



NEWSLETTER

Summer 2017

We would like to thank all of our Members that joined our 16th Annual General Assembly.

We hope that you enjoyed your time and are ready for your summer tourist season. At this year's AGM the majority voted for the 17th Annual General Assembly to be held in Nemaska, Quebec from July 17 to 19, 2018.

WHAT'S NEW!

The Power of Aboriginal Tourism was one of the themes during the Secretariat to the Cree Nation Abitibi-Temiscamingue Economic Alliance's Annual Conference entitled "Looking Ahead Together" that was held in Mistissini June 6-7. COTA was pleased to help coordinate the tourism panel that included Keith Henry, President and CEO of the Aboriginal Tourism Association of Canada (ATAC), Martin Soucy, the of the and Benoit Deshaies, from Investissement Quebec.

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REGIONAL

COTA Wins Partnership Award

COTA received the 2016 Partnership Prize awarded by Aventure Écotourisme Quebec (AEQ) for exceptional leadership in partnering with AEQ and other tourism organizations. We would like to thank our partners at Tourisme Baie-James and Tourism Eeyou Istchee and our members in the Cree communities of Eeyou Istchee.



PROJECTS DEVELOPMENT

MARKETING – TRADE SHOWS

The marketing team has been busy this spring. Starting in January, Victoria Crowe, EIT's Marketing Agent, and Roch Ancil, the Coordinator of COTA's Destination Management Company, attended the Travel & Adventure Show in Washington, DC., where they promoted the Eeyou Istchee Baie-James Region. Victoria made a presentation about Eeyou Istchee Baie-James to encourage travelers to visit our region.



Photos - Roch Ancil

EYYOU ISTCHEE TOURISM



We also have to thank two team members who have contributed to the success of COTA and EIT and who have decided to move on to new employment opportunities. The first is Dorothy Stewart who was our Coordinator of Communications and Members Services. Her enthusiasm and passion helped motivate and inspire Cree entrepreneurs to pursue their projects. The second is Steven Pomerleau, our Marketing Director, who we shared with Tourisme Baie-James. His education and experience in marketing was an asset for the region. He and the marketing team were very successful at raising the awareness of Eeyou Istchee Baie-James as a tourist destination.



ABOUT THE TEAM

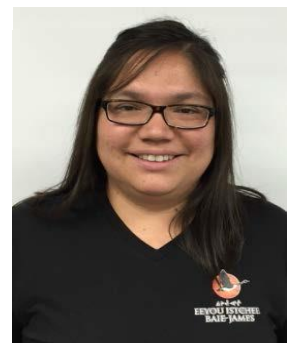
Over the past year, several staff members have won recognition for their long service to COTA.

Thank you for all your hard work and dedication.



Robin McGinley, Executive Director celebrated fifteen years with COTA last spring. She was hired as a Tourism Advisor on April 1, 2001, and was later offered the full-time position as Executive Director

Angel Mianscum, our Digital Animator, celebrated ten years with COTA in September 2016



Timothy Wapachee celebrated five years with COTA in November, 2016. He is our Bookkeeper and Corporate Secretary.

NEW OF THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

A YEAR IN REVIEW: We wanted to highlight all of the achievements that have been done in the past year or so. We are so proud of all of the efforts made by the various entrepreneurs and communities. We hope that they will serve as inspiration for future Cree entrepreneurs and communities.

Nuuchimi Wiinuu

In April of 2016, Nuuchimi Wiinuu officially opened for business in Ouje-Bougoumou. Owners, David and Anna Bosum, share their intimate knowledge of nature and of our ancestors' Cree way of life. They offer lodgings in traditional dwellings, a unique experience in the region. In the winter, their guests can go snowshoeing and learn about ice fishing, trapping, and traditional craft techniques. In the summer, visitors can go hiking and canoeing.



Grand Opening of Nuuhchimi Wiinuu, April 2016



Canoeing at Nuuhchimi Wiinuu

The Eneyaauhkaat Lodge

In October of 2016, the Eneyaauhkaat Lodge opened in Eastmain. The hotel sits on the shores of the Eastmain River and offers stunning views of the sunset and sunrise. This two-story hotel has twenty rooms, which include handicap access. It has three conference rooms, a casino and a restaurant.



Lobby of the Eneyaauhkaat Lodge, Eastmain - Niels Jensen



The Eneyaauhkaat Lodge overlooks the Eastmain River. - Niels Jensen



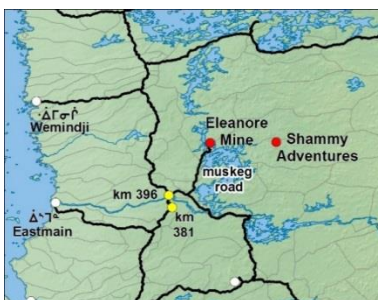
Lobby of the Eneyaauhkaat Lodge, Eastmain - Niels Jensen

Shammy Adventures

Angus Mayappo, Jr. and Stephanie Georgekish, hosted the grand opening of their ecotourism business, Shammy Adventures, last summer. Shammy Adventures is located in a remote setting on the Mayappo family's ancestral hunting territory, where visitors can enjoy outdoor activities, such as canoeing and snowshoeing. Angus and Stephanie have already welcomed guests from as far away as Germany and New Zealand. We wish them much success!



Photo by Mathieu Dupuis



Map by John Bishop - CNG

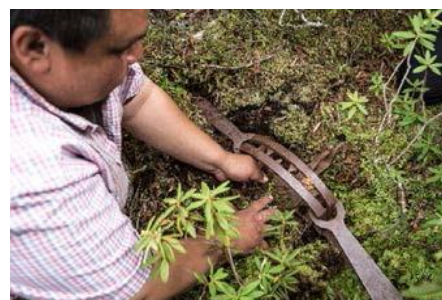


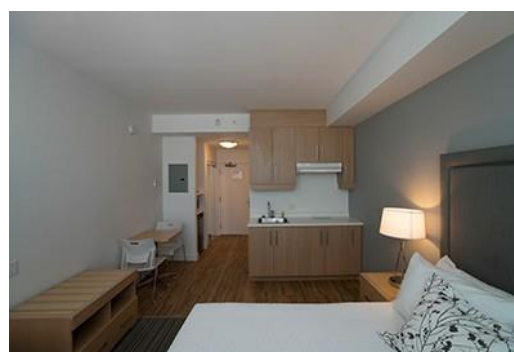
Photo by Mathieu Dupuis

Auberge Waastooskuun Inn

The Auberge Waastooskuun Inn, a forty-room hotel, opened in July of 2016 in Chisasibi. The hotel has three floors and offers two conference rooms, one of them with a star-gazing area on the upper level. The second floor includes a verandah for guests to enjoy in warm weather. The hotel provides trolleys at rooms, one of them with a star-gazing area on the upper level. The second floor includes a verandah for guests to enjoy in warm weather. The hotel provides trolleys at the entrance—especially handy for families or other guests travelling with numerous pieces of luggage. Every hotel room is equipped with a full bathroom, a small fridge, and a microwave oven. The hotel offers a continental breakfast for guests in a room on the ground floor. Plans are underway for an addition of a restaurant.



Auberge Waastooskuun Inn - Niels Jensen



Auberge Waastooskuun Inn room - Niels Jensen

Auberge Maanitaaukimikw

Louie-Rene Kanatewat recently celebrated the first anniversary of his nine-room bed-and- breakfast establishment in Chisasibi, overlooking the La Grande Rive. Since opening his doors in January of 2016, Louie-Rene has welcomed a steady stream of Cree clients as well as business travellers and tourists from outside of Eeyou Istchee. "I have lots of Whapmagoostui people travelling this way," he explains, "They stay overnight, rest up, and then fly home the next day."



The view outside the Auberge Maanitaaukimikw - Louise Abbott



Maanitaaukimikw view from outside, Julie Simard

UPCOMING EVENTS

1. CANDO's Annual Conference
2. The 2017 International Aboriginal Tourism Conference, November 6-8, 2017 in Calgary, Alberta.



E.D. IN ACTION

Tourism Information and Reception

On November 24, 2016, the Cree-Jamesian joint committee held their third meeting in Lebel-sur-Quévillon. The discussions centered on future actions for the Eeyou Istchee Baie-James Regional Reception Strategy. While everyone was together, we had the official launch of the website **www.escapelikeneverbefore** **our website aimed at tourists**. Produced by Numerique.ca, the website is intuitive and interactive. The home page allows a visitor to see the range of tourist offerings in the region. The content is simplified for greater visual impact. Social networks are enhanced with a sharing tab and icons for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube accounts. It also has an interactive map that shows points of interest and attractions in the region, including cultural events, festivals, campgrounds, outfitters, restaurants, accommodations, and gas stations.



ARCTIC CIRCLE FORUM

The Arctic Circle convened its fourth forum in Quebec City from December 11-13, 2016. It was opened by Olafur Ragnar Grimsson, the chairman of the Arctic Circle and the former president of Iceland, and by Philippe Couillard, the premier of Quebec. The purpose of the forum was to hold discussions around sustainable development of northern regions, including northern Canada, Alaska, Greenland, Norway, and Finland. The province of Quebec presented the Plan Nord, with selected key players sharing their experience and expertise in the field of sustainability. Speakers consisted of ministers, lawmakers, indigenous leaders, and other representatives from economic development organizations, investment funds, and scientific institutes.



Robin McGinley, the Executive Director of COTA, explained: "The Arctic Circle forum was a good opportunity to reconnect with old colleagues and also to make new connections. The emphasis was on sustainable development, and many of the speakers stressed the need for communities in the Arctic to be involved in the development of the Arctic.

UPDATE FROM MEMBER SERVICES

The membership year of 2017-2018 begins on April 1, 2017. We encourage all our members to renew their membership so that they can continue to receive the benefits of being a member.



EXTERNAL INFORMATION

The thirteenth edition of the Business Exchange Day—the largest business networking event in the Cree Nation— took place in Val d'Or on November 30, 2016. It was hosted by the Secretariat of the Cree Nation Abitibi-Temiscamingue Economic Alliance. There were more than 250 participants; 171 businesses and organizations represented (small, medium and global); and more than 700

business meetings scheduled. A federal government representative announced a \$300,000 contribution in support of local economic development networks for the Secretariat for the next three years.

EIT's marketing agent, Victoria Crowe, was glad that she experienced "the great networking" at this large business event.



*Photos Business Exchange Day
Paul Brindamour*

COTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS (AGM 2017)

Titus Shecapio – President/Mistissini, Jamie Moses – Vice-President/Eastmain, Joey Blacksmith – Waswanipi, Isaac Masty – Whapmagoostui, Anderson Jolly – Nemaska, Chuck Matches – Wemindji, Jerry Rupert – Chisasibi, Ron Simard – Ouje-Bougoumou, Tim Whiskeychan – Waskaganish, Roderick Pachano – Elders' Council Representative, Janie Pachano – Elders' Council Representative, Dianne Ottereyes-Reid – CNG Representative

EIT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Titus Shecapio – President/Mistissini Representative, Jamie Moses – Vice-President/Eastmain Representative, Ron Simard – Ouje-Bougoumou Representative



Board of Directors Meeting June 7-9, 2017 at ACCI in Ouje-Bougoumou, Quebec

Left to right: Jamies Moses, Roderick Pachano, Janie Pachano, Dianne Ottereyes-Reid, Anna Bosum, Isaac Masty, Johnny Mark, Jerry Rupert, Joey Blacksmith, Ian Diamond, Titus Shecapio