



Neyâskweyâhk Acimowin ᓂᓴᓐᓴᓐ ᐱᓴᓐᓴᓐᓴᓐ

Ermineskin Newsletter December 13, 2023

Neyâskweyâhk Acimowin Pawâcakinasis Pîsim Nistosâp

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TEDDY BEAR TOSS 2023



The Teddy Bear Toss is a heartwarming tradition that is held at various sporting events, more particularly in the hockey community. Fans bring teddy bears or stuffed animals to the game, and when the home team scores its first goal, fans throw the toys onto the ice. The teddy bears are then gathered and donated to charities or hospitals, bringing joy to children in need during the holiday season.

This year, the Maskwacis U18 Hawks hosted the annual teddy bear toss at the home game

against Red Deer. Within the first nine (9) seconds of the game, the Maskwacis Hawks scored their first goal! A total of sixty-two (62) teddy bears were thrown onto the ice after the goal was scored. ***“Teddy’s tossed onto the ice NINE SECONDS into the game. Atta be MASKWACIS”*** says Team Manager, Melissa Nepoose. Although the U18 Hawks had a close game losing 6-8 to Red Deer, it was a great way to get the community together and make a positive impact! Thanks to the players, parents, coaches and families that donated.

THE ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS – CHIEFS VOTE FOR THE NATIONAL CHIEF

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) is a national advocacy organization that represents the interests of First Nations in Canada. It serves as a political forum and a unified voice for over 600 First Nations across the country. The AFN's primary goal is to advance the rights and well-being of Indigenous peoples in Canada, this entails dealing with the federal government and other stakeholders.

The AFN is led by a National Chief who is elected by the Chiefs of the member First Nations. Chiefs across the nation came together this past week to elect the next National Chief. Councillor Craig Makinaw of Ermineskin ran as a candidate, he was hoping to gain favor with his 30+ years of experience in the political arena, dealing with the various governments, and speaking at the United Nations on various occasions advocating on behalf of Ermineskin and all First Nations bringing many concerning issues to the table. There has yet to be an Alberta National Chief at the AFN elected, Craig Makinaw was successful at being a AFN Alberta Regional Chief in 2015.

After six rounds of voting the remaining 2 candidates David Pratt 2nd vice of the Federation of Sovereign Indian Nations in Saskatchewan, and Cindy Woodhouse Manitoba's Regional Chief were not successful in obtaining the required 60% of the vote. The candidate with the second lowest vote David Pratt (39.3%) made the decision to withdraw his candidacy making candidate Cindy Woodhouse the new National Chief



National Chief Candidate, E.C.N Council Craig Makinaw
(Former Alberta AFN Regional Chief)

with 50.8% of the 415 chiefs who voted in AFN chief election.

Woodhouse, served as the AFN's regional chief for Manitoba, was a central player in a landmark \$23-billion child-welfare settlement approved last month by the Federal Court. She says she will continue fighting for the rights and well-being of First Nations children and help to advance economic reconciliation.

The AFN's effectiveness has been hindered by inner turmoil between the AFN executive, the former AFN Chief and Chiefs across the nation. With the remaining 49.2% of the 415 Chiefs that did not vote for Woodhouse, the newly elected chief hopes to unite their efforts, make necessary changes to the processes in order to be an effective organizing advocating body.





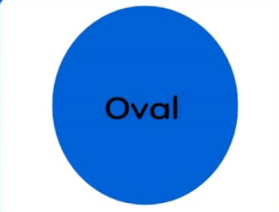
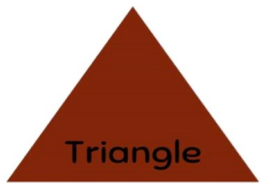
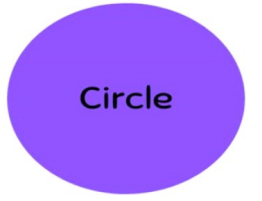

Article written by: Tara Cutarm



AFN newly elected National Chief Cindy Woodhouse
(Manitoba Regional Chief)



GREE CORNER

 <p>Heart</p> <p>Mîhkwâw (NI) Mîhkosiw (NA)</p>	 <p>Square</p> <p>Osâwâw (NI) Osâwisiw (NA)</p>	 <p>Star</p> <p>Wâpôsâwâw (NI) Wâpôsâwisiw (NA)</p>	 <p>Rectangle</p> <p>Oskaskosiwinâkwân (NI) Oskaskosiwinâkosiw (NA)</p>
 <p>Oval</p> <p>Askihtakwâw (NI) Askihtakonâkosiw (NA)</p>	 <p>Triangle</p> <p>Wîposâwâw (NI) Wîposâwisiw (NA)</p>	 <p>Circle</p> <p>Nîpâmâyâtan (NI) Nîpâmâyâtisiw (NA)</p>	 <p>Diamond</p> <p>Okiniwâpikwaniwinâkwân (NI) Okiniwâpikwaniwinâkosiw (NA)</p>

Created by Janine Wildcat

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Miyo Kîsemanito Kîsikânisi

EKWA MIYO OCEHTOW KÎSIKÂNISI

I would like to wish our Nation the best holidays and a Happy New year. From my family to yours, I hope you get to spend this season with the ones closest and most important to you. Nanâskomowin

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CONNECTION OF HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUAL WELL-BEING



Ramona Cutarm-Lightning

Although it is an uncomfortable and slightly embarrassing topic, sexual well-being plays an important part in relationships and adulthood. When it comes to intimate relationships, a key role of a healthy and fulfilling connection often lies in open and constructive communication about sexual health. Understanding and addressing sexual well-being is crucial for building a strong bond between partners. It involves, not only the physical aspects of intimacy but also the emotional and psychological dimensions. Nurturing a relationship that prioritizes sexual health requires mutual respect, empathy, and a willingness to engage in open dialogue. By actively participating in clear communication on boundaries, preferences and any concerns related to sexual health, couples can navigate the intricacies of intimacy with trust and shared understanding, ultimately contributing to a more resilient partnership.

Maskwacis Health Services collaborated with Ramona Cutarm-Lightning in a Pendleton Jacket Making class over the course of three days. During the coat-making, they took an interesting approach by having the topic of discussion be Sexual Health. It was a way to get community members to be involved in the conversation, learning more about the topic while also creating a beautiful project in the process.

Teresa Patzer, Sexual Health and Harm Reduction Nurse, has been working in Maskwacis for almost 2 years. "I tried to get out to as many events as I could this summer, handing out pamphlets and any other material I thought would be useful". She has been to

many local events, promoting her area of expertise, engaging with Nation members and getting their feedback on what resources she can provide.

She goes on to talk about the stigma surrounding S.T.I. Testing, and how it can be harmful in the end by not getting tested at least once. "S.T.I. Testing should be as common as making an appointment to see the dentist or getting a check-up by the doctor," she says. "I find that there is a negative connection with getting tested, but if we, at Maskwacis Health Services, can create a safe place with no judgment whatsoever, I want to be able to do that to the best of my ability."

Teresa also spoke on relationships, and how the term "healthy relationship" will change depending on who you ask. She encourages open discussion with your partner regarding intimacy, as well as your health in general. It is important to take care of yourself to the best of your ability, mind and body. Her message with this workshop is to build a stronger bond and a better understanding of your body. Take care of yourselves as the years come, and have these conversations with your partners in an open, judgment-free space. "It can be safe and fun at the same time! Why should we have one without the other? Both play an important part and should be a conversation to have with yourself and/or your partner. Not only are you setting boundaries,

but you are actively deciding to protect yourself."

If you should have any questions regarding Sexual Health and Harm Prevention, you can contact the Maskwacis Health Services at (780) 585-3830.



Marleigh Cutarm



HIGHLIGHTING ERMINESKIN ELITE ATHLETES

Curtez Giroux is a youth from Ermineskin Cree Nation who has been playing sports since the age of two (2) years old. Curtez started his sports journey by playing soccer in his younger years and has now been playing hockey for the past nine (9) years where he started with the Maskwacis Hawks. He is currently playing the 2023/24 season with Leduc Oil Kings U17 of the AEHL AAA. Curtez has registered 7 goals and 7 assist for 14 points in 12 games played! Prior to this season, Curtez played for the Camrose Vikings U18 AA in the NAHL U18 where he accumulated 22 points (9G 13A) in 32 games played. He also suited up for the Camrose Vikings U15 AA in the NAHL during the 2021/22 season where he went on to score 35 goals, 22 assist (57 points) in 31 games played.



posing teams, *“The challenge I face is being criticized for having long hair. My team is very great, not very often do I face discrimination when it comes to my team but the opposing teams always seem to have something to say.”* First Nations individuals often face stereotypes, prejudice, and systemic barriers within the hockey community. Whether it's on the ice, in the stands, or within the organizations themselves, there's still work to be done to ensure inclusivity and equal opportunities for everyone.

Within the hockey community, Curtez goes on to explain the discrimination he face’s from some of the op-



Although Giroux faces discrimination on the ice, that does not stop him from playing his best every game. He puts 100% when he plays and doesn't allow for the negative comments to affect his game. Curtez encourages other youth to become involved in sports, *“Just do it, you won't know until you try. Sports are fun and can take you a long way. I travelled the world and you get to meet new people! If it wasn't for the guidance from my parents and my extended hockey family/support, I wouldn't be where I am today.”* We wish you the best in your 2023/24 season Curtez! We can't wait to see your



Elder's Christmas Dinner



IRIS RATTLESNAKE



On December 4th, 2023 the Ermineskin Elder's Department hosted their annual Christmas dinner. Elders were treated to turkey dinner catered by Bob Ronnies Catering, Christmas Bingo and gifts from Santa! The event attracted a large crowd that filled every table! Celebrating the holidays with our elders holds profound significance, as it fosters a deep sense of connection and continuity between generations. This holiday we encourage youth and others to use these festive occasions provide a unique opportunity to bridge the generation gap, allowing younger family members

to learn from the wisdom and experiences of their elders. Sharing traditions, stories, and customs during holiday celebrations becomes a precious means of cultural transmission, preserving family history and values. The holidays offer a chance to express gratitude for the wisdom, love, and guidance from our elders.

Ermineskin Elders Department would like to give a big thanks to their staff, volunteers and everyone in attendance!

"Merry Christmas and safe holidays!"



SANDRA WOLFE



HARLEY LITTLECHILD



PATTY COYOTE

EARLY LEARNING CENTRE GRAND OPENING CEREMONY



Theresa C. Wildcat was a highly decorated and phenomenal woman who dedicated her life to education and the preservation of Cree Culture. Theresa C. Wildcat, a visionary educator whose life has been an inspiring testament to the transformative power of education. Devoting herself wholeheartedly to our Culture, Theresa has become a beacon of knowledge, shaping the academic curriculum with her innovative approaches and commitment. Over the years, her outstanding contributions to education have garnered widespread acclaim, earning her a multitude of acknowledgments and prestigious awards.

Theresa's journey in education is marked by a passion for educating and the inclusivity of our cultural teachings in the classroom. Her efforts have not only elevated the quality of education within our Nations, but have also served as a model for educators nationwide. Theresa's impact extends far beyond the classroom, as she has played a pivotal role in educational policy and advocacy for our language and Cree culture.

She was the first high school graduate from Ermineskin Cree Nation, and she became the first teacher from Hobbema, now known as Maskwacis. Theresa was a founding member of the Alberta Native Teachers Society (ANTS), as well as a founding member of Maskwacis Cultural College and Ermineskin Education Trust Fund. She received many awards over her career in education such as the Chief Robert Smallboy Award (1986), Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee Medal (2002), Lifetime Achievement Award, The Tribal Chief's Institute (2002), Esquao Award - Lifetime Achievement Award (2004), the Alberta Centennial Medal (2005), Woman of As-

penland, Wetaskiwin & District Heritage Museum (2006), and the Augustana Alumni Association Citation Award (2010).

By naming the new school after such an inspiring member of Maskwacis, her achievements will live on through the practices within the facility and the values that will be upheld. "This is not just a school, but a place our Awasisak will embark on a Cree curriculum with M.E.S.C.'s guiding values at the forefront," says Matthew Wildcat, son of Brian Wildcat, former M.E.S.C. Superintendent.

"It's different from a traditional school where the kids are sitting down and working from books. In kindergarten, we are using all of our senses — we are singing, we are dancing, we are doing all of those hands-on activities. That's why I loved being in the classroom. "I just want it to be a magical and happy place, because this is the start of school and you want the kids to feel excited," says Principal Marlene Edgi.

This new school has many beautiful features such as multiple murals in the front gathering area, intricate entrances to the classrooms/lockers, with a centre area for reading and class gatherings. This learning space will provide the awasisak with sensory enrichment, as well as a space they can blossom and be immersed in Cree language and culture within the facility.

"I am humbled about the clear demonstration of leadership and vision that has manifested in the beautiful facility and one that is going to continue to reward the children and members of the nation, creating a brighter future," says Jamie Brown, Regional Director General, Alberta Region at Indigenous Services Canada.

The ceremony ended with Chief Joel Mykat cutting a ribbon and the unveiling of a plaque dedicated to Theresa and the Early Learning Centre.

***"As parents, we must encourage our children to keep going to school and teach them our Cree language. Today's children are tomorrow's leaders."
-Theresa C. Wildcat***



EVENTS FOR DECEMBER 2023

FRIDAY
15

- E.C.N. Offices closed for AM, Re-opened 1pm.
- N.G.C.I Midnight Market @ Maskwacis Mall 5pm-11pm

THURSDAY
21

- E.C.N Office Closed @12pm for Christmas Holidays
- E.C.N. Community Dinner @ N.O.K Building 6pm-8pm.

TUESDAY
19

- Gingerbread Parade 5pm Samson Bingo Hall to Panee Agriplex
- REINDEER LANE 6pm-8pm @Panee Agriplex

WEDNESDAY
27

- Food Bank Open
- Open Gym/Skate 2pm-8pm Jim RS Building/Arena

WEDNESDAY
20

- REINDEER LANE 6pm-8pm @Panee Agriplex
- Prenatal/Parent Program, Health Promotion Trailer @9am-4pm
- MCTC Community Dinner 5pm-8pm (Pigeon Lake Rec)

THURSDAY
28

- Food Bank Open
- Tubing Field Trip, Red Deer Canyon @11:30am
- Open Gym/Skate 2pm-8pm Jim RS Building/Arena

FRIDAY
29

- Income Support- January 2024 Issuance 10am-4pm (NHS/SA Office)
- Skiing Field, Red Deer Canyon @ 11:30am
- Open Gym/Skate 2pm-8pm Jim RS Building /Arena

JANUARY 2024

JANUARY
3

- Tubing Field Trip, Red Deer Canyon @11:30am
- Open Gym/Skate 2pm-8pm Jim RS Building/Arena

JANUARY
5

- Open Gym/Skate 2pm-8pm Jim RS Building/Arena
- Skiing Field, Red Deer Canyon @ 11:30am

JANUARY
4

- Tubing Field Trip, Red Deer Canyon @11:30am
- Open Gym/Skate 2pm-8pm Jim RS Building/Arena

JANUARY
8

- E.C.N Offices RE-OPEN @8:30am

UPCOMING EVENTS/CLASSIFIEDS

OFFICE CLOSURE

PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT ECN ADMINISTRATION & OPERATIONS WILL BE CLOSED AT 12:00PM ON DEC. 14TH, 2023 TO ATTEND A STAFF FUNCTION.

REGULAR HOURS WILL RESUME ON DECEMBER 15TH AT 1:00PM



Ribbon Skirt Workshop

With Kim Buffalo



December 18th-20th, 2023

9am - 3pm

N.E.S.T.

Call 780-585-0191 to apply

8 Spaces Available • ECN Member Priority

Deadline To Apply: Friday, December 15th, 2023



Prenatal/Parent Program



HEALTH PROMOTION TRAILER

**Host Nurse Jaden & Tanya
Dec 20, 2023
9am-4pm**

Complete the Prenatal education by 34 wks gestation and you can qualify for a car seat provided by your band Brighter Futures or Intergrated Family Services Program!

Call Tanya or Jaden @ 780-585-2266 to register as spots are limited

Maskwacis Mall presents our 2nd Annual

Midnight Madness

Friday, December 15

5:00 PM - 11:00 PM



ONE TABLE PER VENDOR

Contact Tricia Wildcat

(780) 585-3000 Ext. 234 or Email: tricia@ngcinc.ca





**PIGEON LAKE MEMBERS
ONLY**

Mimiw Sakahikan Christmas Community Dinner Party



20 DECEMBER, 2023

**ENTERTAINMENT BY
EMERY BURNINGGRASS**

DOOR PRIZES!

Time: 5:00pm - 8:00pm
Pigeon Lake Recreation
Center
info@mctc.ca

ERMINESKIN CREE NATION

Community Christmas Dinner

ERMINESKIN CREE NATION

COME OUT BRING
FAMILY AND FRIENDS

**THURSDAY 6:00 PM
DECEMBER 21
2023**
@ N.O.K. Building

ERMINESKIN RECREATION

TUBING FIELD TRIP

**VAN LEAVE AT 11:30AM
FROM JIM RS SPORTS BUILDING**

**LIMITED
SPOTS**

**PLEASE REGISTER TO SECURE SPOTS. DRESS FOR
WEATHER AND HAVE PROPER FOOTWEAR.**

**DECEMBER 28TH, 2023
JANUARY 4TH, 2024**

AGES 10-17

**TO REGISTER:
(780) 585-3088**

GINGERBREAD PARADE

5:00pm on December 19th, 2023

ON-SITE
REGISTRATION:
4:00PM
JUDGING WILL
BEGIN AT
4:30PM

CATEGORIES:

1. Individual Vehicles
2. Commercial Vehicles
3. First Nation Departments

Prizes awarded to 1st, 2nd and 3rd

PARADE ROUTE:

Samson Bingo Hall Parking Lot to
Panee Memorial Agriplex

For more information,
contact:

Ermineskin Events:
(780) 585-3741

Ermineskin Recreation:
(780) 585-3088
SYSD: (780) 585-3012



Reindeer Lane

Holiday Lights Drive-Thru

December 19 & 20, 2023
Panee Memorial Agriplex
6:00pm - 8:00pm

HOLIDAY LIGHTS, FIREWORKS, HOT CHOCOLATE AND CANDY BAGS!

ECN COMMUNITY WELLNESS, RECREATION AND SAMSON YOUTH & SPORTS DEVELOPMENT PRESENTS:

*SUBJECT TO CHANGE, COVID PROTOCOLS IN PLACE



ERMINESKIN EMERGENCY LISTINGS

DEPARTMENT	Contact Number	Hours Of Operation
Maskwacis RCMP	(780) 585-3767 After Hours: (780) 585-4600	7:30am- 4:30pm
Ermineskin Fire Hall	(780) 312-5613 / (780) 312-3145 After Hours: (780) 585-4589	8:30am- 4:30 pm
Ermineskin Sercurity	(780) 585-2004 / (780) 335-3725	8:30am– 4pm
Maskwacis Ambulance	(780) 585-4000	8am– 4pm Ambulance 24/7
Maskwacis Health Services	(780) 585-3830	8:30am– 4:30pm
Maskwacis Mobile Mental Health	(780) 585-0048 After Hours: (780) 362-2150	9am– 4pm
Ermineskin Womens Shelter	(780) 585-4444	8:30am– 4:30pm
Kanawemahwasowin Kamik (K.K.I.)	(780) 585-3721 After Hours: (780) 335-1778	8:30am– 4:30pm
N.E.P. Shop	(780) 585-2101 After Hours: (780) 362-1092	8:30am– 4:30pm
Neyaskweyahk Human Services	(780) 585-3835 / (780) 360-9602 After Hours: (780) 335-5494	8:30am– 4:30pm
Ermineskin Property Management	(780) 585-3886 After Hours: (780) 335-6161	8:30am– 4:30pm
Ermineskin Public Works	(780) 585-3814 After Hours: (780) 360-1556	8:30am– 4:30pm
REA LTD	(780) 585-4037 After Hours: (780) 364-0084	8:30am– 4:30pm
Ermineskin Tech Services	(780) 585-0255 After Hours follow phone prompts	8:30am– 4:30pm
Waste Transfer Station	(780) 585-3639 After Hours: (780) 585-0255	Tues - Sat 9:00am - 6:00pm