



Zach Powder, Fort McKay's First Fire Chief remembered



Brave wildland firefighters left to right: Marvin Boucher, John Boucher, Pat Ahyasou, Zachary Powder, Theodore Bouchier, Walter Powder, Dophus Ahyasou, and Howard Lacorde.

In 1956, it took Zachary Powder more than four hours to go by dog team from Fort McKay to Fort McMurray where he picked up a marriage license that cost him \$2. Fifty years later, on Jan. 20, his daughters and grandchildren surprised Powder and his wife Mary by arranging a golden anniversary celebration, which included dinner, speeches, and a dance in the Band Hall.

Everyone who remembers Zach knew that the most important part of his life was his family. His granddaughter Sophie remembers the family home as being one full of love. 'Mary Powder (his wife) was the love of his life. Everything he did was for her and the family. He loved her with all his heart. He would say 'that's not just my wife she is my partner – and she could shoot a four and ten shotgun real good.'

On that day of his Golden Wedding Anniversary celebration, Zach wore his Forestry Services Uniform. He'd worked for them for over fifty years, and next to his family that job represented the second most important thing in his life: his dedication to the land and its preservation. In Northern Alberta, a lot of that preservation work always seemed to involve fighting fires.

Back in 2004, the Edmonton Journal wrote, 'At 76, Zachary Powder may have fought more forest fires than any other human being in Alberta, alive or dead. Some years he fights 10 to 15 fires a season, going from one to the next to the next. Even now, in semi-retirement he's called in to help manage fires, the last one being a whopper that threatened his home

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WATER SAMPLING IN FMFN. PROTECTING THE COMMUNITY.

Why do we test our water?

We test water in Fort McKay to ensure that the water is safe for human consumption. Among the places where samples are taken are the Health Centre, Riverside, and the school.

In addition, your Community Health Representative also takes samples from private homes. All this sampling is done in the morning so that the samples can be taken to Fort McMurray by 2 pm before being sent to Edmonton for testing and analysis.

If you are asked to allow a sample to be taken, please say yes. It doesn't take long and it is an important part of building a picture of the health of our water. We live in an area bordering heavy industry, and while the safety standards are among the most stringent in the world, forewarned is forearmed. In the event of a spillage or accident, early detection is key to the health of the Nation.

Sampling can save lives. Please co-operate.

FMFN LEADERSHIP TEAM

Raymond Powder, Chief
David Bouchier, Councillor
Crystal McDonald, Councillor
Bobby Shott, Councillor
Melinda Stewart, Councillor

Rhonda Laboucan, CEO
Alvaro Pinto, CEO Oilsands
Development and Sustainability

ADMINISTRATION DEPT.
Dorothy McDonald Business
Centre, General Delivery,
Fort McKay, AB T0P 1C0

Phone: 780-828-2430

Hours of Operation:
Monday - Thursday:
8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Friday: 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Closed daily: 12 - 1 p.m.

SUBMISSIONS

If you have any photos, stories or
ideas for the Red River Current,
please contact us via email at:
communications@fortmckay.com

Sign up for the FMFN App Today!

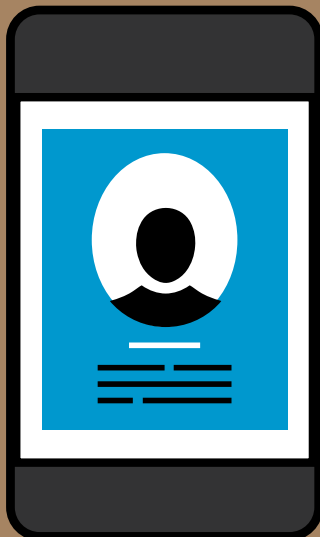
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FORT MCKAY HISTORY

Continued from page 1

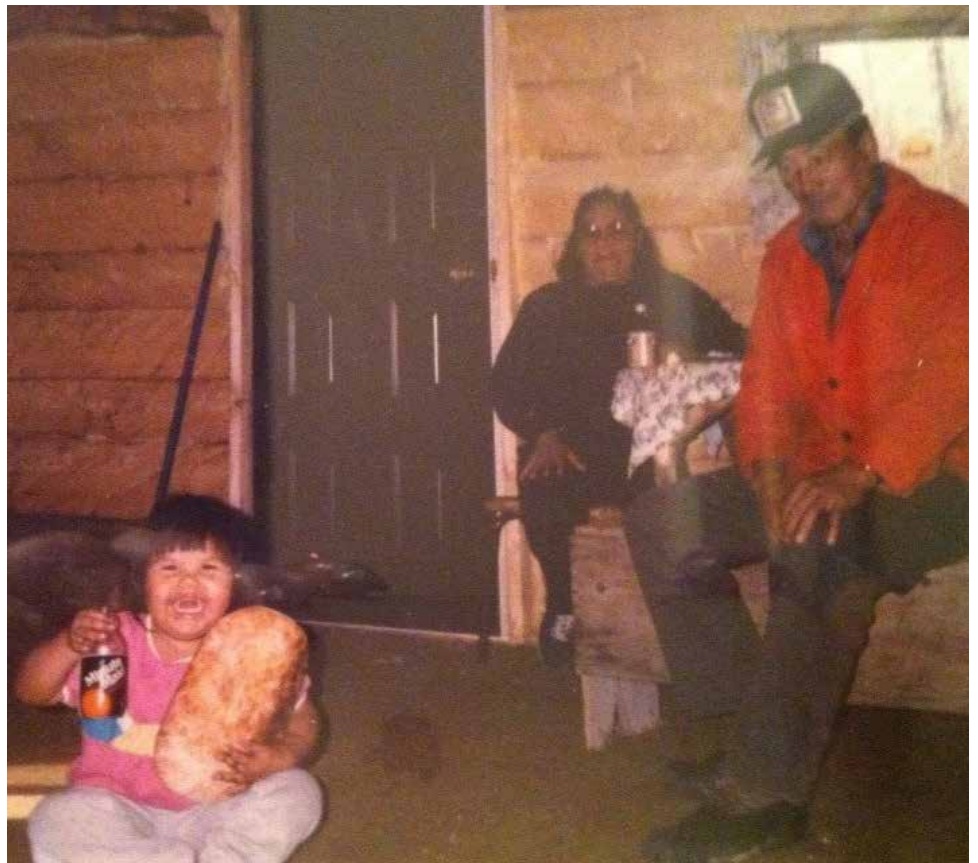
community of Fort McKay in
2002.”

When that story was
published, he was still fighting
fires at 76, and by the Journal’s
estimate had already seen
at least 500, maybe as many
as 750. No wonder he was
the first Chief of the Fort
McKay volunteer firefighters’
department.

Zachary was born in Fort
McKay to proud parents
Alphonse and Louse Powder,
one of 11 children. It was 1928,
not an easy time to be growing
up in Fort McKay. Back then,
living off the land was a
necessity, and times could be
hard. But it was also a good
life and a happy one. Zachary
had a trap-line all his life and
as an adult built a cabin west
of AOSTRA Road to maintain
their traditional way of living.

His knowledge of the land
helped secure his job with
Forestry Services, and to this
day his name is remembered
as part of the curriculum in
Hinton, Alberta, where they
teach the Alberta Forestry
Program.

The stories about Zachary
Powder the firefighter are
many and varied. He was
always a calming influence
as the sector boss and fire
chief to many volunteers over
the years. The legends tells
of him rushing to fight fires
still wearing his moccasins, of
being backed up against a lake
with a fire surrounding him
yet remaining calm enough to
keep on battling. Oftentimes
he would be away for months,
and he always spoke of how
his job would have been
impossible without his wife
Mary, the love of his life.



Zach Powder with his wife Mary Powder and FMFN Receptionist Sophie Powder



Former Fire Chief Zach Powder

The Journal also related this story by way of example. “As a straw boss, a position commanding eight men in a fire, Powder was dropped on the shore of Sand Lake in the Birch Mountains west of Fort McMurray.

The fire in the north quickly leaped around him, hemming him in on the lakeshore. Two-way radios were few and far between at the time, so there was no chance of calling for help. He started up his gas-powered water pump and placed the gas tank and all of his equipment on a tarp next to the water. Then he covered everything with moss and doused it all up with lake water.

‘I could hear the fire coming rolling, just like a thunder,’ Powder recalled. When the flames roared around him, they blotted out the sun. With his back to the water, he kept the pump going, desperate to keep the flames from engulfing him.

‘It felt like a long time, but it was only about 25 minutes. I couldn’t see any sky. The fire was all around me.’

Then the fire moved on. Powder found some unburned moss under the tarp and used it to breathe through the thick smoke. Visibility was too poor for the helicopter to come down and find him, so eventually he tucked in for the night. The chopper landed about 3:00 am and the forest service leader started crying when he found that Zach was still alive.”

Zachary eventually retired from Fire Fighting, mostly. In 2010 he fought a fire north of Fort McKay on the AVC Road. He was 82 at the time. Both he and Mary are gone now, both are sadly missed. But the stories, and the legend, remains.

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FORT MCKAY
HEALTH CENTRE

Clinic Dates:
Dr O'Connor - May 6th - 10th
Dr Taiwo - May 28th - 30th
PCN Nurse - Every Mon & Wed

Please call in advance if you need to make an appointment with Dr. O'Connor or Charlene.

Immunizations:
Contact the Health Centre to make an appointment with the Public Health Nurse

For more information on other services offered at the Health Centre, please contact the centre at **780.828.2450**.

FORT MCKAY
EMPLOYMENT &
TRAINING

The Employment and Training Centre is there to help you with creating/ updating resumes, searching for and applying for jobs, and offering support for employment and training.

For more information or to make an appointment, please contact the office at **780.828.2478**.

FORT MCKAY
106.3 FM



STAY up to date with the latest music and news!!

Listening to Fort McKay's community radio station!

www.fortmckayfm.com

Chief and Councillor at Public Policy Forum Dinner

Fort McKay First Nation Chief Raymond Powder and Councillor David Bouchier were among the attendees at the 2024 Public Policy Forum Annual Testimonial Dinner in Toronto on April 11.

Chief Powder was joined at his table by National Chief Cindie Woodhouse of the Assembly of First Nations and Chief Claire Sault of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. Also joining Chief Powder were Peter Zebedee, Suncor's Executive Vice President, and Jacquie Moore, Suncor's General Counsel.

FMFN Councillor David Bouchier and Bouchier CEO Nicole Bouchier attended as special guests of J.P. Gladue, who was honoured for his contributions to Indigenous economic empowerment. Other honorees included astronaut and politician Marc Garneau, and Olympian hockey star Jayna Hefford, as well as others who have demonstrated exceptional leadership, innovation, and impact in their fields, contributing positively to the development and implementation of policy in Canada and beyond. The Public Policy Forum's (PPF) Annual



Chief Powder with National Chief Cindie Woodhouse of the Assembly of First Nations, and Chief Claire Sault of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

Testimonial Dinner honours distinguished individuals who have made significant contributions to public policy and governance. This high-profile gathering attracts a wide array of attendees, including senior leaders from government, business, and the non-profit world. The dinner serves not only as a Canadian platform to recognize excellence and leadership but also as a crucial networking event where ideas and experiences are exchanged among many of the nation's most influential figures. It is considered one of the most important annual networking events for the country's public policy community.

Chief Powder Attends Meeting on Bill C-61

Chief Powder was in Edmonton on, April 22, 2024, to attend a meeting on the proposed federal Bill C-61, an Act respecting water, source water, drinking water, wastewater, and related infrastructure on First Nation lands. Bill C-61's short title is the First Nations Clean Water Act.

The meeting invitation came from Patricia Hajdu, Minister of Indigenous Services, and included Chiefs from around Alberta. Bill C-61 affirms that the inherent right to self-government, recognized and affirmed by section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982, includes the jurisdiction of First Nations in relation to water, source water, drinking water, wastewater and related infrastructure on, in and under First Nation lands. It sets out principles to guide the provision for First Nations of clean and safe drinking water and the effective treatment and disposal of wastewater on First Nation lands. It provides for minimum standards for water

quality and quantity and wastewater effluent. It also provides pathways to facilitate source water protection.

Bill C-61 was drafted and introduced in the House of Commons last December. It is now at second reading stage, after which it will go to the Indigenous and Northern Affairs Committee for study.



Chief Powder with Patricia Hajdu, Federal Minister of Indigenous Services

FMFN STAFF NEWS

Fort McKay First Nation is pleased to welcome Carlene Moore to the Community Health & Wellness team as a Registered Nurse effective Monday April 22, 2024:

Hello, I'm Carlene Moore (Carley) a Registered Nurse new to Fort McKay First Nation. I graduated from UBCO in 2018 and am from Fort McMurray (Nistawâyâw). I am Cree, and a member of Driftpile Cree First Nation where my kokum was from. My mushum was from Fort Chipewyan and my mother's family was raised in Fort Smith, NWT. My father's side are settlers in Saskatchewan.

Throughout my career I've worked as an Opioid Response Coordinator and Family Practice Nurse with the Wood Buffalo Primary Care Network, addressing critical health challenges in our communities. My experience extends to prenatal care, women's health, and inpatient psychiatry, as well as being a behavioural health provider where I've worked closely with patients and their families to provide compassionate and holistic care. Additionally, I've had the privilege of working with Indigenous Services Canada, working in John D'Or Prairie and Garden River as a primary care nurse.

Outside of work, I find joy in spending time with family, including my doggy Bruce. I also enjoy activities like yoga, snowboarding, travel, and golfing, which allow me to recharge and stay balanced. I'm thrilled to join the Fort McKay First Nation team, where I look forward to contributing to the health and well-being of community members. Thank you for welcoming me aboard!



FORT MCKAY CULTURAL PROGRAMS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

DANCER AND DRUMMER PERFORMANCES

- Traditional Healing Assistance
- Round Dance / Dene Dance
- Cultural Workshops
- Moose/Buffalo Lake Summer Retreat
- Moose Lake Camps & Events
- Employment Opportunities
- Community & Special Events

CREE & DENE CLASSES

Every Tuesday Cree class on Zoom.

Every Wednesday Dene class on Zoom.

To register, contact culture@fortmckay.com

DRUM PRACTICE

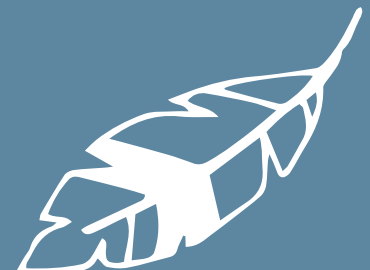
Every Wednesday at 6 pm in the Band Hall.

All males welcome. Drop In, no registration required!

If you would like to be a volunteer or be a Resource Worker for some of our programs or events, please submit an email, please include what events you are interested in, or what skill sets you can provide. First priority will be given to community members.

For more information about our upcoming programs, please contact:

Audrey Redcrow
Cultural and Special Events Lead
780-215-2384
Aredcrow@fortmckay.com



COMMUNITY MEMBER NEWS

Bryce Fabian is having a good year



Last month we reported on his RARA award. Immediately after this, he went into the studio and recorded an album of Country music. It is a set that is largely autobiographical in nature. Bryce was born and raised in Fort McKay, and much of what he sings about will resonate with community members. Here Bryce talks about the making of his album.

In “Dirt Roads To Open Highways,” Bryce takes listeners on a journey through his life, music, and dreams. Born and raised in Fort McKay First Nations, his roots deeply influence his music, infusing it with authenticity and soul. The album’s title encapsulates

the essence of his journey, symbolizing the transition from humble beginnings to expansive horizons.

Fabian’s autobiography delves into the challenges he faced growing up, navigating the rugged terrain of dirt roads while chasing his dreams down open highways. His story resonates with anyone who has dared to pursue their passions despite obstacles. Through his music, he captures the essence of perseverance, hope, and the transformative power of following one’s heart.

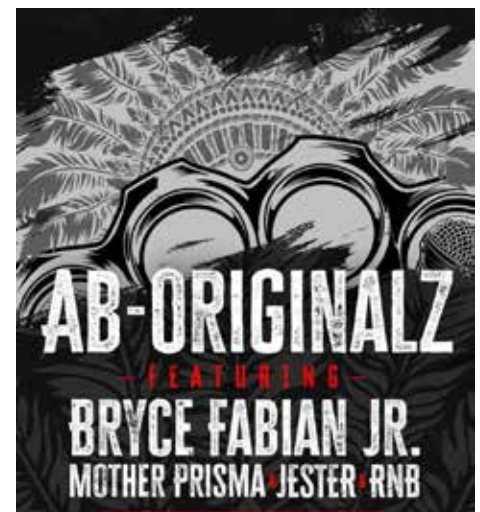
Each track in the album serves as a chapter in Fabian’s autobiography, painting vivid images of his experiences,



triumphs, and setbacks. From heartfelt ballads to upbeat anthems, his music reflects the highs and lows of his journey, inviting listeners to join him on a reflective and inspiring ride.

Ultimately, “Dirt Roads To Open Highways” is more than just an album—it’s a testament to the human spirit’s resilience and the boundless possibilities that await those who dare to dream. His story serves as a beacon of hope for anyone embarking on their own journey, reminding us that no matter where we come from, we have the power to chart our own path to greatness.

Dirt Roads To Open Highways, released under the name B. Fabian, will be available soon in all the usual places. Bryce will be playing at Tavern on Main on May 10th from 8pm.



COMMUNITY MEMBER NEWS

Athlete Highlight - 2024 All-Star World Cheerleading Championships in Florida



Inset: Lexi with her silver medal. Main picture: Lexi and her team mates pose on the steps leading to the All-Star World Championships.

Band member Lexi Hynes-Redcrow is a member of the Norfort Gym cheerleading team that recently travelled to Orlando, to take part in the 2024 All-Star World Cheerleading Championships. The competition took place from April 16-22 and the Northern Cheerleading Allstars started well. In the opening battle round, the team scored zero deductions. Advancing to the second finalist round the next day, the team won the silver, taking second place in the competition.

Lexi is very proud and honored to have been given the opportunity to compete at Worlds, this has been her dream since she started cheer when she was just 8 years old. She wished to thank Fort McKay Recreation Department Director Simon Adams for

the sponsorships that helped with her success throughout the year, and for helping make her dream come true in getting her to Worlds. She also wants to acknowledge her mom Audrey and stepdad Norman for always supporting her in her choice of sport, and for their commitment in taking her to practice five or six a week and to all the competitions.

"This has been the best experience of my life," said Lexi, "and I am so grateful. I cannot wait to compete again next season and hopefully get scouted, and make it to The Open Championship in 2025."



FORT MCKAY ELDERS BINGO!

Date
Thursdays

Time
Noon - 2:00 pm

Location
Elders Centre

Call Peggy for cards at
780-598-3575.



CFWE RADIO BINGO

Date
Mondays and Saturdays

Time
6:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Location
Fort McKay Radio
Canada



This year, wildfire season has come early

The weather this winter means that wildfire season is expected start ten days earlier than usual, according to the Albert government.

Recently, we've seen the risks that wildfires present. And with above average temperatures this winter, and below average precipitation, the risk of fires is also higher than usual.

It pays to be cautious

As a precaution, given the conditions, Alberta Wildfire may make greater use of the fire ban and restriction system to help reduce the risk of accidental fires. Any member who has a planned burning in the Forest Protection Area will require a permit from the Fort McKay Fire Department.

Know what, and what not, to do

All members are encouraged to become familiar with FireSmart principles and to take an active role in wildfire prevention and mitigation by preparing their properties accordingly.

Members are urged to exercise extreme caution in forested areas. Please refrain from burning under warm, dry, and windy conditions. It is crucial that you remain up to date on fire bans and restrictions. More than 60 per cent of the wildfires in Alberta last year were caused by people.

Here are some helpful tips:

- Make sure that your family and the members of your household are prepared and ready to leave immediately should the need arise.
- Have go-bags packed.



- Stay informed about weather conditions and advisories in your area.

- Remove any fire hazards in and around your home, such as dried out branches, leaves, and debris.

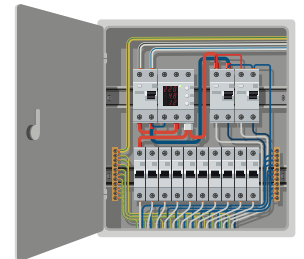
- Keep a sprinkler that is in good working condition in an accessible location.



- Make sure smoke alarms are placed on every level of the home, and preferably in every bedroom.

- Consult with your local fire department or a qualified engineer about making your home fire-resistant.

- Learn how to turn off the utilities in your residence.



- Make sure that your vehicle has enough fuel.

- Check on elderly relatives and neighbours to see if they require assistance.



- Ensure that pets and/or service animals are accounted for.

Keep these phone numbers handy

If you see a wildfire, report it immediately by calling **310-FIRE (3473)**.

If the fire is in the immediate community, call **911**.

In Fort McKay, FMFN Peace Officer Contact Information is **780.828.5555 and press 3**.

Every night our FMFN Security Team is on call from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. Contact them at **587.644.4400**.

Angela McKenzie, Director, Safety and Emergency Management, Fort McKay First Nation
Office: 780-828-4220 | Cell: 780-370-7319



It's fire season, best to be prepared

We all know how devastating uncontrolled fires can be. The trees are very dry. It doesn't take much to set them ablaze. Here are some simple pointers to help keep both you, and the forest, safe.

During wildfire season, always check to see if there is a campfire ban. If you do start a fire, make sure you can put it out – always have a bucket of water or a fire extinguisher immediately available.

Before you build a campfire, find level ground sheltered from the wind, away from trees, bushes, leaves, grass, and overhanging foliage. Never build a fire under a tree.

Use a fire pit if one is available. Check to see where other campers have built fires safely.

ATVs and off-road motorbikes can also cause fires. Before you ride, check your exhaust. Make sure your muffler and your spark arrestor are working properly. One spark be enough to cause a wildfire.

Forest fires travel quickly. If you see a fire, no matter how far away it is, evacuate the area immediately and call **310-FIRE (3473)**.

Always beware of lightning when you're in the bush. It travels at 270,000 miles per hour and can reach temperatures of 30,000 degrees Celsius.

Fire Evacuation.

On the FMFN web site, there's a Wildfire Emergency Preparedness page. It tells you everything you need to know about wildfire risks, how to prepare, and how to evacuate safely should the need arise.

These simple steps will also help:

Don't panic and have a plan.

Listen to the radio, check reputable social media outlets, and watch for email from FMFN for updated information.

When evacuating from Fort McKay head south, unless you receive official word stating otherwise.

In an evacuation, there's no time to waste. Prepare an emergency evacuation kit in advance so you and your family

can be ready right away. This kit should include food, water, clothing, bedding, flashlights, batteries, a pocketknife, utility tool, chargers for electronic devices, first aid kit, toilet paper, prescriptions, spare glasses, pet foods and water bowls, bug spray, children's toys and books, copies of useful documentations, IDS, insurance etc.

Also have spare gas containers so you can refill your tank on the road.



FMFN Ice Hockey Roundup

The Fort McKay First Nation Ice Hockey teams had a busy month in April with participation across all age groups.

2024 Alberta Native Hockey Provincials Fort McKay First Nation congratulates all the young people from Fort McKay who participated in the 2024 Alberta Native Hockey Provincials from April 4 to 7. It was an exhilarating celebration of skill, teamwork, and fair play. The following Fort McKay players and coaches and their teammates made it to the playoffs:

U7 won a gold medal, with a team featuring Fort McKay's Ari Fitzpatrick, Colton Young, Hunter Calliou, and Bryson Whiteknife. Tyler Young was head coach with Ryley Whiteknife as assistant coach.



Under 7 team

U9 Half Ice also won a gold medal. Both Leighton Young and Dominic McIsaac were on the team, with James McIsaac serving as assistant coach.



Under 9 Half Ice team

U9 Full won a bronze medal in the Eagle Division. Ryett Laurent was the sole player from Fort McKay, while Shay Laurent was head coach.



Under 9 Full Ice Team

U11, with Lawson McDonald as their only player from Fort McKay, made it as far as the quarter finals.



Under 11 Team

U13 Female won a silver medal, with strong contributions from Leann Grandjambe and Adele Scott.



Under 13 Female Team

U13 also reached the quarter finals in the Eagle Division. The team featured Cruz Fabain, Isaac Bouchier, Kye Folkerson, Abby Gladue, Easton Fitzpatrick, Emmett McIsaac and Ethan Fabian. Phil Fitzpatrick served as assistant coach.



Under 13 Male Team

Wood Buffalo U15 Warriors won a gold medal at the Native Provincials held in Edmonton



Under 11 Team

and they beat The Kikano Red Army by a score of 6-2 in the final game, securing the championship. Players from Fort McKay included: Chase Fabian, Kingston Makkinga, Maddon L'Hommecourt, Rayden Grandjambe, Ben Asadi, Kane Folkerson and Avery Boucher. Brad Fabian was assistant coach.

U18 made the quarter finals in the Eagle Division. On the team were Jonah Grandjambe, Braeden Lacorde, Keegan Shott, Lyric McKenzie and Kaplan McKenzie. The team was coached by Mason Mitchell and Shay Laurent.



Under 18 Team

Congratulations as well to all these young people from Fort McKay whose play made their community proud:

Logan Fitzpatrick who won gold with the U18 Female Stoney Bisons.

Kayleigh Bouchier in the U18 Female Division.

Jayden Shott and **Tyrese Shott** in the U21 Division.

Reanna Whiteknife in the U21 Female Division, in her last year of eligibility.

Dayton Wilson-Beaudry in the U13 Elite Division.

Blaize Bouchier in the U18 Elite Division.

The Fort McKay Braves won the MGH A "DIV" Finals, beating the Fort McMurray Slappers in Game 6 by a score of 7-3. The players from Fort McKay that were on the Braves roster are: Shay Laurent, Keegan Pruden, Nick Laurent, Brad Fabian, Lawrence McDonald, Christian McDonald, Tyler Young, Tyrell Shott, Tyrese Shott, Trevor Grandjambe and Ethan Grandjambe. In addition Mason Mitchell was on the team. He is not a McKay Band member, but he works at the FMFN rink, helps out with the coaching, and also helps with the on ice youth sessions throughout the winter .



The Fort McKay Braves

Fort McKay First Nation's Eagles



According to Nature Conservancy Canada (NCC), "Much of Canada's bald eagle population lives in coastal British Columbia, with inland populations found in boreal forests across the country, and populations throughout Atlantic Canada. They also require large trees for nesting. In wintertime, bald eagles can be found in parts of southern Canada, along bodies of water that do not freeze."

They can also be found on FMFN land and are more evidence that our efforts to conserve the land continue to bear fruit. These photos, taken by the Nation's remote cameras, show that the eagles appear to be settled and that the preservation efforts are worthwhile.

A final word from NCC: "Protecting a core bald eagle habitat while also educating

the public not only helps this iconic bird, but also benefits many other species and adds to the overall integrity of the ecosystem."



Introducing Crystal Culp

Fort McKay First Nation is pleased to introduce Crystal Culp to the team as the Director of Community Health and Wellness Team effective Monday May 6th. Please join us in giving her a warm welcome to the community.

Introducing Crystal Culp, an accomplished nurse whose diverse experiences have shaped her into a dynamic healthcare professional. Armed with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Brock University and specialized training in Health Quality from Queen's University, Crystal's journey in healthcare spans various realms, from acute care to homecare.

In 2009, Crystal embarked on a transformative path, dedicating herself to serving remote Indigenous communities. Motivated by a deep commitment to addressing Indigenous health issues and promoting equity, she immersed herself in this challenging yet rewarding work. Over the years, Crystal has been instrumental in driving impactful initiatives aimed at improving healthcare access and outcomes for these communities.

Among her notable achievements are leading a successful pharmacy accreditation project, forging strategic partnerships with universities to enhance nursing and healthcare support positions within these communities, and spearheading efforts to expand mental health services



in remote Indigenous areas. Crystal's innovative approach and collaborative spirit have been instrumental in effecting positive change and fostering healthier, more resilient communities.

Beyond her professional endeavors, Crystal finds solace and inspiration in nature. An avid hiker and outdoor enthusiast, she relishes the opportunity to explore the great outdoors whenever possible. Additionally, Crystal is a passionate reader who appreciates the power of storytelling. In a remarkable twist, she has recently

ventured into the world of publishing, launching her own line of books—a testament to her creativity and entrepreneurial spirit.

Crystal's multifaceted background, coupled with her unwavering dedication to improving healthcare access and quality, paints a portrait of a compassionate leader and advocate. Her commitment to serving marginalized communities, coupled with her adventurous spirit and entrepreneurial drive, underscores her status as a true trailblazer in the field of nursing.

News Roundup from FMFN Sustainability Team

Buffalo Stewardship

Our Our Buffalo Focus Group held its fourth workshop, where we presented the results of our stewardship report and talked with representatives from Environment and Climate Change Canada about our next steps and upcoming projects. This fourth workshop was the final workshop under our current funding; the Sustainability Department will schedule the next focus groups once our additional funding is finalized.

The stewardship report that the Buffalo Focus Group put together has information about the history of the Ronald Lake Buffalo Herd and the cultural importance of that herd to Fort McKay. It explains the key threats to the herd at this time, which are industrial development and the potential for diseases (namely, tuberculosis and brucellosis) that could spread from the herds in Wood Buffalo National Park. The Ronald Lake Buffalo Herd is currently small but still healthy. The report ends with lists of recommendations to government, industry, and the Sustainability Department to better steward the buffalo. If you would like a copy of the report, please let the Sustainability Department know and they will be happy to share with you.

Next Steps: Environment and Climate Change Canada have approached us to collaborate on identifying “critical habitat” for the Ronald Lake Buffalo



Herd. Our Buffalo Focus Group plans to visit old harvest sites from areas where the buffalo used to roam but don't any longer. We will see if there is still good habitat and if the buffalo can still access those areas, or if there are barriers keeping the buffalo to a smaller range right now.

Imperial Kearl Environmental Protection Order

FMFN continues to understand how the 2023 tailings seepage and release events at Imperial Kearl may impact the land and land users. FMFN community

members recently met with Imperial to discuss what to do with the small forage fish that are in 'Waterbody 3', a pond on the northeast of Kearl, which is suspected to have received seepage from the Kearl tailings pond.

FMFN is also participating in a risk assessment to see how the areas of the 2023 Kearl EPO could carry toxins to the environment. For more information about the Imperial EPO, see the Alberta Energy Regulator (AER) or Imperial websites, or feel free to bring any questions to the Sustainability Department.



Pictured above is a typical tailings stream being deposited into a tailings pond.

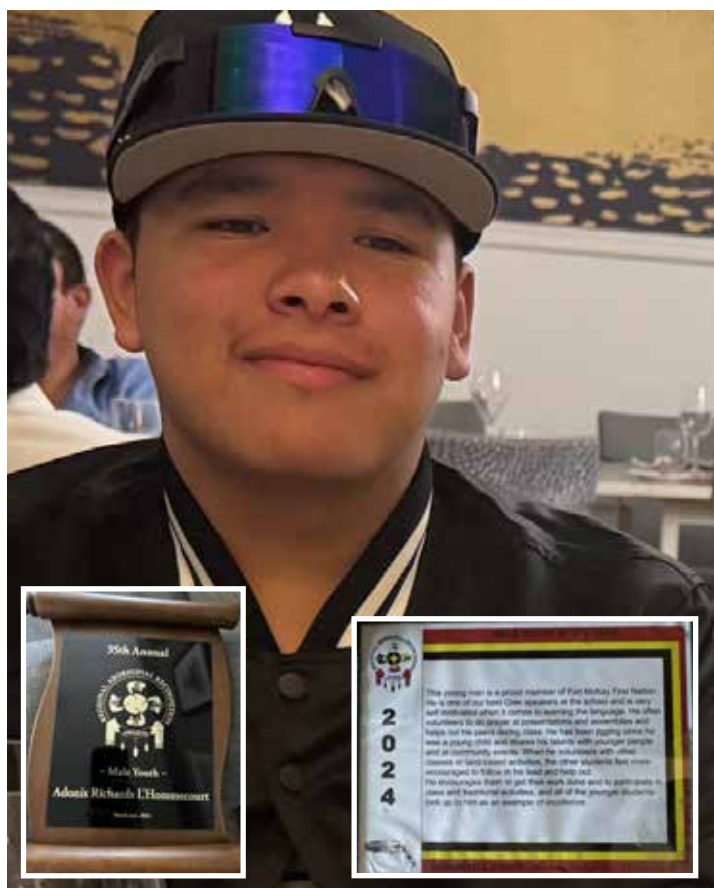
FMFN RARA Awards Recipients

The Regional Aboriginal Recognition Awards (RARA) took place in March in Fort McMurray, and we reported in our April issue that Bryce Fabian Jr, a proud member of the Fort McKay First Nation, was honoured as the Adult Student of the Year.

We should have also have featured our other Fort McKay band members who were honoured that night, and we apologize for this oversight.

Gracie Dyson won the Female Junior Achievement award, Adonis Lhommecourt received the Male Youth Achievement award, and Mel Grandjamb was recognised with the Trapper of the Year award.

We are proud to highlight the achievements and Congratulations to you all!





Bear Sightings



Now that spring is here, you may see a bear in or near the community. For your own safety please follow these guidelines.

How can I keep bears wild and out of my backyard?

- Keep your garbage and recyclable bottles and cans in bear-resistant, airtight containers.
- Outdoor compost attracts bears. Look into using an indoor composter.
- Remove bird feeders from your yard in the months when bears are active – usually from the beginning of April until the end of November. Be sure to clean up any spilled bird seed from the ground.
- Clean your barbecues. Scrub your barbecue clean after each use and store it in a bear-resistant building, such as the garage or shed.
- Consider removing fruit trees and berry-producing bushes from your property. Bears are attracted to the fruit and berries. If you must keep the trees, pick the ripening fruit as early as possible and store them in secure, airtight containers.
- Never leave food out for wildlife.
- Let your neighbours know if you've seen a bear in the community.
- Call Fish and Wildlife for more advice.

What should I teach my children about being safe around bears?

- Do not approach the bear or irritate it by yelling or throwing things at it.
- Never run away from a bear. Back away slowly and find a safe place, such as a building or vehicle.
- Stay with your group and back away from the bear together.
- As soon as you've reached a safe place, tell an adult that you've seen a bear.
- Stay away from areas that may attract bears.
- Bears are more active at dusk, night and dawn.

How can I keep my pets safe?

- Always keep your dog on a leash.
- Feed your pets and store pet food indoors. Keeping pet food outside can attract bears.

What should I do if I see a bear in my backyard?

- Do not panic. Do not run.
- Notify the Fort McKay Park Rangers on **780-598-9644** or Fish & Wildlife on **780-743-7200**.
- Once the bear has left the area, remove anything from your property that might attract a bear.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Day	Date	Event	Details
Every Wed	May 1 to May 29	Dene Classes on Zoom with Janette Flett-Jones 6 pm - 7:30 pm	Register at culture@fortmckay.com
Every Mon & Wed	May 1 to May 29	Health Information: Physiotherapy at the Health Centre	Contact Erin for more Information 780-215-6723.
Every Tues & Wed	May 1 to May 29	Guided Fitness/Strength Training Program	6 pm - 7 pm. Targeted Workouts teaching proper technique. Contact Sarah at 780-215-7124
Every Wed	May 1 to May 29	Dene Classes on Zoom with Janette Flett-Jones 6 pm - 7:30 pm	Register at culture@fortmckay.com
Every Tues & Thurs	May 7 to May 30	Health Information: Acupuncture at the Health Centre	Contact Erin for more Information 780-215-6723.
Every Thurs	May 2 to May 30	Circuit training for anyone 16 or over, at the school track.	6 pm - 7 pm. Care provided for children 3-12 so adults can join. Contact Stefany at 780-714-7101
Every Mon	May 6 to May 29	Adult Volleyball at the School Gym	6 pm - 7 pm. Contact Stefany at 780-714-7094.
Every Tues	May 7 to May 28	Cree Classes on Zoom with Edith Orr 6:30 pm - 8 pm	Register at culture@fortmckay.com
Every Tues	May 7 to May 28	Youth Volleyball at the School Gym	6 pm - 7 pm. Contact Stefany at 780-714-7094.
Every Wed	May 1 to May 29	Dene Classes on Zoom with Janette Flett-Jones 6 pm - 7:30 pm	Register at culture@fortmckay.com
Every Thurs	May 2 to May 30	Addiction Recovery Support Group, Family Support Centre. 1 pm - 2:30 pm	Contact Leah 780-8208-4048. A safe space for connections support. All welcome.
Fri	May 10	Mother's Day Tea	For More Information see The Elsie Fabian School 2023-2024 Calendar
Sun	May 12	Mother's Day Bingo	Contact Audrey Redcrow 780-215-1458.
Thurs	May 16	Moose Hide Day	End Gender-based Violence - website www.mooshidecampaign.ca
Fri	May 17	No School - Non-Operational School Day - 08	For More Information see The Elsie Fabian School 2023-2024 Calendar
Mon	May 20	No School - School Break	For More Information see The Elsie Fabian School 2023-2024 Calendar
Thurs	May 23	Diabetes Community Walk, starting at Elsie Fabian School	Starts at 10 am, T-shirts and lunch provided.
Fri	May 24	Indigenoue Womens & Mothers Group, Family Support Centrel 1 pm - 2:30 pm	Contact Leah 780-8208-4048. A safe space to connect with other women. All welcome.
Fri	May 31	No School - Professional Learning Friday 15	or More Information see The Elsie Fabian School 2023-2024 Calendar