Another year has passed. In this last year as in any other, our nation’s experience was full of challenges, some of which brought success and others that brought important lessons. Nevertheless, our community has continued to see growth through many efforts of working on initiatives that ensure sustainability of our land and resources. As always we are not only looking at needs of the current generation, we are also looking at the needs of the generations to come.

The most recent months of 2016 have seen an age-old challenge brought to light, which our nations’ women have fought since Indian affairs set out to exclude them from our nations. I am reminded of women like Evelyn O’ Bom saw in, Mary Two-Axe Early and many others in their unrelenting pursuit to ensure that they were women, would be re-instated. Although in their lifetime these women saw minor victories, they set the ground for the fight to continue. We have, since Mrs. O’ Bom sawin’s passing, seen one generation of our women’s children reclaim a status that was to insure to the men of our nation’s families without disruption. In her spirit, we continue the fight to right these wrongs.

Hopefully, 2017 will see full equality brought to the families of our women who were discriminated against because of gender and of our men who lost their status because of their decision to fight for our country. These are but a few important challenges brought to the forefront by cases such as the Descheneaux case which re-addresses gender discrimination.

With this achievement will come another great challenge: that of creating an inclusive environment and re-inding our community spirit. Undoubtedly, culture erosion is of great concern for our Council and Community. It is therefore imperative that we as a community take a serious look at who we are as a people and ensure that generations to come can grow with cultural pride and investment. By working together we can bring restitution to our collective experience and cultivate a healthy community environment for our children to come.

Happy New Year!
In peace and friendship,
Chief Rick O’ Bom sawin
Word from councilors

FLORENCE BENEDICT, Councilor

Kwai,
Already a year as Councillor! Time flies and so much remains to be done.
I would like to thank all those who encouraged me with their kind words in my moments of doubt over the last year, which helped me improve and continue to represent you.

Here are some of the events which have attracted attention in recent weeks:

• The relocation of the Post Office at 58 Waban-Aki street, effective November 15, which will undoubtedly improve access for our elders and people with reduced mobility. We are still waiting for the push button to open the door automatically.

• Ms Marcelle O’Bomsawin, in charge of the Odanak community library, in collaboration with the Department of Education, organized a trip to the Montreal Book Fair on November 19th for all members of the community wishing to attend. This activity was a great success with almost thirty participants. At the Fair, we had the opportunity to meet some well-known artists and celebrities. Some of us even took some pictures with their favorite authors. It was a wonderful day!

• The official opening of the Odanak community library was held on November 30 (AWIKHICANIGA MIKOK), which means “THE BOOK HOUSE” in Abenaki. Nearly sixty people attended the event. Guests included Chief Rick O’Bomsawin, Councillors Alain and Claire O’Bomsawin, Alain Laroche from INAC, the mayors of Pierreville and Saint-François-du-Lac, as well as our priest/missionary Mr. Pierre Houle who blessed our new library. The library was relocated to 102-B Sibosis street (formerly the Band Council offices) as of September 14.

• The 43rd Annual Gathering of Members of Quebec Native Women (QNW) was held from December 2 to 5, 2016 at the Sheraton Hotel in Laval. It goes without saying that it was a meeting filled with emotion on account of the recent events in Val-d’Or. Several topics were discussed, such as the Deschenenaux case, the charges that were not taken against Val-d’Or police officers and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls that will soon be opened. During the same weekend, elections were held to elect the President. Ms. Viviane Michel was re-elected for a third term. We would like to congratulate Ms. Michel, a woman of heart who is very committed to her members.

• The official opening of the Odanak community library was held on November 30 (AWIKHICANIGA MIKOK), which means “THE BOOK HOUSE” in Abenaki. Nearly sixty people attended the event. Guests included Chief Rick O’Bomsawin, Councillors Alain and Claire O’Bomsawin, Alain Laroche from INAC, the mayors of Pierreville and Saint-François-du-Lac, as well as our priest/missionary Mr. Pierre Houle who blessed our new library. The library was relocated to 102-B Sibosis street (formerly the Band Council offices) as of September 14.

• The relocation of the Post Office at 58 Waban-Aki street, effective November 15, which will undoubtedly improve access for our elders and people with reduced mobility. We are still waiting for the push button to open the door automatically.

This company is committed to ensuring that materials are recycled and reused according to state-of-the-art methods throughout Quebec. Recyclo-Environnement also offers an integrated material management service (IT asset management, furniture, appliances, etc.). It is interesting to note that their collection and processing services are entirely free for a wide variety of products.

The Recyclo-Centre is a socioprofessional integration company that allows people who are far from the labor market to acquire specific skills and knowledge. Nearly ten members of the Odanak community have benefited from this program and are now, for the most part, hired on a permanent basis. This company also participates in the integration and valorization of individuals in order to contribute positively to the society. For more information, I invite you to contact them: 450-556-0791.

Ms. Benny Watso, production director, Ms. Marie-Andrée Siros, director of the Recyclo-Centre and Recyclo-Environnement, and Ms. Jacynte Siros, former director of the Recyclo-Centre.

There is always a bit of nostalgia around the Holiday season.

We naturally think of the people who have left us recently or who have been gone for some time, people who are alone for the Holidays and families in need. The Holiday season is a time of forgiveness, sharing and reconciliation. Don’t hesitate to make a call to your relatives or to visit them.

Hoping you all had a very happy Holiday season. I wish you all a wonderful New Year filled with joy, health and prosperity.

Looking forward to talking to you soon.

RÉJEAN OOMBOSAWIN, Councilor

Kuyaw Mnzwi Wibanakiaik, DEAR FELLOW ABENAKI PEOPLE,

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you a prosperous 2017 with your family and loved ones.

EDUCATION

I am pleased to announce that Abenaki language courses will resume in 2017.

LAND

The progress of this file is proceeding normally. In fact, as these lines are being written, a second meeting is scheduled for December 2016 to draft a Land Code to better manage and administer our land. This process will continue for two years for a final production which will be the subject of a public presentation.

SOMETHING NEW ON OUR COMMUNITY RADIO!

I am delighted to host a radio show on CKBN 90.5 beginning in January 2017, every Monday from 8 to 9 pm. This show will be devoted to a series of subjects dealing with history, culture and language, through songs, music, tales and legends, interviews, etc.

I invite all of you to tune in on 90.5 FM beginning in January. For suggestions, please email me at: obomsawinr@gmail.com. For those living outside Quebec, remember that you can also tune in via the CKBN.ca website.

KCHI NIWASKW (THE CREATOR) PROTECTS YOU!

Réjean Obomsawin
Land/Education/Social Services Councillor at the Abenakis of Odanak Council, Representative at the Grand Conseil de la Nation Waban-Aki
Hello to you all, members of the Abenaki community,

Here is a brief overview of the various files I have taken part in over the last few months.

Meals-on-Wheels to resume in January
The Meals-on-Wheels service began at the end of last August. It was a great success since around 38 elders took advantage of this food service. Please note that Meals-on-Wheels has been on holidays since December 18 for the Holiday Season and will resume on January 18 with a small change. Customers will now have to pay ≈ $2 per meal.

A Charter of Rights for elders; a first for First Nations
Elders will soon have a charter of rights combining several recommendations such as the right to age with respect and dignity. Note that when this charter is completed and approved, I will ensure that it is published in the Pilaksw. I am proud of this project as we will be the first Aboriginal community to have such a charter. I would also like to thank the members of the Council who eagerly support my requests concerning elders. Otherwise, elders would not benefit from all these services. This valuable support is therefore greatly appreciated.

Odânak Christmas Drive (gourdeole): a real success
The Odânak Christmas Drive, which took place on November 19, allowed us to raise a total of $2,430. Thanks to these generous donations, we will be able to offer our usual gifts, i.e. gift cards, turkeys and hams, to nearly 50 families in the community. I would like to thank all the volunteers for their participation and also the members of the FNCF team for their support. Without you, the success of this event would not have been possible.

I hope you had a great Holiday season with your family! I wish you all a happy new year filled with love and health.

We will talk again in the spring.

Cultural policy
As agreed with the Executive Director of the Abenakis of Wôlinak Council, Mr. Dave Bernard, following the change of Chief, discussions concerning the cultural policy file will resume. In addition, the First Nations Child and Family Services (FNCF) team will join this file as partner.

Presbytery
Concerning the presbytery, the Report on the Condition of the Building required by the Conseil du Patrimoine du Québec will be ready within a few months. We will then be able to re-apply for financial assistance. I would like to remind you that it was mandatory that the Report on the Condition of the Building be forwarded to the Conseil du Patrimoine du Québec so they may make an informed decision concerning our application.

Restaurant Le Calumet
Good news regarding the rental of the Restaurant Le Calumet. Indeed, the restaurant was leased to a member of the community and his spouse. I will inform you of the next developments concerning this issue in the spring edition of the newspaper. I would also like to encourage you to support local businesses.

In closing, I would like to wish you a Happy New Year, in health, happiness and prosperity.

Claire O'Bomsawin, Councillor

Hello to all Abenaki members,

I hope 2016 ended well for all of you. I would like to take this opportunity to make a small recap of the various files in which I am involved.

Catholic Church
Minor repairs were carried out and support was provided for the establishment’s administrative component. In addition, I would like to acknowledge the excellent work done by the many volunteers in preparing and presenting the Christmas concert. All proceeds will be paid directly to the Church.

Anglican Church
The exterior electrical connection was repaired and a request for financial support has been made to the Diocese of Montreal in order to carry out major repairs to the building.

Alain O'Bomsawin, Councillor

The Stanley Vollant Challenge is an annual event that marks the end of months of effort to accumulate kilometers of walking, as with the “Wîl Pmossaw8gan-Bonne marche” walking club project that was set up for the Abenaki people of Odanak and Wôlinak by the First Nations Child and Family Services of the Grand Conseil de la Nation Waban-Aki.

As part of this innovative project, elders and children were invited to join an intergenerational movement to prompt people to move together and gather around Aboriginal culture and tradition.

The Abenakis of Odanak Council is proud to recognize that the people of the community have taken genuine steps to improve their lifestyle by participating in individual and group walking sessions. For the elected representatives of Odanak, the Stanley Vollant Challenge is thus the logical outcome of strong community action, bringing together the people and all community partners.

To follow the Innu Meshkenu project and Dr. Stanley Vollant on social media:
facebook.com/Innu.Meshkenu
facebook.com/DrStanleyVollant
twitter.com/InnuMeshkenu
twitter.com/DrVollant

MATHIEU GRAVEL Coordinator, Innu Meshkenu’s Project

National Safety course in the Handling of Firearms and Introduction to Hunting with Firearms

Dates: 25-26 Février 2017
Time: 8:00 AM
Place: Odanak Community Centre
58, Waban-Aki Street, Odanak (Qué) J0G 1H0

A maximum of 30 participants is admitted to this course.
FREE for all band members of Odanak*

The Courses must be paid in advance,
by February 24, at Noon.
(765 - Handling / 455 - Initiation)
The courses must be paid cash, directly at the Abenakis of Odanak Council or by mail, by money order or by check in the name of:
Abenakis of Odanak Council
104, Sibirosis Street
Odanak (Qué) J0G 1H0

For information and registration, please contact the reception of the Abenakis of Odanak Council at 450-568-2810
(IMPORTANT: Please note that the course is given in French)
Word from Management

**Daniel G. Nolett**
Executive Director
Abenaki of Odanak Council

Kwai mziwi!

Thanks to the $64,491 grant from Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) under the First Nation Infrastructure Fund (FNIF) and the $40,000 contribution from the Band Council, we have successfully completed the relocation and redevelopment of the Odanak library in the Council’s former conference room at 102 Sibosis street.

The post office was also relocated to where the library was, in the annex to the community centre, located at 58 Waban-Aki street. This annex allows better access for people with reduced mobility, among other things. The former post office premises, at 62 Waban-Aki street, will now be used by the Environment and Land Office to store filing cabinets and files.

The second project approved by INAC as part of the FNIF consisted in the development of a pedestrian trail to ensure the safety of students walking to the Kiuna Institution. This trail is nearly completed. At the time of writing these words, all that remained was to install the streetlights for lighting the trail. This trail built on the former railroad track, along Route 132, is a project with a total value of approximately $646,000, of which $605,138 is from the FNIF.

We also installed a “canopy” style dome to store abrasives and de-icing salts used for our roads, sidewalks and parking lots in the winter. This represents an investment of $30,000, almost all of which will be funded by INAC. However, funds are unfortunately not available for this year. Grants should be provided next year. This project will now allow the community to be self-sufficient in terms of abrasives and de-icing salts, which will not be the case before. We will no longer depend on suppliers in the area with whom we used to do business, and whom were not always available when our Public Works needed them most, i.e. during snow precipitations or ice storms.

We have begun construction of a semi-detached residence building (CMHC, Section 95) at the end of Managuan street, behind the semi-detached units located at 7 and 9 Skamonal street. This project represents an investment of $350,000 and should be ready for rental around February or March. In addition, we will soon conduct a viably project for twelve (12) additional residence lots by extending Mgezo street and looping it to Managuan street. This work will be carried out on the former CN land which has become reserve land since May 2015. This project represents an investment of $425,000 and is eligible under INAC as part of the clean drinking water and community infrastructure program.

We are still awaiting a response to our requests for funding made to INAC and Canada Economic Development. We submitted requests for funding for repairs required at the Abenaki Museum. This includes work on the roof’s terrace, the old building’s window frames, painting the porch, eaves and columns, etc. We will keep you posted…

Last September, new exercise modules were installed in the pool park so that young and not-so-young people can enjoy and get in shape. They will also be used by the Odanak Health Centre’s fitness program, in particular the cardio-military program. An amount of $25,000 has already been invested in this project, not to mention the $17,000 grant from the MRC Niscolot-Yamaska Pacte Rural. The planned investment was almost $40,000, but it ended up totalling only $25,000. The Council has undergone some changes in the last few months. We would like to acknowledge the arrival of Ms. Lucie Michaud on August 29 as Assistant Executive Director and in charge of Human Resources. She has over 18 years of management experience, including human resources management. In addition, Ms. Julie Gagnon, Economic Development Officer, has been in charge of the housing department since late November. She took over from Ms. Karine Gill in June 2015. Finally, following the departure of Ms. Emile Paquin, biologist with the Odanak Environment and Land Office last August, we have hired Mr. Samuel Dufoir as biologist. He therefore takes over from Ms. Paquin for environmental projects in Odanak.

Have a good winter! Wli pbon!

---

**SHORT COLUMN ON THE ABENAKI LANGUAGE**

From now on, we will present a short Abenaki language column in each edition of the Pilaskw so you may learn a little more about our language. Let’s begin with the months of the year.

First, it is important to know that in Abenaki, all the letters in a word must be pronounced. For example, the “s” at the end of SIBOSIS should be pronounced. We therefore say “sibossesse” rather than “sibosi”. Moreover,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>January</th>
<th>February</th>
<th>March</th>
<th>April</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>June</th>
<th>July</th>
<th>August</th>
<th>September</th>
<th>October</th>
<th>November</th>
<th>December</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alamikos</td>
<td>Pa8dagos</td>
<td>Mozokas</td>
<td>Sagolikas</td>
<td>Kikas</td>
<td>Nokkahigas</td>
<td>Tmaskikos</td>
<td>Tmez8was</td>
<td>Skamonkas</td>
<td>Pnihogos</td>
<td>Mzatanos</td>
<td>Pbonkas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prayer month</td>
<td>month when buds burst open</td>
<td>month for mole hunting</td>
<td>month for sugar making</td>
<td>month for field planting</td>
<td>month for hoeing and tilling</td>
<td>month for grass cutting</td>
<td>month for cutting and harvesting</td>
<td>month when leaves fall</td>
<td>month when rivers freeze</td>
<td>winter month</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The “i” must sound like the “ay”. For example, nebi (water) is pronounced “NEBAY.” The “o” or the “8” is a nasal sound between the “an” and the “on”, such as the French words “sans” and “son”.

The “w”, when it is before a consonant, pronounced as “an”. Finally, the “o” is really pronounced as an “o” and not as an “a”.

---

**THE ABENAKI COUNCIL OF ODANAK HAS NOW A FACEBOOK PAGE**

Kwai!

A new Facebook page is now online! It is now possible to easily have access to information and relevant news about the Council and the Abenaki Nation of Odanak!

Like & Share en grand nombre!

Go to the following address: https://www.facebook.com/conselidesabenakiskidanak/

Wliw n i!
Yellow perch (m8m8lamagaw) in Lake Saint-Pierre. Recently, the Nation has undertaken various measures to improve the situation, such as identifying priority spawning grounds to be restored and redeveloped. However, the Nation has noticed a lack of response from the government on this issue, opposition from the agricultural community and a lack of commitment by certain key stakeholders for implementing an effective recovery strategy for yellow perch in Lake Saint-Pierre.

In this context, the elected representatives of the Odanak and Wôlinak Councils recently took a stand to support any action that could help restore yellow perch in Lake Saint-Pierre. They have commissioned the GCNWA’s Ndakinna Office (Grand Conseil de la Nation Waban-Aki) and colleagues from the Environment and Land Offices of both communities to represent them on this issue.

Causes for the decline and solutions
There are numerous and diverse causes for the decline of yellow perch, which can be summarized by overfishing in the 1980s, habitat degradation and the deterioration of water quality. More precisely, the current issues identified include:

- many infrastructures, such as roads and culverts, impede its free movement;
- encroachment by agriculture into its spawning habitat, such as shorelines;
- contamination of water by fertilizers and pesticides.

In this sense, the Nation expects the Government of Quebec and other stakeholders to take effective measures to address these issues. Increasing access to quality spawning grounds is a first step. The Government of Quebec must also impose changes to current farming methods.

Improvements may include:
- expanding shorelines;
- reducing and optimizing the spreading of fertilizers;
- transitioning to crops without stripping the soil bare.

Such modifications would improve the quality of water in Lake Saint-Pierre and of yellow perch habitats.

To have any hope for these yellow perch stocks to recover, global mobilization and a genuine political commitment are necessary. To incite political will, the public must imperatively impose some social pressure.

The W8banaki Nation is therefore committed to mobilize and disseminate information and seek external support. For more information on the yellow perch situation in Lake Saint-Pierre and to view the Nation’s full position, please consult the yellow perch tab on the GCNWA website: https://gcnwa.com/en/yellowperch/

Hoping for the recovery of yellow perch in the near future,

Karine Richard, Wôlinak Environment and Land Office
Samuel Dufour, Odanak Environment and Land Office
Hugo Mailhot Couture, Ndakinna Office
Marie-Ève Samson, Ndakinna Office

This position is a joint initiative from the Odanak and Wôlinak Environment and Land Office and the GCNWA Ndakinna Office, with support from several Lake Saint-Pierre fishing community members and support from the Abenakis of Odanak and Wôlinak Councils.

For comments or questions, please contact Hugo Mailhot Couture, Project Manager at the Ndakinna Office.
T: 819-294-1686
Email: hmcouture@gcnwa.com

Commemoration

You are – or you know – a veteran or a first responder?

Kwai mziwi,
Hi everyone,

With remembrance month just recently passed we would like to take this opportunity to ask everyone if you have a family member or a friend who served under the flag, no matter what period or country, to help us create a data bank in order not to forget them and be able to commemorate their service.

This data bank that would include all pertinent information and photographs of their service, (i.e. name, service number, when and where did they join, what branch of the service, missions or theatre of war, etc.).

Luc O’Bomsawin
lucobom@videotron.ca

Kwai mziwi,
Hi to all,

In the elaboration of the cultural policy we have stated that we would like to create a data bank of our artists, craftpersons and professionals of our nation. I you are one of them and would like to be included in this data bank please send us your coordinates (name, address, phone number) and all other pertinent information concerning you or your realizations. This bank will be used to create a registry of expertise and competencies from which a booklet will be produced and therefore augment your visibility for those who are interested in acquiring your services.

Send your information to:
lucobom@videotron.ca
Luc O’Bomsawin
New to the office!
A new biologist has joined Odanak’s Environment and Land Office.

The Odanak Environment and Land Office has hired a new biologist to replace Ms. Émilie Paquin; his name is Samuel Dufour-Pelletier. Originally from the Gaspé region, and having lived in many corners of Quebec during his studies and professional career, he now resides in the magnificent Centre-du-Québec region. His passion for the outdoors took shape during his visit to La Pocatière to complete his degree in biotechnology. During these three years, he expanded his knowledge on many natural inventory techniques and on habitat development. He then attended the Université du Québec à Rimouski (UQAR) to complete his Bachelor of Science in Biology (a specialty in research on the management of wildlife and habitats).

During this period, he felt it was essential to learn more about the functioning and principles governing the dynamics of animal populations and their interactions and issues related to their habitat. Through his studies, he has had the opportunity to work on numerous contracts in the field of wildlife (spruce budworm epidemics, nesting of wild turkey, impact of roads on the American marten, acquisition of knowledge on striped bass, modeling habitat selection of snowshoe hare and red squirrel, characterization of forest harvesting at the provincial level, etc). Following a contract of a few months as a technician with the Ministère de la Faune in Gaspé, Samuel decided to continue his academic training at the Université du Québec à Chicoutimi (UQAC). He then began a Master’s degree on the effect of supplementation of deadwood and cavities in boreal forest in order to reduce the impact of forest rejuvenation on species associated with deadwood (e.g. woodpeckers, owls, squirrels, and several types of insects).

The final phases of his work are still ongoing to ensure the transfer of the knowledge acquired and to promote the impact that this may have in the forest environment. Needless to say, in his spare time he is busy with many outdoor activities such as hiking, ornithology, hunting and fishing. A true enthusiast!

The team welcomed him with great pleasure and excitement earlier this fall to represent the interests and values of the Abenaki people of Odanak on a traditional and environmental basis. The reality of First Nations is not a new concept for him, since he has many Innu people within his family (Matimkush-Lac John). Spending time with these people on a regular basis allowed him to better understand the importance of Mother Earth for everyone. Emphasizing the ability of the Abenaki people of Odanak to manage and protect their natural resources will represent his primary mandate.

The 6 commandments of recycling

1. Accumulate plastic bags in a single bag and put only a ‘ball’ of bags in the recycling bin

The Employees at the recycling centre spend their day sorting plastic bags. By only putting a ball of plastic in our bin instead of dozens of individual bags, we are helping them. In addition, plastic films that do not stretch (pasta bags, bags of chips, cereal bags) cannot be recycled and must go in the trash.

2. Remove papers from the publicity bags (publisacs) to separate the paper

Plastic and paper must be separated when sorting. We only have one or two publicity bags (publisacs) to empty at home, while at the sorting centre, several employees are strictly responsible for emptying thousands of these bags every day, and it’s overwhelming sometimes.

3. Empty food containers and rinse them

Leftover food in containers attracts vermin at the sorting centre. They are literally overrun with rats not to mention the odour stemming from the sorting centre during hot summer days. Please wash the containers and avoid leaving food in them.

4. Put only plastic containers with recycling numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7

It’s false! Although we might want it to be different, ALL plastics without a recycling symbol go in the trash. In addition, plastic number 6 is still not recyclable, so it must also go in the trash. Before putting a plastic in the recycling bin, look for the symbol. Similarly, caps should be removed from containers and discarded if they do not have a recyclable symbol.

5. Put only the proper metal food containers and papers in the recycling bin

Let’s talk about metal. Only small containers such as canned foods, beverage cans or aluminium plates and aluminium foil can be recycled. Scrap metal goes to the junkyard. In fact, non-recyclable metal is very dangerous for the equipment at sorting centres and can damage the sorting machines and even injure the employees. Would you like to see some actual pictures of the sorting centre’s operations? Visit the Facebook page of the Odanak Environment and Land Office, in particular the photo album titled Visite du site d’enfouissement et du centre de tri (tour of the landfill site and sorting centre) which is accessible to everyone (even for those who do not have a Facebook account).

6. Put in the trash what is not recyclable

Other products which cannot be recovered otherwise go directly in the trash. Here are some examples: bags of chips, chocolate bar wrappers, clothing, ropes for bales of hay, lights, Christmas lights, CDs, styrofoam, toys, broken dishes, diapers, sanitary napkins, cat litter, dead animals.

The 2016-2017 Odanak Environment and Land Office team:
- Pascale Puiseau
- Michel Durand, Luc Gauthier, Samuel Dufour-Pelletier, Christopher Coughlin, Kenny Panadis, Danny Gill and Steve Williams

Odanak Environment and Land Office
62 Waban-Aki Street, Odanak, Quebec, Canada, J0G 1H0
Tel: 450-568-6363
E-mail: environnement@caodonak.com
Web: https://caodonak.com/ - Facebook
Last spring, several cooling periods combined with a drying-up of the river caused by a hydroelectric dam significantly disrupted the reproduction of lake sturgeon in Drummondville. We therefore concluded it would be useful to attempt to resume the project in order to determine the longer-term impact of water flow management on the spawning activities of this species.

A development project is planned for the summer of 2017 to restore fish movement, including yellow perch, and will be located between the second marsh and the Tardif channel. A dike will also be built to slightly increase the water level and thus expand the area of habitat available for the spawning of yellow perch.

We plan on identifying several types of forest, urban and marsh habitats to establish the presence of three species of birds at risk in Canada; the Canada warbler, the chimney swift and the least bittern. This would be a first step in laying the groundwork for the development of their habitat with a view to improving and contributing to their protection.

Bats are currently in a pitiful state in several parts of Canada on account of the white-nose syndrome; a small fungus with a very high mortality rate. This adds to a host of other threats such as loss and modification of habitat, disturbance in caves, expulsion from properties, pesticides, etc. This is why we consider it appropriate to report on the situation on the Odanak territory. In doing so, population and habitat inventories will be conducted with a view to identifying concrete measures to promote their recovery.
Increased summer attendance

The 2016 summer tourist season was very good for the Musée des Abénaquis: an 11% increase in attendance was noted, which represents more than 4,800 visitors for the months of June, July, August and September 2016! This increase is the result of numerous advertising campaigns in which the Museum participated as well as the exceptional exhibitions presented here last summer.

Moreover, Essence of a Nation, by the Abenaki artist Joyce Panadis was warmly welcomed and congratulated by Museum visitors. The three live drawing seminars she hosted during the summer were also appreciated by our clientele. Many of you also came to discover the work by this talented artist. Thanks to all!

The outdoor exhibit, REGALIA – Native Pride, also received positive feedback from visitors as it invited them to an authentic meeting with First Nations. The structures built to support the panels for REGALIA – Native Pride will be reused in the coming months to present magnificent photographs from the Odanak archives. To be seen as early as next spring.

In addition, for a second time, the Odanak Historical Society, in association with the Société historique de la région de Pierreville, is proud to show the photographic exhibition Paul Comtois; Emblem of a Region, presented until March 12, 2017, which highlights the life of the lieutenant-governor, tragically deceased 50 years ago in a fire.

Also, from March to May 2017, the Museum will host the exhibition Mirror of a People: the Works and Legacy of Zacharie Vincent. It will present the work of the famous Wendat painter: self-portraits, paintings, drawings and photographs will be exhibited and interpreted.

Wôlinakguéêkw archaeological project

In August 2016, the Musée des Abénaquis conducted an archaeological excavation project in Wôlinak and along the Bécancour River. Archaeologist Geneviève Tremvaud and archeology student, Roxane Lévesque, carried out some forty surveys on the entire Wôlinak territory. Surveys essentially revealed that the terrain has been significantly disturbed over recent years: the landscape has been greatly altered, notably during the construction of the railway bridge in 1972.

Despite all these disturbances, an archaeological site was nevertheless uncovered in the village. Wooden remains (probably a staircase), several ceramic sherds as well as a piece of pipe were discovered. Although further analyses of material culture are still to come, the archaeologist mentions that the site likely dates back to the late 18th century and would have been occupied until the 20th century.

Surveys were also conducted on Île Montesson (island); several artefacts from the period of the French Regime were uncovered.

According to historical sources, Jesuits from Trois-Rivières had built a small mission on Île Montesson in 1669 to Christianize the Abenaki people passing through the region. Pierre Robinneau from Bécancour moved to Île Montesson and built several buildings, including a church. The site discovered by the archeology team would therefore be associated with this late 17th century occupation.

Excavations will resume at this location in 2017 in order to better document this first mission and its buildings: several Abenaki dwellings, two churches, a manor and a mill.

New employee in the permanent MDA team

Due to a marked increase in the number of group visitors (schools and interest groups), the Musée des Abénaquis has created a permanent position. We therefore hired Ms. Zoé Hannis-Grandmont, member of the Abénakis, as in charge of animation. Her responsibilities include providing groups and tourists with guided tours of the Museum, exhibitions and the Catholic Church, answering questions about Abenaki and Aboriginal culture, and participating in the promotion of our educational program. We welcome her to the Museum team! You are invited to come meet her from Monday to Friday, from 9 am to 4:30 pm.

Archaeological publication

Through an $ 81,000 grant from Canadian Heritage, the Musée des Abénaquis is currently working on a publication project that will provide an update on the results of archaeological research conducted between 2010 and 2014 in Odanak and along the Saint-François River and what the research revealed about the history, occupation of the territory and the ancestral ways of life of the Abenaki First Nation. This Museum’s initial publication will target the general public, history buffs and archeology specialists in First Nations issues. This reference book will highlight the most important artefacts discovered during these excavation campaigns. The publication’s launch date is planned for the end of March 2017.

Annual general assembly

The Odanak Historical Society’s annual general assembly was held on September 25. The 2016-2017 Board of Director Members remain unchanged: Suzie O’Bomsawin, President, Helen Watso, Vice-President, Marjolaine Lachapel, Secretary, Jacques T. Watso, Florence Benedict and Jean-Clément Gauthier, administrators.

Sixth edition of our fundraising event

As part of its 2016 fundraising campaign, the Musée des Abénaquis will present the 6th edition of its benefit cocktail on March 23rd. This event is a unique opportunity to discover the artistic and culinary wealth of First Nations.

If you would like to get involved by donating a work, or if you would like to book your ticket, call 450 568-2600 as of today.

Amounts raised during the event will contribute to your Museum’s educational and cultural missions.

Looking forward to seeing you soon,
Vicky Desfossés-Bég, Communications and Mediation Officer Musée des Abénaquis