

## EVOLUTION OF THE

## VAL-D'OR NATIVE FRIENDSHIP CENTRE

1974	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Founding of the Val-d'Or Native Friendship Centre</li> <li>• Purchase of the first building</li> <li>• Opening of a seven-room hostel facility</li> </ul>
1979	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchase of the second building with more space on 6<sup>th</sup> Street</li> </ul>
1980	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Provincial Aboriginal Ball Tournament, held for ten (10) consecutive years</li> </ul>
1985	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Native Film Festival and Art Exhibition</li> <li>• Launching of the first "Centre's Notebook". Today this newsletter is being distributed to over 500 members and organizations, three times a year</li> </ul>
1986	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First bingo permit granted to the Friendship Centre that still, today, is a major fundraiser for the Friendship Centre. The bingo has raised, as of today, a total of approximately \$750,000 over the past ten (10) years and more than 1/3 of it was used to construct the new building that presently houses the programs and activities of the Centre</li> <li>• Major renovations are made to the building on 1011, 6th Street, providing a better quality of lodging and dining facility and thus increasing the self-financing capacity of the Friendship Centre</li> </ul>
1987	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Centre has its own radio show on the local radio station that lasted two (2) years</li> <li>• The Friendship Centre First implements and coordinates a low rental housing project for eighteen (18) urban aboriginal families of Val-d'Or</li> <li>• First contribution agreement is signed with Health Canada to ensure the health liaison service for off-reserve native patients: the first and only one of its kind in Canada as of today</li> </ul>
1989	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launching of two (2) studies on the "Profile of the Urban Aboriginal Population of Val-d'Or" produced in collaboration with the "Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue"</li> </ul>
1990	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation of the second Native Film Festival and Video</li> <li>• Presentation of "Kamamajicek", a photo exhibition on the way of life of the Algonquians that still tours across the region</li> </ul>

1992	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Golf Tournament as a fundraising activity</li> <li>• First contribution agreement with Health Canada to provide the transportation service for the urban aboriginals of the Abitibi region, the only one of its kind in Canada</li> </ul>
1993	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signing of the agreement with the “Société d’Habitation du Québec” for the loan and grants for the construction of a new building for the Friendship Centre for a total contribution of \$1,925,000 of a \$2,200,000 project</li> </ul>
1994	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Benefit Supper and Show as a fundraising activity that raised over \$15,000 and was presented for three consecutive years;</li> <li>• Production of an Algonquin language course on video;</li> </ul>
1995	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion and moving in the new building of 12,000 square feet, built at a cost of 2.2 million dollars. This building offers a lodging capacity of 27 with a cafeteria that can accommodate 50 people, increasing the self-financing capacity of the Friendship Centre</li> </ul>
1996	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opening of the <i>Urban Native Training Centre</i>. Through advance technology, this training centre enables clients to acquire a wide range of knowledge and skills</li> <li>• Opening of the <i>Aboriginal Head Start Project</i></li> <li>• Opening of the <i>Arts and Crafts Boutique</i></li> </ul>
1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation in the <i>Partnership Project</i></li> </ul>
1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of the Urban Multipurpose Aboriginal Youth Centre</li> <li>• Development of the Early Childhood Program</li> <li>• Development of the Aashumiih Akawi Minicin</li> <li>• 25th anniversary: several celebrations are organized for Val-d’Or and its surrounding area to commemorate the VDNFC’s achievements</li> </ul>
2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of a Psychosocial Intervention Service sponsored by a program for the homeless.</li> <li>• A project for the development of personal and professional skills enables a group of young Natives to produce, on the exterior wall, a mural representing Peace as well as banners representing the 11 Native Peoples of Quebec.</li> <li>• Beginning of the campaign to gather signatures for the “Declaration of Friendship between Peoples” on the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (March 21st of each year) and the “Gabriel-Commanda walk against racism”.</li> <li>• “Reaching for New Horizons”, a symposium on crime prevention for the Aboriginal People for which 200 aboriginal and non-aboriginal people gathered.</li> <li>• Organizational realignment to regroup all the services under three major development sectors (social, community and economic development) and to better manage growth.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of Fitness and Lifestyle Services under the Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative.</li> </ul>
2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addition of a new pavilion to the main building at a cost of \$2.3 millions which houses the <i>Abinodjic-Miguam Childcare Centre</i>, the social development offices, a room designed to accommodate the children registered in the Aboriginal Head Start Program, and a community hall.</li> <li>• Collaboration in the organization of the Symposium “<i>Convergence of economic tributaries</i>” to help reinforce business ties between the Cree communities and the town of Val-d’Or.</li> <li>• <i>Mëmëgwashi Gala</i> is held to underline the scholarly achievements of Young Aboriginals.</li> <li>• Development of new Services to Intergenerational Victims in the Boarding Schools, “<i>The Child who Dreams the Future</i>”, regarding perinatal period, liaison and education, and assistance to men and fathers.</li> </ul>
2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration in the organization of the opening night for the Regional Finals of the Jeux du Québec in Val-d’Or by offering a production with a cultural flavour, presented by the Friendship Centre Youth Service.</li> <li>• Development of a service to help children aged 6 to 12 with their homework: the Little Wolves Club.</li> <li>• Inauguration of the Gabriel-Commanda Pavilion and moving in the new building addition (Social Development Department, Children’s Class, Community Room).</li> <li>• Establishment of the <i>Do8dei8in project</i> – visiting and exchanging knowledge, intended for Elders.</li> </ul>
2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Production and distribution of the 2004 Agenda “Catch your dreams” in honor of our Aboriginal graduates.</li> <li>• 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations: Three days of festivities under the celebration tent with the community, opening with a traditional performance followed by cultural and family activities and the Second Edition of the Mëmëgwashi Awards.</li> <li>• Celebration of the first <i>Life Promotion Week</i>.</li> </ul>
2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Val-d’Or Native Friendship Centre organizes the one-day symposium “Anishnabe-Aki : The Land, Past, Present and Future” gathering 120 key stakeholders (Algonquin chiefs, regional political leaders, forest industry leaders, several government delegates) to discuss land claims.</li> <li>• Third edition of the Mëmëgwashi Awards rewarding almost 140 First Nation students at the Télec Theatre.</li> <li>• The Kamamadjisek Exposition, created in 1991, has been updated and is now presented to the public. This photographic display takes an intimate look at the Anishnabe of the region.</li> </ul>
2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotion-based activities with a giant banner for the Racial Discrimination Awareness Campaign in the frame of the March 21 and publication of a special</li> </ul>



	<p>notebook inserted in the Echo Abitibien newspaper, to celebrate June 21, National Aboriginal Day and the Mëmëgwashi Recognition.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The 2007 Agenda, which is the 4th edition of the Friendship Centre's agenda, becomes a promotion tool for the Centre's ensemble of services and an awareness tool for Aboriginal culture. At the same time, the agenda honours the graduates and laureates of the Mëmëgwashi Recognition.</li> <li>• Establishment of "<i>Pibamadzi</i>", meaning "in harmony", a service intended for residential school survivors and their families.</li> </ul>
2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Friendship Centre's Notebook celebrates its 25 years of existence. 700 copies of The Centre's Notebooks are published, three times a year.</li> <li>• The <i>Gabriel-Commanda March</i> for the elimination of racial discrimination brought out about 800 marchers.</li> <li>• <i>National Aboriginal Day</i> (June 21) celebrations keep growing with over 700 participants during the afternoon for traditional activities presented by the group of residential school survivors, and the <i>Mëmëgwashi Recognition</i>, held during the evening, honoured over 120 students.</li> <li>• Partnership agreements were signed between the <i>Regroupement des Centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec</i> (RCAAQ) and the <i>Confédération des syndicats nationaux</i> (CSN), and also locally between the Native Friendship Centres and the <i>CSN regional offices</i>. A partnership agreement was also signed between the RCAAQ and <i>l'Union des municipalités du Québec</i>.</li> </ul>
2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three new youth programs were initiated. The <i>Nitahigan project</i> (meaning "to grow" in Algonquin) and <i>Kabadu</i> (meaning "portage") were added respectively to community development to promote healthy life habits among 12-to-15 year-olds and offer homework support at the high-school level. For social development, the <i>Madjimâkwîn project</i> ("hold on!") offers accompaniment to young adults in their life project.</li> <li>• The <i>Awareness week for the elimination of racial discrimination</i> has its first spokesperson – Algonquin rapper Samian. Over a thousand people participate in the <i>Gabriel-Commanda March</i>.</li> <li>• A totem pole, a symbol of the presence of First Peoples in Val-d'Or, created by the sculptors of the <i>Fraternité autochtone de l'Établissement Drummond</i>, is inaugurated on June 21 during National Aboriginal Day celebrations.</li> <li>• A position paper is presented to the <i>Commission des Affaires sociales du Québec</i> concerning native homelessness in Val-d'Or. After which, there were several collaborative and adaptation actions including an in-field survey and a seminar on homelessness.</li> </ul>
2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation of the ODENA research alliance – "Natives and the City" in which the Friendship Centre collaborated through the <i>Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtone du Québec</i>.</li> <li>• Holding of a seminar on an Aboriginal alternative community justice model.</li> <li>• A fourth development sector (Skills Development) was created with the Pidaban</li> </ul>



	<p>project which would allow 18 young natives to benefit from a job-integration preparation process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Friendship Centre celebrates its 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary with the Tribute to Gabriel Commanda show, which also marks the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the <i>Ville de Val-d'Or</i>. It's also the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Awareness week for the elimination of racial discrimination with <i>les Loco Locass</i> as spokespersons.</li> <li>• Inauguration of <i>Place Gabriel-Commanda</i>.</li> </ul>
2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start-up of the Minowe Clinic, a resource integrated within the <i>réseau local de santé et de services sociaux de la Vallée-de-l'Or</i>.</li> <li>• Launching of the book "<i>Kinawit</i>" which means "us" in Anishnabe, and tell the story of the 35 year history of the Friendship centre.</li> </ul>
2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acquisition of a cultural site on Lac Lemoyne, previously known as the Camp des Scouts.</li> <li>• The 10th edition of the <i>Mēmēgwashi Gala</i>, held at the Télébec Theater, honors 263 students.</li> <li>• DVD "Migona &amp; Moko Anicinabemôk" introduction to the Algonquin language.</li> </ul>
2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for the Idle No More movement which encased bringing the population together in peacefully campaigning justice for the First Nations and the protection of the environment.</li> <li>• The community economic development becomes the social economy to better reflect the service and our intention of developing this collective philosophic enterprise. 125 First Nations adults were assisted in their socio-professional approach since the implementation of the skills-building program in 2009, including the project pilot <i>Pidaban</i>, followed by 5 cohorts of the <i>Odabi</i> project; 34 participants graduate in 2013.</li> <li>• Hundreds of Residential School survivors and their families participate in public hearings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on February 5 and 6 in Val-d'Or. The Friendship Centre was there to offer its support throughout the hearings.</li> <li>• The 10th promotion of life week "À l'aube du 8<sup>e</sup> feu" experiences unprecedented popularity with a record of 600 participants. Transmission of cultural teachings for elders is at the heart of the activities; a symbolic fire illuminates the cultural site.</li> <li>• Establishment of office projects which promote the evolution of field developments.</li> <li>• The Centre produces <i>Miskwâ Sinibân</i>, an AIDS/HIV and other STIs prevention game.</li> </ul>
2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a social perinatal initiative.</li> <li>• Obtain support from the town for the project <i>Kijaté</i>; receive the green light to start the construction project of 24 social housing units.</li> <li>• Create a cultural kit of physical activities and occupational therapy.</li> <li>• Development of an evaluation platform to measure the impact of the Centre's</li> </ul>



services in the lives of the community members.

- 14th annual Awareness Week for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination with the sub-theme of living together. Speakers include Pierre Corbeil, mayor of Val-d'Or; Élisabeth Larouche, former delegate for Aboriginal Affairs and Roméo Saganash, deputy of Abitibi-James Bay-Nunavik-Eeyou.
- The Friendship Centre celebrates its 40 years of foundation during the National Aboriginal Day. A record number of approximately 3000 participants were recorded that day.
- Mobilization of 80 MRC partners during the "*Les Autochtones et la ville – enjeux, défis et pistes de solution*" forum.

