

Kindness and Values in an Era of Uncertainty

We first want to say “**CHI MIIGWETCH**” to all of you for supporting our efforts in trying to minimize the risks of COVID-19 coming into our Community.

Miigwetch to our Elders for your advice and teachings. **Miigwetch** to our Traditional Peoples for the ceremonies and prayers. **Miigwetch** to our Business Owners who closed their businesses for the health and safety of our Community. **Miigwetch** to all of our Staff who are providing assistance and ensuring our Citizens can still access services. **Miigwetch** to our Citizens who made face masks for our Community and the Community at large. **Miigwetch** to all our Citizens for sharing gifts with our young people. **Miigwetch** to our Citizens for making donations to our Community. **Miigwetch** to our volunteers for working the check point station. **Miigwetch** to everyone who brings firewood, coffee, goodies, food, etc. to our volunteers. **Miigwetch** to our COVID Task Team for all your hard work. **Miigwetch** to all our frontline workers, including those Staff (Health, Public Works, Administration, ORRS) who go out and get the supplies we need for the Community, and to the ORRS Staff who keeps the essential service of gas open. **Miigwetch** to our First Responders and Police for the work that you do for our Community.

If we have missed anyone, please know that we are truly grateful for all the thoughtful and kind things that people are doing, everyday someone is helping another and for this we are thankful.

MIIGWETCH!! MIIGWETCH!! MIIGWETCH!! MIIGWETCH!!

We understand that this moment we are in, and this different way of life we are living is challenging for people in many different ways. We are all tired, tired of not being able to visit family and friends, hug our loved ones, be with our families when a loved one passes, be able to go out to get the supports needed or to just go out in public.

Please do not let this crazy time we're in take us to a place of lateral violence, anger, and hate. **This is not our way!** We are all more dependent on each other than we ever were before – we are not the enemy, the coronavirus is, and we need to all work together from a good place to win this war.

Our resilience and good way of life comes from our teachings. We must rely on them and our values, the teachings of the Seven Grandfathers - truth, honesty, courage, love, honour, respect, and humility which apply during good times, as well as bad.

Our teachings go back to time immemorial from the Creator. We, as Michi Saagiig people need to reach deep down and put our differences aside and work together to get through these troubling times. We cannot be divided amongst ourselves during this pandemic.

Our ancestors have survived pandemics and plagues, residential school, governments, experiments, testing, starvation and genocide for hundreds of years. We have grown to adapt and thrive by helping each other by following our teachings.

We may not all get along, and that is okay, what is not okay is lateral violence against each other. Our differences maybe traits from our clan associations. Our clan system played an intricate part of our everyday life and routine. The Creator gifted us the clan system to maintain societal order on earth. Each clan has roles, talents, and responsibilities to contribute to the overall wellbeing of the entire Nation.

There are 7 primary clans of the Anishinaabe people, they are:

Maang Dodem Loon Clan; internal affairs Chief traditionally, the Loon & Crane Clans worked together as eloquent leaders & orators. They were skilled planners, negotiators, & upheld the Seven Teachings. If ever there was a conflict between the Loon & Crane Clans, the Fish Clan helped mediate the situation.

Ajijaak Dodem Crane Clan; “external affairs Chief” The Crane and the Loon Clans were given the power of Chieftainship. By working together, these two Clans gave the people a balanced government with each serving as a check on the other.

Giigoonh Dodem Fish Clan; between the two Chief Clans was the Fish Clan. The people of the Fish Clan were the teachers and scholars. They helped children develop skills and healthy spirits. They also drew on their knowledge to solve disputes between the leaders of the Crane and Loon Clans. Members of the Fish Clan are responsible for water ceremonies and star teachings. The Turtle is the leader of the Fish Clan

Binenhshiinh Dodem Bird Clan; The Bird Clan represented the spiritual leaders of the people and gave the Nation its vision of well-being and its highest development of the spirit. The people of the Bird Clan were said to possess the characteristics of the eagle, the head of their Clan, in that they pursued the highest elevations of the mind just as the eagle pursues the highest elevations of the sky.

Mkwa Dodem Bear Clan; The Bear Clan members were the strong and steady police and legal guardians. Bear Clan members spent a lot of time patrolling the land surrounding the village, and in so doing, they learned which roots, bark, and plants could be used for medicines to treat the ailments of their people.

Waabizheshi Dodem Marten Clan; The people of the Marten Clan were hunters, food gathers and warriors of the Ojibway. Long ago, warriors fought to defend their village or hunting territory. They became known as master strategists in planning the defense of their people.

Adik Dodem Deer/Hoof Clan; The people of the Hoof Clan were gentle, like the deer and moose or caribou for whom the Clan is named. They cared for others by making sure the Community had proper housing and recreation. The Hoof Clan people were the poets and pacifists avoiding all harsh words.

To meet all the needs of the Nation, the Clans worked together and cooperated to achieve their goals. The Clan System had built in equal justice, voice, law and order which reinforced the values and teachings of a sacred way of life.

Our ancestors made decisions and sacrifices with the consideration of seven generations to come. This is why we are still here, "we are the strongest of the strongest." We must continue to live our values and teachings and do the work for our next seven generations.

Please let's remember to put our seema down, and to be kind to each other and have love and respect for everyone.

Strong today, stronger tomorrow, strongest together!!



Miigwetch,
HFN Council