

Eagle Feather NEWS

FREE

SaskTel honours Aboriginal youth

Don Morgan, Justice Minister of Saskatchewan, presented the Female Outstanding Achievement Award to Debrah MacDonald of the Muskeg Lake Cree Nation. (Photo by John Lagimodiere)



Twelfth year for Awards of Excellence

By Andréa Ledding
For Eagle Feather News

TCU Place in Saskatoon was filled with proud families and outstanding young people, attending the 12th Annual SaskTel Aboriginal Youth Awards of Excellence. More than 84 youth, including three group nominations, were nominated in nine categories.

While all the youth were recognized as winners, 11 walked away with \$1,000 each in scholarship money from 10 major sponsors, and beautiful star blankets.

Male Outstanding Achievement recipient Josh Bouvier was humbled by the honour, and the public recognition and applause for success, hard work and individual accomplishments.

“What stood out was all the other candidates – and how all of them have their own unique ways of standing out and of what they’re going to be doing,” noted Bouvier, a proud Métis graduate from Turtleford

Community School who spent a very traditional childhood in the northern community of Coal Bay.

“It’s cool that there are so many others.”

Bouvier also received a \$20,000 entrance scholarship from the University of Saskatchewan, where he plans to pursue an engineering degree. His many accomplishments include a 95 per cent average and a peer tutoring program to help others succeed.

Female Outstanding Achievement recipient Debrah MacDonald, a Grade 12 student at Saskatoon’s Marion Graham Collegiate, is from Muskeg Lake Cree Nation.

“I do what I love – soccer is my passion,” said MacDonald.

A natural athlete, she played soccer for the first time at age nine, a coach at the soccer camp told her to try out for provincials – and she made it. She now coaches and plays at an elite level, and will be studying Kinesiology at the U of S while training for the Huskies soccer team.

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NURSING GRADS
Renee Lerat is one of 14 graduates of the Licensed Practical Nursing program offered on the Cowesses First Nation. - Page 9



WAPOS BAY FAREWELL
Creator Dennis Jackson said a final farewell to the characters of Wapos Bay after a brilliant five-year run. - Page 15



IT'S A FIRST!
Richard Anenakew is the first Aboriginal president of the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce. - Page 20



ONION LAKE PROGRESS
Chief Wallace Fox announced more than \$29 million will be invested in housing and other initiatives. - Page 21



HIP HOP STYLEZ
He's in love with music and the ambitious young artist is devoting his life to it. - Page 26

Welcome to our
National Aboriginal Day Edition
Coming In July:
Back to Batoche Issue
CPMA #40027204

Standing ovation for winner of Spirit Award

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Bouvier and MacDonald's award, sponsored by SaskTel, was presented by provincial justice minister Don Morgan.

Harris Cameron Jr. of Beardy's and Okemasis, and Taylor Pelletier of Fort Qu'Appelle, were the two winners of the Sports and Recreation Award, sponsored by SaskSport, in the largest category (32 nominations plus a girls volleyball club). Fine/Performing Arts was the next largest category with about half as many nominees. Several of them entertained the hundreds in attendance at the banquet, including Wade Daschner from Ahtahkakoop on electric guitar, the St. Mary Dancers from Prince Albert who "got jiggy" to much applause – and highly entertaining and talented Tristan Durocher from La Ronge, the winner of the category, who fiddled (and bantered) for the audience like a pro.

Durocher's award was sponsored by SIGA.

Collin Starblanket from Starblanket First Nation was winner of the Culture Award, sponsored by the Office of the Treaty Commissioner and presented by Treaty Commissioner Bill McKnight. Randall Fiddler of Waterhen

First Nation received the Leadership Award sponsored by Harvard Broadcasting.

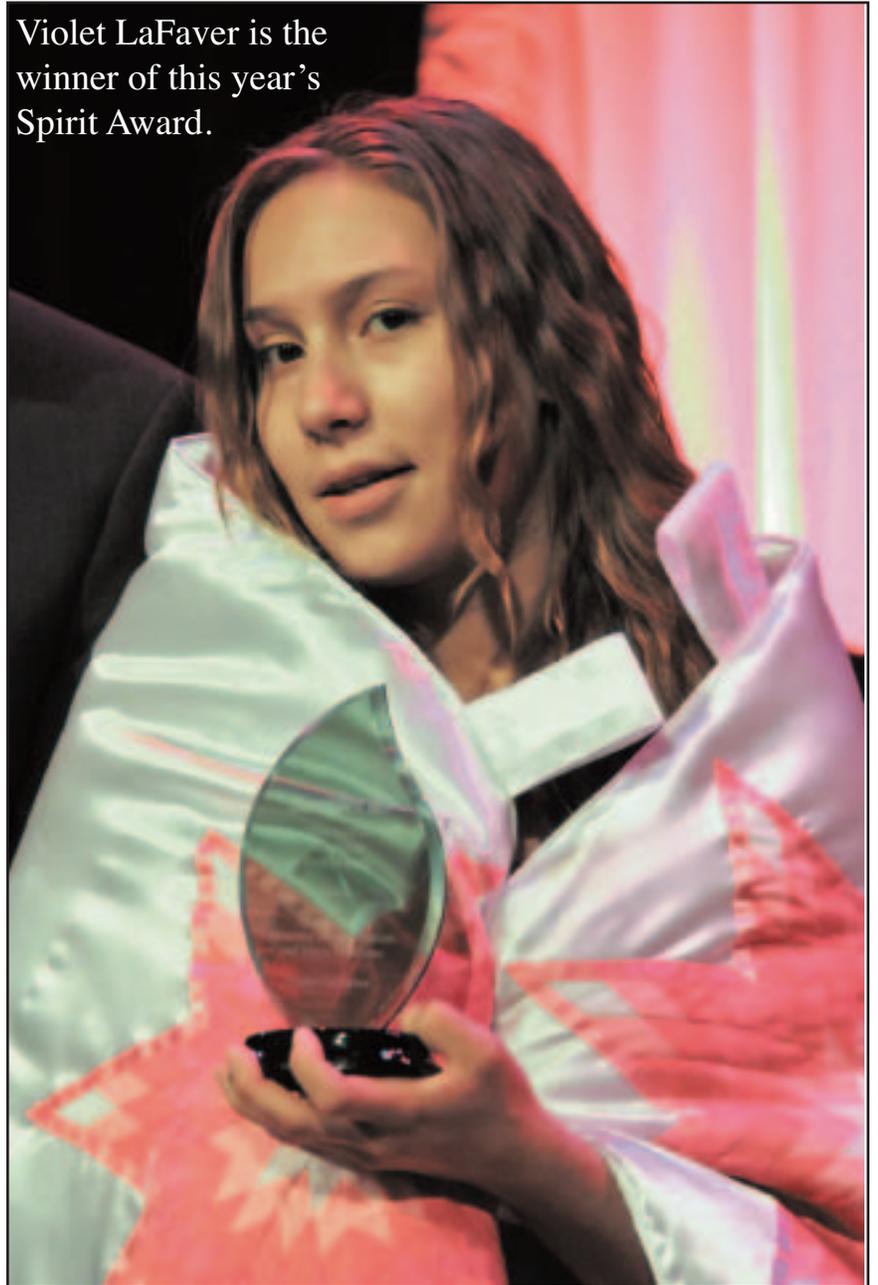
Hannah St. Denis-Katz of Beardy's and Okemasis received the Education Award, sponsored by SIGA. Keely Banin, a Métis student at Miller High School in Regina, received the Technology/Science Award sponsored by Missinippi Broadcasting Corporation.

Gabrielle Fourstar of Marion Graham Collegiate and the Wahpeton Dakota First Nation received the Community Service award sponsored by SaskEnergy.

But the longest applause – and a standing ovation – came for Violet LaFaver, recipient of the Spirit Award. A 19-year-old graduating from St. Mary's High School in Prince Albert, she has been in foster care from birth, and overcome many obstacles including the recent death from cancer of the foster-mother she called her mother.

The Spirit award perhaps best represents the Wicahitowin Foundation's goals, to honour the First Nations veterans by nurturing others for the future – based on the Cree word, and tradition, for "helping each other"

Violet LaFaver is the winner of this year's Spirit Award.



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Youth a priority for friendship centres in Sask.

By **Andréa Ledding**
For **Eagle Feather News**

Aboriginal Friendship Centres operate across the province to provide services and a space for community members and youth to gather in urban settings.

The newest centre in the province is in Regina, where the doors of Newo Yotina Friendship Centre have just been opened in the city's north central neighborhood, on Angus Street. Newo Yotina is Cree for "four directions".

Chris Passley, program co-ordinator at Saskatoon's Indian and Métis Friendship Centre (SIMFC), took a few minutes to chat while preparing for their annual Native Grad Recognition night, to be held June 10. This is the 26th year the Grad night has taken place for Saskatoon and area youth, and like last year they will have about 50 grads who attend, plus family and friends.

"We honour our grads of First Nations and Métis ancestry and highlight all their accomplishments," Passley said, adding that it gives them a chance to be an example, but also to be proud of their heritage and who they are.

Scholarships and awards are also provided by nine different community organizations, and all youth are presented with a feather. Another unique aspect is the



These students attended the First Nation and Métis grad at the Friendship Centre in Saskatoon last year.

(Photo supplied)

backup assistance of SIMFC's restitution program – where youth in trouble with the law work to give back to the community.

"These kids work hauling trash, cleaning graffiti in the community – but also create awards to give to grads

and learn some woodworking."

The awards then become a double gift, not only acknowledging the success of the youth receiving the award, but giving the youth who created it a sense of pride and accomplishment and participation in the community.

Youth are a priority with SIMFC, like all the Friendship Centres in the province, and they have a youth board which operates very independently, providing feedback and running programs. This not only ensures participation and interest, and programming which is youth-generated, but it also gives the young people valuable experience and skills.

They are provided an honorarium for their time, and take the commitment very seriously.

The responsibility they are given passes along the message to the youth how valued and trusted and respected they are, and many of these youth have gone on to become leaders in the community.

Friendship Centres initially assisted Aboriginal people in their movement into urban areas. They provide a range of services focusing on Aboriginal people but also working with the larger community.

Participate in activities such as:

- 1st Annual Indigenous Arts & Craft Show
- guided tours of the archaeological sites
- interactive and educational programs
- performances in the amphitheatre
- writers workshop on June 20th
- evening events

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Editorial

Passion saved FNUC

On the brink of closure, the First Nations University of Canada has finally received a cash commitment from the federal government that ensures the institution can run for at least another year.

INAC Minister Chuck Strahl announced in early June that \$4 million will flow to FNUC through the U of R. The money does come with strings "They have many milestones to reach" as Minister Strahl put it, but with the rotten administration run out and with a rejuvenated board and management team, the future certainly is brighter than it has been in the last five years.

When you talk to insiders, even though the future of the institution was in doubt the last few months, the feel and vibe of the school had certainly returned before the money came back. No more overspending. No more secret meetings. No more political and idiotic firings.

The spirit came back through the students and the staff that stuck with them, even at the threat of firing or other games that people could play.

The whole FNUC fiasco and revival shows what can happen when you engage the community and do the right thing. Kudos have to go out to FSIN Chief Guy Lonechild and those 44 other Chiefs that voted with him to disband the board. He put his political neck on the line for this and emerged looking very much like a leader. Minister Rob Norris must also be commended. Even though relations between the First Nations and the province are strained right now (selling disputed lands, dropping the tobacco exemption down to one carton...etc) Minister Norris showed a steady hand in calling for accountability, and also showed great support when changes were made. We can safely say that Chuck Stahl is probably a little tired of Minister Rob Norris right now.

Good job all around to the Board, the management, the political leaders and the students whose passion for their school made it all happen.

Partnerships are good

It was nice to see a hundred or so people show up for the presentation of the Strengthening the Circle Aboriginal Health strategy. Kinistin Saulteaux Nation, CUMFI and the Saskatoon Health Region invested a couple years researching Aboriginal health care delivery in Saskatchewan and beyond and they created a health strategy for the region to use.

In this day and age of many different groups fighting over dollars or jurisdiction, it is refreshing to see a First Nation, a Métis Local and the health district getting together to find the best way to deliver services to all people. Aboriginal people have historically been alienated from the health care system. Not a lot of doctors and nurses that are indigenous, nor was there a concerted effort from the health regions to be aggressive and hire and retain Aboriginal employees in other sectors of the field. We know for a fact that hiring and retaining First Nation and Métis employees are a recommendation. Good for the partners who pulled this together. It showed cooperation, compassion and persistence. Let's hope the health district can improve their delivery of health services to the Aboriginal people of this region.

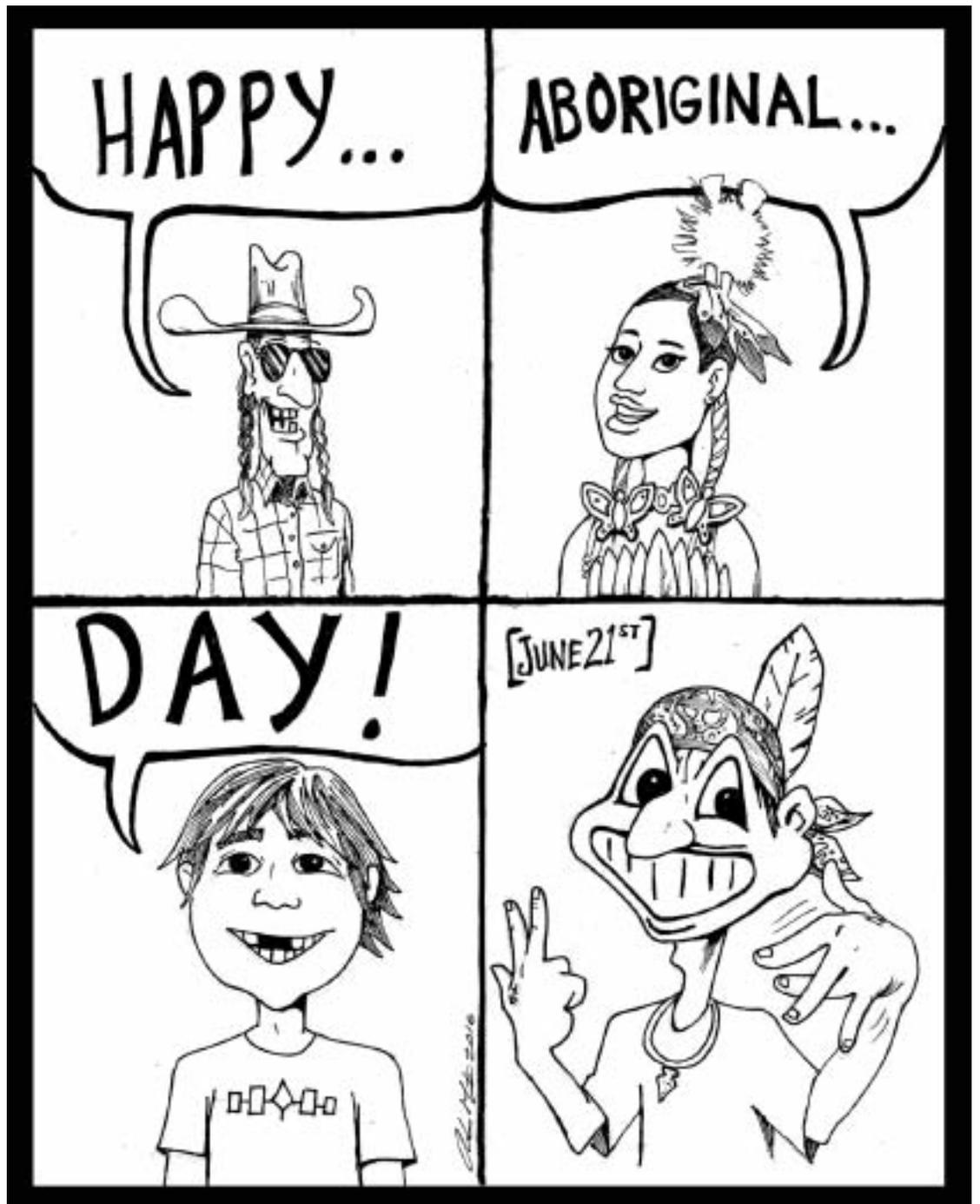
SaskTel Youth Awards make you feel good

From the opening jokes of Don Speidel to the closing of the show with the drum, the SaskTel Aboriginal Youth Awards of Excellence always leave a person with a smile, and hope. Led by committee Chair Colleen Cameron, the team receives hundreds of nominations from around Saskatchewan. They have to sort through them and they make the tough decision on which of these very deserving youth is to receive one of the eleven awards. After seeing the nominees and hearing their biographies, the choice must be very difficult to make.

There were youth walking across that stage that had 95 or 98 averages! In school! There were national caliber athletes, youth that had overcome trauma in their life that would debilitate a regular person, but somehow, somehow they found a way to survive and even thrive. There were entertainers. A young fiddle player had the moves, the foot stomp and the heart of Johnny Arcand. This young lad had the crowd eating out of his hand. Guitars blazed, a saxophone wailed. In the end 11 youth wound up getting awards, a nice blanket/banner, a trophy and a bursary for school, but really, all of the youth there were winners. The event was sold out as there had to be 600 or 700 people there. If only we could get more people to witness this event, they would certainly be a lot more excited about the future of the First Nation and Métis youth of this province. I know I certainly am.

Rank Comix

Adam Martin



Comments, letters, suggestions

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THIS ISSUE...LAST ISSUE...PAST ISSUES.

Don't want to hear Canadian guns on solemn day

It used to amaze me how Native leadership was so easily taken in by government agendas, dollars, and even the language that is part and parcel of the party, the times, and issues of the day.

From Trudeau's "participatory democracy" to today's use of "reconciliation and healing," one would think, the way our leadership tosses them around, that we had come up with those terms. One almost wants to scream: "For heaven's sake, can't you come up with something original?!"

Every single Native leader, regardless of the creativity and dreams that they have come to leadership with, have been caught in that government web. Of course they sometimes make noises that almost convince us that they are different, but in the end it is just the same old malarkey over and over again. If we are to be truly politically independent, then we must be independent of government money.

By that I mean political organizations such as the Métis National Council, the AFN, and their provincial affiliates should be financed by their membership, not by governments. That way they would be politically independent and, just as important, they would have to be accountable to their people.

They should also mind their own business and leave the running of programs and institutions to the people who know what they are doing. After all, that is why we send our children to university, isn't it?

An example of what can happen when leaders don't mind their own

business is the near destruction out of First Nations University. A more recent example is Back to Batoche Days and this year's theme of "reconciliation and healing," which is what my rant is about this month.

This year is the 125th anniversary of the Battle of Batoche, a very important year for Metis people in our country, and so Back to Batoche Days is

something we all especially looked forward to. Imagine the surprise when many of us opened the Saskatoon StarPhoenix last week and read Robert Doucette's interview regarding this important event, in which he is quoted by the reporter as saying that "the festival wants representatives from all sides of the battle including descendants from the Winnipeg Rifles, Midland battalion, the North West Mounted Police, Boulton's Scouts and Metis soldiers that fought in the battle ... The North West resistance is a significant event for all Canadians and celebrating its significance annually is not meant to divide Canadians but is a national celebration to bring them closer to gather."

Well, excuse me, but I thought our annual pilgrimage to Batoche each July is to honor and commemorate our fallen warriors, both Métis and Treaty. If we are to celebrate at all, it should be to celebrate our survival as invisible people living at the margins of our country. And this year – of all years – why would we want to

celebrate with Middleton's descendents, the loss of our lands, the death of our people, the hanging of our leader, and the exile of our warriors?

Reconciliation, a term appropriated by our government from South Africa to

make us think that they are creating change, means to go back to the way it was – at least that is my understanding of the word (that is the dictionary definition

but it means more than that in usage ... it does mean two sides coming together to resolve a past difference or dispute; and they do it with good intent. This isn't reconciliation in that usage because we're the only ones at the table...the Province and Canada aren't reconciling with us and wouldn't feel there was anything to reconcile about other than to say, "so we're good now, right?" Reconciliation takes discussion, agreement, accommodation ... we're not doing that).

Well, that is pretty darn scary. Go back to what? Are we going to pretend that all was wonderful before 1885? That the Manitoba resistance of 1870 didn't happen? That our relationship with the Canadian government was peaceful and honorable? Somebody has rocks in their head!

When governments in the past several years have commemorated those who fell during World War I and World War II, they did not invite former enemies. Inviting the descendants of Middleton's men is like inviting General

Sherman's family to Atlanta to commemorate the burning of the city during the American Civil War. Southerners would never do something like that and no one would expect them to.

And about reconciliation, well, usually other parties have to think that something needs to be dealt with, and, realistically, non-Native Canadians just don't really care about Batoche, even if they know what it is about. It's just not on their radar.

The only people who would want this supposed reconciliation to happen are those white folks who want to appropriate Dumont or Riel or the Metis into their "cause" ... "Look, you're oppressed just like me."

It seems to me that a reminder is needed for those leaders who endorse this kind of celebration and reconciliation. You were elected to get land, not spend our few pitiful dollars making friends with Middleton's men.

I for one do not want to share this special year with the descendants of the men who killed my great-grandfathers and forced their descendants onto the road allowances.

That does not mean I am full of hate, bitterness, or anger. It only means that I would like to honour and remember them at the gravesite on a quiet afternoon, with the sound of that beautiful wild wind, the growling of the distant thunders, and the smell of sage and sweetgrass in the air.

I do not want to hear bugles, marching feet, or the firing of Canadian guns on a day I when I remember and honor my dead.



Next month in Eagle Feather News

Next month is all about Back to Batoche and the Year of the Métis.

There is so much going on in July it is mind blowing but we will try to give you the lowdown and the uptown.

As just a teaser, did you know that at the Back to Batoche event, they intend to set a Guinness World Record? During the Festival, the night of Friday, July 23 an attempt to break a Guinness World Record will take place as award winning singer/songwriter Donny Parenteau will play the music while everyone else clicks wooden spoons.

The current record holder for largest spoons ensemble is a group from the United Kingdom. They set the Guinness Record with a total of 345 spoon players. 345 is chump change. Are you telling us that we can't find 345 Métis people who want to play spoons? This record will be shattered.

You can purchase your wooden spoons for the record breaking attempt in advance by going to www.backtobatoche.ca

Also in July we will have some features on grads from around the province and of course our usual columnists.

Speaking of columnists, we are actually down a couple. Mike Gosselin and Blue Pelletier have moved on. This leaves us in need of some capable writers that are willing to take on the arts and entertainment beat and the sports beat in Saskatchewan.

For the arts column, are you wired into the local theatre company? Do you catch yourself staring at art sometimes and liking it for no particular reason other than it is art? Can you tell a story? Can you make a deadline? Take a photo?

Are you a sports hound? Do you know the coordinators of every tournament in the North West? Have some scars and a bad knee from playing flat out all your life? Can you take a picture? Interview a sports star without gushing? Write and make deadlines?

If you think you have what it takes to be a columnist in Eagle Feather News, send us an email and let us know how you feel about the opportunity and what you could bring to our readers. If selected, you immediately become famous and even earn a bit of pizza or grocery money each month.

Interested?

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When it rains it pours

It's a frog happy monsoon season in Saskatchewan.

There's been enough rain to float Noah's Ark. This has been the wettest spring on record and it may very well turn out to be the biggest mosquito infestation on record.

Not so long ago it was as dry as a bone. The good earth is now as soggy as a used tea bag. Even the dried up PFRA pastures are lush with decent grass.

PFRA land or community pasture is land too marginal for farming or much else. It is home to stunted black poplar, juniper, and prickly pear cactus, hardy choke cherry

and Saskatoon bushes. Not a lot out there except gophers, hawks, white tail deer and the occasional wandering coyote.

The government found it fit only for skimpy herds of cattle or Indian reserves.

All this moisture must translate into a lot of thunder storms as the warmer weather returns. A friend of mine has predicted our country will see more than a few tornadoes this summer. This wet weather contrasts sharply with the coldest winter on record. Lots of records or CDs as they call them now, have been broken.

Is this strange or simply Saskatchewan? Perhaps, like the melting of the polar ice caps, its evidence of climate change. Enquiring minds want to know.

There is a vast area of the southern plains called the Palliser Triangle. It was an area of short grass prairie the size of Ireland. The wet years of the early twentieth century attracted thousands of settlers whose dreams were lost when the prairie reverted to its more natural heat wave hot summers and bitterly cold winters.

Land that should never have known the plough was abandoned. Only a few farm families remained. The last visible legacies of their homesteads are tough as the prairie carrangana trees and iris flowers.

I never liked snakes. There were times in my southern Alberta childhood when extreme heat would drive the Diamond Back Rattlesnakes out of the coulees and into the streets and backyards of Lethbridge, Alberta. Some of them grew pretty big.

Nothing so nasty lives around this vicinity except for a few smelly garter snakes. Too cool.

It's tough living in the heart of a continent. Our weather is not moderated by ocean currents nor mountains ranges.

Intensely cold high pressure systems flow down from the high arctic.

There are times when it is colder in Saskatchewan than the North Pole.

A merciful south wind is winter is most welcome. It is a wonderful feeling to see an eagle in March. They are the first of the migrating birds to arrive and they are definitely a sign of spring.

I live in the country and I was considering putting in a yard light.

Every farm yard seems to have one. Then I got to thinking why bother spending \$800 plus power when a cheaply fed dog would deter strangers.

It turns out there is good reason for those yard lights as an older wiser man once told me. Back in the 1940s there was a series of extreme winters. Saskatchewan was mostly rural at the time.

Blizzards lasting days at a time blanketed the province. People died lost in the storms.

Some were found within sight of their homes. This is the reason so many farms have yard lights. They are a beacon to safely guide blizzard blinded lost people.

I still feel a cheaply fed dog and an affordable GPS from The Source would be a viable more affordable alternative. Times change and so does the weather.

It's been a long harrowing five years but an end to the First Nations University of Canada (FNUC) crisis appears in sight. A long often bitter dispute between an Indian political culture and an Indian academic culture has turned in favour of academia.

There's good reason to celebrate. More obstacles need to be overcome but opposition is dwindling. It is the hope of many that in a few years the Saskatchewan First Nations College will restore the FNUCs reputation and standing in the academic community.

The problem was never with the students or faculty but with a misguided, mean spirited political faction. Their rule has ended.

Investigations and court cases are under way. Justice must take its course. Revisionist history, rumours and disinformation have been squashed through social networking.

Information is power and in this case it was decisive. We have entered a new era.

The last act will be reconciliation between protagonists. We are all too close not to work things through and make a lasting peace with one another.

No one needs to carry embittered feelings into a promising future.



Bev Cheechoo with her husband, Bobby.

Sask. teacher honoured for her work with Aboriginal students

By Jessica Iron
For Eagle Feather News

When Bev Cheechoo (nee Fosseneuve) began her journey as a teacher 31 years ago, she had no idea that she would one day be recognized as the Canadian Teachers' Federation 2010 Outstanding Aboriginal Educator. But that day has arrived.

On July 15, in Edmonton, Cheechoo will be presented the award in honour of her lifelong dedication and service as a teacher, at the Canadian Teachers' Federation annual meeting.

Growing up in Cumberland House, a small isolated island surrounded by the North Saskatchewan River, Cheechoo started out as a tutor following graduation, and eventually entered a three-year teaching program offered through NORTEP. She says she was heavily influenced by her father.

"My dad felt that Native people should be in the classroom teaching their own culture and language. He felt very strongly that we as Native people should be in control of our education and the content material that our children are being taught."

With that in mind, Cheechoo helped develop curriculum and a Cree language program for her community school. The curriculum was so successful it was dispersed among the 31 schools in the Northern Lights School Division. Cheechoo also taught a variety of grade levels, remaining in Cumberland House at Charlebois Community School throughout her teaching career – only leaving twice to further her education.

Now retired from teaching, she looks back fondly on her teaching career.

"I have been blessed in my life to be able to do what I have enjoyed doing. I have worked with many wonderful people who have taught me along my life's journey," says Cheechoo.

"Education is the stepping stone to a healthy lifestyle," she says. "It is through education that we can provide a strong sense of students' culture, language and of who they are and how they can fit in today's society as a people with a strong and positive identity."

Cheechoo used this knowledge to aid fledgling teachers. She was a cooperating teacher for many interns, as well as a mentor for several first and second-year teachers.

"We all need someone to take the time to help us grow in our field. I was willing to do it; it gave me a lot of satisfaction."

The most important thing to be a successful teacher, she claims, is that you must love what you do.

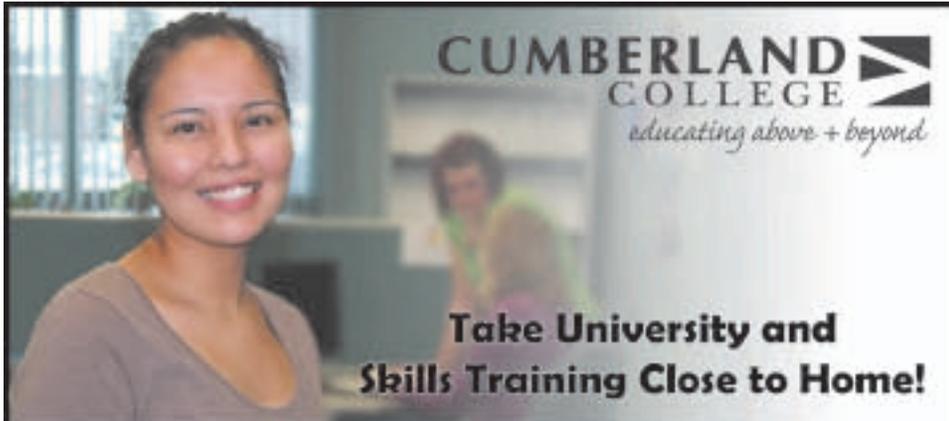
"You need to be passionate about your work and your students need to know you care for them. A hug goes a long way for a child. You have to give your heart and soul to your profession."

She now lives in Cochrane, Ontario with her husband of 27 years, Bobby. They'll travel to Edmonton in July for the Awards ceremony.

"I have enjoyed my career and winning this award is the icing on the cake.

"To have all my hard work recognized by my peers is humbling and I am very grateful to Saskatchewan Teacher's Federation for nominating me," says Cheechoo.

"I understand what it means when people say it is a blessing to be paid for doing something you enjoy."



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University dream about to come true for Choumont

By Darla Read
For Eagle Feather News

July 28, 2009 is a day that will be forever etched in Denise Choumont's memory.

She spoke about it when she was recognized for her commitment and dedication to learning at last month's Saskatchewan Aboriginal Literacy Gathering at Manitou Beach.

When she accepted her award, Choumont read a poem she'd written about that painful day less than a year ago. The audience was hushed as she remembered the sound of a gun barrel rattling against teeth and the smell of gun powder.

Currently, Choumont is finishing her Adult 12 in Prince Albert. It hasn't been an easy road.

"I had lost my parents at a very young age, at the age of nine, four months apart," she explains. "And July 28, 09, I lost my brother. He committed suicide right before my eyes. He shot himself in front of me."

Somehow, Choumont picked herself up.

"One month later, I had to return back to school, and I did it. I'm still in school, and I'm very proud of that. Very tired, though. Overwhelmed at times."

Choumont says at first she suffered a lot of flashbacks, which she says have lessened in time.

"Even reading a sentence was very hard. It was unbelievable. I just focused, I just pushed down. I was so determined. I was reading chapters four times over – I studied so hard."

Choumont says her spirituality helps her through the tough times. She was raised the traditional Cree way by her



Denise Choumont has overcome personal tragedy as she pursues her dream of furthering her education.

step-parents, Ernest and Helen Morin.

"I find the inner strength in my children. I want to be a better mother. I want to be there for them."

In addition to raising her three children, Choumont also raises her brother's two sons.

As hard as that night was, Choumont believes she was given a gift from the experience: to spread a message.

"Bring more awareness to suicide, to never give up. No matter how hard things are, it is possible to make it."

Choumont's goal is to finish her Adult 12 and then study Human Justice in university.

"Going to university is a dream for me. Dreams happen."



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Hard work pays off for Cowesses First Nation's nursing students

By Creeson Agecoutay
For Eagle Feather News

It has been a grueling two years of hard work and studying for Renee Lerat but she could not be happier because today she is a nurse.

"I was very proud to be from Cowesses and to be where I am and I was so proud to celebrate on my home, where I live," Lerat said.

Lerat is one of 14 graduates of the Licensed Practical Nursing program offered on the Cowesses First Nation. Twenty-year-old Lerat can now work at any hospital or care home in the province. The program not only gave her hands on training but many life skills as well.

"It's so much more than that, you learn personal communication you learn who you are really, deep down inside you learn this is what you want to do."

Fellow graduate Ajay Sparvier, also from Cowesses, feels overwhelmed and excited to be finished her studies.

"I didn't think this day was going to come. It's been a long two years but we came up with a slogan when we first started, 'no one gets left behind' and we persevered through it all and I'm glad that all 14 of us finished."

Cowesses began operating the LPN

program in 2008 with the help of partners, which included SIAST, the South East Regional College, and some help from the province and federal government. The reserve's Chief, Grady Lerat says the community saw a huge need for the program considering health problems like diabetes and heart disease, which are common on many Saskatchewan reserves.

One of the biggest problems on Cowesses is the lack of a dialysis machine for people with diabetes. He sees the hardship created when patients have to travel far distances to get treatment. The nursing program was one way to begin working towards that goal.

"It's been always a challenge in the winter time to get so far away to do those types of services, so I think in the onset we were trying to look at a way to try to bring a diabetes programmer and dialysis machine in the area for not only for First Nations members but non-First Nations as well," said Chief Lerat.

Plans are underway for the Cowesses to obtain a dialysis machine.

Rhonda Lavender is the head instructor of the course and says the new LPN program was a real eye-opener for her and others.



Renee Lerat of Cowesses First Nation, Rhonda Lavender, head instructor, LPN Program and Ajay Sparvier of Cowesses First Nation.

"These mature students have families and some of them had jobs and they worked so hard and traveled really far through all sorts of crazy weather."

"They all deserve it, I'm so proud of all of them. This is my first time teaching (and) I'll never forget my first class. I am so, so proud."

That pride showed throughout the community. Renee Lerat and Ajay Sparvier were both presented with their very first star blanket. Lerat says there is still much to be done.

"I'm going to work for a couple of years and my life dream is to become a dentist, so when I go back to school I'm going to be a dentist."

Sparvier has already secured a job with Pasqua Hospital in Regina. Her main reason for becoming a nurse was for the Elders.

"I believe being an aboriginal nurse they'd be more open and receptive to the new health care and the new technology that's out there. I just hope to keep our Elders with us a lot longer."

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Strategy brings culture into health care

By Darla Read
For Eagle Feather News

It's a first for the Saskatoon Health Region and the Aboriginal community, and possibly the first of its kind anywhere.

Last month the Saskatoon Regional Health Authority was presented with an Aboriginal Health Strategy by Strengthening the Circle – a partnership between the Kinistin Saulteaux Nation, Central Urban Métis Federation Inc, and the Health Authority.

Over the course of six months, the group conducted 34 community focus groups, including meeting with First Nations and Métis Elders, and received feedback from 671 Aborigi-

nal people on how the Health Region can better meet Aboriginal health needs.

One suggestion that came out of those meetings was that each hospital in the province utilize Aboriginal healers who would work with doctors and nurses – an idea welcomed by the chief of Kinistin.

“(This strategy) incorporates a cultural presence that enables a comfort zone within the Western concept,” says Chief Peter Nippi.

Other key priorities include developing an Aboriginal Health Council to work with the Health Authority on implementation of the strategy; recruiting and retaining more Aboriginal employees at all levels in the

region; increasing Aboriginal representation on all of the region's boards and committees; developing an anti-racism strategy; and advocating for policy changes at the local, provincial and federal levels in order to improve health access for Aboriginal people.

President of the Métis Nation – Saskatchewan, Robert Doucette, says the new strategy brings people back together when for years everyone has been working in isolation.

“Each thinking that what we were doing was the best thing, and our communities became unhealthy. A lot of things started happening, and it had a great impact on our community,” Doucette said.

“And now, with this new strategy that is being developed, that path is now starting to come back together again. Because, we're all in this together.”

Geraldine Arcand, Vice-Chief of the Saskatoon Tribal Council, says she saw a need for more Aboriginal employees years ago when she worked as a social worker at the Royal University Hospital.

“People were coming there not realizing what they were there for many times: language barrier. Because it was a learning hospital, it was scary when specialists came in with all these interns.”

The strategy is outlined in a document of more than 70 pages. Anyone interested in a copy can contact CUMFI or the Kinistin Saulteaux Nation.



Kinistin Chief Peter Nippi, Shan Landry of Saskatoon Health Region, and CUMFI President Shirley Isbister presented the health strategy to Health Region chair Jim Rhode.
(Photo by John Lagimodiere)

Health Region hoping to increase number of Aboriginal employees

The Saskatoon Health Region hopes to build a more representative workforce.

It's embarking on a four-year action plan called “Awaken the Power of Change,” and it aims to have 10 per cent of its workforce be Aboriginal people by the end of the four years.

Part of the plan involves partnering with school divisions and Aboriginal educational institutions to provide a health academy for high school students.

Through one of its programs aimed at making a more representative workforce, Helen Thunderchild became a health region employee. Thunderchild took part in the Step Into Health Careers program.

She says the program changed her life.

“I didn't only leave the program with a Sterile Processing Technician certificate. I take with me my self-confidence, my self-esteem, my well-being – all with the help of my mentors.

“I applied for an Operating Room Attendant temporary, full-time position at the Royal University Hospital in Labour and Delivery. I had been successfully chosen to fill the position for five months, then falling down to a casual for less than a month. I'm now working as a permanent, full-time employee in Labour and Delivery, all within less than a year.”

Bonnie Blakley Vice-President of People Strategies with the SHR, says people just need to be given a chance, much like she was given a chance when she was a teenage, single mother.

“I know that just like us, some of these people will go from low-income housing to owning their own home. From wondering if they had food in their cupboard to being able to buy food for others. And that is what life's all about.”

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Childhood obesity leads to health problems later

I've been reading scary statistics about childhood obesity and we have got to stop feeding our children junk and get serious about this growing epidemic of childhood obesity.

Today's kids are fatter, don't exercise, and are showing early signs of health-related conditions more common in adults, like diabetes and heart disease.

If you think I'm pulling your leg next time you head out to the pow wow take a look at some of our children and you will see with your own eyes the growing problem.

You'll find them in line for a bannock burger, alongside one of their parents or grandparents.

The study, recently published in The New England Journal of Medicine, is one of the largest to have followed children well into adulthood, over a period spanning several decades, after having gathered detailed information on weight along with other risk factors.

The study used data gathered from Pima and Tohono O'odham Indians, among whom rates of obesity and type 2 diabetes began to climb alarmingly many years prior to the rise of weight problems among other Americans.

Findings revealed that obese children had a much greater likelihood of dying prior to reaching the age of 55, due to illness or self-inflicted injury. The results of the study indicate that childhood obesity can cause serious long-term effects on health.

According to a study out of Umea University Hospital in Umea, Sweden, "The results of this study suggest that obesity prevention should begin in early childhood.

This will involve ensuring our children eat healthy, well-balanced diets and maintain physically active lifestyles."

Parents should be role models for their children when it comes to healthy eating and exercise. It's not rocket science; eat less and reduce portion size, and

become more physically active.

Article after article tells us that choosing to eat a healthy diet combined with exercise is important for maintaining health and weight.

It's not just food and the lack of exercise that contribute to obesity. Studies show that genetics play a factor, and believe it or not, so does lack of sleep.

Our gene pool does play a role in determining how our children's bodies will store and burn fat so as parents we can be aware of risk factors and make the needed changes. Some children are born with a genetic make-up that makes it more challenging to keep weight off.



Sandee Sez
Sandra Ahenakew

a priority when they're struggling to just make ends meet.

Genetics and socio-economic status, however, are not the biggest factors that contribute to childhood obesity. The way we parent trumps them both.

Lifestyle habits are passed down from one generation to the next. People in the same family tend to have similar eating patterns, activity levels, and attitudes about being fit and healthy.

We as parents have a huge effect on the lifestyle habits of our children, both positive and negative. It's easy to see why a child raised by overweight, inactive parents might show signs of obesity by age four.

Getting back to some all but forgotten family basics can have a huge impact on the prevention of childhood obesity.

Adopting simple changes such as sitting down to a family dinner on a regular basis can get children off to a healthy start in the battle against obesity. Don't let your children eat in front of the television, or play their video games while eating their meals.

A recent study involving a large sample of four-year-old children found that the return of the family meal, mixed with less television time, and the added ingredient of sufficient sleep, are a recipe for keeping our kids slim and healthy.

We have to teach our children to develop healthy habits. If not us who?

Not all is doom and gloom, there are things we can do like; change the way you live, and develop healthy eating habits.

You will have to incorporate some kind of exercise and you can take the weight off and keep it off long term. Hard work but worth it.

Thank you for your letters and emails.

You can write to me at Sandee Sez C/O Eagle Feather News P.O. Box 924 Saskatoon SK S7M 3M4 u can email me at sandra.ahenakew@gmail.com

Lifestyle habits are passed down from one generation to the next. People in the same family tend to have similar eating patterns, activity levels, and attitudes about being fit and healthy.

I was an overweight kid and still struggle with weight as an adult. I know that my own diagnosis with type 2 diabetes is making me change my eating habit – I have no choice.

Yet another challenge is that of being poor. One preschool obesity study detected a higher level of obesity in lower income, minority preschoolers. It's difficult for parents to make exercise and healthy meals



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National Aboriginal Day Quiz 2010

Each year with much anticipation, readers of Eagle Feather News avidly study their history of the plains and prepare for our annual National Aboriginal Day History Trivia Quiz. Without further goings on, here it is.

1. The Constitution Act of 1982 describes the Aboriginal people of Canada as:

- A. Indians, Eskimos and Halfbreeds
- B. Indians, Métis and Fish eaters
- C. Cree, Sash People, Inuit
- D. Indian, Inuit and Métis

2. When were Indians on reserve allowed to be Canadian citizens?

- A. 1492
- B. 1960
- C. 1982
- D. 2008

3. Who was the rat that penned the White Paper in 1969 calling for full assimilation of First Nation people?

- A. Jim Pankiw
- B. Maurice Vellacot
- C. Jean Chretien
- D. Brian Mulroney

4. In 1927, Parliament passed what legislation regarding Indian title?

- A. Indian people cannot discuss or spend money on land claims.
- B. The government can take land whenever.
- C. One land claim at a time for Indians.
- D. Like it says in the song, this land is your land this land is our land

5. In 1763 the Royal Proclamation laid out what basic principles of Canadian Indian policies?

- A. Recognition of Indian lands.
- B. Recognition of Indian Governments.
- C. Provisions for a Treaty process with the Crown.
- D. All of the above.

6. Who coined the term "First Nation" in the 1980s?

- A. Sol Sanderson
- B. David Ahenakew
- C. Gordon Tootoosis
- D. Ovide Mercredi

7. When did Chief Kapetekoos (Thunderchild) join Treaty 6?

- A. 1876
- B. 1879
- C. 1975
- D. 1885

8. Treaty payments were set at \$5 annually

for most people. How long was that \$5 supposed to last in 1876?

- A. Until you walked past the Indian taco truck.
- B. Till your cousin borrows it from you.
- C. A full year of rations and supplies.
- D. Until tax time

12. Who turned back settlers and surveyors at Portage la Prairie because they were upset that the Hudson Bay had sold Rupert's Land to Canada?

- A. Yellow Quill's band of Saulteaux
- B. Louis Riel

- C. Customs Canada
- D. Big Bear

13. 640 acres of land for each family of five were allotted to Treaty 6 First Nations. How many acres per family of five were allotted to the First Nations in Treaty 5?

- A. 240 acres
- B. 160 acres
- C. 480 acres
- D. 10 acres

14. How high would your stack of beaver pelts need to be in order to trade for a musket?

- A. 6 feet
- B. The height of the counter at the trading post
- C. 3 feet
- D. The height of the musket

15. After the Battle of Seven Oaks, who wrote the song that was then referred to as the Métis National Anthem?

- A. Pierre Falcon
- B. Justin Beiber
- C. Johnny Arcand
- D. Betsy Ross

16. What do you get when you add grease and berries to dried and powdered bison meat?

- A. Big Mac
- B. Pemmican



This historic photo depicts the making of pemmican.

9. When was the Office of the Treaty Commissioner established in Saskatchewan?

- A. 1989
- B. 1876
- C. 1982
- D. 1945

10. Name the three Treaty Commissioners since 1989 in order of their service.

11. The Hudson Bay Company was given the right to make trade and treaties in what part of North America?

- A. Winnipeg
- B. Franks Land
- C. Rupert's Land
- D. Ontario

- C. Cat food
- D. Trail mix

Answers.

Well we hope we tickled your memory bone a little bit. If you got 16 out of 16, consider yourself an Elder or Professor. If you scored 10-15 correct, you are a brilliant student, 5-9 correct shows you need to read a bit more but you have a good start and if you scored under 5, well, better luck next year.

1.D, 2.B, 3.C, 4.A, 5.D, 6.A, 7.B, 8.C, 9.A, 10. Cliff Wright, David Arnot, Bill McKnight 11.C, 12. A, 13.B, 14.D, 15.A, 16.B



Kennetch Charlette and Alanis King have formed Askiy Productions.

Charlette, King team up to produce Born Buffalo

By Deirdra Ness
Of Eagle Feather News

In July, Askiy Productions will present *Born Buffalo* at the Wanuskewin Heritage Park Amphitheatre. The play is a workshop production from playwright Alanis King and director Kennetch Charlette.

Set in the prairies, *Born Buffalo* explores a contemporary zoo bison trying to rejoin its herd and it's complicated because there is no herd. The buffalo characters come to life in a magical journey of Indigenous myth and magic realism twisted and tied with a visiting genealogist. It's humour, dancing, singing and all Indian.

"I felt it was a story from the land base of the prairie," King says about writing and producing the play.

"It seemed so fitting to have an outdoor play about the buffalo and the cultures from the land base around Saskatoon. I wanted to bring back the essence and meaning of how important buffalo were to people at one time."

For Charlette something in the story caught his attention.

"I started researching the buffalo and the history and the stories fascinate me. The play is a metaphor for native people."

Also working with the *Born Buffalo* production are performers Gloria May Eshkibok, Mitchell Poundmaker, Lanny Macdonald, Lacey Eninew and Brenda Rump, the design team of Adrian Stimson, Jeff Chief and Kristin Friday and choreographer Jackie Latendresse.

Born Buffalo is presented by Askiy Productions, a new Indigenous theatre group created by friends and contemporaries Charlette and King. Charlette is a member of the Peter Ballantyne First Nation from Sandy Bay, Saskatchewan and King is an Anishnaabeekwe from Wikwemikong Ontario. The two met 24 years ago at the Native Theatre School in Toronto.

"As senior artists in the province, we want to create professional theatre productions of our stories from our people," King said about creating Askiy Productions with Charlette.

"As artists we can adapt that into our own settings."

As for the future of Askiy Productions, Charlette says, "In the long term, we want a theatre space based in Saskatoon where we can work mainly with young people. But for now, it's productions."

While Charlette has had great success in his career, many people would say his greatest success has been as a mentor to young people. He lives and teaches his culture intertwined with the performing arts. He and King also share a history working with young people as former Artistic Directors at Saskatchewan Native Theatre Company.

The word "Askiy" means Mother Earth in Cree.

"It seemed appropriate culturally, referencing where art comes from and creating art to please Mother Earth," Charlette explained.



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SASKATOON INDIAN METIS FRIENDSHIP CENTRE

Arcands raise the roof in time for Fiddle Fest 2010

By Darla Read
For Eagle Feather News

Four years of fundraising, two and a half days of construction, and the roof is up!

"It's like a dream is finally coming to reality," says Vicki Arcand, wife of the Master of the Métis Fiddle, John Arcand, and administrative director of the John Arcand Fiddle Fest.

Since late 2006, the Fiddle Fest has been fundraising to build a roof over the annual event. For the past 12 years, organizers have rented a tent and Fiddle Fest-goers had to brave the elements.

This year the board decided to go ahead with construction because it was so close to raising the necessary funds.

The 80 ft. x 200 ft. foot building, described as similar to a big pole shed, cost \$171,000, and Arcand estimates they raised at least \$150,000 – no small feat for an organization that doesn't yet have charitable status, so it can't issue tax receipts.

"It just leaves you speechless. It's been in small



Vicki and John Arcand are thrilled to have a new venue in time for the John Arcand Fiddle Fest in August.

increments, it hasn't been like someone just showed up and gave us this huge cheque, but that almost means more," says Vicki Arcand.

"People who've done it have done it from the heart

To celebrate the roof going up, there will be an opening celebration in July. The 13th Annual John Arcand Fiddle Fest will run from August 12 to 15.

and because they believe in what we're doing. They want to see this culture, this heritage, the music, fiddle, and the dance continue."

Arcand says fundraising will continue because there are two more phases. Phase two will see bleachers and a dance floor built, and phase three will be more amenities.

"I almost want to cry when I say the donations and the support that we have received from volunteers, from people who have come out to the fundraisers."

Arcand notes there have been a thousand small fundraisers to get them to this point.

She says the plan from the beginning was to have a wall of recognition for anyone who donated money, and she says they will fulfill that promise even this year, although it might not be the finished product.

Happy National Aboriginal Day

“

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Wapos Bay proudly concludes run

By Dana Jacobs
For Eagle Feather News

After five seasons, 34 episodes and three Gemini Awards, the stop-motion animation production Wapos Bay is wrapping up its final season.

While audiences and creators are disappointed to see the series come to an end, there is an air of pride and achievement on the Wapos Bay set.

"We have 34 great stories and the movie of the week will wrap things up nicely so we leave the characters on a good note," said Dennis Jackson, the series' original writer and creator.

The Wapos Bay story began when Jackson was in high school.

"I wrote a short story about my grandfather trapping up in the North and witnessing the environment changing around him as opposed to when he was a kid with his grandfather on the same land."

When Jackson was in his final year of film school he produced a six-minute stop-motion animation film based on the short story he'd written in high school, which won a Banff Television Canada Award.

"Just going to the Banff Festival was where you really need to go in order to raise financing for any film and that was fortunate timing for me," says Jackson.

In 2000 Wapos Bay aired as a

Christmas special, three years later production began for a pilot episode, and in 2005 the Wapos Bay series began production.

According to producer Anand Ramayya, Wapos Bay has done more than \$11 million worth of production in Saskatoon over the last five years.

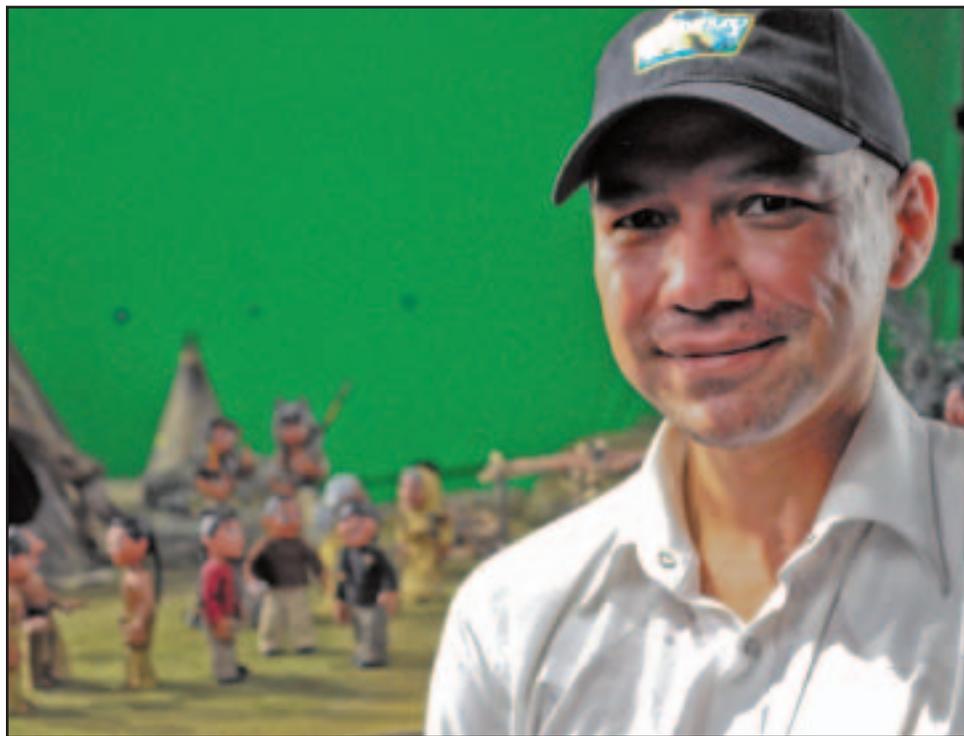
"We've employed over 50 people every year and we are talking about young, diverse people from all backgrounds working professionally in high value jobs."

Ramayya says there is a sense of pride that comes with having built Wapos Bay up from scratch but the show's success would not have been possible without the support of government, industry and community.

"We are really proud of what we are doing and we are also really happy and proud to be doing this in Saskatchewan.

When Wapos Bay was picked up by the Aboriginal People's Television Network, two additional writers began work on the series: Melanie Jackson, Dennis Jackson's wife; and Trevor Cameron. The series also took on a full complement of business administration, creative and technical staff.

The voices behind the Wapos Bay characters include a cast of emerging talent as well as some well-known Aboriginal performers including Andrea Menard (The Velvet Devil), Lorne



Original writer and creator Dennis Jackson says a final farewell to the characters of Wapos Bay.

Cardinal (Corner Gas) and Gordon Tootoosis (North of 60, Legend of the Falls).

Tootoosis, who is the voice of Mushom on Wapos Bay, said he is sorry to see it come to an end.

"It is a lot of fun and a good fit for me," he said. "I've always thought that it was natural for us (Aboriginal people) to make a transition to media like television, radio, stage, to tell our stories because we are an oral culture traditionally."

Wapos Bay is about the adventures of three Aboriginal children growing up in

a remote Cree community where modern life and ancient traditions meet in a light-hearted story of broad appeal.

Loosely based on personal experiences, Jackson says the stories are often based on things the writers remember from childhood.

"We take our experiences and we just blow it way out of proportion, we exaggerate their adventures and turn it into a moral lesson.

"They are universal lessons, not just Aboriginal lessons and I'm really proud of what we have done here."

Saskatchewan Ministry of First Nations and Métis Relations

What is the spirit of National Aboriginal Day?

Is it learning more about each other? Is it listening to the drummers find their rhythm? Is it dipping a warm piece of bannock in a bowl of stew?

This is a day to enjoy the richness of our shared culture and the gifts we bring each other. It is a day to revel in the promise of our future and honour our past.

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2010 - The Year

Battle of Batoche remembered 125 years later

The sun was shining high overhead and there was a brisk wind stirring up memories for the 100 visitors who came to the Batoche National Historic Site to commemorate the last day of the Battle of Batoche. On a stage that 125 years earlier would have been in the middle of a Canadian bombardment, Elders, storytellers and community leaders spoke of the Resistance and the impact on their community.

"We have some students here today and I want them to understand why we want it called a resistance and not a rebellion, a term used by some to this day," said Karon Shmon of the Gabriel Dumont Institute.

"The word rebellion has negative connotations and implies that the rebels choose to thwart authority at an early stage when two opposing views are present. For over a decade, the Métis sent the government many letters, petitions and people to advocate on their behalf, none of which made any difference. Once you have tried all of the safe and legal means to resist being oppressed you only have a few options after that, one of them being to fight back, or in this case, armed resistance."

A prayer was said for the fallen and memories were shared by friends. Stewart Prosper spoke of his community, One Arrow, and how they helped the Métis.

"When you marry an Indian," he joked, "you are marrying a whole bunch of people. We had so many relations here we had to help so we would sneak down at night. People from Whitecap and Muskoday helped too."

Time was also taken to honour deceased Métis Senator John Boucher. His daughter Jodie Zbaraschuk was on hand to accept a gift from the Gabriel Dumont Institute to honour her father.

"My dad was a very honest and loyal man. He dedicated his life to the Métis people and enjoyed every minute of it. He spoke in schools, he got to meet the great Nelson Mandela, he dined with queens and met with prime ministers. We are very proud of him," said Zbaraschuk.

Senator Boucher was from St Louis and had great impact through his work for the Métis community. Boucher had a Canadian senator in the family and much time was spent around the table talking politics and according to Jodie, the late senator liked to sit back and take it all in.

"He told me it wasn't his intention to get out front and speak, but eventually he was kind of



Jodie Zbaraschuk and her daughter stand in front of a quilt that was made depicting the life and times of deceased Métis Senator John Boucher.

(Photo by John Lagimodiere)

pushed into it. He was good at it and a keeper of oral history. Our family participated in the resistance and we had a post office in Boucheville," said Zbaraschuk.

"That land was taken away after the Battle. Since my dad has passed we have hired a lawyer that will be investigating. If we ever get a settlement, it is ensured that the money will be going to Métis youth for education. That's what my dad wanted. He has never done anything for himself."

The event closed with a reading by Métis artist, author and educator Leah Dorion. She read from her book *The Giving Tree*, a lesson for all the people in the crowd about our connection to Mother Earth.

The table of bannock and jam was then opened up and people ate, or stared out over the valley, minds wandering back to 125 years ago when, by that time, only 50 or 60 old men stayed behind to face the Canadian soldiers with no ammunition, just their hearts. The day ended harshly for many of those old men.

"These men stayed behind, knowing they would be killed so the younger men could escape to continue to look after their families, said Karon Shmon.

"This Year of the Métis allows us to tell our story. The privilege of documenting history has always gone to the victors and it wasn't our story that was taught after the resistance. Our storytelling tradition enabled Métis scholars such as Howard Adams and others to bring our culture and history to the attention of others but more importantly, to preserve it for ourselves.

"Our Elders such as Rose Fleury and the late Senator John Boucher have added immensely as advocates and in their dedication to carrying our culture and history forward. At this sacred site today, we remember our ancestors with sorrow and with pride and express our gratitude to them."

- By John Lagimodiere

Métis Did you know?

Did you know? Gabriel Dumont was elected President of the St. Laurent Council in 1873.

Did you know? Gabriel Dumont ran the only ferry in the region at Gabriel's Crossing. Dumont's ferry was a flat scow 27ft long and 12 ft wide and was capable of carrying 4 Red River Carts or 2 wagons.

Did you know? The Métis people elected Louis Riel twice to the House of Commons as their representative for the riding of Provencher—once in 1873 and again in 1874. Riel was never able to take his seat in parliament because at that time the government offered a \$5000 bounty for his capture.



GABRIEL D
of Native Stud

Year of the Métis

Métis life after 1885



Following the 1885 Resistance, the vast influx of non-Aboriginal settlers and the failure of the Scrip system greatly disrupted the Métis' traditional lifestyles. From 1885 to 1930, the Métis had difficulty adapting to the rapidly changing way of life in the Prairie West.

Throughout the nineteenth century, the Métis practised a mixed economy that included harvesting seasonal flora and fauna resources, supplemented with farming and wage labour. After 1885, however, many Métis relied on low-paying seasonal jobs to support themselves. Many ended up living in poverty.

Since spring crops had not been planted at the time of the 1885 Resistance, many Batoche-area families ran out of food the

following winter. Many had their homes destroyed and their property looted, resulting in lengthy compensation claims from Ottawa. Some obtained freighting work to make ends meet; however, these contracts were low paying and were becoming scarce as railways and steamers began hauling goods.

Merchants were reluctant to establish or re-establish stores in the Batoche area, reducing opportunities for freighting contracts and other employment. Nonetheless, some Métis, however, became successful businessmen, ranchers, farmers, clerics, and politicians.

A lack of viable employment opportunities resulted in many Métis families living in a deplorable state. For instance, in 1888, Alexander Cardinal's eight-member family lived in a house approximately three metres square. It was almost devoid of furniture, bedding, and food.

The North West Mounted Police and the Duck Lake Indian Agency distributed flour and beef or bacon to starving families around Batoche. Government officials gave unemployed people provisions in exchange for hauling and cutting wood, or doing handy work around police barracks.

Many Métis soon needed government assistance to acquire food and clothing. Some sold Scrip to speculators to feed their families, resulting in the loss of their lands.

Even when the Métis obtained seasonal work or planted

crops, times remained difficult. In the 1890s, crop failures plagued farmers. In some regions, Métis families were forced to kill their cattle for food – a desperate move for people who owned so few animals. Eventually, some families abandoned their farms or sold all their possessions to cover their debts.

Many Métis became landless and squatted on the approaches of Crown Land, and thus became known as the "Road Allowance People."

Only those who owned property and paid property taxes could send their children to school. As a result, three generations of Métis were unable to receive a basic education (although the children of property owners or those who attended industrial or residential schools received some education).

The Métis who squatted on road allowances had a much lower standard of living than nearby Euro-Canadians and Europeans. This poverty occurred well into the mid-twentieth century. As hunting and fishing regulations increased and government work projects failed, more Métis turned to government aid or "relief" to support themselves.

The Métis' poverty was so disheartening it rendered many hopeless and helpless. Having to live on the outskirts of a settlement in run-down housing without meaningful employment was detrimental to Métis' self-respect.

Endemic racism also forced many Métis to deny their heritage and assimilate into the Euro-Canadian mainstream in order to escape negative stereotypes and economic and social marginalization.

- By David Morin



The Scrip system was implemented after the 1869-70 Resistance resulted in the creation of The Manitoba Act, which set aside 1.4 million acres of land to extinguish the Métis' Aboriginal title to the land. The two types of Scrip created for this process were Land and Money Scrip.

When the system first started, the value of the scrip given to the Métis was either 160 acres of land or \$160 cash to be used for the purchase of land. The value was increased to 240 acres or \$240 due to the rising cost of land. Scrip was handed out by Scrip Commissions, which were like Treaty Commissions. Scrip Commissioners travelled to various Métis communities and gather Scrip applications.

The Scrip System was very flawed for many reasons, resulting in the systematic loss of Métis lands. The Scrip

Commissions were advertised in newspapers and on posters, but many Métis were illiterate and missed the commissions.

Sometimes the Scrip Commissioners missed entire Métis communities. There was also no protection against fraud.

Many had their names forged without their knowledge. Speculators bought Scrip from Métis at very low prices and

then sold them to the main chartered banks in Canada.

Speculators ended up obtaining 12,560 Money Scrips out of 14,849 issued. They also managed to leave the Métis with only one per cent of the 138,320 acres of Land Scrip issued in northwest Saskatchewan.

For more information, please read the essay by Leah Dorion and Darren Préfontaine at: <http://www.metismuseum.ca/resource.php/00725>.

What is Scrip?

Chronology of the 1885 Resistance

1885 (March 18)

The Métis took control of Batoche, and seized the local Indian Agent and other government officials.

1885 (March 19)

Louis Riel was informed that the Métis petitions would be met with bullets. Thus, the Métis immediately formed a Provisional Government. Pierre Parenteau was chosen as president, Charles Nolin was commissioner, Gabriel Dumont was general, French Canadian Philippe Garnot was secretary, and twelve other Métis men were elected as members of the council. The non-Aboriginal settlers and English Métis withdraw their support of the Provisional Government. The Provisional Government or Exovedate established its headquarters at the Batoche Church.

To be continued next month ...

Prepared by the Gabriel Dumont Institute with material developed by Darren Préfontaine, Leah Dorion, Ron Laliberté, and Father Guy Lavallée.

Northern students collaborate to create heroic short stories

By **Andréa Ledding**
For **Eagle Feather News**

A four-story graphic novel was written by five to nine-year-olds from Saskatchewan's North – with a little help from some friends.

During Mark Dieter's artist-in-residence stint at La Ronge, an expansion of a program previously funded by Aboriginal Arts and Culture Leadership engaged him with the Saskatchewan Writers Guild and Northern Schools. Dieter's program, which he created to help students produce short story narratives, explored the theme "The Hero In Us All".

Working with K to 4 classrooms in Green Lake and Patuanak, Dieter started talking stories with the kids about unlikely heroes rising above, conquering fears, and making tough choices for the sake of others. He drafted them and worked with a story editor – Eagle Feather News' former arts and entertainment columnist Mike Gosselin.

Then, along with artist Carrie Saganace, they both travelled back to the communities to talk changes and further ideas. Patuanak had to cancel due to a flu

outbreak, fearing H1N1, but endorsed everything via email.

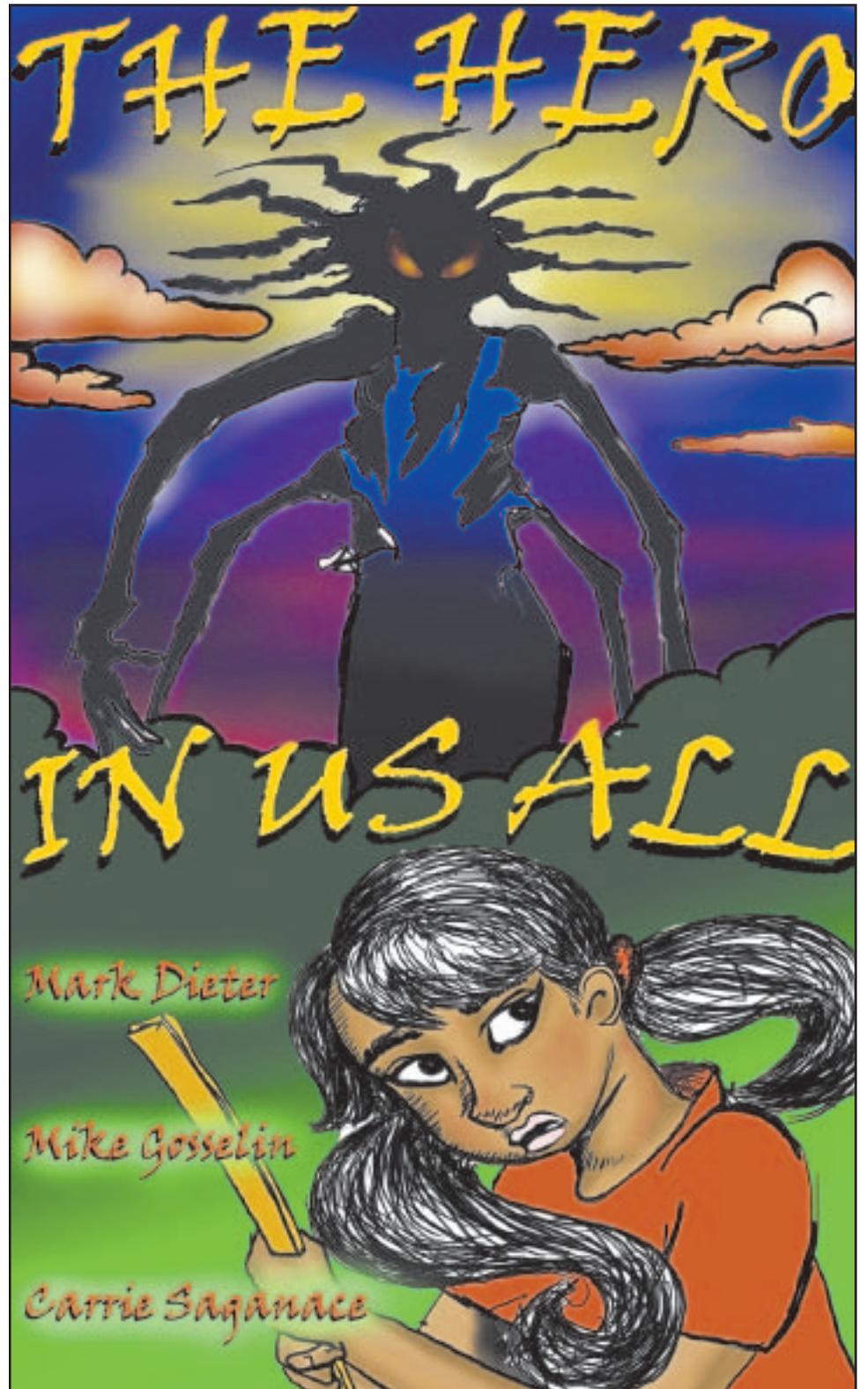
"Back in Green Lake we spent a day with them, and the material the kids came up with is genius," said Gosselin.

Stories included "Scotty, the Deer Who Wanted To Be A Boy", "The Loneliest Bear in Green Lake", "Kevin Versus Felgatz", and "Katrina's Quest to Rid Patuanak of Bad Dreams".

As a former teacher, Gosselin was impressed with the kids' focus and creativity.

"It was a very remarkable experience to sit in this class and talk shop with these kids for a full day... these stories are great, they've got everything a good story needs."

Afterwards, Saganace finalized graphics and artwork, Gosselin polished up details, and Dieter produced and managed the overall project. The plan is to pitch and publish the graphic novel, and inspire and empower youth about the magic of creative writing – but prominent Canadian screenwriter Jeremy Boxen, after hearing the plots, said the stories not only stand on their own but would make decent movies, too!



Peepeekisis craftspeople share skills

By **Andréa Ledding**
For **Eagle Feather News**

Robin Brass didn't have to think twice when Elwood Jimmy at Sakewewak Artist's Collective invited her to make a project proposal.

"I had always wanted to just really focus on traditional methods using natural materials," said Brass, who lined up expert craftspeople at Peepeekisis First Nation to teach skills she hadn't learned herself.

"I grew up in a family that hunted lots, that was my connection – but I always wanted to learn more."

Intensive workshops focused on traditional ways using all-natural materials. Free to participants, thanks to SaskCulture funding, Brass paid teachers a decent wage for time, travel, expertise and dedicated years of learning and acquired knowledge.

Gerald Cook of Lac La Ronge provided deer hides to learn traditional tanning with Pat Koochicum and Marie Cardinal. Porcupine quill work was taught by Angela Redmund and Louis Moosecamp, of Standing Buffalo and Pine Ridge.

Robert and Delphine Bellegarde did

rawhide containers and quill jewelry with the community during cultural camp. Campbell Papequash of Key First Nation led a daytrip gathering birchbark, and birchbark basketry was taught by Lester and Rose Morin, their son, and Alice, Lester's mom, from Big River. Flora Winonis, Alice's mom who is in her 90s, had to cancel due to illness.

"These teachers who are experts now were almost entirely self-taught. Some had it handed it down to them, but others have just had years of incredible dedication and persistence."

Master potter Colleen Aimes from Manitoba taught Indigenous pottery – stones are hand-dug, crushed into clay, then hand-coiled pots are fired with dried buffalo chips in an open pit.

"So few people anywhere now know how to do the old Indigenous pottery methods," said Brass. "The moment the chips turned to ash and you could see those pots – they are glowing red hot – that moment gave me tingles."

This was exactly what people needed, said Brass.

• Continued on Page 19

National Aboriginal Day

Recognize and support the ongoing contributions of First Nations, Métis and Inuit people in Canada.

Funding support to plan and hold cultural activities taking place anywhere in Saskatchewan, available through the:
 Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Leadership Program
 Métis Cultural Development Fund
 Multicultural Initiatives Fund

For these and other funding opportunities, visit www.saskculture.sk.ca or call Damon Badger-Heit at (306) 780-9251 or toll-free at 1-866-476-6830.

Cultural Activity

Storytelling
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 Diversity
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 Band
 First Nations culture
 Anti-racism
 Awareness
 Sound Recording
 Language
 Education
 Built heritage
 Filmmaking
 Métis heritage
 Debating
 Book Publishing

CULTURE BUILDS COMMUNITY



New regalia making is part of the community's rejuvenation initiative.

SaskCulture comes through for Muskoday

By **Andréa Ledding**
For Eagle Feather News

Newly hired Muskoday Community School Co-ordinator Michelle Vandevort had never written a grant before, but on her first try secured full funding for project R.O.C.K. ("Rediscovering Our Cultural Knowledge").

"It goes to show if you believe, your words will come out and you'll be successful," said Vandevort.

Saskatoon Tribal Council and SaskCulture partnered to deliver grant writing workshops, and culture officer Damon Badger Heit offered further expertise.

"I was nervous, but it was the best one they'd received at that time."

Funding not only meant supplies, but leaders Margaret and David Larocque driving weekly from Prince Albert to Muskoday First Nation since December – the real key.

"They were so consistent to come each Tuesday night without fail," she said. "The kids have learned so much – we can hear the boys drumming and singing as the girls are sewing their jingle dresses and fancy dresses."

Two school volunteers, Diane Sutherland and Brad Parent, also generously donated their Tuesday evenings to help 15 or so interested youth – a long but worthwhile day for students and teachers. All leaders donated paid planning time to the program and kids.

"It's so worth it, as the only program consistently running through the school year. With the grant money, it will now be able to sustain itself for a couple of years – we have all the supplies and Diane and I have learned to make the regalia," she said, explaining their goal was an independent on-going program once they'd mastered the basics.

Regalia will be used by the makers, but remain school property. Once outgrown, another child can use it, creating a long-term collection. Grant money also purchased a drum and each boy proudly owns a stick he made himself. The school's first mini pow wow will happen before June 18's summer feast, with dreams to include other schools and First Nations before each of their four annual feasts.

"The boys are going to be singing and drumming to initiate the girls with their outfits," explained Vandevort. They've been invited to repeat the initiation this August.

"The whole community is excited – Muskoday's traditional annual pow wow has been running for some time but it was expensive to get an outfit."

But thanks to SaskCulture, the Larocques, and Edith Dreaver, Muskoday's Elder liaison who taught beadwork and moccasin-making, they have knowledge and supplies.

"Everyone is talking about it. SaskCulture was so awesome. I don't know if they realize what they've done for our community. Our culture has been so lost and you can't just go out and find it, not without guidance and support."

Traditional annual pow wow gets a boost

• Continued from Page 18

So many are disconnected from nature and working with their hands.

"When they get out and learn to work with these materials, you need to pay attention to the cycles of the seasons, become aware of when things are ready to be gathered – timing is very important – it's a naturally healing thing."

People are inspired, and want more school and camp programs, she said, while mental health counselors jump at the therapeutic effect of funding and programming for clients.

"Even if you're living rurally or on-reserve, there's still a disconnect from the land. We don't know how to do these things anymore," noted Brass. "But also there are deeper more important ramifications than just sitting around making arts and crafts."

In an oral culture, teachings, language, and traditions are transmitted while people work together with their hands.

"We all learn lots – not just culturally but conversation about family history – and it stirs the imagination in people to open their eyes and look at the natural world around them."

Share your Culture!

SaskCulture provides funding to support the development and implementation of cultural activities in communities throughout Saskatchewan. Non-profit groups, on reserve or off, interested in engaging First Nations and/or Métis peoples in a particular cultural activity are encouraged to check out the following funding programs:

Aboriginal Arts and Culture Leadership Fund

Aims to increase capacity in Aboriginal communities through the development of arts and cultural leadership opportunities involving youth and mentors. Deadline: October 15

Capacity Building Grant Program

Supports capacity-building opportunities in existing, new and emerging cultural organizations. Deadline: October 15

Métis Cultural Development Fund

Supports community-based cultural activities and initiatives that preserve and pass on the Métis culture and traditions. Deadline: October 1

Multicultural Initiatives Fund

Supports multicultural, ethno-cultural, and Aboriginal cultural initiatives activities and initiatives that contribute to the advancement of cultural understanding in Saskatchewan. Deadline: September 15

For more information on these programs, call Damon Badger Heit at 787-9251 or email: d.badgerheit@saskculture.sk.ca. For applications and more details visit: www.saskculture.sk.ca.

Funding available thanks to proceeds from Saskatchewan Lotteries.

Cultural Activity

Arts and Crafts, Book Publishing, Cultural Festivals, Dance, Drumming, Film, Folklore, Games, Heritage, Language, Music, Museums, Oral History, Pottery, Regalia, Storytelling, Traditional Knowledge, Visual Arts, Writing, etc.

SaskCulture

LOTTERIES

CULTURE BUILDS COMMUNITY



Ahenakew new chair of provincial Chamber

By Warren Goulding
Of Eagle Feather News

For the first time ever, the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce has elected an Aboriginal businessman as its chair.

Richard Ahenakew, the general manager of the North Lights Casino in Prince Albert, was named to the position at the Chamber's annual conference in May. Ahenakew is a member of the Ahtahkakoop First Nation and is the only First Nations chair to lead the provincial Chamber in its 90-year history.

Ahenakew says he's looking forward to continuing the work of previous leaders who have embraced the Aboriginal business community in recent years.

"As a First Nations person I want to continue what some of the board members have done and try and get more First Nations people involved," said Ahenakew, who has been an active member of the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce for eight years.

"Not only at the Sask. Chamber, but at any Chamber or REDA, we need them to get involved."

Ahenakew says there's an eagerness within the non-Native business community to learn more about First Nations and Métis issues.

"They're saying they don't know enough about First Nations people to say something in a meaningful way on First Nations issues, so we don't know how to properly support them or even if we can support them on these issues."

Assuming the role of chair was not something Ahenakew particularly aspired to.

"Something you have to know about me is that my life is my family at home and my work family in P.A.," he explains.

"That was my circle and I never wanted to venture beyond that. I never wanted to be a part of anything like a Chamber."

Candidly, he says his preconceived notions caused him to wonder why he would even want to be a member. That changed when he saw the inner workings of the influential business organization.

"I see a passion there and people that genuinely want to involve First Nations people," says Ahenakew who has been at the helm of the Northern Lights Casino for five years and a Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority employee for more than 13 years.

"It's an amazing time right now because there are so many people and other provinces that are looking towards Saskatchewan for answers because we have so many success stories and partnerships that have happened. Our tribal councils have been successful, for example," Ahenakew points out.

"We are very excited to have Richard as our new chair," said Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce CEO Steve McLellan.

"His commitment to the development and promotion of First Nations businesses and employees will help the Chamber in its quest to ensure the sustainable and strategic growth of our province."



Richard Ahenakew (left) with Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce CEO Steve McLellan.



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\$25.9 million projects for Onion Lake

Onion Lake Cree Nation recently announced it will engage in phase two of a \$25.9 million investment on major community capital projects that will create around 150 jobs.

The Onion Lake Cree Nation has a total population of 5,000 with most of the citizens (3,600) living on-reserve and is located north of Lloydminster, right in oil country.

planning, innovative financing and implementing shovel-ready capital projects are very important. A second phase in capital projects we announced is just the beginning towards positive self-reliance and economic growth.”

The list of projects is staggering and include a \$7.5 million on-reserve housing unit construction; a \$2.5 million home reno-

community capital projects such as an approved \$4.5 million home ownership program with First Nation Mortgage Housing Fund and a \$3 million RBC on-reserve home ownership program; eight CMHC housing units; \$800,000 federal CEAP stimulus funding for lot services for home subdivision infrastructure.

“We are very pleased

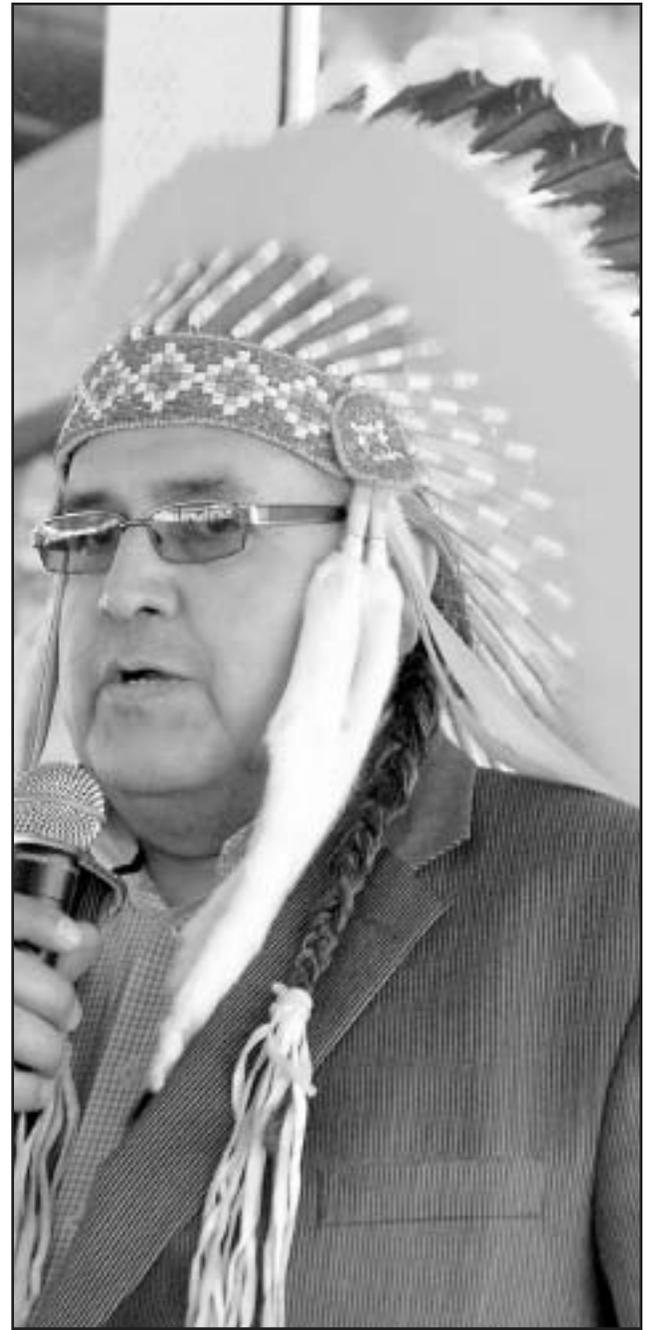
than building much needed housing and infrastructure.

“This is about expanding our Nation’s economy through partnerships and creating training and jobs for our First Nation citizens,” says Chief Fox.

“Our community benefits by having a quality way of life by investing in better housing, roads, water and waste systems.”



Onion Lake has announced a series of major investments in community projects including housing.



Onion Lake Chief Wallace Fox

“The Onion Lake Cree Nation’s economic stimulus plan is a reality and growing. These shovel-ready community capital projects are a result of innovative partnerships with the three levels of government, construction, trades, businesses, and the Royal Bank of Canada,” says Chief Wallace Fox.

“We have one of the largest on-reserve populations in the province of Saskatchewan. Our community management

vation program; a \$5 million multi-year plan for community roads improvement construction; a \$5 million dollar OLCN contribution share to a multi-million dollar low pressure water distribution system for all homes; a \$1.5 million education daycare facility; a \$1.466 million therapeutic group home facility; a \$2.6 million federal government (INAC) capital school roof replacement; and various on-going

to be a partner in the projects at Onion Lake Cree Nation, and to help bring life to this important vision for the community,” says Doris Bear, Vice President Aboriginal Markets at RBC.

“This partnership is one more way RBC is demonstrating our commitment to serving the needs of First Nation communities today and for the future.”

“This investment in the second phase is more

RCMP-GRC

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UNE CARRIÈRE
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Grayson Grows Community Committee

“Sponsor an Acre”

The Grayson Grows Community Committee (non-profit) is raising funds through a fundraising initiative called “Grayson Grows a Crop”.

The Committee will be planting and harvesting acres of crop to raise funds for the development of the Community and its’ Organizations. This event is also tied to a community lottery and prizes will be issued. The first Initiative of the Grayson Grows Committee is to rebuild the local curling rink. You can help “Grayson Grows” by sponsoring an acre of land to grow and harvest.

Tickets are available May 1st to October 1st, 2010.

You can get your tickets at **Grayson Hardware** or by calling **(306) 794-4844** or the toll free number **1-888-476-4729** or by emailing graysongrows@gmail.com. The draw will be held on **October 23rd, 2010** at the Cecilia Hall at the Grayson Harvest Dance.

> CAREER PRESENTATION
JUNE 15, 2010 AT 6 PM

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1500 - 10 Street East, Room 120
Prince Albert, SK

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15 JUIN 2010 À 18 H

SIAST, campus Woodland
1500, 10 Street East, Salle 120
Prince Albert (SK)

Attendance at a career presentation is now the mandatory first step in the application process. / Assister à une séance d'information sur les carrières est maintenant la première étape obligatoire du processus de recrutement.

PRE-RÉGRISTRATION / INSCRIPTION : 1-877-RCMP-GRC (1-877-726-7472)



Bob Kirkpatrick of PotashCorp was on hand to offer CLASSIC Director Amanda Dodge and Board member Glen Luther a \$100,000 grant for them to help carry out free legal services.

(Photo by Andrea Ledding)

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CLASSIC support for legal services

By **Andréa Ledding**
For Eagle Feather News

Community Legal Assistance Services for Saskatoon Inner City (CLASSIC) announced, with PotashCorp, the first ever fundraising campaign for CLASSIC's Endowment Fund, raising seed money to generate long-term annual revenue for this valuable community service.

"Our key priority is to reinvest in the communities in which we operate," said Bob Kirkpatrick of Potash-Corp.

"We will be contributing, dollar to dollar, a matching gift up to \$100,000 for every dollar donated to CLASSIC."

Glen Luther, College of Law professor and CLASSIC board member, added they hope particularly to appeal to Saskatoon's legal community, to sustain access to justice.

"As a non-profit, stable funding is hard to secure, but we are an advocacy clinic which provides real assistance with legal matters to those who have no other means," Luther noted, adding that law and justice only exist if everyone has equal access.

"This makes for stronger individuals, family, and

community."

Gillian Goff, a CLASSIC law student, explained they provide essential legal services to areas underserved or not covered by Legal Aid – like illegal evictions, dispute resolutions, or income support and employment issues. Priority is given to Aboriginal clients, many of whom have never experienced meaningful access to justice.

Affiliation with the College of Law and hands-on experience for students provides an opportunity to work with clients in need, but also makes students aware of existing inequalities within the system so they can work towards making a difference.

"We hope to provide Aboriginal people with some kind of sense it is their justice system, too," noted Luther, listing areas CLASSIC has represented such as benefits and disability payments and issues, residential school payments, or damage deposit and evictions. "CLASSIC is easier to approach."

The campaign was launched at White Buffalo, home to the CLASSIC offices, and will run until Nov. 30.

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SaskPower inks deal with three First Nations

By John Lagimodiere
Of Eagle Feather News

SaskPower is working with three Saskatchewan First Nations to study the feasibility of developing a renewable energy project on the Saskatchewan River system.

aging the capital and expertise of development partners like Brookfield and Kiewit.”

Under the terms of the agreement, new studies will take place to validate the results of previous site selection assessments. The studies will also determine the feasibility of the project from an environmental and economic

positive long-term benefits for the members of our community and the people of Saskatchewan.”

Should the project prove to be an economical supply option, the First Nations-private developer partnership would develop the site, build the power plant and enter into a long-term power purchase agreement with SaskPower.

Pursuing emission free hydroelectric generation was one of the medium and long-term supply options SaskPower identified when it shared its future generation plans with the Legislative Assembly’s Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies in late 2009 and early 2010.



Back row (left to right): Bill Boyd, Minister responsible for SaskPower, Ian Kerr, Brookfield Renewable Power, Chief Guy Lonechild; front row (left to right): Chief Robert Head, Peter Chapman Band, Chief Wally Burns, James Smith Cree Nation and Chief Calvin Sanderson, Chakastaypasin Band of the Cree.

The James Smith Cree Nation, Chakastaypasin Band of the Cree and the Peter Chapman Band – along with their development partners, Brookfield Renewable Power and Peter Kiewit Sons Co. – have reached an agreement with SaskPower to study the feasibility of developing a hydroelectric project that would provide approximately 250 megawatts of power to the provincial electrical grid.

Known as the Pehonan Hydroelectric Project – a Cree word meaning ‘we’re waiting by the creek’ – the proposed location would be downstream from the forks where the South Saskatchewan River meets the North Saskatchewan River.

“Public-private partnerships provide many benefits to the people of Saskatchewan and our government is pleased with the potential of the Pehonan project,” minister responsible for SaskPower Bill Boyd said.

“It allows First Nations like James Smith, Chakastaypasin and Peter Chapman to become active participants in Saskatchewan’s growing economy, while lever-

perspective. This phase of the project could take up to four years.

“In the early 1980s our past leaders had a vision for a hydro project on our land,” James Smith Cree Nation Chief Wally Burns said.

“We are pleased to see that this government is making it a priority to work with First Nations and engage us in opportunities that will benefit our members and hopefully make this vision a reality. If this project can overcome all feasibility obstacles, it has the potential to have significant and





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Body shape, expectations linked to health

By Doug Collie

For Eagle Feather News

Do Aboriginal men have concerns about their bodies and how they look?

That's a question Battlefords Tribal Council Indian Health might look into, according to executive director Janice Kennedy.

BTC Indian Health and researchers from the University of Saskatchewan just completed a ground-breaking research project asking Aboriginal women how they feel about their bodies.

There's a concern that it may be unhealthy to worry too much about what your body is like.

First Nations women were given video cameras about two years ago. They were asked to record feelings and observations about their own bodies and society's idealized body shape.

Kennedy says some women can go to unhealthy extremes, trying to fit the body image they have in mind.

"We also had some young women involved in the research project and some of them do idolize those really, you know, paper-thin models, and some have basically starved themselves, trying to



Youth and mentors have spent lots of time with cameras lately and here they posed for a group shot. (photo supplied)

look like that," she said.

Kennedy says she, too, has struggled with body image, so she used the camera as well.

"I use the fact that I quit smoking in 2002," Kennedy says. "The flip side of that was I gained a lot of weight, so people looking at me would say, 'you know, Janice it's not healthy,' because, look, she's overweight. But, me, personally, I know I've quit smoking and I feel I'm

healthy that way, and to work on my weight issue, that's what I have to work on now."

A gala was held at the Western Development Museum in North Battleford the evening of June 2 to celebrate completion of the project. About 100 people attended the gala, including researchers, BTC Indian Health officials and participants.

Kennedy says now that the video portion of this project has been completed,

BTC Indian Health officials and U of S researchers will examine the data. They'll look for themes to explore further.

Kennedy says one possibility may be time to see how Aboriginal men feel about their bodies and society's expectations for them.

"Instead of women's health, do we want to look at men's health," she asked. "You know, maybe that's another future research project."

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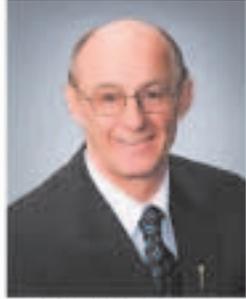


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Hip hop artist Stylez determined to devote his life to music, his first love

By Dana Jacobs
For Eagle Feather News

DC Comic writers might have modeled Watchmen character Adrian Veidt/Ozymandias after Alexander the Great, but Joey Stylez is a more likely candidate for superhero turned entrepreneur bent on world domination for the good of mankind.

Saskatchewan born hip-hop artist Joey Stylez is nearing the end of his "Paint the Country Red" tour, performing at approximately 600 reserves and Métis communities in three years, but he is not ready to sit back and reap the rewards any time soon.

"I set out to achieve a goal and I achieved it," said Stylez. "I'm happy but I don't think that I'm ever going to be satisfied. I'm a very competitive person and I am always going to be chasing. I always want more."

While Stylez says he is first and foremost a hip-hop artist, he's got his sights set on many new conquests.

"Whether it's music, interviews, videos, managing, producing, films ... I'm gonna do it all," he promises.

"For this tour, I'm looking for any reserve," says Stylez. "Once that's open I can start my own management company and start working with other artists to do shows on this circuit. It's our own market, so we gotta protect our own market."

Drawing a parallel between hip hop music's roots in African American culture and the Canadian Aboriginal experience, Stylez says he thinks Native people should be able to relate to the music.

"I grew up in the hip hop lifestyle. A lot of hip hop artists came up having the struggle, a big family and having a single mom, and looking after yourself. If you need something you go get it, by any means necessary. I grew up with that mentality."

His album, *Blackstar*, is a tribute to his grandmother. "She is like the last of her kind. Through her and people like her, the few that are left, they give a lot of motivation, a lot of strength to keep their culture and they make me want to keep it alive."

The message of unity and cultural pride comes through in Stylez' music and videos. In June of 2008, when the Government of Canada formally apologized for the abuse to Native Americans, Stylez performed his song "Living Proof" live on a CBC special dedicated to the reconciliation of Residential School victims.

In typical Stylez fashion, he intends to take his message one step further. Plans for a short musical film are in the works. While he is being tight-lipped about the details, Stylez says it is "gonna be based around what's going on around here. It's gonna to be something that no one has ever seen, with a look no one has ever seen and a story no one has ever heard."

Whether he's an evil genius or a superhero, Joey Stylez is relentless in his ambitions. He admits to being audacious at times but attributes his success to his unwillingness to accept boundaries.

"I truly am in love with music, I owe it my life and that's what I'm going to give it."



Joey Stylez says he owes his life to music.

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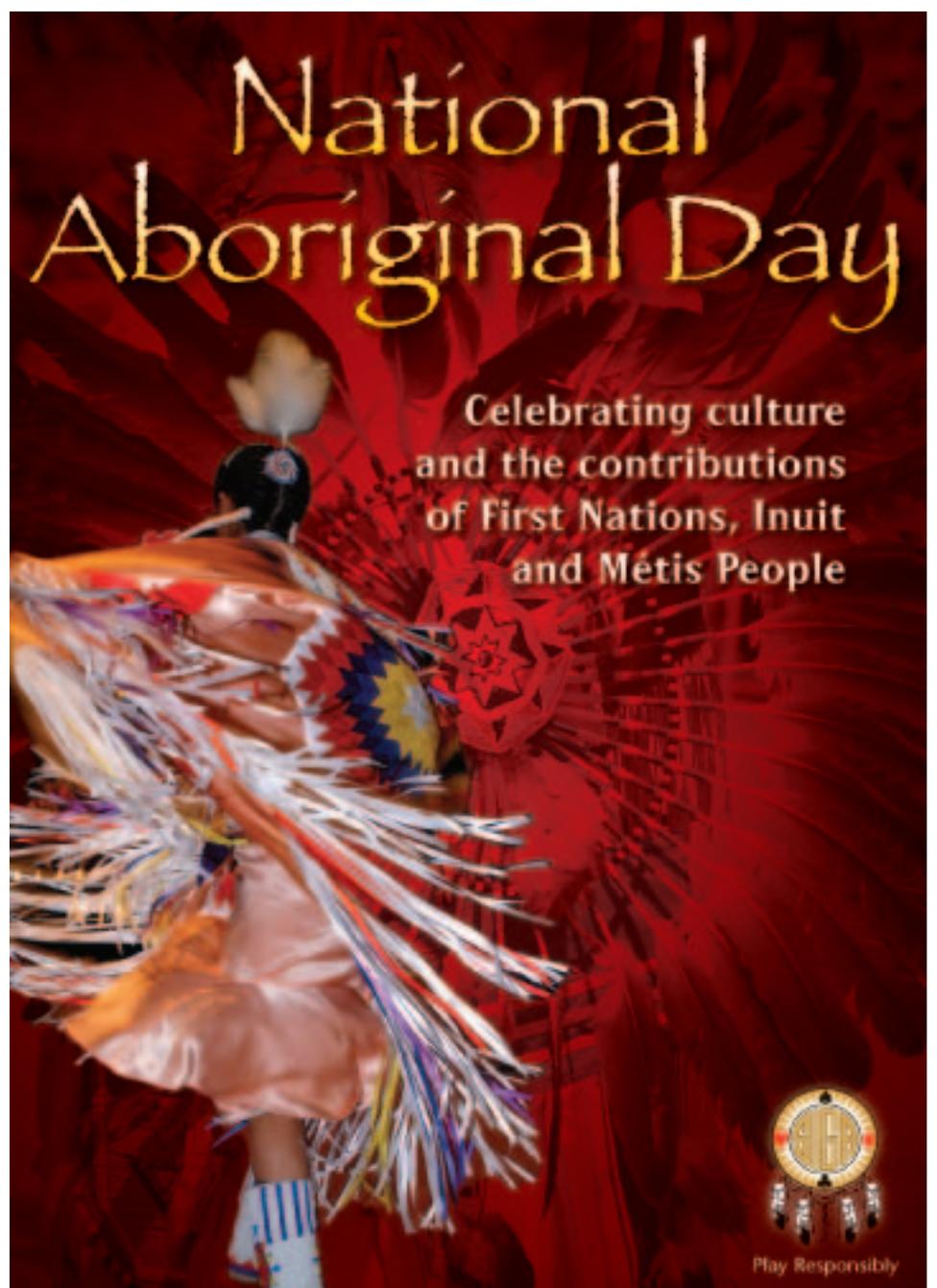


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Gathering of Nations: Experience of a lifetime

By Creeson Agecutay
For Eagle Feather News

A few months ago I was assigned to be the camera man for a documentary on the world's biggest pow wow. How could I say no? It turned out to be one of the most memorable events of my life.

The 27th annual Gathering of Nations pow wow took place in Albuquerque, New Mexico in late April and attracted thousands of people from across North America and beyond.

The story was for CTV's weekly show, Indigenous Circle, and it was a long-time dream come true for host Nelson Bird. He did everything in his power to make it happen – and it did.

So there we were on the pow wow trail, so to speak. Nelson and I opted to drive instead of fly so we could experience all the road has to offer. The drive there was a fun experience – but that's another story all together.

So here I am, this young rez boy from Cowesses, heading to Albuquerque wondering what to expect. I thought 'if we're going to New Mexico, then it will be very, very hot!' That wasn't the case, though. When we got there it was warmer back home in Saskatchewan. Albuquerque is a city of nearly one million people with huge freeways and businesses everywhere.

I was a little out of my element until we arrived at the pow wow. The parking lot was filled with cars bearing license plates from across North America. Once inside and the pow wow was underway, we wanted to stay in one spot and take it all in. Like my mom always says though, "you can't always get what you want."

It was straight to work lugging a camera



Creeson Agecutay and Nelson Bird stop for a photo with a dance troupe at the Gathering of Nations Powwow in New Mexico.

and tripod and interviewing and shooting everything and everyone in sight. But I'm not complaining because how many people can say they get paid to do what we did?

This year's Gathering of Nations pow wow took place outdoors in a football stadium. It is the first time this has happened. In years past, the event was held in an indoor stadium dubbed 'the pit.' Organizers wanted to take it outside because normally the weather is very hot outside.

First Nation and Native Americans were there by the thousands including every tribe from Apache, to Navajo to Cree. During our filming we met a multi-cultural array of people and they all had different reasons for being there.

Michael Villalpandl is from Salt River,

Arizona and he was there for his daughter.

"This is our first year actually, my grand daughter is a pow wow princess and we bring her to experience the pow wow," Villalpandl explained.

I'll never forget a man named Ausben SpottedEagle. He is a black Indian from Fort Worth, Texas. At age 27, he came to the Gathering with his parents.

"I dance pow wow to keep the tradition of my ancestors because especially for black Indians there are a lot of black native Americans but because we've been suppressed, a lot of the times everybody likes to try and forget so I want to bring it back in my family to keep the tradition going," he said.

On a global level, we met a couple from

France. William Moulin and Alexandra Bicais travelled from overseas to experience the pow wow. But they weren't there just to watch. They were there to take part, wearing traditional regalia and competing. Moulin only spoke French so when Nelson interviewed him, Bicais translated for us.

"He says he's very proud to be here and share with Native Americans and he can feel the strength and it's a good feeling around here," Bicais said.

"We don't have a chance to dance in France that much so it's good for us to be here to share with different people," he added.

So that is my experience in a nutshell. There's so much more to say about it including the food, traders market, and Stage 49 with all the performers but I'm limited for time and space. The one thing that will always stand out to me is that the Gathering gave me a true sense of pride to be First Nation. It's also good to see that our culture is not just for us to experience. It's for everyone and it is evident as you look at the crowds where people from all backgrounds come together to celebrate Indigenous culture.

Someday I hope to return to New Mexico for another Gathering. I need to go back. This trip was a working experience but allowed me the opportunity to witness a true cultural phenomenon. I also know I want to share the experience with more friends and family members, and like I did with Nelson, we will drive the whole 2,000 kilometers

The benefits of the Gathering cannot be measured in words alone, but at least now I can start a conversation by saying: "Did you know I once went to the world's biggest pow wow?"



Mentorship Program

CALL FOR VISUAL ARTISTS

We are seeking visual artists as mentors and trainees for a mentorship program from September 2010 to June 2011. Eight trainees will work one-on-one with experienced mentors. The program develops professional practices and support mechanisms for evolving artists and includes professional development workshops and group meetings. The time commitment for mentor and trainee consultations is a minimum of seven hours per month plus group meetings. Trainees are expected to commit additional time to the production and development of their art practice. Mentors must be experienced, professional artists. Trainees must be adults and not registered as students. Mentors and trainees must be Saskatchewan residents. Payment for mentors is \$2750; trainees are paid \$300 for material expenses. Some travel is required.

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Shawn Atleo up close and personal

1. What is your favourite thing to do in your spare time?

I love being out on a boat on the ocean in my territory just fishing.

2. Who is your favourite sports team or athlete?

I can't get enough of watching Pele play soccer. I just love it.

3. CFL or NFL football?

No doubt it is the CFL. I have great memories of my dad taking us to Lions games. The NFL can't compete. Now that I am in Ottawa, I try to watch teams other than the Lions or Canucks, but I just can't. You can take the boy out of the West, but you can't take the West out of the boy.

4. What is your greatest personal sporting moment?

Making it to the final selection for a Pacific Rim Football League team. Football to me means soccer. By far my favourite sport. And to make it to a point where people would have been paying to watch me play, that was the ultimate.

5. What is your best fishing story?

I have many and I used to commercial fish, but the best belongs to my grandfather. He hunted and caught a blue whale the size of a gymnasium. In the prairies, many refer to education being the new buffalo. Where I am from, education is the new whale. My degree was my whale.

6. What is your favourite TV show and why?

I love food and I always wanted to be a chef and I would love to have my own restaurant. So the Food Network is my favourite and the Iron Chef is my favourite show.

7. You did a break dance on The Hour with George Stroumboulopoulos and here at the Winter Games. How would you top that if you were on Letterman?

That show is not really a break dance event. I would just pull out the native humour and run with it.

8. What is your favourite snack food?

Herring eggs ... by the bowlful. It is called kwukmis. We harvest them by hanging hemlock boughs in the water. When the herring migrate, they drop eggs and stick to the boughs. You take them out, put the eggs in boiling water and they come out crunchy and delicious. I can't get enough of it.

9. In your estimation, who is the greatest living politician?

There are so many, but I have to go with Nelson Mandela. He led his people out of Apartheid which is quite a feat.

10. Here is the cliché question for you Chief. If you were stranded on a desert island and could only keep one book, one movie and an album of music, what would you choose?

For a book, I would choose the one my dad wrote. It is called Tswalk and it contains the philosophy and stories of our people. I never tire of reading that. For a movie, I have to go with I Heard the Owl Call My Name. I know it is not a blockbuster, but they filmed it in my community when I was in grade school, so when I watch it, I see my friends and the old people in it. I still get ticked because my friend who sat beside me in school got to take the day off and work on the movie and he got paid 10 bucks. When it comes to music, I have to go with AC/DC Back in Black in case I need to rock out.

Thanks for your time!

This was the most different interview I have ever done. Thanks for having me.

Assembly of First Nations Chief Shawn Atleo was named "A-in-chut" and seated by his people as hereditary Chief of the House of Glakishpiitl of the Ahousaht First Nation in 1999. His political career has taken off and he was elected National Chief in June of 2009. We had the pleasure of interviewing the National Chief in Saskatoon to get his thoughts on residential schools, Truth and Reconciliation and leadership. Here are his thoughts in our final segment of a three-part series. We also caught a bit about the personal side of the national Chief. We at Eagle Feather News are grateful for the time that he afforded us.

EFN

As National Chief you are under a media microscope, lots of travel, lots of pressure.

How do you balance all of that with being a family man?

Chief Atleo

Well you just shook hands with my wife of 24 years. We just celebrated our 24th wedding anniversary this weekend.

Thanks not only to her but to the AFN team, they make sure we get home to our houses, because obviously Ottawa is a long way home from my home. Home and family is foundational. It is the essence of our work. It is about rebuilding not only nations, but inherent in that is re-

building of community and family. I really appreciate the support of not only the staff, but we are honored with invitations from all across the country. But I do think it is important to stay grounded in who you are, where you come from. To maintain those links and a strong family life for my wife, Nancy and I, and our two adult children who are both on the West Coast. That is critical. So with that, in my view you can take on any level of challenge that comes because it is always tempered with that understanding that our people are the ones. I get to experience that first hand when you travel. Our people are the ones who are suffering every single day. That is what gets you up in the morning. Sometimes it keeps you up at night. You have to maintain that balance.

EFN

How did growing up in the community of Ahousaht help you to be the leader you are today?

Chief Atleo

I think like a lot of our First Nations Indigenous communities we learn about a sense of obligation and responsibility to your people and to your land early on. It was the same for me. My earliest memories were around five or six in between playing with friends and fishing, and doing things that kids do, the old-timers would stop me. They would stop others in the village, too, and explain to us that when we got older we are going to have to be responsible for those mountains across the inlet, or we are going to have to take care of our people one day. I think that is a unique characteristic of traditional societies that have maintained those traditional teachings. It is not just about being out for number one. I think growing up, thankfully, of not having gone to the residential school. That was my dad's era. The leaders shut it down before I would have gone. They saw the hurt and the impact it was having. I grew up in an era that was dramatically, adversely and negatively impacted by the residential schools. Make no mistake about it. I witnessed firsthand the violence, the suicides amongst friends. I saw the homes go up in flames. People perishing in all manners of ways. Violent deaths etc. I think when you come from any of our villages you can't help but be touched by the fact that things aren't the same for our people as they are for the rest of the country. I was born into a hereditary Chief seat and we can trace my lineage back twenty-six generations, and now it is going to be my kids turn to pick up the responsibilities. I think each generation is responsible for moving the bar forward. So growing up in Ahousaht, that is my foundation. Nancy and I were married in a traditional wedding, that was, even in my dad's day or even my grandmother's day, that didn't happen because potlatch was made illegal. So we are experiencing a lot of firsts. In Ahousaht it is no different. My father was the first to graduate with a doctorate degree. Not only from my village or my tribal area, but people speculate that at least in British Columbia. So growing up at home and having that as a cultural foundation leaves me so thankful to have spent time with late grandparents, and



great aunts and great uncles who took the time to teach me. That will remain my anchor. It is my home with a capital H and it will always be my home.

EFN

What has been the highlight of your term so far?

Chief Atleo

Well, the highlight has been those moments when you are sitting there with young people writing notes about the importance of their school, and talking about kids in elementary schools, or being in a community where they don't have a school. Where they say we need one, or we are looking for a gym. The Olympics look a long ways off when you don't have simple recreation facilities in your communities. Our grandmothers said, "Boy all I really want is a stove. I just want to be able to cook a meal." And so notwithstanding the fact that we are reminded that we are making progress, it is those one on one conversations with the elders that are concerned about their health. That is what drives us. We hear about the successes. Those are inspirational. To be in communities where they are generating their own revenues, and they are self financing language immersion from K to four. Not because they are receiving any assistance, but in spite of assistance. They are doing it on their own. The expressions of resilience that I have personally observed that have continued to amaze and astound me. If I was to choose one on a very personal level was the fact that my late grandmother stayed up all night for me during the election, that I got to spend so much time with her. She passed on about six months ago. It comes full circle back to your first question. What is it all about? Well it is about family, and it is about the impacts that others have had or have attempted on our peoples lives. The fact that we are on the comeback trail in a very powerful way. There are obstacles, no question. The resurgence is unmistakable and it is going to keep growing at a grassroots level.

Whitecap to host Canadian Native Fastball Championships in July

A world class golf course and a beautiful casino make the Whitecap Dakota First Nation a destination centre for people from around the world.

Now that they have cornered the market for golfers and gamers, Whitecap Dakota and the Muskeg Lake Cree Nation are preparing to welcome the best Native fastball players from around Canada by hosting the 2010 Canadian Native Fastball Championships.

Dakota-Cree Sports Inc., a foundation established to benefit youth from Muskeg Lake Cree Nation and Whitecap Dakota First Nation, will host the Championships on the Whitecap Dakota First Nations new ball diamonds on July 30, 31 and August 1.

Since 1974 First Nation athletes from across Canada have been competing in the Championships and the event attracts approximately 5,000 athletes, coaches, management and spectators.

It is anticipated a total of 156 games will be played with 32 men's teams, 32 ladies teams and 16 40+ teams.

Mark Arcand is a member of the committee and coordinating big sports events is something he is good at. Arcand and

Saskatoon Tribal Council Vice Chief Geraldine Arcand received an award from Tourism Saskatoon for their work on the 2010 First Nation Winter Games.

"We want this event to be the best ever, just like the Winter Games," said Mark Arcand.

"The fans can expect some of the top pitchers in the country like Trevor Ethier, Darren Zack and Dustin Keshane. And we expect there will be all kinds of all-star teams as well."

The tournament will be held at the Whitecap Dakota Sports ground, close to the golf course, the casino and the City of Saskatoon.

"I know the community invested into their fields. They are world class with seating and one with lights so it is great for the players and the fans," added Arcand.

"With our experience from the Winter Games, we know we have to be really prepared and the committee we have is excellent and have everything covered.

"We have many events for the competitors and good times for the fans. We look forward to being good hosts."



Amazing athletes like pitcher Dustin Keshane will be in attendance at the 2010 Native Canadian Fastball Championships in July and August at Whitecap Dakota First Nation. (Photo John Lagimodiere)



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Men's Division MVP Barry Sparvier (Cote Selects) receiving his award from Reggie Leach and Oskana Cup committee representative Dawn Villeneuve.

(Photo by Marmie Poitras)

Another successful year for Oskana Cup

REGINA - The fifth annual Oskana Cup Reggie Leach Challenge showcased teams from four provinces and very exciting playoff and final games for all divisions. The Oskana Cup hosted 27 teams, 500 participants, three divisions and five out-of-province teams.

"It was good to see clubs from Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario represented at this year's event, which is a testament to Reggie Leach's commitment to the community," Milton Tootosis, chair of the event, said.

"The all-rez format with a few imports rule has proven once again to be the model to use in order to develop the communities. It balances out the competition more and detracts from a few teams stacking their teams with high-priced imports," said Leach.

Most of the semi-final and final games ended up as very close contests.

This year's event also reached a new milestone. The tournament was staged in the brand new multi-million dollar Co-operator's Centre at Evrazplace, formerly the Regina Exhibition Park. The tournament staged its final day of elimination and playoff rounds in the state of the art six rink facility.

"The Co-operator's Centre is likely the best tournament venue of its kind in Western Canada," said Tootosis.

"Moving the Oskana Cup in the beautiful facilities opens new doors for expansion in the years to come" he added.

Womens Div. Results: Champs: AMI Flames; Runner-up: Northern Thunder; 3rd: Patuanak Ice Angels. All-star team awards: Top Defense: Samantha D'Jondire - Patuanak Ice Angels; Top Forward: Tammy McKenzie - Northern Thunder; Top Goalie: Bobby-Jo Zerr - AMI Flames; MVP: Karissa Swan - AMI Flames. Masters Div Results: Champs: Kahk Red Bellies; Runner-up: Patuanak River Rats; 3rd: OCN.

All-star team awards: Top Defense: Sam Taypotat - Kahk Red Bellies; Top Forward: Darren Bignell - OCN; Top Goalie: Hector Burns - Kahk Red Bellies; MVP: Emmet McArthur - Kahk Red Bellies. Men's Rec Div Results: Champs: Cote Selects; Runner-up: Patuanak Pats; 3rd: Cote Alliance; Player of the Game: Trent Campbell - Patuanak Pats; All-star Team Awards: Top Defense: J.J. Cote - Cote Selects; Top Forward: Mike Whirl - Cote Alliance; Top Goalie: Matt Fiddler - Cote Selects; MVP: Barry Sparvier - Cote Selects.

Proceeds from the event go to the O.S. Fund and aid young Aboriginal hockey players. A formal dinner and announcements of this season's O.S. Fund recipients will be held in the fall of 2010.

Visit "Oskana Minor Hockey Development Inc." on Facebook.



Cote Selects are the Men's Division Champions. (Photo by Marmie Poitras)

Saskatchewan a force at midget nationals

Team Saskatchewan continued its domination of national midget hockey, evidenced by the boys scoring gold and the girls grabbing fourth at the National Aboriginal Hockey Championships in Ottawa.

In the nine years of the tournament, the boys have won three bronze and five gold medals and the girls have won four bronze. This year the boys defeated Manitoba 8-1 in the final.

Courage Bear, general manager of the teams, says the boys' success was a result of depth.

"We had four really good lines, three lines that could score and one that brought lots of energy. Being able to roll those four lines over the seven games in seven days gave us a definite advantage," said Bear.

He also credits the success to a stronger grassroots program that has produced more kids at the elite midget level.

"We have more players and more coaches so the systems seem to be working."

The girls' team had a good showing considering the makeup of the team.

"We went with a real young team for the girls this year," said Bear.

"And our two goalies were 14 years old. In the bronze final against Ontario South, we were up against a team that had university calibre players and one who had played on the National Under 18 team. Our core of the team is good so next year we will be right up there."

Besides team success, several players won individual honours. Justin Waskewich was named MVP of the Tournament and Bryce Gervais was named an All-Star forward and Garret Kazmiruk was named All-Star goalie.



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The championship team at the Bridge City Shootout was Frosty's, a compilation of U of S Huskies and other former CIS players and had a formidable line up led by CIS All-Star Michael Linklater.

Tanton helping to keep basketball alive in Saskatoon

Mike Tanton is fresh off the challenge of running the Bridge City Shoot Out basketball tournament and before any air can escape from the ball, he is busy coordinating another basketball event for the city.

"The Shoot Out was good, but we had some challenges," said Tanton, busy preparing to bring in the touring Celebrity Streetball Legends to talk to youth and put on an exhibition game.

"Basketball was starting to wane in popularity for a bit, but with Mike Linklater and the Huskies winning Nationals, we have seen a growth in interest."

Linklater and several former and current Huskies won the Shoot Out over the Regina Cougars ex-players. In the Ladies division, the result was the same as the women Huskies beat the Regina Cougars to win their end.

The highlight of the tournament was the slam dunk contest. "Justin Darlington was amazing," said Tanton about the high

flying exploits of the star.

"He was showing off in warm-ups and everyone was scared to even try against him. For toppers, he pulled a 6'6 guy from the stands and had him hold a ball on his head.

"Justin then proceeded to jump over him, grab the ball, put it between his legs and slam it. The guy has a 50 inch vertical and it showed."

Next up for Tanton is to bring in the Streetball Legends to speak to youth and play an exhibition game against all stars from the city including Mike Linklater and some Huskies.

"I expect Mike and the boys to give them a good game. These Legends played in 57 reserves in the US last year and are very entertaining," said Tanton.

"We want to hook kids on basketball because it is so affordable and good for you.

"Events like this connect the youth to sport and give them other options, and besides, it should be a good show."

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