

NEW-Ontario Electricity Support Program- NEW

Did you know?

If you are a customer of an electricity utility and in a lower-income home, you may qualify for a reduction on your electricity bill through the Ontario Electricity Support Program (OESP). The amount of the credit you receive depends on two factors: 1) How many people live in your home; and 2) Your combined household income. For example, a home with four people and an annual income of \$37,000 will receive an on-bill credit of \$34 each month.

What to do...

Gather up the following: 1) Your electricity bill; 2) Birthdates and names of all residents in your home as registered with the Canada Revenue Agency; 3) Social Insurance Numbers, Individual Tax Numbers, or temporary taxation numbers for residents over the age of 16

Visit our website: OntarioElectricitySupport.ca

Complete the online application (you will see it on the home page). Print and sign the consent form and mail it to the address provided on our website. If you require help or more information about this government program, please contact Jackie Peters at the Band Office.

Alternative Education Programming



During the winter months, LDMLFN offered Cultural Education Programming to visiting educational groups. Bimose High School students from Kenora participated in a six (6) day cultural immersion program held at the community cultural complex. The group, led by cultural resource persons, Esther Chung and Barb Osadec, made hand drums, learned drum songs, joined in drum ceremony, and participated in land-based activities. This program is rooted in Indigenous knowledge and culture and has been well received. Demand continues to grow! For more information on the program please contact Rikka Berkan, Education Program Officer at rikkaberkan@tbaytel.net.

NEZAADIKAANG NEWS

Towards a healthy and informed community

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Hundreds Gather at Annual Christmas Feast

Once again, the annual Lac des Mille Lacs First Nation Christmas Gathering was a huge success—drawing the greatest number of Band and community members that we have had since its inception!

Families and invited guests came together at the Victoria Inn in Thunder Bay, Ontario on Sunday December 6, 2015. The evening opened with drumming and prayers.

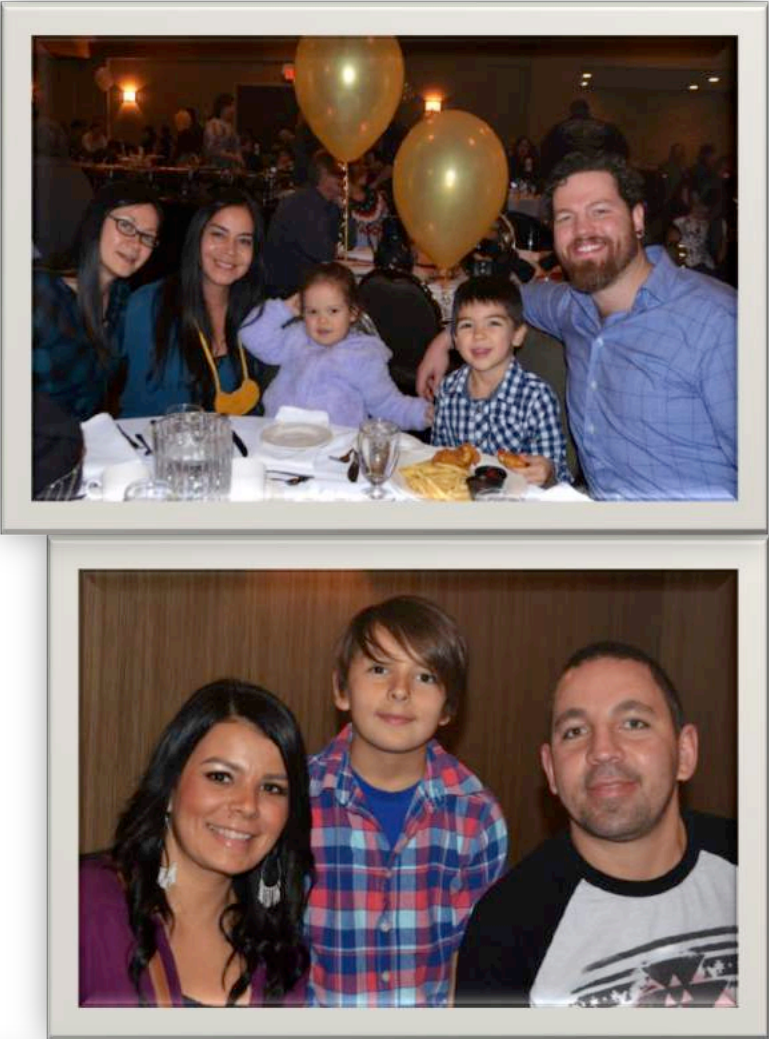
After starting the night out in a good way, our families were invited to a delicious feast prepared by the hotel staff.

The evening was emceed by Thunder Bay's own Nathan Moses, who continues to assist Lac des Mille Lacs in its ongoing work towards re-building a unified and healthy community.

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"It was wonderful to see so many of our families come together to celebrate the holiday season," said Chief White-cloud. "Every year we have more and more people in attendance. This really speaks to a collective commitment to getting to know one another better and helping build positive relationships, which really is the backbone of a healthy and prosperous community."

LDMLFN family and community drums were in attendance to share the gift of song and drum. Community members shared in singing our Anishinabe songs, which are powerful medicines for our families. Of course the evening wouldn't have been complete without the yearly visit from Santa Claus, who presented our Elders in attendance with a Christmas gift on behalf of the community.



LDMLFN Annual Health Fair

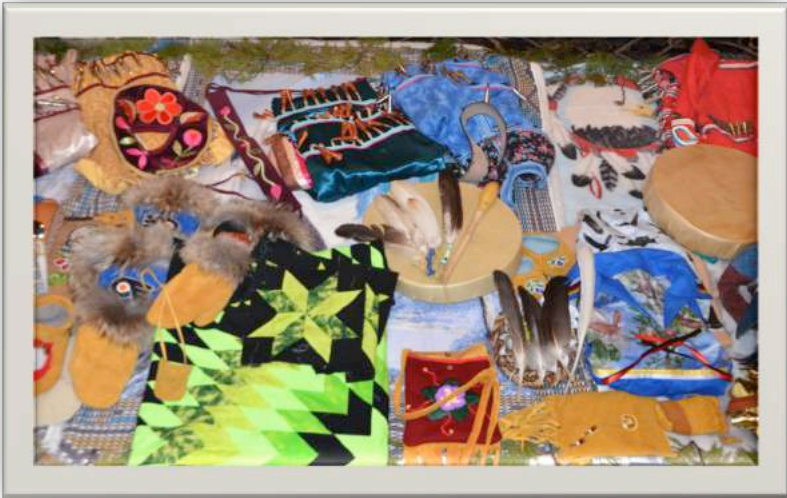
LDMLFN held its annual health fair on Saturday, March 19th at the Valhalla Inn. This year the fair focused on Diabetes and Cancer Screening/Prevention. Highlights of the event included the Dental Hygienist display/table that featured an in-mouth dental camera and the Registered Nurse and Diabetes Educator that provided blood glucose and blood pressure screenings. Please note the Dilico Family Health Team is currently accepting new patients. Community members in need of a physician can call Marcia Pedri at the Band Office. Miigwetch to all of our Elders, participants and our community partners!



Upcoming Event! Don't Forget to Register!

The Lakehead Shrine Circus is coming to the Fort William Gardens on May 13 and 14, 2016. If you and your child/children would like to attend this event, please contact Curtis Primeau at your earliest convenience.

Sewing Spirits Program Feast



The Sewing Spirits program celebrated the conclusion of its fifth year with a feast held in December at the Victoria Inn in Thunder Bay, Ontario.

"This year we had about 40 regular participants and it was our biggest year yet," said Marcia Pedri, LDMLFN Health Director. "It is really amazing to see how much people have learned and the beautiful work they have produced."

Program participants and their family members feasted their items under the spiritual guidance of Elder Freda Macdonald. The Medicine Wheel Spirit Singers led the group in song along with several women from LDMLFN.



Celebrating our Community Events!

In working towards our goal of assisting our members in developing healthy and positive relationships and lifestyles, LDMLFN continues to offer fun activities and events for people of all ages!

In January a community bowling night was held at Mario's Bowl with many families signed up to "show off" their bowling skills!

Later in February, a special Valentine's Day activity was organized for our couples—both young and old!

Over 30 couples signed up to attend a Valentine's Buffet dinner at the Victoria Inn followed by the Second City Improv All-Star Comedy Show. It is important for couples to spend time together and look after their relationships because happy and healthy partners lead to happy and healthy families. In March, several activities were provided for children, youth and their family members during the week of March Break. These events continue to grow each year, which is a testament to our collaborative commitment to strengthening our community as we move forward in a good way!



LDMLFN Successful in Attaining over \$500,000 in Infrastructure Funding

In March, Councillor Tracy Morrison together with the Honourable Patricia A. Hajdu, Minister of Status of Women and the Honourable Michael Gravelle, Ontario Minister of Northern Development and Mines, announced that Lac des Mille Lacs First Nation will receive \$531,234 in infrastructure funding. The funding is for a new solar-powered electric micro-grid that will reduce the First Nation's reliance on diesel and help lower greenhouse gas emissions. It is one of 13 local infrastructure projects in communities across Ontario to receive a share of \$10 million in joint funding from the Governments of Canada and Ontario through the Small Communities Fund.



Holiday Fun for Our Children and Youth

Once again, the annual LDMLFN "Afternoon with Santa" drew a record number of children and families. This year's event featured a variety of games, crafts and Fun contests. A light luncheon was provided and each child in Attendance received a special gift from Santa Claus himself!

Congratulations to Phoebe Kemp, winner of the Christmas Tree decorating contest!



From Our Community Kitchen

In mid-January a Community Kitchen was held. With the help of Elders, participants learned how to prepare and cook traditional foods including moose stew, baked bannock and wild rice. All those who attend not only learn how to improve their cooking skills, but also get to take home delicious and healthy food to share with their families and loved ones.



From the Office of Chief and Council

Boozhoo to our Membership and Families! We hope that all of our families are in good health and are keeping warm during these colder months! Spring is just around the corner and we have had very busy and productive months since our last newsletter. At this time, we would like to provide key updates to our membership.

Forestry

Chief and Council are excited to inform the membership that Dallan Forestry LP (a company owned in partnership with LDMLFN, Nigigoonsiminikaaning First Nation and Dale Levesque) has renewed a six (6) year contract with Resolute Forest Products to provide mill yard services at the Fort William Sawmill site location. Dallan Forestry presently has contracts with Resolute Forest Products to provide mill yard services at the Fort William Sawmill, Thunder Bay Pulp Mill, Atikokan Sawmill, and Ignace Sawmill sites. Dallan Forestry is very proud of the fact that 43% of its employees are First Nation Band Members. 14 LDMLFN band and community members are presently employed with Dallan Forestry and LDMLFN Chief and Council are confident that this number will continue to grow as more of our members submit applications for employment. Also, Dallan LP is currently seeking Heavy Equipment Operators for its Ignace and Atikokan sawmills. Community members are welcome to submit a resume to b.charbonneau@dallanforestry.ca.

Please note that this news is aligned with LDMLFN's commitment to identifying and pursuing new economic opportunities as well as establishing a collaborative process with respect to forest management planning. It is also consistent with the objectives outlined in our Community Economic Development Plan because identifying and engaging in relationships with governments, industry, neighbouring communities, and First Nations is key to the economic health of our community.

To access the Community Economic Development Plan community members are encouraged to visit:

<http://lacdesmillelacsfirstnation.ca/assets/uploads/Banners/LDMLFN%20Economic%20Development%20Strategic%20Plan%20FINAL.pdf>

Community Land Base

We are pleased that our community members have been able to utilize the community cultural complex during the winter months! Families continue to make the effort of spending time out on the land despite the harsher weather conditions.

At this time, we would also like to inform our membership that we are still in the process of developing a Community Housing Policy to outline the process and procedures of lot allocation and other housing matters.

From the Office of Chief and Council (continued)

Flood Claim Update

After much lobbying with numerous Government Ministries, Ministers, and INAC officials, **we are very pleased to announce that both Canada and Ontario have finally presented a global offer for settlement of our Flooding Claim!** It is extremely important that the membership understands that the acceptance of the Flood Claim settlement package can and will only be decided by a vote of the membership. It is the opinion of Chief, Council and the entire Team that the proposed numbers are fair, and while we could never fully be compensated for our losses; the people have suffered long enough and wish to see a settlement.

Due to our Negotiations Protocol regarding Confidentiality, we currently are not at liberty to reveal the proposed compensation numbers. This will be presented to the membership in a Referendum package and discussed at our AGM. Our Negotiation team will be in attendance so that they can give their expert opinion and answer any questions regarding the settlement at that time. We are currently focusing our efforts on reaching consensus with both governments on the "Easement Agreement" and "Settlement Agreement" to bring the negotiations to a close.

We are pleased to report that the First Nation and Province have worked on and negotiated an "Easement Agreement." This has now been sent to Canada for their acceptance. We anticipate a favourable response within the next few weeks.

This brings us to the drafting of the "Settlement Agreement," which we hope to have finalized sometime during the month of May 2016. This is the last remaining document to be agreed upon before we can go to Referendum. We are hopeful and aiming to be able to go to Referendum in June 2016.

It is of the utmost importance that those registered band members, who are 18 years of age and older, make certain of the following:

1. The Band Administration Office has your current and correct mailing address (Note: Please contact Honey Chicago - Receptionist, at your earliest opportunity regarding any address changes or to ensure your address is correct on our list at 807-622-9835 ext 221.)
2. Members must have a current bank account, opened in their name.

Chief and Council thank you for your continued support and patience. It has been a very long, tiring process, which has consumed much of our efforts. It is reasonable to say that we hope and look forward to seeing closure this summer as we continue on with the healing of our people and Nation. ***Chi Miigwetch.*** *N.B. A more detailed communiqué was distributed to Band Members at the end of March via mail. It is also available on the community website at <http://lacdesmillelacsfirstnation.ca/news/view/important-flood-claim-update>*