

# MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2025



FEBRUARY IS MKWA-  
GIIZIS (BEAR MOON)

## Cooking Up Connections:

On January 23, 2025, from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM, the Jordan's Principle Team hosted an exciting and interactive Cooking Night in partnership with the Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre and Roots to Harvest. This evening was a wonderful opportunity for community members to come together, learn new skills, and share a love of food. Participants had the chance to prepare and enjoy two delicious dishes, with each person taking home some of the tasty creations to enjoy with their families.

The evening was filled with laughter, conversation, and, of course, great food, as everyone worked together to create these mouthwatering meals. It was more than just a cooking event—it was a chance to connect, share knowledge, and celebrate the joy of food as a community.

In addition to the fun, there was a door prize drawing, and we'd like to congratulate Averil LaDuke, the lucky winner of a beautiful pot set! We hope it helps make many more delicious meals in the future.

A huge Chi Miigwetch goes out to Sheena Campbell, the Wiisinadaa Let's Eat Nutrition Support Worker, for her dedication and tireless effort in making this event such a success. Your passion for supporting the community and promoting healthy, sustainable eating is truly inspiring. Thank you for everything you do!

"LET FEBRUARY SET YOUR DREAMS IN  
MOTION; IT'S A MONTH OF UNFOLDING  
POSSIBILITIES" - UNKNOWN



## Traditional Care Update

Happy New Year, everyone!

We kicked off the year by announcing the winners of our December Photo Contest! Congratulations to **Jasper**, who captured the joy of sledding—such a classic winter favorite! And a big shout-out to **Vanessa** for sharing a heartwarming photo of her family gearing up for Thunder Bay's beloved Parade of Lights. It was a great way to celebrate the season! If you were at the parade, you might've spotted our Rocky Bay Child & Family Services logo in the parade lineup with the jeep club! Thank you to all who participated in the Family Engagement Photo Contest; we appreciate each one of you. We hope the winners enjoy their well-deserved prizes!

In BZA, we spent a chilly day serving up warm lunch to those interested in learning about becoming a Traditional Care Provider. It was a great opportunity to connect, and congratulations to **Ray Nobis**, our attendance draw winner! We hope you enjoyed your prize and lunch.



A big focus for us this January has been sharpening our skills through ongoing learning, and we're excited to soon offer in-person PRIDE training to our Traditional Care Providers. We can't wait to spend time with those who will be participating and continue building our community together.

As always, if you or someone you know is interested in becoming a Traditional Care Provider or learning more about the role, don't hesitate to reach out to the TC Team today! We're here to help!

## Nurturing Families, One Hamper at a Time

This January, the Traditional Care Team kicked off the year by spreading some love and warmth to our kinship families with special hampers, each packed with all the ingredients needed to make a hearty shepherd's pie. It was a small way for us to show our appreciation and bring some comfort during the chilly winter days.

But that's just the beginning! We have more exciting surprises in store for the coming months, and we can't wait to share what's next. Stay tuned for what we have planned—it's sure to bring even more joy to our amazing families.

We truly value every one of our kinship families and the unwavering support, care, and dedication they provide. Your contributions mean the world to us, and we're so grateful for all that you do. Thank you for being such an important part of our community! <3



### Clear the Air: Your Path to a Smoke-Free Future

In January, Prevention Manager Melanie Thompson hosted an insightful Smoking Cessation Program in Thunder Bay, partnering with Ontario Health to offer expert advice and strategies for quitting smoking. This session wasn't just about quitting—it was about empowering individuals with the knowledge and support they need to take control of their health. Participants learned about the physical and mental aspects of quitting, including helpful techniques for managing cravings, the benefits of going smoke-free, and how to stay motivated throughout the journey.

As a special treat, attendees were also served a warm, savory homemade **chicken-dumpling soup**, creating a cozy atmosphere to nourish both body and spirit during the event.

**BZA community members**, don't worry—Melanie will be bringing the **Smoking Cessation Program** to you next! Join her at the **BZA Community Hall on February 4th from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM**. Whether you're considering quitting or just curious about the process, this is a great opportunity to learn how to break free from smoking and improve your overall well-being. Melanie is excited to meet you and support you on this life-changing journey!



### Embers of Joy: BZA's Cozy Bonfire Night

In January, our amazing Cultural Liaison Coordinator, Peggy Lynch, sparked some magic with a cozy Bonfire Social outside the BZA Community Hall. This wasn't just any gathering—it was an evening designed for everyone, from the youngest to the wisest, to come together and create memories by the fire.



As the flames flickered, guests were treated to a spread of classic bonfire favorites: hot dogs, hot chocolate, cookies, marshmallows, baby marshmallows, and of course, chips. But it wasn't just about the food—it was about the stories shared, the laughter that echoed, and the pure joy of being in each other's company.

The night was alive with warmth—not just from the fire, but from the genuine connections made as the BZA community came together to celebrate and enjoy the simple, beautiful moments of life. We're so thankful for these gatherings that remind us of the power of shared stories and shared smiles.

A huge thank you to Peggy for creating such a memorable experience!





### A Night Out: Elders Enjoy a Delicious Farewell to 2024

Our final Elders Social of 2024 took place at Tony Roma's, where the elders were treated to a meal of their choice—everyone got to pick their favorite dish and enjoy a night out on the town. Winonah Thompson, our dedicated Band Representative, has worked tirelessly to ensure these monthly social gatherings continue, creating memorable experiences for our cherished elders.

This social was a little different from the usual, as it moved away from Winonah's signature homemade



dinners and the beloved 7 rounds of bingo for household items. But even with the change, the spirit of the gathering remained strong, and everyone had a wonderful time. It's a testament to the warmth of the community that, no matter the setting, the joy of coming together was still felt by all.

A heartfelt thank you to Winonah for her hard work and dedication, and to our elders for making these events so special!



### Bingo, Bannock, and Big Fun: January's Adult Social Recap

January 7th, 2025 was an exciting day as we hosted our first adult social of the year, and it was even more special because it took place in our brand-new RBCFS building in Thunder Bay! The venue was buzzing with energy as familiar faces and new friends gathered to kick off the year together.

The night was filled with delicious food, starting with hearty bannock burgers paired with refreshing Caesar salad and macaroni salad. To top it all off, everyone enjoyed the sweet tang of lemon meringue tarts—the perfect treat to end the evening on a high note.



Of course, no social is complete without some friendly competition, and we had 7 exciting rounds of bingo. Whether you were a seasoned player or new to the game, there were plenty of laughs and prizes to go around, ensuring that no one left empty-handed.

It was a fantastic way to start the year, and we're already looking forward to our **next adult social on February 10th!** Be sure to mark your calendars—we can't wait to see you all there for another fun-filled event!



### Lights, Camera, Community: January's Family Movie Night!

This January, our Cultural Liaison Coordinator, Peggy Lynch, hosted an unforgettable Family Movie Night featuring the *Sonic* movie at the BZA Community Hall, offering a fun and relaxing evening for families in the area to come together and enjoy a night out.

As families settled in for the film, they were treated to a spread of delicious snacks—refreshing watermelon, the classic comfort food of popcorn, crispy fries, and savory meat, cheese, and pickle trays. It was the perfect mix of flavors to keep everyone munching and mingling as they enjoyed the movie.



But the event wasn't just about the food—it was about bringing people together to relax, connect, and make memories with one another. Whether families were laughing together at the film or chatting with neighbors, the evening was filled with a sense of community and warmth. There's nothing quite like sharing those simple moments with friends and family, and we were so glad to see everyone come together to enjoy this special night.

We are already looking forward to hosting more Family Movie Nights in the future and can't wait to continue building these cherished experiences with the incredible community members of BZA. Stay tuned for more exciting events—we can't wait to see you all again!



### A Circle of Wisdom: Learning and Sharing in BZA

In January, our dedicated Cultural Liaison Coordinator, Peggy Lynch, hosted a meaningful Sharing Circle for the BZA community. The evening was designed to bring people together to deepen their understanding of the Four Sacred Medicines and other valuable teachings shared by Elder Mike Esquega. Elder Mike guided the circle with wisdom and insights, creating an open space for learning and reflection.

As participants learned about these important traditions, they were treated to a delicious spread of food, ensuring that no one left with an empty stomach. It was an evening of both nourishment and knowledge, where the BZA community came together to learn, share, and grow.



We are so grateful for the opportunity to gather and learn from one another, and we look forward to more events like this in the future!

