

## Indigenous Day celebration in Millennium Park



By Kristena Schutt-Moore The largest Indigenous Day Celebration ever held in the Bancroft area took place at Millennium Park on Tuesday, June 21. The community was invited to come and enjoy the event. The celebration started at 6 a.m. with a sunrise ceremony with a light breakfast provided after around 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. The full ceremony and main events started at 11 a.m. with event organizer Diane Martin welcoming everyone saying, "We felt that it was really important, after COVID-19, for everyone's mental health, of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, to have a gathering and celebrate life." Traditional drumming and dances were performed and presentations and speeches were made by special guests, as a way of sharing the teachings and culture of Indigenous people. These guests included the Shawashgong Ikwe Singers, Big Drum Whispering Winds Singers and Dancers, Big Drum Whispering Woods (youth students and school drum and dancer), speaker Melanie Ross/Flies with the Hawk Indigenous Veteran, and singer Karen Warner. There were also several family and children activities put on by the Algonquin Inodewiziwin and Bancroft EarlyON Child and Family Centre including building bat boxes, playing Wigwas which is a birchbark triangle game and traditional graft, axe throwing, archery, a fish pond and soap carving. The Indigenous Day Celebration was put on in partnership between the Kijico Manito Madawuskarini Algonquin First Nations to bring this event to the community.