

J U L Y 2 0 1 4

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

ACADIA FIRST NATION

ATTENTION SUMMER STUDENTS

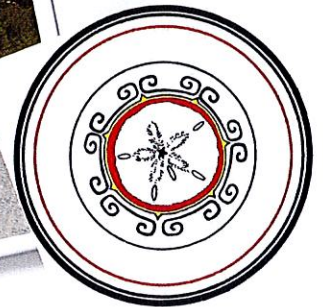
All student forms must be filled out and returned to your NEO, Wanda Westhaver, prior to starting your summer work placement. If you have not already done so, please contact Wanda to make an arrangement.

Greenfield Office: 902-685-2956

Fax: 902-685-2237

Email: wandaNEO@gmail.com

**All Band Offices
will be closed
from July 28th
and will re-open
on August 11th.**



CHIEF DEBORAH ROBINSON'S UPDATE

Again, as Chief, it is my honour and privilege to have this opportunity to provide you with my message and update on your First Nation's progress and my activities. One of my key priorities was to address the strength and stability of the administration and management of our First Nation. We were successful in recruiting Brian Dorey as the new Band Manager.

CONTINUED ON PAGES 11 - 14

Save the Date!

**Office Closed
July 1st**

All Offices are closed for the holiday.

**Youth Gathering
July 3rd**

7th Annual
Mi'kmaw Valley
Youth Gathering in
Bear River

**Connect with
Mik'kmaq Culture**

July 4th-Sept 19th
Go experience this wonderful program at Keji Park

Hard work pays off!

“People probably do not know how good I am in school and how hard I work! They probably did not know I am musically talented either!”

Robyn Whynot



An 18 year old young lady from Liverpool receives the Lieutenant Governor’s of Nova Scotia Award from her Liverpool Regional High School this year. This Award is for students who have shown an exemplary achievement in their academic and community life. There are two students in each school that are chosen for this award (1 male and 1 female). Not only did she receive this award, she also received the Lieutenant Governor’s Respectful Citizenship Award. This is given to a student who demonstrates leadership and commitment to creating safe and inclusive spaces in schools and communities in Nova Scotia, where bullying behavior is not accepted and respectful and responsible relationships are

promoted.

Robyn has been accepted into Acadia University and was also awarded 6 scholarships totaling \$42,000.00. Her long-term goal is to do 4 years at Acadia University and then continue her education at the Waterloo University in Ontario where she expects to graduate as an Optometrist.

This young lady has been on the honour roll her entire time in school and only missed 1 day of her high school attendance. She has dedicated her school years to being the best she could be. She was the President of REP (Respect, Empathy and Positivity Committee), TADD (Teens Against Drunk Driving Committee), YAC (Youth Advisory Committee), Treasurer of the SRC (Student Representative Council), and a member of the Prom, Yoga, Grad, Safe Grad, Auction and Dance Committees.

Her skills don’t stop here. Robyn is self-taught to play the piano and guitar and she loves to sing. Robyn participated in the Christmas on the Mersey event this past year singing Amazing Grace and Silent Night in Mi’kmaq. She loves singing and has also participated in Liverpool Music Festival, Pioneer Days Festival, South Shore Idol and opening hockey games singing “O’Canada”.

When asked what the defining moment in her life was that made her follow the path she has taken, she whole heartedly explained it was in grade 4 when she found herself the target of being bullied by her fellow classmates. At such a young age, Robyn knew that she was very smart and school work came natural to her. She was very hurt by all the bullying that she endured through her early years in school that it became her reason to excel as much as she has. Robyn said her message to all the bullies would be, “Everything happens for a reason! They made me who I am today. It made me work as hard as I did to achieve these accomplishments and they are still stuck where they are!”

I asked her grandmother, Cherry Whynot, “What was your proudest moment of Robyn?” She replied, the night she called me and said “Gram I did it, all my hard work paid off!”

Robyn will soon begin working at the Keji Park as a summer student participating in the Connect with Mi’kmaq Culture Program partnered between Keji and Acadia First Nation.

Great job Robyn, we are all very proud of you!

Councillor Tom Pictou - Update

My name is Tom Pictou and I am a Councillor from the Yarmouth area. My current portfolio for the Band includes: Gaming, Forestry and Finance. I work out of the Yarmouth office on a daily basis Monday to Thursday.

Along with my day-to-day duties on Council, I participate in monthly Gaming and Finance meetings and oversee the AFN Sawmill. I have also been involved in the start up of the new Shelburne office, the setup and overseeing current operations of the new bingo hall in Yarmouth and I have been involved in looking for new opportunities for the now vacant Winner's Corner Building.

This year we have 6 employees working out in Gardner's Mill performing tasks such as: Silviculture, running the mill, making deliveries and maintaining the Christmas tree lot. Products available at the mill include: rough lumber, firewood, slab wood and kindling. Two years ago we started pruning trees for a Christmas tree lot and sold a number of them at Winner's Corner. Last year we expanded the tree lot and sold them once again at Winner's Corner and at Winner's World successfully. This year we are selling camping wood and kindling at one of the Yarmouth stores, which are going well. I have also been working with the Mi'kmaq Forestry Advisor for the Province on issues surrounding Crown land and restoring black ash to our communities.

I have been working closely with our economic development officers to seek funding opportunities when available. Last year we received, from Career Connections Centre, three grants totaling \$14,000 to be put towards wages for the sawmill. We also applied and received funding from Aboriginal Affairs to help develop a fresh new business plan for the sawmill, which will look at the local market and help to identify new business opportunities. This plan is now complete and additional funding is being sought to purchase new equipment upgrades and other grants that may come available.

The bingo hall opened its doors for the first time on January 25th, 2014 and bingos have been held regularly since then. The current Winner's Corner staff, along with 10 new part time positions operates the new "AFN Entertainment Centre." I am very pleased with how the new building has turned out and bingo attendance has been steadily increasing. We celebrated the Grand opening on May 24th with a community barbeque and entertainment with a crowd of roughly 200. Not only do we have a new bingo hall but also a community centre that can host gatherings, events and much more!

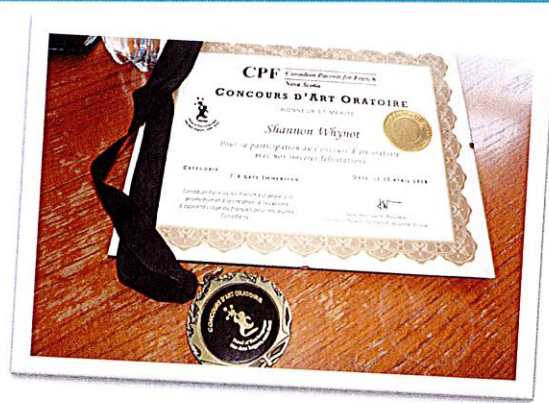
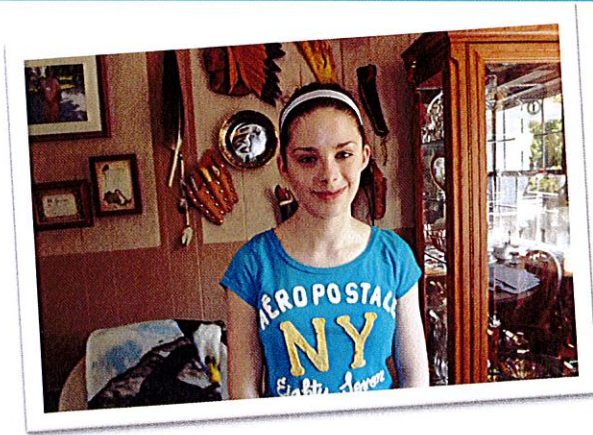
We are still in the process of getting Gardner's Mill changed over into reserve status. We are putting forth every effort to have things finalized; however, this is a long and slow moving federal government process.

It was great seeing all the Band Members who came out for the Community meetings this past month. I am looking forward to another busy and productive year with Acadia First Nation and will work hard to ensure our success continues to grow. Please feel free to contact me anytime with your questions or concerns.

Yours in Mi'kmaw Unity,

Tom Pictou, Band Councillor

Home: 902-881-2503 Cell: 902-740-4481 Office: 1-866-670-8086



Shannyn Whynot – French Immersion Student Receives an Award!

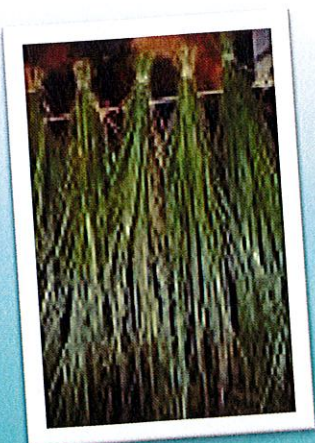
A 14-year-old French Immersion Student of the South Queens Middle School receives the Concours D'Art Oratoire Award for her story on the importance of Adoption. A family member who was adopted inspired this story. She won a week at Camp Kadimah and will be attending in August.

Shannyn is the Student Council President, the Year Book Editor and Drama Photographer at her school. She has received honours in both grade 7 and 8 and her long-term goal is to attend McGill University and become a Pharmacologist. Last year she attended a class trip to Quebec and it was at that moment she knew she wanted to live in Quebec when she grew up.

Shannyn experienced difficult health problems when she was very young that almost took her life. But with excellent health care and the love of her family she pulled through and is now living a healthy life. Her sister Robyn is her role model and she wants to become as successful as her. She said, "being a leader comes easy to me", and continued explaining that if you work hard and aim high you can accomplish anything.

She ended with saying she knows where she wants to be in life and that you have to work hard to accomplish your goals. She knows that in order to be accepted into McGill University she has to push herself hard to get the grades required for admission.

Halifax Elders

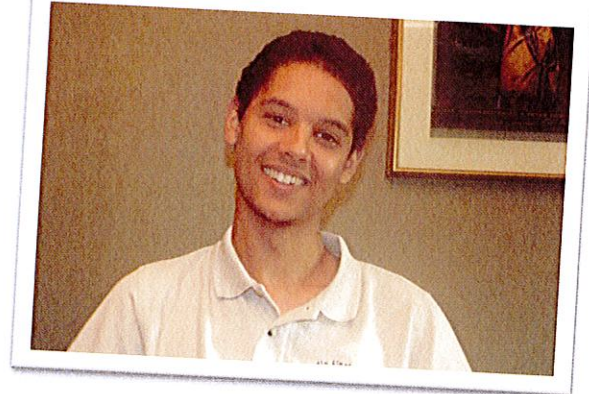
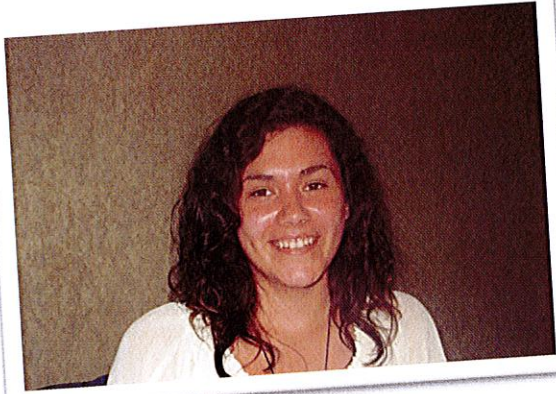


Halifax Area Elders are invited to pick Sweetgrass and have a picnic.

When: Thursday July 24th, 2014

Time: 10:00 am

If you plan to attend this event please RSVP by contacting the Hammonds Plains Office by Thursday July 17th, 2014 for details and location.



Mika Francis and David Falls two programs with the same objective: To Help!

Mika Francis, a grade 11 student has been selected and funded as the Acadia First Nation Representative by the Red Road Project.

The project encourages youth to say no to the peer pressures of substance abuse, and raises awareness of the damaging effects of substance abuse to not only the person using, but also their family, friends, and larger community. The project's name, "Red Road" stems from the Native American concept that means to be on the right path in life in harmony with our Creator.

Mika will be working out of the Winner's Corner building and is looking for input and participation from community youth. You can contact Mika by email at mikafrancis@hotmail.com.

David Falls, is a 19 year old Post Secondary Student from NSCC where he is studying Business with a concentration in Marketing. He is beginning his 2nd year working as a Summer Student Liaison Officer between the RCMP and Acadia First Nation.

The objective of his job is to open the lines of communication between first nation members and the RCMP, making it more comfortable to use the emergency services available. Dave says it is important for members to understand when they should be calling the RCMP and not the band office.

Dave will partner with the Youth Centre and the Red Road Project this summer.

Councillor Debra Wentzell - Update

Debra attended the Queens County Student Awards event that was held on June 26th at the Milton Centennial Pool followed by a pizza party at the Canoe and Camera Club.

Debra will be available in the Medway office on the following dates: July 2, 9, 16 and 23rd at 9:00 am.

Councillor Charmaine Stevens - Update

This past month has been very busy with many activities happening within Acadia First Nation. I enjoyed the afternoon with our Elders who attended the Charlie Pride concert on May 31st.

I also had the pleasure of attending the 02 service program ceremony at the Liverpool Regional High School on June 2nd. It was great to see our students participating in this project, which developed a healing garden that incorporated a Mi'kmaq theme at the school. One of our youth, Lucas Francis, assisted with the drumming at the event.

On June 4th, I attended the Chester Area Middle School Mi'kmaq mural unveiling. The students at the school made a tile mural depicting the Mi'kmaq Flag, which has been permanently placed in the school. Many of our students

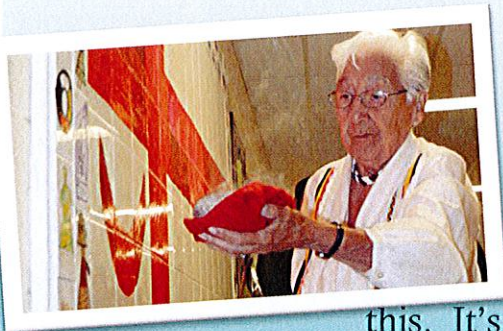
participated in the project and Elder Rose Morris did the smudging ceremony.

On June 16th I attended a meeting with Premier MacNeil, The Minister of Education, Karen Casey and a number of Deputy Ministers to address concerns regarding achievement rates of Mi'kmaq students, post secondary opportunities, Treaty Education and employment equity.

During the month of June there were several meetings that I attended, such as community meetings, monthly Fisheries meeting, Ponthook Trust Meeting, School Board meetings, School closing parties, Chief and Council meetings as well as office visits to both Medway and Wildcat.

Charmaine will be the Wildcat office on July 8th and 21st from 10 am - 12 pm and in the Medway office July 15th and 23rd at 9 am.

Chester Area Middle School honors Mi'kmaq Culture



On June 4, 2014 Chester Area Middle School unveiled a tile mural of the Mi'kmaq Flag. One of our Elders Rose Morris from Gold River Reserve was invited to the school to perform a smudging ceremony with the students and guest. Rose was quoted by the Chronicle Herald saying "I never attended anything so great as this. It's teaching the children about us, and it's so important.

Some people don't know. When the residential schools were going on, everything was swept under the rug...and now everyone's trying to learn more about native people and the hard times that we've been through. But we're still here and we still have our pride as native people."

Everyone enjoyed halibut chowder and salmon cooked by several students under the guidance and support of Shon Myra, also an Acadia First Nation band member, who donated salmon for this event.

Physical Activity Update – by Anita Howard

Researchers have linked sitting for long periods of time with a number of health concerns, including obesity and metabolic syndrome – a cluster of conditions that includes increased blood pressure, high blood sugar, excess body fat around the waist and abnormal cholesterol levels.

Too much sitting also seems to increase the risk of death from cardiovascular disease and cancer.

Try to get up and move around every hour through the day and join your local walking group when possible. Let's get moving!!

Wildcat: Evening walks take place at 6:30 pm Mondays and Wednesdays. They meet at the Store. A canoeing basics program is up and running and the children are having a blast.

Queens: Walking group meets at Queens Place every Wednesday at 6:30 pm rain or shine.

Gold River: Walking group meets at the Health Centre Monday and Tuesdays at noon.

Lacrosse introduction sessions are taking place July 14th at the Forest Height School – 9:00 am

for ages 10-18 and 10:30 am for ages 5 -9. Call Chrissy at the Health Centre to let her know you plan to attend.

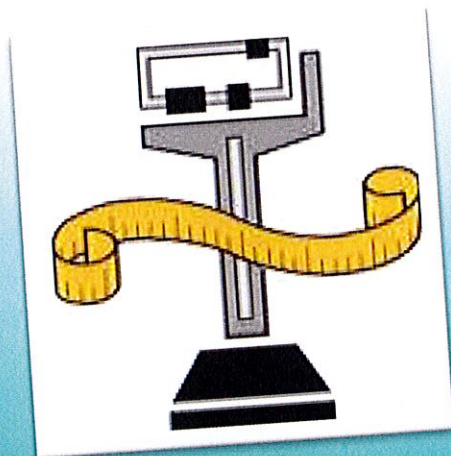
Yarmouth: I'm still looking for a volunteer/s to lead a walking group. If two people were interested then you could share the responsibility. Contact me if you are interested.

Lacrosse introduction session for children age 5 – 18 at the Mariners Centre, arena 2, August 16th from 9:00 am to 10:30 am. Call or email me if you plan to attend. I can be reached at (902) 685-2956 or afnpasc@gmail.com.

I'm at the Youth Centre on July 16th to discuss physical activity with the children.

Hammonds Plains: Walking group meets every Monday at noon. Call Jan to confirm you are planning to attend.

Movement is a medicine for creating change in a person's physical, emotional, and mental states. ~ Carol Welch



Biggest Loser Competition

Due to the offices being closed on July 31st. The Biggest Loser Competition deadline has been changed to August 11th.

We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

Shelburne News – submitted by Darlene Coulton

Office Hours:

July 2 – 11:00 am – 2:00 pm

July 3 – 11:00 am – 2:00 pm

July 7 – 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm

July 10 – Shelburne elder visits – 10-12 Office hours 1:00 – 5:00 pm

July 11 – Elders luncheon Shelburne – 11:00 am

July 15 – 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

July 16 – Barrington elders visits 10:00 am – 12:00 pm – Shelburne office 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm
Recreation Meeting 2:30 -3:30 pm

July 17 – Elders luncheon Barrington – 11:00am

July 21 – Shelburne office 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm

July 23 – 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm

July 24 – 11:00 am – 2:00 pm

Darlene will also be in the Yarmouth Office on:

July 14th – 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

July 21 – 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

The Office will be closed from July 28th and re-opening on August 11th for summer shut down.

All Elders will be contacted and given the information regarding the luncheons.

The Bingo at AFN Entertainment Centre is in full operation. I see that we have regular Bingo

players from the Shelburne area that are attending. If you haven't had the chance to come out to our Bingo I encourage you to do so. Our Bingo has all the up-to-date technology making it a very fun evening. We provide smoking and non-smoking rooms along with a canteen. Our friendly staff will be there to make your evening most enjoyable.

We are also in the process of setting up an exercise program for the seniors in the Shelburne/Barrington area to encourage physical activity and interaction with the seniors in your area. Anita Howard is planning this activity for these areas. Dates and locations will be announced at a later date.

We would also like to start a walking program for these areas anyone interested in taking part in this activity can contact me at 740-2077. This is opened to all ages.

Once again, I encourage you all to come out to the office and have a coffee and chat during my office hours.

I wish you all a safe and enjoyable summer!



Tri-County Multi-Cultural Festival 2014

Acadia First Nation will be participating in the 2014 Tri-County Multi-Cultural Festival from Friday July 11th – Sunday July 12th.

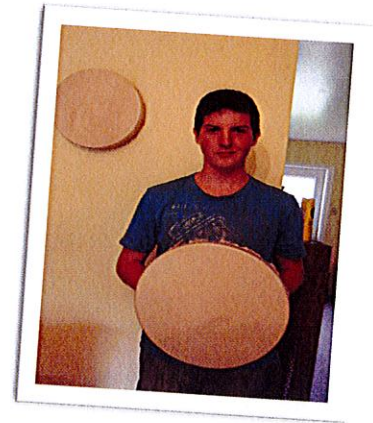
There will be activities on the waterfront all weekend long.

Looking for Vendors to sell and display their First Nation Crafts. Please contact Judy Boutilier at (902) 685-29565 or Melanie Purdy at (902) 742-5599.

The Drummer Boy from Ponhook!

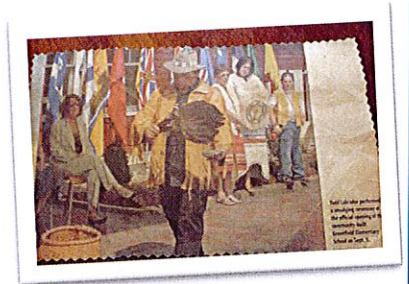
Lucas Francis

At 8 years old Lucas picked up his first drum, with Tina Dixon by his side teaching him how to drum. At 10 years old he made his first hand drum with Todd Labrador. Now 15 years old, Lucas has been called upon to drum at several community events in Queens County.



When asked, “How do you feel when you drum?” Lucas replied with “it feels comforting to drum”. He has drummed and sang the honour song at the White Point Lodge for the Sunrise Ceremony and the opening of the Mi’kmaq Garden at his school. Just last Friday he drummed at the opening of the Caledonia Provincial Ball Tournament. He participated in the Christmas on the Mersey River event where he canoed across the Mersey River and performed the Honour Song. Our Cultural Officer Judy Boutilier has called upon Lucas several times for different events she

Lucas lived on the Ponhook Reserve for the first 13 years of his life where he developed a love for nature. His hobbies include camping, fishing and hunting. Lucas has participated in the Annual Moose Hunt for the past two years. His long-term goal in life is to attend the NSCC of Cape Breton and become a Natural Resource Technician and obtain work as a DNR (Department of Natural Resource) or a DFO (Department of Fisheries and Oceans) Officer. He attended a Co-op with DNR last month and enjoyed it very much.



Members within the Liverpool area have expressed that Lucas should be acknowledged for his dedication and love for our Culture. His mother, Sherry Francis, was very proud to say, “he has a passion for his heritage and is proud to be Mi’kmaq”. Lucas told me his favorite subject in school was Mi’kmaq Studies because he could learn more about our heritage and enjoys class trips to Keji Park. He has been learning about the Indian Residential Schools and explained, he did not realize how bad it was until he learned more about it and the information sunk in. He said “ many people do not speak fluent Mi’kmaq and it is slowly fading away”. He also said he would be interested in learning our language if it was offered in his area.

Lucas would like to learn how to Grass Dance and said his future will include living on the Ponhook Reserve because that is home!



Services Offered by Area

Yarmouth

Services at the Yarmouth Health Centre will be as follows:

VON: July 10th

Dentist: July 8th, 15th and 22nd



Gold River

The VON will be available July 10th and 24th from 9:00 am to 11:00 am

Family Trip to Moncton will be July 18th and 19th

Wildcat

The VON will be available on July 22nd for the Wildcat Community.

Family Trip will be on July 21st and 22nd



Gold River will be hosting a Youth Workshop coordinated by Sarah Jerney, Species at Risk Technician.

Who: Youth ages 8 to 18

When: Monday, July 7th

Time: 11:00am – 3:00 pm

Where: Gold River Health Centre

- Identification Session
- Learn how to make your own recycled paper
- Play SARGO

Please call 627-1245 to register. Lunch and snacks will be provided.



CHIEF DEBORAH ROBINSON'S UPDATE CONTINUED

Brian is a Mi'kmaq from the Shubenacadie First Nation with a great deal of First Nation, Federal and Provincial work experience in the areas of governance, program and policy development and financial administration for First Nations. Brian has been mandated to work to improve the administration of the Band with the review of existing practices and policies along with the introduction and implementation of improved changes in these practices and policies. These actions will address community and federal government accountability and transparency expectations while improving accountability to the Band members.

The dissolution of the Acadia First Nation Gaming Board was a step taken to reduce costs to the First Nation and members while centralizing and streamlining decision-making and management of the Acadia First Nation business operations. As per the Gaming Agreement, the management and accountability responsibility now rests with the Chief and Band Council. The financial aspect is reported by the audit and finance committee which meet the day prior to our regular scheduled Yarmouth Chief and Band Council meeting. Gaming is a standing Council agenda item so as to maintain constant attention on our community businesses. At this time I would like to welcome Julian O'Connell, Inventory Manager to our team. Julian graduated from the University of British Columbia with a degree in Faculty of Commerce and Business Administration. With 29 years experience in retail, performing duties within store operations, marketing, merchandising and inventory, Julian brings an array of experience and is excelling in his position.

There have been a number of events that I have been called upon to take part in ceremonial activities representing the Acadia First Nation as your Chief. Most recent was the Grand Openings of the Acadia Consolidated School Tkipok Trail on June 17th as well as the AFN Entertainment Centre, which houses the bingo and new location for Gaming on the Yarmouth Reserve on May 24th, 2014. This additional revenue generating initiative resulted from extensive planning and will now provide a first class entertainment facility and gathering place for special events.

The other significant event for the Acadia First Nation was the visit by His Excellency the Right Honorable David Johnson, Governor General of Canada, to Gold River Reserve in recognition of the "After School Kids Program". This was indeed a proud moment for Mi'kmaq of Acadia First Nation to be one (1) of only two (2) communities selected in Nova Scotia for this prestigious honour.

I would like to take this opportunity to publicly offer a special thank you, on behalf of the members of our First Nation, to Mr. David Paul for his donation of a hand crafted "Walters Game" which was presented to the Right Honorable David Johnson, at this special event. This event was a beautiful blend of culture, ceremony and achievement for the Acadia First Nation.

I was pleased to accept an invitation on your behalf to take part in the Opening Ceremonies with welcoming remarks for the initiation and introduction to the new ferry, "Nova Star", as it embarks on a new schedule of sailing between Yarmouth, Nova Scotia and Portland, Maine. We will continue to support regional economic and cultural development which will form the basis of ongoing partnerships and initiatives which will benefit our First Nation and those around us.

CHIEF DEBORAH ROBINSON'S UPDATE CONTINUED

I have made every effort to attend all the invitations for community potlucks and gatherings as humanly possible and to take special time to visit with community elders and members whenever possible.

We have completed a series of community meetings that were requested by the membership and held from June 10th to June 25th in which a wide range of topics were discussed.

I would like to extend a congratulatory note to Alex Christmas of Membertou who is now our New District Chief, replacing the Late District Chief Reg Maloney of Indian Brook.

In the past year at Mi'kmaq Kina'matnewey (MK), there has been a lot of activity to try and meet the needs of the communities and the goals and objectives of the MK strategic plan. At the annual MK Symposium, we set our goals based on input put forward by the communities and the MK Board of Directors. When a community has an issue, it is brought forward to the MK Board of Directors and a decision is made based on the vote of the Chiefs.

To date, the Acadia First Nation has benefited from the MK Board in the area of language and culture, transportation, healthy and active living, and Provincial Education Services Agreement. There has been much accomplished through the MK, but there is still more work to be done. This work can be accomplished by communities working together with the MK Board of Directors in the best interest of the students.

In the area of language and culture, MK has set up language classes for the Headstart Program at the Acadia First Nation Youth Centre through the video conferencing unit. These classes will continue on a daily basis. MK has assisted the community with funding for a Mi'kmaq walking trail which will be a valuable resource to those within and outside First Nation community.

Through the Nova Scotia Department of Education, Mi'kmaq language classes are set up online so that any student can access this service for which they receive a high school credit for the course. MK staff monitor the course, provide assistance to students, and present them with a mark at the end of the course.

For many years the funding provided to the Acadia First Nation has remained the same. There is a drastic need for change due to the higher cost in transportation. This is a topic that MK has reviewed and the communities will benefit from the review. On May 28, 2014, I informed my Council members that Acadia First Nation was successful in an increase for the last fiscal year, 2013/2014, for transportation costs. Further to this MK has approved a permanent increase in our transportation budget as required to meet our community needs.

There are many opportunities available in the area of recreation for students. MK is committed to addressing the needs of the students and we fully encourage students to participate in recreation activities. A healthy person is a happy person and we will encourage students to maintain healthy and active lifestyles while supporting every opportunity for them to take part in recreation activities. MK has supported students participating in the North America Indigenous Games, the Canada Games, the Nation Hockey Championships and the Annual MK Aboriginal Track and Field Championships.

CHIEF DEBORAH ROBINSON'S UPDATE CONTINUED

Last year we awarded funding for the Physical Activity Strategic. Anita Howard has filled this position and is currently working with all areas to increase the awareness and participation in physical activity. She is currently organizing elder walking groups, lacrosse, and archery and is seeking input from community members on different activities within their communities.

With the Provincial Education Services Agreement, the Province of Nova Scotia has taken on the responsibility for the success of our Mi'kmaq students in the Provincial Schools. There have been support services provided to schools, such as math enhancement tutoring and the provision of a Race Relations Coordinator. The communities now pay the same rate of tuition across the province and the communities will not pay more than what is provided in the grant. This will prevent the communities from accruing debt because of unpaid tuitions. There is more communication and networking through the Education Services Agreement and this is a benefit for all.

Over the past six months, as the Lead Chief on Governance, Urban and Mi'kmaq Women Portfolios for the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs, I have seen much work and progress on these different files and attended many events. As of June 25th, 2014 I was re-elected as the President of Mi'kmaq Family and Children Services. I am the Atlantic Policy Congress Co-Chair and also sit on many other native organization boards as the Acadia First Nation Representative.

2014 began with a strong focus on governance and identity (who we are as Mi'kmaq people) as key mandates for the Assembly and the staff of Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn Negotiation Office (KMKNO). I have been working closely with KMKNO to oversee their work on Mi'kmaq Citizenship and the development of a ratification procedure. A lot of work went into planning regional sessions to discuss these topics and I was excited for those sessions that I was able to attend and present your views and concerns.

We have very distinct views across Nova Scotia on how we define "Who is a Mi'kmaq", but one thing is clear – we all want to work on this together. There is no question that the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia are committed to building a procedure for ratification that is culturally appropriate and that will work and be understood by everyone. For more information on these discussions or to find out about future sessions, please contact the KMKNO office at 1-888-803-3880.

We have also spent the past six months examining the concept of having a Mi'kmaq government building. During this time we completed a business case analysis and feasibility assessment to ensure that we had all the necessary information. We learned a lot through this work and we are committed to still working towards finding a central place – that is our own – for the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs to come together.

This has been a sad year, for the Mi'kmaq Women and Urban Mi'kmaq Portfolios. The Nova Scotia Women's Association of Nova Scotia and the Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Centre planned events to bring awareness to the disappearance of Loretta Saunders. I was heartbroken when I heard the news of this tragic loss. But she too, while in school, recognized the importance of advocating for our missing and murdered Aboriginal Women. It hurts us all when we are confronted with the reality of how many of our own are still missing and unaccounted for and my goal is to make sure they are not forgotten.

CHIEF DEBORAH ROBINSON'S UPDATE CONTINUED

own are still missing and unaccounted for and my goal is to make sure they are not forgotten.

Although I'm not the lead Chief for these next portfolios, I have certainly worked closely with the Assembly on major decisions which as our united stance against hydraulic fracturing, how we can work together to create jobs for our Mi'kmaq people, Mi'kmaq land use and who has the right to benefit from our Treaties. Most recently we brought all these discussions points to Premier MacNeil and the Nova Scotia Cabinet Ministers at the Joint Meeting of the Chiefs and Cabinet held May 20, 2014 in Glooscap First Nation.

I am proud to say that our Rights have been recognized and affirmed by the highest courts in this country and we need to make sure that our future generations can benefit from this them as well. As we continue to work together to define our own citizens we will be able to ensure that our Next Seven Generations benefit from the Treaty and Aboriginal Rights and Title that we are working so hard to secure and implement.

I am pleased to announce the planning for the National Aboriginal Women's Summit (NAWS) is scheduled to take place on October 22, 2014 in Membertou. I will keep you informed as plans unfold.

Also, the Annual Assembly of First Nations Conference will be hosted by Nova Scotia and will be held in Halifax from July 15th to 17th. This will provide an excellent opportunity to showcase the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia and have our successes, plans and challenges brought to the attention of the country's chiefs and other political leaders. I will be there to represent our community and will report back following this important meeting of First Nation leaders from across the country.

Last year funding was approved to hire a Communication Officer for Acadia First Nation. Sonya Isaac-Surette was hired to fill this position and has been working hard compiling information to share in our monthly Newsletter and keeping the newly developed website updated. You are encouraged to contact Sonya with any newsworthy items that you would like to share in the newsletter. We have several success stories that Sonya is currently working on. She is conducting interviews with members and will be sharing them in upcoming newsletters.

In the spirit of openness and transparency I encourage any member to contact me should you have any questions regarding this report or any matter affecting the Acadia First Nation.

In Mi'kmaq Unity

Chief Deborah Robinson

Pre-Employment Program

Looking for interested candidates in the Yarmouth Area. If there are enough interested we would consider holding a Pre-Employment Program late summer or early fall.

The pre-employment program will provide learners with an opportunity to focus on personal growth and preparation for career development and employment. It will assist participants in realizing success by discovering, learning and demonstrating the life and employment ready skills that will ease transition into the labour market.

Length of the program will be 8 week. Start date to be determined.

The project objectives are:

- To provide pre-employment skills
- To enable students the opportunity to enter a challenging career or further their education
- To provide the skill set necessary to feel a sense of accomplishment and pride in themselves
- To enable students to become more proactive and self-determined
- To enhance the skills of students to ensure they are contributing positively to the growth of their communities
- To develop and enhance students' self-confidence and self-esteem
- Training programs that are focused on personal and career development

Pre Requisites are:

- Grade 12/GED equivalent preferred but not necessary
- MUST attend a Recruitment Session
- MUST complete a Career Cruising Session

If this is a program you would be interested in, please contact Wanda Westhaver at (902) 685-2956 or email at: wandaneo@gmail.com

7TH ANNUAL
MI'KMAW VALLEY
YOUTH GATHERING



Where: (Host) BEAR RIVER FIRST NATION

Date: Thursday, July 3, 2014

Registration: 9am **Time:** 10am - 6pm

Contact: Your Band Office or
Darlene Peters-Copeland

1-800-263-8686

