



Red River Current News|letter

A Fort McKay First Nation Publication

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Fort McKay Ice Festival, where everyone's a winner!



Pictured left to right: Chief Raymond Powder, Fort McKay First Nation Cultural Advisor Audrey Redcrow, and Councillor Crystal McDonald.

The Fort McKay First Nation Fishing Derby may be a recent addition to the community events but it is fast becoming a cherished tradition. The first event, in 2022, had over a hundred participants, and the annual

tournament remains just as popular in the community.

The Derby takes place at Paradise Bay in Moose Lake, and although it is typically cold – Northern Alberta in

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CONGRATULATIONS TO BRYCE FABIAN



Bryce is having a good year. Building on the success of his latest album release Endeavors, which followed his first collection Dirt Roads to Open Highways, as well as his recognition by YMM magazine as one of the top 50 under 50 for 2024, he has been recognized once again. Bryce has been nominated by the Wood Buffalo Arts Council for the Ken Flaherty Music Award in the 2025 Wood Buffalo Excellence in Arts Awards. The Buffys, as they are known, are the premier arts event in the Wood Buffalo Region community calendar. The Awards night takes place in October with a gala event in Fort McMurray. Bryce's nomination is just recognition for this multi-talented musician. Congratulations once again.

COMMUNITY EVENTS NEWS

FMFN LEADERSHIP TEAM

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

Alvaro Pinto, Vice President of
Oilsands Development &
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.

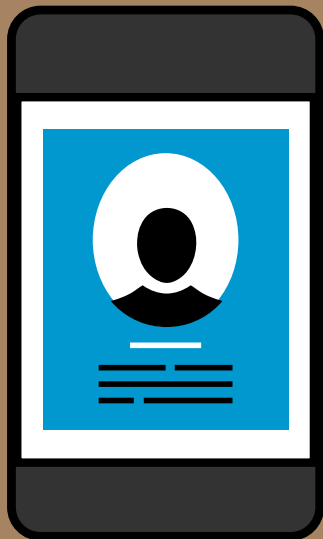
SUBMISSIONS

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

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February rarely disappoints in that regard – everyone always enjoys the day. The food is always fantastic and there are plenty of other things to do to celebrate our event on our traditional territory, including door prizes and prizes for the fishing itself. As you can see from the photos, a good time was had by all who attended.

Fishing Derby winners

Jada Newton 1st place youth
15 and under + 1st place fastest
catch.

Alannis Laurent 1st place adult
+ 2nd place fastest catch

Murray Harpe 2nd place adult
+ 3rd place fastest catch



COMMUNITY EVENTS NEWS



FORT MCKAY HEALTH CENTRE

Clinic Dates:

Dr O'Connor - March 10th - 14th
 Dr Taiwo - March 25th - 27th
 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.fortmackayfm.com

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Valentine's Dinner and Bingo

Fort McKay First Nation Elder Services and the Family Support Centre hosted a Valentine's Day Dinner and Bingo party on Wednesday, February 12th. The Band Hall was transformed with an abundance of balloons that festooned the room and made the day one of red and white splendour. As usual, the Bingo was the highlight of the event and, as you can see from the photos, the prizes were plentiful and enormous, with televisions and other electronics overloading the prize table, as well as romantic stuffed toys, chocolates, and other wonderful gifts.

Pride of place went to the Candy Shop photo booth where nearly everyone had a photograph taken as a memento of the event. Many of the participants added to the glamour of the day by wearing special heart-shaped sunglasses to make the event even more memorable.. Congratulations to all the organizers. You really did the community proud.



COMMUNITY EVENTS NEWS



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



Skinning Beaver Pelts at the Elders Centre

During the winter, local trappers catch beavers and bring them into the community. Beavers have long been a traditional part of Fort McKay's cultural heritage, and after they were skinned and dressed, they were donated to local families. "The carcasses were given to community members for cooking, and every part was used," said Becky Fabian, "including the tail, which is considered a delicacy." As the Elders demonstrated their skills, plans were already in place to prepare the skins. Beaver fur is used to make mittens and hats, among other items, and the pelts are dried and stretched for later use.

Beaver pelts were an important part of the historical fur trade economy, and keeping these traditions alive is vital to Fort McKay First Nations heritage. In the past, the meat could be

boiled, smoked, or cooked in hot stone ovens and if the fur wasn't traded it was used to keep families warm in winter. Used with the fur side inwards, beaver pelts made warm clothing suitable to handle the cold northern winters. No doubt the skills these Elders still have will be passed on to the next generation.



Introducing our new Executive Director of Infrastructure Cal Hurley

Cal Hurley has joined the Fort McKay First Nation team as the new Executive Director of Infrastructure. Here's what he told us by way of introduction to his work colleagues and the community.

"I was born and raised in Fort McMurray, in the heart of the Wood Buffalo region, and my career has been closely intertwined with our local business community. My roots here run deep—my wife and I have raised our two daughters in Fort McMurray, and now our 11-year-old grandson and newborn granddaughter are growing up in the community we love.

"I am passionately committed to the community's environmental and economic sustainability and well-being. With family ties to the Fort McMurray Métis and Willow Lake Métis Associations, I've gained invaluable insights into how industry and Indigenous communities can forge mutually beneficial partnerships. Growing up alongside many Indigenous friends and relatives, I spent countless hours exploring the region's forests and waterways, which fueled my lifelong passion for the outdoors and motorsports.



"My professional journey began as an apprentice machinist with Lemax (now Acden Lemax), where I spent 11 years developing my skills, earning my Journeyman Millwright and Machinist Red Seal certifications, and eventually progressing to a shop supervisor role. I then joined Suncor Energy in early 2000, advancing into leadership positions in facilities and mine equipment maintenance. Later, I worked with Syncrude and Suncor, focusing on the implementation and management of Indigenous agreements with local First Nations and Métis Nations. Most recently, I served as Branch Manager for Brandt Tractor in Fort McMurray.

"I look forward to meeting, collaborating with, and supporting you all as we continue to build a vibrant future for the community."

Thanks for that heartfelt introduction, Cal. Welcome to the team.

Congratulations to Layla

It's been a good couple of months for the cheerleading competitors in the Nation. Following on from last month's report, Layla Serafinchin competed in the Cheerific Western Cheer Challenge in Morinville. Her team, from the Norfort Cheerleading Association, took home the Gold in the Under 12 Competitive Level 1 category and, as you can see from the pictures, it was a proud moment for both Layla and her team. Well done Layla. Onward and upward.



Fort McKay community members shine at the RARA Awards

The Regional Aboriginal Recognition Awards (RARA) were held at the Shell Grand Ballroom at McDonald Island Park on Saturday the 1st of March 2025. Over 350 attendees were on hand to honour the recipients, and Fort McKay band and community members featured prominently.

Trace Quintal was recognized as Entrepreneur of the year and was delighted to be among the winners. "I am deeply honoured to be named

Indigenous Entrepreneur of the Year 2025 by the RARA Awards in Fort McMurray. But this award is bigger than me—it is a reflection of our people, our resilience, and the vision we carry forward for future generations."

Mikeela Cooper was also honoured as the Outstanding Adult Student. She is currently in her final year of a Bachelor of Education degree at the University of Alberta specializing in early education. Future plans include a master's

in education, and ultimately she wants to come back to Fort McKay and work in and for the community. "Thanks to the Nation for giving me the opportunity to pursue my aspirations. It is an honour to be recognized by RARA, and I hope to be back home one day, when I have finished my studies."

There were also junior achievement awards for Felix Faichney Junior and Benjamin Laboucan, son of Senior Community Peace



Back row left: Sophie Powder and Chief Raymond Powder who picked up the award for Trapper of the Year for Councillor David Bouchi Achievement award. Front row second from right is Benjamin Laboucan who also got a Junior Achievement Award. Inset picture is Mikeela Cooper

FORT MCKAY MEMBERS NEWS

Officer Darrel Laboucan. Congratulations to both of them.

Last, but by no means least, Councillor David Bouchier was recognized as Trapper of the year. As he was unable to attend the event due to a prior commitment, the award was received on his behalf by Chief Raymond Powder.

A final word from Trace Quintal best summarizes what RARA has been achieving so successfully for the past 37 years. "Never stop pushing forward. We come from warriors, from leaders, from people who never gave up. Now it is our turn to build,



FMFN Member Trace Quintal with Angela Maxson, Director for NAABA, who presented Trace with his award.

create, and rise together." Well said, Congratulations to all the winners, and thank you to the organizers for this great event.



er. Front row, second from left is Felix Faichney Junior who received the Junior
eela Cooper with her Outstanding Adult Student Award.

FORT MCKAY CULTURAL PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

DANCER AND DRUMMER PERFORMANCES

- Traditional Healing Assistance
- Round Dance / Dene Dance
- Cultural Workshops
- Moose Lake Camps & Events
- Casual employment Opportunities

CREE & DENE CLASSES

Every Tuesday Cree class on Zoom.

Every Wednesday Dene class on Zoom.

To register, contact culture@fortmckay.com

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
Fort McKay First Nation
Cultural Advisor
780-215-1458
culture@fortmckay.com



Weekly Elders' Bingo celebrates Valentine's Day

There's a fierce but friendly competition every week in Fort McKay, but you have to be an Elder to take part. Every Thursday, the Elders Day Centre plays host to Lunch and Bingo, and there can be as many as twenty players in the game.

Bingo is a popular game among the Elders as well as the rest of the community. It's a chance to socialize with friends,

as well as break bread together. And everyone likes winning, don't they?

The Bingo Lunch event takes place every Thursday from noon to 3pm at the Elders Day Centre. To mark Valentine's Day, there was a special edition of the Weekly Bingo. The Centre was decked out in red and with balloons and decorations, celebrating a beautiful day for these beautiful people.



Northern Spirits getting ready for a big year

The Northern Spirits are already hard at work, getting ready for the 2025 season. They have been using the indoor synthetic grass and facilities at MacDonald Island in preparation for what could turn out to be a big year for them. There are 25 players in the squad for the season, and if form follows history the girls will continue playing exciting, fun football throughout the year.

Make a note, football fans and families. One big event to watch out for is the league Jamboree. There are five teams in the Northern Division and another five in the South, but for the Jamboree all 10 teams will be on show. The Jamboree will be in Red Deer on April 5th and we will post updates on Facebook, as well as here in the Red River Current, as and when we know more.

Meanwhile, enjoy these pictures, and get ready for the season.



Sweetheart Round Dance

After a week of events and meals to celebrate the love that is memorialized by Valentine's Day, the community celebrations culminated in the Sweetheart Round Dance on Friday, February 14th. The Band Hall was decorated in the traditional Valentine colours of red and white, and many of the guests dressed for the occasion as well. As the doors opened at 4:30 pm, the celebrations began with a pipe ceremony, followed by a welcome speech and prayer before the main event of the evening, the Round Dance.

Congratulations to the team who put it all together. It was another successful event. Roll on Valentine's Day 2026.



COMMUNITY EVENTS NEWS



Cowboys overrun by Fort McKay Braves



Pictured left to right: Fort McMurray Cowboys captain Steven Hynes, Councillor Bobby Shott, Chief Raymond Powder, Councillor Crystal McDonald, and Fort McKay Braves captain Shay Laurent.

Locally it is the rivalry to end all rivalries, and if the three-game series held at the end of February was anything to go by, this winter classic may become an annual event worth putting in your diaries now.

The Oil Sands Series between the Fort McMurray Cowboys and the Fort McKay Braves went to game three before the Braves ran out winners,

in OT, after being down at the beginning of the third. More on that down below.

Game one, held on Thursday the 27th of February (all games were at the Fort McKay Arena) was an easy enough win for the Braves, who ran out 11-5 on top. However, any hopes that the series would be done and dusted by game two went out the window rather quickly



FORT MCKAY SPORTS NEWS



during Saturday's game two, when the Cowboys bounced back to edge a much closer match 5-3.

On to the final night and the Braves found themselves 5-2 down going into the final period on Sunday evening. This was the Braves finest period of play as they fought back to tie the game with less than a minute on the clock, rounding out the evening with a second minute sudden death OT winner.

The series was an enormous success for the community, with the crowds getting bigger every evening until on Sunday there were over two hundred in the arena, creating an atmosphere that bounced off the rafters.

Codie Pedersen was the MVP for game one, with Shay Laurent taking the honours for game two and Jeff Martens in game three.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Day	Date	Event	Details
Every Mon	March 3 to March 31	Drop in Workout at the Youth Centre 4:30pm - 9pm	Ages 12-18. Contact Dylan at 780-799-2406
Every Tues	March 4 to March 25	AA Support Group, every Tuesday at the Family Support Centre	8:30pm - 10pm, Doors Open at 8pm
Every Tues	March 4 to March 25	Cree Online Classes, 6pm - 7:30pm, Instructor Edith Orr	Register through Audrey at culture@fortmckay.com
Every Tues	March 4 to March 25	Youth Sports, 5:30pm - 7pm at Elsie Fabian School	Contact Katara, 780-972-9810
Every Wed	March 5 to March 26	Dene Online Classes, 6pm - 7:30pm, Instructor Janette Flett-Jones	Register through Audrey at culture@fortmckay.com
Every Wed	March 5 to March 26	Light Exercise Program - Rest, Stretch and Relax, 1pm	Transport Provided. Call Trinda 780-215-0478
Every Thur	March 6 to March 27	Open Gym at the School Gym - Enter through the Side Door	7:15pm - 9:15pm Contact Number is 780-215-5276
Mon & Wed	March 3 to March 26	Influenza and Covid Vaccines in the Health Centre	Call 780-828-4229 for information
Every Thurs	March 6 to March 27	Circle of Security, every Thursday at the Family Support Centre	6pm - 7pm, contact Stephanie Dyck at 780-215-3709
Every Fri	March 7 to March 28	NA Support Group, every Friday at the Family Support Centre	8pm - 9pm, Doors Open at 7:30pm
Sat	March 15 & March 29	Skiing-Snowboarding Program for Youth aged 9-17 years	Contact Julia at 780-838-1812 or Kory at 780-828-4312 for more details.



A provincial non-profit organization dedicate to building strong, vibrant communities to enable youth on their path to rewarding careers.



CO-OP application deadline is April 3rd, 2025.

CAREERS CO-OP Apprenticeship Program

The CO-OP program is available for youth aged 18-25 who are interested in starting their apprenticeship in the trades. Interested candidates must attend a mandatory information session. You can attend one of the sessions outlined below in Fort McMurray or we can bring the presentation to your community. To register for an information session, please contact Anika Campbell by phone – 647-220-2052 or by email coopdocuments@nextgen.org.

Date	Time
March 4, 2025	10:00am
March 6, 2025	6:00pm