

Take Back the Night coming back Sept. 19



By Michael Riley

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Take Back the Night is returning on Sept. 19 this year at Millennium Park from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Sponsored by Maggie's Resource Centre, it will feature musical performances, art, and VIP speakers. It started as a worldwide movement to end and fight violence against women. Melissa St. Pierre, administrative manager at Maggie's, who is apprenticing with Kim McMunn to take on the executive director role, comments on this event. St. Pierre told Bancroft This Week on Aug. 30 that the planning for Take Back the Night is almost complete and they're just wrapping up a few loose ends. She says that every year, Maggie's tries to do something to acknowledge Take Back the Night. "The Take Back the Night movement was first started in the 1970s in response to women fearing going out alone at night. It started as a worldwide movement to end and fight violence against women. This event will symbolize a commitment to ending the epidemic of violence against women. It is a global mission to end all forms of violence, including sexual violence, stalking, gender harassment, and to support survivors in their healing journeys," she says. St. Pierre says they're hoping this year will attract more people, as last year they had under 100 people come by. She says that last year, the Shawashkong Singers and the youth from the Youth Hub attended last year as their guests and we reached out to them this year to do the same. "We are beyond excited to have them again. The Revelins are new this year. We are so grateful that they are donating their time for this event. Our Tamarack facilitator Monica [Sears] reached out to The Revelins," she says. Karen Lemieux from The Revelins says her all women group are very excited about the event. "We feel it is so important to bring awareness to the issue of domestic and non-domestic violence against women, children and men. We look forward to playing our music and are thankful for Maggie's Resource Centre's hard work," she says. There will also be several VIP speakers at the event, according to St. Pierre, including herself, Noreen Tinney, Shawashkong Singer and Algonquin Inodewiziwin cultural coordinator, Andra Kauffelt, general manager with the Town of Bancroft, Cheryl Easton, board chair with Maggie's, and Sears, Tamarack program facilitator and women's support worker at Maggie's. St. Pierre told Bancroft This Week that they have youth from the Youth Hub making signs for the event and they will be a big presence for them. "There will also be a table if you would like to paint an affirmation stone," she says. "Come and join us for this free event, open to all!"