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Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)
Grand Conseil des Cris (Eeyou Istchee)

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Cree Nation Government
Gouvernement de la Nation Crie

Whapmagoostui
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Chisasibi
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Wemindji
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Eastmain
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Nemaska
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Waswanipi
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PRESS RELEASE

Cree Nation Government announces recipients of the newly established Acts of Service Award recognizing contribution and service to the Cree Nation

WASKAGANISH, EEYOU ISTCHEE (September 1, 2022) – The Cree Nation Government is proud to announce the recipients of the first edition of the Acts of Service Award in recognition of service, personal contributions, volunteerism, or outstanding performance. Intended to be presented annually, this award to highlight significant contributions by Cree persons that lead to the betterment of their communities and nation is an important way to honour and celebrate members of the Cree Nation that have distinguished themselves with their accomplishments and dedication.

Please join us in celebrating the first three (3) recipients of Cree Nation Government Acts of Service Medal;

Robbie Matthew, Chisasibi – Born in 1934 and now 87 years old, Robbie Matthew has dedicated his life to protecting and strengthening the Cree way of life. He grew up and spent much of his adult life on the land. He married Sally Neacappo in 1957. Robbie and Sally influenced generations of youth to trust and believe in their own culture. Over several decades, as part of Cree Programs for the Cree School Board, the couple brought youth to the trapline to teach them traditional skills. As former Chief of Chisasibi, president of the Cree Trappers' Association and advisor to the Cree Nation Youth Council and the Cree Health Board, he has also been a positive role model in Cree affairs, more recently providing guidance and support to regional organizations through the Nishiyuu Council of Elders.

Bill Namagoose, Waskaganish – Since 1988, Bill Namagoose has been the Executive Director of the Cree Nation Government. Prior to this, he served as Chief of Waskaganish after a number of years as the Director of Operations. His main focus has always been and continues to be about the promotion and protection of our Cree rights and environmental protection. His belief in these principles were instrumental to stopping the Great Whale Project. He was recently awarded an honorary doctor of law degree from Carleton University for his contributions to the Cree Nation. After over 40 years of service to the Cree Nation, Bill will be retiring leaving a legacy of defending our rights and interests that have helped shape our communities and nation as we know them today.

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Late Alice Shecapio (1968-2021), Waskaganish – For over 25 years, Alice served the Cree Nation of Waskaganish in a number of functions but primarily in the accounting department. She was a member of many local associations and committees and loved volunteering whether to help fundraise or coach local sports teams. A healthy active lifestyle was important for Alice. Since 2020, she had joined the Starlites cycling/walking/skiing/snowshoeing club and had accumulated a 1,500km distance. Alice is greatly missed by her family, friends, and community members. Her daughter Ardelle is receiving the Acts of Service Medal on behalf of her mother, Alice.

The Cree Nation Government will be providing further information on the criteria to be eligible and how to nominate a person who deserves recognition for the 2023 edition of the Acts of Service Award. We look forward to learning about the many people across our territory who contribute their time and energy to help make Eeyou Istchee a better place for everyone while keeping our culture and language alive.

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