





# Our Cover Artist: Lauren Crazybull

Lauren Crazybull, a Niitsitapi and Dené painter currently residing in Edmonton, returned to Kainai territory to research the land and language of their family as a part of their artistic research as 2019 Alberta Artist-in-Residence.

In this region, Crazybull met with artists and elders, and connected with landmarks and historical sites of the Blackfoot Confederacy. Through this process, Crazybull has created their own map based on personal exploration of the lands across the province, and how this journey has informed their own practice in becoming an artist.

Crazybull explains, “Sometime this year I decided that the money I received from the Alberta Government would be the money I used to reclaim what I lost during my sixteen years in the child welfare system. I ended up spending most of my time in Southern Alberta where my mom's side of the family is from. “TSIMA KOHTOTSITAPIIHPA: Where are you from?” has been a way for me to explore the complexity of home and belonging.”

“TSIMA KOHTOTSITAPIIHPA: Where are you from?” is on exhibit at the Southern Alberta Art Gallery (SAAG) in Lethbridge, Alberta until November 15, 2020.

SAAG is also currently presenting XENOGENESIS by the Otolith Group.

TSIMA KOHTOTSITAPIIHPA *Where are you from?* includes the hand-painted map of Indigenous territories now known as Treaty 6, 7, and 8 territories of Alberta, traversed by Lauren Crazybull. The photographic documentation of this

journey culminated in a book created by the artist, and an audio soundscape by Lauren Crazybull, featuring a score by musician Matthew Cardinal.

Lauren Crazybull’s mural *Granny Dora* is presented in the east-facing window of the SAAG and it appears on the cover of this month’s *Alberta Native News*. As Alberta’s 2019 Artist in Residence, Crazybull used their funding from the provincial government to reclaim the familial and geographic knowledge lost to them in the child welfare system. As part of this project, they travelled to Fort Mackay to meet with their grandmother for the first time in over a decade. There, Crazybull began to reclaim their relationships to land, language, and kin and later immortalized the meeting in a painted portrait of their grandmother which would be used as a source for their vinyl mural.

*Xenogenesis* is the first large scale exhibition of The Otolith Group presented in Canada, as part of an international exhibition tour organized by the Vanabmuseum in Eindhoven, NL; the exhibition will include artworks produced between 2011 and 2018. The collective was founded by artist Anjalika

Sagar and theorist Kodwo Eshun in 2002. *Xenogenesis* is named after Octavia Butler’s *Xenogenesis Trilogy*, which consists of *Dawn*, *Xenogenesis: 1, Adulthood Rites*, *Xenogenesis: 2, and Imago*, *Xenogenesis: 3*. As a pioneering African American female science fiction novelist, Butler’s award-winning novels investigated questions of human extinction, racial distinction, planetary transformation, enforced mutation, generative alienation and altered kinship.

Guests are encouraged to book their gallery visit in advance at [saag.ca/visit](http://saag.ca/visit). Virtual tours of the exhibitions will soon be available.

Both exhibitions are on view from September 26, 2020 through November 15, 2020



# Supreme Court upholds ban on peremptory challenges

By Jeremy Appel, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Supreme Court of Canada has upheld legislation that put an end to peremptory challenges, a practice in criminal trials where lawyers are able to strike a juror without justification, which Indigenous advocates have called a recipe for discrimination.

Peremptory challenges allowed for an all-white jury in the case of Gerald Stanley, who killed 22-year-old Colten Boushie in 2016 and was acquitted of second-degree murder and manslaughter in 2018, after Stanley’s lawyer convinced the jury that the shot that killed Boushie was accidental.

After the acquittal, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s Liberals banned peremptory challenges as a means of promoting more racially-diverse juries in Bill C-75, which contained a broad set of legal reforms.

Chris Murphy, a lawyer representing Colten Boushie’s mother — Debbie Baptiste — at the Supreme Court, said the practice had the effect of stacking the deck of the trial in favour of Stanley’s defence.

“Without any evidence of prejudice, defence

counsel challenged each and every one of the five Indigenous jurors,” Murphy said. “Sanctioned discrimination erodes public confidence in our justice system.”

The challenge to the ban wasn’t prompted by the Stanley case, but the first-degree murder trial of Pardeep Chouhan in Brampton, Ont., which had begun the day the ban went into place on Sept. 19, 2019. However, Baptiste was granted intervenor

*Continued on page 9*

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# FNHMA resumes town halls & hosts celebration: November 4

By Jeremy Appel, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

With the second COVID wave on the horizon, the First Nations Health Manager Association is hosting a second round of virtual town halls to provide credible and reliable information on the pandemic to the various Indigenous communities.

During the first COVID wave earlier this year, the FNHMA saw a need to provide virtual information sessions that are specifically geared towards Indigenous peoples in a way that is culturally sensitive. The 14 bilingual town halls each lasted an hour and were streamed online through Indigenous Health Today. The remaining town halls will stream on the FNHMA, Alberta Native News and APTN Facebook pages.

The second round of town halls was launched Thursday, Sept. 24, at 1 p.m. EST and will continue every Thursday at the same time until Dec. 10.

“It’s COVID two plus flu,” FNHMA CEO Marion Crowe said of the second wave. “It’s now, more than ever, that we have to be diligent about sharing information that is credible, relevant and informative to the right people at the right time.”

Each week someone from Indigenous Services Canada will provide a COVID update, with case figures from the different nations on Turtle Island, in

addition to various pieces of information from a federal perspective, Crowe said.

“We will also be talking in coming town halls about the importance of mental wellness during this time, addictions and what that looks like during a pandemic, (and) other social determinants of health,” she said. “We will keep people informed on how the Canadian Red Cross is responding to Indigenous communities right now.”

Crowe says getting this information out to the public is especially vital at this time, with “alarming rates at which our nations are having positive cases.”

“When you think of COVID in a community with no drinking water (and) overcrowded with underlying health conditions, it’s like a match in a haystack,” she said.

In addition to the re-launch of the town hall series, FNHMA will be hosting a virtual celebration of First Nations healthcare workers on Nov. 4 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. EST, which will honour the new class of health managers graduating from the FNHMA program and giving an Award of Excellence for an outstanding leader in healthcare. The ceremony will include musical performances and special guests, including Montreal Canadiens goaltender Carey Price and



FNHMA CEO Marion Crowe

Assembly of First Nations Chief Perry Bellegarde. “We wanted to provide balance,” says Crowe. “While we’re looking at systemic racism and the global pandemic crisis right now, we also have to give thanks (and) celebrate these folks who are exhausted and give their dedication, not just during this time, but every day.”

This event will be livestreamed for free on the FNHMA, NationTalk, Indigenous Health Today, Alberta Native News and APTN social media pages and websites.

## Alberta organizations receive relief funding

Last month, thirty-two Indigenous organizations in Alberta, including Ben Calf Robe Society and Native Counselling Services of Alberta received approximately \$11.8 million in Federal government funding through the Indigenous Community Support Fund’s off-reserve and urban stream to address the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The funding will aid with food security, mental health support services, homelessness, and required emergency supplies to ensure the health and safety of Indigenous Peoples.

“Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, we’ve seen incredible action taken by organizations supporting First Nations People living off reserve and Indigenous Peoples in urban areas,” stated MP Jim Carr. “This announcement will allow Ben Calf Robe Society, Native Counselling Services of Alberta, and the other 30 organizations in Alberta receiving funding, to continue to provide the essential services required to ensure the health and safety of their community members during this difficult time.”

The Ben Calf Robe Society, based in Treaty 6, received \$150,000 in funding to support Indigenous children and youth in meeting their ongoing educational needs through a holistic approach including supportive social and cultural services and programs. They are committed to helping individuals who are struggling to meet their basic needs during the pandemic by providing food, clothing, personal protective equipment, resources for shelters and means of transportation to help people arrive home safely.

“The support the Ben Calf Robe Society has received has allowed our organization to assist our Indigenous community,” stated Ben Calf Robe Society Executive Director Claudette DeWitt. “We have heard from many people how grateful they are to receive additional supports during this pandemic. We will continue to support our children, youth and families to the best of our ability during these challenging times.”

The Native Counselling Services of Alberta received \$221,200 in funding to assist Indigenous Peoples in accessing critical physical, mental and emotional supports, as well as food security through the delivery of food hampers and

*Continued on page 4*



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# EPCOR And Wilco apologize for racist taunts at students

By Jake Cardinal, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

On Friday September 24, 2020 an Edmonton Public School (EPS) smudging ceremony was disrupted by Epcor and Wilco construction workers who made racist comments and disrespectful actions towards those participating.

In a Twitter post made by a teacher at Edith Rogers School, it was written that the workers “revved their engines and yelled racial insults at staff and students.”

Edmonton Public Schools previously said the smudging ceremony was part of its efforts to teach students about reconciliation with Indigenous people.

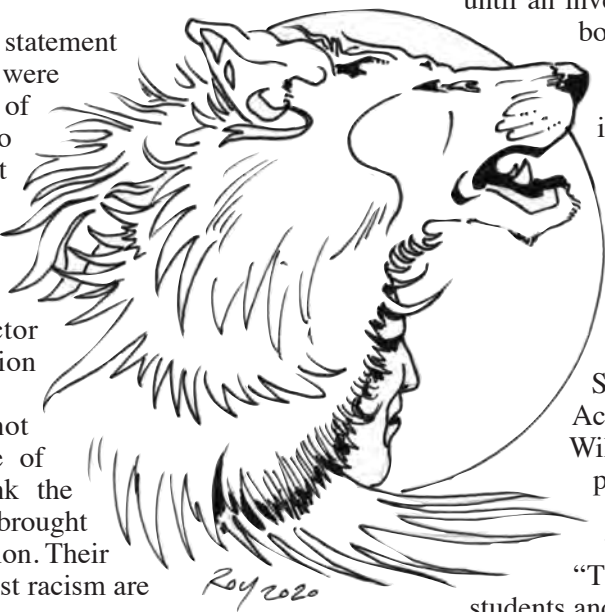
Wilco Contractors Northwest Inc. (Wilco), one of four individually owned and operated companies which comprise the Wilco Group of Companies, released a statement in response to the incident, “On September 25, we let down the community.”

“Employees working on a dry pond project near Edith Rogers School made racist comments and disrespectful actions towards participants in a smudging ceremony. We apologize unreservedly to the students and staff who were hurt by these actions. We take full responsibility for what occurred, and we are taking concrete action to ensure this never happens again.” – Wilco Contractors NW Inc.

EPCOR also released a statement which read: “The actions were attributed to employees of a sub-contractor (Wilco Contractors Northwest Inc.) working at an adjacent construction site for an EPCOR dry pond project under the control of a contractor (Sureway Construction Group).”

“EPCOR does not condone racism or hate of any kind, and we thank the students and staff who brought this incident to our attention. Their actions to speak up against racism are commendable.

“We are mindful that racism and prejudice towards Indigenous peoples continues to happen every day in our communities. It is incumbent on all of us to take action.



“We sincerely apologize to the students and staff who were harmed by this disrespectful act, and we again thank them for speaking up. Without their action, this conduct might have gone unaddressed. Their voices mattered.” – EPCOR

The construction site was shut down by EPCOR until an investigation could be completed by both companies. After the review, Wilco said they “have terminated the staff involved,” and have implemented “cultural and Indigenous awareness training” for their staff.

It was also announced that EPCOR, Wilco, and Sureway Construction Group would be jointly funding a \$30,000 donation to the Edmonton Public School Board’s Amiskwaciy Academy.

Wilco added, “In addition to this public statement, we are apologizing directly to all those who were harmed by this incident.”

“The hurt experienced by the students and staff is front of mind for us, and we hope the actions we are taking demonstrate to them how seriously we take this situation. We thank the students and staff who spoke up, and we thank EPCOR and Sureway for working with us to address this issue.”

## Relief funding *cont. from p 3*

personal protective equipment. The organization also provides transportation to access services safely and effectively.

“Because of uncertainty and fluidity we appreciate the flexibility the funding from Indigenous Services Canada has provided allowing us to meet the changing and evolving needs of the urban Indigenous communities in Grande Prairie, St Paul, Calgary, Lethbridge and Edmonton,” remarked Dr. Allen Benson, CEO Native Counselling Services of Alberta.

“This ranges from food security to information technology, transportation to social activity kits and

connections to cultural materials and supports. We will also look to provide support around the new behaviours that are expected in a time of COVID – anxiety and COVID fatigue to name a few.”


As part of the Indigenous Community Support Fund, the Government of Canada is distributing a total of \$90 million to Indigenous organizations and communities providing services to Indigenous Peoples living in urban areas, to support essential services to the most vulnerable and to prevent and respond to potential COVID-19 outbreaks.

On August 12, the Government of Canada announced an additional \$305 million for the Indigenous Community Support Fund. This most recent announcement brings the Indigenous Community Support Fund to \$685 million in total funding. It will be distributed through a combination of alloca-

tions directly to First Nations, Inuit and Métis leadership, and needs-based funding, which will be application driven and extend to Indigenous communities and organizations serving First Nations living off-reserve and Indigenous Peoples living in urban centres.

The organizations within Alberta are among approximately 260 Indigenous organizations supported to date by the Indigenous Community Support Fund to help address the critical needs of Indigenous Peoples living in urban centers across the country impacted by the pandemic.

“Community-based organizations here in Alberta and across the country have organized on-the-ground responses that have made a real difference,” stated MP Pam Damoff. “From providing food supports, to Elder and youth programs, or critical training and information sharing in a virtual environment — they’ve been there. We are humbled by all their work and thankful for all that they do.”



Natural Resources  
Conservation Board

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

**NOTICE OF PRE-HEARING CONFERENCE**  
**NRCB APPLICATION NO. 1701**

ALBERTA TRANSPORTATION  
SPRINGBANK OFF-STREAM RESERVOIR PROJECT

**WHEREAS** Alberta Transportation has filed an application with the Natural Resources Conservation Board (NRCB) for approval to construct the Springbank Off-Stream Reservoir Project (the Project) on the Elbow River upstream of the City of Calgary; and

**WHEREAS** the NRCB anticipates the need to conduct a public hearing and has previously issued a Joint Notice of Filing on November 6, 2017.

**THEREFORE TAKE NOTICE** that:

- The NRCB will hold a virtual oral pre-hearing conference on December 2, 2020, commencing at 10:00 a.m., to hear representations respecting certain preliminary and procedural aspects of the public review, including:
  - a discussion of the major issues to be examined at the hearing;
  - the appropriate scope and jurisdiction of the review;
  - the location for a hearing, the hearing format, the appropriate timing of a hearing, and deadlines for filing hearing submissions (including evidence);
  - a discussion of procedures to be followed at the hearing; and
  - other matters.
- Copies of the application, including information and particulars filed in support thereof, may be accessed on the NRCB's website at: <https://www.nrcb.ca/natural-resource-projects/natural-resource-projects-listing/83/springbank-off-stream-reservoir-project>.
- Eligible individuals may apply for intervenor funding pursuant to the *Natural Resources Conservation Board Act*. To obtain further information about intervenor funding, please contact the NRCB Manager, Board Reviews, listed below.

Interested parties, Indigenous groups, representatives from Alberta Transportation (the proponent), and other government authorities who wish to make a presentation at the pre-hearing conference must provide a statement of intent to participate and a written summary of their submission by 4:30 p.m., November 20, 2020, to [laura.friend@nrcb.ca](mailto:laura.friend@nrcb.ca). Submissions should be PDF documents with bookmarks, page numbers, and optical character recognition.

The NRCB will also hold a test session on November 25, 2020, at 1:00 p.m. so that any technological issues can be identified and resolved in advance of the pre-hearing. All pre-hearing conference participants are required to participate in the test session. NRCB staff will send participants email invitations that include the link to the test session.

The NRCB contact is Laura Friend, Manager, Board Reviews at 403-297-8269 or [laura.friend@nrcb.ca](mailto:laura.friend@nrcb.ca). Please note that any correspondence or information filed regarding this Project and application is considered to be public information and will be posted on the NRCB website.

Dated at Calgary, Alberta, on October 5, 2020.

William Y. Kennedy, General Counsel, NRCB





# Sisters in Spirit vigils issue a call for action

By Jake Cardinal, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

This past October 4th was Sisters in Spirit Day, which was created in order to bring awareness to the Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) across Canada. Vigils are held annually across Canada and internationally in remembrance of missing and murdered Indigenous women.

In Alberta specifically, several events were held to commemorate the special day.

Indigenous community members and non-Indigenous allies marched on Calgary’s Stephen Avenue Walk on October 1 to bring awareness to the crisis.

Hundreds hoisted signs and banners with names and photographs of missing and murdered loved ones—some other placards included “#She’sSomeone,” “End Violence, Stop Silence” and “No More Stolen Sisters.”

Leading the march were drummers, which included Cree activist and artist Chantal Chagnon. “I’m part of this every year and every year the women get stronger,” Chagnon said. “Eventually, we are going to see justice for all of these families, but it’s going to take time and you can’t stop.”

“This event is to really bring attention to the injustices that continue to happen but it’s also to give hope to those families that we have not forgotten.”

“Unfortunately, the government has really stalled, kind of dragging its feet, and so we’re hoping events like this that we do yearly will stir them to action,” Chagon said.

Stephanie English, a Blackfoot mother who has lost two daughters, also organized a 44-hour walk from Piikani Nation to Calgary that ended by uniting with Sisters in Spirit. “I will keep walking until everything is heard and put on the table and action is being done,” English said.

“It’s been a long journey. I walk in honour of my daughters’ names, to keep their legacy alive, to let their story be told of just how it is for us Niitsitapi, us First Nations people.”

Danielle Larivee, Alberta’s Status of Women

minister, voiced her support for the event. However, English responded with “Your talk is cheap. I’ve heard your story through many other people. Your talk is cheap to me.”

The chief of Calgary police was also in attendance when English mentioned that the CPS did nothing when she reported her daughters’ deaths.

“I will keep walking every year until some change happens — instead of recommendations,” English said. “We’ve heard this for over 14 years. Where is the action? If I can walk, why can you not walk your talk?”

Wetaskiwin also commemorated the event by conducting a walk from Maskwacis to Wetaskiwin, with Chevi Rabbit, organizer of the Wetaskiwin Sisters in Spirit Walk, saying, “We’re walking from Maskwacis to Wetaskiwin to honour the lives of missing and murdered Indigenous women.”

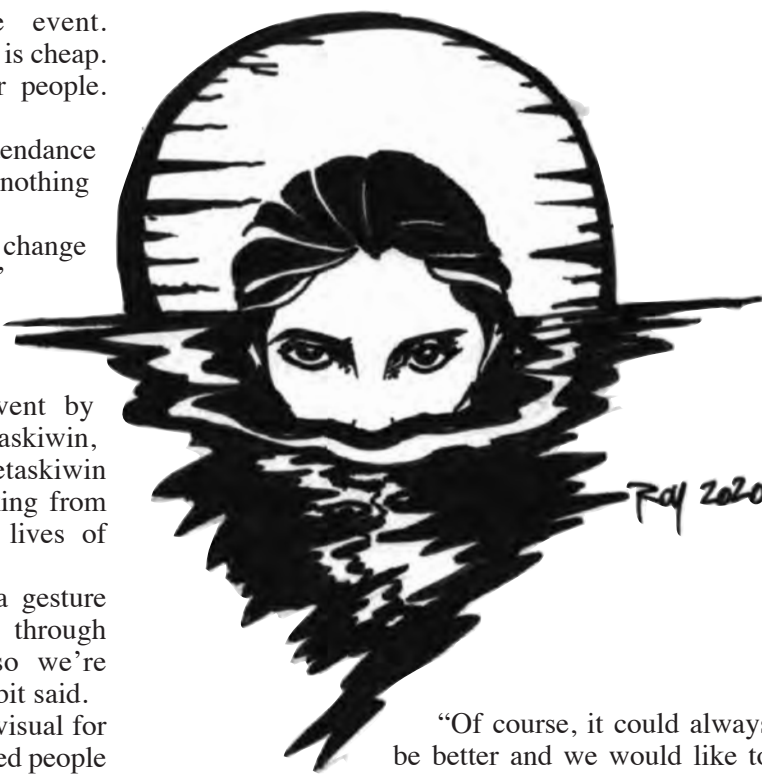
“The walk is more symbolic. It shows a gesture towards all the families that have gone through violence and discrimination and hate, so we’re walking for [those] who can’t be here,” Rabbit said.

“These walks are amazing. They create a visual for the public but we need more than that. We need people to walk their talk now.”

In Lethbridge, a ceremony was held at City Hall where Elder Wendy English gave a prayer followed by a song before the ceremony moved down 4 Avenue South to Galt Gardens for more speakers and a candlelight vigil.

Amanda Scout, a Sisters in Spirit Vigil planning committee member said, “This is our 14th annual. We are honouring the missing and murdered Indigenous women and reminding people to keep that in mind that there have been inquiries and recommendations, but after that, no action.”

“We have gone through the recommendations thoroughly and we’ve brought them to city council. There are 25 we feel that the City of Lethbridge can act on. It’s just about creating safe spaces and getting the resources for women who might be at risk.”



“Of course, it could always be better and we would like to see more action. But it’s being addressed and we have groups here in the city that are working with vulnerable women and trying to empower them. We’re very hopeful and we’ll keep walking.”

AFN Alberta Regional Chief Marlene Poitras said, “Today we reflect on the lives of our mothers, daughters, aunties, cousins, grandmothers, granddaughters that have been lost - that have gone missing - that were murdered. We wear red in remembrance, and in support. We stand in solidarity with victims, survivors, and their families. Again today we call for action to end the violence against indigenous women and girls that continues. Days of awareness, remembrance and action are important and must continue until these injustices end.”

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**Q:** If someone wants to apply, what are their next steps?

**A:** Do research before applying. Many need to start by taking High School courses before they can apply to a post-secondary school. You can:

- Check your Alberta Education transcripts online by creating an Education Account at [mypass.alberta.ca](https://mypass.alberta.ca)
- Do a self-assessment by looking at our Admission Requirements for your program of interest.
- If you do not meet the Admission Requirements for a specific program, Academic Upgrading could be the best option.

**Q:** What kind of financial help can students apply for?

**A:** For career programs, learners can apply for Student Aid. Some may qualify for Band funding and other forms of Indigenous-specific funding. The Funding Information for Indigenous Students page on the website is a good place to start. For Academic Upgrading, Learner Income Support may be an option.

**Q:** What else should students know?

**A:** Bow Valley College has an Indigenous application fee waiver that will waive the \$75 application fee. It can be used for one Academic Upgrading application and one career program application per academic year.

**Q:** If someone has more questions, what is the best way to get answers?

**A:** The Bow Valley College website is the best

resource because it has the most up-to-date information. That’s where you can find all of our different courses, tuition costs, and start dates. It even has student resources, like our Iniiikokaan Centre, a support centre for all Nations from the perspective of Indigenous Peoples.

**For more information about Bow Valley College visit [bowvalleycollege.ca](https://bowvalleycollege.ca)**









# BBMA disburses \$700K for Métis education

By Jeremy Appel, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Belcourt Brosseau Métis Awards have been disbursed to its 2020 recipients, but the annual Sash ceremony has been cancelled due to COVID, so the 2021 event will honour both years' cohorts.

The BBMA panel and its partners at Edmonton Community Foundation disbursed about \$700,000 to 180 students this year, which goes towards the costs of their post-secondary education tuition.

BBMA communications coordinator Theresa Majeran says it's regrettable that the ceremony, which hosts upwards of 400 people and has been referred to as the "the must attend Métis event of the year," cannot occur at this time, but promises an extra special celebration next year, which is incidentally the BBMA's 20th anniversary.

The celebration is a major networking opportunity, where Métis students can make professional connections within the corporate community and connect with their Métis culture, some for the first time, Majeran added.



Daniel Barker-Tremblay

"We didn't want to downplay a community event where we're used to being together — to jig together, to eat a bison together," she explained. "We didn't think we could duplicate that virtually."

The purpose of the awards is to ensure "Métis people participate fully in the economic future of Canada," of which higher education is a central component, said Majeran. Unlike scholarships and bursaries, the awards aren't

based on grades. "It's based on a passion to complete your program, commitment to community (and) those kinds of holistic things that aren't looked at in an academic scholarship," Majeran says.

Recipients apply for the awards each year in March, which requires the submission of two letters of support and your Métis Card.

One of this year's recipients, Daniel Barker-Tremblay, who hails from the small northern town of Lac La Biche, is going to be studying broadcast journalism at the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology in Calgary.

"I'm speechless. This is better than winning the lottery, in my mind," said Barker-Tremblay.

He says he wants to do his internship at APTN, but his ultimate goal is to become the nation's first-ever Indigenous hockey broadcaster.

"After filling out my (SAIT) application, a big question that came to my mind was, 'How am I going to get there financially?'" he recalled.

Barker-Tremblay says he found out about the BBMA through the "wonderful people" at Lac La Biche's Rupertsland Institute when they hosted an event at the high school, BBMA staff were on hand with support for first year students like me.

"It's more of a motivation for me to do extraordinarily well in my program," said Barker-Tremblay. "At the end of the day, I just want to motivate Métis and all indigenous young adults and



Orval Belcourt, Barry Belcourt, Harold Robinson LLB, Georges Brosseau Q.C., Kathryn Brosseau, Lisa Weber LLB, Brenda Bourque-Stratichuk, Lisa Higgerty Chairperson and Theresa Majeran.

youth — boys and girls, and children of all ages — to say, 'Well, if I can do this, so can you.'

"I've met a lot of amazing indigenous people who are gifted and have skills and talents, and they deserve the spotlight more than just about anybody, in my opinion."

The BBMA program began in 2001, with a \$13-million donation from Métis philanthropists Georges R. Brosseau Q.C., Orval Belcourt and Dr. Herb Belcourt. Their vision was to help Métis Albertans realize self-sufficiency through post-secondary education and skills development. Since then, the BBMA has provided the costs of tuition for more than 2,000 students.

The BBMA Panel comprises Métis Albertans who share the vision of the three Founders and are committed to their enduring legacy. The BBMA Panel guides the BBMA program and reviews applications for awards. The panel of this unique program consists of: Dr. John Brosseau, Harold Robinson LLB, Lisa Weber LLB, Kathryn Brosseau, Lisa Higgerty, Chairperson, Brenda Bourque-Stratichuk and Barry Belcourt.

## Metis Crossing breaks ground on 40-room lodge

Métis Crossing has broken ground on a new 40-room boutique lodge, expanding upon the recently completed Cultural Gathering Centre. The Government of Alberta has made an investment of \$1 million to support the development of the site, further bolstering Métis Crossing as a premier destination for Métis cultural interpretation, education, gatherings, and business development in Northern Alberta.

"Métis Crossing is continuing to expand. It is a reflection of the interest and demand we are seeing for Indigenous experiences in Alberta," said Juanita Marois, Executive Director, Métis Crossing. "Everyone at Métis Crossing is thrilled that the Government of Alberta has recognized the value in Indigenous Tourism and in what we offer here at Métis Crossing. They have stepped up in such a major way to support Métis Crossing as a destination for Métis cultural interpretation."

The new 40-room lodge is expected to be operational by summer 2021, complimenting the recently completed Cultural Gathering Centre on the 512-acre historic Métis river lot site. These combined facilities will offer visitors the opportunity to stay overnight, experiencing all that Métis Crossing and the Smoky Lake region have to offer.

This investment is important for the diversification of Alberta's economy — not only does it expand the province's tourism offerings, it also creates seasonal and permanent job opportunities in a regional area.

"Métis Crossing has been a dream of Alberta's Métis for decades. With support from Alberta and other partners, we have built a place where Albertans and tourists can experience the exciting culture of Alberta's Métis. With this new lodge, Métis Crossing elevates the Indigenous tourism experience in our province," said Audrey Poitras, President of the Métis Nation of Alberta.

"Métis Crossing is an important gathering place that showcases the history of a proud people—the Métis Nation of Alberta. Adding a 40-room boutique-style lodge to Métis Crossing means more visitors will be able to enjoy the cultural activities.

Continued on page 8

# Congratulations

## Award Recipients

### 2020



BELCOURT BROSSAU  
**Métis Awards**  
*creating possibilities*

**Good luck on  
your Educational  
Journey**



# EPS launches action plan to eliminate systemic racism

By Jake Cardinal, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

On Monday September 21, 2020 Edmonton’s police chief Dale McFee announced a commitment to action by the Edmonton Police Service to engage with the city’s Black, Indigenous, racialized, and underserved communities in the hopes of improving policing.

“The murder of George Floyd launched a movement and a demand for action that required every police service in every city to look inward and ask themselves what path they wanted to take,” said Chief McFee. “We have heard from community members and our own employees, where our actions and interactions have not been positive.

“In order to be the good and just people we know ourselves to be, we must acknowledge some uncomfortable truths, and ask ourselves what steps we are taking to hold ourselves accountable.”

The council was created after the Edmonton City Council held public hearings in June 2020 to better understand how Edmontonians viewed police.

“Racial injustice in our society is no longer a force we can collectively rationalize, study, ignore or worse yet — form another committee to assess.

“I think everybody, quite frankly, over the last number of years is just tired of talking,” he said.

“I’ve sat through enough of these inquiries and

inquests throughout my career to know there are a lot of things we need to do as a collective group, as a community and as a police service, and it’s time to start taking some action. It’s not time to form another committee to study things.”

“As we have seen from demonstrations around the world, including Edmonton — we saw dozens of hours of testimony at city council — demand for social justice and systemic change is absolutely necessary. This call for change covers society as a whole, but much of it right now focuses on police services.”

“Today, we begin a new chapter of ongoing relationship building with these communities,” McFee said.

“I understand the skepticism some might bring to a statement like that. What makes this different from previous efforts is that this is not a listening campaign, it’s not a campaign at all. It will not end. This is part of our everyday work today and moving forward,”



EPS Chief Dale McFee and Enyinnah Okere announce a new advisory council to address racism and improve policing in Edmonton.

said the police chief.  
The council will visit 50 communities over 15 months.  
The efforts will be supported by what EPS calls its value and impact division, headed by Enyinnah Okere.  
“What makes this fundamentally different is that we are opening ourselves up to the community to speak about our processes, to speak about how we police the community and how they would like to be policed, and we are doing it with a level of transparency,” Okere said.

## Métis Crossing Lodge

cont. from p 7

It also means more jobs for the local economy, helping grow Alberta’s tourism industry and boost year-round visits across the province,” said Rick Wilson, Minister of Indigenous Relations.

Métis Crossing is pleased to be working closely with the Government of Alberta and the Smoky Lake municipalities as a contributing partner and destination in their Economic Development Strategy.

The recently developed strategy will work to grow regional tourism by providing support for Métis Crossing, facilitating other investments across the sector and developing a tourism system that drives economic growth in the region. Preliminary economic impact projections developed by the municipality show the potential for between 300 and 700 jobs created in the region over the next 10 years.

Métis Crossing is the first major Métis cultural interpretive destination in Alberta and the premier destination for Alberta Métis cultural interpretation, education, gatherings and business development.

Sitting on 512-acres of land, comprised of river lot titles from the original Métis settlers to the region in the late 1800s, the Crossing is designed to engage and excite visitors through an exploration of Métis cultural experiences.  
The Métis Crossing site was purchased by the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA), with support from Canative Housing Corporation and the Belcourt Brosseau Foundation, almost 20 years ago. Métis Crossing continues to operate as an affiliate of the MNA.

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# Violence erupts at a Red Deer anti-racism rally

By Jake Cardinal, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Violence occurred at an anti-racism rally in Red Deer on Sunday September 20, 2020. Organizers say it became violent once counter-protesters came to the rally.

“The whole purpose of this event was to centralize and raise racialized voices and to share experiences of these different ethnicities and different walks of life,” said Cheryl-Jaime Baptise, creator of the group Red Deer Against Racism.

“Within the first five minutes, at least two fists were thrown from their side. When everybody showed up from the opposition, they were just very, very violent and there was no way of being able to host a peaceful event so, unfortunately, we had to cancel.”

Kisha Daniels, a co-founder of Black and Indigenous Alliance AB said, “We are all severely traumatized by these events. A lot of our group are racialized and LGBTQ2S+ peoples so we are used to levels of discrimination and violence. It’s just unfortunate that it’s 2020 and this continues to happen.”

Supt. Gerald Grobmeier, the officer in charge of Red Deer’s RCMP detachment, said of the violence: “We certainly didn’t expect to see what we saw on Sunday. I don’t think anybody did.”

“We’ve had so many protests and rallies in the city since my arrival here. We’ve never seen anything like this. The city has always been really tolerant. I’d like to say that a lot of people that were here weren’t necessarily from here,” said Grobmeier, meaning that some of those attending the rally weren’t necessarily from Red Deer.

An investigation is being launched into the incident. “As we all know, there’s always more to it than we see on videos. So we have to do a complete investigation before laying charges,” the Mountie commented.

“We haven’t laid any charges because we need the victim to come forward, we need to obtain witness statements and we also need to know who actually the perpetrator is.”

It has been reported that there were 16 RCMP officers on the scene at one point.

Red Deer Mayor Tara Veer said, “The city, like the RCMP, respects Canada’s constitutional rights of citizens to peacefully assemble. However, we unequivocally denounce violence, we unequivocally de-nounce racism in our community,” she said. “It is highly concerning for our community that the unacceptable actions of some have incited division and violence in our city. I’ve spoken with the provincial Minister of Justice as well as the RCMP, and both are in solidarity with The City in upholding law and order in our community.”

New Justice Minister Kaycee Madu also said, “I have seen select clips of the protest in Red Deer on

Sunday and I am admittedly disturbed. I have been publicly clear about this: Violence and threat of violence at peaceful protests are unacceptable, period.”

Jason Kenney also spoke on the event in a Tweet: “All Albertans, regardless of race, religion, or creed, have the right to peaceful protest & we denounce any instance of racism, bigotry, or intolerance. The RCMP have opened an investigation; we await the result of that work.”

Justice Minister Madu was asked in a news conference about why Jason Kenney hadn’t denounced the groups responsible for the eruption of violence. In response, Madu claimed that he was sure the Premier “condemns this event.”

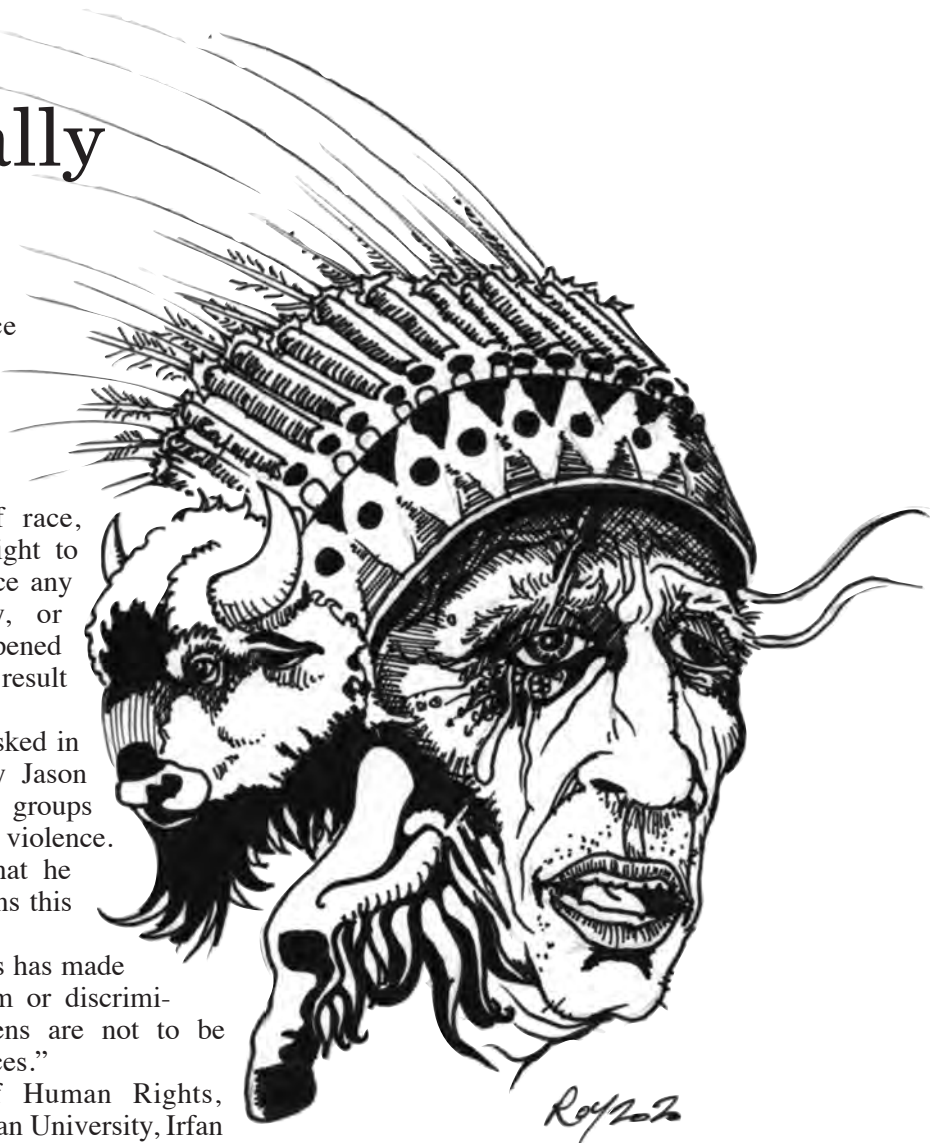
“The premier at various times has made it clear that violence or racism or discriminatory practices against citizens are not to be accepted under any circumstances.”

Director of the Office of Human Rights, Diversity and Equity at MacEwan University, Irfan Chaudhry, criticized the Albertan government’s response to the rally.

“What occurred in Red Deer can only be classified as racially motivated attacks that go beyond freedom of speech laws,” Chaudhry said. “When you look at the video footage, this could only be looked at as white supremacy in action. That, to me, is what’s very concerning — when it’s being downplayed as just freedom of expression and the right to protest.”

“In contrast to the strong statement the premier made when a statue of John A. MacDonald was toppled over, his response to racially motivated attack in his own province has been very tame in comparison.”

A statement from premier’s office says Jason Kenney condemns racism in all forms. “The minister of justice is a key part of the premier’s Cabinet, and Minister Madu spoke for the entire government of Alberta this week in condemning what



occurred in Red Deer,” the statement reads. Irfan also criticized the RCMP’s handling of the event, “In both videos I’ve seen, from Red Deer and Ponoka, I would not be able to positively say their job was being conducted. At the end of the day, they need to be there to contain peace, maintain order. That did not happen. Ask folks to step back. Let them have their say, but maybe do it in a different area.”

## The Witten LLP law firm is pleased to announce that the Honourable L.S. Tony Mandamin, retired Judge of the Federal Court, Trial Division, has joined our law firm as counsel.

Tony graduated from the University of Alberta, Faculty of Law, earning his LLB in 1982. He was called to the bar in 1983 and established his Indigenous law firm in Alberta in 1985, representing First Nations, Indigenous organizations, and Treaty and Metis individuals. Before being appointed to the Bench, Tony was lead counsel in a number of significant Indigenous Law cases, including before the Supreme Court of Canada.

Tony was appointed a Provincial Court Judge in 1999, sitting in the Calgary and area criminal courts. He assisted the Tsuu T’ina in establishing the Tsuu T’ina Peacemaking Court and worked to involve Blackfoot Askapiimohkiiks traditional mediation as an integral part of the process in the Siksika Provincial Court. Tony was appointed to the Federal Court in 2007. He sat on numerous landmark decisions, and also chaired a committee of judges, Indigenous lawyers, CBA Aboriginal law practitioners and Department of Justice lawyers in developing the Federal Court Aboriginal Law Practice Guidelines to assist practitioners who had Aboriginal issues before the Court.

Amongst his many other achievements Tony was awarded a Doctor of Laws Honoris Causa by the Law Society of Ontario in 2017.

Tony’s practice will mostly consist of advising/conducting matters related to Indigenous law.

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## Supreme Court *cont. from p 2*

status, given her vested interest in the legislation in question. Another intervenor in the case — Caitlyn Casper of Aboriginal Legal Services — said the practice clearly inhibits Indigenous people’s full participation in the legal system. "We have quantifiable real numbers to show that Indigenous people are not being chosen, that they're not being selected. And that it is regardless of what role we're playing through that process," Casper said. On the other side were lawyers who argued that the prohibition on the practice was overly broad. Nader Hasan, an intervenor with the Canadian Muslims Lawyers Association and Federation of Asian Canadian Lawyers, acknowledged that preemptory challenges could be abused by racists but argued that it is a useful tool to defend the rights of the accused. “What parliament should be doing should have been to legislate against the discriminatory use of the preemptory challenge,” said Hasan. Chouhan’s counsel, Dirk Derstine, argued that preemptory challenges are necessary to ensure a fair trial for racialized people, who “often have people in society who are unwilling to give them a fair shot.” Boushie’s cousin Jade Tootoosis praised the Supreme Court’s verdict as a small step towards justice. “It is a victory my late brother, Colten Boushie, and all those in my family. I am conscious that this is a colonial system that needs to be dismantled all together. We will continue to do the work necessary,” Tootoosis said in a Facebook post. “But because we’ve lost so many battles in our pursuit for justice, I choose to celebrate this moment, this victory.” The Ontario Court of Appeal in January also ruled that the government was within its rights to ban preemptory challenges.



# Feds propose National Day for Reconciliation

By Jake Cardinal, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

In 1973, Phyllis Webstad was given an orange shirt by her grandmother on her first day of Residential School.

She was 6 years old.

When she arrived at the school, Phyllis was stripped of her belongings, including the orange shirt. Since then, Webstad has always associated her time in the Residential School system with that orange shirt.

Her orange shirt has come to be a national symbol to commemorate and honour the victims and survivors of Indian Residential Schools. September 30 is now known as Orange Shirt Day and this day happens annually, to remember and honour the children who attended Residential Schools.

September 30 was the day when Indigenous children were taken to the schools.

Approximately 150,000 Métis, Inuit and First Nations children were sent to the schools between the 1860s and the 1990s, with the last Residential School closing its doors in 1996.

Dene National Chief and AFN Regional Chief for the Northwest Territories, Norman Yakeleya, said, “We wear orange in honour of all Indigenous people who, like Phyllis Webstad, faced senseless tragedies at residential school. Today, this colour helps us proclaim that every child matters and is deserving of safety, protection and love.”

Assembly of First Nations National Chief Perry Bellegarde said, “Canada’s Residential Schools were an attempt at genocide, they had a severe negative impact on our cultures, our nations, our languages, and for reconciliation to occur, Canada must right this wrong and help the former students and our nations recover and heal from this tragic history.”

“After everything Survivors have endured, it’s important that Canada recognizes that the IRS Resolution Health Support Program is essential. I stand with Survivors, their families, support workers and community organizations to advocate for the continuation of this program that helps so many with healing.”

This past Orange Shirt Day 2020, the Liberal Government introduced legislation in the House of Commons calling for Sept. 30 to be a National Day for Truth and Reconciliation for all federally regulated workers. The possible statutory holiday is part of the 94 recommendations from the Truth and

Reconciliation Commission. Similar legislation was introduced in 2019, but the bill died in the Senate when the last Federal election was called.

“I am pleased Canada is recognizing that reconciliation is a life-long journey by introducing legislation to establish a National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. I will continue advocating with survivors for further actions to meaningfully commemorate this painful chapter of our shared history, including the construction of a national monument honouring residential school victims and survivors,” said Chief Yakeleya.

Indigenous Health Hub director at Alberta Health Services, Nadine Mcree, whose late Grandmother attended a Residential School for 13 years, explained the commemoration by saying, “It’s meant to recognize the harm that is done to residential students and the commitment to the principle that every child matters.”

Orange Shirt Day was commemorated across Canada and in Alberta, public schools also took part in the day. The Elk Island Public School Division schools hosted traditional dances and wrote messages of encouragement. Jeremy Albert, who is the division’s First Nations, Métis and Inuit advisor, said of the students’ response to Orange Shirt Day, “They really see it clearly. They see it very black and white, right and wrong. And they have a lot of empathy towards students who attended the schools.”

“If they can go home and educate their parents, their family members, their community, that’s great. But I really have a lot of hope in our kids that this will be normal for them.”

Our Lady of Lourdes French Immersion Catholic School also took part by buying their entire staff and student population Orange Shirts in order to take part



Grade 2 students from Anzac School - Bill Woodward School in the Northland School Div. #61 helped raise awareness on Orange Shirt Day 2020. (Facebook photo NSD61)

in the day. Vice-principal Nadia Zanatta said, “It was so fantastic to see our full school community in orange – supporting this awareness and being a living example of our Catholic education theme for this year: Nurturing Hope.”

The school had a smudging ceremony, hosted a hand-drum performance by Lee Simpson-Johnston of Serpent River First Nation, and the students listened to Residential School survivor Roger Chum speak on the subject.

Zanetta continued, “It’s important to learn, for the students to learn, and it’s important for them to know that every child matters. The entire school decorated and designed an orange shirt. We had writing activities about how we feel when we’re at school, how we should feel at school and wrote it on a template of a feather.”

“[Orange Shirt Day] also showed us that we can still do school-wide initiatives even with [COVID] restrictions we just have to be innovative and creative.”

Stephane Prevost, Principle of the Our Lady of Lourdes said, “The students captured the true meaning of this day in remembrance of those who attended the Residential Schools. It is important to raise awareness at all levels as part of our truth and reconciliation efforts.”

## RCMP implement Eagle Feather Protocol

On September 16, Elder Tony Arcand blessed approximately 100 feathers gathered from various communities across Alberta and Saskatchewan. These feathers will be used for the implementation of the Eagle Feather Protocol and for the building of an Eagle staff for RCMP “K” Division.

With the Eagle feather protocol, “K” Division RCMP employees and clients, including victims and witnesses providing statements, will now have the option to swear legal oaths on an eagle feather at some

RCMP detachments in Alberta. In First Nations culture, the eagle is considered sacred because it flies the highest and closest to the Creator. The eagle feather is a symbol of spirituality and is used in many Indigenous traditions throughout North America.

Alberta RCMP began its own eagle feather initiative in 2018 and has been working to implement it across detachments province wide.

According to the RCMP Protocol, the eagle feather can be used in the following ways:

When a client enters a detachment to provide a statement, they will now be given three options: to swear on a Bible, affirm or affirm with an eagle feather.

When a client is swearing or affirming an oath or providing an affidavit or statement while holding an eagle feather, they recite the following: “This eagle feather symbolizes our

direct connection to the Creator for my people and I hold it in the spirit of honour and the truth. All my relations.”

The eagle feather may also be offered as a comforting item for a client when interacting with employees at the detachment.

The eagle feather can be used by all citizens. Should the client wish to use the eagle feather, it would be held by the client while providing their evidence or statement.

An eagle staff is a unique, sacred symbol that represents traditional Indigenous culture and clans. It is used at ceremonies and celebratory functions, much like a nation’s flag would be. The RCMP Facebook Page states, “Our goal is to create an RCMP “K” Division Eagle staff. This eagle staff is our way to recognize and honour First Nation people on Turtle Island, and in the spirit of reconciliation, (specifically Truth and Reconciliation Commission Call to Action #57) to raise awareness of First Nation people and culture.

“The Alberta RCMP is committed to implementing the calls-to-action recommended by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. We aim to foster respectful, trusting relationships with Indigenous Peoples, communities and employees through fairness, honour and in good faith as part of our Reconciliation efforts. The Eagle Feather Protocol is also a part of the RCMP’s commitment to create a more inclusive and relevant justice system for Indigenous people across the province.”



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## Alberta Native News



# Métis war hero's spouse receives recognition award

EDMONTON/CNW/ – On October 7, 2020, WWII, Métis Veteran Walter Calahaisn's spouse Myrtle Calahaisn received thanks from the Métis Nation and inheritance of \$20,000. President Audrey Poitras of the Métis Nation of Alberta personally presented the recognition payment to Myrtle Calahaisn on behalf of Métis Nation Veterans Minister David Chartrand.

"75 years ago, the young sons and daughters of our Nation answered the call to defend a country they did not know, in the name of a country that did not respect them. Canada promised opportunity and prosperity upon their return home from the war. A promise that was never kept – until now. It is important to ensure that our WWII Métis Veterans take their rightful place in Canadian history. Métis Veteran Walter Calahaisn and all Métis Veterans must be honoured and respected for their sacrifice in protecting freedom and liberty," stated Minister David Chartrand.

The \$20,000 Recognition Payment is part of the Métis Veterans Legacy Program established in partnership with the Trudeau government to commemorate forgotten Métis soldiers. Mrs. Calahaisn will be the tenth spouse to receive the Recognition Payment since Métis Nation Veterans Minister Chartrand announced on June 29, 2020. The policy is now inclusive of all surviving spouses and common-law partners of Métis Nation WWII Veterans regardless of when their loved one passed.

"The importance of family remains the essence of the Métis Nation," stated Minister David Chartrand. "Our WWII Métis Veterans who have passed would want to take care of their families and ensure their

## NGCI unveils Sundancer Park



On September 25, Ermineskin Cree Nation and Neyaskweahk Group of Companies officially unveiled the Sundancer Solar Park and the launch of the \$2.25 M 1MW energy project.

future and prosperity. We now have the ability to help the families of our Veterans heal, and take comfort, knowing their loved one is being honoured as a Hero of this country. Our Heroes Today, Tomorrow and Forever."

"Today, we thank Walter Calahaisn for his years of service and remember all he accomplished as a Private and as a Métis citizen," said President Audrey Poitras. "Myrtle was by Walter's side for 50 years, working with him, caring for him, and I am so glad to present her with this recognition cheque today. For too long, the dedication and bravery of Métis veterans like Walter went unrecognized. Métis across the Homeland sacrificed much in defense of their country. Now, through the Métis Veterans Legacy Program, we are able to give them and their spouses the acknowledgement and compensation they deserve."

Métis Veteran Walter Calahaisn was born on October 16, 1922, and passed on August 24, 2000.

Veteran Calahaisn was a Private and served in Canada, United Kingdom, Continental Europe and the Central Mediterranean Area. The Department of National Defence employed Veteran Calahaisn as a building maintenance man. Veteran Calahaisn and Myrtle owned and operated a janitorial business and an Indigenous gift shop. Veteran Calahaisn enjoyed playing baseball, horseback riding, dancing and playing guitar.

He married Myrtle on July 28, 1950, and raised nine children. Myrtle is a member of the Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women. In 2009 she received an ESQUAO award that recognizes Aboriginal women who have positively impacted Alberta's Aboriginal communities. Myrtle is also the recipient of the Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Medal.

## Justice for Joyce *cont. from p 6*

Minister of Indigenous Services Marc Miller, "I'm asking you to find me some answers because all I've got are questions and condolences, but no answers. There's no human being that deserves to die with indignity, with humiliation and in fear."

"I have seven children who find themselves without a mother," Dubé said. "I am sad. I am so sad."

Lorraine Whitman, President of The Native Women's Association Of Canada said, "It makes us wonder how many other Indigenous women are being subjected to this sort of abuse in Quebec and elsewhere in Canada but did not have the courage or ability to film their own distress."

"We hope the tragedy will also spur the Quebec government to act on the 142 recommendations of the Viens Commission which concluded last year that the province owes Indigenous people an apology for the way they are mistreated by the public service, including in the delivery of health care. And we hope that all levels of government begin to take seriously the Calls for Justice of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, and well as the Calls to Action of the Truth and

Reconciliation Commission."

"Only when governments recognize the harms that are being perpetrated against Indigenous people, take steps to correct them, and make the necessary reparations, will repugnant incidents like the one endured by Joyce Echaquan be prevented," said Whitman.

Senator Patti LaBoucane-Benson said that the incident is "graphic proof that systemic racism against Indigenous peoples is real and its impacts are devastating. Systemic racism is the product of an entire system of long-existing structures in Canadian society. It manifests itself in our public institutions, including our healthcare system, where stereotypes, biases, and prejudices can have real life consequences. Denying that systemic racism exists is a barrier to reconciliation and contri-butes to further harm to Indigenous peoples."

National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, Perry Bellegarde, also released a statement saying, "Discrimination against First Nation people remains prevalent in the health care system

and this needs to stop. I am encouraged that Premier Legault has expressed disappointment in this matter, but I continue to encourage the Quebec government to work with First Nations to fully implement the Viens Commission's recommendations."

"My sincere thoughts and prayers go out to Joyce Echaquan's family and her seven children."

Judging by the responses given by those in power regarding Joyce's death and the lack of immediate action, it is easy to see that the bureaucracy of the Canadian Government is in itself a form of systemic racism, and until action is taken that is the conclusion I will hold.

The question now isn't whether or not systemic racism exists in Canada, its how many more martyrs does Canada need before action is taken?

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