

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

Funded by the Government of Canada | Financé par le gouvernement du Canada | Canada

Volume 37, Number 8, August 2020
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.

All rights reserved. No part of this newspaper may be reproduced without written permission from the publisher. The opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Editor. Alberta Native News is published by 320754 Alberta Ltd.

For change of address, please send both old and new addresses. We welcome your stories, pictures, artwork and opinions. Please send anything you would like to have published to our office.

Making Bingo Affordable

Castledowns Bingo Association

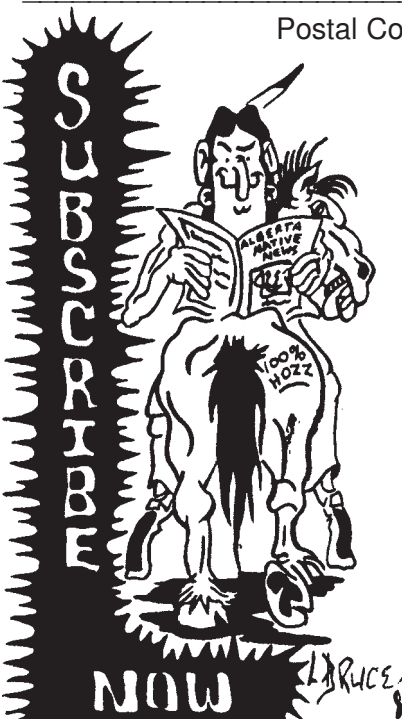
12222 - 137 Avenue, Edmonton, AB
780-457-4670

- Castledowns Bingo operates 7 days/wk, 3 events a day
- Tills open at 11:15 am for Afternoon
- 5:15 pm Evening and 9:30 pm for Late Night
- We have 119 electronic bingo machines max 54 card
- Tuesday is our half price bingo (regular game cards and the first few boxes of balls)
- Win free bingo (regular cards all you can play on paper and 54 on electronic)
- Both you and a pal play all three sessions for a week
- **Early Birds** - #7 \$1.00, Postage Stamps \$1.00
- **Special Games** - Casino \$1.00, Double Action \$1.00 38 numbers or less, Zip \$1.00 and Bonanza \$1.00 Even Better \$2.00 53 numbers or less
- **Last Saturday every month is our Guaranteed Special**
 - Afternoon \$1000.00, \$200.00 for the consolation
 - Evening \$2000.00, \$500.00 for the consolation
 - Late Night \$800.00, \$200.00 for the consolation

SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Alberta Native News
#102 10155 114 Street NW
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 1R8

Name _____
Address _____
Postal Code _____



SUBSCRIPTIONS

\$57.75
per year

\$100.80
for two years

(includes GST)



Don't cut oilsands monitoring

By Jake Cardinal

The federal government and Alberta recently agreed to make major budget cuts to environmental monitoring in the oilsands. The deal, in a copy obtained by the Canadian Press, was signed on July 7, 2020 by top bureaucrats in Ottawa and Edmonton.

The 2019-2020 budget saw \$58 million dollars being dedicated to environmental monitoring – this year, the budget is being cut to \$44 million. The agreement reduces funding by approximately 25 percent from the previous year.

The deal says no fieldwork will be done on the main branch of the Athabasca River, which means that there won't be any funding towards monitoring downstream of the oilsands; there will also be no field studies on wetlands, fish or insects. A project weighing the risks of tailings ponds has also been stopped and water quality assessment in Wood Buffalo National Park has been halted.

Kevin Cash, acting assistant deputy minister of science and technology with Environment and Climate Change Canada, said that the reduced budget is because of the lost time due to COVID. "We have missed part of the field season," Cash said, claiming that a substantial part of the spring and summer was lost.

Cash also said that the budget was made and approved by a 12-person committee which features six people from Indigenous communities, as well as representatives from industry and the provincial and federal governments.

Jess Sinclair, press secretary for Alberta Environment Minister Jason Nixon, echoed Kevin Cash by saying that the budget is actually in line with the previous years and that the budget does not accurately reflect what is spent.

"The \$43.9 million approved for oilsands monitoring in 2020-21 reflects the expected costs of monitoring required to assure immediate public and environmental health, long-term monitoring and focused activities across the areas of air, water, wetlands, wildlife and vegetation monitoring," she said.

Jonathan Wilkinson, Canada's environment and climate change minister, echoed both Cash and Sinclair by saying that "there was no decision to cut anything," and that the reduced budget is a result of COVID. "There will be a bit less spending this year on some of the monitoring activities but it's simply a function of the fact that, for a third of the season, we couldn't send people out into the field," he said.

"It's important for all Canadians to know that we're managing resources in a responsible way and ensuring that pollution is not happening," Wilkinson said. He also added that funding for the environmental monitoring will return to normal in 2021.

Meanwhile, the agreement has received backlash from many people, including Bill Donahue, a former senior civil servant with Alberta's science and monitoring programs, who said to leave the Athabasca River unmonitored is "crazy."

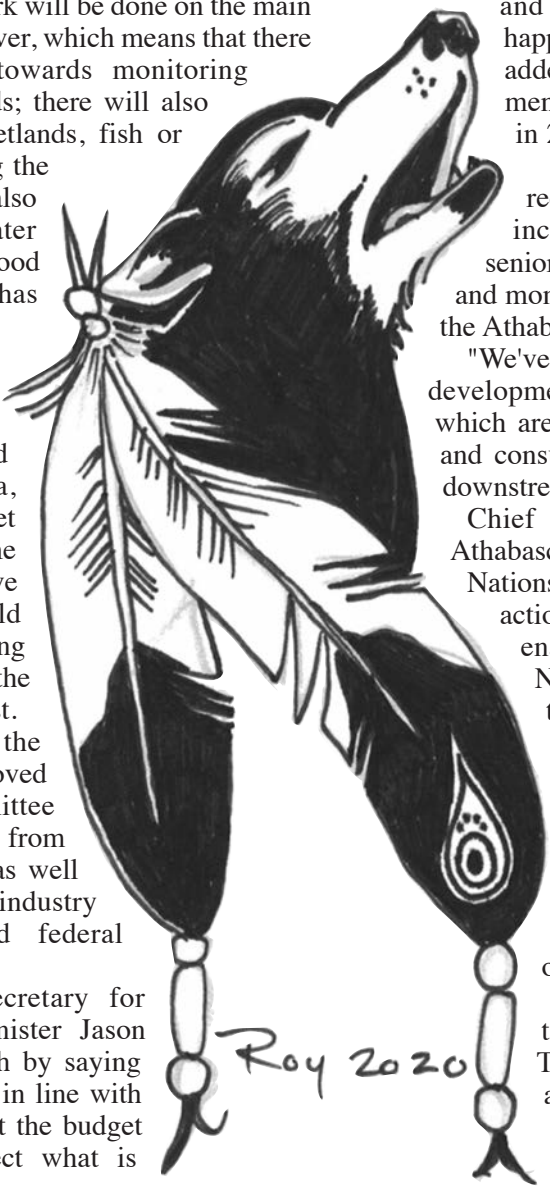
"We've got one of the biggest industrial developments -- the primary problems of which are contamination of the environment and consumption of water -- and there's no downstream monitoring."

Chief Allan Adam, President of the Athabasca Tribal Council stated, "Our First Nations are deeply disappointed with the actions of the Government of Alberta in enacting these Orders. Many First Nations reside in close proximity to the oil sands operations in Fort McMurray and Fort Chipewyan. We are disproportionately affected by the environmental impacts of these operations. Yet, the Government of Alberta failed to consult with us as to how these Orders may impact our communities.

"We find no comfort in having to rely on voluntary reporting. The health and safety of our people and the environment is a major concern - a concern the Government of Alberta does not appear to share. If the Government of

Alberta wishes to sustain a meaningful relationship with the Indigenous peoples of Alberta, then we recommend that Indigenous perspectives are included when making decisions that will be significantly impacting Indigenous people and communities."

Continued on next page



URBAN
systems

Committed to serving Indigenous Communities in Canada since 1975

CALGARY
Suite 101,
134 11th Avenue SE
403-291-1193
calgary@urbansystems.ca

EDMONTON
Suite 200,
10345-105 St. NW
780-430-4041
edmonton@urbansystems.ca

SASKATOON
204-220 3rd Avenue S
306-955-6666
saskatoon@urbansystems.ca

Infrastructure
Economic Development
Engineering
Water and Sewer
Community Planning
Housing

urbansystems.ca

local artists | exclusive collection | original pieces

WG | Wakina Gallery



call 780-237-1556 for viewings
wakinagallery@gmail.com
www.wakinagallery.com

Saddle Lake Smoke Eaters becomes distributor of PPE

By Jake Cardinal

Indigenous-owned and operated wildland fire-fighting company, Smoke Eaters LP, has entered a deal with an international manufacturer, allowing the Saddle Lake business to become a distributor of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

“The business arrangement will consist of being a direct distributor of Atlas Products. This includes sales, ordering, and distribution to the customers,” said Smoke Eaters’ Manager Andrew Cardinal.

Atlas Workwear, who has “been manufacturing and distributing quality products and great prices” for years, will be selling products such as coveralls, work gloves, and face masks to Smoke Eaters LP for re-sale.

“Large industry partners are always looking for opportunities to support local communities,” said Atlas Workwear in a statement to *Alberta Native News*. “With all levels of government earmarking billions for indigenous business spending this year, we feel it’s a great time for both companies to grow our market share while providing opportunities for employment and revenue for Saddle Lake Cree nation members.

“Atlas workwear is developing more great safety and industrial products that will add to the offering in the future and we are very excited to be working with Smoke Eaters on this venture,” the company said in their statement.

In 2019, the federal government announced plans to spend \$4.5 Billion in efforts to try and close the

socio-economic gap between Indigenous people and non-Indigenous people. The new budget “builds on significant investments for Indigenous peoples of \$16.8 billion provided in the last 3 budgets,” reads the government’s website.

Finance Minister Bill Morneau said of the budget, “It is a continuation of what we’ve been doing since Day 1. It is driven by the fact that we know in this country, we need to get this right. We’ve got a lot of work to do and we are going to stay on it.”

Smoke Eaters Board Member Andy Redcrow said of the agreement, “These products are top quality Personal Protection Equipment and workwear that will be essential to meeting the safety guidelines during this pandemic as people’s safety is our primary goal.”

“Atlas Workwear will provide sales support and technical training for our new personnel which will be conducive to work opportunities for our Nation,” said Redcrow.

Smoke Eaters’ Manager Andrew Cardinal also said that the company “will be in a position to provide more services to industry. This equates to having



(left to right): Atlas Sales Manager Sean Brown, Atlas President Patrick Wang, Smoke Eaters Business Manager Andrew Cardinal, and Smoke Eaters Board member Andy Redcrow shake hands on the new deal.

another source of revenue as opposed to just focusing on Wildland Firefighting.

“The working arrangement will allow for members to be trained and involved with the sales aspect of providing products and services to industry. It will allow for logistics to be taken on by the Saddle Lake First Nation (SLFN) trained truck drivers and usage of any heavy truck and trailer owned and operated by SLFN and/or its Members.”

The plans for the distribution agreement are much bigger however, as “over time Saddle Lake Smoke Eaters LP could become a distribution hub to cater to Alberta with a centre located on the Saddle Lake First Nation,” said Cardinal. “This has entailed meetings with major companies to become a vendor and we’ve gained favorable responses to date.”

Jake Cardinal is a local journalism initiative reporter.

Oilsands monitoring *cont. from p 2*

“We call on the Government of Alberta to immediately terminate these Orders.”

Marlin Schmidt, environment critic for Alberta's NDP Opposition stated, "It's critical to protect the environment. It's also critical to show the world we can develop these resources responsibly. We're failing at both."

Despite the Athabasca River flowing into the Northwest Territories and a binding agreement which makes Alberta keep track of the river, the territories were not made aware of the budget cuts. Joslyn Oosenbrug of the territory's Environment Department said, "We were not provided with any detailed information about the budget. The (territory) has made its concerns known about the suspension of water quality monitoring in Alberta and continues to advocate for all monitoring to resume, especially the (oilsands monitoring) program."

The agreement comes after Alberta suspended environmental monitoring during the pandemic earlier this year. The Federal Government also suspended water monitoring when the pandemic started. Despite both levels of government being responsible for water monitoring that affects the N.W.T., several programs have been suspended for months.

"The fact that the federal government has, on the quality side, not done any monitoring during the pandemic, is a serious oversight with huge impact," said former N.W.T. environment minister Michael Miltenberger.

Smith's Landing First Nation Chief Gerry Cheezie said, "We rely on [wildlife] for food, for medicines, for spiritual sustenance. Slowly but surely, the oilsands pollution is killing our people. Using a pandemic to suspend environmental monitoring is a breach of people's trust."

Zoe Guile, conservation co-ordinator with Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society Northwest Territories Chapter, voiced concern for those who live off the Athabaskan waters due to the budget cuts towards fish health studies. "If these insects and animals living in this water are... experiencing health issues, then that's just a really big red flag that the water isn't safe for people anymore," said Guile.

Cameron MacDonald, president of the Fort Chipewyan Métis said, "Something's got to be done, because it's our air, it's our water that's being affected."

Jake Cardinal is a local initiative journalism reporter.

Art of Mohan

- Speciality items

Items for sale include gorgeous face coverings, pillow slips, duvet covers and much more.

Shop at www.artofwhere.com/artists/tim-mohan

Visit us online and like us at Alberta Native News

IMPORTANT BACK-TO-SCHOOL INFORMATION

Students return: September 8-11, 2020

Attention Parents and Guardians: The 2020-2021 school year is just around the corner! The provincial government announced the decision to open schools in the fall under scenario 1 (near normal with health measures). Northland School Division developed its re-entry plan that will guide what the school year will look like for families and staff. The plan, based on guidelines from the province, is available on our website <https://www.nsd61.ca/about-us/division-news/post/nsd-releases-re-entry-plan>.

Schools will resume in-school classes on September 8-11, 2020 with the added health measures. Students will have a staggered entry in the first week, with parents being notified which days during the first week that their child will attend in-person classes.

Student Registration: For re-registration, parents or guardians have the following options for verifying information with their local school:

- Drop off the verification form.
- Email the verification form.
- Verify information via text message or phone call.

For new students, parents or guardians will need to fill a registration form and provide one of the following documents:

- Birth Certificate • Residency Document • Canadian Citizenship Document • Passport

Visit <https://www.nsd61.ca/students-parents/student-registration-forms> to access the registration form.

NOTE: For families not yet ready to send their child to school, we are offering an at-home learning option. If families choose at-home learning, please contact your local school to register for the 2020-2021 school year.

School Bus Information: Effective for the 2020-2021 School Year, all students must be registered to ride the school bus. This includes contracted buses and students attending junior high and high school in another town. Students will not be permitted to ride the bus if they are not registered through the Transportation Department. Visit <https://www.nsd61.ca/students-parents/student-registration-forms> to access the School Bus Registration Form. Please contact your local school for school bus times, pick-up and drop-off locations and general information. Parents or guardians will need to provide a physical address (not a box number).

Kindergarten: The start date for kindergarten may vary from school to school. Please contact your local school to confirm the start date.

Questions? Please contact central office at 1-800-362-1360 or your local school. Additional information is also available on our website at www.nsd61.ca or www.facebook.com/TheNorthlandSchoolDivision.

YEG Tent Camp Pekiwewin advocates for the city's homeless people



Elder Terry Newborn visited the tent city in Edmonton on Aug.11 to conduct a pipe ceremony and feast with prayers for the safety and good health of tent city dwellers. Photos by Terry Lusty

Stories of iskwewak presented in augmented murals

By Laura Mushumanski

In Plains Cree, the word for woman is *iskwew*. *Iskwew* encompasses several meanings within one word that is deeply rooted to our ancestral ties, and in the English language, there are several words that provide the same meaning for the single word, woman.

Iskwew represents strength and courage, respect, love, wisdom, humility, kindness, honor, gratitude, truth and the essence of *okâwîmâwaskiy* (Mother Earth). *Iskwewak* connections to *okâwîmâwaskiy*, *askîy* (land), and cultural knowledge is the essence of their being.

Traditionally, *iskwewak* looked after their communities, harvested medicines, raised their children and supported their family members in rearing their children. *Iskwewak* would make clothing out of tanned hides they prepared, incorporate beadwork that represented the medicines and plants growing within their community, and forged, hunted, prepared and preserved food; in other words, *iskwewak* were the backbone of Indigenous communities.

The *âcimowina* (stories) of the *iskwewak* that have paved the way for the generations after them, are *maskihkîy* (medicine). Our ancestors have gifted us with teachings and lessons of what it means to be an *iskwew* and encouraged us to gift others with the same love and respect each one of them had for their communities and families.

In the 21st century, *iskwewak* currently still live in

an extreme state of marginalization, and encounter oppressive government initiated policies such as the Indian Act, genocidal tactics, and sexist policies that have vastly contributed to policing and shaping attitudes and behaviours surrounding Indigenous women and girls. Even though Indigenous people honour Indigenous women for their resiliency and strength, they are misrepresented within our great nation - Turtle Island. Acknowledging colonial history by understanding and reconciling is needed in order to return to ‘our rightful position and equal status in the world today, as healers, hunters, intellectuals, nurturers and leaders.’

Leading by example and empowering youth, *iskwewak* artists from the Urban Society for Aboriginal Youth (USAY) created three augmented reality murals, entitled the Indigenous Women Augmented Mural Series. The three murals are to be placed in specific locations throughout *otôskwanîhk* (Calgary); two of three unveilings have been postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The project started in April of 2019 and ran for a year until March 2020. Twenty *iskwewak* from 15 to 30 years of age participated in depicting the strength of our Indigenous women and girls, for all to see not just vulnerability but the value an Indigenous woman embodies. The \$45,500 funding for the mural series was contributed by the Alberta government to bring awareness to unjust issues *iskwewak* and girls face on a daily basis.

The three murals feature ribbon skirts, hide and a digitally created painting - focusing on democratic participation, employment barriers and gender-based violence. Within each mural there are deep, meaningful traditional *âcimowina* being told in new ways by exploring what it means to be an Indigenous woman.

One of the murals features three traditional ribbon skirts - ranging from small to large, representing the past, present and future. Titled ‘Vulnerable to Valuable,’ the mural hones in on gender-based violence. The mural is connected to the USAY AR APP, where the augmented reality being in one of the skirts, the Highway of Tears will appear, representing the epidemic of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.

On the small skirt, the app will show a field of Bison, symbolizing Indigenous women getting back to their roots, culture and ‘embracing our future where *iskwewak* don’t have to constantly be activists and fighting for justice.’ Pandemic permitting, ‘Vulnerable to Valuable’ will be placed at the Inn From the Cold homeless shelter.



IWAMS youth unveiled their mural, "Women's Count" at West Winds Police Headquarters in Calgary. The theme is democratic participation and encouraging Indigenous women to vote in current elections.

The nine girls wearing plain clothing in the black and white mural ‘Barrier Breakers’ is associated with overcoming workplace obstacles. The plain and dull looking mural is intentional, representing how Indigenous women are viewed throughout their communities - as not contributing to or being part of the workforce. When using the app, bricks are flying off a wall, resembling a wall being broken down, eliminating barriers to success or employment; the ladies are then seen wearing attire fitted to their aspirational careers.

‘Barrier Breakers’ is to be displayed at Forest Lawn High School, chosen because of the interactive component and encouraging aspect of young Indigenous women succeeding and being a part of the workforce.

On July 23, the unveiling of the artist’s permanent mural, ‘Women’s Count,’ shares the *âcimowina* of Indigenous women’s governance and their participation in politics. At Calgary Police Service headquarters, sticks and handprints frame the mural made out of hide. The title reflects a traditional winter’s count where Indigenous nations would get together and recount significant events that happened over the year. The hide has simple symbols called infographics, that reflect the events of a winter’s count and voting practices. Traditionally Indigenous women were the primary governing bodies for Indigenous communities, and since colonization, Indigenous women’s roles were undermined and presently it continues to play a negative role in Indigenous women’s participation in democracy.

The mural is a call to action, and in the USAY AR app, there are stories reflecting oral traditions. The mural being placed at the Calgary Police Headquarters represents how reconciliation can be fostered and that relationships between Indigenous people and the police can be built and civic engagement can be directed in a forward motion.

Laura Mushumanski is a local journalism initiative reporter for Alberta Native News.

DISCOVER CALGARY LIBRARY

- Books and eResources
- Indigenous Services
- Events - and much more!
- Arts & Culture displays
- Programs

All free with your Library Card – FREE for all residents of Calgary and surrounding area Indigenous communities.

calgarylibrary.ca

What the land teaches us about our livelihood

By Laura Mushumanski

The bush and the natural world teach us to be connected to the *askîy* (land) and everything our ancestors knew about healing. The plants have a symbiotic relationship with everything living on the *askîy* and are here to aid us in sickness and in health. The spiritual teachings of the *askîy* have been passed on from our ancestors before us and continue to be passed on to the next generations. And even if our inherent knowledge of the *askîy* has been lost, we can still reconnect with the *askîy*, that is a part of us, because we are all a part of Mother Earth.

“If you have *askîy*, you have everything. If you have the *askîy* you will always be looked after,” is what the grandmother of Brenda Holder spoke of during her time preserving and practicing traditional Indigenous *maskihkîy* (medicine).

Holder is a fourth-generation knowledge keeper of traditional Metis *maskihkîy*. She emphasizes the importance of what our natural environment and wild plants are teaching us, and the significant teachings, lessons and gifts behind illnesses.

There was always a purpose behind Holder’s grandmother’s teachings, that was something specific as she demonstrated an activity, like berry picking, and the truth to what they were saying.

“A way of working with the *maskihkîy*, in a way it was almost meditative, and you could literally see [my grandmother] connecting with the *maskihkîy*, and it was through her and the *maskihkîy* and the person she was treating that needed her attention. That struck me the most – how very deeply connected she was to the ill person, the *maskihkîy* and the *askîy*.”

It is a gift and of great importance to continue to preserve Indigenous culture. And at a young age, Holder was taught that, “keeping my family, values, knowledge, and traditions alive, keeps culture alive.”

At a pivotal time throughout the globe, COVID-19 has highlighted the essence of everything Indigenous people traditionally have known about *maskihkîy* and illnesses. When observing how people behaved themselves during the early stages of the pandemic – by purchasing an abundance of non-perishable food items – Holder states that, “this virus has really brought these teachings home in a very poignant way.” The pandemic is seen as a gift, the unexpected situations that came to us, our ancestors understood

the art and the very important lesson in preservation – not to harvest everything, to ensure the longevity of everyone.

Traditionally in Indigenous culture, everyone had a role within their community to provide for each other and look after each other. Our ancestors had an innate understanding of their own health and longevity, because of their deep connection to culture, teachings of the *askîy* and how to work with the *askîy* to extract *maskihkîy* that they needed.

“You enter into a sacred contract, to live a good and clean life on the plants’ and animals’ behalf.”

When practicing a traditional way of life, respect is shown to the animals being hunted for meat that is providing nourishment for our families. The stories told from each piece of hide we wear on our feet and our backs, connects us to our culture, ancestors and the *askîy*. Our ancestors passed on the teachings of harvesting, hunting and gathering sustainably and for us to be mindful of ensuring a better world – to respect both past and future generations.

“I think it is important to highlight the very essence of keeping the culture alive, even in today’s standards.”

Holder emphasizes the importance of continuing to remember the spiritual teachings – the *askîy* teachings, from the people that have gone before us. Our ancestors have put so much of themselves into the *askîy*, their livelihood, hard work, blood, sweat and tears – ensuring a better world for us. To respect the *askîy* is to respect the teachings reaching back in history, in time, for the benefit of the people that have gone before us.

“To have an innate understanding of traditional *maskihkîy*, *maskihkîy* needs to make yourself well.”

Holder has been gifted with the teachings of traditional Metis *maskihkîy*, and over the years has been able to blend her cultural world with western knowledge. She has studied, practiced and continues to learn and understand plants, how *maskihkîy* work and she respects the *maskihkîy* as being part of her family. Since 2000, Holder has been given the opportunity to take



Brenda Holder is owner and founder of Mahikan Trails. (Photo Travel Alberta)

interested participants onto the *askîy* and teach them to learn and understand the *askîy*. Holder is the founder of Mahikan Trails and continues to practice spiritual teachings. “The answer is always in the bush, no matter what, always ask the *maskihkîy* [for the answers you are seeking].”

A few notable sacred plants within Alberta, that have been preserved through traditional cultural knowledge are: Blueberry, Cranberry, Horsetail, Labrador, Nettle, Raspberry, Sage, Wild Mint, Wild Rose, Willow and Yarrow.

Here is a recipe for respiratory health, clearing a cluttered mind, and good memory:

Ingredients: Half a handful of Spruce Tree needles, chopped; Hardened sap from Spruce Tree; Large bowl; Hot water; Tea towel.

Place Spruce Tree needles and sap into a large bowl, fill the bowl halfway with hot water, breathe in the hot water/Spruce Tree aroma while covering the back of head with a tea towel.

Brenda Holder is the owner of Mahikan Trails. She is an advocate for Indigenous tourism, and shares her knowledge during guided tours within the Rocky Mountains. For information email brenda@mahikan.ca

Laura Mushumanski is a Local Journalism Initiative reporter for Alberta Native News.

Covid support announced

By Jake Cardinal

Earlier this month, it was announced that the Alberta Government will supply each of Alberta’s five First Nations colleges with \$100,000 in one-time funding for COVID-19 supports, for a total of \$500,000.

Demetrios Nicolaides, Minister of Advanced Education, stated, “We listened to the concerns raised by leaders of First Nations colleges in Alberta and we are pleased that we can provide this one-time funding to address some of those immediate challenges. First Nations colleges are cornerstones of their communities and we need to ensure they can continue to provide valuable and effective learning opportunities for their students, despite these unprecedented times.”

The grant will address technology and Wi-Fi access, support online programming development and delivery, and assist with improved cleaning protocols to meet COVID-19 standards.

“Indigenous communities thrive when their youth come back with contemporary skills and a willingness to uphold the old ways, too. Knowing students will have the access they need to continue their education makes me optimistic for their future and their communities,” said Rick Wilson, Minister of Indigenous Relations.

There are five First Nations colleges in Alberta receiving the funds: Maskwacis Cultural College, Old Sun Community College, Red Crow Community College, University nuhelot’i?ne thaiyots’i? nistameyimâkanak Blue Quills and Yellowhead Tribal College.

Roy M. Weasel Fat, Namahkan, president, Red Crow Community College said, “Red Crow Community College is very appreciative of extra funding received from Alberta Advanced Education for COVID-19 preparedness initiatives for our college safety program.”

Rachel Hertz Cobb, chief administrative officer, Yellowhead Tribal College stated, “Like our fellow post-secondary institutions, we have been working to provide our students with a learning environment that’s safe and that also allows them to keep making progress toward their diplomas and degrees. This enhancement of the First Nations College Grant recognizes that PSE delivery under pandemic conditions asks extraordinary feats of small institutions like ours and goes a long way toward making it possible for us to meet our goals.”

Jake Cardinal is a local journalism initiative reporter for Alberta Native News.



SUPPORT
YOUR
COMMUNITY
YOUR WAY

Alberta Blue Cross and the Alberta Recreation and Parks Association have partnered together to create the COVID Community Roots Program, providing grants up to \$5,000 from the Alberta Blue Cross community foundation to help community-led initiatives navigate COVID-19. Non-profits and charities in rural communities across Alberta are eligible to apply.

Learn more and apply at ab.bluecross.ca/aboutus/community-roots.php



**The Blue Cross symbol and name are registered marks of the Canadian Association of Blue Cross Plans, an association of independent Blue Cross plans. Licensed to ABC Benefits Corporation for use in operating the Alberta Blue Cross Plan.
*Blue Shield is a registered trade-mark of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association. ABC 83100 2020/07



Kanatan Health Solutions honours Indigenous traditions

By Jake Cardinal

A Saddle Lake business known as Kanatan Health Solutions has created hand sanitizers that smell like sage, cedar, and sweetgrass.

The “Indigenous Focused PPE Products are designed and formulated with Indigenous People’s unique culture and arts in mind,” reads the company website.

Four of the founders: Leah Redcrow, Sheila Redcrow, LaDawn Redcrow, and Tasha Power described Kanatan’s origins.

When Kanatan Health Solutions started, it was not a business, they explained. It began as a way to keep family safe.

Leah Redcrow said, “I made sanitizer for my parents during the time when there was no hand sanitizer readily available. My parents only had a tiny little bottle of sanitizer and they couldn’t get any more. So I got really worried about them.

“I decided to do different studies on different hand sanitizers and for about a month I studied different chemical compositions. But the formulation had to be something they would actually want to use.”

Leah needed to get rid of the alcohol smell, she said, “because my parents aren’t drinkers and they don’t like the smell of alcohol. So, then I decided to formulate one that had sweet grass essential oil in it –

I also made one that had cedar and sage.

“I had protecting them in mind and I wanted to make something that they would want to use.”

Then after letting her family know, Leah sat down with her sister Jessie, who is a clinical health professional and is an “avid user of sanitizer, even before COVID started.” After their discussions, it was decided that the sanitizer should be tested.

“She did a ‘soft launch’ at her work place to see if the health professionals would like it. And I had a very small amount, something like 20 bottles, and they bought it all within 20 minutes. Then we applied to become a business entity, got our licensing and approval from Health Canada on June 22, 2020 and here we are.”

The sanitizers are measured to include a total of 75% Isopropyl Alcohol and include all-natural plant-based moisturizers and locally sourced essential oils.

“We don’t use ethyl alcohol because it’s a grain alcohol – and alcohol and smudge don’t mix. So we use the isopropyl alcohol, which is a more



Kanatan Health Solutions founders: Sheila Redcrow, President & CEO; Leah Redcrow, Director of Products & Innovation; Tasha Power, Director of Marketing & Branding; Ladawn Redcrow, CFO; Jessie Redcrow, Quality Assurance Officer (not pictured). For info: 780-270-6202.

expensive medical ingredient than ethyl alcohol,” Leah explained. The sanitizers also contain skin moisturizer so that it won’t make your skin coarse.

Kanatan Health Solutions has several hand sanitizer sprays and bundles available for sale. The Sacred 4 Bundle includes 1 Sweetgrass, 1 Sage, 1 Cedar and 1 Sweet Tobacco. Their Berry Patch Bundle includes 1 Blueberry, 1 Strawberry, 1 Raspberry and 1 optional Unscented.

In addition to the hand sanitizer sprays, they have lovely reusable cloth face masks and fancy ribbon face masks available for sale on their website KanatanHealthSolutions.ca and social media.

Jake Cardinal is a local journalism initiative reporter for Alberta Native News.

We must take care of one another

By the AFN Knowledge Keepers Council

"The COVID-19 pandemic is not over. We must continue to listen, learn, be cautious and take care of one another," reads a message from the Assembly of First Nations Knowledge Keepers Council.

The AFN Knowledge Keepers Council continued with this message:

We would like to give thanks to the Creator for keeping our families, communities, and leaders safe during these challenging times of the COVID-19 pandemic. Thank you, Creator, for walking with our families who have lost loved ones during this time and keep them safe. Creator, please keep our young people safe.

The past few months have brought new challenges to our communities and Nations. Members of our families and communities have left this world early due to complications from COVID-19. We honour their memories and acknowledge the grief that many of you feel. We recognize that it has been difficult to be separated from friends and families and to not be

able to participate in all the activities and ceremonies that support our wellbeing. We thank all the nurses and frontline workers who are taking care of our people.

To our younger generation: please know you are in our prayers and that you can reach out for support anytime. With technology today, we are available to provide support, or we can find the support you need.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic reached Canada, First Nations have worked relentlessly to protect people and families in their communities. We have case numbers at a manageable level with a majority of cases resolved in community. Through adapting and working together, we have once again shown that we continue to be resilient. Some communities have had no cases so far, but that does not mean we can be complacent. The pandemic is not yet over. The risk of a second wave exists, and we must all continue to be cautious and continue to listen to our Elders, leadership, and health leaders.

With the change of seasons, many of us are going out onto the land to participate in ceremony, harvest fish and berries, and to hunt. We must

continue to gain strength from these practices and honour our traditional beliefs while acknowledging the role of western medicine in keeping us safe from sickness. With the coming of fall, the influenza vaccine (flu shot) will become available, and this year, more so than ever, it is important that we get vaccinated and encourage our friends and family members to get vaccinated as well.

With the gradual re-opening of communities, businesses, and schools, our social circles will become larger and we will interact with more people from within and outside of our communities. Please apply the direction of our leaders and practice physical distancing, practice good hand hygiene, limit large gatherings, and wear a mask inside public spaces. You may not feel sick, but you may be a carrier. Be reminded that there is strength in the practice of self-isolating, seeking medical attention, and getting tested for COVID-19 if you do feel sick or are in contact with a confirmed case.

By taking these precautions, you are taking care of yourself, and, importantly, taking care of those around you who may be more vulnerable to the disease, especially our Elders. Continue to listen and learn about what is known about COVID-19, how it is spread, and what is effective in reducing the spread as information is constantly evolving. We have always taken care of each other, we will continue to do so now, especially in this period of uncertainty, to protect our people, our communities, and our Nations.



Canadian Mental Health Association
Mental health for all

Job Posting: Manager Crisis and Navigation Support Services

Permanent Full-time; Mon – Fri: 8:30am - 4:30pm
(occasional evening & weekend work required)

Salary: \$56,195- \$69,113 per annum

Closing Date: Open until a suitable candidate is found

Job Summary: Reporting to the Director, Crisis and Navigation Support Services, the Manager, Crisis and Navigation Support Services provides leadership & direction to the 211 and Distress Line Programs. These programs offer support & assistance to individuals who may be feeling overwhelmed, experiencing abuse, are contemplating suicide or require information on resources available.

The position establishes & monitors program goals and trends; provides an operational lens to strategic planning at the program level and leads the implementation of new initiatives at an operational level; and works closely with a Distress Centre Calgary counterpart to ensure consistency of service delivery in the province.

Qualifications: University Degree in a related Social Science field; Current registration with a professional body (as appropriate); Minimum of 3 years of experience in a leadership/supervisory position with community stakeholder facilitation and/or funder and stakeholder engagement; Certified Crisis Worker AAS/CASP (preferred); Certified I&R Specialist (preferred).

Apply, with cover letter and resume, to: hr@cmha-edmonton.ab.ca



KanatanHealthSolutions.ca
780-270-6202

Hand Sanitizer Sprays & Cloth Masks
Health Canada Approved! NPN 80102065!
Made In Treaty Six Territory.
Proudly Indigenous-Family Owned & Operated.
Our Products Are All Hand-Made
With Love By Plains Cree Iskwew (Women)!

Our Hand Sanitizer Sprays Come In 3 Sizes & 8 Choices:



Sweet Tobacco Sage Cedar Sweetgrass



Unscented Raspberry Blueberry Strawberry

Visit Us On Social Media!
Like, Follow, Share, Pin, LinkUp!


Shipping Across Canada & USA Now!
We Accept All Forms Of Payment




Metro Cinema: Films, music & conversation

By Jake Cardinal

On August 29, 2020 the Metro Cinema will be hosting an event called *Hard Core Local: An Evening of Film and Conversation* featuring: *Bad Buddy* and *Unspittable*.

The event will consist of a double-feature – two films screened back to back – from Edmonton’s very own, Michael Macdonald. He is an award-winning filmmaker, cine-ethnomusicologist, and associate professor of music in the MacEwan University Faculty of Fine Arts and Communications in Edmonton.

“I’m delighted Metro has programmed a night of my films. It’s quite an honour and privilege to live in a city that has a cinema that supports local filmmakers and artists more generally,” Macdonald said.

The first film is *Hunters*, which follows the Edmonton-based band, *Bad Buddy*, behind the scenes as they live life on the road; and the second film is *Unspittable*, named after the Edmonton-based rap group, and this film features the life of Amplify, an Indigenous hiphoppa.

Macdonald said of the event, “It’s a great opportunity to share an intimate portrait of two local bands with a larger public. Unspittable has done really well at festivals, winning two awards, and yet the group hasn’t had the chance to see our work on the big screen.”

Now, it would be misleading to discuss the event without mentioning COVID-19 and social distancing,



but have no fear! The Metro Cinema’s auditorium is equipped to seat crowds of up to 100 people. There is a modified seating arrangement which will have rows clearly marked for use (and not for use) and the arrangement will have options for individuals, couples, families, and cohort seating areas that are spaced 2 metres apart to adhere to social distancing. There are other protocols like enhanced cleaning, required mask-wearing by staff and viewers, cashless and tap payment options, etc.

With a limited screening schedule, *Hardcore Local* will be among one of the first events hosted at the Metro. Dan Smith, Executive Director of the Metro Cinema, said, “It’s going to be a fun event because we get to showcase the work of a local film-maker and we get to showcase the work of two local music groups.

“I think it’s going to be our first chance to bring in

local artists and maybe get an understanding of what their experience has been during COVID and just hearing a little bit about what they’re doing right now.”

After the screenings, there will be a Q+A session with the filmmaker and the artists featured in the films.

Doors open at 6:15 pm and the films will start at 7 pm. \$13 adults, \$10 seniors and students.

The one ticket price will cover both films and the Q&A portion of the night.

The Metro Cinema is located at the Garneau Theatre, 8712 109st Edmonton AB.

Jake Cardinal is a local journalism initiative reporter.

AHS Indigenous Cancer Strategy is Reconcili-action

By Laura Mushumanski

Once upon a time, when iceboxes were dirt dugouts and before beaver felt hats were turning the English mad, our ancestors did not contract the chronic illness, cancer. In other words, spoken by Chris Carriere, “this is not our disease.” One of the flaws that came after the industrial revolution was brought over to Turtle Island was disease, specifically cancer that has been directly linked to unhealthy diets, lack of exercise, tobacco use other than long hauls taken from ceremonial pipe smoking, and firewater use. In other words, our ancestors could not have inherited such disease when they were fit like NFL quarterbacks that chased buffalo instead of pig skin, ate a clean diet and lived a clean and healthy lifestyle.

When Indigenous patients, post-cancer treatment, return back to their communities, there is a grey area where patients in recovery are now having to adapt to, ‘what’s next after cancer treatment?’ And for these patients, their experiences with cancer is never a joyous occasion or a story worth sharing around a campfire.

Since 2019, a team of five Alberta Health Services (AHS) employees have embarked on a journey to put together and collaborate on a relationship based and action-oriented strategy for Indigenous people living with and have experienced manicosak (little bugs), cancer.

When the ‘C’ word comes up in conversation, it is not taken lightly. Cancer can have a lifelong impact on anyone, and has become too familiar within our Indigenous populations.

The proud Metis citizen of Alberta and team lead for Alberta Health Services’ Indigenous Cancer Strategy, Chris Carriere has been effectively engaging with the community and Elders to hear the stories being shared from our Indigenous brothers and sisters whose lives have been impacted by *manicosak*.

Carriere has found a way to give back to our moose meat stew and bannock devotees through the compassionate and understanding role he plays with AHS. Carriere has a background in dietetics, nutritional studies, that came about through his own bouts with health-related issues, and since has found his passion within the field of Indigenous healthcare.

The dynamic work being conducted, has an overall goal for this project, which is to change the stories of Indigenous people living with manicosak by working together with community and having conversations around *manicosak*. Carriere has been working to improve the experiences and stories with Indigenous people living through manicosak to empower our people to learn effective ways to talk about *manicosak* and bridge cultural teachings with Indigenous healthcare.

The current stories being told are not something to write home about, and with Carriere’s team working closely with Elders and community members, their long-term plan is to create a supporting community to reduce the hardship that comes with experiencing *manicosak*.

The humanity found in Indigenous humour is a form of healing for our Indigenous brothers and sisters. And when speaking to some of the most embarrassing things hap-

pening to our bodies when bodily functions are being affected by the chronic illness, shit literally happens.

Our people have always been resilient when facing hardship, and during a vulnerable time in a person’s life when experiencing manicosak, sometimes a quick-witted joke about kohkom calling the police, because after treatment it looked like someone stole her backside, can change the narrative about the disease.

For the next several years, Carriere will be leading the Indigenous Cancer Strategy team, building meaningful relationships with Indigenous communities throughout Alberta, and ensuring that each story being told is valued, acknowledged and being preserved as part of cultural teachings- assuring that our community members know “we are in this together.”

For more information about AHS Indigenous Cancer Strategy’s healing through humour and storytelling or anyone wanting to share their stories, call toll free 1-855-258-9963, or email: ccawalkingtogether@ahs.ca.



ADVERTISE

**your business or organization
in Alberta Native News.**

Contact Dan at natnews@shaw.ca





**Your home for
independent cinema...
at home!**

metrocinema.org

 / Metro.Cinema

 @themetrocinema

 @themetrocinema

8712 109 Street
Edmonton AB

**NEW FILMS WEEKLY!
FOR STREAMING LINEUP
VISIT METROCINEMA.ORG**

Our cover artist: Alycia Matchatis

By Jake Cardinal

The beautiful artwork featured on this month’s cover of *Alberta Native News* belongs to Alycia Matchatis, an Indigenous artist from Cold Lake First Nation and Saddle Lake Cree Nation.

The composition, entitled “mohtew ohpikowin (Becoming a butterfly)” features a landscape with a beautiful mountain range and an equally beautiful lake. In the foreground of the landscape is a women’s fancy dancer with a rainbow shawl that seemingly drips onto the canvas. The landscape is reminiscent of Claude Monet – the thick brush strokes create the natural blending of the eye – while the heavy contrasted colours of the dancer bring comparisons to Vincent Van Gogh or Andy Warhol.

In an interview with *Alberta Native News*, Alycia spoke of what drives the work she makes, “I create pieces that represent my feelings, culture and things I love. I especially like to create pieces with sentimental themes that revolve around Indigenous issues.”

“I start off with a blank canvas and a blank mind. I then begin by picking colors that I feel suit my mood and allow my imagination to take it from there. I get inspiration from my surroundings and subjects that are close to my heart,” Matchatis said. “With every piece I make, I am trying to convey messages that raise awareness towards intergenerational trauma from residential schools and the beauty of the Indigenous culture. Art has been my biggest healing medium.”

The next piece featured is titled, “Wanihawak (missing men),” and “it represents the missing and murdered men that don’t get as much as acknowledgement as the women and girls,” said Matchatis. The painting features a plethora of handprints in Matchatis’ signature rainbow colours and the face of a Native man in a headdress with his eyes closed. The background is an abstraction of blues and blacks which makes a sense that there is no fixed time and space.

“That piece is very sentimental because my father was murdered in 2016,” Alycia explained, “I love to advocate for the missing men and boys. They deserve to be acknowledged as much as the females.”

After being asked who her favourite Indigenous artists were, Alycia said, “One of my favourite artists is Fred Buchwitz because I love how realistic and detailed his landscape paintings are – I have a strong connection to the land. Alex Janvier is another artist I look up to because his line work and colour pallet is phenomenal. He is also one of my relatives and I aspire to be a well-known Indigenous artist just like him.”

Alycia is currently enrolled in the University of Alberta with a major in Drama and a Minor in Art. “I’m working towards a bachelor of second-ary education. I’m on the way to becoming a high school drama and art teacher. My biggest goal in life is to become a very well-known Indigenous performing, and visual artist.”

“My advice for young emerging artists is to use your imagination to its fullest potential. I encourage others to pursue art in any form to help themselves heal and break cycles.

“I truly believe anyone can accomplish anything if they put their mind and body to it and don’t give up. As a future educator, I encourage all to chase their dreams and keep going even when faced with adversity. I changed my major twice and failed a few classes but just because you fail doesn’t mean you can’t try again.”



Wanihawak (Missing Men) by Alycia Matchatis.

“Honestly, it was a big goal of mine to have my work featured in *Alberta Native News* ever since I was 12,” Alycia mentioned. After I expressed my disbelief, she continued by saying, “I’m not even kidding! I remember reading *Alberta Native News* for the first time and seeing the Native artists in there and thinking, ‘I want to be that artist one day,’ and here I am – which is crazy. I’m honestly so happy with my life right now. I worked so hard to be here and so have you.”

“Breaking cycles, man.”

Jake Cardinal is a local journalism initiative reporter for Alberta Native News.



EDMONTON
HERITAGE COUNCIL

Employment Opportunity: Indigenous Initiatives Lead

Salary Range: \$52,000 - \$59,000

The Edmonton Heritage Council is currently recruiting for a brand-new full-time role. The Indigenous Initiatives Lead, reporting to the Programs and Partnerships Manager will support EHC in its goal of **supporting Indigenous peoples in revitalizing and participating in cultural practice that connects to their ancestors, the land, and living traditions.**

They will lead EHC’s activities to support and build relationships with Indigenous leaders in cultural work, developing partnerships within the heritage sector, and in developing and delivering Indigenous heritage projects.

Qualifications include:

Knowledge and understanding of the Truth and Reconciliation of Canada; strong communication skills; Project Management experience.

Key responsibilities include:

Community Outreach; Indigenous Program and Project Development; Inter-Program Coordination; Administration.

Interested candidates, please email resume and cover letter as a single PDF attachment by **September 10, 2020** to:
Danielle Dolgoy, Programs and Partnerships Manager
Email: ddolgoy@edmontonheritage.ca

Full job posting at edmontonheritage.ca

We are an equal opportunity employer. EHC encourages diversity and welcomes applications from all qualified individuals.

We thank all applicants in advance, however, only candidates selected for an interview will be contacted.

HELP LINE

Ph: 780.594.3353
1.866.594.0533



24 Hr. Confidential Service

Support

Information

Referrals

HelpLine Funded by  

The Peace River School Division family welcomes students, parents and staff to the 2020-2021 school year.

Peace River School Division provides students with high quality learning opportunities in safe, caring and supportive environments. Our doors are always open - come by with any questions, suggestions or concerns about our services. We value the important role our school communities play in the education of our youth. Best wishes for a great year ahead! We look forward to serving students needs.

For helpful start-up information visit us online at **www.prsd.ab.ca**

  Follow us on Twitter and like us on FACEBOOK



Peace River School Division
Learning Together - Success for All