

# Eagle Feather NEWS

FREE

## “We must remember, freedom is not free”

Saskatchewan First Nations Veterans Association President Steven Ross carries the SFNVA eagle staff in the grand entry at the FSIN Assembly.

(Photo by Shelley Mike)



By Julie Wriston  
Of Eagle Feather News

Fresh out of school and searching for opportunities in the 1960s, a young, curious Steven Ross walked into an army recruitment centre in Saskatoon.

According to Ross, this was a choice that “forever changed my life.”

He recalls: “There was no employment in my home community of Montreal Lake at that time, so I tried traveling around the province. One day I was walking around Saskatoon, saw the army recruitment centre and walked in, just to enquire.”

He enlisted and served for the Queens own Rifles of Canada. His tour of duty included United Nations Peace Keeping Duty in Cyprus. He attributes where he is today to his service.

“It changed my thinking. I learned to be disci-

plined, focused, and I developed better thinking skills.”

He suggests that the choice to join the armed forces creates a lot of opportunities for young people with lots of available training and access to education.

“I often wonder where I would have ended up if I had just stayed in Montreal Lake. When I joined, then I had a future – I had something to live for.”

Acting as Grand Chief of the Saskatchewan First Nations Veterans Association (SFNVA) since March 2015, Steven is focused on finding ways to support and honour First Nations veterans in our province.

“Our membership is declining.”

This past year, the SFNVA has lost 14 veterans across Saskatchewan. He is very proud to say that the SFNVA has been working hard to provide proper military funerals to those who have served.

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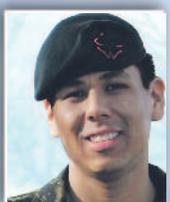
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Veterans & Youth Edition

Coming In December - Newsmaker of the Year Issue

# Whitecap early learning centre honours Charles Red Hawk

By John Lagimodiere  
Of Eagle Feather News

**WHITECAP DAKOTA FIRST NATION** – Charles Red Hawk was the first Dakota teacher at Whitecap Dakota First Nation. He was employed way back in 1916 for approximately eight years at Whitecap's day school.

To celebrate its past and to lay the groundwork for its future, Whitecap recently opened a new early learning centre featuring 56 spaces and they christened the newly upgraded school the Charles Red Hawk Elementary School.

“Our members have always honoured those that have paved the way. Charles Red Hawk was a pioneer as a Dakota teacher for our people, and he deserves recognition for a legacy of promoting strong values for education this has instilled in our community,” said Whitecap Chief Darcy Bear.

The early learning centre features multiple configurable learning spaces, kitchen facilities and modern learning technology. The facility will serve the needs of the growing Whitecap population and the employees who travel daily to Whitecap for employment. Operated by Preston Early Learning Centre, child care spaces will be open to Whitecap members and non-members alike. The facility represents another positive step in

the reconciliation process by providing a unique cultural learning experience, combined with early learning strategies to promote literacy and support readiness for schooling.

Upgrades to the school include two new classrooms, upgraded gym facilities, a soccer pitch and a link to the Whitecap Health Centre. The school provides a curriculum operated in partnership with the Saskatoon Public School Division (SPSD) and serves children from pre-kindergarten to Grade 4. The newly upgraded school provides facilities to meet SPSPD standard and will better serve a growing community at Whitecap.

“The newly named Charles Red Hawk Elementary School facility is a demonstration of what can be accomplished when we work in genuine partnership,” said Carolyn Bennett, the federal Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs.

“Congratulations to the Whitecap Dakota First Nation on ensuring the secure personal and cultural identity of your young people by providing this exemplary education and learning environment.”

Saskatchewan's Ministry of Education is providing ongoing funding to the centre. Speaking to the benefits of de-



Dignitaries look on as children cut the ribbon to officially open the Charles Red Hawk Elementary School on Whitecap Dakota First Nation.

veloping early childhood education programs, Deputy Premier and Education Minister Don Morgan said, “The early years of a child's life are the foundation of their future and early learning programs, like this new centre, help prepare children for success in school and beyond. The Whitecap Dakota First Nation has done a tremendous job of building partnerships that will serve the education and early learning needs of their children.”

For the leaders of Whitecap, it was an easy decision to make the investment in their education system.

“Our motivation is getting the best education for our children, starting with

proven benefits of early learning strategies,” said Chief Bear.

“Through our partnership with Saskatoon Public Schools and with the support from both Canada and Saskatchewan together with BMO's contribution, we are pleased to be able to provide this service not only to our own members, but also make them available to the surrounding community and to those working at Whitecap.

“We have a diverse workforce at Whitecap. We want to be inclusive and breakdown the doors of segregation, and so it is important for us that all employees have access to our Early Learning Centre.”

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Gord Downie (left), Chanie Wenjack (inset)

## Secret Path carries powerful message

By Mike Gosselin  
For Eagle Feather News

“We’re all sorry!”

It was shouted during a brief lull in Gord Downie’s performance of *Secret Path* at Roy Thompson Hall in Toronto. A show where, through animation and music, Downie told the story of Chanie Wenjack – a 12-year-old boy who died after trying to walk 600 km home from residential school in 1966.

“We’re all sorry!”

The words so audible, every one of the 34 members of Chanie’s family in attendance heard it. We all did. It’s as if they were blurted into a microphone on stage.

Perhaps it was one of the people who sparked up a joint thinking they were at a Hip show. Or maybe it was that age-old defensive response Aboriginal people deal with far too often. We’re sorry. Get over it. Now let’s forget what happened.

Forget the residential school experience tore families apart. Forget the attempted cultural genocide. Forget many of our family members were raped. Abused. Starved. Tortured. Forget residential schools operated until 1996.

You get free education and no tax. Just get over it.

On this night and three prior in Ottawa, however, Gord Downie did his part to make sure the Wenjack family knew Chanie’s story will never be forgotten. He also let residential school survivors, many of whom feel like dusty files in some cabinet locked away in time, know that their experience will not go unnoticed.

He heard Chanie’s story and refused to get over it. And he chose to tell it in a fashion that makes you feel like it was your kid alone on those tracks. Going home at all costs.

The price was, of course, his life...

“That’s all he wanted. To get home,” Chanie’s sister Pearl says in the CBC

short documentary about Gord’s visit with the Wenjack family in Ogoki Post.

Call me biased if you will. I’m a Gord fan first. He’s released solo albums and a poetry book – all of which have had tremendous artistic impact on my life. That band he’s in is pretty good too.

I went to one of the shows this summer. It was largely touted as one of his last concerts due to his terminal cancer diagnosis. Took my eight-year old son. Rocked out with tears in my eyes. I didn’t think there was anything more Gord could do to inspire, encourage, make people think.

Then with a third of the country watching the last show live on CBC from the Hip’s Kingston home, he decided to do something about a dark history he felt all of Canada should know about. A history much of our country has been trained to ignore. And it just so happened he addressed his comments to someone in attendance.

“Well, you know, Prime Minister Trudeau’s got me, his work with First Nations. He’s got everybody. He’s going to take us where we need to go,” Downie said to the crowd as Trudeau stood at attention. He looked really apprehensive but bravely listened to his call to action.

“It’s going to take us 100 years to figure out what the hell went on up there but it isn’t cool and everybody knows that. It’s really, really bad. But we’re going to figure it out. You’re going to figure it out.”

Gord didn’t ask our government to do more. He demanded it. Obviously for those in the know, this was also foreshadowing at its finest. Gord wasn’t about to sit around and wait. He had a plan to do something he felt needed to be done. Do his best to make sure every Canadian who never heard about the residential school experience was going to listen.

He released the album, animated film and book called *Secret Path* – a project three years in the making. And soon after its release, people in the Aboriginal

community admitted they were a bit jaded by the whole thing. Why does it take a famous white guy to shine light on the residential school experience?

Especially when pioneers like Tomson Highway have dedicated their lives to building bridges with the non-indigenous community by telling our stories, only to have their work go largely unnoticed by the mainstream population of our country.

For some, it may seem like Dances with Wolves all over again. The moniyas will save us! But with every objective morsel of my being, I don’t think Gord is trying to save anyone. He was simply affected by the tragic story of a 12-year-old boy trying to get home. Deeply affected. He started asking questions and discovered something unbelievable.

Ry Moran, Director of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, summed it up best.

“Gord’s not telling Canada the stories of Indigenous peoples,” he said just before the show. “What his primary goal

is, is calling out mainstream Canada and saying you guys have to pay attention to this. Non-Indigenous Canadians as a whole have a real responsibility to listen.

“And sometimes it takes someone who’s non-Indigenous to talk to non-Indigenous peoples.”

And while I can’t get those echoing words out of my head – we’re all sorry – after some thought and reflection, I can’t help but believe it was a genuine response. That person wasn’t saying it as a defense mechanism. They weren’t asking anyone to get over anything. They were simply reacting to the profound experience they were having. They really were sorry. And saying it out loud for everyone to hear was the only thing they felt they could do in that moment.

That, my friends, will be Gord’s legacy...

Watch *Secret Path* at [www.cbc.ca/secretpath](http://www.cbc.ca/secretpath) Visit [https://downiewenjack.ca](http://https://downiewenjack.ca) to find out what you can do to help.



**Joshua Hill**  
2015 Winner

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*“I am particularly thankful to AFOA Canada and PotashCorp. I would like to express my gratitude to the individuals who made this possible, and would like to mention that your involvement does not go unnoticed. I am looking forward to bringing this experience back to my community and inspiring younger grades to reach for their best life.”*  
– Joshua Hill, Onion Lake First Nation, SK






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# Honouring our Indigenous veterans

Indigenous men and women have been contributing to the protection of our country for hundreds of years.

There have been an estimated 12,000 First Nation, Métis or Inuit people that have served Canada in wars and in peace missions around the world. We know at least 500 gave their lives in the process.

To honour their service, Canada has declared Nov. 8 Aboriginal Veterans Day.

We honour our veterans with this issue every year. We acknowledge some that have passed and we also support the Saskatchewan First Nations Veterans Association. These vets serve an important role in supporting each other and families of their members that pass. As time goes on, their membership is getting smaller.

They are now reaching out to the new generation of retired soldiers to help expand their network and community service offerings. And there are more to come. Indigenous people continue to serve today with more than 1,200 First Nations, Inuit and Métis people serving with the Canadian Armed Forces. You will meet some of them in this issue.

Veterans are always included and honoured in our community. This is one thing we do very well. It is so good to see the veterans be there to lead the grand entry at events. Soldiers from young to old are always treated with respect. Organizations like the Gabriel Dumont Institute undertake massive projects to honour them.

We go out of our way to shake their hands. The youth of Carry the Kettle host a scary Halloween

walk through the woods every year. All funds raised go to support their veterans.

The Office of the Treaty Commissioner has also honoured our veterans. They have translated the famous First World War poem 'In Flanders Field' into Cree and Dene and shared it on their website and with the public. You can see them on page 6. If you want a real treat go to the OTC web site and you can see Dolores Sand translate and say the poem in Cree.

I proudly wear my beaded poppy from GDI from Nov. 1 until Nov. 16. That way I honour all of our veterans and the passing of Louis Riel, the last Métis to fall after Batoche. And I also throw a donation in at the poppy table at the mall.

The fundraising for the legions is important too. These folks need a place. But we always have to remember that

our Indigenous veterans weren't actually allowed in there until the 1960s because of their race. Lest we forget.

• • •

The insanity that is the United States is terrifying. The election of Donald Trump as President validates the voices of the activists and the oppressed that have shouted from the mountaintops about racism and violence in the United States begat on the minorities of that once great nation.



**Publisher's Notes**

**John Lagimodiere**

Now it is a liability in the world. When the head of the Klu Klux Klan comes out and calls the election of Trump a good thing, be afraid.

Also terrifying is listening to the boastings of the "white heterosexual male" who called in to Gormley how this result was because of guys like him and how this is good for the world and



will lead to peace. I am still in shock.

• • •

The December issue will feature our newsmaker of the year. Do you have a suggestion?

We are looking for people who did something special, or got in the news for a reason (we hope for something nice, not Trump like).

Hit us up on Facebook or go vote in our reader's poll on our website. The big reveal will be Dec. 9 on our website and with our December edition.

Make sure you vote. Just look at what happened in the United States.

**The late Joseph Halkett had a tombstone placed Aug. 16, 2011 in honour of his service in the First World War. Here his family gathered to honour him. Veterans are always honoured and respected by the community through monuments and by leading ceremony and community events including Remembrance Day.**

(Photo by Carmen Pauls Orthner)

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# I'm putting the plug on the information drain

It was late last week that I cracked. I was in Children's Place, a few winter items for my kid in front of me; my toddler was sitting on the counter while the cashier went through the items.

"He's so cute," the cashier cooed and he nodded and then held up his hand to ward off kisses, as he does.

I thanked her and then she did it: she asked for my postal code. I gulped, hesitated, and then gave it. Normally my response is a curt, "I do not give it out." But she had already complimented my kid, despite his dirty face.

Then it got worse, "And your phone number?" Again I hesitated before giving it up – should I? I'd already given up the postal code, what more harm would the phone number be ...? So I told her – I even gave her the correct number!

She smiled, typed it into the corporation's database in which they will store all my personal information until the end of time and then handed me my purchases. Leaving the store, I felt small and weak – I had succumbed to the information sucking machine.

I have resisted for a long time. I may be one of the pioneers of denial. I have stood alone for years, the only per-

son who refuses to hand over their data. "Why?" I'll ask, not meaning to

be cold but that it's hard to make a "why" friendly. The clerk will explain

something about warranties or returns and I would shrug my shoulders.

"I don't return things."

This is true. I usually find some way to smudge them with chocolate before I find the time to return them.

I don't know when companies decided that they needed all our information. Name, phone number, date of birth, postal code – that's more information than is needed to be faculty at Trump University.

But resisting is not popular. I've felt the grumblings behind me. People who don't understand why I won't comply.

"Are you so important? Are you a celebrity or something? What do you need privacy for?"

And it's true, I'm not someone special. I just don't like ending up on lists

because I've seen how hard it can be to get off of them.

For a six month period, I received phone calls from a creditor for someone else.

I would answer, they would ask for her – let's call her Berta Butterbear – and I would explain that this was my phone and that I didn't know the person they were looking for.

But they wouldn't believe me. They would demand to know my name and how long I'd had my phone. Even if I told them, they would still argue with me, telling me to stop covering for Berta. I would get into full arguments on the phone with creditors on behalf of Berta.

"I can see why she's hiding from you, you're a bunch of unfair jerks."

And on and on. This happened until I called the creditor company's main office, explained that Berta must have had the same number as me at one point. It was a fairly simple process to remove my number from their database – the

only problem was that I had to repeat the process six times before it stuck.

So then I became wary of any requests for personal info. If I bought raffle tickets, I would put in my mom's phone number (she loves phone calls) or just tell them to come find me if I won. I kept this up for years. And then I became a mom.

For some reason, children's stores seem to be at the forefront of the information collection. They say that they're going to enter you into raffles and send you coupons but I haven't seen any yet. I have, however, had three texts from companies telling me that I'm missing out on "AMAZING SALES – TEXT NOW KNOCKOFF MICHAEL KORS" in the past week.

As a result, I will be returning to my normal, no-information, stance. When cashiers request my phone number, I'll request theirs. When they ask for my email address, I'll tell them I don't believe in them.

When they request my postal code, I'll tell them that I live another dimension, where postal codes are outlawed and everyone gets mail through their televisions.

So if you see me in line in front of you, prepare yourself for a long wait.



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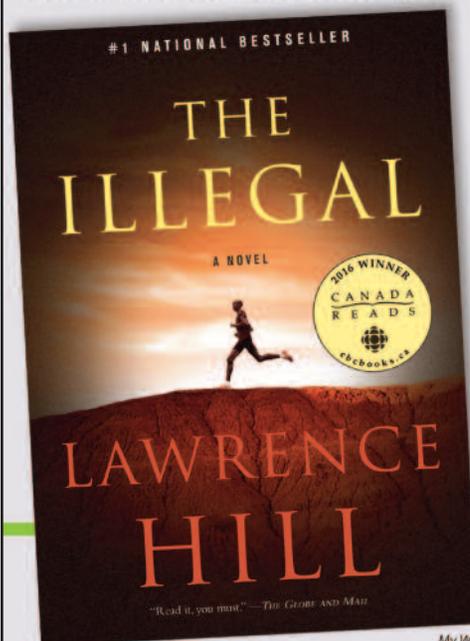


Photo by Lisa Sakulensky



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**Flanders yikwahaskānihk**  
 “In Flanders Fields”

– Plains Cree translation, by Jean Okimāsis and Arok Wolvengrey,  
 – based on an original Woods Cree translation by Minnie Mckenzie.

*Flanders yikwahaskānihk wāh-wēpāstanwa wāpikwaniya*  
 In Flanders fields the poppies blow  
*tastawāyihk pimitāskwahikana kā-nāh-nīpitēstēki*  
 Between the crosses, row on row,  
*ta-kiskinawācihtāhk ita kā-pimisiniyāhk; māka kīsikohk*  
 That mark our place; and in the sky  
*aniki ē-sōhkē-nikamocik piyēsīsak ē-pimihācik*  
 The larks, still bravely singing, fly  
*akāwāc pēhtākosiwak iyikohk ē-māh-matwēwēhk askīhk.*  
 Scarce heard amid the guns below.

*onakataskēwak niyanān. namōya māka kayās*  
 We are the Dead. Short days ago  
*nikī-pimātinān, nikī-mōsihtānān kā-sākāstēk, nikī-wāpahtēnān kā-pahkisimok.*  
 We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
*nikī-sākihiwānān mīna nikī-sākihiwānān, māka ēkwa nipimisiniān*  
 Loved and were loved, and now we lie  
*ōta Flanders yikwahaskānihk.*  
 In Flanders fields.

*kiyawāw ēkwa naskwāhihkok kinōtinākaniminawak*  
 Take up our quarrel with the foe:  
*ē-kī-sākōcihiyōyāhkik, kitāsōnamātinān*  
 To you from failing hands we throw  
*iskotēw; ohpinamok ēkwa kiyawāw.*  
 The torch; be yours to hold it high.  
*kīspin ānwēhtawiyāhki niyanān kā-nakataskēyāhk,*  
 If ye break faith with us who die  
*namwāc nika-aywēpinān, āta ē-ohpikiki wāpikwaniya*  
 We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
*ōta Flanders yikwahaskānihk.*  
 In Flanders fields



**Flanders nīhok'é yaghé**

Flanders nīhok'é imbai k'ose nījts'i yé dashit  
 Imbai k'ose t'ulé laṭ'e chāt'ai gesé,  
 T'ok'e nuhba nuṭ'a; kólú yadaghé  
 Iyézé dajen ṭu dzedat'á dáyenṭ'í'éth  
 Hōt'edhe daríth'a?ile telk'édhi dadarṭ'í'eth ṭa.

Łeghede ṭat'e. K'ani tthile  
 Daghida ni, k'abj haṭ'ai hedáridi ṭu, naṭa héṭ'dj ni,  
 Nuheghā nowetā hu dene ghā nehílya hu, ku dué thités

Flanders nīhok'é yaghé  
 T'a eṭnare nuhit'j beṭ eṭk'éch'a yawuṭi  
 Ts'ájdānidhen kólú nets'en hīlghal  
 Kón dzérélt'ahi; nareddha dowúton  
 Łeghede ṭu nuhet'anireṭa?ile de,  
 Imbai k'ose dániye kólú wutés ṭile  
 Flanders nīhok'é yaghé

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The Farm Land Exemption that Yancoal Canada requested and received is not about being able to purchase 60,000 acres (94 sections), but rather as a non-Canadian entity being about to purchase more than 10 acres (> 1 section).

Yancoal Canada is listening to your concerns, it is imperative that all the productive land and soil within the province be protected. On a landowner by landowner basis Yancoal Canada will pursue opportunities for leasing the land needed for the well field. In respect to purchasing agreements, Yancoal Canada will make every reasonable effort to accommodate sale conditions such as honouring existing lease agreements and first right of refusal to the previous owner/leasee.

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# Batoche monument pays tribute to all Métis veterans

By **Andréa Ledding**  
For Eagle Feather News

The National Métis Veterans' Memorial Monument, first unveiled at Back-to-Batoche in July of 2014, has been engraved in honour of all Métis veterans.

It was the idea of Lennard Morin of Cumberland House, who worked tirelessly to grow support for the monument. He had created a local one for the many veterans of his community, and lobbied others including the Métis Nation of Canada to get behind his idea for a national monument, because of the poor treatment of Métis veterans historically, once they returned home.

"The Métis have never been honoured with their own monument," noted Karon Shmon of Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI).

"There were numerous calls right across Canada to ask people to submit information of Métis veterans whose names should be inscribed but there are some jurisdictions that have yet to put forth names of Métis veterans."

Research was also undertaken by GDI. They know there are many more names out there and only half a pillar left uninscribed, so the vision is a second set of pillars to circle the existing ones, which will again take more fundraising.

Currently 5,500 names are on the monument and GDI has created a directory to locate specific names on the monument

with the hope that eventually they can create a visitor centre at the monument to house a physical copy of the guide. Meanwhile their website contains links to look up where to locate specific names, and to allow people who cannot physically access the site the ability to still see the names on the pillars, online via photographs.



**Indigenous veterans posed for a historic photo at the official unveiling of the Métis veterans monument at the Back to Batoche Festival site. Over 5000 veterans have been honoured with their names etched on the granite.**

(Photo by Andrea Ledding)

"The importance of Métis veterans to the Métis community cannot be understated. Our veterans occupy a point of honour at all Métis gatherings and cultural events," notes the GDI website.

Support has come from various organizations including local fundraising,

the Manitoba Métis Federation and the government, towards the initial \$300 000 to build and engrave the monument. Donations to maintain, engrave, and add onto the current monument are still being sought by GDI, who did all the fiscal and practical management details of the monument.

Mike Gouchie, and Krystle Pederson. One hundred per cent of the sales of these three items go towards the monument's upkeep and engraving process.

Additionally, donations over \$10 are eligible for a tax receipt from GDI which is a registered not-for-profit charitable organization. As an added incentive, donations over \$25 receive the CD and donations over \$50 receive the book.

If you know of a veteran who has not been included to date, you can contact GDI.

"The veterans of 1885 are on there, the Great Wars I and II, Korea, Afghanistan and even peace-serving veterans," noted Shmon.

"Métis veterans did not receive the same benefits when they came back as other veterans, so it's been painful for Métis veterans not to receive the recognition; and so this is an opportunity to recognize their service and sacrifice."

Shmon noted there are also female Métis veterans included on the monument.

"We will continue to collect. Names are on in random order because if you go by order of conflict or alphabetically, what do you do when you get new names? This way they are spaced to fit the columns, and you can search the database to find which pillar and even which row."

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**GLOBAL100**

# Bold Eagle program challenged Merasty to excel

**By Jeanelle Mandes  
Of Eagle Feather News**

After a summer in the Bold Eagle Program, Nathan Merasty decided to become an infantry soldier with the Royal Regina Rifles.

Infantry soldiers have the toughest job. They close in and engage the enemy in close quarter combat using the latest weapon systems and battle tactics on the battlefield. Additionally, their job is to go house-to-house and clear them out. They are the guys in the trenches and the brave soldiers on the front lines if Canada is ever in conflict.

"I want to do the hardest job. Not many First Nations are currently serving in the Canadian Military," said Merasty who is a citizen of the Muscowpetung First Nation.

"If Canada was ever in an armed conflict, I personally think that a First Nation should be on Canada's front lines because our people were here defending our country first. This is the reason why I chose my job as an infantry soldier."

Merasty is in his second year at the First Nations University of Canada in Regina studying Business Administration. In his first year of university, he was introduced into the University of Regina's OMA program which is designed to help first year Indigenous students integrate into university life. He says joining the Bold Eagle program in 2013 has helped him transition into the military life and helped him decide his career path. He strongly encourages all Indigenous youth to give the Bold Eagle program a try.

"The Bold Eagle program will help them a lot. You get money for the summer, you get life skills, you get to know people from all over Canada and it's free training. It costs nothing," he says.

"I did it and I want others to experience it as well. I want our youth to experience military life. You don't have to commit to the career in the military; it's just an experience of a lifetime."

The skills that Merasty gained from the Bold Eagle program and the military training were leadership, life, and social skills – which all boosted his confidence. As an infantry soldier, Merasty explains he has to be physically fit, which is mentally and physically demanding. He hopes to become a better infantry soldier – the more military courses he takes, the further his career goes with an advancement of more opportunities.

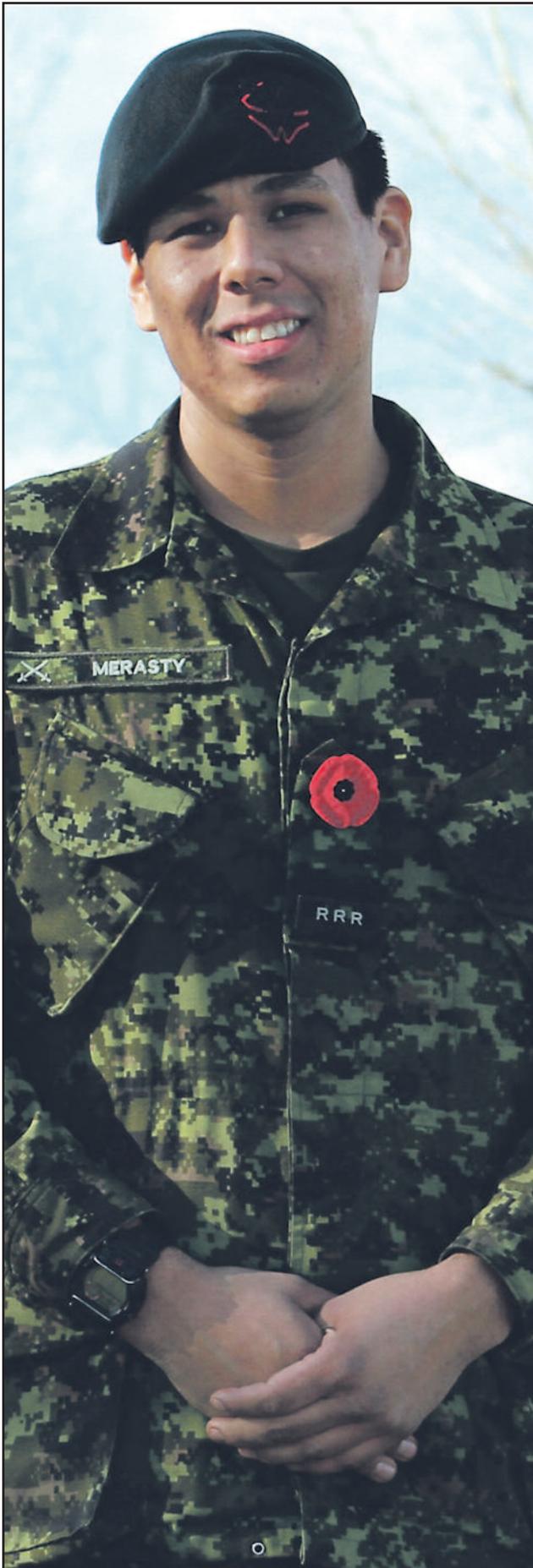
"It will also allow me to see the

world. This year, I was offered to go to the Arctic, but I had to decline because I chose school first," he says.

He has four military courses, some include infantry course, and currently he is learning how to drive the big military trucks. Every second weekend, he takes that course in Saskatoon. He plans to finish his degree and get his promotion to Corporal.

Merasty says he participates in Remembrance Day to remember the fallen comrades through service. He will be marching in Regina on Remembrance Day along with police officers, the fire department, and the military—all that do a service for people by putting their lives on the line to serve and protect.

"Just like how in our culture we dance for the sick and people who can't, in the military we march for our fallen comrades who haven't made it home," he adds.



Mucowpetung First Nation member Nathan Merasty got a taste of military life while attending the Bold Eagle Program and decided it was the life for him.



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Members of the Saskatchewan First Nation Veterans Association support each other as well as families of passed veterans. They are also actively recruiting younger members who are recently out of the armed forces. (Photo by Shelley Mike)

## SFNVA continues fight for veterans

• Continued from Page One

“We take the time to accommodate all traditions and culture in our memorials. I know the benefits the families get from finally seeing their fathers/husbands/uncles or aunts getting recognition for their service to our country.”

The SFNVA is trying to attract the younger generation who have served. “There are quite a few young veterans coming out of service, but they don’t view themselves as veterans. We are making headway, but it takes a lot of work to find young soldiers, freshly out of service.”

Ross often stumbles across them by accident, and takes the time to inform them about the SFNVA the benefits of having a support system there to lean on.

“These young people are affected by where they have been posted. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) affects their lives and families.”

The SFNVA is actively looking to find ways to help. Proposals are being written to support the creation of a specialized treatment centre in Saskatchewan.

“It can be done,” says Ross. “We need to work with Veterans Affairs to find the resources to make this a reality.”

Looking forward to 2017, the SFNVA is working on taking approximately 20 First Nations veterans to France for the 100 year commemoration of Vimy Ridge. It is challenging to find creative ways to make something like this happen.

The 2016 SFNVA Gala is geared towards the Vimy Ridge journey. Invitations are offered to the general public, institutions, businesses, First Nations organizations to purchase tables.

“We are hoping to get a good program for the evening. We will have a military display and are looking to secure a high command military speaker.”

Sunchild Law has generously donated a quad to be raffled off at the event.

When asked what message Ross would bring to the young people of Saskatchewan, he offered this: “We have people joining the armed forces, and we have people who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom. It is challenging, for the people, for their families and friends.

We must always remember, freedom is not free. We can’t forget to honour our veterans.”

**The Saskatchewan First Nations Veterans' Association**



*“The worst thing is to be forgotten.”*



**2nd GALA FUNDRAISING DINNER**

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# Norman MacAuley served as soldier, legislator and educator

By Linda Mikolayenko  
For Eagle Feather News

**LA RONGE** – Norman MacAuley lived a life of service. He served his country as a soldier in World War II, and served northern Saskatchewan in many capacities, including Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) for Cumberland constituency.

With his passing this summer at the age of 98, a scholarship in his memory has been established to support Métis students in their post-secondary education.

Education was important to him, says MacAuley's granddaughter, Erin (MacAuley) Reid.

Born in La Ronge of Cree and Scottish ancestry, MacAuley was one of only a few Métis day students who attended the All Saints Indian Residential School there.

"He might have had a Grade 8," said Reid. "Had there been opportunity for him to continue, I think he would have taken it."

However, says Reid, that lack of opportunity did not prevent him from accomplishing great things.

"He seemed to always tackle any issue head on," said Reid, "and always wanted to do the best. He might not have had the formal education, but was always willing to take it on, because his ultimate goal was to make conditions in life better for everyone in the North."

From 1942 to 1946, he served with the 8th Canadian Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment in the Royal Canadian Army 70th Battery. He was sent to England for training, where he met and married his wife, Hetty. As a gunner, he saw action in France, Belgium, Holland and Germany. Reid notes that MacAuley often related his experience being part of the Normandy invasion – "the horrors of it, as well as the outcome."



**Norman MacAuley served as MLA for Cumberland constituency from 1975-82.** (Photo courtesy Erin Reid)

His community service included being the first president of the La Ronge Branch of the Royal Canadian Legion, the first chairman of the Northern School Board and La Ronge Regional Community College, and the first La Ronge Scout Master.

With his commitment to education and youth, the family has chosen to honour his memory by establishing the Norman MacAuley Scholarship Fund. Reid, who has previously taught at Churchill Community High School in La Ronge, says an annual scholarship will be awarded to a deserving student with documented Métis ancestry graduating from Grade 12 at Churchill "who will be going on to any sort of post-secondary training that they choose – technical school, vocational school, university, college."

Donations are still being accepted to the Norman MacAuley Scholarship Fund, care of Erin & Doug Reid, 9 - 1316 Township Road, 533 Parkland County, Alberta T7Y 0G2



(Left) Norman MacAuley served in World War II with the 8th Canadian Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment in the Royal Canadian Army 70th Battery.

(Photo courtesy MacAuley Family/Northern Saskatchewan Archives)



**As a gunner in the Royal Canadian Army during World War II, Norman MacAuley (left) saw action in France, Belgium, Holland and Germany.**

(Photo courtesy MacAuley Family/Northern Saskatchewan Archives)

MacAuley served as the MLA for Cumberland from 1975 to 1982, representing the New Democratic Party. In presenting a motion of condolence in the Legislature on Nov. 1, 2016, Premier Brad Wall said MacAuley also served as the Legislative Secretary for the Minister of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan.

Opposition Leader Trent Wotherspoon noted that a few paragraphs of MacAuley's maiden speech in the Legislature were in Cree.

"The Legislative Library believes that Mr. MacAuley would likely be the very first person to speak Cree in this Assembly," said Wotherspoon.

Graham Guest is an archival historian with the Northern Saskatchewan Archives in La Ronge which intends to feature MacAuley and his contributions during the annual Archives Week Open House in 2017. Guest's research shows MacAuley engaged in a number of occupations, including working for the provincial government, as an RCMP Special Constable, and tourist camp operator.

## Sheri Benson

Member of Parliament // Saskatoon West

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## Meet Capt. Walker Pryor

Artillery Captain Walker Pryor is a member of the Muskeg Lake Cree Nation. Born in Calgary but raised in Saskatoon, Walker attended University in Edmonton. After university he worked as a child and youth care worker focusing on Native youth. He joined the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) in 2007. Eagle Feather News caught up to Captain Walker and got the low-down on his career and tips for those considering the forces as a career.

**As a member of Muskeg Lake, how do you feel about the rich tradition of your people serving Canada?**

I am honoured and proud that I have been able to continue the tradition of Muskeg Lake and serve in the CAF.

**Where have you served during your time in the forces?**

I have been posted in Quebec, New Brunswick, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, British Columbia and Alberta. Quebec, New Brunswick, and Saskatchewan was for training purposes. Manitoba was a posting to 1 Royal Canadian Horse Artillery. B.C. was for two deployments to Op PALACI which is Avalanche Control in Rogers Pass. Alberta is a posting to 3rd Canada Division.

**What did you do in Afghanistan?**

I was in Kabul Afghanistan (15 Jul 11 – 29 Feb 2012) for Operation ATTENTION. I worked in the joint operations cell in the National Command and Support Element. I was organizing tactical assistance visits and other visits for VIPs.

**What has been most rewarding in your career?**

My current position as the G1 Operations and Plans at 3rd Canadian Division where one of our tasks is to ensure support to injured soldiers or families of the fallen.



**Capt. Walker Pryor is following a proud tradition of Muskeg Lake soldiers in the Canadian Armed Forces.**

**What has been most challenging?**

That would be spending eight months in Kabul. The time away from friends and family proved to be challenging but it has enriched the time when you are together. The time there was hard but I look forward to my next deployment that hopefully will be next year.

**What kind of person do you need to be to become a soldier? Do you recommend the career to young people?**

A person needs to be ethical. Everything else can either be taught, or experience or personal growth. Soldiers skills can be taught. Incremental challenges will build in-

ner fortitude. But a lack of ethical fiber cannot be fixed. I would highly recommend young people to join the CAF. It is not for everyone but your first contract is for three years and it will be an experience that will not be forgotten nor will you regret it. Like most jobs, there is good and bad and once a person has gotten a few years then they can make a proper decision if this is life for them. In fact, the reason why I ended up joining was because I was working with a youth that wanted to join so I took him to the recruiting centre. He never did join but I am thankful to him and the nine years of service.



### MUSKEG LAKE CREE NATION

# Lest We Forget

**Pte. Okemasis, Joseph: 1 Canadian Infantry Division, (MG) Bn (KIA) - Italy died December 07, 1943**  
 On December 6, 1943 the SLI was providing mortar support for the Hasty P's (HPE) infantry, who were leading an attack across the Moro River to the town San Leonardo on the Adriatic side.  
 The Canadian 1st Division took the objective San Leonardo, by December 10, 1943 - though had suffered many casualties.  
 Buried at Moro River Canadian War Cemetary - Italy

<p><b>World War I (1914-1918)</b>          Arcand, John B.          Arcand, John Malasyppe          Arcand, Louis          Arcand, Louis O.S.          Flamend, John          Greyeyes, Louis          Ledoux, Isadore          Sanderson, William B.          Tawpisim, Alexander</p>	<p>Greyeyes, Mary (Reid)          Greyeyes, Stanley          Greyeyes, Thomas          Greyeyes, William C.          Greyeyes, William R.          Lafond, Albert          Lafond, Beatrice          Ledoux, Vincent          Longneck, Felix          Sanderson, Francis X.          Sanderson, William          Tawpisim, Alexander          Venne, Beatrice (Lucier)          Venne, Emile          Venne, Harry</p>	<p><b>U.S. – Iraq War (2003 - 2011)</b>          Sgt. Ledoux, Aaron - 173rd Airborne, US Army, Vincenzo, Italy. OIF I-OEF V</p>
<p><b>World War II: (1939 – 1945)</b>          Arcand, Albert          Arcand, Clement          Arcand, Collin          Arcand, Francis X.          Arcand, George          Arcand, Joseph          Arcand, Joseph Thomas (J.T.)          Arcand, Louis O.S.          Arcand, Patrick Maurice          Greyeyes (Steele), David Georges          Greyeyes, Esther (Mowat)          Greyeyes (Steele), Flora J.          Greyeyes, Gertrude (Lloyd)          Greyeyes, Josephine</p>	<p><b>Korean Conflict: (1950 – 1953)</b>          Arcand, Arthur "Gabby"          Arcand, Clement          Arcand, Patrick Maurice          Lafond, Albert</p>	<p><b>U.S. – Afghanistan War (2001 - 2014)</b>          Sgt. Ledoux, Aaron - 173rd Airborne, US Army, Vincenzo, Italy. OIF I-OEF V</p> <p><b>Canadian Forces:</b>          MWO Greyeyes, Grant - PPCLI (Afghanistan and currently serving)          Cpl Wolfe, Kelly, PPCLI (Afghanistan)          Capt. Pryor, Walker, 1 Royal Canadian Horse Artillery (Afghanistan and currently serving)</p>
	<p><b>Vietnam Conflict (1959 – 1975)</b>          Lafond, Stanley</p>	<p><b>MUSKEG LAKE CREE NATION also acknowledges those who have served during times of peace.</b>          Cayen, Pat          Greyeyes, David W.          Greyeyes, George          Greyeyes, Marcel          Greyeyes, Richard          Greyeyes, Robert          Lafond, Roderick          Lafond, Frederick "Sonny"          Wolfe, James</p>



Photo courtesy of Carol Lafond

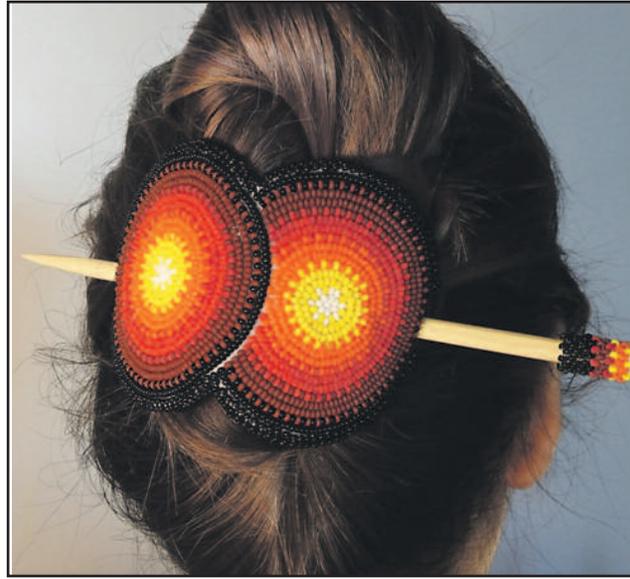
# Wanuskewin shop pops up on Broadway

By John Lagimodiere  
Of Eagle Feather News

SASKATOON – Wanuskewin Heritage Park has opened up a convenient gift shop just in time for the Christmas season.

The pop-up location at 704 Broadway Avenue in Saskatoon will be open from Nov. 12 until Dec. 30. Those familiar with the neighbourhood will know the address as the former Brain Sport retail location.

“We wanted to make our store a bit more accessible for people who cannot make it out to the park to shop this holiday season. It’s not always easy to make it during park hours and so we felt that this location would be ideal for our customers,” said Andrew McDonald, Marketing Manager of the Park on the decision to move into the city for the season.



Buying Saskatchewan made traditional crafts will be more convenient with the Wanuskewin pop up shop on Broadway Avenue in Saskatoon. You can also get Pendleton products and great clothing.

The Wanuskewin Gift Shop will offer the unique handmade, local First Nations arts and crafts that are one of a kind as well as Pendleton products, dream catchers, jewelry pieces, Indigenous apparel, moccasins and more.

“A majority of the items we sell are from local artists from around the province so this is a great central location both within the city and within the province,” added McDonald.

“We are very proud of the network of artists and artisans that we have developed and cannot wait to share this beautiful work with a larger audience on Broadway.”



**PFP**  
Participant Funding Program



## Notice of public hearing and participant funding

The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) will hold a public hearing to consider an application from AREVA Resources Canada (AREVA) for a 12-year renewal of its uranium mine operating licence for the McClean Lake operation. This operation is located in northern Saskatchewan, approximately 750 km north of Saskatoon.

The current operating licence authorizes AREVA's McClean Lake operation to produce up to 10,909,090 kg of uranium concentrate per year, along with associated operations, and to process uranium ore slurry from Cameco Corporation's Cigar Lake operation. It expires on June 30, 2017.

**Date:** June 7–8, 2017  
**Place:** La Ronge, SK  
**Time:** As set by the agenda published prior to the hearing date

The hearing date and location may change. Check the CNSC website for the latest details.

Through its Participant Funding Program (PFP), the CNSC is offering up to \$75,000 in funding to assist members of the public, Aboriginal groups and other stakeholders in reviewing AREVA's application and associated documents, and submitting topic-specific interventions to the Commission. This funding must be used to prepare for, and participate in, the Commission's public hearing.

The deadline for submitting a completed participant funding application form to the CNSC is December 12, 2016.

The public is invited to comment, in writing, on AREVA's application. Requests to intervene must be filed with the Commission Secretariat by May 5, 2017 online at [nuclearsafety.gc.ca/eng/the-commission/intervention](http://nuclearsafety.gc.ca/eng/the-commission/intervention) or at the coordinates below. Please include your name, address and telephone number. You may submit your personal information on a separate page to ensure its confidentiality. AREVA's submission and CNSC staff's recommendations to be considered at the hearing will be available after April 7, 2017

For information on how to participate, visit the “Participate in a public Commission hearing” and “Participant Funding Program” sections of the CNSC website at [nuclearsafety.gc.ca](http://nuclearsafety.gc.ca).

**For information on the PFP:**  
PFP administrator  
613-947-6382 or 1-800-668-5284  
[cncs.pfp.ccsn@canada.ca](mailto:cncs.pfp.ccsn@canada.ca)

**For information on the hearing process:**  
Senior tribunal officer, Secretariat  
613-996-9063 or 1-800-668-5284  
[cncs.interventions.ccsn@canada.ca](mailto:cncs.interventions.ccsn@canada.ca)

[nuclearsafety.gc.ca](http://nuclearsafety.gc.ca)



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Together we can build something to be proud of.

# Lloydminster Indigenous business summit promotes inclusion

**LLOYDMINSTER** – The focus of the 4th Annual Indigenous Economic Partnership Summit was on Entrepreneurship and Indigenous Human Resource policy. The iSummit, for short, was held in Lloydminster, Saskatchewan on October 13.

Keynote speaker, Clint Davis, Indigenous Business Advisor for Acasta Capital spoke on Indigenous business, the opportunity and how to seize it.

“Aboriginal people are increasingly leaving their economic footprint on the national picture. Combined income of Aboriginal households, businesses and government sectors was \$24 billion in 2011.”

While Davis was with TD Banking Group, he studied the Indigenous economic market. He noted that Indigenous businesses grew by 5.7 per cent in 2015, as compared to 1.1 per cent overall Canadian business growth. This was accomplished by tapping into different business models and growing Economic Development corporations.

His thoughts for the future of Indigenous business were to advocate to all levels of government to develop Indigenous procurement policies, and to build scale through collaboration. He also pointed out that the media story is that Indigenous people are looking for handouts, when the story should be about Indigenous contributions to the economy.

The guests were then given an update

from the Border Tribal Council on the new casino project in Lloydminster, which is now approved and moving forward. The Border Tribal Council will own the land and buildings and SIGA will run the casino.



**Kelly Lendsay, Clint Davis and Mayor Rob Saunders share a laugh at the 4th Annual Indigenous Summit in Lloydminster.** (Photo supplied)

The first business on-site will be a Petro-Canada gas station and the goal is to have a majority Indigenous staff.

While the Tribal Council experienced some time setbacks due to the fact Indigenous businesses often must deal with more red tape, they have found the City of Lloydminster to be a cooperative business partner in building the first urban Reserve in Lloydminster.

The panel on “Starting Your Own Business” then took to the stage. The panel was moderated by Jeff Ross, Economic Development for Onion Lake First Nation.

He was joined by Heather Abbey, social entrepreneur and founder of shopindig.ca, Rob Campre, former pro football player, business owner and Board member of many Alberta organizations, Kara John-

ston, business owner and Stephanie Harpe, actress, musician and owner of Shapeshifters Talent.

The overall theme that they all touched on was finding a need in the community and creating a business to fill it. Creativity is key. They also advised to contact Indigenous Economic Development organizations for advice and funding.

After lunch and a performance by The Metis Jiggers, Terry Bird presented his keynote presentation. Bird is the Lead Advisor, First Nations and Metis Initiatives, for multinational company K+S Potash. He is

a Human Resource specialist and gave some great advice to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous businesses on creating good Indigenous hiring and procurement policies. He also spoke on the benefits for First Nations in developing Economic Development corporations to provide continuity to business practices when leadership and councils change in First Nation communities.

“The key for resource companies working in First Nation territories is engagement. Build trust with the Chief and council, but also the community.”

The next panellists joined Bird on stage to speak on Indigenous HR policy. Led by Milton Tootoosis, the panel covered many aspects of hiring Indigenous staff and creating good HR policy.

Jim Nowakowski, President and CEO of JNE Welding, Jeff Ross and Kelly Lendsay, President and CEO of the Aboriginal Human Resource Council, lent the crowd their advice on HR policies. They all agreed that companies, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, need to stop talking about Indigenous policies and just create them if they are serious about inclusion.

iSummit 2017 will be held in Lloydminster October 11 and 12, 2017. For enquires on the event, please contact the Lloydminster Chamber of Commerce, 780-875-9013 or [info@lloydminster-chamber.com](mailto:info@lloydminster-chamber.com)



Photos: Don Whiting Photography

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## Métis business forum honoured the past, embraces the future

By John Lagimodiere  
Of Eagle Feather News

**SASKATOON** – Supreme Court decisions, business financing and using economic development to end homelessness were topics on the table for the 2016 Métis Economic Development Forum.

Created by the Saskatoon Aboriginal Employment Partnership (SAEP), the forum brought together business leaders from around Saskatchewan to share best practices and network on the common cause of improving Métis business in Saskatchewan.

The event began with a prayer from Métis Senator Nora Cummings. She also shared how her family had a community right on the land where the forum was hosted, the Saskatoon Western Development Museum.

“Our family has been involved in the economy of Saskatoon since it started,” said the Senator.

“Our people have always been hard working and we helped build this city. I remember hauling wood with a horse drawn cart over bridges in Saskatoon. We have to tell our children these stories so they know our role.”

Métis legal eagle Jason Madden was the keynote speaker. Managing partner in the prestigious law firm Pape Sallier Teillet LLP, Madden spoke of the importance of the Powley, Manitoba Métis Land claim and Daniels Decisions for the Métis people.

“Powley established that the Métis have Aboriginal rights that are equally protected in the Constitution. The Manitoba case showed the Crown has a Constitutional morality for promises made long ago and can’t just dust history under the rug,” said Madden who has appeared before the Supreme Court for all Métis rights cases in the past decade.

“And the Daniels decision has now shown us whose door we go to for the funding relationship.”

All of these decisions have helped define the place of the Métis in Canada. Further cases like Duty to Consult have also helped thrust more Métis communities into the economy.

“The Métis were the brokers and played a fundamental part of building western Canada,” said Madden.



Roland Duplessis, Greg Fofonoff and Jeff Lindgren discussed Métis economic development at the Métis business forum. Keynote speaker, lawyer Jason Madden (far right), kicked off the day with an explanation of Supreme Court Decisions that affect Métis people. (Photos by John Lagimodiere)

“Métis were the brokers and played a fundamental part in building Western Canada. The government now can’t have convenient amnesia. They have a duty to negotiate with the Métis.”

SAEP is comprised of 20 members representing a diverse cross section of stakeholders including employers, education and training institutions, program and service providers, and Aboriginal representative organizations.

It is co chaired by Gilles Dorval, Director Aboriginal Relations for the City of Saskatoon, and Gabe Lafond, Director Representative Workforce/First Nation Métis Health Service with the Saskatoon Health Region.

“We were really glad to get all of these leaders together in one room,” said Dorval of the Forum.

“Métis business often gets overshadowed by First Nation business ventures so it was important to have this one specifically for the Métis.”

Panels discussed financing and procurement for Métis business.

“Métis are doing business in the province in a big way,” said CCDF CEO Roland Duplessis.

“But I also want to point out we have identified that we need \$67 million to meet the needs of Métis communities in Saskatchewan. We need that capital and I encourage you to lobby the government for it.”

Panelists also included Greg Fofonoff of SMEDCO, Jeff Lindgren of Kikinaw Development Corp, Terry Bird of K+S Potash Canada, Bruce Richet of CIMA and Blaine Dubriel of Allan Construction.

The success stories of Pinehouse Business North and CUMFI Local #165 were also explored. Walter Smith shared the Pinehouse story.

“Our community has changed because of leadership,” said Smith. “From PBN’s first venture where we borrowed a purple truck and someone used their Visa card to buy paint, our community now has 34 apprentices from level one to four and a multi-million dollar business.

“And we have a really high graduation rate. We need those grads as we are building a workforce.”

CUMFI President Shirley Isbister closed the Forum with the story of her Local using economic development to benefit the neediest in the community.

“We are committed to improving the quality of life for Métis people,” said Isbister as she talked about the 160 staff and the multiple apartment buildings and houses under control of CUMFI.

“Too many of our people face poverty and family violence. In our buildings we surround families with a caring environment. Better yet, by using economic development to help our community, we have helped take over 800 children out of the social services system.”



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Dorthea Swiftwolfe, Missing Persons Liaison Officer, SPS and Vernelle Swiftwolfe, Building and Grounds Labourer



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## The 2016 Métis Economic Development Forum would like to thank our sponsors:



# Métis urged to get involved in upcoming election process

By Julie Wriston  
Of Eagle Feather News

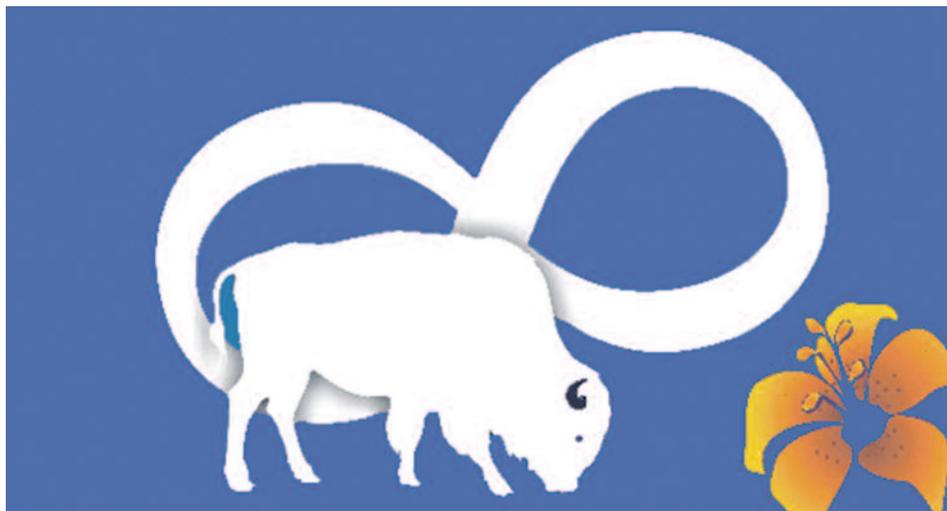
The year 2017 marks yet another opportunity for the Métis Nation – Saskatchewan to embrace the spirit of rejuvenation.

With all of the chaos experienced in the past few years, some sceptics wonder why anyone would commit the time and energy it takes to inform themselves about the 2017 MN-S Election. And considering the past issues with elections, there are worries over who gets to vote this time and where they will go to vote.

Fred Payton, the returning Chief Electoral Officer, thinks the Métis people of Saskatchewan have an opportunity to choose the direction for the next four years for this representative organization. The biggest challenge will be dispelling any misinformation about voter eligibility in order to encourage as much of the Métis population in Saskatchewan as possible to vote.

“I have a Métis Elections Act that I am bound to follow,” said Payton.

“It is important to communicate that one does not need to hold a Métis Nation of Saskatchewan membership card in order to cast a vote in this election.”



There has been a lot of confusion out there about who can actually vote. The Métis Nation – Saskatchewan Elections Act provides the guidelines to direct the voting process. Based on the Elections Act, the criteria to vote for Executive positions as a Métis citizen is as follows.

You must:

- Identify as a Métis citizen
- Be at least 16 years of age
- Not be a registered member of a First Nation or any other Aboriginal peoples

To vote for a regional representative, you must be each of the above and

a resident of the region for which the regional representative is a candidate.

Every person who votes will be required to sign a declaration indicating the above, as well as that they have not previously voted in this election. This declaration is a legal document, and failure to declare truthfully could result in the individual being charged criminally.

“Presenting the appropriate identification, as is required at all elections, and signing the declaration is all that is required in order to vote,” says Payton.

The Act under which the election is to be held is the same Act that was

approved for use for the 2007 election (and for the 2012 election) with some slight modifications. These amendments were made at the Provincial Métis Council (PMC) meeting in Yorkton on July 30 this year.

The amendments which were passed did not materially change the Act, aside from providing the PMC with the authority to appoint the complaints officer and the adjudicator.

Having roots that lead back to the Red River, Robert Hawkins has taken an interest in his Métis history and culture. He has resided in Saskatchewan since 1979, but it has only been in the last ten years that he has really started paying attention to Métis issues.

Hawkins offers this message to those who are undecided about whether the 2017 election is worth their efforts.

“If you don't vote, you have no one to blame for the government you get but yourself. So, in the next election for the Métis Nation- Saskatchewan, be curious and find out what the candidates stand for, and vote your conscience.”

Métis people in Saskatchewan have the right to have a voice. On Feb. 4, 2017 – make sure you let yours be heard.

## Call for Election Officers

### Regional Returning Officer and Assistant Regional Returning Officer

for each of the 12 Métis Nation - Saskatchewan regions.

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Please email your application to: [fgpayton@mnselection.ca](mailto:fgpayton@mnselection.ca)

Applications will be received until 4:00 p.m. on November 17, 2016

Applications should be accompanied by a resume including any experience as an election worker. You can also indicate your position preference as well as other positions you are willing to accept.

# Reporting on taboo issues and why it's important

In journalism, there will always be stories that are known as 'the elephants in the room', everyone is aware of them but no one wants to talk about them because it tends to make people feel uncomfortable.

I soon learned about this after I covered the recent suicides in Northern Saskatchewan. Within a matter of five weeks, six girls took their own lives. This is a serious issue. I felt this issue's importance needed to be covered. Here is why.

I read most of mainstream media's coverage about the first two girls from Stanley Mission who took their lives. They were all labelled as 'young Indigenous girls', which is accurate.

But who were they? What kind of lives did they live? What were their dreams, hopes and aspirations? What were their hobbies? What were their families' favourite memories of them? These were the questions that were overlooked in mainstream media coverage.

I pitched the story idea of covering who these girls were to my Eagle Feather News editor. After he gave me the go-ahead, I proceeded to find at least one of the family members of one of the three girls.

***Reporters have that duty to inform the public on what is happening in the news but we also need to take care of our own well-being.***

I found Lynda Roberts, mother of one of the girls, from the Lac La Ronge Indian Band. I explained to her why I was interested in writing the story in this angle. I approached her in a sensitive and respectful manner.

After engaging into a discussion about the topic, she kindly agreed to tell the story of who her daughter was and how she wanted people to remember her daughter. It wasn't an easy interview to do. I felt her pain, but as a professional, I needed to have that thick skin to proceed.

I thanked her for sharing her story and I told her that I would write the story of how she wanted others to remember her daughter.

After the interview, I took off that invisible shield and cried. Simply, because I am still human.

There are stereotypes out there about journalists who cover hard stories like this. The common one is that journalists are like robots; we don't show compassion or empathy in the stories we cover.

For the most part, that is false. We are all trained to have thick skin in order to report accurately, fairly, and to remain neutral. But once we take off that journalist hat and return to our homes, the pain from the tragedies that we report on remains with us.

After I submitted the story I had other stories to work on, as well as my homework in my Journalism Master's program. In midst of writing one of the stories, my mind was focused on Lynda and her family.

Every time I reflected back on her interview, an immediate lump appeared in my throat. I took mini-breaks to refocus my attention but it still lingered in my mind. That weekend, I went back to my reserve for a visit and one of my family members questioned me if anything was wrong as I wasn't my usual self and I reassured him that I was fine. But clearly, I wasn't.

The topic of suicide isn't new to me. I dealt with the loss of my best friend, who took her life a few years ago. It was a devastation, which I hadn't dealt with completely because I swept it under the rug as suicide is an uncomfortable topic to talk about.

This is why I took on covering this issue with compassion simply because I care. These are girls who had dreams of becoming something such as a veterinarian, they had families who cared for them—they were someone important in these affected communities. In the media, I didn't want them to become just another young Indigenous girl who took their life.

The second story, I wrote about the fifth suicide in Northern Saskatchewan, which happened in Loon Lake. As careful as I thought I was, my story was pulled as it had some people upset from the affected communities.

It wasn't my intention to offend our readers and I apologize to those I've upset. At the time, it was four weeks since the Prime Minister and Saskatchewan's Premier responded in the wake of the Northern Saskatchewan suicides. The story was merely a follow-up on the government's words and what has or has not been done to address, as some of the provincial chief's call it, the "suicide crisis".

I overlooked one protocol in the reporting suicide guidelines – which I wasn't aware of. In journalism school, we weren't taught about reporting on suicide, because many news outlets avoid covering it unless it's considered a crisis.



Comment

Jeanelle Mandes



## INVITATION

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# Standing Rock, North Dakota and progress

The images of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe protest in North Dakota got me thinking.

I am not a fan of standoffs. But like every rock star I felt outrage when confronted with the images of our relations getting roughed up by armed police and private mercenaries.

Clearly, government forces are so brave and courageous that they must wear masks in case their awesomeness leaks out as they club and shove protesters. So much pride and honour.

Clearly, the sweetgrass in the air posed such a lethal threat that tear gas, mace and armoured personnel carriers are the only rational response. The supporters of the Dakota Access Pipeline people are lung enthusiasts.

Clearly, the singing of sacred songs justified the unleashing of dogs on unarmed civilians. Yup, there's nothing so tasty as freshly bleeding music to feed the dogs. Animal lovers.

To my incredible mind it seemed we are no better off than we were 20, 50, 100 years ago.

But then the more I let my huge brain dwell on the situation it became clear that progress has been made.

Rock stars, celebrities and even Marvel's The Avengers turned up to

support our Sioux relations to the south. THE AVENGERS people! I saw the Hulk, Thor, the guy that plays Samuel L. Jackson. They turned up, supporting the Standing Rock Sioux!

Hell, even the young lady who played Tris from the movie Divergent got arrested there, though she's not as big a deal since I have a restraining order against her. Long story. And, no, I did not specify what kind of restraints are to be used nor what the safe word is.

But I digest.

It's true that most mainstream media are ignoring the situation. However, social media is going nuts. So nuts it's almost bananas.

Gone are the days when governments and corporations are free to violently oppress peaceful protesters. Yes, they are still doing it, but there is a price they too must pay. The world is watching.

And in a clever move, the protesters have done the unthinkable. They have unmasked the perpetrators. Splashed all over Facebook is the CEO

and the Police Chief. Awwh, their children must be so proud.

Teacher: "Jimmy, what does your father do for work?"

Jimmy Spankleton: "He clubs people when they pray. When I grow up I want to be a Stormtrooper, or a masked

government thug."

The next logical move for the protesters should be to target stakeholders and stockholders, anyone with an interest in building that bloody pipeline.

Hit the company where it matters.

We live in a very different world than the generation that preceded us.

We have social media. We also have the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. We have the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

We have a series of Supreme Court Decisions that require governments to consult when they are even thinking about the possibility of the idea crossing it's mind that perhaps they might take a course of action that might have an impact on our interests.

Gone are the days when greed

could run roughshod over our interests, flouncing through the meadows without a care in the world.

Wait. Is it possible to run roughshod and flounce? Is greed in shape enough to run?

Wait. I'm digesting from my original point.

The Dirkster can testify that governments and companies in this country are moving in the right direction, whether they want to or not. They cannot afford to ignore us any longer if they want to prosper.

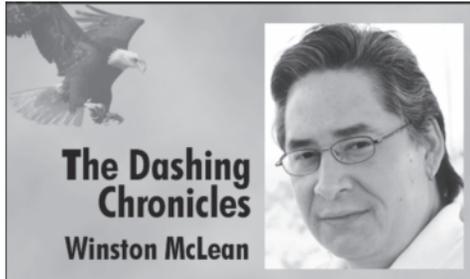
Now, the conversations may be awkward. They may feel clumsy. Mistakes will be made. After all, we are talking about bridging generations of isolation, ignorance and misunderstanding so, yeah, it'll feel weird for quite a few people, including our people as we finally get to know each other.

Of course there will be pushback from those who prefer the days when Indians were meek, compliant and irrelevant. They may want to minimize our interests. Perhaps they resent the comfy, laid back and lazy "benefits" that come with being an Indian.

I can only warn you, it's going to get a whole lot worse for you.

But for those who get it, we'll prosper together.

*Dirk says, The safe word is "Apples"*



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# Pasqua turns the sod for new youth centre

By Jeanelle Mandes  
Of Eagle Feather News

**PASQUA FIRST NATION** –A youth recreation centre is one step closer to becoming reality on a southern Saskatchewan First Nation.

Pasqua First Nation, 60 kilometers northeast of Regina, held a cultural sod-turning ceremony on October 25th to kick start construction on a long awaited youth centre

“This is pretty significant and important for Pasqua; we decided to have a sod-turning ceremony. Our community navigator, Jessica Gordon, coordinated the whole event,” says Fabian Ironeagle, a Pasqua First Nation council member.

“We’ve got a couple of our elders together and two of our youth representatives there who put the shovel in the ground. It was a wonderful experience.”

Reighlene Peigan, the community’s female youth representative, says the youth was excited when they received news that they were going to be getting a youth recreation centre.

“I’ve been wanting a youth centre since I was nine,” says Peigan who is now 17-years-old.

“I’m happy for my little (five-year-old) brother that he’s going to have



Community members gathered to support the youth of Pasqua First Nation at the official sod turning at the location of a future youth centre. The centre is expected to be opened next summer. (Photo supplied)

somewhere to go when he grows up.”

Peigan said she felt humbled and blessed to participate in the sod-turning ceremony and representing the youth of her community.

“I thought I was going there to watch, but we actually got to shovel (where) the elders prayed and put tobacco down. It was so awesome to see,” she adds.

Peigan, who takes input and ideas from the youth and tells it to the councillors, says the youth recreation centre will benefit the youth a lot and offer them a variety of programs to keep them occupied.

“The kids who go down the wrong paths, they usually do that on the weekends and evenings, this will be a safe area to go,” she adds. “The elders can teach us about the past and where we came from.”

Ironeagle said in late June, Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada

(INAC) put a call out for proposals. Ironeagle and two other staff members had three days to grab all the required data and put their application together—including a conceptual drawing of a building from Wendell Peigan, owner of WP Construction.

About six weeks later, Chief Todd Peigan got a hold of Ironeagle and broke the news that they were approved for the youth centre.

“It’s a dream come true for us ... the youth centre has been at the top of the list out here for years,” he says. “Having this youth centre will enhance services that we already have for our youth.”

Ironeagle and his team put the amount of \$900,000 on the proposal but INAC approved them for \$750,000. Following the news, Ironeagle contacted an engineering company that his

community works with called Associated Engineering and started setting up meetings.

“Our youth are excited for this project. This is going to be their building, not ours. We’re going to provide a worker there who will provide programming for them,” says Ironeagle.

Peigan says once the youth recreation centre opens up, they plan on creating activities geared to the youth such as sewing, making powwow regalia, moss bags, games and movie nights.

“(The youth) are so excited as well, they can’t wait until June comes,” she adds.

The sod turning ceremony signified the start of the project which is expected to be completed at the end of June of next year and are hoping for a grand opening ceremony in early July.



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Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools  
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By  
Curtis Peeteetuce



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# Crime Stoppers program introduces Regina youth to positive role models

By Jeanelle Mandes  
Of Eagle Feather News

REGINA – Regina’s Crime Stoppers have introduced the Leaders Creating Future Leaders program, a new initiative that focuses on providing at-risk Regina youth with an opportunity to meet with leaders who have a profound impact within the community.

Jada Yee and Thomas Benjoe were selected to speak to the youth aged 11 and under. The program organizers approached Yee about sharing his success story.

“They know my background (because) I’ve done speeches for the youth in the past. I’ve also done youth care work with at risk youth,” says Yee, who mentioned in his presentation that he turned his life around when he became a young parent.

“I wanted to talk to them about me growing up. When I was a little kid their age, I was getting into a lot of trouble. I was kicked out of elementary school and had to go to a different school (eventually) dropping out of high school.”

He felt a similar connection with Benjoe describing him as a huge success story because he came from North Central Regina and grew up in poverty.

“He and I both were raised by single parents and he knew earlier on that he didn’t want to live in poverty,” he adds.

Benjoe, the President/CEO of File Hills Qu’Appelle (FHQ) Developments Ltd., received CBC Future 40 recognition back in 2013. He was asked by Yee to share their stories with the youth in the program.

“I wanted to let the kids know to never stop learning and to surround themselves with good people that will support them,” says Benjoe.

“We are all given challenges both good and bad that we must face and we have to be able to overcome those challenges to build success.”

Yee is currently the food and beverage manager at Casino Regina. He was recently recognized as Top 40 Under 40 program, where he was the lone Canadian representative at an international gaming expo.

Yee said that a lot of the kids who attended the event could possibly relate to their stories because that’s the current situation some of them are in now.

“We wanted to show them that you can rise above and can break the cycle and that there are choices. You don’t have to fall into a life that gangs are the answer, or that crimes are the answer,” he adds.

“When I was doing stuff at their age, I didn’t think of the impacts I was doing like how it impacted the community – I didn’t think of the repercussions.”

A lot of the kids that are in this program are youth at risk and the Regina Crime Stoppers initiative is to get them while their young. Regina Crime Stoppers partnered with Conexus Credit Union and The Regina Intersectoral Partnership (TRIP), which is the organization that works with at risk youth.

“This is a very important program and I commend the Regina Crime Stoppers Program for initiating this program. Not only First Nations, but all youth in Regina, are made aware of,” Yee adds.



Tom Benjoe (left) and Jada Yee on the far right came and spoke to youth for the Regina Crime Stoppers Creating Future Leaders program. They both shared their challenges growing up and how to avoid the pitfalls in life and find success.

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Newly elected (fresh blood!) Mayor Charlie Clark stopped by the Vampire Gala to bring greetings on behalf of the City. (Photo by Julie Wriston)

# Vampire Gala brought out a creepy crowd for White Buffalo, Home Fires

By Julie Wriston  
Of Eagle Feather News

SASKATOON – Gorgeous ghouls and spooky studs filled the TCU Place Galleria at the Third Annual Vampire Gala.

The event is hosted in partnership by the Saskatoon Tribal Council and Potash Corporation supporting the Home Fires Foundation and the White Buffalo Youth Lodge.

As usual, vampy gala attendees went all out. It was as if Bram Stoker himself handcrafted the creepy characters that haunted the halls and lifted their spirits to come out and support children and youth through a devilishly delightful silent auction.

The evening was hosted by the mega-talented Crystal Shawanda, who just released her newest album “Fish Out of Water”. Drummers, dancers and even a rock ‘n’ roll band called Live One wowed the blood sucking crowd, keeping everyone entertained and well behaved!

Even fresh blood, er, newly elected Mayor Charlie Clark stopped by to hang out with the undead, bringing greetings and support.

Hypnotist Scott Ward creepily controlled the minds of the braver souls in the room, including Vice Chief Mark Arcand. Who knew Vice Chief could dance, sing and play Stanley Cup worthy hockey? It was an impressive display, one for the memory books.

Great food, belly laughs and money raised for a good cause – this event really is the most fun you can have in Treaty 6 Terror-tory!



Ghouls, goblins, and vampires were the order of the day at the gala. No clowns, though. Thank goodness no clowns.

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