

Feelings of Pride

Donna Mirasty figured being the wife of the lieutenant governor would be a real adventure

Photo credit: The Office of the Lieutenant Governor.



By Jeanelle Mandes
of Eagle Feather News

Her Honour Donna Mirasty is a woman of poise who is modest, family-oriented and is wholly supportive of her husband, Russ Mirasty who is Saskatchewan's 23rd lieutenant governor.

Donna Mirasty was born and raised in Cumberland House in northern Saskatchewan. Her first language is Swampy Cree, which is the 'n' dialect. Her parents were Agnes and Pierre Carriere and she grew up with five brothers and two sisters.

"My parents had a traditional lifestyle of hunting, fishing and trapping," she said. "I was raised on duck, moose and all that."

After completing high school, Mirasty went to Saskatoon to obtain an education in the Certified Nursing Assistant program, which is now called the

Licensed Practical Nursing (LPN) program.

Forty some years ago, she met His Honour during her first job at Lac La Ronge Indian Band.

They got married in May of 1978 where they devoted their unconditional love for one another. Mirasty supported and followed her husband as the locations in his RCMP career changed a lot. With her education and training, she would manage to land a job as an LPN.

"My main focus when we got married, that this is my life...so my focus [was] on both of us. When we had our children, I also focused on the kids. I always made sure my family was OK," she said.

The Mirastys have two grown children, Jennifer and Matthew, and two grandchildren. The Mirastys were firm believers in education and strongly ...

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Metis Trackstar

"In my first year, I was a bit overwhelmed with the track and classes. But I'm balancing and extending my degree to control everything that's going on..."

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March 2020 is...
**WOMEN'S
ISSUE**



Language Warrior

"One day I thought, 'why not create a Cree camp with Cree teachers in a Cree context? ... It seemed so simple.'"

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Donations Needed

"I knew we had to do something to help. My life had been saved. Now I wanted to give back."

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Donna Mirasty proud of lieutenant-governor husband Russ Mirasty

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encouraged their children to obtain a higher education. Jennifer is a Registered Nurse and Matthew went into policing and is now working for the provincial government in justice.

It will mark one year in July that her husband took on the role as Saskatchewan's first Indigenous lieutenant-governor. Mirasty recalls the thoughts and feelings she had when they first found out about the news.

"I thought 'Wow! It's going to be a real interesting adventure,'" she said. "I was looking forward to it."

An installation ceremony for His Honour took place on September 12, 2019 in Regina. It was a monumental moment in history, one that the Mirastys will cherish forever.

"We were all so proud. I was so grateful that my family and Russ's family were there," she said. "My mother's beadwork was worn [that day]."

My grandson wore hair wrap-arounds and my nephew wore a beaded jacket. Little pieces of home were there and it was so nice and a proud moment."

Mirasty wishes to share some advice with other women out there in honour of International Women's Day.

"My mom and dad told me (to) be proud of who I was and where I came from. Try your best in whatever job you're going to have," she said.



Premier Scott Moe greeted LG Russ Mirasty and Her Honour Donna Mirasty during the installation ceremony last year. (Photo by Jeanelle Mandes)

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Sedley: Sedley Gym Hall - 507 Prairie Ave
Kenaston: Kenaston Place - 704 4th St
Estevan: Affinity Credit Union - 833 4th St

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Teen climate activist fighting for Mother Earth

By NC Raine
for Eagle Feather News

Saj Starcevich is Saskatchewan's Greta Thunberg.

Seventeen year-old Swede Thunberg has become synonymous with climate activism since she began leading thousands of students in 2018 to walk out of class to protest the climate emergency. But Thunberg isn't alone. Although she is indisputably the face of a movement, there are many other young leaders who are taking serious action to protect both their communities and our world.

Thirteen year old Sáj Starcevich, member of Carry the Kettle Nakoda Nation, is one of Saskatchewan's young leaders fighting the systems that enable climate change. Being a vegan all her life, Starcevich has long been involved in animal rights activism, but learning more recently about the state of the planet has prompted her to focus on the environment.

"When I found out our world was dying, that mother earth was dying, I started doing climate activism to help mother earth," said Starcevich. "I feel like I have an obligation to help the earth because I need an earth if I'm going to have a future."

Starcevich has wasted no time taking action on the climate crisis. She has met with the mayor of Melfort, written to her city council, met with MP Randy Hoback, spoken in front of hundreds

of people at the Saskatchewan Legislative Building in Regina, and attended marches all over the country, including the Thunberg-founded Fridays For Future strikes.

"When adults (contribute to climate change), they know what's happening. But their lives aren't on the line. Ours are. We need to send them that message," she said.

"My ancestors have been on this land since time immemorial, and the land and mother earth has given us so much. I feel like we owe it to her to take care of her. And the animals, who are like our brothers and sisters, we owe it to them to save the planet."

Perhaps most notably, Starcevich is one of the 15 young Canadians who are suing the Canadian government over climate change. The lawsuit, filed on October 25, accuses the government of contributing to dangerous climate change. The young plaintiffs are supported by the David Suzuki Foundation, the Pacific Centre for Environmental Law and Litigation, and Our Children's Trust.

"We are hoping for a science-based recovery plan to save our future and mother earth," she said. "I think if everyone does their best and is motivated to help, we can do it."

The young climate activist doesn't lack for motivation herself, attributing her family for providing her with encouragement and support. Starcevich was even able to briefly meet her role model, Greta Thunberg, at a climate strike last year in Vancouver.



13 year old climate activist Sáj Starcevich at a Fridays for Future strike in Melfort. (photo: Ray Cruzzola)

"It makes me really happy that there's someone like her speaking. She's such a big influence to the climate movement," said Starcevich. "It's really encouraging, because she's still just a kid, too. That makes me feel like I can make a big difference as well."

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Welcome to a new and fresh look of Eagle Feather News!

By Jeanelle Mandes
of Eagle Feather News

It's an exciting and pivotal change to the newspaper. This month marks 22 years in operation of Eagle Feather News. I have only been on board since 2014 as Eagle Feather

News' first intern. I've stayed connected as a freelancer turned news editor. But I had occasionally read the newspaper whenever I had the chance to get my hands on it growing up on the rez. Never would I have thought I would be a part of the



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Editorial Notes



Jeanelle Mandes

Eagle Feather News team.

I've learned so much throughout the past six years from my fellow colleagues.

We've welcomed new members to the team within a span of four months. Errol Sutherland (from Beady's – woo!) is our Digital Media Strategist. Errol was instrumental in introducing fresh ideas to help with the newspaper's transformation. In addition, Errol introduced our web stories in an audio format where I have been hearing nothing but positive feedback about this new feature.

Betty Ann Adam is our copy editor and writing coach at Eagle Feather News. I knew her for almost 13 years as she was one of my instructors in the Indian Communication Arts (INCA) Summer Institute. Betty Ann has mad writing skills and does such an excellent job in editing our stories and providing feedback to our fellow writers. We are very fortunate to have her on board as well.

As we welcome the new changes, we also say "see you later" to a longstanding member of the Eagle Feather News team. Warren Goulding was the newspaper's associate editor. He has been with us for 20 years. Prior to joining the news team, I already knew who Warren was as he is the author of "Just Another Indian: A Serial Killer and

Canada's Indifference."

I studied this book in high school and I even had the opportunity to conduct a phone interview with him many moons ago before I entered university life. I had no idea what I was doing in terms of conducting an interview. But my fascination with the work Warren put into his book overshadowed my doubts. He was very instrumental in bringing life into the newspaper. I've learned a lot from him. It's a bittersweet ending to a wonderful era with his involvement with Eagle Feather News. I was reminded by my publisher/boss, John, that change is always hard but necessary. Thank you, Warren, for the patience, dedication and the long hours you've put into the newspaper. Although we've only communicated through email and telephone (haha), just know that you will be truly missed. I wish you well on your future endeavours.

The spring equinox falls on March 19th. It's hard to predict if we will see any springtime flowers especially when you live in Saskatchewan where winter seems to last forever. But when I think of the two seasons about to click, I am reminded of change. Change happens whether you like it or not. We, the amazing news team of Eagle Feather News, hope you readers enjoy our new look. Ekosi.



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www.eaglefeathernews.com

PUBLISHER/EDITOR: John Lagimodiere, john@eaglefeathernews.com

NEWS EDITOR: Jeanelle Mandes, jeanelle@eaglefeathernews.com

ASSOCIATE EDITOR: Warren Goulding, publisher@askewcreek.com

ASSOCIATE EDITOR: Betty Ann Adam, bettyann@eaglefeathernews.com

DIGITAL MEDIA STRATEGIST/ SALES: Errol Sutherland, errol@eaglefeathernews.com

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The “second-hand” fan

While never small, my imprint on the world has become significantly larger since I had a kid. When I look at pictures of unlucky whales choking on plastic, I think of the toy boxes at home filled with plastic toys that a certain toddler swore he needed at the time.

We have enough plastic to choke at least two belugas. This waste problem is only getting worse since the toddler discovered YouTube videos in which other kids play with toys. (There are also a surprising number of YouTube adults playing with toys. I both admire and am repelled by them).

When the toddler watches these videos, he then shouts, “Mommy I need this.” And as you know, a lot of these YouTube toys are no longer available in stores. (Well, they are available on Amazon for about \$200 apiece but no one tells the toddler that.)

This problem drove me to check out second-hand stores. We wander through the toy aisles and always find something new to him. The selection is all over the place, but there is a crazy amount of minion and ninja turtles figures – those never seem to go out of style. As a mom, I feel super-rich telling him, “Why stop at two ninja turtles – get three or four.” At a dollar a piece, I can afford to shop like a Kardashian.

As we walked around second-hand stores, I noticed a fair amount of elderly and young hipsters, which makes sense as they wear the same clothes: sensible shoes, pleated slacks and oversized sweaters. The elderly don’t wear as big of

glasses but if you squint, they are pretty much twins.

I found some great deals on clothes for myself and my toddler but you should be aware that yes, sometimes these clothes have bugs on them. When I was younger, I assumed that all of the clothes on those hangers had been freshly laun-



dered. I’m not sure where – surely in the back there was a big industrial-sized washing machine next to a giant dryer. One time I bought a skiing jacket because I was going to take up snowboarding and I remember dropping my purchase on my bed and then forgetting about it.

A few months later, I found a bug crawling on my blanket and I squished it. A smell emanated that I remembered oh, so well from my childhood – it was ye ole bedbug. I brought in the building manager, a hippie artist. As a white guy with dreadlocks, he wasn’t the least bit judgmen-

tal. With his help, I flipped the mattress and we found an entire colony – well, colonies – on the underside of the mattress.

They had been feeding off of me and me alone. Did I notice? Nope. Did I have any suspicious rashes? Nope. In fact, I had suffered zero health effects from the bedbugs feasting on me. It’s almost like I was the perfect host.

The ski jacket had been secondhand but these bugs were first-hand to me. I remember staring at the bedbug cities and thinking, “I am their God, I am powerful.”

Even though, of course, everyone else was disgusted. A friend who was supposed to visit me that weekend would only meet me in public places and deigned not to hug me.

My landlord helped me pack up my stuff into garbage bags. After my bugs were removed to a farm where they had lots of room to run around (no, of course they were chemically eradicated – but I like to pretend they made it out okay) I had a week’s worth of laundry to do without making eye contact with any of my fellow apartment-dwellers.

Ironically, after all that trouble, I never did go snowboarding in my bug-infested jacket.

So, while I am a big fan of secondhand stores because I get to feel like a rich mama and powerful like a person who could support a bedbug metropolis, everything goes into the washer on extra-hot.



CONGRATULATIONS STUDENTS!

During Indigenous Achievement Week this February, over 40 Indigenous students received awards for their accomplishments in academics, community engagement, leadership and research. Congratulations to everyone and thank you for all that you do!



Coaching reaps cultural riches for track star Farmer

By NC Raine
for Eagle Feather News

Two spheres seemingly unrelated – biochemical engineering, and track and field – but for standout University of Saskatchewan student-athlete Kendra Farmer, her application to the former may in part explain her excellence in the latter.

“In track, you’re able to measure just how much better you’re getting. In



Kendra Farmer running the relay at the Canada West track and field championships (photo: Louis Christ)

team sports, you can’t always track that improvement, so the measurability of it is fun.”

“I never made that connection between track and biochem (engineering),” laughs Farmer. “But one thing I like about both math and science is how exact answers are. There’s no grey area. And that’s very much like track, so perhaps that explains my draw to it.”

In almost no time at all, the Saskatoon-born Metis athlete has made quite a name for herself in western Canadian track and field. In 2018, Farmer won the Patricia Lawson Trophy for U of S female rookie of the year after winning a silver medal in the 4x400 metre relay, bronze in 4x200 metre relay, and fourth place in the 300 metre race at the Canada West Championships.

After collecting a couple more silver relay medals last year, Farmer and the relay team won gold in both the 4x200 and 4x400 races at Canada West this year. Farmer won silver in the 300 metre race, for which she is now currently ranked sixth nationally, and qualifies for nationals in both the 300 metre race and long-jump.

“Track and field is my love and passion right now,” said Farmer. “In my first year, I was a bit overwhelmed with the track and classes. But I’m balancing and extending my degree to control everything that’s going on. There’s still a lot of long bus trips spent on the computer doing assignments.”

In addition to school and track, Farmer makes time to give back to her community. After getting involved with Running Wild and the Saskatchewan Aboriginal Track and Field Championships (SaskATF), Farmer became a coach for the North American Indigenous Games (NAIG). She will take a group of under-16 girls to compete in Halifax this summer.

“When I started coaching last year, I noticed how they started to open up and evolve. Watching that made me realize (what) a difference track and field,

and being part of a community, can make in a person’s life.”

Farmer said she feels NAIG plays an important role in Indigenous and Metis athletics, because it helps foster interest in communities that may not have track and field.

“Every time I hear young athletes talk about NAIG, they talk about how many memories they’ve made and how it’s been one of the best experiences for their lives,” said Farmer. “For me, track has helped me gain so much more confidence. So I hope this is one of those opportunities (for youth) where they can go out and be part of something bigger than themselves.”

Growing up, Farmer said she wasn’t particularly immersed in her Metis culture. But after getting involved in NAIG and SaskAFT, she’s begun to connect more with her background and culture. It’s just one of the many benefits that has sprung from dedicating herself to her vocation.

“It’s been rewarding being involved in SaskATF and NAIG. I’ve been around my culture more and started to understand what it meant to be Metis,” said Farmer. “It’s helped me celebrate who I am.”

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Entrepreneurs teach business and the arts

By Andrea Ledding
for Eagle Feather News

Kimberly Parent of Saskatoon Salsa and Christine Marie of Awasis Boutique have joined forces to create “ayishiinoo” - a Michif word meaning Indigenous - to mentor and inspire other entrepreneurs in the Indigenous community.

“It’s more an extension of both our businesses, a partnership. We are offering various workshops and speaking engagements to communities. We talk about business but also artistic workshops because we’re both in the arts. So, I offer dance workshops and Christine offers sewing and fashion workshops,” Parent said.

While they are geared towards Indigenous business owners, anyone can

years, but I knew I’d get back out there eventually and bring positivity to people’s lives,” Marie said.

They want to get out into communities and share their knowledge and enthusiasm to help others turn interests and passions into businesses.

“If someone wants to start sewing, I can teach them basic sewing projects, something they can do in their home that doesn’t cost tons of money. It’s an outlet too,” said Christine.

She also notes that being a woman and having the opportunity to share is huge because there are generally far more male speakers, and Indigenous women can help be that light and inspiration to others too.

“When you grow up not seeing people that look like you being role models, when someone asked me who my role models were, I had to stop and think and I didn’t know,” said Christine, adding that it’s important to create opportunities for the younger generation to have those Indigenous female role models.

“The biggest thing for me is just to show up authentically for others, to bring a positive impact. Ultimately that’s what it boils down to. Connecting with people, because you have to relate. Being Indigenous women, there’s an instant connection right there.”



Entrepreneurs Kimberly Parent and Christine Marie have formed a business built to mentor and inspire Indigenous entrepreneurs in Saskatchewan. (Erin Crooks Photography)

benefit, she said.

Since August of 2019 the two have built a website, shared visions, and created workshops. They want to inspire people to go into business or grow their current business, and help them access tools, information and supports that already exist.

Their finance and resource workshops draw on supports available from Women Entrepreneurs of Saskatchewan, SMEDCO, Clarence Campeau and other support organizations. They address mindset, sustaining business, community and collaboration.

“We both have a strong belief that we’re better together and it’s always better to work in community rather than in competition.”

They also offer fun workshops incorporating business with dance and sewing workshops. They also do speaking engagements on entrepreneurship, parenting and the healing effects of the arts.

Marie used to do many speaking engagements before having her kids: to youth, reserves, and treatment centres about the unique challenges and experiences of being Indigenous, such as being the first to graduate from post-secondary in her family.

“I took time off when I knew I was ready to have a family, any parent knows that’s a big change and I was able to stay home with them for five



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Indigenous women create welcome space at ta-tawow student centre

By Isaac Adeoluwa Atayero
for Eagle Feather News

Every March 8, International Women's Day is an opportunity to highlight extraordinary women empowering and enabling others and the women of ta-tawâw Student Centre fit the bill.

Misty Longman, from George Gordon Saulteaux First Nation, is the manager of the ta-tawâw Student Centre at the University of Regina.

She and other Indigenous women staff members are passionate about creating a welcoming experience for all students. The ta-tawâw Centre is a space that promotes Indigenous ways of knowing and being specific to Treaty 4 territory. The programs run by the Centre create a community for students to network, receive counseling and learn about Indigenous culture.

Longman is an alumna of the First Nations University of Canada, but came to campus long before that.

"I've been on campus for almost 30 years of my life. I am a product of a single mother who came to university and when she did not have daycare, I was on campus", said Longman.

After graduation, Longman started working as an Indigenous recruiter at the U of R and after 15 months, the manager position at the Centre became vacant. In 2012, Longman became the manager, almost a year after another Indigenous woman, Rachel Janzé, became program coordinator.

"I started working here in September 2011, two weeks from the Tipi raising competition, and

it was nuts. I had no experience planning an event of that magnitude and was initially overwhelmed," Janzé said. "However, the support I got from the community saw me through. I came from working at the university's archives so it was a real learning curve for me.

"One of my favourite memories from those first days was when a student came to us in tears with an issue she had," Janzé continued "Within half an hour, we found a solution and then she asked me for a hug. Being able to help people like that made me very happy."

For both Longman and Janzé, it is important to



Ta-tawâw Student Centre manager, Misty Longman, and Program Coordinator, Rachel Janzé, catch up with student Ben Redcrow at the end of a long week. (Photo by Isaac Adeoluwa Atayero)

create programs for all students to feel at home, regardless of their background and what they are going through. Students can participate in pipe ceremonies, round dance feasts, resume review luncheons, counseling sessions with an elder and smudging.

"When it comes to feasts and round dance, we work with our Indigenous women on how to be cooks for feasts and what the protocols for the process are as women in the ceremony,"

Longman said. "We also work with our knowledge keeper, Brenda Dubois, to educate the young women on the roles women play in terms of parenting, as well their roles of bringing up Tipis in the home fire and the significance of that."

The knowledge keeper, Dubois, is fondly referred to as "Grandmother" and she makes herself available to students who need someone to talk to.

Morgan Esperance, a third-year journalism student at the U of R, testifies to the programs offered at the Centre. Esperance was a part of the nitôncipâmin omâ (OMA) program run by the Centre in her first year of university. OMA helps new first-year students navigate through university culture. Esperance, who is from Beardy's and Okemasis First Nation, recalls how crucial that program was in helping her find her way.

"The program gave me a lot of courage and support during my first year," she said. "It was a comfortable space where you could talk about female things without feeling awkward. After experiencing the programs for myself, I decided to work there last year and be a part of the great work."

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Innovative Cree teacher finds ways to keep language alive

By Betty Ann Adam
of Eagle Feather News

When Belinda Daniels wanted to learn in a Cree language immersion program, there weren't any, so she hired teachers and created a Cree camp where she could be a student.

The Sturgeon Lake First Nation teacher was serious about learning the language: she had taken a couple of university classes during her Education degree program, was taking Cree night classes while working on her Master's degree and practicing speaking with her grandmother, but the learning wasn't coming fast enough, she recalled in a recent interview.

"It came out of frustration," she said.

"One day I thought, 'why not create a Cree



Cree language teacher Belinda Daniels says protocols should be attached to learning the language. (photo submitted)

camp with Cree teachers in a Cree context?'.... It seemed so simple, but yet it wasn't being done anywhere."

It was 2003 when she spoke to two Cree language teachers.

"I said, 'let's do a Cree camp. You guys speak Cree and teach Cree and we'll all camp and I'll pay you.' Like literally, from my pocket. I received \$500 from the Saskatchewan Cree Language Retention Committee. There was basically no money and there wasn't any money for a long time," she said.

Daniels hired the teachers, who went with her

and four other students to camp at her home First Nation.

Sixteen years later, Daniels runs two one-week-long camps each summer. She accepts 30 students per camp and has to turn people away. She also has mini-workshop language experiences throughout the year.

"The language camp for me, (is) raising the consciousness of the value of language. Having the people choose to be Cree speakers is another huge success for me," she said.

It takes at least 1,000 hours of immersion to become mid-proficient.

The camps are just one of the reasons Daniels has won a host of teaching awards, including from the Canadian Teachers Federation, the FSIN, a University Award for Research and a Saskatchewan Heritage Award. In 2016 she was nominated for a global teacher award and was invited to Dubai, where she met innovative teachers from around the world.

Daniels' passion for teaching the language has always been with her.

"Language chose me," she said.

"I have had really vivid dreams, dreams that send messages."

She was 10 or 11 when she had a dream in which she saw ancient rock petroglyphs of Cree words written in syllabics.

"When you come from a nehiyaw realm of thinking and being, it unfolds where the language spirit chose me, as opposed to me choosing that language was going to be my thing," she said.

Daniels says she was blessed to be raised by her grandparents and grew up hearing them speak Cree to each other. She heard the intonation and rhythm of the language. She understood when one word ends and another begins, when someone is asking a question or making a statement.

She still doesn't consider herself fluent or even fully proficient but says she can speak, "everyday conversational Cree."

"The language is vast like the ocean and deep... If you're not raised in the language, fluency is very hard to gain. It can be done. It is hard, but not impossible"

Her understanding of how the language works has led her to invent another tool for teaching Cree.

"I really consider myself a language coach. I've really again, created this, where you have the teachers, but then you have someone

in the middle and then you have the learners. I'm that person in the middle that knows how to scaffold the language, knows how the language works for learners.

"Fluent speakers will overlook various aspects of the language and learners kind of get stuck in mini plateaus where... you're wondering 'what do I learn next?' or 'what should I be saying next?'"

"So I guess I'm a language conduit, a language coach," she said.

The newhiyawak understand that people are part of nature and equal to, not better than, other living things, she said. That reverence for all of nature is reflected in the language and the way things are taught. There is ceremony attached to everything because there is a deep awareness of the sacredness of everything, she said.

For that reason, Daniels believes that the way Indigenous languages are taught needs to change: respect and protocol need to be attached to learning and teaching languages.

She has also learned that sacrifice is an important value. For her, that means devoting time and energy to her pursuit of the language and traveling, at least once per month, to Sturgeon Lake.

"This is where I learn so much. It wasn't at a university... I learned how to work through the academy to get where I need to be (but) the more educated I've become, the more I want to go home to my roots. There is strength there," she said.

"My home community is where I belong, where I am most needed and where I am most loved."

FIRST CONTACT

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Cuthand wins GG Award in Visual and Media Arts

By NC Raine
for Eagle Feather News

Pioneers of a particular field often fail to be properly appraised during their careers; it's not until enough time has passed that we begin to understand the influence of their work. Such might be the case for multi-disciplinary, Saskatchewan-based artist Ruth Cuthand.

Earlier this year, at a the Ziigimineshin Beading Symposium in Winnipeg, Cuthand was referred to as 'the Matriarch of Contemporary Indigenous Beading' for her innovative artworks using beads. In her series Trading, Cuthand has beaded 12 visual representations of viruses the European settlers brought to North America. The artworks are a visual reference to colonization and represent how settlers and trade impacted Indigenous life.

"I wanted to politicize the beads. I wanted to make them more than just a craft item, to move them from craft to fine arts, and present them in a more contemporary way," Cuthand told Eagle Feather News.

"I started thinking when the bead arrived, as a trade good, how beading and women's art just exploded. Because they now had this material that was faster than quill work and they could express themselves more. I started thinking of trade, then the downside of trade, part of which was disease."

Cuthand said she was immediately drawn to the abstract beauty of microscopic images of these 'new world' diseases. Once she started, she quickly piqued the attention of curators and galleries around the country. Her bead work has been

exhibited across Canada, including showings in Montreal, Toronto, and, Saskatoon, and an artists' residency at the University of Saskatchewan.

"When I started doing it, I questioned how

pull to it," she said.

Cuthand has long had a career of infusing her artwork with complex themes and challenging mainstream perspectives on colonialism and racism.

"Art allows me to make work about what's on my mind. It's a way of communicating with other people without hammering them over the head," she said. "An idea will go around and around in my head. Once in a while, it will come forward, and I'll think on a basic level of what I want to do about it and how I can best express it."

In addition to beading, Cuthand's art includes installations, paintings, drawings, prints, and multi-media artworks.

This February, Cuthand was awarded the prestigious Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts, which recognizes outstanding contributions to the arts in Canada. It was the first time she was nominated for the award, and as such, the honour was quite a surprise.

"I was told you usually don't get picked on the first try, so when we got the news, I was jumping up and down with my daughter," she said.

Cuthand said her next venture is yet to be determined, but whatever it may be, her work will continue to push boundaries.

"The creative part inside me asks, 'how are you going to do this without doing what people have done before? What's new about this that I can bring to it?' Those are the questions I'm always asking myself."



Artist Ruth Cuthand, recipient of the Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts (Photo by Nathan Raine)

beautiful it was. Because if you bead a disease, it's gorgeous, but it's still a disease. So there's a push-



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Women see ongoing need for feminism to reject violence, fight for equality

By Kaitlynn Nordal
for Eagle Feather News

From a young age, many women are told to sit down, look pretty and not to question the inequality they face on a daily basis.

Reflecting on International Women's Day, which was on Mar. 8, three Saskatchewan women say how they challenge the status quo to make the world a better place.

Carmel Crowchild, who owns Carmel Indian Agent 138, a Regina medical and justice advocacy service for people who can't afford them, said she has been a feminist since she was a child. In the 1990s, when trying to leave



Destinee Peter (R) and her husband have chosen to raise son Theo (L) as a feminist because they believe in equality among the sexes and believe it is important for their son to know his mom works just as hard as his dad. (Kaitlynn Nordal/Eagle Feather News)

an abusive marriage, the ideas of feminism and gender equality were truly entrenched in her.

"Being First Nation, in my family, we honour the women," said Crowchild. "So, from a young age, I watched that honour system ... and I was grateful for that because that's what taught me that I was not my husband's property. I truly believe the matriarchal system that I was raised in gave me that skill to leave and no longer be a property."

Crowchild found that some people still disapproved of divorce, regardless of what was happening behind closed doors.

"I was disowned by family when I divorced and I stood strong. I stood my ground. I'm very grateful I did. So yes, I would have to say I'm a feminist because I went against the grain," she said.

Rachelle McHenry, of One Yoga, Vinyasa Yoga for Youth and the Saskatchewan Indigenous Yoga Association in Saskatoon, grew up in a single-parent household. Watching how hard her mother worked reinforced her belief in the need for feminism and gender equality.

McHenry links those concepts to the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls epidemic. She often sees reports about missing young girls and knows the statistics in Canada are high.

"So, to me, that says that it still isn't equal. The fact that they are female and then you add on Indigenous," McHenry said. "Patriarchy is still dominant in today's society and so (feminism is) not an outdated concept at all."

Destinee Peter, owner of Tangled Hair and Beauty in Regina, describes herself as a feminist for the simple fact that she believes in equality between the genders, but she thinks there is a way to go before truly achieving it.

"I think there is still a lot of people out there that are against it and don't treat women with respect and equality. I don't think women get the same respect as men," she said.

Despite this, Peter hopes society is heading in the right direction.

"I think people are focusing more on the power of women, the strength that women have and what we can do," she said.

For Peter, it is important to raise her one-year old son, Theo, to be a feminist.

"I want my son to have a lot of respect for women and not degrade them and to see how hard his mom works, as well as his dad," she said.

Crowchild said it is also important to have men part of the conversation.

"Men also need to have a voice in women's rights," said Crowchild. "How many of these young men witnessed their mothers going through their trials and tribulations and wished they could change it? There is a man's point of view here ... there is a male responsibility here."

McHenry agrees and said she has seen her yoga class help men deal with toxic masculinity they see and hear daily. Youths, especially, are often bombarded with images of violence against women, she said. "The more that we can get role models out there that are Indigenous and are rising up, that is also going to let others know it's Okay to rise up, to set yourself high," McHenry said. Crowchild advises young women to stand up for themselves.

"Never give up, hold yourself up no matter how brutalized you feel," said Crowchild. "I know in our younger generation, suicide is a disease and when we get to that level of hopelessness, when we get to that level of pain, when you're down there, don't give up. There will be a way through."

SHARLA JOHNSON
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Program: Automotive Service Technician certificate

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Tomorrow
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It is our right to speak up about injustice

The ongoing violations from the Nation is a plague of systemic oppression. It cycles through the generations and all I see is history endlessly repeating itself.

The racism in the air is heavy and it is weighing down on my soul.

I am already exhausted from the struggle of trying to survive in a capitalistic colonial society.

Despite all the racist and hateful comments circulating online I see such a strong resurgence of Indigenous Nations and allies.

Got Land, resources, an economy? Well thank a Native, because the infrastructure of this colonial Canadian society is built on the ongoing dismantling, displacement, and genocide of Indigenous peoples and Indigenous Land.

In regard to the circulating comments online filled with racism and hate, people are just showing their true colors. I think during a time like this we should come together and support one another and let go of those who do not support us. There are bigger issues in regard to the blockades, such as the ongoing denial of Indigenous rights, laws, jurisdiction and authority. I do stand with Wet'suwet'en and I am proud of those on the frontlines defending and asserting our rights and the rights for the land. There is a lot going on in the world right now.

Right now, I have the honour of taking the course, Indigenous Legal Processes with Maria Campbell. Our discussions and readings are all based on Indigenous laws and it is truly the first time in all of my education career I feel safe and comfortable and where Indigenous knowledge is appropriately valued and recognized.

It is a breath of fresh air to be able to speak openly about the truth of our country and in a safe environment. I know many of the other students feel it too and are starting to see things differently, because we were never taught the truth about our identity and Indigenous Nations. What was taught was the ongoing biases and stereotypes that cycle through this society. This is proven in the comment sections online. This kind of hate and anger directed at Indigenous people only increases my anxiety and fear in regard to the world I am raising my daughters in.

We are a reflection of our environment. If our Mother Earth is out of balance and the society we live in and the colonial institutions that govern us, then we will most likely be out of balance too. We have a responsibility to the Earth and each other. Times are pressing in determining what we will leave for future generations. It is about being mindful and taking a step back and looking at the full picture.

I wish there was more time to reconnect to the earth and our identity to ground us and make us strong. The daily struggle and the distractions and temptations used to control the masses does a good job to keep us from our own self-development. Therefore, we are not functioning anywhere near our full potential or living with purpose. It is slowly breaking us down and this makes it easier to cave into temptations.

Living life in a good way is the purpose of Indigenous laws and governance structures. It was about being responsible, respectful, proud and taking care of all living things. There was the original taxation system practiced by Indigenous peo-

ple that was not compulsory, but was done because it was right. If you had more than you needed,

you shared with those who did not have enough. We took care of our sick, elderly and our children were the center of our world.

These traditional systems and ways have been dismantled and torn apart and it is up to us to revitalize our governance structures and adapt them for modern times. The law today needs to evolve as the people are; you see many more Indigenous youth, peoples, nations and allies standing up for Indigenous rights together.

It is because of professors like Maria Campbell who have come before me and started paving a path to setting things right. We cannot forget who has done that and we need to continue paving more paths in all spaces. We also need to uphold each other and that means holding each other accountable in ways that form a more holistic, healthy wellbeing and not tear each other down, as we try to improve our lives. There is enough of that still going on in this society.

That is where I am at right now, fed up with the ongoing status quo of the denial of Indigenous Nations, rights, laws, authority and jurisdiction, but still grateful and moving forward with the strength from those who came before us.



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Sangster brings international diplomacy home

By Betty Ann Adam
of Eagle Feather News

Rhett Sangster's years as a Canadian diplomat mediating conflict in the Middle East and in Ottawa writing policy on mediation and peace processes got him thinking about applying the principles to his home province of Saskatchewan.

"I thought, 'we have all these issues in Canada too – colonization and poverty,'" he said in a re-



Reconciliation Allies is a new monthly feature that will recognize the non-Indigenous allies who work alongside us, helping to move reconciliation forward in Saskatchewan. We welcome nominations. (photo by Betty Ann Adam)

cent interview.

Sangster, now the Director of Reconciliation and Community Partnerships at the Office of the Treaty Commissioner (OTC) in Saskatoon, spent 12 years with Foreign Affairs, including a three-year stint in Turkey during the 2003-2011 Iraq war.

He also spent two years establishing a mediation process between Afghanistan and Pakistan on border issues.

"That's where I got the bug for mediation and conflict management. I really found it was concrete. We could make progress people didn't think we could make," he said.

He saw that bureaucrats and leaders of organizations could collaborate below the political level to work peacefully on shared concerns.

With Canada in mind, he embarked on a Master's degree in International Development Policy, focused on peace building.

In the summer of 2013, before the second year of the program at Duke University in South Carolina, he did an internship at the OTC. He spent the summer working to facilitate conversations between the Northern Village of Pinehouse, which had signed a multi-million dollar deal with Cameco and Idle No More activists, who were opposed to resource extraction.

That work led to Sangster's Master's thesis. "Everything I was learning in second year, I was applying to Saskatchewan and Indigenous issues. That's what I'm doing now, trying to implement my thesis," he said.

Upon graduation, he returned to the OTC, where he replicated work he'd done with Afghanistan and Pakistan in Moose Jaw, working on the ground, helping to bring together 18 influential "thought leaders," who could consider the realm of the possible for mutually beneficial relationships.

Members of the Saskatchewan associations of rural and urban municipalities, representatives of the provincial and federal governments, Indigenous elders, knowledge keepers, Metis leaders gathered every few months for a year, during which personal relationships developed among individuals with a broad range of perspectives.

That process led to the creation of Reconciliation Saskatoon after the 2015 release of the TRC Calls to Action.

The City declared a year of reconciliation, during which Sangster, Gilles Dorval of the City of Saskatoon, residential school survivor Eugene Arcand and his wife Lorna, led work to raise public awareness. Fifteen Indigenous and non-Indigenous groups and organizations had signed on.

"In 2015, things were different from today. People didn't come together very often. They weren't quite sure of each other," Sangster said.

The group organized the Rock Your Roots Walk for Reconciliation. Relationships developed among people with a common goal to work toward. Other groups heard about the project and membership more than doubled.

The walk has become an annual event, which attracted about 4,000 people last year. Today, more than 100 organizations belong to Reconciliation Saskatoon. The OTC has helped hundreds of Indigenous and non-Indigenous groups establish nine

other Reconciliation circles around the province. "The relationships are making a difference. Sometimes people get frustrated by the speed of change but... change happens at the speed of trust," Sangster said.

At a recent Yorkton circle, a representative of the City and a local First Nation Band Council or talked and both lamented the separate celebrations of Indigenous and non-Indigenous veterans. The pair later approached a community member, who is working with local Royal Canadian Legion members on a project to create banners to hang around the city to celebrate individual veterans. As a result, at least 14 Indigenous veterans will be among the 50 honoured on banners that will hang from lamp posts.

"It's because an Indigenous and non-Indigenous person were able to come together and talk... It's a small change but it's a change," Sangster said.

The reconciliation movement in Saskatchewan is real-world action implementing recommendations laid out by national and international inquiries and research - the TRC Calls to Action, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls for Justice, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP), United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Reconciliation circles rely on guidance from OTC. Limited funding to the program is the only thing holding the movement back from expanding more quickly throughout the province, Sangster said.

He says that \$1million per year for three years could provide the staff needed to expand throughout Saskatchewan.

"This is a good investment for the provincial or the federal government... We're tilling the soil for the seeds to grow."

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Kidney transplant recipient urges donations

By Judith Iron
for Eagle Feather News

Organ donation can be a life-and-death situation for waiting recipients.

Monica Goulet of Cumberland House knows this all too well. In 2011 Goulet learned her kidney was failing and she would need a transplant. After many disappointing attempts at finding a suitable donor, Goulet received the call that her nephew Jim Searson was a match.

"I thank Jimmy for saving my life and I thank god that I come from the family that I do and for the community that I have. I sure have gotten lots of love and support throughout this journey," she said.

March 26 is the one-year anniversary of her kidney transplant. Goulet feels healthier and happier. After many years of medical leave, she is back at work for the Saskatoon Police Service as an Aboriginal Relations Consultant. She takes nothing for granted.

dialysis for approximately three years and desperately needs a kidney.

"It's been tough. My granddaughter means the world to me," Colleen Bear said.

"She's so young. I just want her to have a normal happy life."

Donna Bouvier-McKay has been on dialysis for 6 years and undergoes hemodialysis far from her home community. She had to move to Saskatoon for the necessary three sessions per week because she couldn't afford all the travel.

"But even now that I'm here, I still have a hard time getting back and forth to the hospital," she said.

Hearing stories similar and knowing there are many more challenges, Goulet knew she had to help others get a second chance at life.

She partnered with the Saskatchewan Kidney Foundation to host fundraiser called Staying Alive. The event will be held at the Dakota Dunes Casino on Thursday, March 26. Chief Dar-



Monica Goulet and Jim Searson – photo by Monica Goulet

"I am so grateful to be alive. When you're that close to death it seems so much more sweet," she said.

Now Goulet is staying alive to save lives by raising awareness, promoting kidney health, and educating the public on how organ donation can save lives.

Searson and Goulet shared their stories as donor and recipient on Facebook and the response was overwhelming.

"We ended up meeting a lot of people... people who needed a kidney, or were going through a transplant or were starting hemodialysis, reached out," she said.

Not every one gets a second chance at life if there's no donor match or assistance with expenses.

Talitha Winnie Bear, 17, from Saskatoon has been going through hemo-

cy Bear of the Whitecap Dakota First Nation donated the banquet room for the event and \$4,000 to the cause.

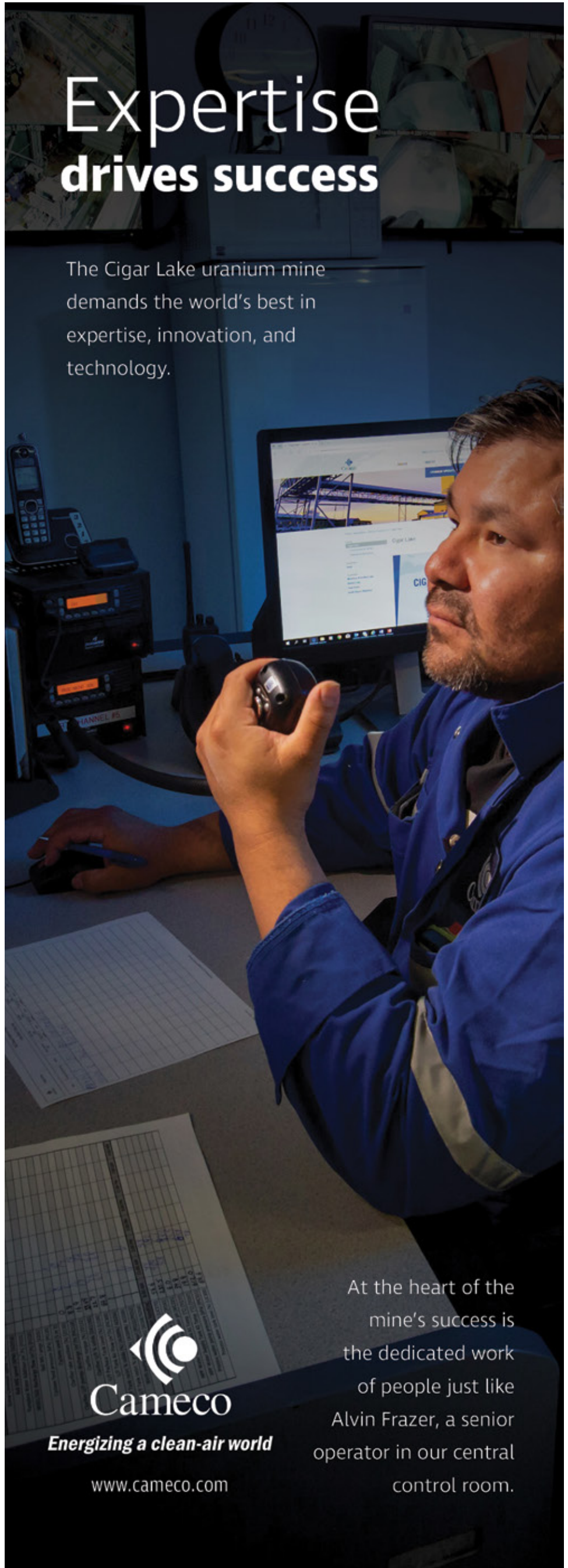
Money raised will go to the Saskatchewan Kidney Foundation's short-term emergency financial assistance program to benefit eligible Metis and First Nations people.

To donate silent auction items, please contact Monica Goulet on Facebook.

Being a living donor is a choice, but in unforeseen circumstances your family may not know your wishes. Organs and tissues from a living or recently deceased person can save or enhance the lives of many. Tell your friends and family members that you want to save lives. You are never too old or too young to have this important discussion with your family.

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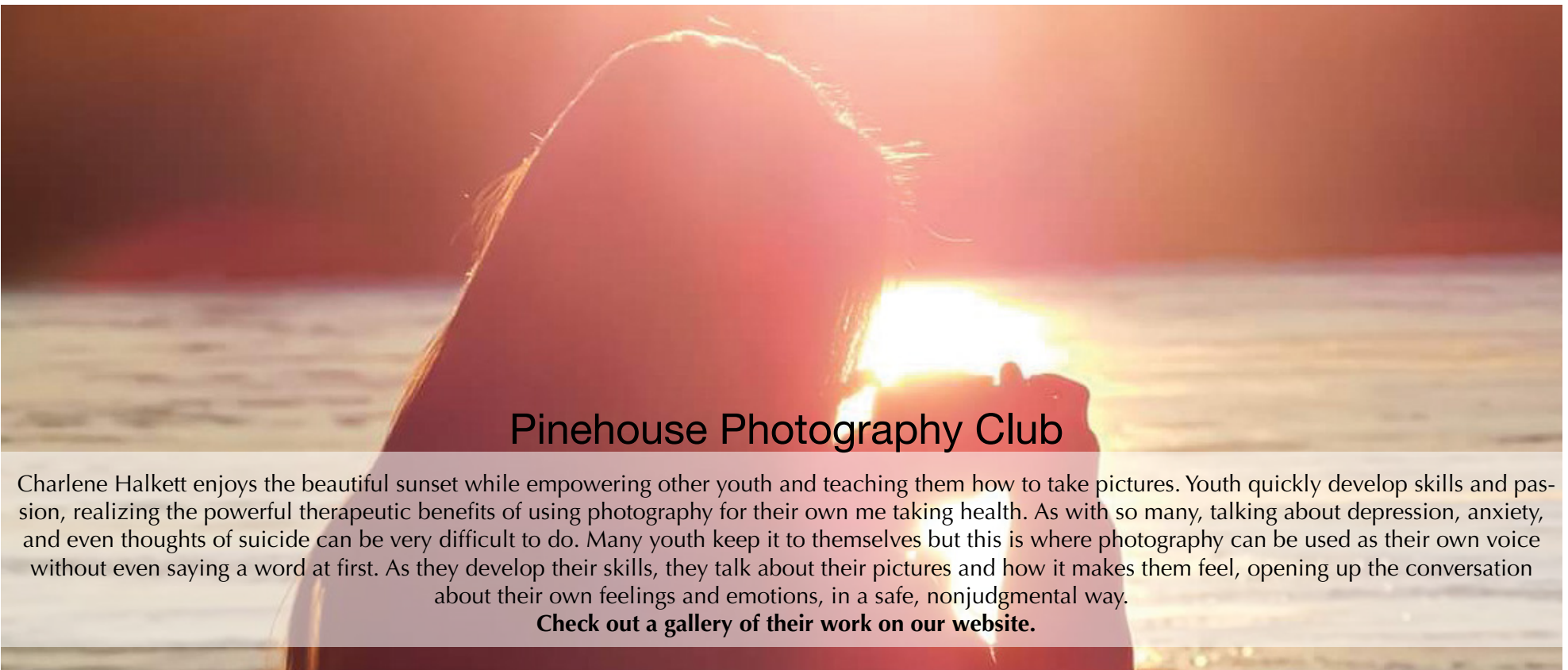


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Pinehouse Photography Club

Charlene Halkett enjoys the beautiful sunset while empowering other youth and teaching them how to take pictures. Youth quickly develop skills and passion, realizing the powerful therapeutic benefits of using photography for their own mental health. As with so many, talking about depression, anxiety, and even thoughts of suicide can be very difficult to do. Many youth keep it to themselves but this is where photography can be used as their own voice without even saying a word at first. As they develop their skills, they talk about their pictures and how it makes them feel, opening up the conversation about their own feelings and emotions, in a safe, nonjudgmental way.

Check out a gallery of their work on our website.

Understanding money & personal financial solutions

By Cate Morris

Mazaska. Soniyaw. Zhooniyaa. These Indigenous words all translate to mean the same thing – money.

And although money as it is today wasn't initially part of our traditional existence, it is a staple in today's times. Everything in our daily living calls for it, from basic needs like shelter and sustenance to our more traditional needs like travelling to visit an elder or attend ceremony. Yet many of our people struggle with managing money, perhaps because it's relatively new to us, so we don't know what we need to know. Perhaps individual over communal accumulation is a different world view than our own. And perhaps because money has developed a negative reputation. Greed, jealousy, shame, even 'evil', are thoughts that arise when money is the topic. Regardless of the reasons, what we don't know about money is hurting us, with many of our people locked in financial struggles.

Speaking to its origin, money is an inanimate object, a conceptual (and sometimes virtual) tool. It serves a purpose when defined and used correctly. So, let me offer up this definition: money, in essence, is simply a man-made tool created to simplify many of life's transactions. And although there are contentious issues surrounding improper usage, responsibility lies with those involved. Similar to how one might raise a puppy into a dog, it's in the intent and actions of the handler. In truth, when money is understood and used properly, it can assist with making life simpler and securing healthier existences.

Because money is the chosen unit of exchange nowadays, understand-

ing it is a vital life skill that our people must learn. Students need to know how to manage their money so it doesn't become an issue while pursuing their post-secondary dreams. Our workforce must learn what their income can help them to achieve. Families should feel confident in deciding how they save and spend for their best interests. Elders should understand pensions and benefits to secure safe and sustainable retirements.

Money management skills are especially important for the women, the life givers, in our communities because they statistically have lower earnings but often carry more responsibilities for longer periods of time. From young hopefuls just starting out, to mothers holding it down on their own, to beautiful matriarchs nearing or in retirement, money management skills are essential life skills. Even those who have spouses or life partners need to know how money flows in and out of their households to secure their well-being in case of partner loss or separation. Survival often requires managing limited resources with many competing needs. Understanding money will help.

For overall well-being, good money management skills help with making informed decisions and choosing best actions. In time, this can lead to breaking free from cyclical and generational poverty. If you'd like to learn more, watch for this column in future editions of Eagle Feather News. Money management tips, personal finance information and maybe even some reader Q & A will be shared. Until then, pidamaya and peace! #Money-Scout4U

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Changing of the guard at Eagle Feather News



By Warren Goulding
of Eagle Feather News

For more than 20 years, every month, all 240-plus of them, I've helped with the production of Eagle Feather News.

My role was to edit the stories submitted by freelance and staff writers and to lay out the pages.

When John Lagimodiere asked me to get involved, I thought it would be a long-term arrangement. Now, just 20 years later, it's come to an end.

Just kidding, it's been a long run and a satisfying one that has had its share of ups and downs, but now that John has stepped back and handed the reins to a talented crew of journalists, we can reflect on two decades of accomplishment.

Publishing a newspaper that was committed to telling the stories of Indigenous communities in a vast and diverse province has always been a chal-

lenge and until John arrived, no one had done it successfully for an extended period of time.

And now, with the arrival of the Internet and social media, the challenges are even greater. Struggling to be relevant in a world that has a shorter attention span and devours its news in bits and bytes is increasingly difficult.

Advertising dollars are shrinking. Both the federal and provincial governments have cut back on their spend in print publications and that has hurt newspapers across the country. Eagle Feather News is no exception.

Other, once-loyal advertisers, are opting to target their audience through social media, including websites such as the excellent one managed by Eagle Feather News.

Things are changing.

But that doesn't have to be a bad thing. And with the arrival of new talent, Eagle Feather News will adapt and flourish in the modern environment. You can expect a fresh look in the print edition; a strong connection to the communities Eagle Feather has always served and enhanced coverage of the important issues of the day.

I'll be forever grateful to John and Deirdra for allowing me to be a part of Eagle Feather for so many years.

The connection to the First Nations and Métis communities that I've made over the years is something I'll always cherish.

The doors that were opened to me were welcoming and fascinating.

Within the hallowed halls of the original Eagle Feather News building on Avenue N South – oh, the stories those walls could tell – a cast of unique characters combined their talents to produce Eagle Feather.

What a pleasure it was to work with the

likes of Maria Campbell, Bernelda Wheeler, Sandra Ahenakew, Darla Read, Paul Chartrand, Tyrone Tootoosis, Winston McLean, Kevin Roberts and other skilled writers in the earlier days. And Dawn Dumont, Alyson Bear, Winona Wheeler and Jeanelle Mandes, more recently.

I'll never forget the good times we had working with Faith Obey, Dave (Boo Boo) Criss, Ivan Morin and Arnold (T-Bone) Wardman. Someone oughta write a book.

It's a story of service to the community and growth.

When John and his then-partner came to visit Saskatoon Free Press publisher Bill Peterson and myself to talk about their plans for Eagle Feather News, I'll admit I was skeptical. I knew the history of Aboriginal publications in Saskatchewan and it wasn't pretty. And, in our opinion, the business plan articulated by John's partner was flawed.

Fortunately, John had a better plan and I can tell you it involved giving back more to the community than he ever garnered from the newspaper. There was support for virtually any and all organizations that were also serving their community. Theatre companies, sports organizations, struggling First Nations communities and more benefited from John's generosity as the paper found its niche and grew.

Growth, too, happened within the writing fraternity.

I watched proudly as the writers found their voices. Their messages became sharper, their confidence grew. Many went on to successful careers with other media organizations or found employment in the public sector or in the world of academia.

Saskatchewan is a better place because of Eagle Feather News.

I am proud to have been a small part of the journey.

Publisher's Notes

The best investment I ever made was swapping a free office in my building for some services. I want to talk about the guy who took that deal and his importance to where we are today at Eagle Feather News. And I want to thank him for everything. I first met Warren Goulding when we were a couple months into making the paper. He and Bill Peterson were making the Saskatoon Express at the time and we went to them for advice.

Shortly after, the Free Press collapsed, my partner had left and Warren reached out and we kept in touch. Then he decided to write a book covering the story of Eva Taysup, Shelley Napope, and Calinda Waterhen, three Indigenous women who were killed by serial killer John Martin Crawford. He needed a place to write the book and by coincidence, we had an open office space in our building. The deal was no rent, but he would edit articles and give me guidance in the publishing field.

His book, *Just Another Indian, A Serial Killer and Canada's Indifference*, was a stunner and opened many people's eyes to systemic neglect and racism in our systems. He was also the first

journalist to tell the stories of the women lost as people who had families they loved and that loved them. He was one of the first non-Indigenous journalists out there to get our community. And care about it.

While the book was being published, the star light tours hit our city and the next several years saw the turmoil and fall out from that and then we had the Stonechild inquest. Around this time Warren, besides being associate editor also took over the layout and design of the paper. We covered all the news. We had a raucous office in challenging times with multiple interesting personalities making the paper work.

Thing is, Warren has been working at or publishing newspapers since he had the bowling column in a Toronto paper as a teenager. He still publishes papers in BC. His knowledge of news and newspapers has been a steady hand at Eagle Feather News ever since. Just what we needed. A mentor.

We've been doing the paper remotely online since 2005, but my favourite two days of the paper were always on the phone and email work-



ing near deadline with Warren to make the paper awesome every month. And he did.

Sharp headlines. Crisp copy. Over 5000 pages of copy this man has laid out for us over the years. And I swear to goodness, in those 20 years we have never filed our paper late. Never once.

But, alas, there comes a time to change and I am doing less of the paper and Warren intends to retire soon and scoop ice cream. Our work will continue and is in good hands though.

Thank you, Warren Goulding, from all the staff and writers at EFN you have helped. I am grateful for what I have learned in the past twenty years about publishing, professionalism and telling a story from Warren Goulding. And I got a life time friend from it as well. All for an initial investment of a free office. Not bad.

Wallace overcame exploitation, now advocates for others

By Suliman Adam
for Eagle Feather News

Beatrice Wallace's perspective changed when she was exploited at a young age.

"In the early days, I experienced racism, abuse and when I was around 13 years old, I had enough of it and I let them know that they will not abuse me anymore," recalled Wallace, who now manages a women's recovery program at Souls Harbour Rescue Mission, is also a board member of White Pony Lodge and an author.

Wallace, who had been adopted as part of the '60s Scoop, ran away. She describes being an innocent child, but says that within half an hour of being out in the streets, she was exposed to drugs and abuse. "I experienced life,



Beatrice Wallace saw it all growing up and the violence and abuse almost ended her. Now healthy, she helps others and volunteers around the community to make the world a better place. (Photo by Suliman Adam)

not so good of a life, and as a way to give back I wanted to work in the community with ladies and children to show them that there is a better life out there," Wallace said. "When I think back, I was in survival mode, everything was a crisis, day in and day out, so I was surviving," she continued. "Back when I was on the streets, there wasn't as much support and I didn't realize I was sexually exploited."

Now 47, Wallace looks back on the impact of the abuse on her mental health.

"I was suicidal since I was eight years old and when I was in my 20s, I decided that I would rather live in hell than live on this hell, so I did way too much drugs with the intent to kill myself and then as I was going under, my life just started flashing before my eyes," she said.

Wallace realized she didn't want to be "another statistic," she said.

"I jumped up, opened my door and I fell on the stairs and my neighbour just happened to come out," Wallace said, noting her neighbour was upset and gave her an ultimatum.

"Choose your kids or choose your drugs, but you can't have them both," Wallace recalled her neighbour saying. "I couldn't believe that I was choosing drugs over my kids and it really did something to my heart."

But even then, she sold her furniture, including her children's bed, to support her drug habit. Healing was not easy.

She went into a methadone program to get clean. After that, she enrolled

in university and got her children, even the older ones, back from social services. "I'm still on that journey and it's been over 15 years," she said.

Her mentor helped her develop skills as she started going through programs. It was then she began writing about her personal trauma, which she thought might help others coping with similar experiences. In 2019, her book *Wolf Woman*, a search for identity, was published.

"Seeing the violence affecting people that I worked with, it was another way to give back and (be) in the community," she said.

She helps clean needles off the street, offers counseling and teaches people about boundaries and transformation.

Seven years ago she began helping others who have been sexually exploited.

"I started advocating as soon as I realized I could be a voice and I could be there," she said. She tries to build the same values with her children.

"Even my kids know if someone needs help, you try to help them, however that looks, and they're getting familiar with the programs, too.

"It's deeply in my heart to help women and children," she said.

Wallace mentions awareness as an imperative tool and is concerned about the lack of safe places in Regina. She thinks organizations should work together to ensure people have a range of programs to support them.

Jan Morier, a fellow board member from White Pony Lodge, says Wallace's calm confidence inspires trust.

She recalled walking with Wallace in the summer of 2016. "I said, 'I don't know why I'm doing this, because I'm afraid of the dark and afraid to be walking in the neighbourhood in the dark,' and she said, 'You're not alone, you're walking with friends,'" Morier said.

"She radiates power as a leadership quality, people listen to her, she inspires the desire to do more and do better in other people."

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Brotheridge emphasized diversity, inclusion at City of Regina

By Julia Peterson
for Eagle Feather News

This time last year, City of Regina diversity and inclusion consultant Debbie Brotheridge was busy preparing for National Indigenous Peoples Day. Now that she has retired, she is looking forward to attending this year's events as a guest.

Brotheridge started working at the City in 2012 in a talent management position, but soon found herself taking on more diversity-related work in addition to her regular duties.

"I was doing a lot of recruiting and I asked the question, 'so, what do you guys do for diversity?... for National Aboriginal Day?'" she said.

"They said, 'Well, maybe you could help us with that. So I started doing diversity off the side of my desk, and it didn't feel like I had enough time to dedicate to it.'"

After a reorganization left Brotheridge with even less time to devote to diversity and inclusion work, she advocated for a dedicated diversity position, and moved into that role full-time in 2016.

"Initially, people were asking me 'what are you going to do in this role?' "Brotheridge said. "There's not going to be enough to keep you busy.' Well, there was plenty to keep me busy and I knew there would be."

One of Brotheridge's longtime coworkers, Inner City Facility Integration Coordinator Bev Cardinal, says Brotheridge's presence is already missed.

"In the three short weeks [since Brotheridge's retirement] we have directly felt her absence," Cardinal said. "We miss her enormously – we wish we could clone her. We're really missing her leadership, because she's a very personable person. She's very vibrant. She's got a great sense of humour, and a lot of energy and a lot of passion about Indigenous people."

As diversity and inclusion consultant, Brotheridge established a diversity committee, started the Aboriginal City Employees (ACE) resource group and worked on developing a diversity strategy. She also kept statistics on the number of female, Indigenous, disabled and visible minority employees working for the City.

Looking back on her years with the city, Brotheridge said she is especially proud of her work on the reconciliation wall, an educational installation about Truth and Reconciliation unveiled at Regina's City Hall in October.

"It was almost overwhelming at the turnout of people that showed up for [the unveiling]," she said. "And while it was my initial idea, it certainly was not just my work – it was a whole committee's work – but it felt really good to know that there was



Recently-retired City of Regina diversity and inclusion consultant Debbie Brotheridge stands in her Regina home.

something that was going to be out there for people to see, and not let them forget and give them something to talk about."

Brotheridge's husband will also retire at the end of March, and the couple is looking forward to their next steps.

"We'll load up the camper and head down to the east coast, then probably down the eastern seaboard and all the way around to Palm Springs in California, and we'll be snowbirds after that," Brotheridge said. "And while we're here, I hope to do some volunteer work with the Métis Nation."

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