

## 2020-year end report for Friends of the North Misiway

Before COVID-19 put an end to shipments of clothing and food to the James Bay Communities for 8 months, Friends of the North Misiway was shipping at least two 25 lb bags five times a week. We have shipped 21 bags of clothing and 8 bags of food to Kashechewan, 12 bags of clothing and 12 bags of food to Attawapiskat, and 7 bags of clothing to Moose Factory. Our records show that 1,585 lbs of bedding, clothing, winter coats and books were shipped.

During the Spring, Doris submitted a Seed Grant Application to the United Church Foundation for \$15,000 which is focused on the Elders of Moosonee and opportunities for intergenerational connections where possible which was accepted in June. Unfortunately, because of COVID, no action has been possible in developing this proposal. The Foundation is aware of this and willing to provide an extension.



Irene and her group Helping Hands Northumberland continued to collect bedding, clothing, and hygiene supplies. Backpacks, hats, mitts and scarves to the Ministik Public School. Four boxes of diaper cream, diapers, bibs, receiving blankets, knitted baby afghans, clothing and toys were sent to the Healthy Babies, Healthy Children program, all in Moose Factory. And the Misiway shop was the recipient of six bags of toys, books, blankets, snow boots, slippers and hygiene supplies.

Susan Cohen did an amazing job with We've Got Mail program sending to Moosonee. She has sent about 16 envelopes of items with themes for new Moms, teenagers, busy Moms, young children, elders etc.

In September, Pat connected with staff in Moosonee and Moose Factory who stated that the Elders were really suffering mentally and physically as a result of the isolation that they are experiencing during the pandemic. A list of items that the elders could use to benefit their lives was received. We all came barrelling on board and between Nov. 12 and Dec. 1 we were able to send fourteen 25 lb. bags of socks, underwear, sweaters, puzzles, crafts, books and goodies to the community. These items were made into care packages by some of the community workers and distributed to those in need.

Amanda, our True North Aid liaison, has proven invaluable connecting with other Indigenous communities across Canada who are in need of clothing and bedding. We sent two pallets to Beau Val Saskatchewan. We also sent two pallets to Red Sucker Lake and one to Tadpole Lake in Manitoba. Janice, Monica and others packed the boxes and then assisted at Capital Movers to transfer the merchandise for shipping.



The Misiway shop in Moosonee was also forced to close in mid-March which resulted in marked decrease in sales this year. Until the pandemic closure, sales were \$999.23. However, the store reopened in December for 6 days for another \$1,379 in sales.

Friends of the North Misiway has sent bags of food to northern communities around Christmastime for several years now. However, this year with the COVID restrictions, this was not possible. The company that owns the Northern Stores which is the only store in most of the communities in the North was approached regarding the purchase of gift cards. With the financial collaboration of True North Aid, food gift cards worth \$12,000 including a generous discount of 20% by North West were purchased and distributed to the Health Unit in Moose Factory, the Elders project in Moosonee and the Native Friendship Centre in Moosonee. We again collected thousands of dollars in contributions from their contacts to support this endeavour.



Masks were nearly impossible to purchase in the north, if available the price was exorbitant. We sent boxes of non surgical masks and numerous hand-made masks to northern communities.

What an amazing amount to have accomplished during a very challenging year.

However, none of this would be possible without you, our donors. Thank you to each and every one of you who have made such an incredible difference to our brothers and sisters in the north.

In 2021 we wish you the Very Best of Health, Happiness and Peace.

Friends of the North Misiway  
True North Aid