

Eagle Feather NEWS

FREE

NAIG creates amazing memories

Kiefer Paul, from One Arrow First Nation won Gold and bronze in track at the North American Indigenous Games in Regina. Athletes like Kiefer led Team Sask to an amazing medal count. (Photo by Jeanelle Mandes)



Team Sask finishes a close second behind B.C.

By John Lagimodiere
Of Eagle Feather News

REGINA – There were tears and cheers as the seven day sport and cultural extravaganza known as the Regina 2014 North American Indigenous Games ended on a high note with thousands of people converging on the First Nations University of Canada lawn to revel in victory, competition and some awesome entertainment.

The theme for Regina 2014 North American Indigenous Games (NAIG) was “Raising the Bar” and the host committee certainly delivered. NAIG Youth Representative Colin Starblanket summed up the spirit of the games.

“I believe that we all came here to celebrate our ancestry and skills in a healthy and positive way,” Starblanket said.

“Whether an athlete is Inuit, Métis or First Nation, each contributed to the success of these games through good sportsmanship and showcasing his/her culture. By bringing everyone together, we made something great happen, showing the world who we are as Indigenous Peoples of North America.”

Over the week more than 4,000 athletes, coaches

and Mission Staff from 21 different regions in North America’s Indigenous communities had the opportunity to showcase their talent and meet new friends. The Games featured 13 sports including: archery, athletics, badminton, baseball, basketball, canoeing/kayaking, lacrosse, golf, rifle shooting, soccer, softball, volleyball and wrestling.

There are still some unresolved issues around the accreditation of the swimming event. Originally it was cancelled, and then brought back as an unsanctioned sport. Then, ultimately, it received sanction and the medals from swimming wound up counting towards the final total. This allowed Team B.C to win the medal count with 160 medals, 63 Gold, 49 Silver, 48 Bronze. Saskatchewan finished second with 159 medals, 72 Gold, 54 Silver and 33 Bronze. Ontario was third with 149 medals. Team Saskatchewan has filed a protest.

The controversy never affected the youth. Most of them had the time of their life and, as one astute observer described it, “the kids didn’t give a squirt. They were busy bartering like their ancestors before them. That was the best part of the Games, trading pins and gear towards the end.”



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Welcome to our
Justice & Back to Batoche Edition

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Monument will honour missing, murdered women

By John Lagimodiere
Of Eagle Feather News

SASKATOON – The RCMP has determined there have been over 1,100 missing or murdered Aboriginal women in the past several decades in Canada.

These women and girls are much more than numbers. They are someone’s mom, daughter, aunty, sister or grandmother. And even if they are gone, they are still thought of, remembered or looked for.

To honour those women, the Saskatoon Tribal Council, the provincial government and the Saskatoon Police Service are collaborating with the community to build a monument for missing and murdered Aboriginal women at the new Saskatoon Police station. The Tribal Council is leading the way and three community consultations have been held already.

On a July evening, community members gathered in the new Police Station Community Room and, following a prayer by Walter and Maria Linklater, a few drum songs and some soup and bannock, people settled into groups to discuss the themes they would like to see reflected in the memorial.

“We have some members that are deeply affected by this issue,” said Saskatoon Tribal Council Chief Felix



Saskatoon Police Service Chief Clive Weighill showed community members the potential site of the monument honouring missing and murdered Aboriginal women outside of the brand new police station. (Photo by John Lagimodiere)

Thomas.

“Somebody has to do it. Regardless of the cost, we need to do something to

keep reminding people that this is an important issue. This is a big thing for people directly affected. People can talk

all they want, at some point you have to do something.

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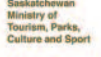
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Police chief says community consultation is important aspect of monument process

• Continued from Page 2

Out of respect for them, we are making sure they are not alone and that they are included," Thomas said.

The people involved hope the memorial will help keep awareness of the issue alive.

"We need people to remember and continue the search for our loved ones and not forget the ones that have been located," said Dorthea Swiftwolfe, the Missing Persons Liaison for the Saskatoon Police Service.

"I think it is important to include the families in this process. This monument is not for the police service or the general public, it is for the families to make everyone aware of how they are feeling. The monument represents the heartache and longing. It never goes away. The monument will always be there," Swiftwolfe says.

"Now imagine that being your child, sister or brother. These people are not

numbers or a statistic. They are loved. They are somebody. They are valued and honoured. And we need to remember that."

The situation regarding missing people is serious. The Saskatoon Police Service receives 1,600 missing people reports a year and Police Chief Clive Weighill says they have changed how they handle missing people cases.

"The days of waiting 24 hours to file a missing persons report are over. We take reports immediately," said Weighill. "We prioritize the cases and treat them accordingly."

The Police Service also has a resource book for the families of the missing people and has signed agreements so that they can communicate with the Chief of the First Nation where a missing person is from. The monument, says Weighill, will serve an important purpose to the community.

"We want to keep the awareness alive



Dorthea Swiftwolfe is the Missing Persons Liaison Officer with the Saskatoon Police Service. (Photo by John Lagimodiere)

on the issue. We have worked hard on this file for several years, and we wanted a place for people to come, assemble, reflect or start or end a march in Saskatoon that keeps that awareness alive."

Myrna LaPlante participated in the community consultation, sharing her vision of what the monument should reflect.

"Hope, dignity, respect, awareness. These are all a part of this topic of missing and murdered Aboriginal women. It has to reflect the ongoing commitment to search for loved ones. But I would like to see it be something simple," says LaPlante who knows about the issue all too well.

Her aunt, Emily Osmond, has been missing since 1997 and her nephew, Cody Wolfe has been missing since May of 2011. She has put in countless hours searching for her loved ones and also raising awareness on a local and national level with her work with Iskwewuk E-wichiwitochik Women Walking Together.

"I am really glad they are doing this process. Chief Thomas and Chief Weighill have it right. Community input and family input is vital. We expect other families to join in as we go along," adds LaPlante.

The Tribal Council expects to have some more consultations before they begin the lengthy process to find the concept and artist for the memorial. The best case scenario is instillation in the fall of 2015.

"We don't want to rush this process. We want to make sure it is done properly with inclusion," added tribal Chief Thomas.

"Words and concepts such as love, respect and courage, can be visualized and actualized. We did that with our residential school project. Elders told their stories and they were depicted on canvas. It can be done.

"We are glad the community came out and we are appreciative of their time. It is an important issue for all of us."



Elders and community members gathered to share their thoughts on what the monument should reflect. (Photo by John Lagimodiere)



Gary belongs to two communities. We're proud to be one of them.

Gary Lerat grew up in a community he loves — the Cowessess First Nation in Saskatchewan. Today, he's also a member of the PotashCorp community. Thanks to a unique outreach program, we're tapping into the talents of First Nations and Métis people like Gary. We offered him a career path at our Rocanville mine, and he's making the most of it. "It's got that community feel," says Gary about PotashCorp. "Everyone there is almost like family." To see the video of Gary's story, visit PotashCorp.com/25



NAIG in Regina made all of us proud

If you were one of the lucky ones to go to any event, ceremony or the cultural village and experience the North American Indigenous Games in Regina, you could see that the years of hard work that led up to the amazing seven-day adventure were well spent.

For an event of this magnitude to come off without a visible hitch, is testament to the hard work and professionalism of the host committee and the hundreds of volunteers who gave of their time.

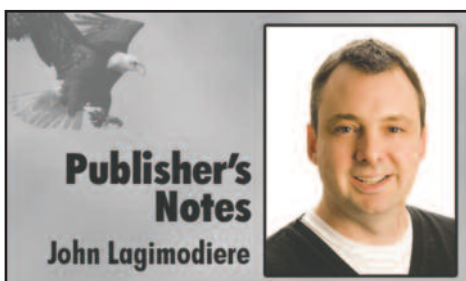
The Opening and Closing Ceremonies were on time and fantastic. The dancing bear when George Leach performed at the Opening Ceremonies was very memorable. The crowds were pumped and had a great vibe (not necessarily because of a Tribe Called Red performing at the Closing, but they helped). APTN broadcast the Opening and Closing Ceremonies live and Saskatchewan's own Larissa Burnouf even hosted the Closing Ceremonies and made us all proud.

The massive amount of people at the Closing Ceremonies and at the First Nations University of Canada campus all week was a good indication of the success of the Kirby Littleton Memorial Cultural Village. The ring of 15 tipis that surrounded the front lawn hosted various cultural teachings or events and all day long, you could see young and old pop in and out of the tipis and participate in various cultural events.

A big hit and my personal favourite was the Dene and Northern games cultural exhibit. At this venue they had young ambassadors from the Territories demonstrating games that northerners played in the winter in order to stay strong and prepare for the fishing and hunting seasons. Games included the neck pull, the log push, feats of jumping athleticism and a super fun game called Animal Muck where you had to stand in a circle and keep a straight face while someone tried to make you laugh by imitating an animal.

My monkey impersonation was a winner. Turns out they weren't used to the monkey trick up north so it was highly effective.

The best by far though was the Dene hand games. I had the great fortune to participate. They asked for volunteers and I and Lac la Ronge Indian Band Chief Tammy Cook Searson both volunteered. I



was surprised when they asked her not to play because the hand games are only played by men in their culture ... partly because in the past, the betting on these games got

so wild that over days long competitions sometimes wives were gambled and lost ... interesting!

The rhythmic drumming in the hand

games gets you into a groove as you try to hide a token in one of your hands that the other team has to pick. The key to the game is sneakiness and tempo ... and the ability to tease and taunt your opponent into frustration. I won six in a row until they caught onto me. Pretty good for a newbie I thought. Great game, hard on the knees, but worth it.

But the real point of the Games is about the athletes and the competition. The happy and healthy athletes were everywhere across Regina, representing themselves and their provinces or Tribes in a real good way. Our hotel was host to Team Wisconsin. We learned to do their "W" in a hurry and met some real nice people.

There were dozens of amazing stories, athletes and epic games to witness. Some of the basketball games packed the University of Regina gym. A few fastball games drew thousands to the ballpark for an evening game.

Imagine the thrill for these athletes to play in front of such a huge and rambunctious group and to compete at such a high level. These Games were a once in a lifetime experience for most of them that they will remember forever. On social media, you could see how proud the parents were and in one case, a van load of athletes arrived home to a hero's welcome as people lined the road, rang bells and waved signs to welcome home their athletes with pride.

Our Most Valuable Player during this entire event was our hard working reporter Jeanelle Mandes. If you visit our web page, you will notice that Jeanelle has been covering NAIG and its athletes for several months. In that time she has interviewed and profiled over fifty athletes, written over a dozen stories about the Games and single-handedly took thousands of photographs. She earned our Gold medal.

Kudos to the athletes, coaches and mission staff for their hard work on behalf of Team Saskatchewan, you have all made us proud. And a big thanks to the Host Committee for pulling off an amazing North American Indigenous Games.



The neck pull was practiced in the winter in order to keep strong for hunting.



Dene hand games were a big hit at the Kirby Littleton Memorial Cultural Village. (Photos by John Lagimodiere)

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Supreme Court of Canada decisions

The reference in the title is to the two recent and much-discussed cases decided by the Supreme Court of Canada: *Roger William (Tsilhqot'in Nation)* released on June 26, and *Grassy Narrows First Nation*, released on July 11.

Tsilhqot'in was a dispute about the rights held in Canadian law by a First Nation to its ancient homelands that now lie within the political boundaries of the province of British Columbia.

For the first time in history the courts of Canada have recognized aboriginal title. Canada had been subjected to United Nations criticism for its failure in this regard. That is indeed a victory worthy of some celebration.

One important point decided concerned the degree of occupation required to prove Aboriginal title. The court held that Title is not limited to settlement sites but extends to tracts of land that were used regularly and over which the First Nation had effective control at the time of assertion of British sovereignty.

It had been argued recently in a 'Metis' case called *Hirsehorn* that Aboriginal Title could be founded on regular hunting of bison in southern Alberta. That case was lost simply because it was not supported by the facts of history.

An attempt to argue for Metis Aboriginal title as a result of *Tsilhqot'in* would expose some of the serious challenges that flow from case law on Aboriginal rights. I have argued

that there should be only one date for proof of Aboriginal rights including Title: the date at which allegiance to the Crown was exchanged for protection by the Crown's courts, the date at which the fiduciary relationship was created.

But the Supreme Court decided in the 'Métis' case of *Powley* in 2003 that there must be two different dates for proof of aboriginal rights, and a third date for Aboriginal Title. The two dates are one for First Nations and one for the Metis. As a result of this indefensible approach it would be discovered that the Métis are able to prove Aboriginal Title at a more recent date than a First Nation in the same region.

There is much that needs to be rationally developed in the law relating to Aboriginal people in Canada. The failure of the Supreme Court to follow the traditional analytical approach of the English common-law courts with rigour leaves



ambiguity and uncertainty in the law, and erodes the rule of law. The Court leaves itself open to accusations that it is acting as a policy second-guesser rather than a court.

The *Grassy Narrows First Nation* case concerned a question about Treaty Three signed in 1873 in a region that now covers parts of Ontario and Manitoba. In the Treaty, the Ojibwe had the right to continue to make a living on the Treaty Territory lands outside the reserves until the lands were 'taken up' for public purposes by the government. Ontario issued a license for clear-cutting forest on Ojibwe Treaty Territory to a large company. The question was whether according to the Treaty and the law of the Constitution of Canada Ontario was entitled to issue the license or whether the approval of the federal government of Canada was also required.

The Supreme Court held that Ontario could issue the license without the approval of the federal government.

Grassy Narrows contributes to a demystification of the idea of 'the Crown'

in Canada. The 'Crown' is the symbolic term for the state of Canada, that is, all forms of government power in Canada. We have a federal system with a central government and provincial governments.

They are all part of 'the Crown' which is theoretically indivisible. Accordingly, the provinces, as *Grassy Narrows* points out, have authority to regulate Treaty rights subject to the important condition that the province perform its duty to consult and where there is an infringement of a Treaty right the provincial government must also justify the infringement in accordance with legal tests that were previously established by the Supreme Court.

Much more could be written about these cases but it is hard to do so in this space and without the use of legal jargon. There is reason to consider these cases as victories for Aboriginal people. There are also many reasons to be very cautious about decisions of the courts, which are after all but one branch of the government ('the Crown') that imposes Canadian law and subjugates First Nations law.

The *Tsilhqot'in* case started in 1983 along with some attempts at negotiations. It cost a lot of money. Political action including negotiations is always an alternative to be seriously considered.

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Aboriginal people key in fight against HIV/AIDS

By Angela Hill
For Eagle Feather News

Now, more than ever, Aboriginal Peoples are being recognized as a key population in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

While on the international stage, Canada is seen as a country that supports indigenous groups' work to end HIV/AIDS; it's also used as a warning to other nations to show the need to get culturally appropriate programming of HIV prevention to First Nation communities.

"For me as an Aboriginal Australian, looking at the HIV data from Canada is a real concern for me," said James Ward, an associate professor in Australia and first-ever indigenous plenary speaker, at the recent International AIDS Conference in Melbourne.

"When you represent four per cent of the population and 23 per cent of all HIV diagnosis in that country it's of real concern."

What increases the concern for him is the parallels he sees between Canada and what is currently going on in Australia. He said over the past two years they are seeing the highest ever reported number of new HIV cases and injection drug use is starting to increase among aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations. Remote aboriginal communities have very high rates of sexually transmitted infections – up to 50 per cent prevalence in 16 to 19 year olds.

"Those populations have been immune from HIV, but once it gets there, and we're not on top of it, it will escalate rapidly like it has in places like Saskatchewan," he said.

"I learn all the time from the HIV data from Canada – and so we should, it's our Indigenous brothers and sisters from the northern hemisphere – what I do know is our potency of intervention needs to be much earlier. We need to be in on top of it."

"I think we need to ramp up our activities so that in 10 years' time we still have a good news story in HIV in Australia."

He said it's not good enough to acknowledge that there is increased drug use.

"We need to change our strategy so we don't end up in the same situation as Canada and its First Nations people and HIV."

Canada's health minister, Rona Ambrose, attended the International AIDS Conference and spoke with a number of Aboriginal groups such as the International Indigenous Working Group on HIV/AIDS (IIWGHA).

Dr. Gregory Taylor, deputy chief public health officer of Canada, attended those meetings as well.

"There was deliberate effort to plan meetings here. It's interesting, it's not that you have to go half way around the world to have meetings with people in your own

backyard, but they were here and we took advantage of meeting with them," he said. IIWGHA is based in Canada through the Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network.

"These are key populations that we need to hear from and I think that's why our minister is making a lot of energy and time to connect and listen to those populations, so we can better address our interventions and support them."

Clive Aspin, an aboriginal man from New Zealand and leader with IIWGHA, attended the meeting. He said he was pleased with the response from the Canadian government.

"It was a tremendous opportunity to talk about some of the issues that are really important to IIGHWA ... she encouraged us to continue to fight for a place at the table and she was extremely receptive about the things we talked about," he said.

"She acknowledges, accepts and understands the significant disparities that exist in Canada and she's fully aware of the fact that something significant and generous has to be done to make a real impact on aboriginal communities in Canada."

While Aspin and others say they are pleased with the funding that Canada has given to the indigenous working group, there is the realization that more needs to be done.

"I feel that the federal government is willing to consider some of the suggestions that we are making in terms of interventions," Denise Lambert, with the Kimamow Atoskanow Foundation, said about the meetings.

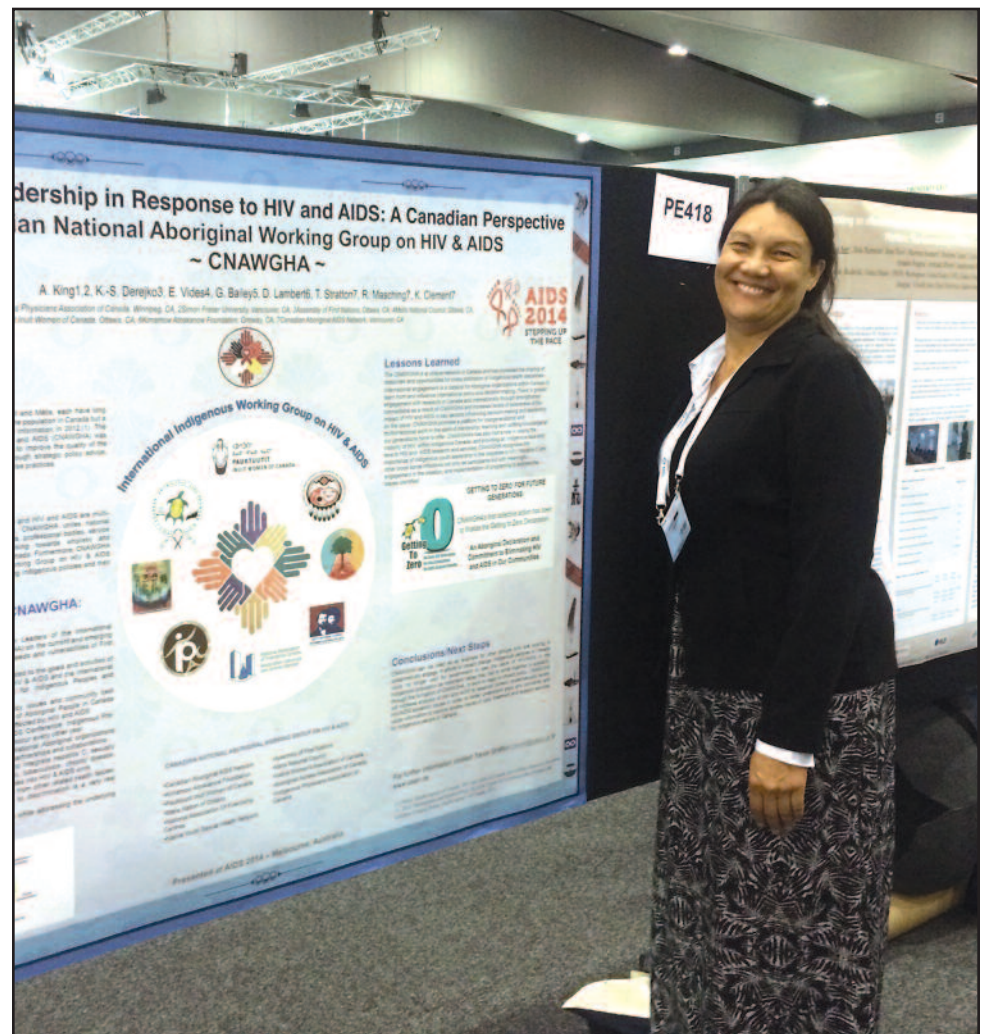
There are a few things that the Canadian government still needs to do, she said. The need to acknowledge and validate the historical impacts that affect First Nations and Inuit health by looking at historical and current policies and figure out how to address the inequity in service access, she said.

Lambert said there is a role government has to play to support prevention in a consistent way.

"That is everyone having equitable access, no matter if you are in a far northern community or if you are in the city, you should have the same access."

Lambert also sees the need for leadership of aboriginal communities to buy into the public health message.

"The people who have the well rounded understanding actually move some of the projects forward at the community level particularly, but when you have a leader who doesn't understand – who is perhaps paralyzed by fear of HIV or paralyzed by the secret attached to HIV and all of its issues – that's where some of our leadership challenges are," she said.



Denise Lambert, with the Kimamow Atoskanow Foundation, stands with the poster she and a team presented at the International AIDS Conference.

(Photo by Angela Hill)

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Program prepares Aboriginal recruits for the RCMP

By Jeanelle Mandes
For Eagle Feather News

REGINA – In July, the RCMP Aboriginal Pre-Cadet Training Program (APTP) had a graduation for 21 graduates who participated in a three-week course. The program was held at the RCMP Academy Depot in Regina.

The graduates are from all over Canada, including Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Manitoba, Northwest Territories, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador.

The program gave the participants a chance to see what it's like to be an RCMP officer and to gain the skills that are needed for this job.

Brooke Turnbull, from Manitoba, says this experience gave her the essentials skills that she will apply in her future.

"We've learned so many applied police sciences such as hand cuffing, criminal code, different management selections that police officers need to know and a lot of police defensive training," says Turnbull.

Turnbull had one of the biggest roles during the program. She was one of the right markers who are in charge of an entire troop. She says it was a big challenge but definitely worth gaining the leadership skills.

"I kind of feel like a big babysitter but that's the lead that I took on. My job was to keep track and to keep count of everyone in the troop so I made sure I get them from point A to point B on time.

"I kept track of schedules, appointments and I made sure everyone's homework was done on time," she says. "It's a big role to take on and also a lot



Manitoban Brooke Turnbull took on an important leadership role as one of the participants in the Aboriginal Pre-Cadet Training program in Regina.

of stuff comes upon your shoulders as well," she adds.

"Also in fitness, we learned how to

maintain a healthy balanced lifestyle with eating well, exercise, time management and staying organized," she adds.

Constable Maureen Greyeyes-Brant, also the APTP program manager, says the experience doesn't end here. The graduates will be taking the gained skills and knowledge back to their home communities.

"After the graduation, they're going to be flying home and going to their provinces. They've all been given their first shifts so they'll be reporting shortly to their detachments and their field mentors to start their eight-week detachment employment," says Greyeyes-Brant.

"This is an amazing recruitment initiative for the RCMP, I think it's great to give these Aboriginals a chance to experience this program," she adds.

Constable Greyeyes-Brant hopes the graduated pre-cadets decide this opportunity may one day lead to a career choice for them or if not, the gained skills will apply to the career that they're looking for.

That's exactly what Turnbull will be doing from her experience at the APTP. She says her dream is to become a RCMP officer. Her hope is set a good example for others in her home community.

"I hope to show people that I'm a role model. A lot of people look down because you're female and Aboriginal. Not many people take on that role of becoming a police officer," she says.

Families of the pre-cadets were invited to the graduation and watched them perform the drill as they received their graduation diplomas.

The APTP is open to Aboriginal Canadians between the ages of 19-29 from all over Canada.

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Covering NAIG hard work but what memories were made!

By Jeanelle Mandes
For Eagle Feather News

REGINA – I started my internship with Eagle Feather News at the beginning of May and John said that I will be focusing a lot on the North American Indigenous Games (NAIG). So from May till even now, part of my life has been all about NAIG.

I've written tons of stories about and it came to the point where I felt like I worked for NAIG. I was happy to cover stories about this amazing event that Regina hosted. It's a once in a lifetime opportunity to experience this and I was proud to be a part of it telling the stories of our athletes and those who worked hard to make this event happen.

I had planned the whole week carefully and even made arrangements for my parents to keep my little girl for the week of the Games because I knew I was coming home late and waking up extra early every day. I even opened up my home to accommodate some of the parents of the athletes from Team Sask. I was really pumped and looking forward to the Games.

The Opening Ceremonies were held at Mosaic Stadium and as soon as I walked onto the field, I looked to the huge crowd and I saw pride. Pride from the people of all the athletes as everyone wore their team colors, waving their province or state or First Nation flags, and even little kids sitting on the shoulders of their parents waving down to the athletes with huge smiles with possible thoughts that

one day, that will be them. It was one of the most amazing moments in my life.

After the opening ceremonies were over, immediately I went off to interview athletes from different teams in the parking lot and on the field. A lot of them were surprised that they were asked to be interviewed. I realized that I didn't have any business cards so I wrote down the web address to our website so the athletes could view their stories.

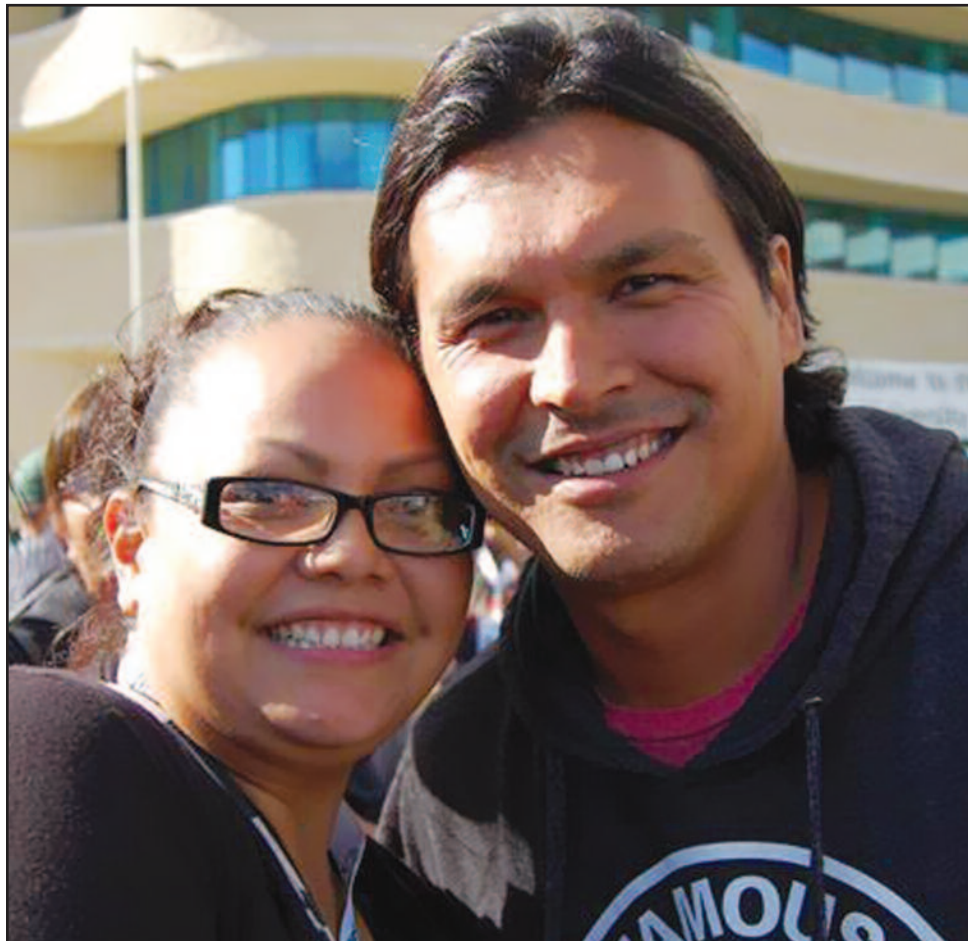
Every day when I got home, I sat down in front of my laptop and I studied the times for the sporting events and the entertainment at the "Kirby Littleton Memorial Cultural Village" for the next day. I made sure that I wrote down the web address on pieces of paper ahead of time for those that I interviewed.

I was up by 6 a.m. in the mornings and out the door by 8 covering different sports and I would stay out till the entertainment was done each night. When I got home, my work was not over; I would stay up till 1 or 2 in the morning finishing up stories and photos from the day.

I always woke up tired but the thought of what stories I would find that day pumped up my energy. Each athlete had their own unique story to share.

One story that really stuck out in my mind was about a little girl from the Yukon. She was torn when she heard that the swimming event was cancelled. She said that she practiced and trained herself hard to make it as a swimming athlete.

But she was very determined to play in NAIG that she tried out for athletics and she



It doesn't get any better for a reporter than having your picture taken with Adam Beach.

ended up making it for the sport.

When I asked her how she liked her experience at NAIG, she went on about how beautiful Regina was. Coming from an isolated place, she talked with such great enthusiasm about how incredible it was for her to walk in a mall downtown.

She described it as: "Wow! There were so many stores; I didn't know where to go."

Those are the kind of stories that really touched my heart.

The entertainment was awesome. There were so many cultural activities and entertainers happening at the same time, it was hard to choose where to focus your attention to.

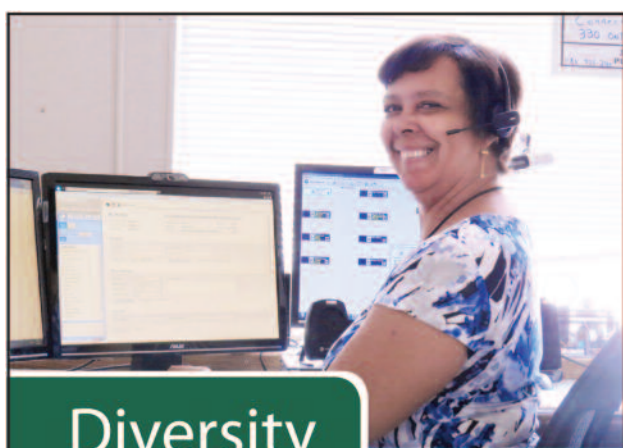
I enjoyed watching and learning the

different hand games from the Northwest Territories. The closing ceremonies were amazing like the opening ceremonies.

The whole First Nations University of Canada lawn was filled with people, teepees, and vendor tents, entertainers and Adam Beach!

In the crowd numerous groups of athletes from different provinces and states mingled amongst each other trading pins and sharing stories of their sporting experiences.

I've gained so many memories. Whenever I reflect back to when NAIG was held in Regina, I will remember youth, effort, culture and pride. And work, lots of work! My overall experience was amazing!



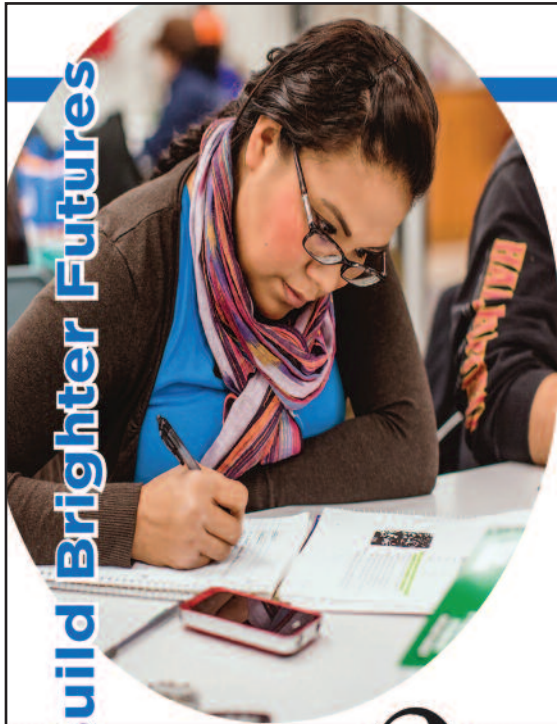
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NAIG Profile

Athlete: Courtney Thrun

Age: 16

Grade: 11

From: Regina

Sport: Athletics

U16

**By Jeanelle Mandes
For Eagle Feather News**

Courtney Thrun won two gold medals and two silver medals at the North American Indigenous Games (NAIG) competing in athletics.

She was looking forward to the games after she received the news that she made it for Team Saskatchewan.

"Happy because I got to compete against other people from other states, not only from Canada."

She practiced a lot of track for NAIG but mostly has been playing basketball to keep herself active in sporting activities.

Thrun enjoyed her experience at the games and had made a lot of great memories to last forever.

"It was really hot outside on the track but I've met a lot of new people."

She hopes to receive an athletics scholarship from somewhere and attend university in the States to work on being a plastic surgeon in the future.

She thanks her mom for making her practice for NAIG and she also looks up to an Olympic medalist to push herself.

"One of my inspirations is Allyson Felix because she's really amazing in track and she won four Olympic gold medals and two silvers."

Her message to the youth who want to be an athlete in NAIG is simple but straight to the point.

"Just train and don't put it off."



NAIG Profile

Athlete: Kyrel Herman

Age: 16

From: La Loche

Sport: Volleyball

U16

**By Jeanelle Mandes
For Eagle Feather News**

Kyrel Herman, from La Loche, was happy when his team brought home the gold medal in U16 volleyball for Team Saskatchewan in the North American Indigenous Games (NAIG).

"I felt so happy winning the gold medal. It was fun competing against other provinces. Winning that gold medal is something that I will remember forever and meeting the great people there."

Herman has been playing the sport since he was in Grade 7. His friends asked him one day to play and ever since, he fell in love with the game.

He played on the team with his best friend, Trey Crookedneck.

When he heard the news that he made it for the team, he was excited to see what kind of experience we would have.

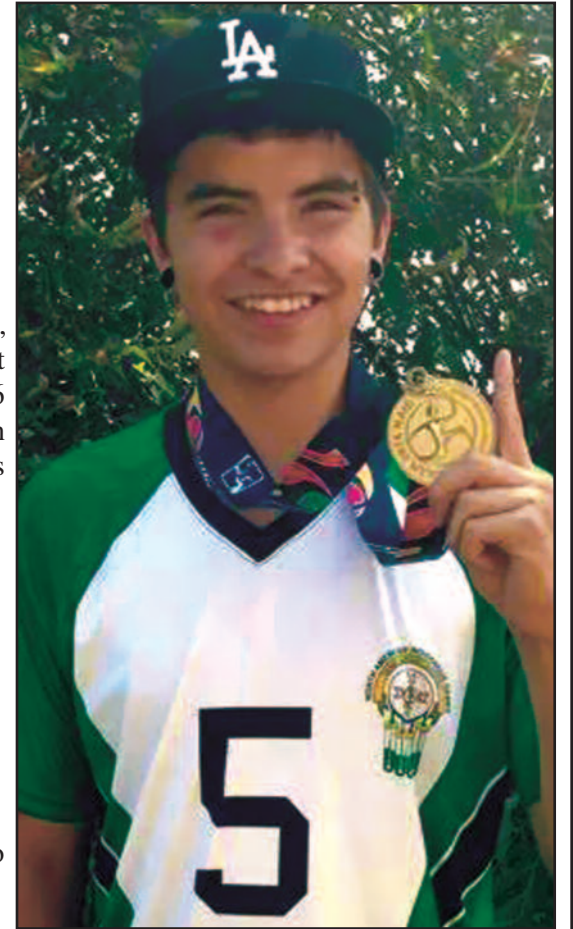
"I felt happy because it was something that I wanted to do to play on a provincial team and it was my first time coming to NAIG."

He had been training for NAIG for almost a year doing a lot of workouts and practicing volleyball back home.

He enjoyed his experience not only by winning the gold medal but taking home memories that he will cherish his whole life.

"It's very fun and meeting new people is great. Winning the gold medal, we did it as a team. There were six Denes and six Cree. It was great because before NAIG, we already knew each other so it was good," he says. "I like to thank my coaches for coaching us," he adds.

Herman hopes to play college or university volleyball at either at the University of Regina or Lakeland College in Lloydminster.



NEWS THAT NOT ONLY INFORMS, BUT INSPIRES.

Trust Larissa Burnouf, your Saskatoon correspondent, to gather stories from an Aboriginal perspective. *APTN National News* reports each weeknight from regional bureaus across Canada, delivering the stories that affect us all.

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Métis Veterans Monument unveiled at Batoche

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

BATOCHE – At a moving ceremony at Back to Batoche Days, Lennard Morin of Cumberland House finally witnessed the unveiling of the Métis Veterans Memorial Monument.

A veteran of the Korean War, Morin was from a family that had a tradition of serving in national military engagements despite the Métis community having been on the receiving end of federal gunfire.

Morin noted that even as a young person he had noticed how little was done

for the veterans. He listened to, respected, and honoured them, building a monument in his community. Not all those who served, returned. Those who did survive were not treated well.

“My uncle, just like your uncles and fathers, they came home after the Second World War emotionally scarred for life,” Morin said to the hundreds gathered for the unveiling. “Some were traumatized — they came home angry and mean. They were supposed to be honoured and given land, compensated, that never happened. So they went to their traplines, and they had problems, and there was no counseling.”

The imposing granite monument was designed with input from veterans — a circle of nine black pillars with a grey centrepiece that will have Dennis Weber’s original artwork etched into it. The first 7,000 names will be inscribed on the monument’s pillars in 2015. There will be extensive research through federal archives because nobody has kept formal



Métis veterans in front of the Métis Veterans Memorial Monument. **Frank Tomkins, James Smokey Tomkins, Wesley Whitford Miller and Oscar Lacombe.**

records of Métis veterans. The Gabriel Dumont Institute is hoping the public will send in names of Métis friends and family who served. Over the years, the names of veterans will continue to be added.



Korean War veteran Lennard Morin addresses the crowd at Batoche.

(Photo By Andréa Ledding)

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Youth runners pay tribute to Métis veterans



Monument in Batoche included (left to right) Glen Bottineau, [unclear], John McDonald, Lawrence Jack White, William Bill

(Photo by Peter Beszterda ©Gabriel Dumont Institute)

“One must also remember that these soldiers were kids ... 17, 18, 19 years old in many cases. We are free today and we must never condone war but we must never forget our heroes.”

He recalled Riel and Dumont’s courage in their various ends, at the gallows noose and standing without bullets against the Gatling guns.

Veterans Edwin St. Pierre, and Harriet Oakes-St. Pierre said the Act of Remembrance in English and Michif, before the Last Post was played and silence observed.

The youth Honour Runners who ran from Saskatoon to Batoche presented each veteran with gifts, while the soldiers who had participated were given Métis sashes by the Métis veterans.

“Some came home, and every one of them would say the heroes were the ones who remain buried around the globe,” noted Alex Maurice, veteran and provincial president of the Aboriginal Veteran’s Association.

“This morning, these soldiers wouldn’t eat until everyone else was fed,” noted Shannon Loutitt, who had organized the “Road to Peace and Unity” Honour Run, adding it was typical of

their selfless everyday sacrifice.

Elder Norman Fleury said the opening prayer; musicians JJ Lavallee, Donny Parenteau, Jess Lee and Andrea Menard shared music, while many dignitaries and funders provided tributes.

The monument funding was spear-

headed by Gabriel Dumont Institute over the last few years and about \$100,000 is still required. Parenteau, who produced a monument fund-raising CD for GDI entitled, “Honouring Our Heroes: A Tribute to Métis Veterans” encouraged the crowd to give a standing ovation to the many veterans present.



A Métis veteran passes the Cadet honour guard at the Batoche ceremony.

(Photo by Andréa Ledding)

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NAIG Profile

Athlete: Kiefer Paul, Age: 18, Graduated Grade 12
From: One Arrow First Nation, Sport: Track and Field U19

By Jeanelle Mandes
 For Eagle Feather News

Kiefer Paul, from One Arrow First Nation, is the winner of a gold and bronze medal competing in athletics at the North American Indigenous Games (NAIG) in Regina.

He was surprised when he won these two medals; something that he wasn't expecting.

"The bronze medal I got from shot put and a gold medal I got in discus," he says.

"I felt overwhelmed, I didn't expect to place in shot put, and it was more less a back up and when I got here I kind of hurt myself on the first throw. So from there, I didn't think I could do it. A lot of talking from good coaches told me I could do it. I ended up placing bronze and in gold most of my motivation came from my son," he adds.

Paul was overwhelmed and happy when he found out that he made it for Team Saskatchewan to compete in the sport.

"I was more overwhelmed than anything. I didn't think something like that would happen. The moment I found out, I was right into training. I knew I had to come here to compete and do my best."

He said he started doing exercises on the bike, weight-lifting and a lot of cardio exercises. He'd train two-three times a week and practicing his throws every day.

He says he loved his first NAIG experience with so much to take in.

"It's been awesome, the greatest experience I've ever had. I've done a lot of track and field and this has got to be the best. Even the sports, I've been to all the basketball and volleyball games. Just the atmosphere being here is amazing. Everybody is here to do one thing, to compete at their best. I think everyone brought it to the table," he says.

He plans on returning to NAIG not as an athlete but as a coach to help to keep the youth working towards a positive step in their lives.

"I want to come back to coach because I want to give back. Right now, I'm looking into getting a scholarship for the First Nations University here in Regina and I want to become a teacher and I want to be a coach, I would love to give back to all the kids. I want to show them that with a lot of hard work, you can do anything."



NAIG Profile

Athlete: Logan Booth
Age: 15
From: Syracuse, New York
Sport: Volleyball U16

By Jeanelle Mandes
 For Eagle Feather News

Logan Booth, from Team New York, was really happy to take part of the North American Indigenous Games (NAIG) in Regina, Saskatchewan.

She loved her first NAIG experience

and has gained a lot of great memories to take back home with her.

"It's been really cool and I got to meet a lot of different people and I got to trade pins. Overall, it's been a really great experience."

Her team came in fourth and lost the bronze medal against Team Ontario. But, she says she came to the games to enjoy herself and to take home memories.

Her advice to the youth who would like to participate as an athlete for NAIG is to have a great experience and to have fun while you're playing.

"Train hard and enjoy yourself while your out here, it's a really awesome experience that you don't get every day."



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Staying Brown a reminder of our connectedness

I enjoy Facebook. Over the years I have reconnected to lot of friends with it. I've found new ones and revitalized relationships that were floundering because of time and distance.

I've also been able to share a lot of the twists and turns of life and the sudden realizations and revelations that come from living. As a writer there always seems to be something fascinating going on beneath the surface of any ordinary day. So Facebook is a great tool for those of who spend most of our lives at a desk.

But it seems that the more people you connect with in a good way, the more people who are likely to be upset with things you share. The more you give your inner self, the more they attack you outwardly. I try to post comments and observations that have something of consequence in them; writing things that are spiritual, reflective and indicative of the things my spirit leads me to.

I try to be real. Still, there are always people who are my 'friends' on Facebook who malign me for some of those contemplative comments.

For instance, I've been using a closing salutation on my posts for the last year or so. At the end of a message

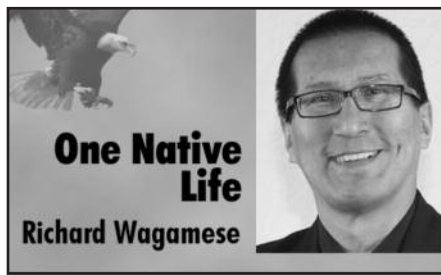
I will often write, Stay Brown. To me it was a benign, neutral salutation intended only as a spiritually oriented way of wishing everyone a good day, good fortune and good wishes. It was a celebration of personhood, identity and meant to bring us all together as a human family. But I got blasted for it.

Some people accused me of reverse racism. They said I was promoting Native identity over everyone else's. They said I was creating ill will. Others called me exclusionary and someone who was creating barriers between people.

A lot of people deleted me as a Facebook friend because of the salutation "Stay Brown."

Looking at it objectively, I can see where there might be cause for some degree of upset. The trouble is they didn't get what I was saying.

Where dissenters took the phrase as something hugely negative, they didn't get my intention. They didn't look at the phrase as something of value to everyone or even send me a Facebook message to inquire about it. Instead, they



One Native Life
Richard Wagamese

chose to vilify me, denounce me and sometimes advise others to delete. But within the phrase "Stay Brown" is something

elemental and valuable to all of us.

See, when you remember that you are a part of the Earth and that she is a part of you; you stay brown. When you remember that we are all one body moving through time together; you stay brown. When you can believe that we are all brothers and sisters as members of this human family, you stay brown. When you remember that we are all under the care and nurturing and grace of a loving Creator; you stay brown.

When you remember that we are alive because everyone and everything else is; you stay brown. When you can live with the credo that the honor of one thing is the honor of all things, you stay brown. When you remember that reaching out requires far more strength than pushing away; you stay brown, and when you remember that spirituality finds its truest expression in community; you stay brown.

And most importantly, when you

remember that if you take the four primary colors of the Medicine Wheel, the red, white, yellow and black, the colors that represent all the colors of people in the world, and you mix them together – you get brown. It shows you the great human truth that separation does not exist and that unity and harmony are the energies that work to keep us together. You remember that we need each other, that we are all related, that we are all brothers and sisters – and you stay brown.

That's the intent and the purpose of using that phrase. That's the central message. It's the spiritual center of two words that in themselves are nothing without that spiritual context. When I posted this explanation on Facebook, the feedback was immense. People swarmed to it and began using it themselves in messages back to me. Why? Because everyone is searching for a reminder of our connectedness.

But the most important part of that salutation is this: that when you remember to start each day with gratitude for the blessings that are already present in your life; you stay brown.

So, Stay Brown friends! Stay brown.



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Here's the recipe for gutless wonderhood

The Dashing Board of Gov'ners met and the subject turned to greatness. We got hung up on how some men appear stuck in Gutless Wonderland, and take it out on their loved ones.

Then, we decided to have a little fun with the topic.

Finally, the list you didn't know you were waiting for, here is the recipe to evade success, repel women, disappoint people and stay a gutless wonder.

1. Blame Others.

Your new motto? Be a Little Bitch, or BLB for short. All of the problems in your life are because of other people.

You are a victim, an innocent bystander, powerless, meek, and weak, so complain at the top of your BLB lungs.

Judging other people helps.

Taking responsibility for your life, for your decisions, that is the domain of the brave. Screwed up? The brave step up and own it, no excuses.

It is much easier to cast blame elsewhere – cowardly, but much easier.

2. Be Needy.

Never be self-sufficient. Always require the strength, resources, or presence of others, and find ways to manipulate their feelings for you so you can get what you want.

Ask your mom for stuff, or take grandma to town on cheque day and get the crap you can't get for yourself.

Unsure? Scared? Am I worthy? We all have these moments, but if you truly want to have a passive, bland life this is where you live. In fact, every decision you make should be the result of your imagining what other people might think.

The bold, on the other hand, are not paralyzed worrying about the judgment of other people. Sure they are considerate, and they take in all the information they can from people they respect.

But ultimately they act. And they own the results. And if wrong, they step up and own that too!

3. Follow the Crowd.

Never examine your beliefs or values, and never act on them if you happen to stumble upon them. Wait until the mob tells you what they believe, what they cherish, then meekly blend into the crowd.

Parades will not be thrown for you, for that silliness is reserved for the bold – the ones who dare to think for themselves.

They're the ones who have been thrust into the darkest – and brightest – corners of their souls, who have come to certain terms with what they found.

4. If You're the Smartest Guy in Your Crew, Keep That Crew.

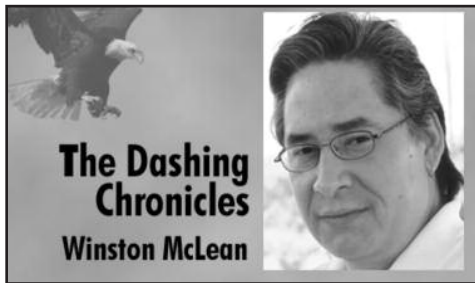
If you find yourself the leader of the pack, do everything you can to stay there. Sure, the power you feel is shallow and insecure, but it is power. So lie, gossip, and deflect if it keeps you in the lead.

Getting a new crew takes courage. They may have bigger visions, bolder missions, and they may be accomplishing great things, maybe with class.

Some of that crap may rub off, and the old crew will think you a sell-out.

5. Have No Vision.

Plodding along without a direction is a great way to avoid taking responsibility for your life. Just drift, let life push you around. BLB.



The bold have taken that deep, hard look inside, then looked forward. They ask themselves, "What does life look like in five, 10, 25 years, because I have

overcome my situation, my history, and am living a fantastic life?"

They savour that picture, those emotions, that fantasy. They act.

It's like Ron Swanson says, "Never half ass two things. Whole ass one thing!"

Looking back, I can say with complete and utter confidence that I have made every single mistake on this list, and come up with a few dizzying innovations of my own. We all have.

Looking forward though, things look great. I got a

Board of Gov'ners to advise me. I got my babies, and my grandlittles to motivate me.

I've got heroes to inspire me. And there are other blessings.

There are no guarantees. All you can do is improve your chances.

And God said to John, "Come forth and receive eternal life." But John came fifth and won a toaster

I can say with complete and utter confidence that I have made every single mistake on this list.

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Heavy equipment operators ready for work

By John Lagimodiere
Of Eagle Feather News

SASKATOON – Andrea Bluehorn and Dale Caron have both realized their childhood dreams of operating heavy equipment and receiving their license to drive a semi.

A training program run by The City of Saskatoon, in partnership with the Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI), Saskatoon Tribal Council Inc., and Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology (SIIT), just saw Bluehorn and Caron celebrate their graduation with five other students from the Aboriginal Heavy Equipment Operator and Class 1A License Pre employment Training Program.

training, I passed the test on the first try,” said Bluehorn before the graduation ceremony at Wanuskewin Heritage Park.

“This program gives me the opportunity now to go out and find work with the skills that I have learned in the past three months. I’m kind of sad too because I won’t be with my classmates the way I was past three months. I’m happy for all of us.”

The Aboriginal Heavy Equipment Operator and 1A License Pre employment Training Program is designed to train men and women to prepare for employment opportunities in the Saskatoon and Saskatchewan labour market. Participants take a variety of classes including: Class 1A



Classmates, instructors and partners from SIIT, GDI, the Saskatoon Tribal Council and the City of Saskatoon gathered for a team photo at the graduation ceremony. (Photo by John Lagimodiere)

Bluehorn was working casual at the Dakota Dunes Casino when she heard about the course. She immediately applied. When she first sat in the cab of a semi to drive it, the reality hit home.

“I was, like, what the heck did I get myself into, but I went along with it. I was really nervous, but I knew deep down inside this was something I always wanted. After

(theory and practical); First Aid/CPR; Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS); Ground Disturbance and Transportation of Dangerous Goods; Confined Space Entry; and, Defensive Driving and Heavy Equipment Operator training where partic-



Andrea Bluehorn had always dreamed about operating heavy equipment. Now she can.

Participants gain first-hand experience operating a variety of heavy equipment.

Caron was working in construction before he got into the course but he took to driving the rigs and heavy equipment in no time.

“This was a wonderful course and I learned so many new things. Since I was young I wanted to be around heavy equipment. I am so thankful to the City, GDI and SIIT for training me so I can sustain my family’s future,” said Caron.

“Great things are going to happen. I know it. For my family I can provide better for them. Long-term stability will allow me to give them things they never had in the past. I can be financially stable.”

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Notice of Participation at a Commission Meeting

The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) will hold a meeting on October 1-2, 2014, during which the *CNSC Staff Report on the Performance of Uranium and Nuclear Substance Processing Facilities: 2013*, and the *CNSC Staff Report on the Performance of Uranium Mine and Mill Facilities: 2013* will be presented. These reports summarize the CNSC's assessment of the safety performance of uranium and nuclear substance processing facilities, as well as uranium mines and mills, for 2013. This meeting will update the Commission on safety and compliance information for these facilities and provide an opportunity for members of the public to file written submissions.

Date: October 1-2, 2014
Place: CNSC Public Hearing Room, 14th floor
280 Slater Street, Ottawa, Ontario
Time: As set by the agenda published prior to the meeting date

The public is invited to comment, in writing, on these meeting items. Written submissions must be filed with the Secretary of the Commission by September 5, 2014, online at nuclearsafety.gc.ca/eng/the-commission/intervention or through the coordinates below. Please include your name, address and telephone number. You may submit your personal information on a separate page, to ensure its confidentiality. It should be noted that all submissions are available to the public upon request to the Secretariat.

The CNSC staff reports will be available after August 11, 2014, upon request to the Secretariat. The agenda for the meeting will be available after September 16, 2014, on the CNSC website, at nuclearsafety.gc.ca.

c/o Louise Levert
Secretariat

Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission
280 Slater St., P.O. Box 1046
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5S9

Tel.: 613-996-9063 or 1-800-668-5284
Fax: 613-995-5086
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Canada

NAIG Profile

Athlete: Santanna Bill,
Age: 15
From: Pelican Lake First Nation
Sport: Badminton U16



By Jeanelle Mandes
For Eagle Feather News

Santanna Bill, from Pelican Lake First Nation, was excited to be a part of this year's North American Indigenous Games (NAIG) held in Regina. She says she was really excited when she first found out that she was going to represent Team Saskatchewan playing badminton.

"There were really no words that came to mind how happy and proud I was. I was really excited to get the experience be a part of NAIG."

She trained for three months running, doing footwork and other exercises. She's been playing badminton for six years and owes her dedication to her biggest inspiration; her sister.

"My sister is my biggest inspiration because she competed in NAIG when she was younger; she tripled crowned. I really look up to her so I wanted to follow her footsteps."

Bill enjoyed her first experience at NAIG having a lot of fun besides taking home the gold medal.

"It was amazing! It was really great seeing all the people and meeting new people and spending time with everyone."

Her plans for the future are to attend university and go into teaching but she is unsure of which university to choose from.

Her advice to the youth who would like to work hard to play in NAIG is to play hard and enjoy the experience. "Just talk to new people, make lots of friends and just have a good time."

NAIG Profile

Athletes: Savannah and Santanna Debray
Ages: 17, From: Duck Lake, Sport: Soccer U18

By Jeanelle Mandes
For Eagle Feather News

Two athletes, who are also biological twins, made it together to play U18 soccer for Team Saskatchewan in the North American Indigenous Games (NAIG) in Regina.

Savannah and Santanna Debray, from Duck Lake, both enjoyed their experiences at the games.

"It was a wonderful experience, getting to know other people's cultures from all over and getting to know people and having a competition in a sport that I like," says Savannah.

Santanna agrees with her sister, she says she was really happy when they both found out that they made it to the games together.

"I was really excited; I actually didn't believe it at first. We do a lot of sports together so it's pretty good to do the same sports at the same time because we do a lot of things together," says Santanna.

Savannah's position was the goaltender and her sister was on defense in soccer. They both enjoyed playing and winning the silver medals with their teammates.

"It was fun just being with the team and building team bonding and getting to know new people and seeing people from other places," says Santanna.

Both girls have been playing the sport for five or six years. Their advice to the younger ones who would like to play in NAIG is to have a fun experience.

"It's a great experience and just as you try your hardest, have a good positive experience and you'll have fun there. Train hard and do whatever your coach tells you and don't lip off. Respect your coach and you'll have a fun time," they both said.



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Karma always ready to bite the bad guys

Karma is a fairly well known concept also known as “what goes around, comes around” or “is a bitch.”

As far as philosophies go, it’s pretty simple: whatever bad you do, will be done unto you. Maybe not tomorrow, but someday – cuz karma – like an elephant or an abscessed tooth – never forgets.

The whole point of karma is to teach you that there are consequences to acting like a dick. But I find that message gets lost. A lot of times, I’ve seen people treating karma like a kind of spiritual pit bull: “Go get his ass Karma, you get him real good!” For their sake, I hope there’s no bad karma incurred from being a vindictive asshole.

Karma and I have a pretty close relationship. Whenever I do wrong, it’s always there to deliver a swift kick to the ass. When I was younger, I used to steal my sister’s clothes all the time. (My brother’s clothes were safe as like most teenage boys he had a strong goat-like smell.)

Going home from University was like shopping to me – but the free kind. I would browse through her closets and take whatever I wanted. My rationalization was that my sister was taller and therefore had already won the genetic lottery and I was just evening up the score. Karma did not agree.

While moving one summer, all of my clothes were stolen. (Except for the clothes that I was wearing – you’d have to be a pretty good thief to pull that off.)

How could this happen? Well, at the time, my family was obsessed with giant suitcases. These suitcases were three times the size of a normal suitcase,



suitable for moving an entire wardrobe or a dead horse.

On a holiday, my large family would throw all of our clothes in the same suitcase thus saving us the trouble of having to carry several smaller suitcases.

There were many problems with this system like when the wheels broke on one of our giant suitcases and we had to take turns dragging or pushing it through hotel hallways like Egyptian slaves working on the pyramids.

Or when it got stolen and everything you owned and loved was in it.

I remember the moment when I told my parents about the theft: “My clothes are gone. All of them.” I had a loopy half-smile on my face because I was in shock.

My mom was sad for me, my dad was sad for himself as he was inevitably the bank that helped restore my wardrobe. (Not sure what he did to deserve that – but it must have been bad!)

Another Karmic moment – in the past, I’ve made fun of people with bad teeth. I once described a guy as “looking as if he flossed with barbed wire.” Not to his face, however, behind his back, like a lady.

This is probably why a few years ago, I cracked a tooth on a popcorn kernel, went to the dentist and ended up needing seven fillings, three root canals and an extraction. (I hope the dentist is still enjoying his Jet Ski from that visit.) You might think – but Dawn, maybe this is not Karma, maybe you just have terrible dental hygiene? Considering that I floss once a month, whether I need it or not, I believe the spiritual explanation is likely more accurate.

So if Karma punishes you for being a d-bag, then it must reward you for being nice, right? Well on this, I’m not certain. Every year I buy one of those Hospital Home lottery tickets and just before the draw date, I go on a “Being-Sweet-as-Beets” spree. My coworkers are literally showered with double doubles. I tip more than 20 per cent wherever I go – (except the dentist, screw that guy).

On phone calls with my friends, I don’t check my Facebook while pretending to listen to them. I smile at strange babies, even the not-so-cute ones.

So far, however, I haven’t won squat – not even an iTunes card. I guess a Karmic scholar would say that I’ll get my reward in the next life. But what if I’m super rich in my next life and I don’t even need a free house? What if I’m so rich that I’m like, “oh great another house to hire a cleaning staff for!”

Karma is the universe’s way of punishing the bad guys and rewarding the good guys and it’s a law that works even when our justice system can’t – which means, Stephen Harper, you better check yourself with the Karma police.



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Plex balances sports, music with fatherhood

Doug Bedard, aka Plex, is an award-winning hip hop artist who was in Regina to perform at the closing ceremonies for the North American Indigenous Games (NAIG). Eagle Feather News recently caught up with the Edmonton born and raised rapper at his home in Toronto.

Goz: First off, what is Plex up to these days?

Plex: I've really just been focusing on being a good father. I do find time to be creative, usually when the kids are asleep. I have about 10 songs demo'd to basically become my next album. Just need to re-record all my vocals and add some guitar. I always have a ton of yard work to keep up with. But I did recently get a lawn tractor and it really changed my lawn mowing game.



ass to say anyone but her.

Goz: What would your WWE name be? What about your signature move?

Plex: My name would be Perfect Plex and my signature move would be the 'Curt Hennig.'

Goz: What sports icon would you most want to rap with? Why?

Plex: To be honest, I don't want to rap with any icons. I barely want to rap with any other rappers.

Goz: What's it like being a go-to role model for events such as NAIG?

Plex: I have a really good time connecting with youth of all ages. I'm grateful that anyone would ever consider me to be a part of any event like this. The last decade has been so amazing for me and I'd love to continue to make music and scout out talent to work with.



Doug Bedard says he had an amazing time at the recent NAIG in Regina.



Plex performing on the NAIG stage with Won 18 in Regina.

Goz: You recently performed at the North American Indigenous Games in Regina – how was it?

Plex: I had an amazing time in Regina. The weather was great while we were there and I also got the chance to perform with my old rap group, Won 18. Everything started with Won 18 for me and considering how we didn't get a chance to rehearse, we were able to perform seamlessly. I'm grateful to have been given the opportunity. The crowd and all those athletes the whole thing was amazing.

Goz: Considering what is was like when you were a kid, how far has Aboriginal sport come?

Plex: I played community league, junior high and high school basketball and volleyball. I definitely don't remember the Indigenous Games existing until after I had stopped playing. So I guess ... it's better? Ha ha ha ha!!

Goz: There are a lot of Indians in jails these days. Been that way too long. With that in mind, how important are sports for youth?

Plex: Basketball kept me out of trouble. In my early to mid-teens, I woke up at 8 a.m. during the summer and played right until the sun went down. Most of my friends also did the same.

Goz: If you were a sports legend, what game would you dominate? Why?

Plex: I guess basketball was my choice growing up, but if I could skate better, it would probably be hockey.

Goz: If your son was playing hockey and at around age 16 told you he was wanted to make the NHL as a fighter, what would you say?

Plex: Hmm. I really can't imagine my son would say something of that nature. He's a lot like his mom (Jennifer Podemski).

Goz: Favorite sports movie of all time?

Plex: Kingpin.

Goz: Favorite Aboriginal athlete? Why?

Plex: Well, I know Waneek Horn-Miller (a former member of Canada's water polo team) and she's just so nice and such great company, I'd feel like an

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