

# BINGWI NEYAASHI ANISHINAABEK (SAND POINT FIRST NATION) COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER AND UPDATE



## MESSAGE FROM CHIEF AND COUNCIL

NEWSLETTER - WINTER 2014



Greetings and Happy Holidays to the Members of Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek! As we approach the Christmas Holidays, BNA's Chief and Council wanted to re-cap some of the highlights from this year, and to set out some of the plans for 2015.

On the Economic Development Front, we continue to pursue our many Projects and initiatives, both on and off-reserve. Some of these Projects - hydroelectric, forestry, aggregates, etc. - once operational, will provide significant employment and contracting opportunities for members, and would generate revenue that our community desperately needs in order to continue with our on-reserve developments. The projects that BNA and its economic development arm, Papasay, pursue are meant to eventually achieve these goals, but they are not without their difficulties and complications, and they require time and patience. In the new year, BNA will be completing its Economic Development Strategy for the next several years. We will ensure that there are plenty of opportunities for members to provide input into BNA's Strategy, and guide our way forward into the future. As always, we strongly encourage the participation of our members in the development of our plans. They are the building blocks of our community, and will ensure we continue to move our First Nation forward. In the meantime, if you have any questions about any of our Projects or developments, please speak with Jordan Hatton, BNA's new Director of Economic Development. He would be happy to help.



We also continue to develop the reserve lands. With the heavy equipment course that we held this year, we were able to not only train 6 BNA members and obtain equipment for use on and off-reserve, but we were able to work on the widening and ditching of the main community road. We also had all of the roads within the community surveyed, along with our business and new housing sections. We have nearly completed the surveying of the entire reserve, which will allow for organized development going forward. And we can finally announce that following a positive meeting between the Chief and our funders this week, we will be moving ahead with the Housing Committee work starting in the new year. This Committee, along with our MRP (Jeremy), Membership (Jeff), and Lands Committees (Celine), will form the laws and customs for our community development, and will ensure that the membership is in the driver seat going forward.

Our Health Department continued to deliver amazing and informative programming throughout the past year. From the BNA Powwow and Aboriginal Day celebrations, to workshops on health and wellbeing and direct day-to-day support to members, our Director of Health, Edna Hodgkinson, has continued to serve our membership and community through exciting and dynamic programs. And through our Cultural Coordinator, Audrey Mandula, BNA's reserve has seen its cultural landscape change with the additions of a community Teepee and Healing Gardens.

Chief and Council are proud of its staff and all of its accomplishments throughout this past year. 2015 will see the continued pursuit of on-going Projects as well as new initiatives. With on-going effort to begin operations in our new sawmill, and the commencement of land management under the BNA Land Code, 2015 will not be without its challenges. However, by working together with our neighbouring First Nations, all levels of government and industry, BNA will continue to ensure that our community moves ahead, and that it has the necessary resources to do so. We are confident that with our small but dedicated staff and community membership, we will succeed.

Miigwetch and Merry Christmas to all BNA Members - Chief Laura Airns and Council

## A Message from Jordan Hatton, BNA's Director of Economic Development

Greetings BNA members! Many of you know me already from my role as Director of Lands and Resources. While Chief and Council will be hiring for the new Lands Manager Position which will oversee the implementation of the Land Code, I will continue to manage BNA's off-reserve projects, as well as work with the Papasay and Wawasum Board of Directors on their respective projects and partnership developments. I am very accessible, and can be reached at the office (807-623-2724), on my cell (807-472-9619) or by email (jhatton@bnafn.ca) at anytime. I look forward to continue working with you on these exiting developments, as they have the potential to provide jobs and training opportunities for BNA members, as well as significant revenue generation for reserve development. If you have any question or concerns, please do not hesitate to get a hold of me. Merry Christmas! - Jordan

### THE PAPASAY VALUE-ADDED SAWMILL PROJECT

During the AANDC Land Designation Vote on August 2013, the members of BNA overwhelmingly approved the Value-Added Sawmill Project. This released the remaining funds from the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation and FedNor to erect the facility. Over the winter and spring of 2014, Burmet proceeded with the construction of the sawmill, installing the overhead and man doors and electri-fying the building. Then, once the facility was completed this fall, we moved our Woodmizer equipment - consisting of 2 portable saws and an edger - down to the site. We now are faced with the challenge of making the Sawmill operation a success.



The first step is the re-vamping of the Sawmill Business Plan. BNA and Papasay submitted a joint proposal to the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs for the completion of a new Business Plan which will encompass the vision of a smaller, community Sawmill, rather than one of a larger, assembly-style Sawmill. Part of this re-vamp will include re-looking at the marketing associated with the Sawmill, and looking for distributors to purchase our product once it is fabricated in the Sawmill. If the proposal is accepted, BNA will move ahead with hiring a consultant to prepare this plan, and have it completed by March 31st, 2015.

Next, prior to the commencement of operations, Papasay will need to identify and train members on the equipment. This step will come with a financial cost, so we will need to seek out funding in order to make this training a reality. BNA will try and work through AETS or other training partners in order to try and find opportunities. Chief and Council will attempt to hire BNA members for the operation of the Sawmill, and members will receive priority.

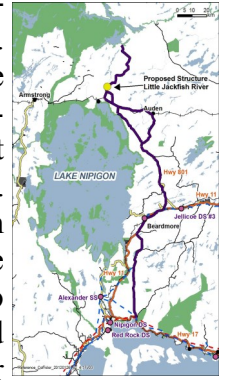
Finally, once we have our plan, our purchasers lines up, and our workers trained, we will be in a position where we



can commence operations. There is significant work still to do, and lots of decisions still need to be made regarding the strategic direction that Papasay will need to take in order to ensure that our operation is a success. However, we are confident that with the appropriate level of planning and commitment to this Project, that we can make it a success for our members and for the region as a whole. We thank the membership for their continued patience as we have carried this Project forward over the years, and hope that once we are operational, we will be able to ensure that the employment and associated opportunities that a Project of this nature can provide become a reality.

# WAASKIINAYSAY ZIIBI INC. UPDATE

In March 2014, the Chiefs and Councillors of the 4 Lake Nipigon First Nations still a part of WZI - BNA, AZA, RRIB and Whitesand - received notification that the 78MW Little Jackfish River Hydroelectric Project north of Lake Nipigon was going into deferral due to a lack of power requirement in the north. This means that OPG can no longer spend any money on LJF in order to not accrue interest on the Project. This was not the news that BNA was looking to hear. It was our hope that OPG would continue to work on the Environmental Assessment, and that the results would dictate whether or not this was a project that the First Nations around Lake Nipigon were interested in pursuing with OPG. Nevertheless, the WZI Board of Directors continues to lobby for a proposed transmission line on the east side of Lake Nipigon in the hopes of powering up the Greenstone region (picture on the right). Rather than run up to the Little Jackfish, this line would continue along Hwy 11 to Geraldton. This line would be owned by BNA and its Lake Nipigon First Nation neighbours, and would be required for potential future projects, such as TransCanada's Energy East Project, Premier Gold's Hardrock, and eventually the Ring of Fire. WZI continues to work with the Ontario Power Authority on their plans for the region, and pushing the viability of this transmission solution for both industry and First Nations alike.



**TRAINING** WZI also held 2 major training programs this year - HEO and Construction Craft - which saw 10 BNA members receive training. These courses are described below.

## HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATOR TRAINING

Starting on September 2nd, BNA began hosting a 12-week Heavy Equipment Operator (HEO) course on its reserve lands. With funds provided through WZI, BNA hired the Confederation College to undertake the training, which included Common-Core safety training, theoretical components, and on-machine training. Six BNA members and six members from the Red Rock Indian Band participated in the training, with an identical course with six AZA and six Whitesand FN members being held at the same time at Partridge Lake. At the end of the program, an evaluator with certification from the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities spent two days with the students evaluating them on the machine of their choice, and proving their competencies on the machines. Along with the Certificate of Completion, the evaluation will provide trainees with one more tool as they pursue employment opportunities throughout the region. All 6 BNA members passed the training course and received a certificate of completion for their file.

Along with having 6 BNA members trained-up in Heavy Equipment Operation, this training opportunity had some other benefits for BNA and Papasay. Firstly, with the funding, we were able to fix-up some cracks in the excavator undercarriage, purchase a dozer and backhoe (used, but carefully inspected), and rent a 4th piece - a grader - off of Miikana Contracting, a member-owned business, for the duration of the training. These 3 pieces of equipment - the excavator, the dozer, and the backhoe - will be of tremendous use to BNA for the future development of the community, as well as a significant generator of revenue for the First Nation well into the future. Secondly, through this course, BNA was able to enhance the community road from the highway almost to the gatehouse. This included several loads of quality aggregate material which solidified the base of the road. BNA will continue with this road work next spring, utilizing our trainees and our equipment.



Congratulations to the HEO Grads!

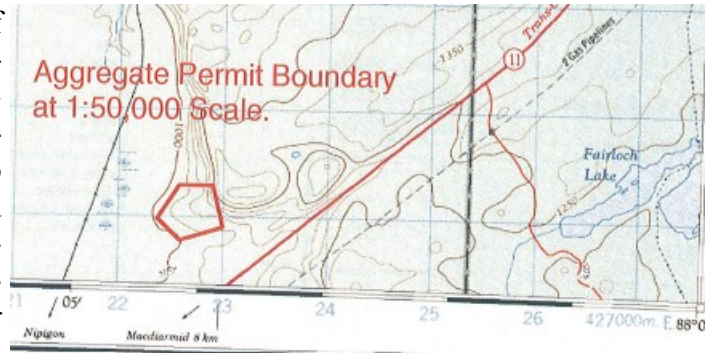
## CONSTRUCTION CRAFT TRAINING

WZI held a Construction Craft Training Course for 16 students (4 from BNA) between May 20th and July 4th, 2014. The course was put on by Local Union 647, and held at their headquarters on Balmoral St. in Thunder Bay. Training included forklift operation, use of power-tools and saws, working with propane torches, working around scaffolding and cranes, traffic control, fall protection, and health and safety training. All in all, 252 hours of training were received, and all 4 BNA members passed. Congratulations!

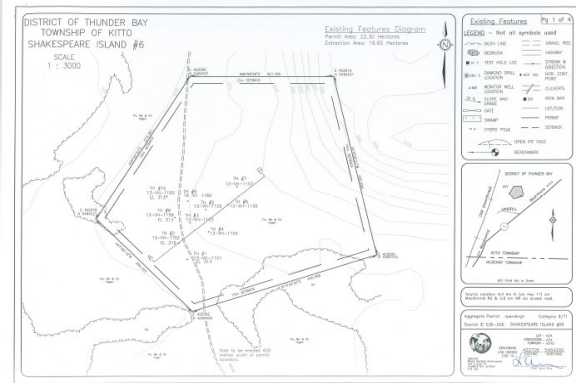
Sadly, during the course, Sarah Airns, passed away suddenly. Sarah will be missed by her family, friends and community alike.

# BNA AGGREGATE QUARRY

On March 30th of this year, BNA and the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) held a joint session at our community meeting in order to update the membership on the results of the BNA-MTO MOU. At that meeting, we discussed how BNA was pursuing an aggregate source near to the community in order to develop the reserve lands, and potentially crush and sell Granular A for revenue generation. A site had been identified just to the north of the current MNR dump, just to the west of Hwy 11. While our MOU ended on March 31st of this year, the MTO committed to continue assisting BNA as it moves ahead with acquiring the permit for this site. We are pleased to report that the MTO has kept their word, and has been very helpful throughout this process.



With the support of the MTO in preparing the necessary mapping and hydrology reports for the permit, BNA applied to the MNR for its Aggregate Permit this fall. The permit would be 22.3 hectares in size, and would allow for lots of room for excavation toward the more mountainous easterly areas of the permit boundary, and storage on the western portion. There is also a plan for a gate on the site, which would protect BNA from liabilities, as well as prevent others from dumping on the site.



The next stage of the process is consultation. BNA has already consulted with the Ministries of Transportation and Northern Development and Mines, and now must do the same for other interested stakeholders. The MNR is tasked with the responsibility of consulting with BNA's neighbouring First Nations about the site. BNA will be responsible for ensuring that any mitigation measures that are put on the permit following consultations are carefully followed. It is the hope of Chief and Council that we will finally be able to start clearing and preparing this quarry for excavation next spring. BNA is working closely with the MNR to ensure that this process moves forward without delay.

## BNA LAND CODE

On March 29th, 2014, BNA successfully ratified its Land Code under the Framework Agreement for First Nation Land Management. The Individual Agreement has been signed and sent off to the Federal Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, and we are awaiting the return of the agreement. Once signed, BNA will join a handful of other

First Nations across the country who are managing their own land under Land Code. Once we are operational, BNA members will be in the drivers seat regarding the future of developments occurring on their own reserve land.

**NOTICE OF VOTE**  
TO: MEMBERS OF BINGWI NEVAASHI ANSHINAABEK FIRST NATION

YOUR NOTICE that a Resolution Vote will be held in accordance with the Binjig Nevaash Anshinaabek Community Consultation Process on March 25, 2014, is in order to determine if Eligible Voters support the Binjig Nevaash Anshinaabek Land Code and the Individual Agreement.

The following question will be voted on by the Eligible Voters of Binjig Nevaash Anshinaabek First Nation:

- The Binjig Nevaash Anshinaabek Land Code, dated January 21, 2014 and
- The Individual Agreement with the Ministry of Crown Lands and Heritage.

The Official Day for the Resolution Vote will take place on **Wednesday, the 25th day of March, 2014 from 10:00 AM until 3:00 PM.**

The Voters are listed on the Voter List, 333 Andrew Street West, Thunder Bay, Ontario, N6B 1K6, Province of Ontario.

Signatures of the Binjig Nevaash Anshinaabek First Nation and the Binjig Nevaash Anshinaabek Community Consultation Process on March 25, 2014, is in order to determine if Eligible Voters support the Binjig Nevaash Anshinaabek Land Code and the Individual Agreement.

**ADMINISTRATIVE NOTICE:** All members of Binjig Nevaash Anshinaabek First Nation are eligible to vote, PROVIDED THAT SUCH MEMBERS RESIDE IN CANADA AT THE TIME OF THE VOTE. A VOTER REGISTRATION DOCUMENT WILL BE PLACED ON THE LIST OF REGISTERED VOTERS. Voter registration documents will be sent to all Eligible Voters whose address is on record with Binjig Nevaash Anshinaabek First Nation.

Documents that are available from the community website, [www.bna.ca](http://www.bna.ca), or from Customer Service, Binjig Nevaash Anshinaabek First Nation, 333 Andrew Street West, Thunder Bay, Ontario, N6B 1K6, will be available to the Voter List Office and registration number appearing below, and submitting them to the Registration Office.

**VOTERS CAN REGISTER IN PERSON AT THE POLLS UP TO THE CLOSE OF THE POLLS ON THE LAST VOTING DAY.**

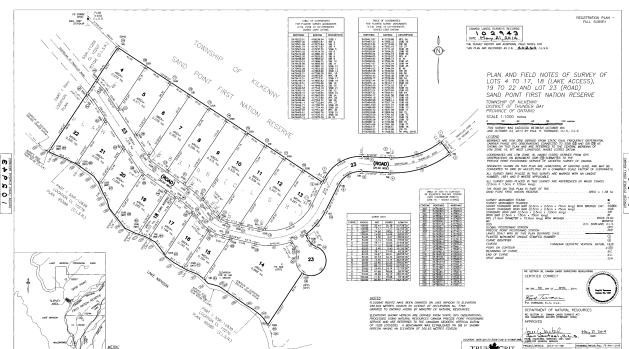
BNA is at the Binjig Nevaash Anshinaabek First Nation Office, 333 Andrew Street West, Thunder Bay, Ontario, N6B 1K6.

**Registration Office**  
Thunder Bay, Ontario  
Telephone: (807) 335-1354 Fax: (807) 335-1355 Email: [info@binjig.ca](mailto:info@binjig.ca)

**NOTE:** All Eligible Voters will receive a mail-in ballot package that will include a registration declaration, however Eligible Voters who do not receive a mail-in ballot package should contact the Registration Office.

## BNA LAND USE PLANNING

On April 1st, 2014, BNA entered into its last year for the Land Use Planning Pilot Project. This process has allowed BNA to take the already-developed Capital Plan, and begin the associated surveying on-reserve. Last fiscal year, we were able to survey the first 20-lots in the Phase 1 housing division along the Lake. This fall, BNA hired True Grit to continue the surveying of the reserve, including completing all of the community roads, the business section north of the Industrial Park along Hwy 11, and the roads into Phases 2 and 3 housing before the gate house. Following this year, BNA will have surveyed nearly all of its reserve land in preparation for continued developments.



# TRANSCANADA'S ENERGY EAST PROJECT

Throughout 2014, TransCanada, a large pipeline company from western Canada, has been meeting with BNA and its First Nation neighbours regularly on its “Energy East” proposed Project. This Project would see over one million barrels of Alberta oil flow past the eastside of BNA’s reserve land every day in a converted pipeline, heading to the east coast for refining. While this is certainly not a Project that Chief and Council would pursue on its own, the company has approached BNA to initiate consultation. In order to ensure that we have standing during the National Energy Board hearings on the Project when they take place in a few years time, BNA will sign a Consultation and Engagement Funding Agreement (CEFA) with TransCanada so that the community’s interests - including traditional and cultural sites and activities - are protected in the event that this Project moves ahead.



After the Christmas holidays, BNA will move ahead with the hiring of a “BNA Energy East Liaison”. This individual will be tasked with the responsibilities of coordinating community consultation sessions with the membership, as well as with individual mapping sessions with Elders to gather Traditional Knowledge from the pipeline area; completing community impact assessment reports and summary of issues reports; and liaising between TransCanada and BNA on this Project. Please note that members MUST NOT confuse our signing of the CEFA agreement with support for this Project. BNA understands its rights and obligations regarding the Crown’s Duty to Consult, and this agreement is simply facilitating that arrangement. All impacts must be fully explained to members, and this process will commence in the new year.



## NAMEWAMINIKAN HYDRO

In 2014, the Namewaminikan Hydro Project’s construction was to start. However, due to delays in permitting from the Ministries of Environment and Natural Resources and Forestry, the Project construction will now commence in the spring of 2015. BNA, along with its First Nation Partners, AZA and BZA, will be in a position to take advantage of employment and contracting opportunities with respect to this Project. The 3 First Nations will work communally to form partnerships and bid on tenders as they are released. Once the Twin Falls and Long Rapids Hydro facilities are constructed, BNA and its First Nation partners will receive a royalty every year that the Project generates power. The Namewaminikan Hydro Project is an excellent example of how First Nations can work together and form agreements with industry in order to mutually benefit from renewable energy.



## WAWASUM GROUP LP

Wawasum Group LP is a 50/50 partnership between BNA and AZA for the construction of a pellet mill which would utilize our annual hardwood allocation on the Lake Nipigon Forest. BNA and AZA were successful in their application to the New Relationship Fund for a Project Manager to see the development move ahead. In this role, Joe Hanlon and the Wawasum Board have been working with Great Northern Bio-Energy on the development of proposals to NRCAN, FedNor, and NOHFC for Class 20 and Class 10 engineering studies for the facilities. If we are able to make this Project a reality, it would have the potential of creating up to 46 jobs in both the facility and in the harvesting operations, and would launch both BNA and AZA into the bio-energy industry, one of the most promising sectors on the horizon today.



# BINGWI NEYAASHI HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

The department continues to collaborate with its partners to provide services with a public health component.

Funding is received from three sources that support eleven programs and one source that supports one program. These twelve programs are community-based to support the well-being of the community members.

The areas of focus include prenatal health, nutrition, physical, emotional and mental health. Activities are carried out to aid in the development, delivery and management of culturally appropriate programs, services and initiatives engaging families and children to provide intervention for improved development of physical, intellectual, social, traditional, cultural, spiritual and emotional well-being.

Referrals are made to include Dental Services, Family Health Services, Immunization programs Nutrition Services, Mental Health/Psychology services, Sexual Health, Substance abuse, communicable disorders, infectious diseases and injury prevention.

2014 has been a very busy year for the department. Final tallies indicate the following visits/statistics:

There were 174 male members and 243 female members made office visits or were seen at their home throughout the year.

Of these:

- ◆ 174 well man visits
- ◆ 243 well woman visits
- ◆ 76 well child visits
- ◆ 6 prenatal visits
- ◆ 204 Diabetic/chronic disease management visits
- ◆ 187 health educational visits
- ◆ 81 home visits
- ◆ 187 other visits
- ◆ 75 referrals made, and 266 phone calls were received.



Aside from daily office interaction with community members at the Band office, home visits or at the BNA land, the department ventured forth in its effort to continue with community based activities supporting the involvement of community members. The New Horizon's for Seniors Program and the Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy approved and funded a 2-day Elder's workshop held in Thunder Bay, Ontario, last February entitled "Un-Silencing the Truth". The response was overwhelming with 80+ Elders from 10 First Nations in attendance.



# BINGWI NEYAASHI HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES CONT.

Three students participated in the Health Careers Program funded by the Independent First Nations and attended a tour of health services of Dilico Anishinaabek Family Services. Four community members were given scholarships to assist with furthering their studies in the health field.



A 1-day workshop on Youth safety, bullying, alcohol/substance abuse and prescription drug abuse was held to promote awareness that suicide is a preventable problem. Guest speaker Bossy Ducharme captivated the audience with the contents of his personal journey. The event ended with a community feast and "Friendship Gathering Pow Wow".

As summer approached, all efforts were directed to BNA land. Flowers were planted at both cemeteries only to witness them being eaten by a three legged bear cub.



The children's playground was further developed by adding swings for their enjoyment. Aboriginal Day proved to be festive with the "Pie Eating Contest" only to have the remainder of the pies distributed to the community members for their consumption.



BNA Health and Social Services becomes involved in every community Christmas event by purchasing children's gifts, gifts for the community members of the Healthy Babies Healthy Moms and Community Wellness programs, gifts for the entire community in and out of town, entertainment, Santa's visit and the community feast.

At this time the community acknowledges the help received from the spirit world, relatives and ancestors; it's a time to honour all those who have helped the community, and to respect what has been done for the community.

## AETS UPDATE

Anishinaabek Employment and Training Services administers training funding for Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek along with 8 other First Nations. In conjunction with the administration of our training dollars, AETS also provides valuable services to the members of BNA. These services include, support with resume writing, employment counselling, access to computers and other business tools and much more.



employment and training endeavours.

Any members who are interested in training or require assistance with seeking employment are encouraged to contact Russell Twance, Employment Counsellor at AETS. Russell can be reached at (807) 346-0307 or you can visit the AETS office located at 277 Park Avenue in Thunder Bay.

Since January 2014, BNA was able to successfully provide employment and training support to 14 members. This support varied from course purchases, mobility assistance, employment start up and wage subsidies. All clients were successful in their employ-

## SUMMER PARK WORKERS

Summer employment began with the hiring of the adult Park Workers in June and the students in July. This year, employees at the park assisted with making some great progress in the development of our new community. Our employees were able to successfully complete several projects including:

- ◆ Thinning and maintenance of access road
- ◆ Building a deck for the bunkhouses
- ◆ Assisting with the construction of the Spirit Garden
- ◆ Clearing and thinning of residential lots
- ◆ Landscaping
- ◆ Ongoing care and maintenance of community grounds

We are proud to report that we were able to employ a total of 6 adults and 5 youth this summer. Funding for these positions was obtained through successful proposal applications with Canada Summer Jobs, Ontario Summer Jobs, allocations from our AETS training dollars, and contributions from BNA's own resources. We would like to thank all park employees for the hard work and dedication they displayed. We appreciate everything you have done for the development of our new community. Job well done!

## CULTURAL COODINATOR



The role of the Cultural Coordinator position is to bring cultural heritage traditions that have been lost over the years back to our community. Through this role, the coordinator worked on many initiatives. One of the first tasks was working with the BNA Health Department on a booklet called "Un-Silencing the Truth". This followed a 2-day workshop where we listened to Elders tell their stories. I utilized this knowledge to meet and listen to BNA Elders as they discuss their past traditions, and record them for future use.

Edna and I also put together a workshop introducing Bossy Duchame to the BNA membership. Bossy's life journey included living off of the land, and how it improved his overall health and well-being. Our community focused on this well-being through our second annual Powwow this past March, where we celebrated our cultural heritage with our neighbouring First Nations.

Two of the biggest accomplishments from the Cultural Coordinator Position are the construction of Wigwam and Medicine Garden in the cultural area of our reserve lands. These projects took a lot of work and time, but we all made it come together and it turned out beautifully. Both of these Projects were unveiled at BNA's Annual General Meeting (AGM) in August. During this gathering, we had a ceremony for The Medicine Garden, allowing members to gather together and celebrate our cultural traditions.

Our culture will live on as long as we cherish it and keep it alive. Miigwetch - Audrey Mandula, Cultural Coordinator.





# HOUSING AND MATRIMONIAL REAL PROPERTY

## MRP COMMITTEE

On June 19, 2013, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada developed a Federal Law to address the division of on-reserve assets (homes, property, etc.) that are owned by one or both partners in the event of a divorce, or in the event of the death of a partner. The Law is titled the "Family Homes on a Reserve and Matrimonial Interests or Rights Act", which came into effect on December 16, 2013.

Normally, the new law would be implemented in two parts; the first part of the law provides the opportunity for First Nations to implement its own laws with respect to on-reserve Matrimonial Real Property. The second part of the Law would come into force twelve months later, on December 16, 2014, which will force the Federal Laws onto the First Nations that did not create its own Law. Fortunately, as BNA operates under its own Land Code, we are able to implement our own custom BNA Matrimonial Real Property Law after the December 16, 2014 deadline, once the BNA Law has been ratified by the Community.

Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek began working in partnership with the First Nation Market Housing Fund (FNMHF) to undertake the development of our own Matrimonial Real Property Laws to enact on-reserve. A community meeting was held on September 20, 2014 to discuss the development of BNA specific MRP process, and to introduce our Lawyer on the MRP process Dominique Nouvet, of Woodward and Company, as well as our consultant leading the process Gord Wickham, of Wickham Consulting.



As part of the process, BNA appointed a MRP Committee consisting of four (4) Committee members, two (2) registered Band members (Audrey Gilbeau, Guy Gladu) and two (2) affiliate members (Line Clarke, Joe Ladouceur Sr.). The appointed MRP Committee began regular bi-weekly meetings on October 2, 2014 discussing a series of topics each week including Domestic Contracts, Division of Assets, Compensation, Exclusive Occupation Orders, Emergency Protection Orders, and Dispute Resolution. The Committee concluded regular meetings on November 13, 2014, and the first draft of the BNA Matrimonial Real Property Law will be presented to the Committee on January 15, 2015, and will be brought forward to the Membership in early March 2015 for review and input. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the Matrimonial Real Property process, please feel free to contact Jeremy Bonhomme by phone at (807) 623-2724 ext. 214 or stop by the BNA Office.

## HOUSING COMMITTEE

Over that past few meetings, we have heard a number of questions and concerns regarding the housing committee, and the development of BNA's housing policies. Chief and Council acknowledge the questions and concerns from the Membership and has made the development of housing policies a top priority. As a result, the team at BNA is pleased to announce that starting in the new year, we will be working with the First Nation Market Housing Fund (FNMHF) on the development of housing policies for the Community.

As you are aware, BNA had submitted an application to the FNMHF seeking funding support on the development of the BNA Housing Policies quite some time ago. The application has been held up in the approval process due to FNMHF requirements of working with a FNMHF approved consultant. In efforts of pushing the application through the approval stages, a meeting was requested with the FNMHF in early November 2014.

On December 10, 2014, Chief Laura and I met with Deborah Taylor, Executive Director at the FNMHF, and reached an agreement as to a path forward for the BNA Housing Process. As per our agreement, the FNMHF will provide BNA with a list of FNMHF Approved Housing Consultants; BNA will then tender the housing work to the approved consultants. Once chosen, the successful consultant will work with the appointed BNA Housing Committee through bi-weekly Committee meetings to develop a draft Housing Policy for Community review. Once a final draft has been developed, the BNA Housing Policy will be subject to legal review and Community Ratification. The new housing process will commence in February 2015.

Additionally, while meeting with the FNMHF, it was determined that the FNMHF will also support the work required to the BNA Membership Code and BNA Administration Policies. While this does mean that we have a big task ahead of us, we are thrilled to be breaking ground on the development of these policies in the New Year.



## GOVERNANCE AND MEMBERSHIP

The past year has seen development and growth within Governance and Membership. The internal systems used to maintain the Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek membership have been updated. This has allowed BNA to be more efficient when addressing membership inquiries, maintaining member's information and allowing for email to be an alternate means of regular communication with the members. Further to maintaining membership contact information, BNA has begun the process of gathering the information of the children of BNA members. This information will help the First Nation to efficiently coordinate community events, such as the Christmas party. The changes made within the maintenance of the BNA membership information will help the community going forward.



The Governance Committee consists of 3 Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek community members and is facilitated by the Governance Coordinator and a representative of Chief and Council. Through Bi-weekly meetings the Governance Committee has been making equal progress with developing tools that will help BNA to develop systems and structures that ensure a vibrant community. Currently the Governance Committee has developed a Communication Policy that will help to create a clear and concise message to the community members and a Ratification Policy that will help to ensure all members have a clear method to participate in community discussions. Both of these Policy documents have been put forward to Chief and Council for review. Currently, the Governance Committee has been working towards the completion of the Membership Code. The hope for the Committee will be to have this document completed by the end of March for review by Chief and Council and the Community. If members have any questions regarding the membership file, feel free to contact Jeff Robert at 807-623-2724, or at jrobert@bnafn.ca.

### BNA 2014 AGM



On August 23rd, the membership gathered at the BNA Cultural Grounds to hold its AGM. Along with the usual presentation of the Audit to the members, a presentation was given on training and economic development, and the community had a pickerel and poutine feast. The AGM was also the unveiling of the community Teepee and Medicine Wheel Garden, which was led by Cultural Coordinator Audrey Mandula. As always, BNA Chief and Council always try and ensure that we hold our AGM at the reserve land, and bring the membership together for the event.



### HALLOWEEN COSTUME CONTEST



This year, Audrey Mandula, BNA's Cultural Coordinator, organized a Halloween Contest for the members.

The winners are:

For the children: 1<sup>st</sup> place – Olivia Davis; 2<sup>nd</sup> place – Michael Esquega; 3<sup>rd</sup> place – Trayskon Desmoulin.

For the Adults: 1<sup>st</sup> place – Renata Bouchard; 2<sup>nd</sup> place – Phyllis Michon; 3<sup>rd</sup> place – Cheryl Nakanagis.

Miigwetch everyone for participating!