

Eagle Feather NEWS

FREE

Tears are part of healing process

Eugene Arcand, the Saskatchewan representative of the National Survivor committee, passes the beaded urn full of ashes from the Scared Fire to Madeline Basile, the Quebec representative of the National Survivor Committee as a group of Elders look on and share a laugh. The ashes will be placed in the Sacred Fire at the next national gathering in Quebec. (Photo by Andréa Ledding)



By Andréa Ledding
For Eagle Feather News

Those who attended or volunteered will never forget the historical June that the Truth & Reconciliation Commission national event came to Saskatoon.

Eugene Arcand, a local member of the national TRC Survivor's Committee, would explain at the end of five gorgeous, sunny days that Elders from every First Nation prayed to Creator for the good weather that showed up in the midst of torrential rain and tornado warnings.

As master of ceremonies, Stan Wesley, pointed out Thursday in opening ceremonies at Prairieland Grandstand, "It is the people that reside within these lands that make it so beautiful. This city will feel different and be forever changed, as a result of what happens here."

Organizers estimated that one in 10 survivors attended the events, with over 4,000 thousand people daily.

Thursday began with sunrise pipe ceremonies and prayers at the ceremonial tipis in Exhibition Park, lighting of the sacred fire while an eagle arrived and circled overhead, and welcome to the territory, ending with a round dance that night.

Highlights of the following three days included the birthday party on Sunday for survivors who had never had a childhood party while away at school. There were sharing circles and individual testimonies, induction of honorary witnesses such as former Prime Minister Joe Clark, CBC host Shelagh Rogers, former MP and First Nations celebrity Tina Keeper, and holocaust survivor Rob Waisman, who also delivered a moving keynote address.

There were daily calls to reconciliation which included practical and symbolic gestures from individuals and organizations, the learning place and archives, a wall on which people could write their sentiments and support to survivors, film screenings, a prayer place manned by staff and volunteers of all the representative churches, displays and artisans.

The closing ceremonies were emotional and cultural and traditional healers acted as health support persons, as an obligation of Health Canada. At the first sign of tears, from witnesses to journalists to survivors, a worker was there to respectfully provide support if needed or just to hand out Kleenex, gathering them afterwards to be burned in the sacred fire.

"Tears are part of healing, they're not garbage but part of the sacred process," said Commissioner Marie Wilson, explaining that the Elders and the Survivors TRC Advisory Committee suggested they be collected and burned in the sacred fire, and the ashes brought to each subsequent event.

"The beaded urn started in Winnipeg and the ashes from each event have been collected and passed along in a symbolic way, the ashes of all of the tears ... survivors are reassured, symbolically, that they're not alone," Wilson explained.

"I think these support workers should take over our health care system," said one attendant during the Saturday Town Hall, to widespread cheering and applause.

Many of the workers have full-time careers in First Nations counselling, including Residential School legacy issues such as addictions and abuse.

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Métis people in Saskatchewan will be going to the polls in September.

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CULTURAL CONNECTION

Residential School survivor Howard Walker never gave up on his culture and knows it helped him cope.

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MISSING NIECE

Marilyn Keepness has never stopped looking for little Tamra even though its been eight years.

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JINGLE DANCER

Destini Gardypie danced for those "who cannot dance" at the recent Wanuskewin pow wow.

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SUNTEP GRAD

Kate Clements is one of more than 1,000 grads who have gone on to successful teaching careers.

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Welcome to our
Graduation Edition

Coming In August - Justice Issue

CPMA #40027204

Results of the Potash Corp Wanuskewin Heritage Park 2012 Pow Wow

Singing Contest

Winner's Circle
#1.) Midnight Express
#2.) Wild Horse
#3.) Whitefish Jr.s
#4.) Poundmaker
#5.) Buc Wild

Dance Contest

Winner's Circle
Men's Golden Age
#1.) Tommy Draper
#2.) Mike Laliberte
#3.) Cecil Nepoose
#4.) Ron Thunder
#5.) Harvey Thunderchild

Women's Golden Age

#1.) Dolly Neaptung
#2.) Lara Draper
#3.) Elsie Wultonee
#4.) Dianne-Goodwill McKay

Men's Fancy Bustle

#1.) Laz Roan
#2.) Kenny Pratt Jr.
#3.) Quannah Henry
#4.) Patrick Mitsuing
#5.) Kevin Yazzie

Men's Traditional

#1.) Keith Tacan
#2.) Wendall Powless
#3.) Moses Carrier
#4.) Justice Cree
#5.) Peter Eagle

Men's Grass

#1.) Darwin Goodwill
#2.) Trae Little Sky
#3.) Ira McNab
#4.) Bryson Rabbit
#5.) Chris Scribe

Men's Chicken

#1.) Nelson Baker
#2.) T.J. Warren
#3.) Bob Badger
#4.) Todd Half
#5.) Rod Atcheynum

Women's Traditional

#1.) Krystal Big Sky
#2.) Danita Goodwill
#3.) Emery Rose Assiniboine
#4.) Meguin Morin
#5.) Liberty Cree

Women's Fancy

#1.) Michelle Whitecalf
#2.) Carol Melting Tallow
#3.) Kairlyn McArthur
#4.) Nadine Obey-Wright
#5.) Tishanna Baptiste

Women's Jingle

#1.) Lacy Albert
#2.) Cyrina Bull
#3.) Tanski Clairmont
#4.) Dabney Warren
#5.) Kristy Yuzzicappir

Teen Boys Traditional

#1.) Nathaniel Deegan
#2.) Lakota Little Sky
#3.) Bobby Badger Jr.

Teen Boys Chicken

#1.) Shauntay Begay
#2.) Braden Severight
#3.) Jermaine Roberts

Teen Boys Fancy

#1.) Sonny Littlehead
#2.) Preston Redman
#3.) Dray Bear

Teen Girls Traditional

#1.) Marissa Tsatoke
#2.) Sage Speidel
#3.) Quinn Weaseltail

Teen Girls Fancy

#1.) Laryn Oakes
#2.) Madisson Baptiste
#3.) Kenecia Tootoosis

Teen Girls Jingle

#1.) Mallery Oakes
#2.) Shannon Wambli Ska
#3.) Shantay Big Sky

Jr. Boys Traditional

#1.) Ruben Littlehead Jr.
#2.) Anthony Cree
#3.) Blazing Carrier

Jr. Boys Chicken

#1.) Ryzen Walkingbear
#2.) Emery Tootoosis

Jr. Boys Fancy

#1.) Jazz Roan
#2.) Robin Fiss
#3.) Carson Tootoosis

Jr. Boys Grass

#1.) RayMen McNab
#2.) Elijah Poorman
#3.) Raynell McNab

Jr. Girls Jingle

#1.) Daneen Gardypie
#2.) Cia Sutherland
#3.) Omiyosiw Warren

Jr. Girls Traditional

#1.) Wambli Little Sky
#2.) Sparrow Little Sky

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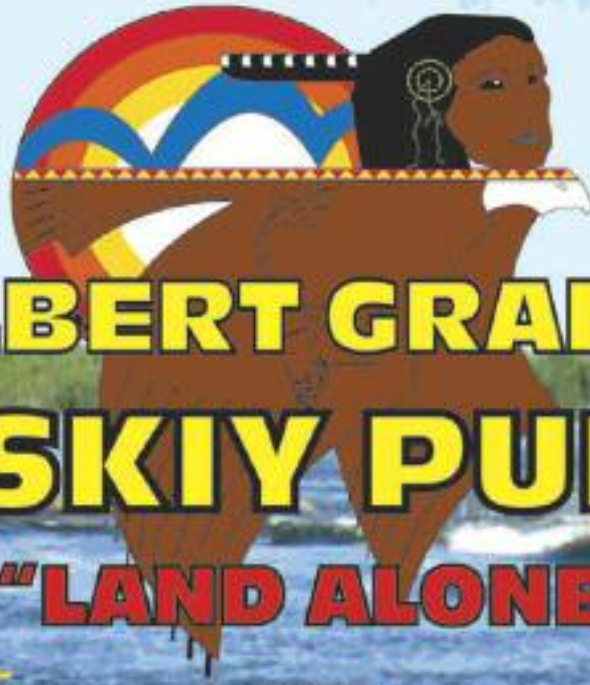
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August 6, 7, 8 & 9 2012





Editorial

Freddie walked with pride

It was deeply moving to witness the happenings at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission national visit to Saskatoon. There was an emotional scene around every corner of the Prairieland Park.

Whether it was seeing old school pals pour over ancient class photos picking each other out, someone standing and silently crying as they read the panels on Indian Residential Schools made by the University of Saskatchewan students, or if it was all-out tears as someone testified at the Commissioners Sharing Panel, a person could barely move without being impacted.

One of the more powerful moments was when Freddie Sasakamoose and the 50 or so other members of the Paspewin Indian Residential School Survivors Walk strode proudly into Exhibition Park while an eagle flew overhead.

Freddie had shocked many when he revealed his residential school sex abuse at the TRC hearings in Prince Albert months prior to this event. Freddie has always been a leader ... hockey, politics, community, you name it, even through the pain he must have had.

So now he decided to walk, for the TRC. And to honour. The walkers left Duck Lake four days previous and had camped out each night, spending the last night at Wanuskewin.

Freddie carried the eagle staff and walked with purpose to the centre of the circle beside the sacred fire where he made offerings. When he spoke there was not another sound in the valley.

"We came in honour with respect today. We came as survivors. We been walking four days and got blisters. I want to thank the fellow walkers and the eagle that's been following us. This boy here, he ran 20 miles yesterday. I told the young man. Remember the ones that are gone. Thanks to my wife, I have been missing her and my 48 grandchildren. Out there on the road I left my pain. I have no more hurt. I will rest peacefully."

Glistening with sweat, Freddie looked like a young man at that moment as he smiled. He then, to much laughter and applause, invited us all to his enshrinement into the Saskatchewan Hockey Hall of Fame on July 28.

Maybe, finally, he dropped the baggage that comes from such traumatic pasts, trauma shared by many. Each person has their own way of healing or reconciling, and for Freddie, he could leave it on the road. Judging by the way the mammoth four-day event went off, the TRC is certainly making impact with its work and providing many more people opportunities to leave their hurt on the road too.

Coming next month

It's time for the justice issue so we want all our friends and family doing time in the bucket to take some time for us ... August is home to letters from jail, so put your thoughts down, tell us about the big house. Got a funny story? Lesson learned? Regrets? Ways to improve the system? Let us know.

Top three letters will have \$50 sent to their loved one cause we know the bills don't stop when you are doing time. We look forward to your words.

Eagle Feather News is closed from July 16 until August 3. Have a great summer!



PASPEWIN WALK

Hockey legend and residential school survivor Freddie Sasakamoose and Savannah Peirre Weenie lead the Paspewin Indian Residential School Survivors Walk group into Exhibition Park at the end of their 138 kilometer 4 day walk from Duck Lake, the site of St. Michael's Indian Residential School. "I'm going to walk even if I am alone," said Freddie in his address to the people gathered at the Sacred Fire. "And now there are 52 of us and that eagle that was over head when we arrived. He's been following us for four days that guy."

(Photo by John Lagimodiere)



PICTORIAL HISTORIES

A labour of love took over for a University of Saskatchewan Native Studies class 430.3 "Issues in Cultural Preservation." The class project saw several students continue the work after courses ended focused on researching the IRSs in Saskatchewan. The research led to the students creating an exhibit "Pictorial Histories of the Indian Residential Schools in Saskatchewan" which was on display at the TRC National Event. The posters had information and pictures from 21 Residential Schools that existed across Saskatchewan. Hundreds of people would peer at class photos, looking for themselves, old school mates or relatives that have passed.

(Photo by Winona Wheeler)

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Residential School research a learning experience

The history and inter-generational impacts of the Indian Residential Schools have been studied by Native/Indigenous Studies students for the last 20 years in universities across the country.

It is a difficult subject for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, one that brings up a range of emotions and a burning need to tell the rest of the world and to “do something.”

The legacy of the Indian Residential School system impacts us all one way or another. The suffering and damage experienced by the survivors; the experiences of survivors' children and grandchildren who grew up in traumatized families; the anger and remorse of non-Indigenous peoples who had no idea of the genocide occurring in their own backyards.

When talks began for the Truth & Reconciliation National Event in Saskatchewan we planned to participate, but we also wanted to commemorate the survivors by making a contribution.

Our Native Studies 430.3 course, “Issues in Cultural Preservation,” focused on researching the Residential Schools in Saskatchewan. The result of our work so far is the exhibit “Pictorial Histories of the Indian Residential Schools in Saskatchewan” which was on display at the TRC National Event.

The exhibit is made up of 21 large posters depicting Residential School life as

we interpreted it through our research into the archives and photographs.

We focused on historical photographs because they visually capture an experience or event at the moment and provide insight into the lived experiences of their human subjects. They are often described as ‘windows of the soul’ because they trigger many more memories than the ones depicted and through that can help tell our personal and collective stories.

The students researched and wrote short historical profiles on each school. They studied published books and articles, old Indian Affairs reports and correspondence, and historical photographs. We did not interview anyone because we couldn't possibly get interviews from survivors of all the Residential Schools in such a short time (three months).

However, we found a lot of survivor testimonies in the reports of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal People and the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, newspaper articles, published papers and books, unpublished reports and community websites. We also had the benefit of watching some of the community hearings that were live-streamed on the TRC website

and had a number of guest speakers including TRC's Kim Quinny and Commissioner Littlechild, and J. R. Miller.

We compiled working inventories of Indian Residential School photographs for each of the schools from the Saskatchewan Archives Board, University of

Saskatchewan Archives, Société Historique de Saint-Boniface, Prince Albert Historical Society, Diefenbaker Centre, Presbyterian Archives, Anglican Archives, and others.

Some schools like Fort Qu'Appelle (LeBret) have hundreds of photographs, others like Battleford had very few. There are many more out there we are continuing to find.

Not all the Indian Residential Schools in the province were studied. We contained our research to 21 schools, including the 18 recognized in the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement, plus St. Barnabas at Onion Lake and Lac La Ronge until they closed and moved to Prince Albert.

We also included Ile a la Crosse because it interned many generations of Métis students whose experiences should never be overlooked. A few schools we did not have the chance to study but we hope to finish them up in the near future.

Halfway through the course two

students withdrew leaving the rest of us to complete their work. The remaining students continued working long after the course was over because of their commitment to complete the project for the National Event.

Over the summer we will be doing the final corrections and edits, and then preparing them for regular poster size prints. When completed, copies will be presented to the TRC for their National Archives and to the Saskatoon Public Schools.

We have been invited to display the entire exhibition at Wanuskewin in the near future and it will also be on permanent display in the Indigenous Studies Portal on the Usask library website <http://iportal.usask.ca/>.

For students this project was also about experiential learning and undergraduate research experience. Good research is useful research, and we all learned a lot. The students who worked so hard to make this exhibit happen – Sarah Binnie, Brookelynn Dzik, Lorne Fagnon and Claire Thomson – express their gratitude to everyone for this opportunity and for all the encouragement and support they received. It was a truly rewarding experience for all.

Special thanks to the TRC, to our Provost Brett Fairburn for providing financial support, Gale Hagblom for design assistance, Jane Westhouse for printing, Pelican Signs for the frames, Emma Sim, Bobby Henry, Rob Innes, our families and many others for helping out and advising.



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RCMP Assistant Commissioner "F" Division, Russ Mirasty and FSIN Vice Chief Bobby Cameron signed a public safety protocol agreement together.

RCMP, FSIN ink policing agreement

The Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations has signed a three-year Public Safety Cooperation Protocol agreement with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

The signing between FSIN Vice Chief Bobby Cameron and RCMP Assistant Commissioner "F" Division, Russ Mirasty took place during the FSIN Spring Legislative Assembly.

The purpose of the protocol is to establish trusting and reciprocal relationships between First Nation communities and the RCMP. The goal is to build safer

communities for the residents and the RCMP members who work in those communities.

"The Federation, through its Special Investigations Unit, intends to resolve disputes at the First Nation community level when possible, and to prevent incidents that can potentially escalate into formal complaints.

"In this way, First Nations become part of the solution and are more responsible for the safety within their own communities," said FSIN Vice Chief Bobby Cameron.



MN-S President Robert Doucette has announced that he will be running for President once again. (Photo by John Lagimodiere)

MN-S election in September

The Métis Nation – Saskatchewan (MN-S) held its Métis Nation Legislative Assembly (MNLA) on June 16 at the Travelodge in Prince Albert. The meeting was a great success as 88 delegates attended the meeting to make important decisions relating to the MN-S.

First and foremost, the MNLA has accepted September 8, 2012 as the date for 2012 MN-S Elections and appointed Meyers, Norris and Penny as the Chief Electoral Officer. Furthermore, the MNLA has defined the terms of the current office holders within the MN-S. The Executive and Regional Directors of the MN-S have been given the opportunity to remain in office until the dropping of the writ for the now scheduled 2012 election.

The writ is expected to drop in the first week of August.

Check Eagle Feather News in August for a complete list of candidates, their platforms and all the voting information you will need.

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Connection to culture helped Walker cope with Residential School years

By Creeson Agecutay
For Eagle Feather News

Growing up on the James Smith Cree Nation, southeast of Prince Albert, Howard Walker's culture became a way of life for him. While his parents were on the trap line during the winter months, Walker lived with his grandparents, learning his traditional lifestyle.

"I learned the language, I learned the customs and traditions of the Ojibwa, Saulteaux people," said Walker.

When Walker was seven years old, he and his older sister were taken away from their home on the James Smith Cree Nation to the residential school in Prince Albert, as their parents were threatened they would go to jail if their children were not allowed to go.

"They cut off my braids. They took my brand new moccasins that my grandmother made me and threw them in the garbage," said Walker. "(The person) then told me, 'You will not need your long hair any longer. You will not need these shoes. That is all pagan and I will not hear any more of that jibberish,'" said Walker.

From 1951 to 1961, Walker endured physical, mental and sexual abuse in the Prince Albert residential school and Gordon residential school near Punnichy. From a broken arm in two places to loss of hearing in his left ear from being hit countless times in the head with a Bible to being sexually abused while attempting to protect his sister, Walker left residential school at 17 with less than a high school education.

Today, at age 68, sporting his signature cowboy hat and long hair, Walker stood tall at the national Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) event that took place in Saskatoon from June 21-24. Walker was one of more than 420 health support workers organized through Health Canada who wore blue vests, assisting hundreds of residential school survivors at the TRC event at Prairieland Park.

"I feel comfortable that I can attend a church of worship, that I can attend and lift my pipe in a lodge, that I can go out to a lodge and dance and sing, I can go out and live comfortably in both worlds," said Walker.



Samaya was also one of many health support workers provided by Health Canada. She is seen here collecting used tissues in the special white bag. The tissues were burned each day in the sacred fire at to emphasize the sacredness of tears and to honour the process of truth and reconciliation. (Photo by Andréa Ledding)



Howard Walker at the Muskeg Lake Powwow 2010. (Photo EFN)

Powering the future of the north.

Saskatchewan is a vast province, and a land of opportunity. Northern Saskatchewan, with all its resources, is now experiencing growth and development that is very exciting, but challenging at the same time.

One of the challenges is supplying sufficient power to northern communities, to new mine sites and to other developments spread across the region. As the north grows and changes, the need for more power is growing as well.



More than 250 jobs were created.

Kitsaki takes on major tree clearing contract

Kitsaki is a wholly-owned commercial subsidiary of the Lac La Ronge Indian Band. Last year Kitsaki was awarded the contract to clear a right-of-way along the power line from Highway 102 near Brabant Lake to Key Lake. The brush and trees along an 85-metre wide path needed to be cleared for two reasons. First, to help maintain the existing power line, but more importantly to prepare for the proposed construction of a new 300-kilometre high voltage line alongside it.

Clearing of the first 125 km was completed this past winter and early spring. Phase two will involve another 174 km and is expected to begin in September.

Contract brings income and skills to northern communities

Russell Roberts, CEO of Kitsaki, says it was an exciting undertaking. "It involved hiring and training some 250 northern workers. The impact on the local community was huge. More than 250 good-paying northern jobs were created. And over 3.25 million dollars in wages were paid. On top of that, 90 per cent of the equipment and supplies needed were purchased from local vendors in the north."

Bill Orpen, SaskPower's Senior Project Manager for this initiative, says the project provided local people with new skills-training. "Our connection to the north and to northern families has always been strong," he says. "But with a project of this size and scope, we touched a lot of people and helped them see what potential there is to live and work and be successful in the north."

Clearing the way

Fifteen remote work camps were established up and down the line – most of them accessible only by air. Helicopters ferried materials and supplies in and out. Workers lived in insulated tents with wood floors and wood heat. Each worked 20 days on and four days off. A total of 200,000 hours were worked without a single serious injury or lost-time incident.

Winter conditions often meant brutally cold temperatures and several feet of snow, making the job challenging to say the least. Workers needed to clear the brush and trees down to four inches. "This was a really difficult project to complete successfully," says Roberts. "Make no mistake about it, this was hard labour. We are very proud of how our people came through. I want to thank everyone for their commitment and hard work," he says. "We finished on time and on budget, and we surpassed all environmental and quality standards. This is a great tribute to everyone involved."



Clearing of the first 125 km was completed this past winter and early spring.

"It goes without saying," Roberts admits. "Northern people love the north. I'm proud of the effort SaskPower is making to ensure economic development in the region benefits everyone. We want to make sure this is a land of opportunity for all."



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Grads, time to look for those greener pastures

Proud parents are walking around with their heads held high and about to pop the buttons off their shirts, they are so proud of their children.

This is the season for graduation, convocation and celebration. Children from kindergarten to university are stepping up to collect their diplomas and degrees.

If memory serves me, I recall a day when First Nations saw only one or two people graduating and now there are hundreds. Yes hundreds!

I couldn't wait to graduate. I figured the grass would be greener on the other side of high school.

What was I thinking? Hindsight really is 20/20. We all dream of the time we will be done with high school and can move on to the greener pastures of university (or just not being in high school anymore), where we will be treated like adults and have fewer rules and more choices.

Few of us realize that whatever lies ahead is not going to be any easier than what we have just left, just different. And it doesn't matter which direction we go, or in which field we end up, it won't stay green if we don't do our part to take care of it.

Someone once told me that life is not the way it's supposed to be. It's the way it is! The way we cope with it is what makes the difference.

As you leave high school, do not worry or grieve over leaving behind the life you have had, don't waste precious time wishing you could do it over differently.

Face the future with the understanding that you will be more aware of your actions and make the most of every choice you make.

The future offers a blank page for you to draw your own future. Embrace the past, be grateful for it, learn from it and move on.

Graduation is a time to truly reflect on who you are, what you've become, how you feel about the world around you.

High school offers us a chance to begin this process and some of us actually get lucky and figure it out before we graduate.



Sandee Sez

Sandrew Ahenakew

Not all of us really know who we are or we are afraid, for whatever reason, to be ourselves in front of others. As you go forward, you need to be comfortable with who you are in order to find your

place in the world.

Eventually we all learn that those who truly care about us will allow us to be ourselves without judgment. They will in fact, encourage it.

You are about to begin real life! There will be obstacles. There will be days when you wonder why you were so excited to leave high school.

Remember if you mess up, it's not your parents' fault, so don't whine about your mistakes, learn from them.

As the great Dr. Seuss once said, "You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself in any direction you choose. You're on your own. And you know what you know. You are the guy who'll decide where to go."

Today, close to ten per cent of the total student body at the University of Saskatchewan is Aboriginal. Opportuni-

ties for higher education have multiplied for Aboriginal students, as evidenced in increasing enrolments at the First Nations University of Canada and the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies. Go and grab your slice of the post secondary pie.

My last bit of advice: do what you love. You have the gift of time. Use it to do what you love.

Believe anything is possible and then work like hell to make it happen.

There is a Cree proverb that says, "Realize that we as human beings have been put on this earth for only a short time and that we must use this time to gain wisdom, knowledge, respect and the understanding for all human beings since we are all relatives."

So be kind to each other and help each other because it is the right thing to do.

Congratulations to all the graduates. Grab your shades because your future is bright. Ekosi.

Keep your letters and emails coming.

Send your questions or comments to: Sandee Sez c/o Eagle Feather News PO Box 924 ST Main Saskatoon, SKK

3M4 or you can email

sandra.ahenakew@gmail.com

A message from the ABORIGINAL FRIENDSHIP CENTRES OF SASKATCHEWAN

The Cultural Connections for Aboriginal Youth Program has been frozen by the Federal Government without consulting with or warning the Aboriginal Friendship Centres of Saskatchewan (AFCS). The lack of consultations prior to the freeze forced many Centres to immediately halt programming/services. With no revenue to replace the dollars lost on planning and developing CCAY programs, many Centres are frustrated and angry that thousands were spent on the assumption that business would go on as usual. What is troubling is Friendship Centres spending money for a program that is no longer in existence. The AFCS has appealed to the Federal Government on behalf of the Friendship Centres on this issue.

According to a press release from the National Association of Friendship Centres (NAFC) the government has indicated that this is a temporary measure so that the program's terms and conditions can be revised to meet the government's priorities. The government has presented this to the NAFC as an opportunity to redesign the program and we believe it is important to keep these resources in urban Aboriginal communities. We view this engagement with the federal government as the right opportunity at the right time – it is the right approach.

Despite the many changes with the CCAY program over the years the Friendship Centres and the youth that make use of the programs have benefited and have been highly successful. These places offer development of leadership, culture and self-esteem. When Friendship Centres Youth Programming are not available throughout the summer, youth are left without essential programming; many rely on Friendship Centres to provide a positive and safe outlet.

Last year, CCAY was able to provide 55,000 points of service for 5,500 urban and rural youth through more than 12,000 hours of activities and services in Saskatchewan alone. The AFCS feel that if funding is re-instated as soon as possible Aboriginal youth can still have positive experiences from the revamped program this fiscal year.

The AFCS is an umbrella organization for SK's 11 Aboriginal Friendship Centres that offer a wide range of culturally relevant services and supports to Aboriginal people residing in urban and rural communities. These include job training and skills development programs, mental health and addictions counseling, literacy and early childhood education programs, and cultural support services for youth, families and elders.

For more information contact:

Gwen Bear, Executive Director of the Aboriginal Association of Friendship Centers

gbear@afcs.ca 306-955-0762

Aboriginal Friendship Centres of Saskatchewan 115 Wall Street, Saskatoon, SK S7K 6C2



This Is Your Chance To Be Heard.

The Government of Saskatchewan remains committed to establishing a fair, open and transparent legislative environment that meets the ongoing needs of both employees and employers. To this end, we are undertaking a comprehensive review of employment and labour relations legislation. You may have some ideas in this regard and this is your opportunity to provide input.

To facilitate your participation in the consultation process we have prepared a paper, "The Renewal of Labour Legislation in Saskatchewan", which poses a series of questions about employment standards, labour relations and Occupational Health and Safety legislation. You can download or review a copy of the discussion paper by visiting our website at www.lrws.gov.sk.ca/modernizing-legislation.

We encourage and look forward to your comments on all aspects of the current legislation.

If you have questions, please contact the Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety at (306) 798.0225.

More information about the current Acts and the consultation process can be found at the web site provided above. The deadline for responses is July 31, 2012.

Please submit all responses to:

Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety
300-1870 Albert Street
REGINA SK S4P 4W1

Or by email to: labourlegislationLRWS@gov.sk.ca

Thank you in advance for participating and making Saskatchewan a wonderful place to live and work.



Ministry of
Labour Relations and
Workplace Safety

Missing child's aunt holds out hope after eight years

By Morgan Beaudry
For Eagle Feather News

There have been 1,680 tips given to police, 1,700 follow-up and investigation-related tasks. It has been the largest police search in Regina's history.

Hundreds of city blocks, alleys, backyards have been searched by hundreds of officers and volunteers. Acres of rural property and reserve lands have been searched. Rewards totalling \$35,000 have been offered.

As of this paper's publication date, it's been 2,932 days since five-year-old Tamra Jewel Keepness was last seen at her Ottawa Street home. Despite the extraordinary efforts to find her, she is still missing.

At a barbeque held within a few hundred yards of the missing child's home, friends, extended family, Child Find staff, a dozen officers and Regina Police Service Chief Troy Hagen and members of the public gathered at Core Community Park to recognize and reinforce that the search for her will never be over. It took place on the eve of eighth anniversary the little girl's disappearance on July 5, 2004.



Marilyn Keepness believes someone has the answer to the mystery surrounding her niece's disappearance.

"Really, potentially, we could be just one single fact, one single phone call, away from having that answer (about her whereabouts)," said Regina Police spokesperson Elizabeth Popowich, who added that the case will stay open "forever. Until we know."

Child Find Saskatchewan also was flooded with tips shortly after Tamra went missing. The torrent of tips slowed to a trickle over the years despite wide media coverage, posters and flyers distributed across the country and around the world.

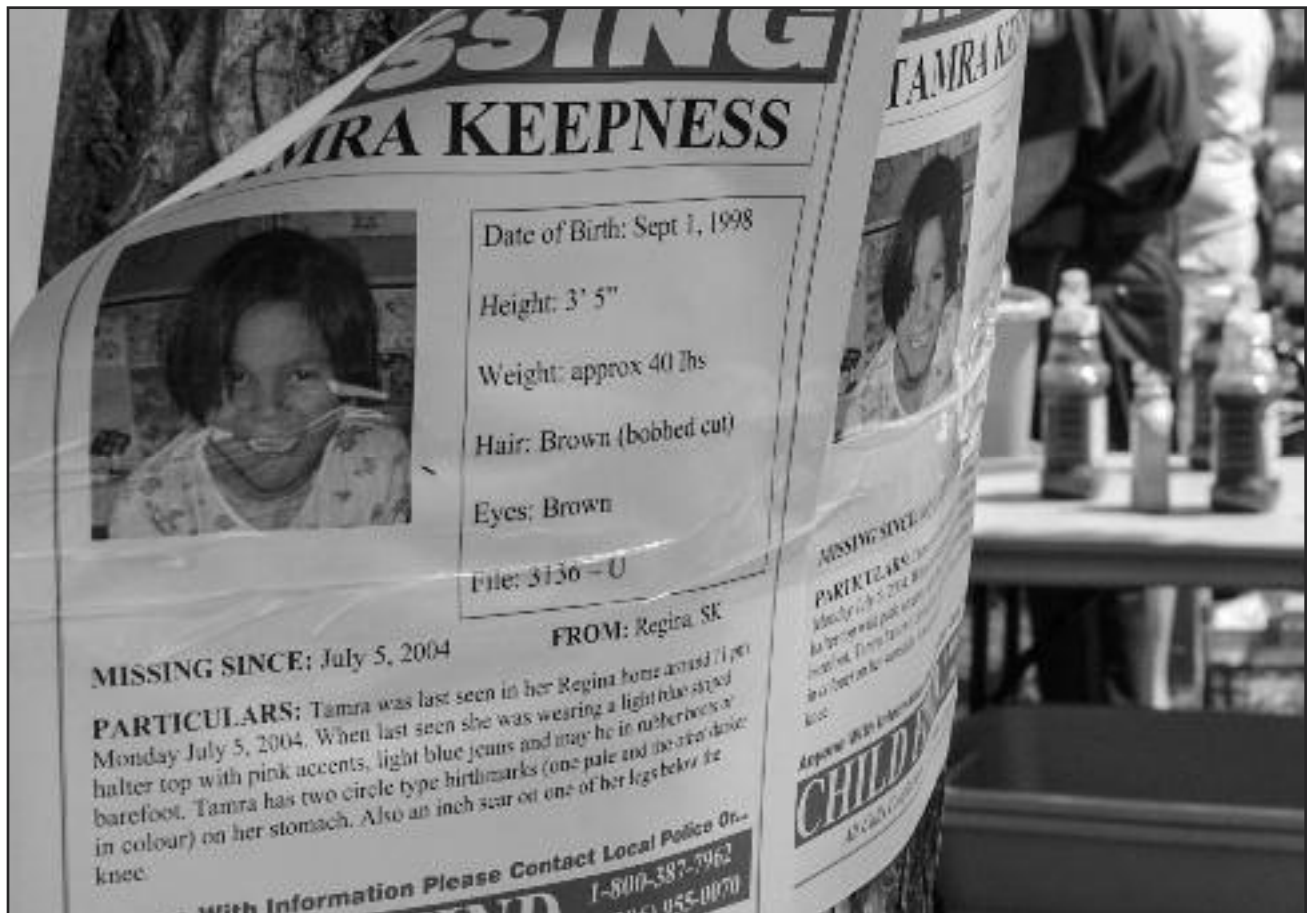
"A disappearance affects the whole community, not just the families," said Child Find Saskatchewan executive director Shirley Semkiw.

Tamra's great-aunt Marilyn Keepness spoke to media on behalf of the Keepness family.

"We met with the police but I don't think we know anything more about where she might be or what happened. It's a mystery," Marilyn said.

"Somebody has to know something out there. (If someone had information they should) talk to the police. This is a child, a helpless child, that needs an adult's help – a responsible adult."

There were no adults in the home at the time it's believed Tamra was last seen. During the late night hours of July 5 and into the early morning hours of July 6, her mother, stepfather and another man came and went from the Ottawa Street home. Thus far, no arrests have been



Thousands of posters have gone up and hundreds of tips have been received but after eight years no one has any answers in the Tamra Keepness case.

made in connection with Tamra's disappearance.

Marilyn says she's never stopped looking and never will.

"It's always there in the back of your mind. When you're in a park or driving ... you look at kids. I wonder

how she would look years later," said Marilyn.

"I'm happy that they have this barbeque every year to remind people that she still is missing. It's hard being here every year. What can we do now except bring awareness that she's still missing?"

Energy drinks: Read the labels

Energy drinks are, at best, an over-hyped, over-marketed moneymaker and at worst, they could be dangerous.

The high caffeine and high sugar content may affect people in a negative way, especially people with diabetes and nervous disorders.

I am very concerned about the trend of mixing energy drinks with alcohol and with street and prescription drugs. A possible risk exists when energy drinks (a stimulant) are mixed with alcohol (a depressant) because the resulting effects may cause death.

Energy drinks have become the rage in the past ten years or so, reaching beyond the "rave" market to include fitness people, working parents, studying students and anyone who feels the boost in energy, stamina and mental clarity.

The energy drink phenomenon is a test more than a quick pick-me-up. Most energy drinks are labeled with a list of unhealthy ingredients, with a trace amount of herbs and vitamins to make us think we're drinking a healthy beverage

Last June I was invited to Pelican Lake as a practitioner. I saw a young man and during my consultation with him I asked him if he was experiencing chest pains, and feeling tired. I asked him if heart disease occurred in his family? He didn't know, his mother then approached me when the young man shared with me he was experiencing chest pains.

I asked her to take this young man to a physician. Four days later the mother called me at my clinic and said the young man had stopped drinking energy drinks, his chest pains stopped and his physician had found no symptoms of heart problems. The mother, a teacher, was very concerned and shared with me that

energy drinks should be banned. I also contacted a health care provider in Pelican Lake and she expressed her concerns about young people on her reserve as young as nine years old were consuming these energy drinks to mimic the older teenagers and adults on the reserve.

I personally work with hockey players and have a concern about athletes drinking and abusing energy drinks. I've gone to drugstores and various food outlets that carry these

energy drinks on the shelves – "The mind altering" and "mood altering" messages by the names they are giving these drinks with eye-catching colors on the cans is very disturbing.

I interviewed an athlete, a former goalie with the Saskatoon Blades, a former policeman of 25 years with the Saskatoon police force in Saskatoon. His response to energy drinks was: "When I played hockey our drink of choice was water. We depended on a good diet, plenty of rest."

The Russian athletes use Korean Ginseng in a capsule form to increase the body's resistance to stress, anxiety and fatigue, while also strengthening the immune system. Korean Ginseng is considered effective for mental and physical health.

Siberian Ginseng helps regulate blood pressure and blood sugar levels, balance the pituitary and adrenal glands (flight or flight response). Taken in the right quantities without the caffeine and sugar of standard energy drinks, these supplements can have energy enhancing effects on your body and mind and a better choice with benefits.

Flo Lavallie can be contacted at
WWW.companionhealthoasis.com



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Wanuskewin welcomed thousands for National Aboriginal Day

By Creeson Agecoutay
For Eagle Feather News

For 16 years, Destini Gardypie from the Beardy's and Okemasis First Nation has been dancing for those who cannot dance.

"The jingle dress dance is a healing dance," said Gardypie. "We dance for the ones in wheelchairs, the ones that can't see or the ones that are sick in the hospital. Even for the people that are having a hard time, we keep them in mind."

Inspired to dance at a young age from her kohkom, Cecilia Wuttunee, Gardypie said she is thankful for the opportunities that have entered her life while travelling, sharing her culture with others. Her dancing has taken her overseas to Europe and the U.K. with Dance Saskatchewan, a non-profit organization committed to the advancement of dance. She also attends 20 to 30 powwows a year travelling across Canada and the United States from spring to fall.

"(My kohkom) always taught us that culture is very important," said Gardypie. "She always taught us that in order to go far in life, we have to balance out the culture as well as education. We have to maintain that balance."

When Gardypie is not dancing, she is busy pursuing her teaching degree at the University of Saskatchewan's Indian Teacher Education Program, beginning her second year in the fall. Gardypie is now passing on what she learned from her kohkom to her eleven-year-old daughter.

"My daughter has been dancing jingle since she's been able to walk. She started dancing at age one, as soon as she took her first step," said Gardypie.

Together, Gardypie and her daughter danced in the Wanuskewin Heritage Park's 20th anniversary cultural celebrations that took place during National Aboriginal Day in June. For more than 6,000 years, the area where Wanuskewin now stands has been a spiritual place of gathering and that notion carries on during the powwow celebrations.

The special two-day powwow on June 20 and 21 attracted thousands of people from across the country, honouring First Nation veterans and elders. It has been five years since Wanuskewin had their first powwow in 2007.

"This (powwow) is the biggest celebration that Wanuskewin has had. It's a celebration for many years of hard work over the last 20 years and we're looking forward to the next 20 years," said Dana Soonias, CEO of Wanuskewin Heritage Park.

Soonias, along with the board of Wanuskewin Heritage Park, took the time Wednesday to recognize the many city, provincial and First Nation organizations that have helped keep Wanuskewin afloat.

"We have seen tremendous growth here at Wanuskewin. Our elders foretold that there would be difficulty for our younger generations. They spoke of the need and importance for institutions such as Wanuskewin to share what needed to be shared, that land is the life," said Tyrone Tootosis, curator and manager of Wanuskewin's cultural resources.

The drums, song and dance during the powwow's grand entry echoed louder than the thunder that could be heard in the distance. Strong winds whipped up the grass as clouds loomed overhead but organizers pushed on with the celebrations.



Destini Gardypie has been taking her daughter Daneen to powwows since Daneen could walk. They both dance jingle dress for the people that are sick as it is a healing dance. (Photo by John Lagimodiere)

"Wanuskewin was a dream that started back in the '70s with elders and community members. We have themed the powwow around healing and honouring our veterans and elders, but also all those that went through the residential schools," Soonias said.

Declared a national historic site in October 1987 by Queen Elizabeth II, Wanuskewin first opened its doors to visitors in 1992 and later developed into a site for tourists, educational tours, art shows and meetings. Soonias now sees Wanuskewin taking the next step forward in education and will continue to talk to community partners and organizations.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission also hosted daily meetings at the site and invited all residential school survivors to join in the celebrations.

"It's a really good thing that they brought the powwow back," said Gardypie, who also does various dance presentations at Wanuskewin.

"Powwow is a major part of our customs and traditions and it all connects together with the ceremonies and meanings and this is very important. I hope that it continues here."

Gardypie also gives strong words of wisdom for any youth that are thinking about dancing.

"It doesn't take much to get an outfit together, talk to somebody, talk to an elder. Ask for direction in whatever way. There is protocol in how to be brought into the powwow circle but I'd say just do it, if it feels right, do it. It's a real positive life (when you dance).

"As long as you're out there and you feel it, it's healing."

For information on Wanuskewin, visit www.wanuskewin.com

WANUSKEWIN HERITAGE PARK, CEO AND STAFF WOULD LIKE TO GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE AND THANK ALL WHO SPONSORED AND OR WHO PROVIDED CONTRIBUTIONS-IN-KIND, TOWARDS THE 2012 WANUSKEWIN POW WOW. WE WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND A HEARTFULT THANK YOU TO ALL THE SINGERS, DANCERS, VOLUNTEERS AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WHO JOINED US AS WE CELEBRATED OUR 20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS.

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 **Wanuskewin**
Heritage Park

Reconciliation may take seven generations

* Continued from Page 1

Saskatoon was expected to be the largest event because a quarter of the national survivors of the Indian Residential Schools live in Saskatchewan – almost 30,000 – along with many inter-generational surviving family members.

“The TRC is just one part of the 2007 Indian Residential School Settlement and Agreement,” noted Commissioner Wilson, adding that education would be a huge ongoing part of the mandate as information was pulled together on understanding 150 years of Residential Schools, and that recording and safeguarding this information through a National Research Centre would also be key.

“We have an obligation to host seven national events, and this is the fourth ... the midway point.”

Prior events took place in Winnipeg, Inuvik, and Halifax, and at the closing ceremonies, the sacred ashes from the fire were passed along to representatives from Quebec, where the next event will take place. B.C. and Alberta will host the final national events.

Wilson explained that the particular role of these national events is to ensure there is a vehicle for a representative number of survivors to share, and so that those who are listening and bearing witness can help complete a fuller picture of what happened in the schools.

“With the largest class action lawsuit in Canadian history, one of the elements is that we gather together in an oral history kind of way the experiences,” noted Wilson. “It is open to anyone affected by residential schools.”

She noted that the legacies of the schools are an impact still felt by everyone, but the greatest challenge the TRC faces is the reality that the average Canadian believes it has nothing to do with them. But Non-Indigenous Canada needed to learn the commonality between Indigenous and Christian spirituality, and see what is truly universal, suggests Wilson.

The TRC had also been advocating for a larger turnout of non-Indigenous people, because wider societal understanding needs to happen before true reconciliation can begin. In Saskatoon, non-Aboriginal people made up between 40 and 50 per cent of the crowd in the four days – a new record. In addition, thousands, from across Canada and dozens of countries worldwide, watched the proceedings online.

“The TRC was not created by the government, and is not accountable to the government – it was the survivors who wanted a chance to put the true stories on the record, to ensure future generations know,” said TRC Chair Justice Murray Sinclair, adding it was a sacred responsibility to record this national memory so that no one would ever be allowed to say this never happened.

“Reconciliation may, in fact, take us seven generations ... but at the same time reconciliation is not just about the survivors but about the future, the children and grandchildren ... an understanding among all of Canada that this is not an Aboriginal problem, this is not an Indian problem, it is a Canadian problem. Those who came to this country and imposed their will have also been affected.”

Sinclair believes that since education had got us into this situation, a fully balanced approach to re-educating our nation would get us out of this problem.

“It’s about building a better place for all of us,” Sinclair said.

“This is the largest event to date,” noted Commissioner Wilton Littlechild.

He said each event brings something special to the Commission, and here it was the impacts of residential schools on women, from both the man and woman’s perspectives. Women were asked to stand and be honoured.

“This fourth event, in the middle of the seven, signifies a shift to reconciliation.”

During closing remarks, Eugene Arcand told those in attendance that survivors and their families did not want pity, but compassion and understanding, sharing what had been heard with colleagues, friends, and family.

“As you leave, the Elders told me to pass on that you will feel a light rain, this is tears from the spirits of those not with us.”

Which was exactly what happened as everyone finished shaking hands with each other, old friends and new, and stepped outside into the parking lot, in a light rain, to continue their healing journeys.



The writing wall was a place where people could write their sentiments and support to survivors. I Remember. I Believe. I Hope were all written across the top. (Photo by Andréa Ledding)

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August 21, 2012

- 5:00pm: Feast
- 7:00pm: Rounddance
- Midnight Lunch
- Giveaways

August 20, 2012 travel day and on-site registration. Registration 6:00pm to 9:00pm
 Further details and agenda will be posted on the FSIN website www.fsin.com.
 Registration forms, banquet forms and tradeshow forms will be available on the website.

<p>Conference Registration:</p> <p>Pre registration by fax Before August 15, 2012 On site registration: 6-9 pm August 20, 2012 Contact: Cynthia Kay Business: (306) 665-1215 ext 282 Direct: (306) 956-1011 Fax forms: (306) 477-4554 Email: cynthia.kay@fsin.com</p>	<p>Trade Show:</p> <p>Information Booths - \$400.00 Merchandise Booths - \$400.00 Deadline: July 17, 2012 Contact: Crystal Janvier Business: (306) 665-1215 ext 255 Direct: (306) 956-1037 Email: shelby.mike@fsin.com</p>
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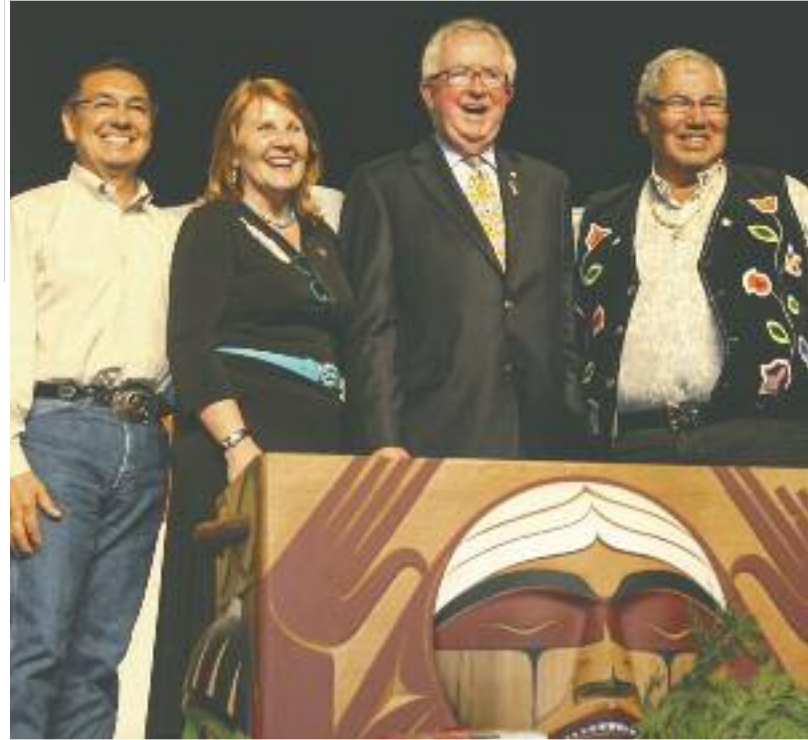
Pictures of Reconciliation Saskatoon, June 2012

Gary Merasty from Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation, who as an MP in 2007, tabled the original motion for the government to initiate the Residential School Apology, contributed a copy of that speech to the Bentwood Box. Merasty's motion stated: "That this House apologize to the survivors of Indian Residential Schools for the trauma they suffered as a result of policies intended to assimilate First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, causing the loss of aboriginal culture, heritage and language, while also leaving a sad legacy of emotional, physical and sexual abuse." Below, Merasty places his motion in the Bentwood Box.

(Photo by Andrea Ledding)



(Above) The Quewezance family testifies. (Photo by Andrea Ledding)



Former Prime Minister Joe Clark was on hand to offer his own Expression of Reconciliation. Here Clark and Commissioners Littlechild, Wilson and Sinclair join him as his statement is placed in the Bentwood Box. (Photo by Andrea Ledding)



Tara Campbell in front of her family's vendor booth, "Indian Heart Creations", with her baby girl, Lyrikah Lafond. Campbell's father is from Cumberland House, and her mother is a residential school survivor from English River. Tara had this to say about her experience of the four-day event: "People say, 'I don't want to go to the TRC, I'll feel so sad' ... but you don't, it's so healing." (Photo by Andrea Ledding)



(Above) Author and Writer Campbell Papequash not only promotes his Autobiography "The Yearning Journey" his compelling life journey of the consequential fall out of alcohol addiction he uses to cope with the abuse he endured and overcomes as a Residential School survivor but was also a TRC volunteer for the Truth and Reconciliation Conference. Group Photo from left to right; Editor, Maury Fraser, Wife Theresita Papequash, Dale Grey, Sister Cora Sanchez from a Regina Catholic Church, Campbell Papequash and a Reverend (who preferred not to have her name published)

(Photo by Trina Kingfisher)



Blue Jay, Walter and Maria Linklater's grandson, drummed for the survivor's birthday party. (Photo by Andrea Ledding)

Volunteers played key role at TRC event in Saskatoon

By **Andréa Ledding**
For Eagle Feather News

A first for the TRC was volunteer recognition. Saskatoon's own Gilles Dorval did so much that they made a special presentation to him on Sunday night, including a beautiful piece of pottery which Justice Murray Sinclair joked they had lifted from the Bessborough.

"We have never recognized any individual before," noted Sinclair, but he said Dorval worked at the corporate, political, civic, and volunteer levels to meet the TRC's needs, while advocating for the province, and the city.

"He's an ambassador, and shows great commitment to the survivors as well."

Linda English is the TRC volunteer coordinator, and said Saskatchewan, like Manitoba, is a volunteer province. That didn't mean she wasn't making cell phone calls as she arrived, still trying to rustle up more people, but with hundreds of volunteers every day, it was a huge success. Some volunteers were from church communities, and trying to express their support for the TRC, the survivors, and the mandate of the Commission.

Others had intergenerational ties to the legacy of Residential Schools, while others were just big-hearted.

Said one enthusiastic volunteer, "I wish all of Saskatoon would come to this."

Wearing volunteer shirts to identify themselves, people greeted and directed newcomers, manned tables, and helped with logistics. Another impressive area of



Gilles Dorval, an employee of the City of Saskatoon was honoured with a gift from the Commissioners. Gilles had gone over and above the call of duty in helping ensure the City was ready to host the TRC National Gathering.

(Photo by **Andréa Ledding**)

volunteering was the thousands of cupcakes baked for the Survivor Birthday Bash on Sunday afternoon.

Some volunteers drove golf carts, so that Elders and those with mobility issues could move between venues and vehicles with ease. Volunteer Brian Hartsook happened to be coming by as one Eagle Feather News reporter hopped out of her van, and she was offered a lift since his cart was empty, and definitely not because of

how old or tired she looked, he insisted.

During the brief ride, Hartsook explained why he got involved, and he said partially through his church, and some committee meetings, but really, it all began in his early twenties. He'd been living near Mississippi and recalled witnessing the emotional Labour Day weekends, when parents were bidding farewell to all their children who were leaving for another ten months of residential school.

"It was heartbreaking to watch," he said, adding that the scenes stayed with him.

Then, after his first wife passed on, he married a First Nations woman.

"So I have a grandchild who would right now be sent away to residential schools too, if they were still operating. So it really hit home."

Church volunteers organized a special listening tent, as well as access to archives and photo albums, providing a quiet space where volunteers would listen to survivors and their families, pray when asked, and promote truth and reconciliation on an individual basis. They also cooked and served breakfasts every morning for the survivors and their families, in Diefenbaker Park.

English is also the volunteer coordinator for Manitowahbee, and made such good friends with the locals that some of them will be heading to her hometown of Winnipeg to help out at that event and maybe some of the local volunteers will even want to go to Quebec for the next TRC event, n'est-ce-pas?

Reconciliation
through education

The University of Saskatchewan honours the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). As an institution of higher learning and research, our highest priority is education that helps individuals contribute to their communities.

We are committed to upholding the values of openness and respect, promoting intercultural engagement, and assisting First Nations and Métis communities. We are proud to support the work of truth and reconciliation through our educational activities.

We welcome you to visit the first floor of the Murray Library on the U of S campus to see our display of resources about the Indian residential schools. This showcase will support education about the residential school experience, the mandate and work of the TRC, and the process of reconciliation.

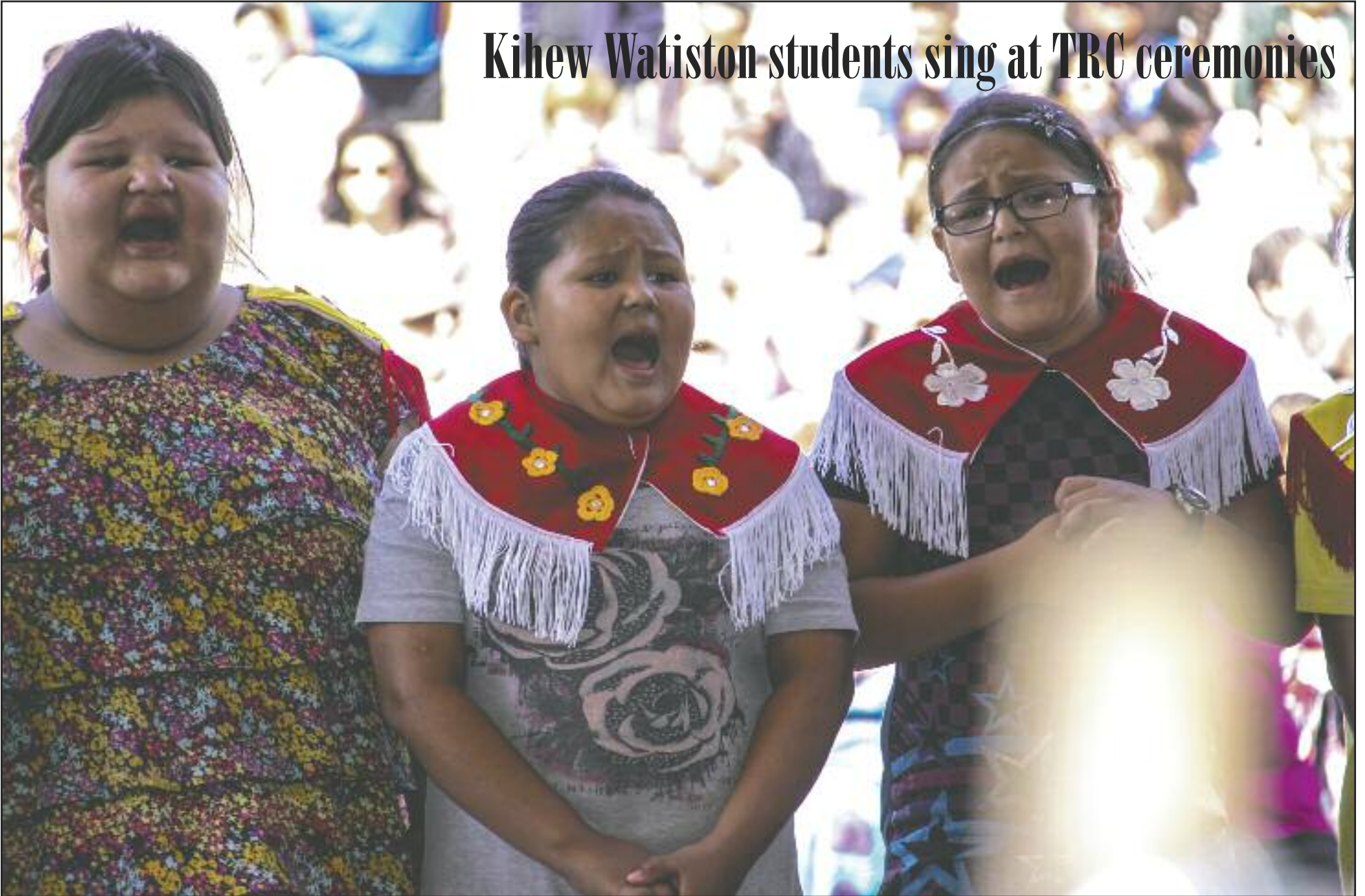
Find us online at usask.ca.

PHOTO: The 2012 U of S Graduation Powwow was held May 30 in the Bowl—the heart of our campus.

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

Studios US

Kihew Watiston students sing at TRC ceremonies



Students from the Kihew Watiston (meaning Eagles Nest) Cree School in Onion Lake sang at the opening ceremonies for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission national visit to Saskatoon.

Their wholehearted effort and young voices visibly moved the crowd. The school is one of the first in the world to have everything taught in Cree from PreK to Grade 4. According to teacher Delia Waskewitch, the different way of teaching has had a great impact on the children.

"We sing every morning. They eat, and then we go to the gym at 9:30. They go into a circle and they sit there and meditate as they smudge and one boy is picked to help the smudge," said Waskewitch.

"The children don't talk. After that the

principal will talk and share values and ask how the weather is in Cree and the kids will talk with him. The kids then say a school pledge and after that, the Elder will pray."

Then Brian Waskewitch, another teacher, sings and teaches the kids songs and it takes an hour.

"We need that time to get the orality or literacy of the language for the children," added Delia. "The kids are content. Every person needs at least 20 minutes every day just to sit by themselves. It is something we have seen over the years.

"The kids are quieter, more content, and proud of themselves and they speak the language more. They have been able to speak in public and sing. And stand proud."

The young choir was the perfect choice to open the historic gathering.

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WE BUY GOLD

More than 1,000 SIIT grads entering workforce

By John Lagimodiere
Of Eagle Feather News

It has been a good year for the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology. SIIT's registrations grew by 26 per cent between 2007-08 and 2010-11, and completion rates increased from 60 per cent to 69 per cent in certificate/diploma programs, in the same period.

In total 1,576 students completed SIIT programs in 2010-11, reflecting increased retention and completion at the institute as well as employer demand. This year's graduation ceremonies were some of the biggest, sending over 1,000 skilled graduates into the workforce.

"SIIT is committed to increasing the educational outcomes for our students and reducing the gap in First Nations employment," SIIT Vice-President, Student



SIIT Class of 2012's Community Addictions Course Graduates travelled from Yorkton to Saskatoon receive diploma's and gather together for one last hoorah photo op to mark the occasion celebrating their successful achievement.

(Photo by Trina Kingfisher)



SIIT graduates proudly show off their Diplomas.

(Photo by Trina Kingfisher)

Services and Academics Kim Fraser-Saddleback said.

"This will continue with the ongoing successful partnerships with the private sector and all levels of governments."

The 2012-13 provincial budget provided \$4.7 million in operating and program funding to SIIT. The success of the SIIT Scholarship Golf Tournament also helps students' access funds to help complete their studies. Hundreds of people from government and industry support the tournament yearly making it one of the most in demand places to see and be seen.

For more than 35 years, SIIT has provided applied skills training for careers in a variety of areas, including Adult Basic Education, Aircraft Maintenance Engineer, Business Administration and Information Technology, Community and Health Studies, Professional Development and Trades and Industrial Training. SIIT programs are offered at three campuses located in Saskatoon, Regina and Prince Albert and are integrated to combine traditional learning and hands-on training with a First Nations perspective.

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Pelican Narrows Merasty family's academic success continues

By John Lagimodiere
For Eagle Feather News

Somewhere up there with the Creator, Napoleon and Jane Merasty are very proud of their children. Just this year, their oldest son Mel and youngest daughter Cara both graduated from the University of Saskatchewan and hit the ground running in their respective careers.

And with the last of their 11 children enrolling in post secondary in the fall, the Pelican Narrows family can boast that all of their 11 children will be graduates of post secondary education.

Mel is the eldest son and he just graduated from the Edwards School of Business with a marketing degree. A week after school he was hired by the Dakota Dunes Casino to be a marketing coordinator.

"It is very gratifying that someone is looking for an Aboriginal grad and I got a job right away," said Mel. "I wanted to show my kids so they could say, 'Hey look at my dad, he got his commerce degree and got a job right away' to instill in them about education."

Mel finished his degree all while being a single dad with five children, four still at home.

"Now that I have a job, maybe they won't leave," joked Mel. He knows that the supports he had helped him to realize his dreams.

"I had a lot of support from brothers and sisters. I don't know if I could have done it without them. They would be there to lift me up every now and then, it was good," said Mel.

"The funding is not all that great, and having to work part time and having four kids at home, can be tough at times. When I was working the kids were in sports, but when I became a student we couldn't really afford that for them.

"So, instead they took part in lots of extracurricular activities at school and I worked around that and changed my schedule to be there for them."

Cara Merasty just graduated with her law degree and is articling in Prince Albert at Kirkby Fourie and will be writing her bar courses within the year. She also relied on her siblings and friends to get through school.

"Our band, Peter Ballantyne, was a great support, but really it was my family and friends that helped me through," said Cara.

"And that meant at times staying away from events and trips because I didn't have the time. Sometimes my friends did me favours by not inviting me to things. It was tough at times, but worth it."

This is Cara's second degree. Already a trained social worker, she always knew she would be going back to be a lawyer.

"It was only a matter of time," she added. "But I was advised to go get a degree before law to help me adjust to school. It was a culture shock coming from a northern community into school. By taking my first degree at First Nations University, it really helped me get comfortable with the idea."

Both Mel and Cara heaped lots of praise on the supports for Aboriginal students at the U of S. Mel raves about the Rawlco Aboriginal Resource Room and Cara about the Native Law Centre.

"The people there can really help you through the ups and downs of school life," said Mel.

"These Aboriginal support centres really do matter," added Cara. "And I recommend all Aboriginal students take advantage of that support."

Their siblings are very proud of Mel and Cara, and according to sister Angie, it is all due to their parents.



Cara and Mel showed off their degrees for the family.

"Even though Mom and Dad never even finished middle school, their work ethic was strong and you did what you had to do to survive and provide for your family," said Angie, who noted that her folks were very entrepreneurial, at one time owning the medical taxi and they always had a small business going at home.

"Our parents ingrained education in us. We did not miss school for anything, even if we were sick. Every morning, the 11 kids would line up at the bathroom to brush up, and my dad would be cooking while mom tended to us, then we would all eat and head out the door to school. They also made sure we weren't ever late."

The Merasty family was recognized in 2000 by PBCN and PAGC for having the most graduates in any one family. Since then, remarkably, that number of graduates continues to grow. Wise business people that they were, Napoleon and Jane made quite the investment in education for their children, and now their kids and the community are reaping the profits. Thanks Nap and Jane, job well done.



28th Annual Native Graduate Recognition Night



Honouring our Aboriginal grade 12 Graduates and encouraging the pursuit of post secondary education is a priority for our Saskatoon Aboriginal Community. This year the Saskatoon Indian and Métis Friendship Centre hosted with excellence the 28th Annual Native Graduate Recognition Night. With 101 Graduates in attendance, a banquet and ceremony was held in their honour to recognize their achievements. To encourage lifelong learning and post secondary education; 20 scholarships were handed out.

28th Annual Native Graduate Recognition Night Scholarship Recipients:

Carson Magnuson	BHP Billiton Scholarship	Trysha Atkins	Sturgeon Lake Scholarship
Ashley O'Watch	BHP Billiton Scholarship	Patrick Fiss	Sturgeon Lake Scholarship
Stephanie Piecowye	GSCS Metis Legacy Bursary	Risa Naytowhow	Sturgeon Lake Scholarship
Brittany Cook	GSCS Spirit Award	Brittani-Anne Roberts	Sturgeon Lake Scholarship
Kassidi Gourdeau	GSCS Academic Award	Christopher Dogniez	GDI Scholarship
Risa Naytowhow	SPSD Spirit/Resiliency Award	Devon Bird	SIMFC Athletic Award
Christopher Dogniez	SPSD High Achievement Award	Christopher Dogniez	CUMFI Local #165
Cody Secord	SPSD High Achievement Award	Yolanda Roper	Jerry and Florence Kayseas Award
Ashley O'Watch	Les Bird Memorial Scholarship	Cheyenna (Raven) Martell	Saskatoon Police Service Award
Samantha Fiss	Sturgeon Lake Scholarship	Warren Nekurak	Saskatoon Police Service Award

Our community would like to thank and recognize our main event sponsor BHP Billiton as well as sponsorship contributions from Airline Hotels and the University of Saskatchewan.

Written by: Bill Mintram



Saskatoon Indian and Métis Friendship Centre

Charlie taught me identity is an inside job

You give up everything about your identity when you're an Indian in the city. That's the common belief among those who never really take the time to get to know us or our lifestyles.

I've had people tell me down through the years that you can't really be Aboriginal surrounded by concrete. It's all a big assumption, as though urban and Indian is a heap big negative not meant to ever collide in the same sentence.

It's not, though. I lived in cities for years and it was that more than anything that led me to such strong reliance on my culture and traditions. It was that more than anything to foster faith that teachings were more the stuff of life than possessions.

It was that more than anything that taught me that my identity is, and always was, an inside job. Living in an urban setting helped me realize that.

And it isn't just me. I've met a lot of urban based people over the years and they represent themselves and their people with honor and dignity.

There are gatherings and ceremonies that tie us to the land in an incredibly powerful way. There are

people who exemplify that.

Take my friend Charlie, for instance. Charlie was from a West Coast First Nation and I met him in Vancouver almost 40 years ago.

He would stare across a vacant sea of asphalt in the parking lot behind his apartment. It was a shabby place, devoid of luxuries but always warm and welcoming whenever I dropped in there.

He'd feed me; offer me tea, even though his resources were slim. He treated me like an honored guest.

Once we'd eaten and shared a smoke, we'd talk and eventually Charlie would drift off into his own thoughts again.

I'd watch him as he begin to pull both hands across his belly, slanted to his hip bone in a pantomime of paddling. He'd sit calmly then as though drifting. I could virtually feel him remembering things.

Then, he'd smile and nod his head. It was in those moments that I knew that he was recalling the great canoe they paddled out of Kitimat then down

Hecate Strait and into Queen Charlotte Sound the summer he was 12.

He could still feel the muscle of the channel on his arm almost 70 years later. He said that when he gave himself up to the memory that the smell of it all potent,

rich, eternal, was like the smell he found in dreams and visions. Thunderbirds dancing with orca who was chasing raven across the slick

surface of the sea. He could get all of that.

When he got that vision and the feelings that came with it, he knew what he had to do. He'd been in the city a long time.

Through the years he'd watched a lot of other people fold to the pressure of their displacement, of being away from their home territories and their people.

Some chased drink. Others just folded in on themselves like certain flowers do with the dropping of the sun. That's how he put it.

He recalled being 12. He recalled being introduced to the canoe and being

taught to carve his own paddle. It changed him. It anchored him so that no matter what tides might pull at him, cause him to drift, he would always have the memory of a paddle in his hands to guide him back to himself.

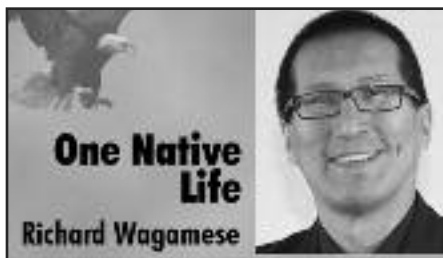
I was impressed by that. When I met him I had nothing like that. I was adrift on a sea of change without a paddle and his words comforted me.

He'd sit awhile and gather himself. Then I'd watch as he crossed to his closet. He dug around a bit and came out with the tools and wood and paints he kept there.

He'd bundled it in the black and red button blanket he danced in once on a shoreline he hadn't seen in a long time. He'd nod to me and head down the stairs out into the street to find the inner city Haida kids he taught to carve paddles.

What are you doing, I asked him once. He considered my question. It took him a few moments to answer but I never forgot what he said. "Bringing them the ocean glowing in the moonlight," he said. "In case they never get to see it."

My friend Charlie was a good man. Urban. Indian. He taught me that identity is an inside job.



Touchwood cadets march to own beat

By Kerry Benjoe
For Eagle Feather News

In June, members of Touchwood Agency Tribal Council Cadet program completed their final set of drills for the year.

It took discipline and perseverance and 10 months of commitment for this year's cadet graduates to complete the program. Jada Windigo, 14, from Muskowekwan First Nation said it was worth it.

"It taught me discipline," she said.

Kelly Akan, cadet co-ordinator, said the cadet program was developed in 2008 and was funded through Dakota Dunes' Casino Community Development Corporation. Then in 2009 the cadet program was selected by the National Crime Prevention Centre as a pilot program.

Akan began co-ordinating the program in 2010.

"We offer it twice a week and deliver it to the four First Nations in Touchwood - Muskowekwan, Kawacatoose, Day Star and George Gordon," said Akan. "Two nights a week and two communities come out for each night."

Then one weekend each month the cadets are taken on a field trip. This past year the cadets toured the University of Regina and First Nations University, participated in cultural teaching as well as recreational activities and this past winter they went skiing.

The program begins in September and runs through until June each year for youths between the ages of 10 and 18.

"Feedback has been positive and it's well supported by the communities," said Akan. "Particularly by the



RCMP Assistant Commissioner "F" Division, Russ Mirasty inspects the Touchwood Agency Tribal Council Cadets during parade. (Photo supplied)

chiefs of each of the communities. They really believe in it and have been helpful whenever we needed anything."

Members of the RCMP run the drills and they don't take it easy on the young cadets.

"It focuses a lot on discipline and responsibility," said Akan. "We try to stress to the kids that their education is important. What we do is we actually go into the schools and check on their attendance and academics to make sure they are keeping up with everything."

The program started out with 130 participants and graduated 46 cadets this year. Akan said many of the participants had other commitments like hockey or baseball.

Among the graduates were Landon Pratt, 13, and his little sister Tiarah Pratt-McNab, 11, from George Gordon.

Tiarah began the program last year and plans on continuing next year.

"I liked it," said the Grade 6 student, adding that the best part of the program was the drills.

"We got to hear other people say the drills and it was nice to hear other people."

Tiarah said she didn't mind that the instructors were strict.

"They were just getting us to listen," she said.

Tiarah added that the program helped improve her listening skills which helped her in school.

Landon said he joined because it gave him something to do all year. He plans to re-enrol again in the fall. Like his sister, he said the best part of the program was the drills. He would recommend the program to others because helps teach discipline. Landon also enjoyed the field trips. He also plays sports so in order to do both activities he had to be disciplined.

Landon is happy that he was able to finish and is looking forward to starting Grade 9 and cadets in September.

Sport: Keeping it real and the ghetto, fabulous mentality

John L: Youth engaged in sports are more likely to stay in school and move on to healthier, productive lives. Young women lower the risk of pregnancy if they are involved in team sports. For more on the connection between sports and the good life we present Dirk "Da Vinci" Dashing.

Dirk: Thank you John. First Nation and Métis youth can learn valuable lessons from sports. For instance, I myself when I was a little children I learned that in boxing there is more to the game than hitting, that there is the whole business of not getting hit. That's how I got the nickname Da Vinci.

John L: You must have been quite the boxer to have earned a nickname. Why Da Vinci?

Dirk: It may have been the fact that I spent so much time getting up close and personal with the canvas, John.

John L: No surprises there, Dirk. Now I got kids. What do I say when they ask me to buy \$250 basketball shoes?

Dirk: Let's look at Charles Barkley, an NBA hall of famer, who had his own line of expensive sneakers. He said, "These are my new shoes. They're good shoes. They won't make you rich like me, they won't make you rebound like me, they definitely won't make you handsome like me. They'll only make you have shoes like me. That's it." That says it all, John.

John L: Athletes. Is there anything they don't know?

Dirk: But there are some great messages for our youth from the world of football, and they deal with the idea of "keeping it real" and the "ghetto fabulous mentality." We start with Michael Vick.

John L: He is the NFL quarterback convicted in 2007 of sponsoring a dog-fighting ring. What can we learn from him except the obvious?



Dirk: When Vick hit it big he kept his street friends, to help him "keep it real." And they kept it real all right. When the cops raided the Bad Newz Kennels his "keeping it real" pals cut deals with the authorities and hung Vick out to dry.

John L: But Vick was guilty as sin. He sponsored the events, promoted the fights, and he lied to the courts. He even failed a drug test during that mess.

Dirk: Damn straight he was guilty. His pals from the ghetto guaranteed that. Which leads us to the whole ghetto fabulous attitude that Michael Irvin is talking about.

John L: Michael Irvin. Former Dallas Cowboys wide receiver, right? He was charged with cocaine possession in 1996, at his 30th birthday party. What can we learn from him?

Dirk: Just a few weeks ago, at the 2012 NFL Rookie Symposium, Irvin spoke about the special responsibility of becoming a success when you come from nothing. He said, "We must stop letting the ignorance of our youth and our history prevent us from our destiny. What is that ignorance? (I call it) our ghetto fabulous mentality."

John: What did he mean by that?

Dirk: Irvin was warning the next generation that your pals from the ghetto, who are "there" to help you keep it real, can and will destroy you to save their own sorry asses.

John L: True enough, but what do you make of Irvin's point about destiny?

Dirk: According to Irvin and other champions, success is not just about wealth and fame, it's about giving hope. I am told most suicides are because people lose hope. They lose hope because they believe there is nothing better in front of them than what is behind them. And if what is behind you is pain, addiction and all the other goodies handed down to us from the residential schools and the '60s scoop, then the future is dark. But being a success gives others hope. It enables others to draw strength from your story. That story may mean new pals, and dropping the lazy, punk ass, I-only-do-drugs-and-crime-recreationally moron friends behind.

John L: Interesting. But those messages seem designed for men. What about our young women?

Dirk: Not being much of a woman all I can say is you may need to ditch that drunk, broke-ass punk standing between you and your dreams. We all know there are men out there whose idea of keeping it real for their woman is to steal her power, and blame her for his failed and miserable life. Ditch the gutless wonder and get on with your fabulous self.

John L: You're a wise man, Dirk. Thanks for sharing.

Dirk says, If you are the smartest one in your crew, get a new crew.



Message from Grand Chief Ron Michel

Tansi. I am pleased to announce that the 12 First Nations of the Prince Albert Grand Council will be co-hosting the historic NRTA National Summit this summer, August 6-9, 2012 in Prince Albert. Treaties 1-10 will be expected to participate in his historic event.

In 2010, First Nations leadership from all three western provinces, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, committed to a three-year process in addressing and resolving breaches and violations of our treaties within the Natural Resources Transfer Agreement, 1930. As a result, in June 2011, a year ago, Manitoba region hosted the first

NRTA summit in Winnipeg.

Delegates from Treaties 1-10 gathered together as the "Western Treaty Nations." The delegates included our Indigenous Peoples from the Cree, Dene, Saulteaux, Dakota, and Lakota Nations.

A Declaration was developed and signed after the four-day gathering.

We are all aware, and recognize, that our treaties have been breached and violated. Our Treaty Nations agreed to share and care for the land: water, air, forests, fish, game, medicines, minerals and all other resources that have been entrusted to us by the Creator.

Through the guidance of our spirituality and customary laws, we must continue to come together as one "Nation" and fight for the rights of our people and future generations to come.

The Natural Resources Transfer Agreement entered into between Canada and the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta is clearly incompatible with our treaty covenant. We must continue to work collectively.

We are requesting your participation and continued support in order to have a successful summit.

Sincerely,

Grand Chief Ron Michel
Prince Albert Grand Council

Atleo faces seven challengers in AFN election

First Nation leaders from across Canada will gather in Toronto from July 17-19 for the Assembly of First Nations 33rd Annual General Assembly and election of National Chief.

Under the theme "Honouring our Traditions: Achieving Action for our Future", hundreds of First Nation Chiefs, youth and Elders will come together to elect a National Chief and engage in focused dialogue and strategy sessions for action in advancing First Nation priorities.

For the first time, four women have thrown their hats into the ring for National Chief. The chiefs of Canada's 630 First Nations will vote for one of the following eight candidates on July 18.

Shawn A-in-chut Atleo is running for a second term as National Chief. He is the hereditary chief of Ahousaht First Nation on Vancouver Island and the AFN's former regional chief of British Columbia.

Bill Erasmus has been the AFN's regional chief of the Northwest Territories and the leader of his home Dene Nation since 1987.

Ellen Gabriel shot to fame when she was chosen as the spokesperson for her home community of Kanehsatake during the 1990 Oka Crisis.

Joan Jack is Anishinaabe Ikwe, from the Berens River First Nation, 270 kilometres north of Winnipeg. She is a lawyer, skilled in negotiating on behalf of aboriginal communities in fisheries management and land claims.

Diane Kelly, an Anishinaabe lawyer



AFN Chief Shawn Atleo

from Ontario's Onigaming First Nation, was the first woman elected Grand Chief of the Grand Council of Treaty #3 territory.

Terrance Nelson is a former five-term chief of Roseau River Anishinabe First Nation in southern Manitoba. He made headlines earlier this year when he took the plight of First Nations to Canada's Iranian consulate.

Pam Palmater is a Mi'kmaw lawyer and member of the Eel River Bar First Nation in New Brunswick. Palmater teaches Indigenous law, politics and governance at Ryerson University.

George Stanley is a former chief of Alberta's Frog Lake First Nation. The former RCMP officer, with extensive experience in aboriginal justice, has been the AFN's regional chief for Alberta since 2009.



Kate Clements in a SUNTEP graduate from 2010 and is pleased that the U of S and GDI have extended the partnership agreement for five more years.

(Photo by John Lagimodiere)

SUNTEP program continues to develop quality teachers

By John Lagimodiere
Of Eagle Feather News

The University of Saskatchewan signed a new agreement of continuing partnership between the College of Education and the Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research to enhance the delivery of the Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP). The arrangement will last for another five years.

“The Gabriel Dumont Institute is very pleased to affirm our partnership with the University of Saskatchewan and our commitment to the education of Métis people in this province,” said GDI’s Vice Chair Glenn Lafleur.

“SUNTEP has been a major success for GDI. The value of SUNTEP is significant – culturally, socially, and economically – to those in both the Métis community and in the larger society.”

According to a recent publication by author Eric Howe, Bridging the Aboriginal Education Gap in Saskatchewan, the more than 1,000 SUNTEP graduates have increased the provincial GDP by more than \$2.5 Billion. SUNTEP provides an education that is culturally and professionally relevant for students of Métis ancestry, ensuring preparedness and adequate representation in the teaching profession.

“SUNTEP grads have earned an excellent reputation as teachers and role models in schools across Western Canada,” said Dean Cecilia Reynolds of the College of Education at the University of Saskatchewan.

“In fact, not all SUNTEP graduates go on to become teachers. The education that is provided by SUNTEP helps to build and strengthen positive self-image and gives our students tools not limited to teaching, but skills that present opportunities for success in entrepreneurship, business, and leadership roles in many other fields.”

Facilitated by the Gabriel Dumont Institute, SUNTEP is a fully accredited, four-year bachelor of education program. The focus of the program is two-fold: giving students of Métis ancestry the tools to prepare them to fill their just share of teaching positions in Saskatchewan, and ensuring that all SUNTEP graduates are educated to be sensitive to the individual educational needs of all students, in particularly those of Métis and First Nations ancestry.

Kate Clements was a SUNTEP grad in 2010 and is now a Grade 10 Teacher at Mount Royal Collegiate in Saskatoon. SUNTEP, she says, gave her the ammunition to be a great teacher.

“I grew up in a Mennonite community, one of the only aboriginal families in town. My grandmother taught us lots about being Métis, but I needed to know more,” said Clements after she addressed the crowd at the signing.

“I was an EA before I enrolled in SUNTEP and I knew I could do better than other teachers. SUNTEP gave me the opportunity to learn my history as well as to train as a teacher. I needed that.”

Clements added that the course is far from easy or a free ride.

“The entire process is really difficult and so is learning about our past,” Clements said. “I never heard about the history, or the policies that hindered Aboriginal people. The family dynamic of SUNTEP is what keeps a lot of students there.

“It is difficult stuff to learn about the racism and government policies ... but with the other students we could talk about it together and figure it out and move forward with solutions. And for all those out there that want to be teachers, you have to be ready. It takes lots of commitment and hard work. Be ready, do research, volunteer in schools and do what’s right for you. SUNTEP was right for me.”

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NUCLEAR WASTE MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION SOCIÉTÉ DE GESTION DES DÉCHETS NUCLÉAIRES

The Multiple-Barrier System

The long-term management of Canada's used nuclear fuel involves the development of a deep geological repository (DGR). The DGR is a multiple-barrier system designed to safely contain and isolate used nuclear fuel over the long term. The design is based on the use of multiple durable barriers, including hundreds of metres of rock. This long-term management plan emerged from more than 30 years of scientific and technical studies conducted in Canada and internationally. Most countries with nuclear power programs have selected the DGR as their preferred approach for managing used fuel; two countries (Sweden and Finland) have identified sites and are in the early stages of construction.

Q. What is the multiple-barrier system?

A. A series of engineered and natural barriers will work together to contain and isolate used nuclear fuel from people and the environment. Each of these barriers provides a unique level of protection.

- **Barrier 1: The Used Nuclear Fuel Pellet** – Used nuclear fuel is in the form of a ceramic pellet. The pellets are extremely durable.
- **Barrier 2: The Fuel Element and the Fuel Bundle** – Sealed tubes contain the fuel pellets; these are called fuel elements. The tubes are made of a corrosion-resistant metal called Zircaloy.
- **Barrier 3: The Used Nuclear Fuel Container** – Used fuel bundles will be placed into large specially designed containers to contain and isolate the fuel for 100,000 years or more. The container is made from thick steel, which provides the mechanical strength to withstand the pressure of the overlying rock and future glaciations. The outermost layer of the container is copper, which is resistant to corrosion in the deep underground environment.
- **Barrier 4: Bentonite Clay, Backfill and Sealants** – In the repository, each container will be surrounded by bentonite clay, a natural material proven to be an effective sealing material. As placement rooms are filled with containers, they will be backfilled and sealed. The access tunnels and shafts will be backfilled and sealed only when the community, the NWMO and regulators agree that it is appropriate, and postclosure monitoring will then be implemented.
- **Barrier 5: The Geosphere** – The repository will be approximately 500 metres underground. It will be excavated within a suitable sedimentary or crystalline rock formation. The geosphere forms a natural barrier of rock, which will protect the repository from disruptive natural events and human intrusion. It will also maintain favourable conditions for the container and seals, as well as limit movement of radionuclides in the unlikely event that barriers fail.

Q. Is there evidence from nature to indicate that this approach can work over very long times?

A. The most important evidence will be from the site itself. Detailed field investigations involving geophysical surveys, characterization of the existing environment, drilling and sampling of boreholes, field and laboratory testing, and monitoring activities will be conducted during site characterization to affirm the suitability of the site. In particular, evidence will be sought that conditions at the site have been stable with little to no groundwater movement for millions of years.

There are also several locations where high levels of natural radioactivity have been contained for millions of years by the surrounding geology. These natural systems provide strong evidence supporting the concept of a DGR.

One location is the Cigar Lake uranium deposit in Saskatchewan. This deposit is one billion years old and is buried 450 metres below the surface, surrounded by a layer of naturally occurring clay. There is no trace of radioactive components from the deposit at the surface.



Dr. Paul Gierszewski is the Director of Repository Safety at the Nuclear Waste Management Organization. Prior to joining the NWMO, he was with Ontario Power Generation, where he was responsible for maintaining and improving safety assessment system models for deep geological repositories. Dr. Gierszewski has a bachelor's degree in Engineering Science from the University of Toronto and doctorate in Nuclear Engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Boston. He is a registered Professional Engineer in the Province of Ontario.

"Ask the NWMO" is an advertising feature published regularly in this and other community newspapers to respond to readers' questions about Canada's plan for managing used nuclear fuel over the long term and its implementation. The Nuclear Waste Management Organization welcomes your questions. Please forward your questions to askthenwmo@nwmo.ca.

For more information, please visit:
www.nwmo.ca/backgrounders



www.nwmo.ca

Mr. and Mrs. Batoche have fond memories of earliest visits to annual Métis event

By John Lagimodiere
Of Eagle Feather News

Mr. and Mrs. Batoche want to see you at Back to Batoche festivities this year. Phil Boyer and his wife, Gail Fiddler, are being honoured as Mr. and Mrs. Batoche.

The couple have been going to Back to Batoche since the events inception in the early 1970s, though not necessarily as a couple since they both began going there as children, and they think it is a must see summer attraction.

"I have been around Batoche all my life," said Boyer. "My dad took me when I was five or six years old, right when it started. It is different today, but lots of things are the same like the friendliness and camaraderie.

"My dad is gone 20 years now, but now it is my family going and carrying on that tradition. A family holiday every year that we look forward to."

Fiddler is no stranger to the territory either.

"My dad also took me to the first Back to Batoche," she says. "My dad was from there and we had a family tradition to go as well. Now when we go it feels like going home, where I go to visit grandparents and relatives."

The humble couple was quite surprised when they heard from Shirley Isbister that they were going to be Mr. and Mrs. Batoche.

"Shirley called and we were surprised and honoured," said Boyer, who didn't really believe the good news.

"And the next day Senator Nora Cummings called and told us the same thing. So I guess we have work to do."

Boyer is a regular at Batoche on the main stage usually performing with their son Dallas who plays fiddle. Fiddler likes to sit and watch her "boys" as she says and does not really like the limelight.

"I have taught her how to wave like the Queen," joked Boyer about their "Royal" duties.

"I will just be by Phil's side and take it all in," said

Fiddler, adding that she does look forward to being a good ambassador.

There is the regular line up of fiddling and jigging contests, old time music and great food this year. You also don't want to miss Métis Got Voices where they are trying to find future talent to play at Back to Batoche Days. And, of course, old friends and hospitality.

"Our job is to make Batoche a friendly place, and visit with people," added Boyer. "I've been there all my life, you can feel the spirit of what happened there many

years ago at the Rebellion, especially at night when the campfires are going.

"You can certainly feel that spirit. It is beautiful, something I wouldn't miss in the world. We invite everyone to come out and have fun. It is a wonderful place to be in the summer time."



Phil Boyer and Gail Fiddler are this year's Mr. and Mrs. Batoche.



Clarence Campeau Development Fund

Proud sponsor of Back to Batoche Days

The Clarence Campeau Development Fund has been providing equity capital to Métis owned businesses in Saskatchewan for the past 15 years. During that time the Fund has grown from a vision into an organization with 12 staff located in offices in Saskatoon and Regina servicing the Métis business community throughout Saskatchewan.

- Business Plan Assistance
- Loan Equity
- Women's Equity
- Youth Equity
- Large Scale/Joint Venture
- Métis Energy & Resource
- Management & Marketing Skills
- Aftercare
- Community Development
- Métis Economic Development Sector

For more information please contact the Clarence Campeau Development Fund at:

Telephone: 306-657-4870 Toll Free: 888-657-4870

E-mail: info@clarencecampeau.com

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Awards throw spotlight on Métis achievement

By Morgan Beaudry
For Eagle Feather News

Growing up, Jennifer McGillis knew she was Métis but really didn't know what Métis was. Her first impressions of Métis were people bickering at Métis local meetings her mother took her to, or people partying at Batoche.

Ashley Norton, whose father, Morley Norton, was active in Métis politics and served on the National Aboriginal Health Organization board, gave his daughter the context McGillis lacked but, even so, the significance of being Métis was lost on her.

After high school, McGillis and Norton got involved in their communities, embraced their heritage and sought opportunities to be of service but it wasn't until attending the First Nations Awards gala at the Orr centre that they saw a critical culture gap that needed filling.

"Before the awards even started, we decided there should be an annual event and recognition for Métis in Saskatchewan – long overdue recognition – that has nothing to do with politics or meetings," said Norton.

Right there, Norton and McGillis became the principal founders of the Wiichiwayshinawn (We Are Helpers) Foundation Inc. and plan to host the first annual Métis Awards of Saskatchewan on October 20, 2012 at the Regina Inn.

Recognition for Métis peoples' accomplishments isn't just about praise for worthy achievement; it's a life and death issue for a culture that's in danger of losing its identity through a lack of awareness and education, Norton says.

"I remember being in school in Grade 11 discussing the naming of the Louis Riel Trail and no one, apart from

me, in the class knew who Louis Riel was," said Norton.

"We're like the hidden race, an invisible one. There's so much history about the Métis but it's not taught, and if it's not taught or shared there's nothing to show young people growing up."

Before jumping right into creating an event, the trio floated the idea on Facebook to gauge what sort of support and interest such an event might have. The feedback was positive and abundant, and support for the idea flooded in. A Vancouver web developer created their website and logo, and the Ministry of First Nations and Métis Relations reached out to the fledging organization with an offer to sponsor outreach meetings.

There will be ten awards categories recognizing artistic, academic and other achievements. Nominations close July 27, 2012. To be eligible, nominees must have lived in Saskatchewan for at least one year, be Métis, and be living (except for Portrait of Honour nominees).

Between now and the first of what they hope will be many Métis Awards nights, Norton and McGillis have much to do: sponsor recruitment, entertainment booking, marketing, and the tricky task of coordinating these logistics while working and going to school.

Norton, 29, and a mom of two is an interpretive guide at the Royal Saskatchewan Museum, while McGillis, 34, a mom of four, is a full-time business student and was president of the Regina Riel Métis Council until 2012.

"The idea of who is Métis has evolved since the 1800s. We need to create awareness of not just the historic figures like Riel and Gabriel Dumont. There are Métis today making amazing contributions to society and no one knows about it," said McGillis.


"We want to recognize people who are the future



Ashley Norton left, and Jennifer McGillis have taken it upon themselves to honour worthy Métis citizens of Saskatchewan with the Métis Awards.

(Photo by Morgan Beaudry)

Riel's and Dumont's. Even so, lots of young people don't know others who have done important things so there's lots of work to do."





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Events

May 15-Sept 10: Art Exhibit: Leah Dorion's "Country Wives - Métis Women of the Land"

Jul 1: Canada Day Celebrations (Free Entry)

Jul 15: Experience the Heart of History

Jul 19: Mass at Historic Church

Jul 21: Parks Day - Going Royale at Batoche

Aug 18: Experience the Heart of History

Sep 10: Site Closes

Nov 16: Louis Riel Day - Honoring our Heroes (with Gabriel Dumont Institute)

Événements

15 mai-10 sept : Exposition d'oeuvres d'art : "Country Wives - Métis Women of the Land", par Leah Dorion

1er juillet : Fête du Canada (Entrée gratuite)

15 juillet : Faites une incursion au coeur de l'histoire

19 juillet : Messe à l'église historique

21 juillet : Journée des parcs -Des airs de royauté à Batoche

18 août : Faites une incursion au coeur de l'histoire

10 septembre : La journée de fermeture

16 novembre : Journée Louis Riel - honorez nos héros (avec l'institut Gabriel Dumont)

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Jul 6-8: La Fête Fransaskoise

Jul 19-22: Back to Batoche Days


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6-8 juillet : La Fête Fransaskoise

19-22 juillet : La Fête de Métis



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My Métis Finger-Weaving Journey

(This Eagle Feather News interview of Bonnie Hrycuik was done by Bradley Brown)

BB: Bonnie, please tell us a little about yourself so our readers can get to know you better.

BH: I work at the Gabriel Dumont Institute Publishing Department as a summer student. This is my second year working as a summer student. Currently I am attending the Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP), which is a Métis specific teacher training program in Saskatoon. Outside of school and work, some of my hobbies are photography and travelling.

BB: As you know, I learned to finger-weave through GDI too, and have had the pleasure of teaching others, in classrooms and as a workshop facilitator. Each of us takes our own path as we acquire this cultural art. What has your path been?

BH: I first learned how to finger-weave at the Gabriel Dumont Institute 30th Anniversary Cultural Conference. There was a workshop facilitated by Scott Duffee on how to finger-weave. It was through this workshop that I learned how to create a basic two-colour bookmark length sash. Then David Morin, from GDI Publishing Department, came to one of my SUNTEP classes and taught me how to create a sash incorporating three colours.

Did you know?

Métis finger-weaving only requires wool strands, your fingers, and the knowledge to finger-weave. It is not done on a loom or using tools akin to knitting needles or crochet hooks. Some techniques have evolved to make the process easier but are not necessary. These include setting up the wool across a dowel, or using hooks or tape to keep things in place, but you still use only your fingers if you truly want to call it finger-weaving.

While attending The Hills Are Alive Cultural Fest, I met a woman who taught me how to create the arrowhead pattern, which is a more complicated and traditional Métis pattern. I have had several different teachers who all have their own unique styles, and it was through their help that I have been able to develop my own style of finger-weaving.

BB: Why do you feel it was important for you to learn to finger-weave?

BH: The sash has always had a symbolic significance in Métis culture. Through finger-weaving I have learned more about the traditional use of the sash, such as being used as a belt, rope, a cup for carrying water, using the

fringes of the sash as an emergency sewing kit, to help carry cargo, and more. It was a privilege for me to learn how to finger-weave because I have always had an interest in learning more about my cultural heritage.

BB: What do you enjoy about finger-weaving?

BH: One of the main things I enjoy about finger-weaving is how challenging it is. It allows me to constantly grow because I am always trying to learn new techniques and patterns. In finger-weaving it is easy to come up with a new design every time by making simple adjustments to size, design, and colour. I enjoy taking on new projects because I can challenge myself by using different patterns and creating different lengths of sashes. Another thing that I really enjoy about finger-weaving is that it can be very relaxing once you get the hang of it. I have learned that creating a sash takes a great deal of time and effort and at times can be frustrating. That is why I have come to have a larger appreciation of the time and effort my ancestors put into this art form. Often it is this appreciation that motivates me to finish my projects.

BB: Have you helped others learn to finger-weave?

BH: There have been a few different events that I have had the opportunity to teach others how to finger-weave. As I have learned more about finger-weaving I have become more comfortable teaching it to others. In the future, I hope to be able to share this technique with others who are interested and willing to learn.

BB: Have you made any special projects?

BH: Each sash I make, whether big or small, is special to me because they all take time and dedication. Recently, I had the opportunity to make a sash for someone very special to me. While at The Hills Are Alive event I was given special pink and white bamboo wool to use for a sash. I used this wool to create a sash for my niece, Ivy who is six months old. The sash took me a great deal of time to finish but every minute it took was worth it. It was really important to me that I gave her her first Métis sash. While making it for her, I gained a sense of pride that I was able to share my hard work with her. I was really happy that she could join me in the celebrations taking place at the Batoche National Historic Site on National Aboriginal Day where she wore her first Métis sash proudly.

BB: Often creating projects for a loved one attaches a sentimental value to it. Not only will your niece cherish this gift you have given her, but it will also engage her to have an interest in her Métis heritage because of this special gift from her Auntie. Do you have any other special projects that you plan to do in the future?

BH: One day I hope to eventually make my own full-length traditional Métis



Bonnie Hrycuik used finger weaving technique to make a sash for her niece Ivy.

sash. Traditionally, Métis sashes were two meters long and fifteen centimetres wide. A sash consisting of 100 strands takes approximately 70 to 80 hours to complete. I will continue to finger-weave and take on new projects, and I hope that one day I will be able to accomplish my goal of creating a full-

length sash.

BB: Thanks for taking the time to do this interview. I wish you all the luck in your future finger-weaving endeavours. Marsii. For more information about Métis finger-weaving please see:

<http://www.metismuseum.ca/resource.php/00741>

Learn Métis-style

- mini-moccasin making: July 15
 - beading or rug hooking: July 21
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- at Batoche National Historic Site



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Johnny Arcand, second from left in the front, was joined for a historic photo by fellow professionals and students at the end of last year's Fiddlefest. (Photo supplied)

John Arcand Fiddle Fest bigger and better in fifteenth year

The 2012 John Arcand Fiddle Fest is celebrating its fifteenth anniversary with more fiddling, dancing and culture than ever before. This year the event runs August 9-12.

Over the past 15 years the Festival has been growing and become widely acclaimed for its quality instruction, family-like atmosphere and development of professional and emerging artists.

After years of requests by fiddle enthusiasts, the Festival is proud to introduce the John Arcand Fiddle

Category to its fiddle contest.

"This, along with our Traditional Métis Fiddle Category, speak strongly about our promotion and preservation of Métis fiddling," says festival organizer Vicki Arcand.

Both will run Friday at 4 p.m. and be a "once through" with no finals.

A brand new "much larger" dance floor has been built and will accommodate the popular old time dances on Friday and Saturday night and is the perfect venue to introduce the Festival's first ever Square Dance workshop Friday at 1 p.m.

The Festival offers workshops, daytime programming, evening concerts, old time dances, and a fiddle and jigging competition. Due to the large number of requests, this year also features an expanded number of Cultural Classes in Métis beading and finger weaving.

There's a children's activity area with planned activities, free shuttle service to and from Saskatoon to the Festival site and the on-site people mover (taking people to and from the campground to the main stage venue)

The 15th annual John Arcand Fiddle

Fest – affordable family fun – with a one-time gate fee ... there is no charge for entering competitions, or participating in workshops.

General admission is just \$50 per weekend per person or \$20 per day. Children 12 and under are admitted free with a parent or guardian. Admission at the gate only and not sold in advance. Free un-serviced camping on site as well as a concession.

For details visit the website at www.johnarcandfiddlefest.com or call 306.382.0111.

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White Buffalo welcomes graffiti

Is graffiti art or vandalism? I think it can be either, depending on the subject matter and where it is placed. I'm not a fan of immature bathroom scribbles, nor do I think swear words or gang tags on the sides of buildings are cool.

However, a nicely placed sanctioned piece can easily brighten up a dull, dreary area. 'Sanctioned' is the operative word though – because without permission, graffiti is likely to be covered up again. The benefit of having sanctioned work is that with the extra time and daylight hours you can see a marked difference in the quality that results.

When given the proper space, graffiti artists can create some amazing and unusual images and the style of writing is often a lesson in perspective. Layering and shading create impressive 3D imagery, and the usage of color can often add a whole different dimension.

Periodically I stop in the alley behind the White Buffalo Youth Lodge in Saskatoon, to see what new and amazing pieces have been created. Recently, I took pictures and decided to share my appreciation with others who may not be aware The Free Wall exists. (The Lodge is located at 602 20th Street West and their phone number is (306) 653-7676)

wasn't as fortunate to find someone to interview this time around.

I had a feeling I wouldn't locate someone to interview, since it is in the nature of graffiti to have an air of ill-siveness surrounding the craft. Though many artists develop an underground reputation for their style, as noted by 'tags', they are often somewhat anonymous.

Free Walls have been tried all over North America and there are many people who advocate that by providing a space, you prevent graffiti from appearing in other, more affluent neighbourhoods.



Arts & Entertainment
Jessica Iron

However, those who have homes in areas surrounding Free Walls argue that there is a 'spill over' effect, where graffiti is soon found on trash cans, surrounding walls and other areas, starting at The Free Wall and trickling outwards.

I couldn't get an answer from White Buffalo Youth Lodge about whether or not there has been a 'spill



In order to put up a piece, artists must first check in with the front desk at White Buffalo Youth Lodge to register. They must provide their own paint and designs. The staff occasionally checks on the artist to be sure that the artwork is legit and not gang-affiliated or swear words. I couldn't get a definite answer as to how long The Free Wall has existed, but it seems to have been around as long as The Lodge itself. On their website, it says: "The Free Wall has provided youth a canvas and gallery for their far too often misunderstood art. The Free Wall is a White Buffalo Youth Lodge program and completely youth-driven initiative that illustrates the need and the power of self-expression."

The first time I saw artwork being put up on The Free Wall, maybe ten years ago, several artists were out there with their masks and spray paint. One stopped to chat with me for a few minutes which was very cool, but I

over' effect around The Free Wall, nor was the Saskatoon Police officer of the Anti-Graffiti-Unit available for questioning before this column went to press.

In any case, I truly admire beautiful panoramic graffiti pieces that take obvious time and effort. I would hate to see The Free Wall covered up.

For those of you gifted and creative enough to try graffiti please stick with sanctioned locations so that people can appreciate your work, or ask for a Free Wall in your community.

Also, artists, please be responsible. Remember, there is a stark difference between art and vandalism. Be an artist.

If there's an artist, entertainer or event that you think could be featured in Eagle Feather News, give me a shout at: snazyjess@hotmail.com. See you next month!

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Delorme an ace representative for Cowessess First Nation

By Creeson Agecutay
For Eagle Feather News

Whether he is promoting the First Nations University from the podium or teeing off for his next golf competition, Cadmus Delorme wants to inspire others.

The 30-year-old golfer from Cowessess First Nation recently won the 87th annual Waskesiu Lobstick match-play championship, coming in first among 80 golfers back in June. Delorme is also the second person in the history of the Lobstick to be awarded as low qualifier, open winner, match play winner and to score a hole-in-one, as well as the first First Nation person to be awarded this title.

“That was just icing on the cake,” said Delorme. “It’s a pat on my back for all the practice, all the money that I have put into the game and it allows my people who support me to show them that what they invested in me is paying off.”

Delorme was asked to give a speech after the competition and said he likes educating his listeners every chance he gets.

“I thanked everyone I had to thank and I said I not



Cadmus Delorme shows off some of the hardware he earned at the Lobstick Championship at Waskesiu. Up next, defence of his Mid Amateur Provincial Men’s title.

(Photo by Mike Dubois)

only won in northern Saskatchewan but I also won in the Woodland Cree territory. Not too many people recognize the territories of the First Nations people.”

Delorme has been keeping busy and has recently been defending his provincial title at the Saskatchewan mid-amateur men’s golf championship at the Willows Golf and Country Club near Saskatoon. Before that he

missed the cut of the Canadian Tour’s Dakota Dunes Casino Open but is hopeful of making a comeback in other competitions throughout the summer.

“Golf is a mind game. I believe that a combination of my culture and my education that I get at First Nations University helped me win these tournaments.

“My culture allows me to have patience, and education allows my mind to expand and think of other things between shots. Instead of me getting upset over a bad shot or showing signs of fatigue because you’re golfing so much,” said Delorme.

Delorme does admit that he would like to see more First Nations people compete in provincial tournaments and hopes he can lead by example.

When Delorme is out on the green, he makes sure every time to tell others where he comes from.

“Sometimes (announcers) try to say from Regina, Saskatchewan and I’ll correct them. I’m very strong with my culture at these events. I always make sure they say, ‘from Cowessess First Nation, Cadmus Delorme.’

“It just makes me smile when I hear that.”

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June 21st

National Aboriginal Day / Journée nationale des Autochtones

Saskatoon Indian and Métis Friendship Centre Celebrates National Aboriginal Day

Together with Saskatoon Indian and Métis Friendship Centre We Celebrate National Aboriginal Day

Eagle Feather happy to help young hoopsters

By John Lagimodiere
Of Eagle Feather News

Students at W.P. Bate Community School in Saskatoon were recently treated to a basketball camp sponsored by Eagle Feather News.

Saskatoon basketball wizards Mike Tanton and Mike Linklater were brought in to lead 30 participants through fun and fundamental drills that will help to one day produce more Saskatoon-made basketball stars, and perhaps see more kids spend time at the park shooting hoops rather than being distracted by other not-so-healthy games.

Both Tanton and Linklater have played with the



Students from W.P. Bate Community School in Saskatoon were treated to an Eagle Feather News basketball camp with coaches Mike Tanton and Mike Linklater. (Photo by John Lagimodiere)



University of Saskatchewan Huskies and are long time contributors to the community donating their time to many charitable works. Tanton played a long, long time ago and used the leadership and skills he learned as a Husky to create amazing basketball programs and eventually become the Director of the White Buffalo Youth Lodge.

Linklater is a more recent alumnus of the University of Saskatchewan, having left University like a rock star two

years ago after captaining the team to its first CIS National Championship.

The two basketball Jones united to lead the students in drills designed to make the sport even more fun. They were joined by W.P. Bate Vice Principal Jody Glines, an old teammate of Tanton's from centuries ago. The students were all eager to learn. On top of the helpful drills, each student received a durable basketball designed to withstand the punishment of a season of street ball on Saskatoon's outside school yard courts where future Mikes are created.

Eagle Feather News would like to thank Jody Glines and the students of W.P. Bates for welcoming us, and Mike Tanton and Mike Linklater for their contribution to the community.

