



ALBERTA NATIVE NEWS



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The importance of Treaty Acknowledgement

By Aaron Paquette

The beautiful painting on the cover of this month’s Alberta Native News is by Aaron Paquette, an award winning author, artist, speaker, Nehiyaw, Métis, and Edmonton City Councillor for Ward 4.

Councillor Paquette was recently asked to open an Urban Planning meeting and he did so with an acknowledgement of Treaty. He began with a preamble that he felt was important, to bring context and help build understanding for why this small recognition holds a great deal of meaning. His preamble appears below:

“On occasion, Council or Committee will offer a Treaty acknowledgment to begin the proceedings. This is in response to the 94 recommendations made by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. To many, it can come across as rote, as a signal of virtue, or simply checking off a box.

The words become almost like a ritual that can be anticipated and spoken, but perhaps not always really heard or understood.

So today I would like to offer something a little different. I would like to give, in a brief and small way, an explanation of why we offer Treaty acknowledgements and what it actually means to me, and for all of us.

Considering that we are on the tail end of Victoria Day, it seems appropriate to talk about these agreements made with Canada (the British Empire) on behalf of her Majesty the Queen.

To begin, the numbered Treaties in Canada were signed over a period of decades across much of this nation.

Indeed, they can be considered the founding documents of this country; they are legal apparatuses that allow

Canada as we know it to exist. The Treaties were signed not in culmination of war, but as a formation and certainty of peace.

Treaty 6 was agreed to by two different peoples with two very different world views.

Municipalities, provinces, and the federal government are bound by the language of laws. The English language is a noun-based language that, by its nature, lends itself to the concept of physical, time-based ownership. The Cree language is a verb-based language that, while certainly has nouns, is more focused on action, relationships, and an understanding of cycles and impermanence. As you can imagine, this led to two entirely different understandings of what the words of Treaty conveyed.

This difference could have led us to fundamentally important understandings of one another and concepts that could grow and strengthen relationship and, in many ways, one could argue it did. However, it also led to some of the most terrible actions we can imagine; it led to acts that produced many of the social ills we see today when we think of Canada and First Nations, Metis, and Inuit people. This was, in large part, due to the Indian Act: a rarity in that it is a solely race-based piece of legislation and a fundamental tool by which Treaties were weakened.

The following are some of the impacts of the Indian Act



Edmonton City Councillor Aaron Paquette

and it is by no means a comprehensive list —
The Indian Act: denied women status, introduced residential schools, created reserves and renamed individuals with European names. It restricted First Nations from leaving the reserve without permission from an Indian Agent - (the pass system was a policy endorsed by the government; it was never an Order in Council or Regulation but was definitely designed to keep First Nations on the reserve). It physically relocated reserves away from municipalities if it was deemed expedient and denied First Nations people the right to vote.
The Indian Act also: forbade First Nations from forming political organizations, forbade First Nations from speaking their native languages, forbade First Nations from practicing their traditional religion, forbade western First Nations from appearing in any public dance, show, exhibition, stampede or pageant wearing traditional regalia and declared potlatch, Sundance, and all other cultural ceremonies illegal.

Continued on page 6

First Nations children most impoverished in Canada: Report

(Ottawa, ON) – While premiers and territorial leaders met in Saskatchewan on July 9 to discuss the well-being of Indigenous children, youth and families, a new report co-authored by the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) revealed that First Nations children experience the highest levels of poverty in Canada.

“Canada is not tracking First Nations poverty on-reserve so we did,” said AFN National Chief Perry Bellegarde.

“The findings of this report are shameful and underscore the urgent need to invest in First Nations children, families and communities. Our children face the

worst social and economic conditions in the country. They deserve an opportunity to succeed.

“Canada has not been tracking poverty on-reserve and that’s one reason the situation is not improving. We need a combination of political will, action, cooperation among governments and sustainable investments in water, infrastructure, housing and education to help First Nations children succeed and get a fair start in life. It’s beneficial to all Canadians to close the gap in quality of life between First Nations and Canada.”

Towards Justice: Tackling Indigenous Child Poverty in



Canada, developed in partnership by the AFN, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) and published by Upstream: Institute for a Healthy Society, finds that half of all First Nations children on-reserve live in poverty, with even higher numbers in Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

Children on reserve are four times more likely than non-Indigenous children in Canada to live in poverty and experience some of the worst social and economic conditions, causing negative effects on physical, mental and emotional wellbeing. The report tracks child poverty rates using the 2006 Census, the 2011 National Household Survey and the 2016 Census.

National Chief Bellegarde met with premiers and territorial leaders on July 9 in Big River First Nation, Saskatchewan to instill in leaders the importance of working together with First Nations to urgently address long-standing barriers to closing the gap. This includes working collaboratively to implement recently passed federal legislation focused on First Nations jurisdiction over child welfare. The meeting, hosted by Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe, was focused on the well-being of Indigenous children, youth and families and took place in advance of the Council of the Federation meeting in Saskatoon Wednesday July 10.

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New survey: Youth in Canada are engaged in reconciliation

(Toronto, ON) - A new national survey reveals how Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth in Canada view the future and reconciliation between their peoples. The first of its kind, the *Canadian Youth Reconciliation Barometer* charts the state of reconciliation among youth in Canada (ages 16 to 29) through their attitudes, aspirations, priorities, and experiences.

The results show that youth in Canada as a whole are aware and engaged when it comes to the history of Indigenous-non-Indigenous relations and reconciliation in particular. There is a striking alignment between both populations of youth regarding their aspirations and views, with Indigenous youth more prominently prioritizing education as a key life goal. The survey was conducted earlier this year by the non-profit Environics Institute for Survey Research, in partnership with Canadian Roots Exchange and the Mastercard Foundation. The results of this survey should give Canada cautious optimism.

“It’s clear that we’re on the right path, but we still have a long way to go,” said Max FineDay, Executive Director of Canadian Roots Exchange. “Young people, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, are learning about why this relationship is fractured, and are optimistic we can repair it.”

Key findings from the survey include the following:
Youth in Canada have a considerable amount of connection and interaction with people in the other population, which extends to close friendships: More than eight in 10 Indigenous youth and one quarter of non-Indigenous youth say they have one or more close friends in the other population. Moreover, interactions with individuals in the other population are more often than not positive in terms of comfort and respect.

Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth are largely in agreement on the current state of relations between their peoples, the extent of discrimination experienced by Indigenous Peoples, and the need to address the legacy of colonization, specifically in terms of reducing the socio-economic inequities, incorporating Indigenous perspectives on community, land and culture, and improving non-Indigenous understanding of the history.

Most youth in Canada have some familiarity with the concept of reconciliation, although this is stronger among Indigenous youth. For both populations, reconciliation is considered to be about rebuilding relationships and trust, apologizing and making amends, and correcting past

wrongs. Many in both populations have seen or heard about specific examples of progress toward reconciliation in the form of apologies, government actions, education initiatives, and cultural programs.

Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth see a number of barriers to reconciliation, notably myths and stereotypes about what Indigenous Peoples receive from Canada, a lack of political leadership to implement real change, and too little

understanding among non-Indigenous people. At the same time, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth are generally optimistic about the prospects for meaningful progress toward reconciliation in their lifetimes.

One-third of Indigenous youth, and one in six non-Indigenous youth report having been involved in some type of reconciliation activity (e.g., cultural activities, education, community events), and about half of the rest express some interest in doing so. Such involvement with reconciliation on a personal level appears to be making a positive impact on how youth in Canada relate to Indigenous issues and reconciliation in particular (e.g., having a more informed and positive perspective).

Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth in Canada share the same broad life goals, which include a successful or meaningful career, family and children, financial independence, and living a balanced life. Indigenous youth place a comparatively greater priority on educational goals. Both populations express confidence in achieving at least some of their life goals, but for most the primary obstacles are financial (insufficient income, high debt) and emotional pressures (anxiety, depression, low motivation).

“The similarity of aspirations and optimism shared between Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth in Canada presents a remarkable and important opportunity,” notes Jennifer Brennan, Associate Director Mastercard Foundation. “We are aware that current outcomes of both groups are not at all equitable. We must all work together – across sectors – to build the systemic changes needed to meet this optimism.”

“This kind of research provides an important form of evidence to tell us about where we stand on reconciliation today, and how it is evolving over time,” comments Keith Neuman, lead researcher on the project. “Without such evidence we are at the mercy of anecdote and stereotype.”

The survey was conducted online between March 22 and April 29, 2019, with representative samples of 682 Indigenous and 695 non-Indigenous youth (ages 16 to 29), distributed across the 10 provinces and three territories. The sample was stratified to ensure representation by region, community type (urban/rural, on-reserve), age sub-cohort, gender, and Indigenous group (First Nations, Métis, Inuit), based on the most current population statistics (2016 Census). The survey was conducted in English and French.

For more details, including the final report and detailed data tables, visit www.environicsinstitute.org.



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SHELDON KRASOWSKI
FOREWORD BY WINONA WHEELER

GAME CHANGER

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by Sheldon Krasowski, foreword by Winona Wheeler

“Sheldon Krasowski rightly shows Indigenous peoples in *No Surrender* to be intelligent negotiators of mutually beneficial treaties, instead of the dupes we have been portrayed to be.” — Harold Johnson, author of *Clifford and Firewater*

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Publication Mail Agreement No. 40050628
Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to: Circulation Department:
102, 10155 114 Street NW
Edmonton AB T5K 1R8
E-mail: natnews@shaw.ca
Tel: (780) 421-7966

Volume 36, Number 7, July 2019
ISSN #08294135
www.albertanativenews.com

EDITOR: Deborah Shatz

ADVERTISING:
Dan Moser 780-421-7966

Alberta Native News is published monthly for distribution to Native Bands and Metis Settlements across Alberta, Saskatchewan, British Columbia and Northwest Territories.

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Canada and the Métis Nation of Alberta sign historic agreement

By MNA President Audrey Poitras

July 5 marked the 135th anniversary of Louis Riel’s return to Canada to lead the fight for Métis rights. He dreamed of – and fought and died for – self-determination for the Métis people. Last week, after more than 13 decades, his vision of Métis self-government was finally recognized by the Government of Canada.

On Thursday June 27, 2019, Canada and the Métis Nation of Alberta (“MNA”) signed a historic agreement. The agreement recognizes that the Métis Nation within Alberta has an inherent, constitutionally protected right to self-government. It establishes a formal process that will lead to the recognition of a modern, Métis government for all Métis Nation citizens in Alberta. This process will include the adoption of both a constitution by the Métis Nation within Alberta and legislation by the federal government. Finally, Métis self-government is being recognized for what it is: an essential pillar of Confederation.

The story that got us here predates Canada by generations. The Métis Nation was initially born of the fur trade around the turn of the 19th Century, as European men and First Nations women in the old northwest raised families and built communities. Soon, we developed our own language, culture, and identity distinct from our forebears—neither European nor First Nations. We became much more than simply a group of mixed-blooded individuals. We became a new Indigenous people, a new nation. As an Indigenous people, we have the right to self-determination and self-government. Indeed, we have always been staunchly independent. In Plains Cree and in Michif (the Métis language), we are called Otipemisiwak—the free people, the ones who own themselves.

The Métis Nation’s relationship with Canada has rarely been easy. Immediately following Confederation, Canada moved west into our homeland without acknowledging that we were already here, living off our own land and overseeing our own affairs. Our response was distinctly Métis: under Louis Riel’s leadership, we declared a provisional government and negotiated terms of union with Canada. Although Canada would fail to honour our

agreement, the precedent was set. When faced with adversity, the Métis Nation’s response has always been the same: to govern ourselves.

Through the late 19th and early 20th century, we organized across Alberta. From Cypress Hills to St. Albert, from Lesser Slave Lake to Fort Chipewyan, we came together as Métis Nation citizens to advocate for our rights and lands. These were the building blocks of Métis self-government in the province. In 1928, we created what is now the MNA to be a united voice for the Métis Nation within Alberta. Ever since, dedicated Métis individuals from across Alberta have worked with the MNA for the benefit of our families, our communities, and our nation. With our new agreement, Canada finally recognizes the MNA as the authorized representative of the Métis Nation within Alberta in implementing our inherent right to self-government.

Why does the Métis Nation within Alberta need self-government? Because successive provincial and federal governments have failed us.

This was true when the MNA was founded, and it is true now. For generations, educational outcomes, employment prospects, and health indicators of Métis in Alberta have fallen shamefully short of those of non-Indigenous Canadians. The final report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls highlights how tragically true this is. We face systemic disadvantages rooted in colonialism, racism, and indifference. No non-Métis government has cared enough or been committed enough to correct these problems. Only a Métis government will be able or willing to respond to our unique needs and ambitions as Métis Nation citizens.

The agreement signed by Canada and the MNA is meant to put an end to generations of denial and neglect. This federal government has had the courage to do what no federal government before it would: acknowledge our right to take charge of ourselves. Now, we can move forward – together - in the spirit of recognition and respect. Canada has handed the Métis Nation the reins. Where we go from here is up to us.



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Required: English, Secondary (high) school graduation certificate or equivalent experience, 1 to less than 7 months experience, Own vehicle, Valid driver's licence, Effective interpersonal skills, Initiative, Organized, Flexibility, Excellent oral communication, Team player, Judgement, Client focus. Fast-paced environment, Attention to detail, Ability to distinguish between colours.

All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply, however Canadians and permanent residents will be given priority.

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(1) Cook: FT, Perm, \$15-19/hour (negotiable)

Duties: Prepare and cook complete meals or individual dishes and foods. Help chef to supervise kitchen staff and helpers, Clean kitchen and work areas. Organize and manage buffets and banquets. Help chef order ingredients.

Required: English, Physically demanding, Excellent oral communication, Judgement, Flexibility, Team player, Organized, Client focus, Reliability. Secondary (high) school graduation certificate or equivalent experience. Exp: 7 months to less than 1 year. Cuisine Specialties: Italian cuisine, European.

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Alberta Indigenous Games will be held in Edmonton August 11-17

By Jacob Hendy

Excitement is mounting for what is sure to be an amazing 2019 Alberta Indigenous Games (AIG) which will be held in Edmonton from August 11 to 17, 2019. AIG 2019 will feature a record breaking 1500 + athletes and coaches registered with over 115 Teams from more than 30 First Nation and Metis Communities in Alberta.

The Games will be held at Rundle Park in Edmonton and at various venues throughout the city. 2019 will be our 3rd Games in a row since 2017 and 6th games in the last 9 years since our inception in 2011.

We had 485 youth registered in the 2015 Games and anticipate that close to 1700 athletes will be competing in 2019. All the head coaches from the Alberta based Universities and Colleges that have the sports included in the AIG have been invited to come scout out the Games. Over 20 have already confirmed they are excited and will be attending to give our youth extra exposure to having the opportunity to get recruited.

We are currently seeking a \$2,000 sponsorship to sponsor our Games to be televised live stream online and to record the Games via apps on 10 different smart phones that will be stored on our website. This will allow communities back home to cheer on their teams and to allow interviews and for teams to watch back their events online. It will also allow colleges to scout talent if they can't make certain games.

Please contact us if you want to be a sponsor for the live streaming or any other aspect of our Games and get exposure to our over 6200 people following us on Facebook. Our Games has become the only Multi-Sport Summer Games for Indigenous Youth in Canada on a yearly basis.

We are also in a high demand for volunteers!

Please if you are available go to our website at albertaindigenousgames.ca to register as a volunteer. Volunteers get an opportunity to be part of a really wonderful group and make a huge difference in the smooth operation of the Games and they also receive a souvenir Games T-Shirt and sack lunches.

One Last Final Deadline to register a team to participate in the Games has been set for July 31st at 11:59 pm. The early registration fee of \$550 per teams or \$100 per individual athlete expired on July 15. Fees were raised starting July 16, set to \$650 per team and \$125 per individual. They will be accepted until July 31. Register



The Alberta Indigenous Games will be held in Edmonton from August 11 to 17. Registration is open for teams and individual athletes until July 31. Volunteers are welcome!

online at albertaindigenousgames.ca.

For a full list of the team and individual sports that are included in the 2019 Alberta Indigenous Games visit albertaindigenousgames.ca. In addition to the sports, the following special events will be held: Eagle Staff Run, Opening Ceremonies, Showcase Lacrosse Game, Entertainment Stage, BBQ and Round Dance, Talent Show, Elders Village, Honourary Ambassador Program, Medal Ceremonies and Closing Ceremonies.

For more information email ab.ind.games@gmail.com.

Jacob Hendy is Alberta Indigenous Games CEO and Games Manager.

Treaty *cont. from p 2*

The Indian Act imposed great personal, economic, and cultural tragedy on First Nations. This legacy continues to affect many communities, families and individuals today.

These acts of genocide did not just occur in the past, but their echoes persist. More than half of the children in care in Canada are Indigenous. First Nations, Metis and Inuit women and girls continue to go missing in a country where they represent a small percentage of the overall population, but a disproportionately large percentage of crimes are committed against them. The majority of ills are a direct result of generations of abuse, neglect, and dishonouring of Treaty agreements at the hands of the federal government.

Many people feel resentful when they hear these sobering statistics and more. They should not. No one here is to blame.

But Canada has been the beneficiary of this colonialism and Treaty acknowledgments are one way by which we begin to heal this relationship so we might prosper together. Our yesterdays have been determined. Our tomorrows are waiting for us to decide.

I will add at this point that everything that happened was technically legal.

The law can control a person's autonomy, it can control their body, their right to express themselves, and their freedom to live and love as they feel they should.

As I give this acknowledgement, I would ask you to reflect on the power and purpose of government, and to ponder your place within it.

Treaty Acknowledgement: I'll call the meeting to order and acknowledge that Council meets on the traditional land of Treaty 6 Territory. And I'll also acknowledge the diverse Indigenous peoples whose ancestors' footsteps have marked this territory for centuries such as: Cree, Dene, Saulteaux, Blackfoot, Nakota Sioux, as well as Metis and Inuit, and now settlers from around the world."



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Bissell Centre celebration in YEG

By Stefani Sharma

(Edmonton) - Colourful regalia. Delicious food. Traditional performances. Laughter between friends. These were just a few of the sights and sounds to behold at Bissell Centre’s celebration of National Indigenous Peoples Day on Friday, June 21, a day which also marks the summer solstice. The solstice is notable for providing the longest stretch of daylight of the year, which was fitting, as the 10 am to 1 pm celebrations saw a reprieve from the relentless stretch of rainy days. As members of our community gathered in the street together to honour the rich and diverse culture and contributions of the Canadian First Nations, Inuit and Metis peoples, the clouds parted and the sun made a welcome appearance on a day that Indigenous people have devoted to celebrating and rejoicing in our connection to the sun and the earth for thousands of years.

But National Indigenous Peoples Day is about more than just celebration. It's an opportunity for all Canadians to reflect on the history of mistreatment and adversity that Indigenous people have faced in Canada for hundreds of years, ever since the endless miles of Canadian soil that had belonged solely to them from the beginning of time became inhabited by groups of people who did not share their beliefs or ways of life. The Canada we know today is a beautiful cultural tapestry, brightly woven with colourful threads from cultures, ethnicities and nationalities from all over the world, and we are known internationally as a country that will welcome those who need refuge or who seek a better life for their family with open arms. Even so, it's important to acknowledge and reflect upon the fact that Canada became the nation it is today at great cost to Indigenous people and their storied heritage. And this history is far from ancient - the last Canadian residential school did not close its doors until 1996. For many Indigenous Canadians, the scars borne of decades of intergenerational trauma and the societal inequity that First Nations, Inuit and Metis people continue to face today often makes the healing process a long and difficult one.

While National Indigenous Peoples Day is an opportunity for both celebration and reflection, it also offers the promise of community. As the sun rose to its highest point in the sky over Bissell Centre on Friday, it shone down upon traditional performances of drumming, singing, and dancing, Indigenous art forms that continue to be passed down from generation to generation as visceral representations of the beauty, passion and deep spirituality of Indigenous culture. It alighted down upon friends, families and loved ones of all different cultures sitting down to a delicious traditional meal of stew and bannock, sharing stories and laughter as they ate together. It cast its dazzling light upon a day meant not only to celebrate the countless contributions that First Nations, Inuit and Metis peoples have made to Canada, but also for us as a wider community to show our solidarity with our Indigenous brothers and sisters and the adversity they continue to encounter every day.

Bissell Centre, founded in 1910, has always been an ally to the Indigenous community. In the days when



Everyone enjoyed the National Indigenous Peoples Day celebration at the Edmonton Bissell Centre.

Indigenous religious ceremonies and cultural practices were illegal in Canada, Bissell Centre provided a safe haven for Indigenous leaders to practice and keep their rich culture alive. We continue to strive today to be an organization where Indigenous traditions and practices are not merely accepted, but celebrated - not only on National Indigenous Peoples Day, but every day of the year.

Application deadline for Sixties Scoop Class Action: August 30, 2019

MONTREAL /CNW Telbec/ – Information sessions on the Sixties Scoop settlement individual payment application process currently underway in Canada have been held across the country since December 2018. As the August 30, 2019 application deadline fast approaches, Collectiva, the claims administrator, can confirm that it has reached a great number of people who fit the eligibility criteria for compensation. Many information sessions have been held to date across Canada.

As there is still time to apply, the claims administration team has recently begun to hold a second wave of information sessions across the country. The goal is to ensure that as many people as possible who meet the eligibility criteria have the opportunity to apply prior to the August 30, 2019 deadline. Details are available on the settlement website at: www.sixtiesscoopsettlement.info. Anyone needing more information or the support of a professional to complete an individual payment

application is invited to communicate with Collectiva. It should be recalled that a settlement agreement was reached in 2017 in respect of a class action aimed at compensating any registered Indian or person eligible to be registered or Inuit person who was adopted or made a permanent ward and was placed in the care of non-Indigenous foster or adoptive parents in Canada between January 1, 1951 and December 31, 1991, resulting in the loss of cultural identity. Eligible class members will receive compensation between \$25,000 and \$50,000 depending on the overall number of eligible members. Visit sixtiesscoopsettlement.info for more information or call 1 844 287-427 or send an email to sixtiesscoop@collectiva.ca.

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Summertime Blues

by Xavier Kataquapit

Like that old song says “there ain’t no cure for the summertime blues.” I remember very well what it was like being a teen in summer back home up the James Bay coast in Attawapiskat. I always had to work and that was good in a way because it kept me busy and out of trouble - more or less. Still, when I was 16, 17 and 18 I wished that I could leave my dusty, remote rez and head out to the big world where cities with sky scrapers, thousands of people, cars, trains and planes captivated my imagination.

That coming of age time which is probably from 14 to 18 or 19 is remarkable. Everything was so intense for me and I was learning about my home, the world and myself in leaps and bounds. Hanging out with my friends was always the release and comfort I needed while I felt trapped working on construction projects with my dad, Marius. In a way I am thankful that my dad had a construction and cargo business that provided much work for myself and my brothers. Long hours at work kept me away from drinking and drugs for quite a while.

Still, I remember as a teen that my life was all about adventure, risk and wanting to fit in with the other teens around me. I had always promised myself from the time I was very young that I would never drink or get into drugs because of so much tragedy and horror I had seen in my community when I was growing up. However, no matter what my intentions were when I was a teen suddenly the idea of having a drink with the boys, going to a party or trying a joint seemed like an acceptable thing to do.

Of course all teens want to fit in and take risks and that is just a reality for most of us at that age. However, what we never realized was the addictive power of alcohol, drugs and nicotine. It was hard to believe that something that most people did on a regular basis could actually turn a person into a helpless slave. I survived a relatively long time with out joining in for the drinking, cigarette and drug experience but one day I decided to accept someone’s offer and that was it. My life changed from my experience of being a more or less innocent, wide eyed kid enthusiastic about learning, succeeding in life and reaching for the stars to becoming lost in drunken nights. Somehow I rationalized taking that first step and then keeping on that trail into some dark, lonely and very confusing days. It was terrible.

Lucky for me in the midst of this darkness a light came my way. A cousin of mine who had been to drug and alcohol treatment and taken a college program in Native drug and alcohol abuse had returned to the community and with the assistance of some others started an Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) group. All of a sudden I felt like someone had thrown me a life preserver as I was floating helplessly on a rough and dark ocean. It was difficult to make the move to attend my first meeting but I was helped by my cousin Ron and the small group made me feel welcome. Wow, I had a safe place where people were not judging me or stressing me out. We were all in the same boat and doing our best to follow the AA program

and figure out what this addiction reality was all about. We had each other to count on and although life was not suddenly just a piece of cake it got a lot easier and slowly I moved back into a reality that was more sane. This was not a popular thing to be doing because most of the community was heavily involved in drinking and drugs and they were very negative and nasty to our little group because we threatened them.


I was lucky to have connected with some people that knew what I was going through and what it would take to get my life back. Soon after I got sober I had the opportunity to head out into the greater world and began my path as a writer, videographer and digital graphic designer. I chose to surround myself with sober people and I realized that I was one of those individuals that just could not handle alcohol or drugs and I got that. My life could have gone down many different trails that summer when I was 18 but lucky for me somehow I ended up on one that gave me back my life before I had gone on too far into the darkness. I have met many Native and non-Native people over the years that have given me insight, education, traditional knowledge and provided me with the opportunity to write for a living. I owe so much thanks to my family for understanding and supporting me, my mom Susan and my dad Marius for being hopeful that I could have a good life, my partner Mike for leading me through the jungle of life and pointing out many of the traps on the trail. I give thanks to so many of the Elders I have met on my journey who shared some of their wisdom, culture and traditions with me. Meegwetch to all the Native organizations and groups that have provided me employment over the years so that I could write the stories of my people. I am also thankful to the media who feature my column and stories far and wide.

I know that many teens are going to have an intense, hot summer and I hope and pray that they think twice



before they leave their innocent childhood behind and trade it off with a tumble into a difficult life. There are people you can reach out to in all First Nations that are sober and won’t ever judge you if you decide you need help. You can contact Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention (NADAP) Workers in most communities or if there is no AA, NA or traditional leadership to access then ask your community to develop these so that more of us can survive those critical coming of age summer time blues.

For more information about Xavier Kataquapit visit underthenorthernsky.com.



Dehcho Divisional
Education Council

REQUEST FOR
PROPOSALS

Student Residence House Parents

The Council is hiring house parents; on .contract, for a twelve bed, coeducational students' residence locatedIn Fort Simpson.

The home serves the needs of male and female .students attending school in Fort Simpson. The facility will be operated according to the Oparational Guldellnes established by: the Council. Written applications will be evaluated according totheOperational Guidelignes that may be obtained from the Dehcho Divisional Education Council office.

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Written proposals, that include personal resumes and references, must be received at the Council office by 5:00 pm, July 26 ,2019. If interested in applying, please contact the Council office for a copy of the application form and requirement to be submitted as well as a copy of the Terms of Reference

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St. Albert cont. from p 5

of celebrants, led by First Nation and Métis veterans, Elders, RCMP members and Eagle and Staff Carriers made its way around the large field before stopping in front of the main stage. Carolyn MacDonald sang O Canada, in Cree, French and English, moments before emcee Luc Gauthier introduced host drum, River Cree Singers, who performed an honour song in remembrance of Tom Ghostkeeper, whose community and cultural commitments will never be forgotten.

Elder Margaret Cardinal delivered the opening prayer and spoke to those in attendance about the importance of the special day, noting that though she would be offering the prayer in her Cree language, she wanted everyone to pray because: “we are all here to celebrate together, to pray together and when we do, we make the energy in here so very strong and clear.”

Elder Don Langford, Executive Director of Métis Child and Family Services, the co-host of the Indigenous Peoples Day event, was the first guest speaker to address the gathering. He praised the volunteers who helped to make the event a successful one for all who came out to celebrate the day and thanked the many marchers who made the 40-minute walk in honour of Canada’s missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.

“We are very honoured and happy to be here in St. Albert today – the home of Alberta’s Métis,” noted Langford. “I want to take this moment to ask the Creator to look after our children and our families and to help us all enjoy this celebration of culture, heritage and diversity.”

Métis Nation of Alberta Provincial Vice President Dan Cardinal was introduced to the podium, where he “acknowledged that we are on Treaty 6 territory, also the homeland of the Métis,” before lauding the words of Elder Cardinal and paying respect to the memory of Tom Ghostkeeper.

“I am so happy today that I speak Cree,” he noted, “because this is after all, the Year of Indigenous Languages. Welcome one and all to this National Indigenous Peoples Day event.”

St. Albert MLA Marie Renaud thanked Elder Cardinal for her prayer and told the audience that “her words are an important reminder that unconditional love is the answer and that we have much work to do around recognizing truth and working toward reconciliation.”

St. Albert Mayor Kathy Heron thanked everyone who attended the celebration and acknowledged everyone who came out to enjoy the day.

“On this day we celebrate the First Nations, Métis and Inuit but the summer solstice is also the beginning of something called Celebrate Canada Day. It is great to see so many volunteers participating here today – thanks to the many of you here today who have traveled far to join us in celebration. This event has been going on in St. Albert for 10 years so it’s actually a celebration day and I call for a round of applause for all the organizers.

“An hour ago, the marchers walked to City Hall where we hoisted the Métis flag; it will fly there for half the week and then we will raise the Treaty 6 flag for the second half of the week. As a city we are publicly announcing our support and our inclusion and as a council we are very proud to note that we have added the Métis flag and the Treaty 6 flag as permanent additions to our council



St. Albert NIPD 2019 honoured Elder Tom Ghostkeeper and presented his wife Martha with an honour blanket in his memory.



The St. Albert National Indigenous Peoples Day event raised awareness about Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls before launching into the celebration. Top: MCFS Executive Director and army veteran Don Langford and St. Albert RCMP officer Pam Robinson participated in the Grand Entry. Event organizer Gwen Crouse and granddaughter Carolyn MacDonald, who sang the national anthem in Cree, French and English. Bottom: Metis Nation of Alberta Vice President Dan Cardinal, St. Albert MLA Marie Renaud, event emcee and performer Luc Gauthier and St. Albert Mayor Kathy Heron.

chambers so every time we walk in the chamber we are reminded about the land we stand on.”

Heron said she’d like to “rewrite our land agreement” and to do so “we need help from this community so we get the right words to acknowledge Treaty 6 land; it is important that we understand who we are every time we stand in front of you.”

National Aboriginal Week sees many local, regional and provincial organizations, agencies and communities take the time and make the effort to join Canadians from coast to coast to celebrate Aboriginal culture and tradition and to reflect and remember the important role that Indigenous

Canadians have played in Canada’s history. Initiated in 1996 by then-Governor General Romeo Leblanc, National Aboriginal Day (renamed National Indigenous Peoples Day) falls on the summer solstice, the longest day of the year and a time when Aboriginal peoples traditionally gathered to share, trade, celebrate and reunite with loved ones. When the day was introduced, the message was clear that “all Canadians are encouraged to participate” in the many festivities, and to “celebrate the values, traditions and cultures” of Canada’s First Nation, Métis and Inuit peoples.



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Maria Campbell attends naming ceremony at Athabasca U

By Terry Lusty

Maria Campbell is a highly respected Elder and author of the bestselling book *Halfbreed*. She has given often and endlessly of herself, and definitely made her mark in humaneness, the arts and teaching. Her work has touched many lives, educated countless people and inspired so many others.

During a recent visit to Alberta, Campbell and her brother Wil, performed a special ceremony to bestow the new name, Nuksahtowin ('meeting place' in Cree), to what was previously known as the Centre for Indigenous Knowledge and Research.

The ceremony was held May 29 in a round room referred to as the "gathering room" situated on the Athabasca University campus in the town of Athabasca. A 'sister' centre bearing the same name is in Edmonton at the Peace Hills Trust building on 109 Street.

The ceremony was performed by Maria and Wil and was attended by approximately 50 people including university president Neil Fassina and other dignitaries who participated in a smudging ceremony. The smudging was followed by a pipe ceremony by Wil Campbell who also offered some explanations to educate the attendees while Maria proclaimed the new name for the centre.

The naming ceremony was followed by a few speeches in the room as well as in the university's main foyer. This, in turn, was followed by a superb feast, gifting and social mingling.

Pipe holder and ceremonialist Wil Campbell gave glowing accolades for his accomplished sister, Maria. "She is such a great inspiration and support (for many people)," he stated. Despite all she went through and all her hard knocks in life, "she always loved us and cared about us (her siblings)," he added.

Additionally, she has a knack for letting people know she loves them. Her greatest gift he continued, is her message which gives the world "hope, strength and belief."

About her book *Halfbreed*, Wil said, "It was unbelievable - the change she made in people. She took the fear out of us hiding who we were," as Indigenous people.

Both Maria and Wil notice the difference education is making among the younger generation in the Indigenous community.

"It's such a positive progression," claimed Maria. On the flip side, however, "there's still bad stuff happening," she added, including the high incidences of children committing suicide and children being neglected.

Many of Maria's attributes stem from others who have been part of her life, especially her mentors.

Maria was born in 1940 at Park Valley, about 80 miles

NW of Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. With her mother passing away at a young age, Maria, the eldest of eight children, assumed her mom's role in caring for her siblings. She later moved to B.C. and Alberta before returning home to Saskatchewan where she rapidly involved herself in community issues. She encountered many rocky roads and difficult times, but she persevered and retained her indelible passion for the arts. Whether it was film, music, theatre, or literature, Maria was forever consumed by it and genuinely embraced it.

Maria's initial 'big break' was the 1973 release of her biography, *Halfbreed*, which has gone through several reprints and "always sold really well," she stated. The book is still in use in many schools and universities. It details the searing realities of the trials and tribulations of this Metis woman growing up in a country presumed to encourage and uphold equality, respect, justice and honour. As we all now know, nothing could be further from the truth.

Over the years, she also wrote children's books, including: *People of the Buffalo*, *Little Badger* and *the Fire Spirit, Riel's People*. In partnership with Kim Anderson and Christi Belcourt, she is nearing completion of another book.

Her writings are not limited to books and articles. She's also penned material for films and theatre. She wrote and directed *My Partners, My People* (three years running). Additional film credits include: *Wapos Bay* (on APTN TV), *Journey to Healing*, *La Beau Sha Sho*, *Joseph's Justice*, *A Centre for Buffalo Narrows*, *Cumberland House*, *Road to Batoche*, *The Red Dress*, and more.

Her theatrical play, *Flight*, garnered her a 1986 Award and Best Canadian Production at the Quinzanne International Festival in Quebec City and two of her plays toured much of Canada, Denmark, Italy and Scotland.

From 1985 to 1997, she owned/operated Gabriel Productions, and coordinated Sage Ensemble - a theatre group for Indigenous Elders and was actively associated with the late actor, Gordon Tootoosis' Nikaniwin Theatre (formerly Sask. Native Theatre Co. in Saskatoon).

Add to this, her voluntary




Wil Campbell, Maria Campbell and Athabasca University President Neil Fassina at the naming ceremony of the Nuksahtowin (meeting place) on campus.

activism as a staunch supporter and advocate for women's and Indigenous people's rights, her founding of the first Women's Halfway House, and a Women's and Children's Emergency Crisis Centre in Edmonton.

She also established food and housing co-ops, advanced the recognition and hiring of Indigenous people in the arts, encouraged higher education for Indigenous people, served as a member of the Grandmothers for Justice Society and as an Elder with the Saskatchewan Aboriginal Justice Commission.

Maria served as a writer-in-residence, lecturer and sessional instructor at various universities, is recipient of several honorary degrees and doctorates as well as countless awards, including: the Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation Fellowship, Officer of the Order of Canada, Canada Council for the Arts Molson Prize, National Aboriginal Achievement Award, and so much more!

Alberta Native News is proud and honoured to salute this iconic lady who has given so much and is such a terrific role model for so many others in innumerable Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.



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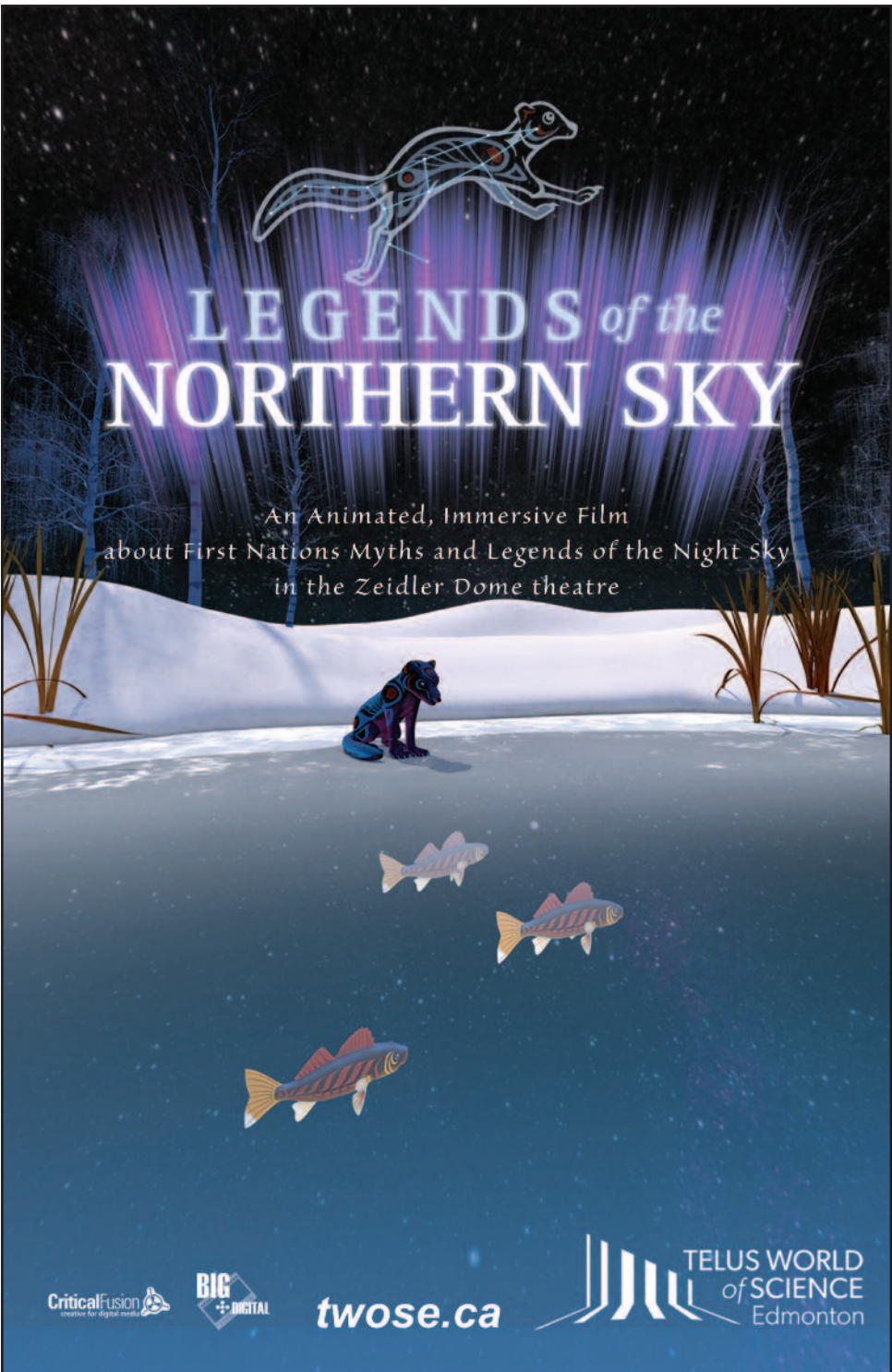
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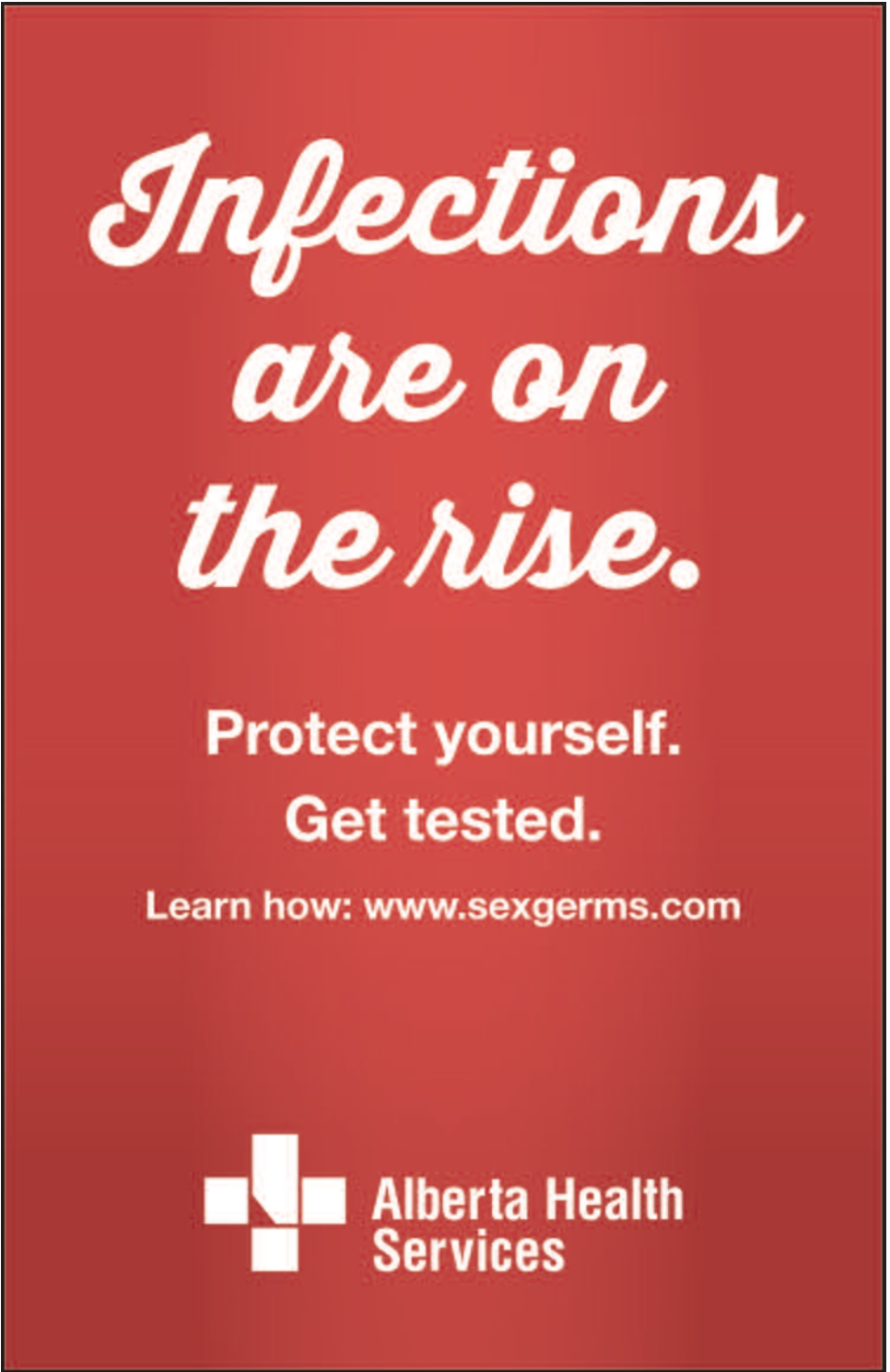
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