

DIBIKI GIIZIS DIBAAJIMOWINAN

(MOON TELLING STORIES)



* ANIIN * BOOZHOO * GREETINGS *

Welcome relatives to Manitoba Moon Voices Inc's inaugural quarterly newsletter. This newsletter and each forthcoming newsletter will tell stories about what MMVI accomplished each fiscal quarter. For example, this newsletter, Issue 1:Q4 represents events that occurred October 2022 - December 2022, Quarter Four. The next issue, Issue 2:Q1 will reveal stories that occurred January 2023 - March 2023 and so forth.

To begin, we would like to share with you the story of our newsletter's name: **Dibiki Giizis Dibaajimowinan** (Moon Telling Stories). In January 2023, Kathy Boulanger-Budd, MMVI employee, was offered tobacco to come up with a name for our newsletter. At MMVI, Kathy is our in-office go to person on Indigenous language and tradition. Kathy is Ojibway/Cree from Berens River, Manitoba, Treaty 5 Territory. Kathy is a fluent speaker of Ojibway as it was her first language and understands Cree that was spoken by both maternal and paternal grandparents.

After consulting her family, Kathy gifted us with **Dibiki Giizis Dibaajimowinan** (Moon Telling Stories). MMVI staff and Board of Directors would like to say gitchi miiqwetch (a big thank you) to Kathy for honouring us with her knowledge.



CULTURALLY CENTRED HEALING

The National Women’s Association of Canada expanded its healing and cultural services. Meetings are no longer boring boardroom procedures, but cultural events.

In November 2022, MMVI’s Executive Director and four board members visited NWAC’s new Resiliency Lodge in Chelsea, Quebec and new headquarters in Gatineau, Quebec. “The trip was amazing! I never felt more taken care of and nurtured in my entire life” said Mel Critch (MMVI Co-Chair).

The first of its kind in Canada, the Indigenous Women’s Resiliency Lodge is not only a place, but it is also a program. Built in response to the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls for Justice, the Resiliency Lodge “is based on the outcome of Elder and community-level consultations that focused on how to provide critical healing programs and services.” (quoted from NWAC 21/22 AGA)



Based on traditional knowledge, the Resiliency Lodge promotes land-based healing and meeting. Each room is themed. “All the rooms are decorated,” said Ashleigh Bear (MMVI Board Member), who stayed in the Inuit Room. Gayle Pruden (MMVI Board Member) stayed in the Metis Room. The room is decorated with Metis imagery, like the Metis sash and ceremonial items, like the feather. There is a place to burn Medicines. Louis Riel’s image is on the wall. And there is a Metis Elder doll laying on the bed, wearing the familiar Metis-blue one sees on the infinity flag. “It was a beautiful space with a lot attention to detail,” Denise Cook (MMVI Co-Chair) said.

Denise took pictures of a seating area, which is off from the dining area. There are seal fur pillows and a polar bear rug. A kayak decorates the ceiling. The view outside the window is incredible - nature at its most comforting. The Resiliency Lodge seating area has the feel of stepping into a museum display.





There is a space, outside the Resiliency Lodge in the forest, that honours MMIWG2S+. A Red Dress hangs there. The space “felt peaceful but also sad,” said Ashleigh, who has worked directly with MMIWG2S+ families. “It was such a beautiful spot,” Ashleigh observed. The MMVI group took a moment of silence to honour the space and think about the MMIWG2S+ relatives and their families. “It was nice to stand there on the land and just think about them.....You could hear the wind blowing through the trees,” Ashleigh said. Ashleigh also noted that she took the opportunity to soak in a copper bath that was filled with medicine, cedar. The copper bath is in the pool area of the Resiliency Lodge. Ashleigh said she left the Resiliency Lodge uplifted and rejuvenated.

“I will forever be grateful for the time [at the Resiliency Lodge] and I hope we can bring the same beautiful experience here to our relatives in Manitoba,” Mel said.



The MMVI crew also visited the Social, Cultural and Economic Innovation Center, the new NWAC headquarters in Gatineau, Quebec. On the main floor is a meeting room with a carving of a woman made from a single piece of wood. The carving evokes thoughts of ancient gods and Shkaakaamikwe (Mother Earth). There is a gift store and a café in the new Centre. There is a space that pays tribute to the children of residential schools and the children who never made it home. NWAC's Social, Cultural and Economic Innovation Center is a place that honours and furthers reconciliation.



AGA'ING

MMVI held its Annual General Assembly on November 26, 2022. The AGA was held on urban reservation land at the new Wyndham Garden Winnipeg Airport Hotel, owned by Long Plain First Nation. The AGA was a hybrid situation which allowed MMVI membership and board members to participate in-person or virtually, via a Meeting Owl. The Meeting Owl allows those attending virtually to see the full meeting space.



AGAs are routine affairs, but this year’s AGA produced a Youth Council, which was not part of the planned agenda. The Youth Council formed organically because so many youths were nominated for the one vacant Board of Directors Youth Representative spot. Each nominated youth was given an opportunity to address the audience – a hard task, even when prepared, but each youth had to speak on the spur of the moment. It was an educational moment that allowed six youth to speak about their experience and why they want to be on the Board of MMVI. After an electronic election, Angelina Perea was voted to MMVI’s board as the Youth Representative. The process of electing MMVI’s Youth Representative inspired Shannon Hoskie, MMVI Executive Director, to bring all nominated youth together and form MMVI’s new Youth Council. The Council will start meeting in 2023.



GATHERING AGAIN



After years of working and gathering virtually, MMVI held an in-person holiday open house on December 20, 2022. Prizes were given out and food was served. Because we are at the start of meeting in person again, we were not sure on what to expect. It was nice to have a full house as we honoured the season and each other.

Dibiki Giizis Dibaajimowinan (Moon Telling Stories) was put together by Gav Chippeway and the MMVI team.

Comments and questions can be directed to:

Gav Chippeway
Communications Coordinator
Manitoba Moon Voices Inc.
301-286 Smith Street
Winnipeg, MB R3C 1K4

Phone: 204-942-1828
E-mail: Communications@mmvi.ca

