

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2023



JUNE IS
BAASHKAABIGONII-
GIIZIS
(BLOOMING MOON)

Mother's Day Celebrations:



The RBCFS staff in BZA were pleased to collaborate with the BZA Band staff to provide a beautiful Mother's Day Celebration which took place on May 12th at the BZA community center.

Attendees enjoyed bingo, a penny auction, raffles, draw for a door prize, and received flowers. The event wrapped up with a beautiful dinner.

Participants were invited to bring in a photo of their mother so there were many beautiful photos on display. Meegwech to everyone who shared photos of their loved ones.



Thank you to everyone who worked hard to put on this event. BZA Band staff - Family Well Being who provided the door prizes, Brighter Future Programs, RBCFS staff and the Prevention team for providing penny auction prizes, and to everyone who attended. We apologize if we have missed anyone who contributed to the event.



To the world, you are a mother.
To our family, you are the world.



Mother's Day Celebration Continued:

The Rocky Bay Child & Family Services office in Thunder Bay also hosted a Mother's Day celebration on May 12th at the Superiorview Boardroom at the Spence Building. Mothers were treated to self-care activities such as yoga sessions, a hair station, and a nail station. Participants also enjoyed a lunch of meat & cheese, salads, and banana bread. All the ladies received a goodie bag, gift card, and a rose.

We would like to thank the RBCFS ladies for hosting this wonderful event for our mothers here in the city and everyone who attended our mother's day celebration.



Hot School Lunch at Beardmore School

The BZA Prevention team hosted a hot lunch for the Beardmore Public School. They introduced the Child and Family Services worker, their role, and talked on how the workers are here to provide support and help, working in a child welfare role.



The Beardmore school requested cultural teachings from the agency and would like to see ongoing teachings in the fall for the students. Children enjoyed pizza and popcorn chicken for lunch. Thank you Beardmore school for inviting us, and thank you to the staff for an awesome lunch.

RED DRESS DAY – MAY 5TH

Red Dress Day Red Dress Day, first observed in 2010, happens every May 5th.



The intent is to honour and bring awareness to the thousands of Indigenous women and girls, and two-spirit people who have gone missing or who have been murdered which affects many of our members.

The Rocky Bay Child & Family Services Elders Committee members along with the RBCFS staff in Thunder Bay hosted an awareness event at the satellite office on Memorial Avenue.



Participants gathered to honour our MMIWG2S with drumming, songs, and offered support to each other. They were outside the building for several hours to help bring awareness on this issue and received welcoming support from visitors and passersby. Warm drinks and snacks were provided.



We would like to say chi-meegwech to everyone who attended, offered to support to others, and for bringing awareness to this crisis that affects our Indigenous community across Canada.

RBCFS Open House

Rocky Bay Child & Family Services held an Open House at the BZA community center on May 3rd. There were several booths with information on services and programming offered such as our Traditional Care team, Prevention team, and Child & Family Services team.



The Traditional Care table provided information on how to become a traditional care provider. There was swag, a jeopardy theme game with questions related to traditional care for an extra ballet into the draw for a prize. Winner of the adult prize package was Ray Nobis who won Tupperware, an RBCFS notebook and playing cards. Hazel was the winner of the child prize package of toys.



RBCFS Community Survey

Rocky Bay Child and Family Services conducted a Community Survey seeking feedback on two proposed community initiatives for 2023. For the location of the Fitness gym for all ages most people answered across the road from the church. For the splashpad many answered by the waterfront, big dock, beach area.

The most popular answer for future initiatives for 2024 was a daycare. Other future initiative suggestions were day/summer camp, community garden, more outdoor activities for kids and adults, just to name a few. The most popular answer for what summer programming members would like to see for this year was day/summer camp, community picnics/bbq, summer school, swimming lessons/dock safety, just to name a few. Winner of the bbq was Jim Hardy. We would like to thank everyone who took the time to complete the survey.

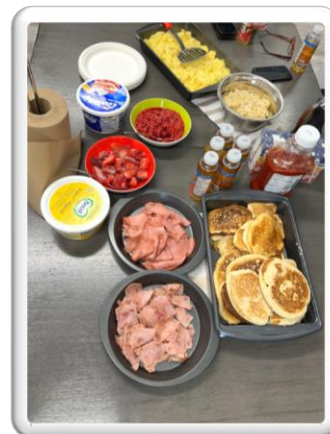
BZA Community Cleanup

The BZA community held their annual spring cleanup of the community from May 23-26th. Garbage bags and gloves were provided to community members from the medical staff and RBCFS staff. The RBCFS staff assisted with hosting the bbq on May 26th. We always enjoy collaborating with BZA First Nation on community events. Meegwech BZA First Nation.



Staff Appreciation Breakfast

Both RBCFS offices were treated to a staff appreciation breakfast on May 19th. We would like to thank the Traditional Care team at the Thunder Bay office for the delicious spread of bagels, fruit, cream cheese spread, juice, and other goodies. You ladies rock!



The RBCFS office in BZA also enjoyed a delicious spread of fried ham and bologna, pancakes, scrambled eggs, hashbrowns, toast, fruit, juice, and other goodies. You guys rock!

Traditional Care Program

May is Foster Care Appreciation Month and the Traditional Care team hosted several events for the Traditional Care providers.

Farrah King, Traditional Care worker in BZA, provided a complete meal for her caregiver families so they could have a BBQ dinner when they choose to. She delivered hotdogs, smokies, corn, potatoes, and coleslaw. She also gave them flowerpots and supplies to paint flowerpots, and seeds to plant after their pots were painted.

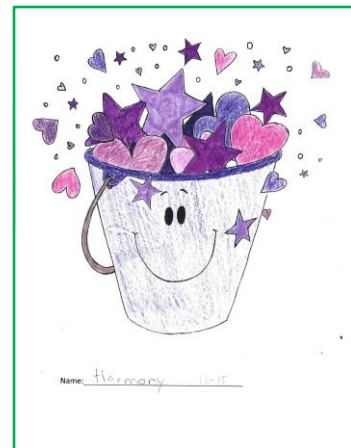


The Traditional Home Care Workers in Thunder Bay hosted a Foster Parent/Kinship appreciation program on Sunday May 28, 2023, at the Rocky Bay Office in Thunder Bay. Families were invited to come out to celebrate and were provided lunch and refreshments. They were provided flowers to paint and planted flower seeds in honouring of loving and helping our children to grow.



The Traditional Care team also held a Colouring Contest for the month of May. Due to the many beautiful submission received all the contestants' names were put on a spin the wheel and it generated the winners.

Harmony won a google play gift card. Harmony and Bucky won a sand bucket and bubbles.



We would like to thank everyone who submitted their coloring pages. Everyone did a fantastic job!

We would like to congratulate Farrah King on her promotion to Child & Family Services and wish her the best in her new position. The Traditional Care team is going to miss you!

Prevention Programming

The Prevention team hosted a Stress Management Workshop in Thunder Bay on May 4th. Participants learned about the stress model of crisis and discussions took place after each guided stage. The team presented on long-term and short-term methods for managing stress. Participants were given an activity and guided through the strategy sheets. Feedback was positive saying it was helpful to explore one's own personal experience and strategies related to stress and stress responses. A luncheon of soup and sandwiches was provided. Anita won a hygiene basket. Other participants received gift bags. The workshop ended with a hug line.

Our Prenatal Infant Care worker Jessica Colvin hosted a Perinatal Mental Health workshop on May 9th at the Thunder Bay office. Information on mental health and coping mechanisms were provided, and participants did an exercise on Circles of Support. A light lunch of tomato soup and garlic bread was served.

Jessica also hosted a Do-it-Yourself Baby Wipes and Diaper Cream workshop on May 25th. Participants learned how to make their own baby wipes and diaper cream out of natural and safe ingredients. A light lunch of garlic bread and caesar salad was served. Shayna won the door prize.



Prevention worker Josee Lynch hosted a Tea and Bannock Social at the BZA office on May 10th. She cooked her awesome blueberry bannock, had tea, and chatted with participants. Mike Esquega won a voucher for the Spirit Bay gas bar.



Josee also hosted a Book Club event at the BZA office on May 17th. Attendees received a copy of the Seven Fallen Feathers and found it a very interesting read. They also received a journal, pen, and bookmark. In



June there will be 2 Book Club events so check out the June calendar. Snacks and refreshments were provided. Maryann Mickelson won the munchie basket.



The Prevention Team in Thunder Bay also hosted a Substance Abuse Program on May 24th. Information was provided on opioids, the many different types, and Narcan kits and how they work. Discussion took place on the stigma and effect that words have on people, and attendees looked at strategies on how to help end stigma. Plenty of laughter took place. A light lunch and refreshments were provided. Shayna was the winner of the hygiene basket.

JUNE FEATURED STAFF

Booshoo, my name is Mike Esquega Sr. I am from Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging aka Rocky Bay. I have lived here most of my life and was born one mile down the tracks. In my previous work I was chief for 14 years and a councilor for 12 years.

I worked in many areas for our First Nation, from fishing on boats, and other jobs like Band Manager, EDO, ED Assistant, and few others including a NNADAP worker.

What led me to this job of being Cultural Coordinator was through a spiritual awakening in 1989 when I began my sobriety path and began learning and following the red road as some call this way. I followed a few elders who shared and taught the many ways of being an Anishinaabe to me. I love this way of life as it has led me to dancing, doing cultural activities, and attending different ceremonies which I am capable of conducting. Most of this knowledge I've learned through elders, and most of which I will share through the duties of this job.

It is in anticipation that my knowledge will be shared in a nonintrusive way so in sharing teachings my hope is for all to know who we are as Anishinabe and know our culture.

Miigwetch,
Mike Esquega Sr
RBCFS Cultural Coordinator

Parenting Support Events

Parenting Support Worker Kayla Thompson hosted a Self-Care Activity event at the BZA office on May 19th. Participants received a self-care goody bag that they got to take home after filling out a self-care assessment sheet to determine if they are lacking self-care in their everyday life and learned how important self-care is especially when being a parent or a caregiver.

Robin was the winner of the towel set for woman and Kyler was the winner of a coffee mug for men.

BZA ELDERS' SOCIAL

The BZA Elders' Social took place at the main office in BZA on May 29. There was a great turnout and Elders enjoyed beef stew with dumplings for supper, followed by cinnamon buns with apple pie sauce and ice cream for dessert. There were 20 games of bingo played, and everyone got to take home leftovers.



**Rocky Bay Child & Family Services - BZA Site**

The RBCFS Elder's Committee invites you to attend a

Clean-up of the BZA Graveyard

Wednesday, June 14th from 11am-2pm

Please bring a chair and bug spray as well as any equipment such as a rake, shovel, wheelbarrow, etc.

Lunch will be provided

If you have any questions, please call 807-885-1697 or email rharry@rbcs.ca

Youth Liaison Program

Youth Liaison Worker Robin Thompson hosts several monthly events for children aged 6 – 18 years old at the main office in BZA. One of the monthly events is the monthly Teens Bingo for youth ages 11 – 18 years old. This month's teens enjoyed bingo, listened to music on the big screen, and were provided a light supper of pogo and fries. We had some of the parents attend with the children at this month's bingo which was awesome.

She also runs the High School Bingo which is just for high school students. It also gives them the opportunity to socialize, enjoy a light supper, and win food prizes.

Another one of Robin's events is the Kids Bingo for children aged 6 – 10 years old. Kids are given the opportunity to socialize, provided with a light supper and refreshments, and win fun prizes. This month's Kids Bingo had 12 children attend. Prizes were munchie bags with a large bag of chips, chocolate/gum, juice boxes, and little toys. Tennessee won the jackpot prize of a munchie bag and \$25 gift card to Lars Place. The kids were treated to chicken fingers, fries, and Kraft dinner. Thanks, Kirby, for helping Robin cook!

Robin also hosts the monthly Teens in the Kitchen. Teens aged 11- 18 years old learn how to cook a variety of food and learn how to bake various goodies. They learn responsibility, get to socialize, get to enjoy the dishes they prepare, and have a chance at winning gift certificates/vouchers.

She also hosts a High School Cooking Class which is just for the high school students who learn how to cook and bake various goodies, socialize, play games, and get a chance to win gift certificates/vouchers.

Our Family Movie Night is another program our Youth Liaison worker sponsors. Families enjoy movie time together, treated to snacks and refreshments, and have a chance to win door prizes.

Robin also participates in other programming when needed, and we appreciate her dedication to the youth and families of Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek.

* See our photo gallery of Youth Liaison Programming events for May →



ELDERS CORNER

Drumming with Diane:

Hand-drumming with Elder Diane takes place every other Tuesday of the month. The current dedicated group of hand-drummers have been getting together since last fall. There will be 2 more sessions during the month of June and then the program will take a break for the summer, returning in the fall.



Elders Social - TBAY:

The Elders Social took place on May 29th at the Thunder Bay office. Miss Mona made shepherd's pie with sweet potatoes served with lettuce and tomato, followed up by her delicious homemade red velvet cupcakes. Participants enjoyed bingo, shared stories, and laughter. It is always a fun time when Miss Mona is hosting.

Miss Mona Hardy also hosts an LBGTQ2 Group every Sunday from 1:00 – 3:00 pm. Come join in and enjoy some tea, a light snack, and conversation.

Weekly sessions are open to all, and all ages are welcome to attend. This is a safe space for participants, and we ask that everyone be respectful of other people's thoughts and comments. Meegwech.

Miss Mona was unable to host her monthly Adult Social in May due to personal commitments but will be back to host her social on Monday, June 12th from 5:00 – 8:00 pm. The Adult Social is open to ages 18 – 54 years old. Participants enjoy a wonderful meal prepared by Mona, tea, and conversation, followed by bingo and plenty of laughter.

Please call reception at 807-475-4703 to register or email cfsreception@rbcs.ca.

Sacred Tree ~ by Joceline Nobis

Tiny seed planted since the day you were born.

As you were growing you weathered out storms, the seasons of extreme cold, with strong winds that almost broke your back, and scorching heat and in need of water to quench your thirst.

But you kept growing. Your roots dug deep and held on firmly to mother earth that helped you stay rooted.

The sun smiled and gazed on you daily. The rains nourished your roots. Then you branched out in many directions where you wanted to go. There was no stopping you.

As nodin flowed through you.

As it cleansed what you needed to let go.

Your roots went in many directions and no matter of what was in your way.

Your roots dug so deep into mother earth. In knowing this is where you have such overpowering faith.

Now fully grown you look around you.

You're proud of who you become.

You stand firm and tall; you welcome each day with open branches.

You welcome night and moon with open arms.

You made it this far now continue on showing this world of who you are and will continue becoming.

Yes, you are your own unique Sacred Tree!

Wrote this just this morning on Sept 10th 2011.

Miigwetch,

Joceline Nobis