



Nujignua'tegeg

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Families First prepares Sweat Lodge

“We’re always getting a request to do more culture related programs,” said Christine Metallic, the Cultural Coordinator with Families First.

Six weeks of information sessions just finished on May 4th. All the sessions were leading to the upcoming fast.

“We started off with the medicine gathering ... and [identified] what they’re for, and holistically how you can start taking care of yourself,” Metallic said.

All the sessions were aimed at different ways of taking care of yourself, with a holistic understanding in mind. “As Mi’gmaq people, what ceremonies are out there,” Metallic asks.

Some of the ceremonies that are being practiced closely mimic the land, as the snow melts away.

“The fast – it’s about shedding stuff from the past, and just being able to move on,” said Metallic. “Spring is the time a lot of ceremonies take place. Spring and summer. Our highest ceremonies and our Sweats are taking place.”

This is the first time Families First is hosting this fast, but it is certainly not the first time this fast is being held.

“I have family members that have been fasting forever,” Metallic said. “We’ve been fasting in our territory – we just don’t talk about it. We just don’t come right out and say this is what we’re doing.”

But for whatever reason, right now seems to be a good time. While there are obstacles in just about anything you try to do, Metallic said these last few events have “been a breeze.”

“People are actually coming out, wanting to volunteer, wanting to learn,” she said.

The final session ended with Karen Kimbell and her knowledge of herbal medicines.



Well over a dozen people showed at Karen Kimbell’s teachings on traditional medicine, on May 4th.

If interest continues, Metallic said she could see sessions such as these being available quarterly. It depends on demand.

“Every program that’s based in Families First is based on our client’s needs.”

The sweats are open to anyone. But it’s always asked that people refrain from alcohol and drugs – even for the days leading up to the Sweat Lodge.

“While we have people who are fasting one, two, or three days, not everybody is going to be fasting,” Metallic said.

Usually, when someone starts a fast, they go into a sweat first. And they finish their fast by going in to another sweat. Since people will be fasting for different lengths of time, organizers plan to have a sweat each morning.

Volunteers are also definitely welcomed. “We’re gonna need help in preparing the area. Building the teepees, the Sweat Lodge, keeping the area clean,” she said. “It ends up becoming a workload.”



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Grass fire contained, despite strong wind



Fields are drier in the spring than you may think. The fire on April 30th was proof. A fire began in the fields located in and around Dundee Road.

"By the time the Fire Department got there – even with the quick response – there was damage done to the property," said Peter Arsenault, the Director of Public Security. "They fought it quickly, but it also moves quickly, because of the wind, the breeze picks it up and fire generates rather quickly with dry fuel like that."

A shed was burned, as well as portions of fences, but no one was injured. However, there have been some concerns with some Elders and respiratory difficulties.

There are unsubstantiated reports of someone on an all-terrain vehicle, dropping matches. As of now, it is not believed the fire was set intentionally. Often matches dropped on walking trails, or cigarette butts grow into large fires around this time of year.

what happened."

Unfortunately, there are always fires in the spring. In the past, some Firemen have even been injured as a result. In some areas, grass fires often get out of control after being deliberately set by people who believe it is good for the soil, when the opposite is actually true.

"It has environmental impacts," Arsenault said. "It's also bad for our groundwater. Plastics burn, and they seep into the soil, and eventually go down into the groundwater – the very water that we drink."

In an attempt to curb the damage caused by these fires, the Fire Department has been conducting controlled burns, to create a buffer between dry areas, and people's property. It is the only tool available to help limit the damage.

The only tool other than raising awareness.

"I think it's someone along the lines of not realizing the consequences of their actions," said Arsenault. "I don't think it was their deliberate action to set somebody's property on fire, but as a result – that is



Gerard Wysote using a garden hose to fight the fire. It was good luck that he was there, as the wind was carrying the flames quickly.



Gary Caplin, Fire Chief for the Listuguj Fire Department, along with other members of the LFD attempting to contain the fire.

Free to buy beer in Listuguj

A recent ruling on cross-border trade allows New Brunswickers to buy beer in Listuguj or Cross-Point without fear of being charged.

The ruling lifts the restrictions imposed by the N.B government that charged Gérard Comeau for importing more than five cases of beer into the province. The government of N.B. has until the end of the month to appeal the decision.

During the days following the ruling, there were reports that the sales of alcohol in Listuguj and Cross-Point stores increased, as the prices of beer and other alcoholic beverages are cheaper in Quebec than N.B. Christine Bujold, cashier at the Restigouche Drive-Thru – a Listuguj store located on

the Interprovincial Boulevard – noted that there wasn't an increase in the number of clients.

"It's almost the same," she said. "But now instead of buying two or three cases of beer, they fill their car trunk."

Canada is a country that signs international Free Trade agreements with countries around the world. Economic Development Minister, Navdeep Bains, called the decision a "positive development."

This legal battle for the recognitions of the Constitutional right to cross-border trade is a reminder of First Nations legal battles to implement the Jay Treaty signed in November 1744 which reaffirmed

"that First Nations could cross the border without harassment and not pay tax or duty on goods." The implementation of the Treaty was challenged many times.



A Tracadie man buying beer at the Restigouche Drive-Thru on May 3rd. A recent ruling allows him to cross the border back into New Brunswick without fear of being charged.

The Diamonds and Pearls Mother's Day Social

The Diamonds and Pearls Mother's Day Social was held Saturday, May 7th, at the Listuguj Community Development Center (Bingo Hall). Doors opened at 5 p.m and supper, which consisted of chicken, rice vegetables and salads (made by Elders Jean Martin and Donna Wysote) was served at 5:30 p.m.

Patty Martin was the Master of Ceremonies. The fundraiser event's

agenda was a mix of live performances, video sketches, door prizes as well as a fundraiser basket. Guest singer 'Paul Jensen' was also in attendance.

The Diamonds and Pearls Mother's Day Social event made proceeds amounting \$5,000.00; which was divided between the Elder's trip to St Anne De Beaupre and The Veteran's Lodge. (\$2,500.00 Each) A gift basket was also

raffled during the night to raise funds for Carter Cyr. Proceeds for Carter amounted to \$1,020.00, and an additional \$2,000 was donated from the St Anne's Committee and Tina Barnaby. St Anne's also donated \$1,500 to Zaccari Barnaby.

All in all it we hope it was a memorable event for the mothers, the organizers are glad to have raised proceeds for the community.



1. Community members attended the event for a memorable night

2. Supper was provided by Elders Jean Martin & Donna Wysote

3. Dirty Dancing Skit performed by Chad Gedeon and Maddie Metallic

4. The Meal served was chicken, rice, salad, vegetables and a bread bun. Desert was strawberry shortcake.

5. Live Skit "Uptown Funk" performed by Chad Gedeon, Tyler Morrison, Sailor Lloyd Jacques and Gullege Isaac.

6. Beginning of the Dirty Dancing Skit.

7. Audience choosing the winner in the Chippendale skit.

Chaleur Terminals in court May 17th



The crowd that showed up the morning of March 14 – the first date in the New Brunswick Court of Queen's Bench. The Mi'gmaq Mawiommi Secretariat filed an application to quash approvals to build oil storage tanks in Belledune, which could bring 220 rail cars of oil along the Restigouche River daily.

Chaleur Terminals Inc. and the New Brunswick government will be back in court Monday, May 16th.

The previous two dates, March 14th and 15th, were taken up entirely by the Mi'gmaq Mawiommi Secretariat (MMS) lawyers, with all the testimonies and documentation that had been prepared.

Troy Jerome, Executive Director of the MMS, said that while it's impossible to tell what the outcome may be, he felt encouraged by the first two days.

"We believe, at least, the court was listening to what we had to put forward," he said.

This is the first "duty to consult" case in

the province of New Brunswick. The judge asked for legal precedents, but none exist. There are others across the country, of course.

Based on those cases, Jerome believes the application has solid ground to stand on.

"Consultation is not just there for the Aboriginals to let off steam," Jerome was told by a lawyer from western Canada. "It should be meaningful, and it should have a reason."

Meaningful consultations should include involving, and working with the concerns of the First Nation communities.

People are encouraged to attend, and sit in the courtroom on May 17th if possible.

"[We] want the lawyers, and the judge, to see Mi'gmaq citizens sitting in the courtroom, so they may think, 'this is important to these people,'" Jerome said.

Spring Fishing



Every spring Joe Sark, left, and Lloyd Arsenault, right, are seen along the Restigouche River holding a cup of coffee and their fishing rods, exercising their rights and enjoying their tradition.



Jill Metallic enjoys traditional activities like hunting and fishing. Her skills are obvious with these catches that were given to the Elders. (Photo: submitted)

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