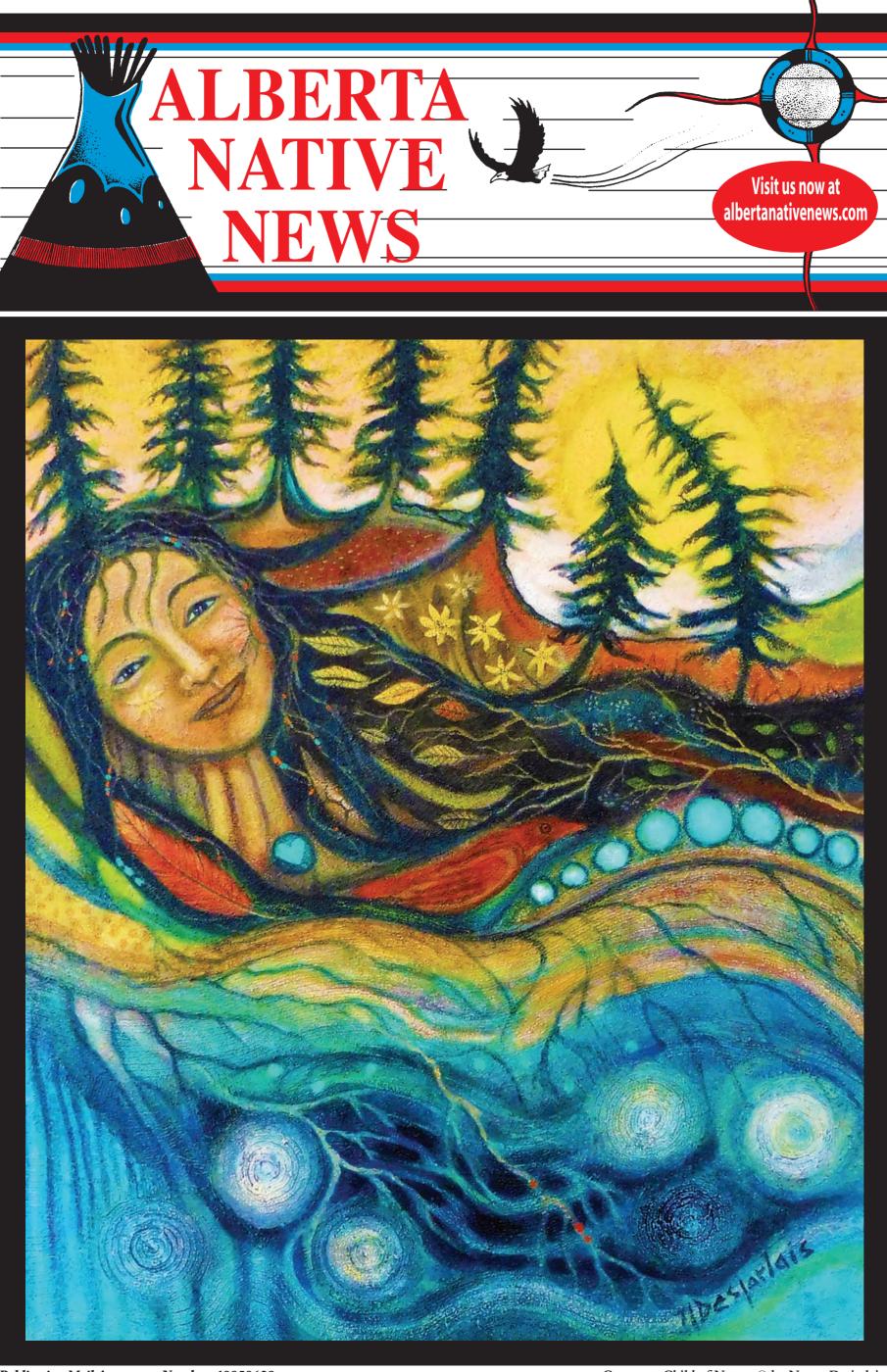
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Katherine Swampy discusses powwows and advocacy

By Chevi Rabbit, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Katherine Swampy is a Councilor of the Samson Cree Nation, a human rights advocate and a provincial advocate for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women. She is a role model in her community and beyond who demonstrates that challenges and trauma can be overcome and that one voice can make a big difference.

Alberta Native News sat down with Katherine Swampy to discuss her views on repatriation, powwows and advocacy.

Can you talk about your childhood?

I grew up in Samson Cree Nation, and although we struggled with poverty and faced many challenges, I was blessed with a very traditional and culturally involved family. My mom took us to feasts, tea dances, ghost dances, and ceremonies every other week. It's not as active

nowadays as it used to be; there are regular ceremonies, but not as many.

Can you speak about your education and the struggles of raising and managing a young family.

I'm in my Ph.D. program for public policy administration, and I have raised eleven children, five biological and I also kept my nieces, nephews, and brothers-in-law. I only have four at home now, many have left the nest. I love all of the children very much. It was a difficult journey balancing education and children, especially when the pandemic hit. I felt burnt out, and I firmly believe that things don't need to be perfect, but they must be done.

Can you talk about what repatriation means?

Repatriation is our Indigenous peoples taking back our traditions and culture. You don't need to



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be raised with the culture, but you're taking it upon yourself to learn. Genocide and colonialism set out to assimilate Indigenous peoples and remove our language, culture, and traditions, so it is up to the survivors to re-learn what was stolen from us. If you have one drop of Indigenous blood in you, you are responsible to your ancestors for learning your heritage and repatriating your language, culture, and traditions. Many of our elders are so sacred that we must absorb the knowledge they seek to share while we still have them - offer protocol and learn.

Can you talk about being a powwow family?

As a powwow mom, I would consider all dancers my family; we often share and help each other out at powwows. I know many people can be shy, and some are



MMIWG advocate Katherine Swampy

distant but most want to help each other. We feed each other, sometimes we house each other; we consider other dancers, some we may have met for the first time, as a family. We look out for one another.

Can you talk about being a jingle dress dancer and how you encourage others to dance?

I was listening to an elder one day; she said we have to share what knowledge we have. I remember thinking that I cannot share, who am I to share anything? And then I realized that even if I wasn't the most knowledgeable, I knew some things, and I could share what little I did know. For example, I know how to sew, and I know how to dance, and not everyone does. So around ten years ago, I started teaching youth and anyone who wanted to learn. It was my little way to keep dancing alive.

Can you talk about being an MMIW advocate?

I have family that has been murdered, Cheryl, Debbie, Trisheena, Warleen, Jonathan, Justin, and many friends, Dawns, Chantel, Savanna, and more. And I never meant to be an advocate for MMIWG and Men. I was so angry and hurt by the many losses, and I went to court to support families because I knew what it was like sitting alone in a courthouse. I want them to feel supported because it's a challenging situation. When I speak about MMIWG, it hurts; I'm remembering the pain of losses and sharing that pain with others. I want Justice for our loved ones, and I'd like it to stop. I want us to be safe.

Can you talk about how non-Indigenous people could be better advocates?

Non-indigenous voices are listened to, and it has become apparent that we are just muffled out and often ignored. We need allies and supporters; they can vote for leaders who want to help Indigenous peoples and push for policies that will help indigenous communities.

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This Indigenous History Month, let's celebrate and honour the First Peoples of this land.

Heather **McPherson**

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Alberta accepts bid for surgical facility on Enoch Cree Nation

By Jake Cardinal, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

On June 1, 2022 it was announced that the Government of Alberta has accepted a bid by the Enoch Cree Nation to build a private surgical clinic on the First Nation's land.

The clinic is a culmination of a new partnership between Enoch Cree Nation and Surgical Centres Inc., a private health-care operator in Canada.

"Traditionally, chartered surgical facilities haven't performed hip and knee replacements, since many patients need to stay overnight after those surgeries," said Alberta Premier Jason Kenney.

"But I can say that Enoch Cree Nation and Surgical Centres Inc. have stepped forward with a very strong proposal to accommodate more complex surgeries while following the stringent standards of care that we expect in Alberta."

The clinic will be privately-owned — which has been met with some pushback from critics as the partners are responsible for the building and equipment costs. Meanwhile, the surgeries themselves will be publicly-funded.

"Obviously they have a financial incentive. But they also want to get their patients to have shorter wait times but there's limited capacity in the current hospital environment," said Kenney.

The government has said they accepted

the bid in an effort to combat the evergrowing backlog of surgeries in

Alberta — with Health Minister Jason Copping reportedly saying that the amount surger-ies on the province's wait-list is over 70,000.

Furthermore, there are almost 23,000 patients awaiting orthopaedic surgery — one-third of them being for knee replacements.

He has also stated that more than half of all orthopaedic patients on hold for surgeries are beyond their recommended wait-times.

"People are waiting far too long for hip and knee replacements. We need to do a lot more of them and this is going to help us get it done," said Copping.

The new surgical facility should be complete in the 2023-24 fiscal year and is expected to perform up to 3,000 orthopaedic procedures annually. The current contract with Alberta Health Services (AHS) is still being created, but the government has said that the new surgical facility will allow AHS to perform 17 percent more operations in the Edmonton-area, compared to 2019 and 2020.

While the clinic will be privately-owned, one of the owners and operators is the Enoch Cree

Nation, so it is expected that the clinic will be culturally-appropriate for First Nations people.

Enoch Chief Billy Morin said that the facility will staff Indigenous people, as well as include traditional healing and medicine in their work. He also invited Indigenous and non-Indigenous people alike to visit the clinic upon its completion.

"When an Indigenous person from High Level comes here, they're going to get not just the fancy building with the nice Indigenous pictures,"

he said. "They're going to get a new

experience where they're going to have a Dene person talking to them. They're going to have traditional healing and medicine right here on the First Nation offered to them as well and to all Albertans, quite frankly, if they want to go down that road, too."

Pope Francis to visit Alberta this summer

By Jake Cardinal, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Holy See Press Office — the official news outlet for the activities of the Vatican — has announced that Pope Francis will be visiting with Indigenous Nations in Canada from July 24 to 30, 2022.

During the trip, Francis is expected to meet with multiple Indigenous Nations across the country due to his commitment to reconciliation.

The visit will be the fourth papal journey to Canada and the first since Saint John Paul II's visit in 2002.

The popular belief is that the pope will reiterate his initial apology — made on April 1st, 2022 in Rome, Italy — in which he essentially apologized for the actions of *individual* members, as opposed to the institution itself apologizing.

"We fully expect that the Pope will reiterate the apology he did give in Rome," said Edmonton Archbishop Richard Smith, a general coordinator of the trip.

The "Holy Father" will be visiting the cities of Edmonton, Quebec and Iqaluit. Specific locations

The decision to visit Edmonton is due to the size of the city's Indigenous population; it is the second-largest in Canada. There were also about 25 residential schools that operated in Alberta, making it home to the most residential schools in any province or territory.

Furthermore, Francis will only be visiting these

three cities during the trip due to issues with his mobility, said Smith.

"When he comes to a country, he can't get around by helicopter, he can't be in a car any more than an hour, he can't be in a different place every night," he said. "The Vatican chose these

Continued on page 23



and visitations are expected to be made available as the trip draws nearer, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) has said.

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Filmmakers share how TELUS STORYHIVE helped their careers

By Regan Treewater, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

STORYHIVE wants to amplify Indigenous voices by providing support to 30 Indigenous storytellers with a \$20,000 production grant, mentorship, training and distribution through TELUS Optik TV. The STORYHIVE 2022 Indigenous Storyteller Edition aspires to provide self-agency and empower film innovators from British Columbia and Alberta to build thriving artistic careers.

"Since 2013, STORYHIVE has been able to support a community of more than 18,000 local content creators across British Columbia and Alberta," explains Ryan Logan, Alberta Territory Manager for STORYHIVE. "We want to support Indigenous communities and provide an accessible platform for up-and-coming storytellers to share their work."

"STORYHIVE acknowledges that there is a history of Indigenous creatives being excluded from the film industry due to systemic racism," Logan continues. "At the heart of any cultural group are the stories that provide the foundation for beliefs, unity, and belonging and we want to help share these stories and voices with all Canadians."

Recipients are given financial support to fund their projects, as well as artistic mentoring and distribution of their work through TELUS Optik TV Channel 707 and 126. To ensure an authentic message is delivered to viewers, TELUS STORYHIVE has partnered with the Indigenous Screen Office and an Indigenous Advisory Committee.

young age I knew I wanted to be filmmaker," explained STORYHIVE 2018 grant recipient Trevor Solway in a recent phone interview. The Blackfoot filmmaker, writer, and director has always

been enamored by the limitless possibilities inherent to the world of the silver screen, but never saw his own identity reflected within the industry – times are changing.

When Solway got a phone call encouraging him to apply for the 2018 grant, he remembers feeling a sense of accessibility. "My name came up through networks of contacts, and I was supported through the entire application process. I felt extremely valued."

Solway's work finds its origins, inspiration, and realization within the familiar setting of his home and the community that raised, influenced, and nurtured him. "I was at film school in Vancouver, and I very purposefully moved back home to pursue filmmaking. I felt strongly that this is where I needed to be. My home, and the people who surround me are a treasure chest of stories. I'm making films with and about people who love me, and I wouldn't want to be anywhere else."

Solway is dedicated to encouraging members of his community to follow their goals, and as a full time filmmaker, he provides those "I have always loved film and from a around him with employment opportunities to



Apply for the 2022 Indigenous Storyteller Edition before June 28 for your chance to receive \$20,000 in production funding, as well as mentorship, training and distribution through TELUS Optik TV. Photo credit: Takla Traphouse. Produced by Levi Davis.

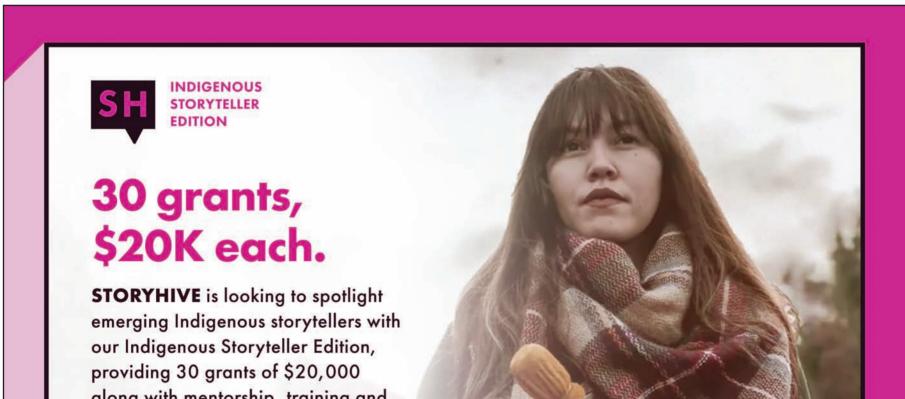
contribute and collaborate in his many projects. His cousin Adam was the cameraman on his last cinematic undertaking.

STORYHIVE works to engage talent within remote communities."We partner with past STORYHIVE creators to get the message out," says Logan. "We want to encourage talent in B.C. and Alberta." He elaborated further, adding that, "STORYHIVE wants to amplify Indigenous voices."

In Solway's Siksika community, storytelling has always been a way of life. He learned the art of passing on oral history from his grandfather and recalls that his version of Saturday morning cartoons as a child consisted of sitting with his grandfather over hot cups of coffee to listen to stories about the stars, the Earth, the animals, and their people. How fitting that through these grants and mentorship, such narratives by Indigenous creators can now be accessed through the click of a button or tap of a screen on STORYHIVE's social channel and Optik TV.

The sharing of Indigenous stories and

Continued on page 7



along with mentorship, training and distribution on TELUS Optik TV.

Your Story, Your Narrative. Apply before June 28 at STORYHIVE.com/apply.

Image credit: The Camp(us) | Produced by Hayle Gallup



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So you think you have a great business idea. Now what? With any new idea, a good place to start would be to do some research to ensure that your business idea is likely to succeed. Taking this first step can help you decide whether you have a viable business or if you need to modify your business idea (or come up with another idea altogether). Visit businesslink.ca and learn more about how market research can help you move your business idea forward in this helpful blog post: The Why and How of Market Research.

When clients reach out to us and are not sure where to start, we encourage them to use the Startup Guide, a useful guide on our website that offers guidance, resources, and checklists for starting a business. Working through this guide will ensure you have the skills and knowledge to pursue your business idea.

Other questions the guide will help you with: Does your business solve a problem? Who might be your ideal customer? What sets you apart from your competitor? Will my business be online? Offline? Or both? Who will be a part of my management team and will I hire employees or contractors? How will I fund my business? Will I need to start the business as a part-time venture, or can I dive right in full-time?

As a next step, you can use the Business Model Canvas and Value Proposition tools to brainstorm and evaluate your idea by filling in the answers in the appropriate areas. These tools are helpful in ensuring you have a good understanding of the basic structure of your business and the problems you intend to solve.

Another great visualization tool is the Lean Plan template from Bplans.com. This tool is similar to the Business Model Canvas and can help you map out the basic structure of your business. Our clients often work with these tools until they have a good understanding of their business model.

Understanding who your customer is and what they are looking for is another critical step. You need to ensure you are solving a problem for your potential customers. Once you've confirmed that your business idea is a viable one, it's a good idea to further research your business idea. You can now start to collect all this information and use it to build your business plan! Business Link has a free, online Interactive Business Plan Builder that can help you put together your business plan section by section, with helpful tips and examples along the way.

You'll also need to do some additional research to understand the industry your business is in, what the competitive landscape looks like, what your marketing strategy will look like, and your potential sales revenue in order to complete your business plan.

As you move ahead with your business idea, you'll need to decide what type of business structure you'll register as: sole proprietor, partnership, or corporation? Depending on the business type, you'll also need to identify any special licensing, permits and regulations that may be required. If you're planning to start an on-reserve business, you may have to determine if there are other legal requirements you may have to meet, such

Continued on page 19







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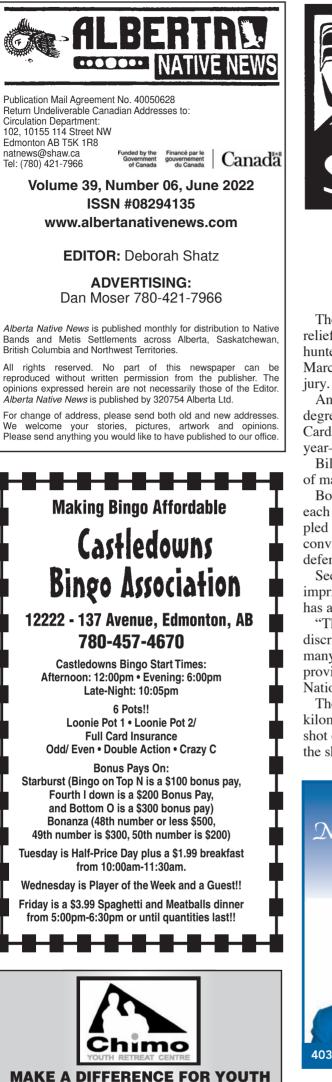
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Was it a Hate Crime?

By Jeremy Appel, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Metis Nation of Alberta has expressed relief after two men who shot and killed Metis hunters Maurice Cardinal and Jacob Sansom in March 2020 were found guilty by an Edmonton

Anthony Bilodeau was found guilty of seconddegree murder for the death of 57-year-old Cardinal and manslaughter for the death of 39year-old Sansom.

Bilodeau's father Roger was also found guilty of manslaughter for both deaths.

Both Bilodeaus were charged with two counts each of second-degree murder, to which they had pled not guilty. Jurors have the option of convicting for manslaughter if they find a defendant not guilty of murder.

Second-degree murder carries a sentence of life imprisonment while manslaughter with a firearm has a minimum sentence of four years.

"This case was a stark illustration of the discrimination and contempt experienced by many of our Citizens especially in that area of the province," reads a statement from the Metis Nation of Alberta (MNA).

The killings occurred on a rural road about 260 kilometres northwest of Edmonton. Sansom was shot once in the chest and Cardinal three times in the shoulder.



"Both were callously left to die at the roadside by the killers," the nation noted in its statement.

Outside the Court of Queen's Bench, Andrea Sandmaier of the MNA spoke on behalf of the victims' families, thanking the judge, jury, Crown prosecutor and supporters of the family for working "to bring justice for these senseless murders of Maurice and Jake."

"You can't even imagine the strength that this family has and what they've endured — the ugly, ugly ugliness of the keyboard warriors out there," she told reporters.

"These gentlemen, Maurice and Jake, were so important to our Métis community ... It's a huge loss to this family, it's a huge loss to the Metis Nation of Alberta.'

Jacob Sansom's widow Sarah, who also spoke outside the courthouse, said no sentence will make up for the needless death of her husband.

"How do you put a time or sentence on two lives? And lives that were as significant as their lives were," she said.

Sarah Sansom also criticized how the media uncritically reported the defence team's arguments that focused on whether she and her husband had been drinking.

"Are we back in the 1800s? Is this cowboys against Indians?" she said. "The things that they were saying and the lies, for us, it was frustrating because we know them so well and we're like, 'they would never say things like that.""

The 11-person jury's verdict came on May 31 the day after closing arguments from the

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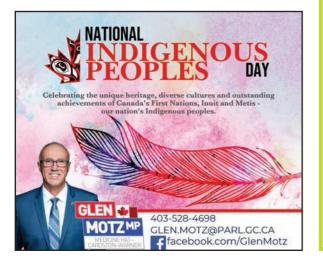


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and appreciation for the culture and traditions of Alberta's Indigenous communities, this special month

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Luxury beadwork featured at Western Canada Fashion Week

By Chevi Rabbit, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

For Indigenous Peoples across Turtle Island, beadwork is considered high value. Consequently, the patterns and color selection of beadwork designs are inherited and passed down to new generations of Indigenous families.

Last month, custom handmade luxury beadwork pieces were on full display at Western Canada Fashion Week by Pelican Lake First Nations member, designer Helen Oro. Her designs are – simply put – Culturally Exquisite!

In an interview with *ANNews* reporter Chevi Rabbit, designer Helen Oro shares what inspires her creativity and passion for luxury beadwork.

Oro comes from a family of artists, and she was raised by her kokum and mosom (grandparents) from the age of one.

"My kokum and her sisters did a lot of beading and sewing, so I grew up watching them. I had uncles who drew and my dad, also made star blankets.

"I come from a family of artists. So I was bound to pick up on something for sure," said Oro.

"My memories of watching my kokum at the sewing machine are what I remember the most and of me helping her push the pedal while she sewed...Eventually, I learned how to make dream catchers, which would be my first passion."

Oro was inspired and encouraged by her kokum to pursue beadwork and fashion.

"My kokum got me into the little sister and big sister program when I was little. I was matched with my big sister at the age of 11. I now call her mom, and she is who I refer to when I say mom," said Oro.

"They both inspire in many ways and have helped mold me into the woman I am today."

Oro explained that when she first started

creating, she was motivated to make beautiful things that she couldn't afford to buy. "Then, it was a snowball effect of pushing myself to try new things when it came to beading."

"Also, I wanted to set myself apart from other artisans by creating statement sets that weren't quite traditional, and they're not made for regalia but more for red carpet events," said Oro. "They are luxury beaded statement sets."

Indigenous artisans are participating in events where we never saw beaded jewelry or ribbon skirts or moccasins before, she added.

"I see us taking up more space with our beaded jewelry in the film industry, fashion weeks, and red-carpet events," she said. "I mean, it's already happening, but I see it [happening more often] and being even more celebrated. More ribbon skirts, moccasins, and beaded jewelry, whether it's worn in a traditional style or mixed in with modern pieces."

During the pandemic, Oro bunkered down and became a hermit. "Showcasing at fashion week was just what I needed to start that fashion spark again," she noted. "When creating this small collection, I got inspired to think out of the box, and now my creative juices are flowing. I can't wait to showcase more of my work."

"My message to youth would be not to wait to showcase your talent," she added. "If you create things like ribbon skirts, t-shirts, beadwork, or even rework clothing to make it your own -I say showcase it, don't wait till you think you're ready. Just do it now."

Oro tells other creatives to share their work on social media and events but share it!

"When I first started creating, I had no idea what I was doing, but I was eager to get into



Beadwork by Helen Oro Designs was featured at WCFW in Edmonton. Photo by Soko Fotohaus.

the fashion scene, so I just started," said Oro. "Even before I knew what I was doing, I started showcasing as an accessory designer.

"I didn't see anyone in the fashion industry who was an Indigenous accessory designer to look up to when I started or to ask for advice from.

"I learned so much over the years by just putting myself out there with my small collections," said Oro. "I traveled the world to various fashion weeks and was often the first First Nation designer to be part of their events.

"By not waiting till I was ready and putting myself and my talent out for the world to see, I've had some pretty amazing opportunities. So, my advice is not to wait till you think you're ready – start sharing your gifts now."

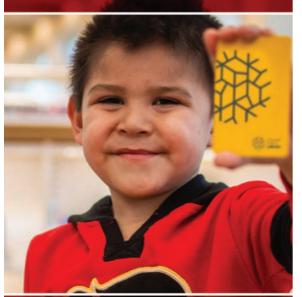
Oro said the pandemic canceled a trip to travel to Fiji Fashion Week. "We would have been the first First Nation people to have attended. Now that things are opening back up, we are set to bring these plans back to life and will prepare for next year's Fiji Fashion Week," said Oro.

STORYHIVE cont. from p 4

amplifying of long stifled voices remains a priority at TELUS. Since 2018, over \$4 million has been invested in community programming through TELUS Local Content. This year's Indigenous Storyteller Edition promises to promote greater understanding of Indigenous narratives through nationwide distribution of enriching filmmaking by some rising stars of Canadian cinema.

The 2022 Indigenous Storyteller Edition is

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open now for submissions at storyhive.com/apply and will close June 28, 2022 before 12 a.m. (midnight). Indigenous storytellers from across British Columbia and Alberta are encouraged to apply. Those interested can access artistic content from past years, including the 2018 Indigenous Storytelling Edition through social media platforms: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, and YouTube.



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*NDP

Harold Gadwa: Powwow can help heal intergenerational trauma

By Chevi Rabbit, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Harold Gadwa is a well-known Cree Grass Dancer who believes Indigenous people can reconcile trauma caused by residential schools through powwow.

Gadwa is an artist, porcupine quill art fabricator, Muay Thai fighter, and youth worker for Pimatisowin Group Care in Maskwacis (Samson). He is from Kehewin Cree Nation and Samson Cree Nation.

"I am a proud father of my six-month-old son Côwêkanapisîs, a husband to my amazing wife Amber Flanagan," said Gadwa.

Gadwa is a Grass Dancer at powwows. He explained, "They're many iterations of this style of dance. I mainly follow the style of the Omaha Tribe. However, the Sioux have made the dance their own and brought it up to the plains and that why the Plains Cree Tribe dances it."

According to many, the grass dance is a style of modern men's powwow dancing originating in the warrior societies on the Northern Great Plains. Unlike most forms of powwow dancing, the grass dance regalia generally has no feathers besides the occasional roach feather. Instead, the regalia consist of brightly colored fringe made of either yarn, broadcloth, or ribbon.

Gadwa said being a Cree Grass dancer is most rewarding when the younger generation say they admire his dancing. "They tell you that they admire your style. They say they want to dance just like you and offer you tobacco for knowledge. You are doing something right if you're making the next generation proud. That defines the healthy pride of a dancer," he said.

After nearly a century of our traditional ways

being outlawed, Gadwa feels empowered to dance with his fellow Indigenous brothers and sisters.

"Powwow is one of many things that make one feel alive," he said.

"Our DNA is structured with 100 years of trauma from residential and boarding schools. We can reconcile within ourselves through powwow."

"This is why we have so many powwow families who adopt each other as sons, daughters, kids, mother, father, grandfather, grandmother, grandsons, granddaughters, grandkids, uncle, aunts," added Gadwa.

He said the powwow trail is beautiful, and every year you can try to visit old or new locations. Powwows are being hosted all over North America.

"It isn't exclusive to one area. I have

been traveling the Alberta and Saskatchewan circuit my whole life."

"Then, in 2018, I started traveling to the USA. People down in the states are friendly to visitors. No one is proud; everyone is welcoming. They even feed you if you're hungry. Also, powwows end earlier down there too. So that's nice," said Gadwa.

He said the powwow community is generous and thoughtful. He describes a time when he was struggling. "I was in New York for Salamanca powwow back in 2019 pre-covid. A member of the REDRUM First Nations brotherhood saw me selling earrings for gas money. He thanked

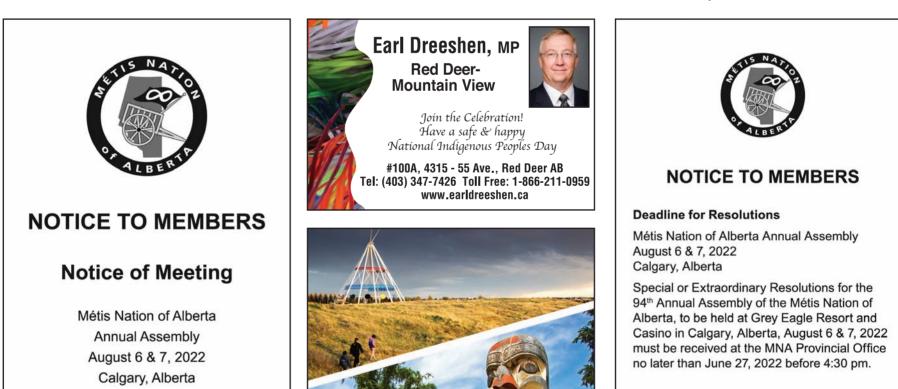


Grass Dancer Harold Gadwa describes the healing qualities of powwow dancing. Photo by Mark Lawson.

me for coming from Alberta, Canada, and generously gave me \$90 USA for gas money. That was the most humbling thing anyone has ever done for me."

Gadwa says you've got to stay in shape for the powwow season. "I like running the stairs, working on leg strength, cardio, diet, and practicing," he said.

Gadwa ends the interview with advice for upcoming dancers or returning dancers: "Get back out there—no matter who discourages you. No one should have any opinion about how you should dance or move. That's the beauty of powwow. Dance your style as the emcee would say."



In accordance with the Bylaws of the Métis Nation of Alberta **NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that the 94th Annual Assembly of the Métis Nation of Alberta will be held August 6 & 7, 2022 in Calgary, Alberta.

Carol Riddale

Carol Ridsdale, Secretary, Métis Nation of Alberta

NATIONAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY MARTIN LONG, MLA West Yellowhead

Please send your resolution to:

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Carol Riddall

Carol Ridsdale, Secretary, Métis Nation of Alberta

Our cover artist: Nancy Desjarlais

By Terry Lusty, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

It's always an honour and pleasure to share space with notable talents in the world of sports and the arts. In late May, the stage - for art that is - was set when Edmonton's longestablished art gallery, Bearclaw Gallery, featured one of Canada's most highly-regarded artists -Maxine Noel, aka Ioyan Mani ('Walk Beyond' her Sioux name).

Along with Noel was Edmonton-based Nancy Desjarlais, a Cree-Metis artist whose beautiful painting titled "Child of Nature" is on the cover of this month's *Alberta Native News*. As a dual act, the two artists' works were specially featured at a Bearclaw exhibit titled 'We Walk Together.'

Unfortunately, Noel was unable to attend on opening day, May 28, but Desjarlais was present and those who visited were delighted to meet her.

With the passing of five of the original Group of Seven acclaimed Canadian Indigenous artists, only two remain - Alex Janvier and Joseph Sanchez. Other talented Indigenous artists have reached international acclaim including Maxine Noel, Archie Beaulieu, Joane Cardinal-Schubert, and Jane Ash Poitras. A new wave of gifted artists is emerging and Nancy Desjarlais, originally from the bushlands of northeastern Alberta, south of Fort McMurray, is poised to become one of the greats.

Consider the definitive comments of Bearclaw owner Jackie Bugera. She describes Desjarlais' work as, "extremely powerful, introspective, imaginative, spiritual ... (that) creates a narrative." While her work is admittedly "powerful," there is a "softness," adds Bugera.

"Nancy came to us five years ago," says Bugera. Thus, she's still relatively new to the gallery. However, over the past year, "I saw evolution, growth, in her technique and expression."

Noel, on the other hand, has been with Bearclaw since the '80s and has created a large following. Bugera sees her as "extremely significant given her social and cultural influences." When the National Aboriginal Achievement Awards (now Indspire) came on the scene, Noel was rapidly snapped up to help design those magnificent stage sets that absolutely astounded viewers. They were "incredible!"

She's also been involved with the Canadian Native Arts Foundation and Association for Native Development in the Performing and Visual Arts. Aside from her lecturing at universities and art schools, her work appears in the collections of the Canadian Museum of History, the University of Western Ontario, the Canadian Native Arts Foundation, and more.

Today, like Alex Janvier and Joseph Sanchez, she is a national treasure.

Indigenous art in general is experiencing an exciting resurgence, expresses Bugera. It is morphing in unique ways alongside mainstream art.

Desjarlais' art fits nicely into this profile as she produces earthy, contemplative pieces which seem to offer a serene and calming effect on viewers.

As a child of the backwoods country Desjarlais has never lost that natural connectedness with her land, water or culture as these were gifts from Creator. She's always felt that closeness to Mother Earth and acknowledges and expresses it in her art, sometimes using mixed media that includes the gifts from the land - things like sand, cedar, feathers and birchbark, which she then mixes with her paints.



Nancy Desjarlais' art is on exhibit at Bearclaw Gallery in Edmonton.

In fact, many of her contemporary pieces employ the use of sand and acrylic which is something a bit different for art connoisseurs as it intertwines the natural elements with her paint.

In recalling her childhood, she says, "I always loved to colour with crayons, then pencil crayons." In Grade 7 she was encouraged by her teacher and her foster parents. After she married and moved to the west coast, she experimented even more with natural materials borrowed from the land. This included feathers and beach glass. "I found a lot of inspiration looking at (others') art and I learned by imagination and exploration." Indeed, the coastal territory provided many additional influences for her art.

Her return to Edmonton was a welcome move as it allowed her to be close to family and friends she missed, especially her children and grandchildren.

She maintains that one of the strongest influences on her work is her own Cree culture.

Continued on page 14



Indigenizing the classroom at Bow Valley College

For Bow Valley College instructors Allen Fung and Kathryn Kiss, indigenizing the curriculum is not just about adding material to the English course they teach. It's about embedding Indigenous knowledges into the classroom. "A big part of what we're trying to focus on is not just the historical traumas, but stories of resilience — that there are an abundance of thriving peoples and cultures that continue to have positive outcomes," he says. "I think it's really Fung and Kiss say their work on the English curriculum is just the beginning.

"One of the key outcomes we are looking for in this whole process is not just to bring awareness about Truth and Reconciliation

The Literacy and Essential Skills educators have been working to incorporate Indigenous histories and ways of knowing into the non-fiction section of their course, which is focused on diversity, inclusion, and identity. Each Indigenous element added to the curriculum is authenticated by an Indigenous person, such as an Elder or Residential School Survivor. Fung says the work is in response to the Truth and Reconciliation's calls to action on education. important to balance the two. To show perspective on the darker historical truths, but also on some of the light that is shining today."

Their work is part of efforts across the College's School of Foundational Learning to bring Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing into classes to benefit students from a wide range of backgrounds. Another example of this work is a science course that connects Indigenous life-givers — earth, sun, air, and water — to chemistry, physics, and biology studies. to our learners, but to bring awareness about the need for accepting one's own identity, accepting and embracing diversity, and that we're all in this process together," says Kiss. "It's a very interesting course to teach now, but it will simply develop as time goes along and become better."

To find out more about the School of Foundational Learning's programs, including Adult Basic Education, Indigenous Foundational Learning, and Indigenous Pathways to Employment, please visit bowvalleycollege.ca.

AU honours Red Crow College President Roy Weasel Fat

Roy Weasel Fat has been instrumental in promoting the role of Traditional Blackfoot Knowledge in formal education for Blackfoot learners. And more broadly, he has promoted the role of Traditional Knowledge in education systems for all Indigenous learners.

These efforts have earned the current Red Crow Community College president an Honorory Doctor of Laws from Athabasca University, which is awarded to individuals who have made outstanding intellectual or scholarly contributions in their field.

Weasel Fat's efforts reflect his own experience with schooling, both in his grade-school and in his post-secondary experiences.

"There was really nothing in the curriculum that taught about Indigenous people. It was always studying other cultures, rather than our own culture," he said. "So that's what Indigenous education is about. It's to reclaim our identity as Blackfoot People and learning our language, so we can make better sense of our Blackfoot culture and identity."

Weasel Fat's leadership on this issue, among others, earned him recognition as a leader from

his own family and community; he is also known by the Blackfoot name Namahkan. He explained Blackfoot names are often bestowed on individuals throughout their life in recognition of certain characteristics or accomplishments.

The name Namahkan was originally held by one of his ancestors, who signed the Lame Bull Treaty between the U.S. government and the Blackfoot People. The name signifies leadership. He said it is now his obligation to honour the name by considering how the original Namahkan would have behaved, and then meeting that expectation or exceeding it.

That capacity for leadership is one he began to show throughout his life, even before the name was bestowed on him.

Weasel Fat said some of his first memories of education are from his family. His first language was Blackfoot, and he was able to understand the Blackfoot language from an early age.

When he was about 8 years old he stayed with his grandparents for the summer. He recalled how his grandmother would tell him stories in the Blackfoot language - lessons that were intended to teach him about the world around him and

about the Blackfoot culture and worldview.

"That's where my early foundations of Blackfoot culture really started, because of that experience with my grandma," he said.

That experience contrasts sharply with his experience in settlerrun schools, both the residential schools on Blood Tribe territory in southern Alberta and the integrated schools



AU honours Roy Weasel Fat, president of Red Crow Community College. Photo supplied.

in nearby Cardston and Fort McLeod. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada released reports in 2015 outlined the history and long-lasting negative impacts of Canada's historical approach to educating Indigenous children.

Weasel Fat said he experienced some of the challenges outlined in those reports, but in recalling his experience he spoke mainly about how he felt disconnected from the Blackfoot language and culture. "And maybe that's the way education was done at that time. But you know, it wasn't good for me, personally," he said. "I guess I just kind of learned not to like school because of that experience."

Yet already in those early years, before he was given the name Namahkan, he was showing he had a capacity for leadership and helping people. He recalled going to the residential school at 8 years old and looking out for some of the other younger students there who had been bullied, or were just feeling really lonely.

Continued on page 20



it's time.

The online **Bachelor of Commerce** with a major in Indigenous business is a program that is created and taught by Indigenous scholars. It is offered online and in person, with support through one-on-one mentorship. Indigenous Culture, Traditions, and Values are prominent and woven in with contemporary management in each course.

 BUSY MOTHER

 CURRENT BCOMM LEARNER





Susan Aglukark receives Humanitarian Award

By Regan Treewater, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The concept of 'belonging' is one that transcends borders. Humans naturally seek affiliation, and with this comes a sense of security, safety, and the protection offered by community.

"Many of us Indigenous groups, if not all of us have been emotionally displaced from our own Indigenous stories," commented celebrated singer-songwriter Susan Aglukark in a recent telephone interview from the road. "As much as our communities are ours, by virtue of the fact that these are our traditional lands and many of us were born and raised in those communities, there is the undertone of colonial impact in these environments," she paused impactfully.

"We belong there – traditionally, culturally – but there's that little thing that keeps us emotionally always trying to take ownership of everything that's in our community, and so when I talk about 'belonging' it's that, it's reconnecting."

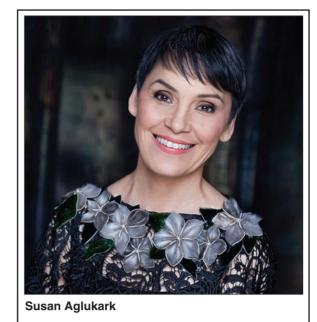
Susan Aglukark has just celebrated the release of her tenth album, *The Crossing*, where she explores ancestral feelings of 'belonging' and reconnects with stories attached to her own heritage. "Writing this album through our contemporary Inuit lens has been a lesson in belonging...As we correct the narrative, we are also finding puzzle pieces in our own healing journeys - and what a privilege it is to have this platform to share these lessons from."

The messages and themes woven into her new album will resonate with older and younger generations. Aglukark explained: "When we talk about intergenerational trauma in my community, we are talking three and four generations back."

Aglukark took a moment to reflect on the differences manifested between the trauma of her own generation and that of her parents before continuing. Her mother, a traditional seamstress, and her father who recently passed "were born and raised in the traditional ways. So, their formative years were traditional, and it was when they were, seven eight, nine, ten, years old that they were placed into permanent settlements... And then their lives changed - instantly and completely. There was no transition; there was no choice...Choice was taken away from them."

Referring to her parent's generation, Aglukark continued: "There are pieces of disconnect that they've always felt – that makes sense. It's in understanding these disconnects that they begin to heal...When we can make these connections, the change in their belonging and their home, the change of their sense of belonging in that community – it's immediate for them," she concluded.

Susan Aglukark is an Officer of the Order of Canada and a recipient of Governor General Lifetime Artistic Achievement Award. She holds honorary degrees from the University of Lethbridge and the University of Alberta, and her list of accolades keeps growing. She is no stranger to the winner's podium at the Juno Awards, but at this year's ceremonies, the exceedingly humble musician turned non-profit trailblazer was recognized for her monumental contributions to improving the lives of youth in remote Inuit, First Nations, and Metis northern communities. For her work as the visionary



behind the Arctic Rose Foundation, Susan Aglukark was presented with the 2022 Humanitarian Award by Music Canada.

The Arctic Rose Foundation is a unique initiative targeting the emotional, expressive, and cultural needs of young people through community building. "There's a couple of focuses that we have through the Arctic Rose Foundation with our children and our youth," explained Aglukark. "And it comes back again to that sense of belonging to the community. We hire youth; we train them to run the afterschool Messy Book Program, the expressive arts programs. They're trained in what I call 'cultural cognizance' which means that we know our communities uniquely and we want a healthy community."

Aglukark explained further that young people may have educational goals that temporarily take them away, but that by instilling them with a feeling of community citizenship, they will

Continued on page 21



July 13, 2022 is the last day to submit a claim

It's free, confidential and supports are available for you



For information or legal support visit: indiandayschools.com or call 1-844-539-3815 Hope for Wellness Help Line: 1-855-242-3310



It's Powwow Season again!

At *Alberta Native News* we have put together a schedule of some of the upcoming powwow events and other happenings.

Our list will be updated as the season progresses and we hope it gives you an idea of what to expect in the weeks to come. Good luck to all the summer festival participants.

Have a great time!

June 16 - 19

Fort McKay Treaty Days, Fort McKay First Nation AB.

June 18

Edmonton Indigenous Peoples Fest, West Edmonton Mall, AB.

June 19

St. Albert National Indigenous Day, Lions Park, St. Albert, AB.

Empowering Our Youth live concert, Orange Hub Theatre, Edmonton, AB. 780-471-3220. See ad p 5.

June 20

Waskasooseepee Traditional Pow Wow, Red Deer, AB. 403-340-0020

June 20 - 25

Aboriginal Awareness Week, Calgary, AB. www.aawc.ca

June 21

National Indigenous People's Day Traditional Pow Wow, Junction of Hwy 16 & 40, North Battleford, SK. 306-445-8033

National Indigenous Peoples day, Shell Place field, MacDonald Island Park. Fort MacMurray, AB. See ad p 13.

Celebrate National Indigenous Peoples Day across Canada. In Alberta visit indigenous.alberta.ca

June 24 - 26

Saddle Lake Cree Nation Pow Wow, Saddle Lake AB. 780-726-3829

June 25

National Indigenous Family Day & Pow Wow, Calgary Stampede Grounds. www.aawc.ca

June 25 & 26

Muskeg Lake Cree Nation 30th Annual Veterans Traditional Pow-Wow, Muskeg Lake Cree Nation, SK. 306-713-0810

June 28

Metis 8 Indigenous Day Celebration, MSGC building in Edmonton, AB. 780-822-4096. See ad p 17.

June 28 - 30

Sturgeon Lake First Nation Competition Pow Wow, Sturgeon Lake, SK. 306-764-9352

July 1 - 4

Nakota Strong Music Festival, Glenevis, AB. 780-977-8606

July 2 & 3

One Arrow First Nation Traditional Powwow, One Arrow First Nation, SK. 306-361-4769

July 2 - 4

Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation Pow Wow, Glenevis, AB. 780-967-2225

July 8 - 10 Fort a la Corne Traditior

Fort a la Corne Traditional Pow-Wow, James Smith Cree Nation, SK. 639-533-7919

Healing Our Community Pow Wow, Kinostino, SK. 639-929-7097

July 12 - 14 Saskatoon Tribal Council Traditional Pow Wow, Merlis Blescher Place, SK. 306-956-6100

Kahkewistahaw First Nation Competition Pow-Wow, off Hwy 201, Broadview, SK. 639-205-7066

Calgary Stampede Pow Wow, Calgary AB.

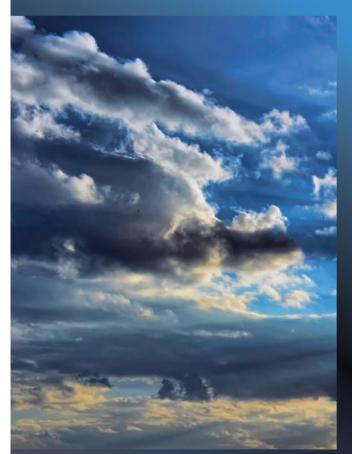
July 15 - 17

Onion Lake Cree Nation Pow-wow, Onion Lake, SK 306-344-7541

Kainai Powwow & Celebration, Standoff AB, Red Crow Park, AB. 403-315-2540

ON BEHALF OF THE ABORIGINAL FRIENDSHIP CENTRE OF CALGARY'S BOARD, STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS





June is a time for Canadians to share and learn from Indigenous stories, traditions and culture in new ways that keep us together and connected.

The Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary recognizes the importance and sacred nature of

cultural ceremonies and celebrations year round. For over two years, with COVID-19, we recognize that it has been very difficult for our Elders and most vulnerable community members.

We wish to extend our gratitude to all the essential workers, community outreach teams, and funders who collectively have mobilized to selflessly support the most vulnerable.

Visit us online at www.afccalgary.org

June, 2022 Alberta Native News



July 18 - 21

Ministikwan Lake Cree Nation 1st Annual Pow Wow Indigenous Reconciliation Days, Ministikwan, SK. 780-870-6842

July 19 - 21 Mistawasis Nêhiyawak Traditional Pow Wow, Leask, SK. 306-466-4800

July 21 - 24 Back to Batoche Metis Days, Batoche, SK. 306-343-8285

July 22 - 24

Mosquito Grizzly Bear's Head Lean Man First Nation, S. of North Battleford on Hwy 4, SK. 306-490-8454

Peepeekisis Traditional Pow Wow, Balcarres, SK. 306-334-2573

July 22 - 31

K-Days Indigenous Experience, Edmonton, AB.

July 29 - 31

41st Annual Kamloopa Powwow, Kamploops, BC. 250-828-9782

July 29 - Aug 1

Canadian Native Fastball Championships, Prince George, BC 250-649-6589

Aug 2 - 4

Thundering Hills Pow Wow, Maple Creek, SK.

www.timothymohan.com

August 5 - 7

Frog Lake First Nations Pow Wow, Frog Lake AB. 780-614-1132

August 6 & 7

Muskaday First Nations Traditional Pow Wow, Muskaday First Nation, SK. 306-960-9682

Aug 10 & 11 Pasqua FN#79 Traditional Pow wow, Asha Beach, SK. 306-331-4446

Aug 12 - 14 Little Red River Traditional Pow Wow, Little Red, SK. 306-930-7844

Samson Cree Nation Celebrations and Powwow, Bear Park Ermineskin, Maskwacis, AB. 780-585-3517

Waterhen Lake First Nation Pow Wow, Waterhen Lake, SK. 306-236-6717

Aug 15 - 19 FSIN Traditional Healing Gathering, Fort Qu-Appelle, SK. 306-665-1215

Aug 16 - 18

Cowessess First Nation Traditional Powwow, Cowessess, SK. 306-696-7905

BATC Traditional Pow-Wow, North Battleford, SK. 306-446-1400

Aug 19 - 21

Piapot First Nation Pow Wow, Piapot First Nation, SK. 306-781-4848

Big River Residential & Day School Survivors Commemorative Pow Wow, Big River First Nation, SK. www.bigriverfirstnation.ca

Aug 26 - 28

Ochapowace Nation Traditional Powwow Celebration, Ochapowace, SK. 306-696-2425

Celebration of Culture & Powwow 2022, Pine Lake, AB. 289-684-4662

September 2 - 4 Flying Dust First Nation Traditional Powwow, Meadowlake, SK. 306-240-9553

Sept 12 - 18 Treaty No. 4 Gathering, Fort Qu'Appelle, SK. 306-332-8200

Sept 17 & 18 36th Treaty No. 4 Pow Wow, Fort Qu'Apppelle, SK. 306-332-8200

Sept 25 - 28 Transformative Reconciliation Gathering, River Cree, Enoch, AB.

October 8 & 9 47th QTS Annual Traditional Memorial Pow Wow, Quesnel, BC. 250-992-8347

FSIN Spirit of Our Nations Cultural Celebration and Powwow, SaskTel Centre, Saskatoon, SK.

Join us for Burgers and Bannock in the Park as we come together to celebrate

National Indigenous Peoples Day.

Location Shell Place field, MacDonald Island Park

Date and Time June 21, 2022, from 12 noon to 2 p.m.

www.rmwb.ca 🛛 🚯 😰 RMWoodbuffalo







REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

Powwow dancer reclaims her heritage through traditional dance

By Chevi Rabbit, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Nyla Carpentier is a first-generation powwow dancer who is reclaiming her heritage in powwow and passing it down to her family.

Carpentier is Tahltan, Kaska, French, and Scottish. She grew up in Ottawa, ON, and currently lives in North Vancouver, BC, with her fiancé Matt and baby daughter, Theodora.

Carpentier's powwow style is both fancy shawl and jingle.

She travelled to Tsuut'ina First Nation and said she felt very welcomed by the community and encourages others to attend their yearly powwow,

"Tsuut'ina First Nation has great food and so many good specials. My family felt very welcomed," said Carpentier

She said the Fancy Shawl is a high-energy dance with footwork and spins and is one of the newer contemporary dance styles in the powwow circle.

According to some, Fancy Shawl Dance, the most modern ladies' dance style, originated in the 1950s and 1960s as a tourist and competition dance style. The Fancy Shawl Dancer is traditionally said to mimic a colorful butterfly as it floats over a grassy, wildflower spotted meadow.

"Jingle Dress originated from the Ojibway people, known as the Healing Dance," said Carpentier. "The dancer wears a dress that has rolled metal cones. I think they sound like rain when you walk or dance. I've beaded my outfit, made two shawls, attempted to make a dress, and done appliqué work." "I'm not much of a sewer," she added.

"What I love about powwow culture is that it's rooted in communities and connecting. People that you meet and dance with become your family."

"I have many shawl sisters now," said Carpentier, "and when I visit certain places, there are people that I consider family...You also learn to help one another and support new dancers. [You] travel together; take turns watching the kids and share food."

Carpentier said a powwow family is the people you get to hang out with when you visit a new place or a familiar powwow.

"I'm the first powwow dancer in my family; I started dancing at the Odawa Powwow when I was three. My Mom volunteered there helping out her friend who helped start the powwow," said Carpentier.

"I was drawn to it immediately and wanted to dance. My Mom is white, so she asked her friends in the circle what to do. Then she passed those teachings to me; those friends also took me under their wing and encouraged me to dance. So now, I'm teaching my baby daughter and my niece about it."

"I'm forever grateful to those Powwow Aunties," said Carpentier.

"I think my daughter will get to travel to more powwows than I did growing up! I only went to 3-4 a year, mostly in Ontario. We never hit the trail until I was an adult."

She explained, "I got a lot of lessons! First, take care of your outfit, and it takes care of you. Learn the protocols of every powwow you visit and



Nyla, Theo, Matt and Ryleigh.

honour them. Listen to the MC. Passing down teachings is essential - learning where the root of dance comes from no matter how contemporary it looks today.

"Share what you can. Dance hard, dance proud, and dance for those who can't."

"I prepare by going over my outfits and beadwork to sees what needs to be fixed. This year after having my daughter, I have to go over each outfit and see what fits! I've ordered two new dresses to be made so I can nurse in them," said Carpentier.

She is also making new outfit pieces for her niece and eventually new beadwork for herself and her daughter

Now that the pandemic is nearly over she is grateful that the community can dance again. "I missed it, and now I have my daughter to be part of this way of life too," she concluded.

Cover artist *cont. from p* 9

"It has a lot of symbolism," she explains. Of course, her use of mixed media offers her a sense of "freedom" in that nature "has so much to offer." She often injects symbols into her images that



include petroglyphs, animals and birds, in addition to tipis, flowers and trees. She also likes to include elements of the universe - stars, planets and spirits.

She really enjoys having her art reflect her culture. "Cree culture is so rich in meaning," she states. As one example, "the tipi is important in our culture - very meaningful, a place to gather, do ceremony, it's very natural."

Desjarlais' process is eclectic, she doesn't

always preplan it. Sometimes she'll meditate on an image for a while before she gets back to it. Meanwhile, she is passionately honing her talents as she continues her journey in the world of art. She enjoys it and wants to share it with others, with the world.

To view her art, as well as the art of Maxine Noel and others, visit Bearclaw Gallery in Edmonton at 10403 124 Street or bearclawgallery.com.





Calgary-Klein Constituency

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In honour & celebration of National Indigenous Peoples Day we recognize the rich culture, heritage and valuable contributions of First Nations, Metis and Inuit people.





On National Indigenous Peoples Day, and everyday, we celebrate and honour First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples achievements, contributions and culture.

First Nations Bank of Canada Gy in O www.fnbc.ca

CDI College donates \$500K in scholarships to Indspire for Indigenous education

CDI College has partnered with national Indigenous charity Indspire, donating half a million dollars' worth of funding and awards to Indigenous students over the span of four years. The federal government will match this donation, for a total of \$1M in funding.

With a shared goal of closing the educational gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians, representatives of CDI College and Indspire celebrated the partnership at a launch event hosted at CDI College North York campus on May 16, 2022.

Indspire President and CEO Mike DeGagné shared the projection that the partnership will financially support over 100 Indigenous students over the next four years. "The creation of the CDI College awards represents an exciting opportunity for a national partnership between CDI College and Indspire as well as a new avenue toward success for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis students," said DeGagné, who spoke at the event.

"These awards ensure that Indigenous students have the financial means to succeed on their educational journeys and ultimately enter their chosen careers."

CDI College recognizes that a key step in the process towards reconciliation is the elimination of the educational gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians, as identified by the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Principles of Reconciliation.

As a part of its commitment to Truth & Reconciliation, CDI College also observes Orange Shirt Day by raising funds and awareness of the lasting effects of residential schools on Indigenous communities and culture. Anoush Kazarian, Regional Director for CDI College in Ontario, said that the new partnership with Indspire allows the CDI College community to continue to learn Indigenous from people and address an educational gap that exists.

"Alongside with the

awareness, recognition, and funds that we raise, the most important thing to me, as an educator, is the dialogue that we open up, the things we can learn from our Indigenous students, staff and community," said Kazarian.

CDI College's program offerings in the fields of teaching education, addictions recovery support for youth and families, and healthcare community services in particular have the potential to provide vital building blocks to Indigenous community health across Canada.

Prospective students can apply for the scholarship through Indspire.

CDI College offers quality educational programs at both the college and vocational training levels at 25 campuses across Canada. As a bilingual, licensed educational institution with community-based campuses, CDI College aims to enrich the communities where we live, work, and study.

Indspire is an Indigenous national charity that invests in the education of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people for the long-term benefit of these individuals, their families and communities, and Canada. With the support of its funding partners, Indspire provides financial awards, delivers programs, and shares resources so that First Nations, Inuit, and Métis students will achieve their highest potential. In 2020-2021, Indspire provided more than \$20 million through 6,245 bursaries and scholarships to First Nations, Inuit, and Métis students across Canada.



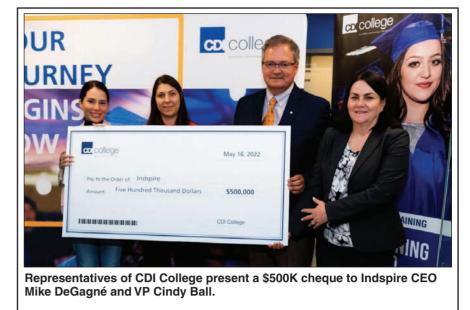
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Book Review

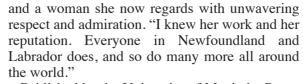
Exactly What I Said: Translating Words and Worlds Elizabeth Yeoman (Author) Published May 2022, 288 pages Paper, ISBN: 978-0-88755-273-1

Reviewed by Regan Treewater, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Professor Elizabeth Yeoman, who recently retired from her post at the Memorial University of Newfoundland, has dedicated her life to discovering new approaches to building bridges of historical and cultural understanding. Her newest project is an extension of an earlier undertaking proudly supported by NL Intangible Heritage, ArtsNL, the Smallwood Foundation, The Memorial University of Newfoundland's Canada Research Chair in Aboriginal Studies, and the prestigious Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

Yeoman describes the resulting book, *Exactly* What I Said: Translating Words and Worlds (2022), by saying: "It is a firsthand account of Innu history by an Innu woman who was an inspiring leader through perhaps the most tumultuous and challenging times her people had ever known." The woman to whom Yeoman refers is Tshaukuesh who "had been leading this annual week-long walk in Innusi - Innu territory - since the 1990s as a way of demonstrating that this is Innu land, and the Innu are still here, still using it."

The text chronicles the discoveries Yeoman made as she engaged with the land being reintroduced to her, "I had not walked it, but I knew it when I saw it. The map-making and storytelling had etched into my memory," and the meaningful relationship forged between herself



Published by the University of Manitoba Press, Exactly What I Said: Translating Words and Worlds, is a highly personal and intimate approach to broaching discussions around cultural understanding and traditional practices. The author makes every effort to maintain the

authenticity of Tshaukuesh's teachings, and factual representation of customs and traditions. Even the snowshoe image that appears as cover art for the book was selected with exceeding care, and in collaboration with Tshaukuesh.

Yeoman, a researcher of pedagogy, explores topics like linguistic code-switching and tries to reimagine the boundaries of language and "Students communication: studying other literatures are almost always required to learn the languages and to study them in the original. Why would literary work in Indigenous languages not be taught in the same way?"

every word, Yeoman explores some of the painful realities associated with tangible memory, physical place, and cultural presence. The author's depth of connection with the subject and the topics outlined in her book result in a nuanced portrayal of the Innu world and way of life. Although Yeoman approaches more

scholarly discussions in her text, the format of her book is less conventional, and cannot be consumed as one might read an academic publication. Rather, Yeoman's work is a mosaic of observational vignettes, narrated instances of cultural immersion, scholarly pontifications, and excerpts of translated portions of Tshaukuesh's own writing punctuated by selected captioned photographs.

Yeoman observes that "a gap can be a creative space," and perhaps it is this innovative approach to examining cultural translation and communicative negotiation that makes her

book stand out. Yeoman herself acknowledges that a "standardized" approach might be more easily accessed by larger audiences but is adamant that the substance and authenticity of the valuable content would be compromised.

Elizabeth Yeoman's publication is one that could resonate with diverse audiences: academics, historians, cultural anthropologists, and anyone eager to know more about the stories and practices of the traditional lands. It is not a classic 'page turner,' but this is not meant as a criticism, but as a testament to the work's depth. Yeoman has an entire chapter dedicated to listening. This is a text that demands

With dignity and love evident in her reflection and consideration. It is less that the reader must read the text, and more that they must listen to what is being shared. "Language is a vast territory. It is one of those necessary invisible latitudes of physical territories that we know," she writes.

This work goes beyond documenting and surpasses any conventional approach to scholarly discourse. Audiences who come to the book with open minds and open hearts will find the contents of Exactly What I Said: Translating Words and Worlds feeling enriched and intellectually challenged.



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Translating Words and Worlds

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Indigenous-themed playground opens in YYC

By Jeremy Appel, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

A recently-opened playground at St. Kateri Tekakwitha School will give children in northeast Calgary the ability to play while learning about Indigenous cultures.

The playground includes an eagle climbing wall, a dream catcher-shaped climbing structure, an Indigenous "I Spy" with buffalos, a teepee and a wolf, among other activities.

Additionally, there's an outdoor classroom with four tables representing the four sacred medicines — tobacco, sage, cedar and sweetgrass — and a sharing circle. The purpose is for children to learn more about the cultures of the Siksikaitsitapi, Siksika, Kainai, Piikani, Amskappi Pikun and the Iyarhe Stoney Nations (Bearspaw, Chiniki and Wesley), and Métis Nation Region 3.

"We really wanted to incorporate as many learning opportunities and just educate people here on Treaty Seven about things that are here, that they may hear words or not know what things are," explained Stacey Dyck, the Calgary Catholic School Division's learning commons librarian and the St. Tekawitha School Education Society's president.

The school had been without a playground for the past five years. It was installed in August 2021 by volunteers, and was entirely finished and blessed by District Elder Wanda First Rider at a smudge ceremony on May 27. First Rider was joined by Father Adrian Martins, who blessed the playground with holy water in accordance with Catholic tradition.

"We tried to be in line with Calgary Catholic values as well as Indigenous values," Dyck said.

St. Kateri Tekakwitha principal Sandy

Solyom told *Alberta Native News* the playground is a product of the school board's commitment to reconciliation.

"All of our gather-ings are led with the land acknowledgment, and specifically at this school, we lead with our prayer for St. Kateri that we say each and every day," he said.

St. Kateri is an Algonquin saint, demonstrating the school's dual Catholic and Indigenous identity, Solyom added. This makes the school an appropriate place to "create an anchor" for reconciliation, he said.

The playground is open to everyone,

<image>

Indigenous-themed playground equipment at St. Kateri Tekakwitha School in Calgary.

particularly those in the nearby Abbeydale and Forest Lawn neighbourhoods.

"We want people to know that this space is here to be used," said Dyck. "I would love nothing more than to see a group of people gathering on the sharing circle and having a conversation, a program using it in a good way, or a family having a birthday party on the picnic area."

The playground and classroom were funded through a \$125,000 provincial grant and \$25,000 from the Parks Foundation of Calgary, with the rest composed of smaller donations from community members.

Hate Crime cont. from p 6

defence and Crown.

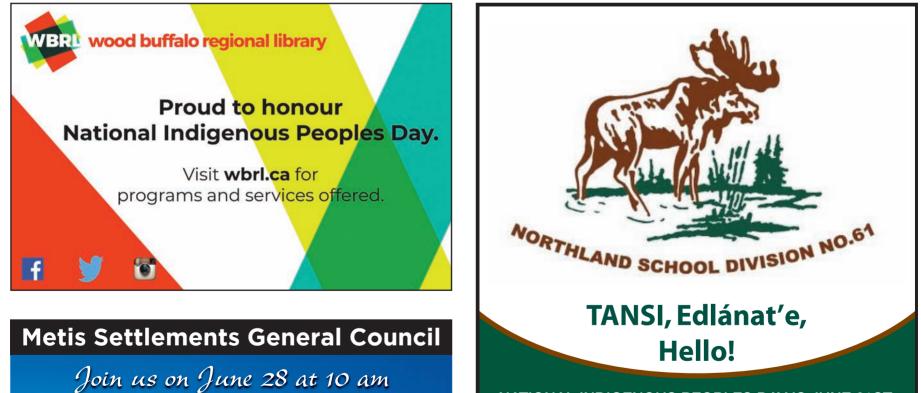
The Crown argued Sansom and Cardinal had done nothing wrong and that the Bilodeaus had taken the law into their own hands.

Court heard that Roger and his teenage son Joseph chased Sansom and Cardinal down seven

km of rural road, at one point reaching speeds of 152 km/h, after spotting the Metis hunters' truck in their driveway and assuming they were thieves.

During the chase, Roger called Anthony and told him to bring a gun. Once the two vehicles were stopped, Anthony Bilodeau arrived, shooting and killing Sansom and Cardinal before destroying the firearm and dumping it. Anthony's lawyer Brian Beresh said he believed there are "strong grounds" for an appeal of the verdict.

"This was not a race-motivated situation," Beresh said. "We think that this was a misunderstanding in rural Alberta, it wasn't about vigilantism at all." -



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Thank you, Hai, Hai, Masi Cho.

Long Covid has affected thousands

By Xavier Kataquapit

Summer has finally arrived and the warm weather has us all excited and out and about. We have all endured a difficult winter and in fact a challenging past three years of the Covid19 pandemic. We deserve to have a great summer.

The fact is that Covid19 is still alive and a threat to us. In Ontario the government is reporting that as of today June 7, 2022 526 people are in hospital with Covid19 and 114 in intensive care. In terms of death, if you are vaccinated with three doses you are generally safe from getting very ill if you get Covid19 or ending up in the hospital and dying. If you are not vaccinated there is more risk you could get very sick, end up in the hospital and perhaps die.

The good news is that Covid19 deaths mostly have to do with those over 80 years of age with 24,671 passing away in Canada as of the end of May 2022. To put things into perspective 8,765 people aged 70 to 79 passed away, 4,415 aged 60 to 69 died and 1,881 50 to 59 succumbed. There were 671 deaths in the age group 40 to 49, 316 died aged 30 to 39, 130 died ages 20 to 29, 18 in the age group 12 to 19 and 32 in those 6 to 11 years of age.

For anyone who was fully vaccinated and had any of the Covid19 variants, it seems their sickness was less severe, they were less likely to be hospitalized and less chance of deaths. For those who were not vaccinated the outcomes were more severe. It is understood that many people ended up with Omicron variants because of how contagious these variants were. However, many who ended up with Omicron hardly felt any symptoms.

I had one of the Omicron variants and I was sick for a week or more and then I coughed for more than a month. A couple of months later I developed symptoms again and coughed for a few more weeks. I wondered what on earth was going on and then I discovered a condition that is affecting thousands of people who had gone through Covid19. It is referred to as Long Covid.

I know so many people who are still feeling unwell and not back to their good health since having Omicron. They are complaining about brain fog, exhaustion, fatigue, a sore chest or back, sore throat, headaches and being short of breath on doing anything physical. Through recent study I have discovered that although there is a lot of research going on to discover just how wide spread Long Covid is there is some thought that it might affect about a third of the population who experienced Covid19. It seems that the more severe cases are in those who were not vaccinated however many people who were vaccinated and did not have severe symptoms are still experiencing Long Covid. Groups like the Long Covid Canada support group is assisting those who are experiencing this condition. People with severe cases have found they can not work, have trouble returning to a normal productive life and can not support family and friends as they did in the past.

Recent research points to the fact that people who had been infected with the virus experienced a reduction in grey matter and a greater cognitive decline compared with people who had not contracted Covid19. How's that for scary? There is so much we do not know about Covid19 and how it has affected those who ended up with it but research is going on all over the world now so we should know more soon. In the meantime the best way not to end up with Long Covid is not to get Covid19. So it is a good idea to get vaccinated and take preventative measures to protect yourself. Although everyone including our governments are acting like Covid19 has ended, the fact is that this is not true and the

evidence is that this virus is still circulating and making people sick. The good news is that if you are not in the older age category you probably won't end up in the hospital, in intensive care or die, however you could end up quite sick and then go on to develop Long Covid which could affect you for many years.

So the best idea is to keep on wearing a mask in public when you are in a building with many people, wash your hands often and do your best to stay away from others who seem to be sick. It is very difficult for doctors to diagnose long term

to diagnose long term Covid and there are no known treatments currently so

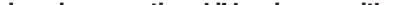
it is very much every person for themselves at this point.

We can still have a great summer but we do have to be conscious that we need to be careful.

For more columns by Xavier Kataquapit visit underthenorthernsky.com.

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Ottawa rights a wrong

By Jake Cardinal, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

On June 2, 2022 Prime Minister Justin Trudeau joined Siksika Chief, Ouray Crowfoot, for a ceremony honouring the signing of a \$1.3 billion decades-old land claim settlement.

The 1910 surrender claim settlement — which is one of the largest agreements of its kind reached in Canada — aims to correct a historical injustice: when Canada broke its Treaty 7 promise to the Blackfoot Nation and wrongfully took almost half of Siksika's reserve land.

The country took approximately 115,000 acres from the reserve — including some of the most productive agricultural and mineral-rich lands to sell to settlers.

According to the office of the Prime Minister, the settlement awarded the Nation financial compensation from the federal government to resolve several outstanding land claims and their related litigation; such as, longstanding claims related to the Bow River Irrigation District, the Canadian Pacific Railway Claim, and other landbased historical grievances.

Additionally, under the settlement, Siksika can

Business Link cont. from p 5

as a Band Council Resolution (BCR). You can check with your Band or Economic Development office on this.

There is much work to be done when making the decision to start a business and Business Link can help. We provide training programs to help entrepreneurs prepare and write their business plans, like the Indigenous Business Planning Series, a free six-session program. We also support individuals preparing to start an independent contractor business. Both of these programs have free planning workbooks that acquire over time up to 115,000 acres of land to add to their reserve land base on a willingseller/willing-buyer basis.

"Today, we right a past wrong committed by the Government of Canada. This agreement is the culmination of over 60 years of relentless advocacy and leadership by Siksika Nation, whose people have fought to right this historic wrong," said Trudeau.

"It is also an opportunity to look forward as we build a better future together – one that is based on nation-to-nation dialogue, partnership, and respect," he concluded.

The 1910 land claim is one of the many settlements the government of Canada has reached with First Nations across the country.

To date, Canada has settled over 590 specific claims through negotiated settlements with First Nations across the country. This includes over 180 claims settled through negotiations since 2016.

Chief Crowfoot said of the settlement, "Settling this case, which dates back to 1910, is long

coincide with the training. You can find out when we're hosting these next on our website.

Another way to showcase your business is through the Indigenous Made campaign, which promotes and highlights Indigenous businesses in Alberta. Entrepreneurs can download and display their Indigenous Made decal to help bring awareness to their products and services, show support for other companies, and build a unique business community.

We also work with other organizations to build customized workshops and training programs. Our Indigenous Services team collaborates with our partners to ensure we are creating an environment that is inclusive for all of our clients. Business Link recognizes the importance of the Indigenous community to the Alberta economy by having the land acknowledgement on our website, as well as ensuring it is a part of all events and meetings in our organization. In addition, by having a specialized Indigenous Services team we can meet the unique needs of our Indigenous clients and extend our resources by working with partners in the entrepreneurial ecosystem. This way, we can be a one-stop destination to provide the most up-to-date and beneficial information to our clients. Our priority is helping entrepreneurs start, run and thrive.

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overdue for the People of Siksika Nation."

"I want to make that clear: Canada is not giving \$1.3 billion to Siksika. Canada is righting a wrong committed over a century ago when Canada illegally took 115,000 acres of lands provided to Siksika along with other illegal acts," he said.

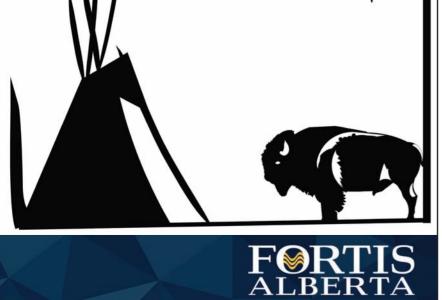
"Now that this case has been settled, the compensation from the settlement can assist Siksika to develop true financial sovereignty and provide more opportunities for our People."

The settlement is definitely a hard-fought victory for the Nation, as the land claim was initially filed by in 1960 — over 60 years ago.

However, it wasn't until 2008 that negotiators initiated a settlement. Then, 61 years after the original file, the Nation approved the settlement with a community vote in December 2021.

"This case was filed in 1960 under Chief Clarence McHugh and many leaderships and technicians have worked tirelessly over several decades to see this day come to fruition," said Crowfoot.

"I want to take the time to share my gratitude for the leaders that came before us and other ancestors who help build the foundation we stand upon today," he concluded.





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AU honours cont. from p 10

Education as the new buffalo

Weasel Fat wasn't left with a good impression of school, but he said his parents always told him how important education would be in his life. In the same way that the buffalo on the prairies provided the Blackfoot People with everything they needed, education could now provide that.

Although the description of education as "the new buffalo" was not unique to Blackfoot culture, his family always spoke about the importance of getting an education to be able to make a good living.

"They were always telling us to get an education; you'll get a good job. That's all I heard from my parents, because they went to school too," he said.

His parents had not been able to attend college or university themselves, but he said he saw how they were able to support themselves with skills they had learned - agriculture in his father's case, and homemaking in his mother's. His parents had known education could help them provide for themselves, and so he knew it could do the same for him.

Discovering his role as an educator

Weasel Fat completed an agricultural technology program at Lethbridge College in the 1970s, and did fairly well, which made him realize post-secondary education was something he could do successfully. In the following 17 years when he worked in the agricultural industry, he said he found he liked teaching others, whether about farming techniques, safety requirements, or equipment operations.

When he decided to go to university, he chose to pursue a bachelor of education because he wanted to continue teaching. After completing his degree from the University of Calgary, he worked as a substitute teacher for a few years. In 1994, he joined Red Crow Community College in Stand Off, Alta., to help develop and teach its adult literacy program. He won the Teacher of the Year award at Red Crow College in 1995.

The college's mandate is adult education in the community, and in those early days that mostly meant adult literacy and academic upgrading. The college would offer programs semi-regularly, when there was enough demand to run particular programs.

Returning to school to advance his career

Weasel Fat said he enjoyed the work he was doing, but in order to move into a leadership position at the college as the adult education coordinator—a role he described as roughly equivalent to that of a school principal—he needed a master's degree.

He earned a master of education in 1997 from Gonzaga University, based in Spokane, Wash., because that program was hosted at the Red Crow campus. That experience helped to underscore the need not just for education to be accessible to people in their own communities, but also the need to acknowledge the value of Traditional Blackfoot Knowledge and culture within a formal education system.

"We were always seen as simple people wandering aimlessly in the country. But that isn't the case," he said. "We had a purpose in life, and we know that. And we were able to live in an extreme environment because we knew how to live off the land."

He added the Blackfoot people had their own education system, their own health-care system, their own economy, and trade with other tribes. They had their own recreation, including Traditional Blackfoot games. They had their own entertainment in the form of pow-wows, re-enactments of historical events, and re-enactments of tribal wars.

After 5 years as the adult education coordinator, when Red Crow Community College began offering more certificates, diplomas, and degree options, Weasel Fat was appointed as the college's first VP of academics in 2002.

He held that role for many years, while also promoting Traditional Blackfoot Knowledge at University of Lethbridge, as coordinator of the university's first Niitsitapi teacher education program, and later as coordinator of that university's First Nation, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI) master of education program.

"With those two programs, the idea was to promote Blackfoot culture in academic programs," he said.

Leadership at Red Crow Community College

Since being appointed Red Crow Community College president in 2013, Weasel Fat has continued to promote the role of Traditional Blackfoot Knowledge within the college, and in turn the role of the college within the Blackfoot community.

This included work to forge partnerships with





other post-secondary institutions via transfercredit programs, as well as work to more formally recognize the Knowledge held by Blackfoot Elders in the community by awarding them doctoral designations.

The college faced a significant challenge in 2015 when its building, a former residential school, burned down. The Blood Tribe provided a former elementary school building to the college to continue its operations, and the college leadership's work to develop a new campus took on a greater sense of urgency.

"I want to give credit to the Blood Tribe leadership, chief and council," he said. "They committed to funding half of the building costs, after surveys of community members showed overwhelming support for a new building. That helped us get matching grants from the federal government."

That work is nearing fruition. After years of planning and advocacy Weasel Fat said the new campus will accommodate up to 900 students when it opens in fall 2022.

The future of Indigenous education

The new building will present further opportunities for academic programming in the community, such as offering more transfer-credit options where the partner institution delivers the course at Red Crow's physical facility something Weasel Fat said will help break down barriers for Blackfoot members to access and complete post-secondary education.

"I'd like to make sure there's a higher rate of completion and graduation for the Red Crow students who are in our community," he said. "We could improve on that just by having more postsecondary programs offered on site."

He said the college has also seen an increase in retention and graduation rates because students have been able to really claim their Blackfoot identity, increasing their knowledge of Blackfoot culture, meeting the challenges and moving forward in their academic lives. Having Blackfoot Elders in the college has been invaluable in helping students achieve this.

Weasel Fat acknowledges his role at Red Crow won't last forever, but said he expects to continue working with the college for as long as he is able in an advisory role, supporting educators and students alike in understanding the role Traditional Blackfoot Knowledge can have in their post-secondary experience.

An individual's guide when interacting with police

"We have really expanded our cultural programming, because we know that once our students reconnect, or gain a better understanding of Blackfoot culture, that really moves them forward," he said. "They can take on any challenges."

Roger Reid, MLA Livingstone-Macleod Best wishes to everyone for a Happy National Indigenous Peoples Day! Constituency Office 618 Centre Street SE, High River, AB Ph: 825.212.2000 Satellite Office 1300 Hewetson Ave., Pincher Creek, AB Ph: 403.904.8110 livingstone.macleod@assembly.ab.ca

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Indigenous veterans receive honours

By Glenn Miller

The Last Post Fund recently installed four military style markers for veterans on the Siksika Nation. This came through their Indigenous Veterans Initiative which honours veterans who have no permanent stone, by erecting a military style marker, that includes a traditional name inscription on the marker.

The last Siksika WW2 veteran was Mark Wolfleg who served with the Edmonton 49th Light Infantry Regiment during World War Two.



Carolyn McLennan with Annie Dotsie and Joan Bartlett.

Susan Aglukark cont. from p 11

hopefully want to bring back their skills and talents to their home. "They need to be anchored to an identity and some of those connections are in our ancestors and their stories and we have a duty and a responsibility to engage our children and youth in the process of connecting with and helping them write those stories,' she commented.

"The issue is not that we want to not be there. We need to change the environment of crisis. So that their generation, and the generations to follow are emotionally invested in the community. They can build great, healthy lives in our community...It starts with that work to reconnect to healthy emotions."

Aglukark works to engage youth through performing and visual arts in addition to the Messy Book Program. "For example, we will have an Inuit artist who works with mixed-media,

He served for an additional number of years after the war with the Kings Own Calgary Regiment. His son Clarence also served in the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery and has been involved with the number of military



the RCN. On hand were Glenn Miller, Verdun Hind Bull-Morning Owl, Newton Bullshields, Lambert Fox and Paul Brundige.

and commemoration ceremonies events. A ceremony will take place on June 20 at Little Walker cemetery at 3:30 pm.

The Last Post Fund Indigenous works with local Indigenous researchers to locate and identify unmarked veteran graves. Marianne Wolfleg has taken on this role for the Siksika Nation and continues to work with families of veterans. If you know of a veteran in an unmarked grave you can contact the Last Post Fund Indigenous Veterans Initiative Project Coordinator Maria Trujillo at 1 800 465 7113 ext 222 or to learn more of the Indigenous Veterans

Initiative visit their website www.lastpostfund.ca.

Blood Tribe Veterans Patrick Morning Owl and Carolynn McLellan were honoured to receive Quilts of Valor from volunteer Joan Bartlett. Able Seaman Patrick Morning Owl served on HMCS Quapelle for three years with the Royal Canadian Navy. McLellan served with the 18th Regiment RCA.

A blessing and prayer was given by Lambert Fox and an honour song was performed by President of the Headdress Society Newton Bullshields. The ceremony was held at the Lethbridge General Stewart Branch No.4.

and is trained in 'cultural cognizance' and she will be sent to a partner community, once a month for a week at a time... Our guest artists will share their healing stories and their process behind their art...These are professional artists sharing their stories. We also engage performers, singersongwriters, musicians, poets, dancers, actors, drama teachers. We train them in 'cultural cognizance,' and they are also deployed to these communities."

This after-school program like no other provides a space of acceptance, healing, and growth. Youth are empowered and supported as they explore their cultural identities. The Arctic Rose Foundation is also investigating ways to transpose this model onto an urban backdrop. "Our children and youth are strong and resilient, they still believe very strongly in their culture, in Inuit or Indigenous culture, and they are still fighting every day to find their place."

When asked what the future holds for her artistic undertakings and philanthropic endeavors, Aglukark responded: "I don't set about accomplishing to accomplish. I'm just living my life. Here is a need. Do we have the experience, do we have the pieces to help fill that need or to help guide the process? Let's do it – that is how we respond. I'm really just living my best life possible. We're out there and we are going to continue to record music and take gigs and sing for as long as we can. We do it because we know that we are very fortunate to be living the life we're living, we have a duty," she explained.

Captivating in voice and message - musically and humanitarianly - Susan Aglukark exudes strength above all else: "The conversations around reconciliation have provided an opportunity to change the narrative. The Indigenous people in Canada come from highly organized societies built on knowledge, process, and organization - without which none of us would have survived." Standing as a pilar of her community, Aglukark is committed to living the change she dreams of for the world around her.





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Adrian LaChance: Heart and soul

By Terry Lusty, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

A good many people in Native country know him as the man behind the mic at round dances and community events. He's also known as an educator/presentor at schools and conferences where he shares his knowledge of Native history, culture and traditions.

And while his popularity grows in those areas, Adrian LaChance is widely renowned as a powwow dancer. He stands out as a dancer in any powwow arena. He's a bold, skilled and wonderful traditional dancer who originally hails from Saskatchewan and then transplanted to Edmonton.

LaChance stands out loud and clear in powwow circles. His colourful, well-crafted regalia is an attraction in itself and he is often the centre of attention for visiting photographers and videographers for his magnificent presence.

Be that as it may, it's a wonder that an individual who grew up as he did, was able to overcome so many negatives handed to him in life, and emerge as an accomplished cultural individual, and also a kind person who walks that precious Red Road and gives so much of himself to and for the good of the community. But that's Adrian - a good person, a kind man, and an upstanding role model for so many of Native country's youth to appreciate and emulate. He sets a wonderful example for not only the youth, but adults as well.

The teachings that he shares with the non-Native community is commendable and so important given the times we live in. In this present era of controversy, Adrian shares his wisdom and knowledge with the non-Indigenous community so they can better understand, appreciate, accept and respect Native people, including their lifestyles, culture and protocols. LaChance's early years were in a cultural vacuum. While being raised in group homes, he was one of many Indigenous children who were frequently subjected to damning and put-downs. He was taught that Native culture was akin to "devil worshipping."

When people are told something repeatedly, they eventually come to believe it. It becomes so ingrained. Yet despite the colonialistic concepts that attempted to "take the Indian out of the child," LaChance was able to do a complete turn-around and recapture his historical customs and traditions.

"Because of what I was told as a child in those group homes," said LaChance, "I was scared of powwow dancing and singing." He grew up deprived of learning his roots and heritage but finally, at age twenty, LaChance attended and witnessed his very first powwow.

"Once I found the Elders and dancers who shared their truth about it, I felt comfortable learning more that it was beautiful and okay."

It was those basic, simple truths that went on to set him free - free to pursue the culture he'd been denied, the culture he thirsted to know. Stolen away from him through all his tender, young life, LaChance's appetite for knowledge simply exploded. He learned more, then more, including his long-denied traditions of singing and dancing. And what a transformation that turned out to be! He went on to become not just a dancer, but the champion dancer that he is today! Add to this his abilities at drumming, singing, facilitating cultural workshops and presentations, and you have a blessed individual who is graciously doing his own thing in a truly good way. He is sharing his knowledge and his skills for the betterment of all.



Adrian LaChance - on the powwow trail.

For years now, he's been giving back, not just locally but all over the country!

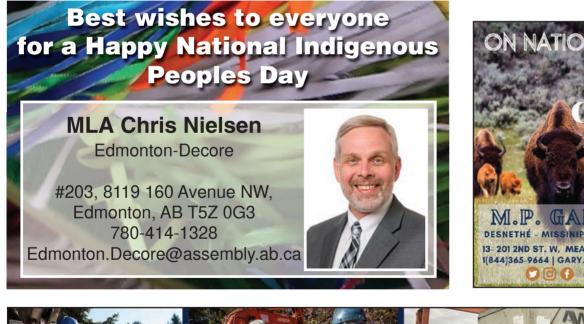
LaChance's character makes him stand out in a crowd and so does his regalia - thanks to his loving, caring grandmother, the late Eliza Running Thunder, who sewed for countless hours on end. Every stitch and every bead was filled with love.

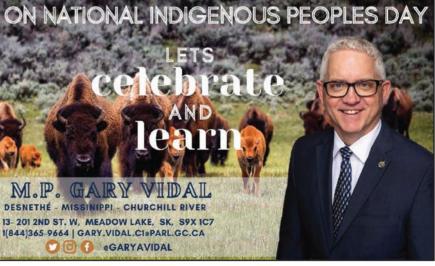
"She was gifted with so much knowledge and wisdom," LaChance explained. And, undoubtedly, she had a very positive influence on him in terms of helping others, valuing education and staying away from alcohol.

As for the powwow trail, it's like his second home. LaChance loves sharing his skills and he dances in memory of his past mentors and Elders, all of whom helped make him the good person he is today.

"I honour them each time I dance," he states matter-of-factly.

On the powwow circuit, he states, it's a "beautiful energy the people are so nice and friendly. It gives my heart much joy and hope that we can overcome anything."





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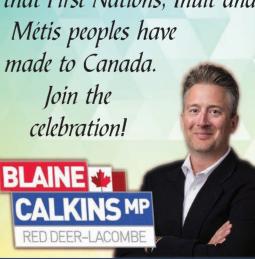
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212 confirmed graves of children at Saddle Lake Cree Nation Residential School

By Jake Cardinal, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

WARNING: the following story deals with graphic imagery and is triggering to some readers.

Last month, the Acimowin Opaspiw Society (AOS) — a Saddle Lake-based, survivor-led non-profit organization leading the investigation into the Blue Quills Residential School — announced they have confirmed that at least 212 children were buried in unmarked graves during the school's operations.

The investigation team said they confirmed the student burials in confidential records. Due to issues of privacy, the Society has said that they would like to keep their source undisclosed as the investigation is on-going and extremely delicate.

At this stage in the investigation however, it is near impossible to determine how many children died and where they were placed to rest. This is due to the long and complicated history of the Blue Quills Indian Residential School — and the general lack of record-keeping seen so consistently in the Residential School system.

To be more precise: the first iteration of the Residential School operated from 1862 to 1898 in Lac La Biche, Alberta; it then re-located to Saddle Lake Cree Nation, where it operated between 1898 to 1931; before finally settling just outside of St. Paul, Alberta — where it still stands today.

Currently, the society only has access to burial records from 1898 to 1931, which is when the Saddle Lake site — previously named the *Sacred Heart Indian Residential School* — was opera-tional. The Saddle Lake site, has no locational relationship to the current Blue Quills University.

"It was one of the most horrific residential schools in Canada," said Eric J. Large, lead AOS investigator. "The

amount of missing children is extensive... The institution was strife with violence, illness, starvation, abuse and death."

"It can be safely stated that in our community of 12,000 people, each family has had four to five children who went missing from this institution," he continued.

The remnants of the Saddle Lake site are so extensive that grave diggers kept uncovering

child-sized remains when digging graves for recently deceased band members. This is because the Saddle Lake site eventually became the Nation's community cemetery - and it is still currently being used today.

With regards to the accidental excavations, Saddle Lake Councillor Jason Whiskeyjack is one of the main witnesses due to his work as a parttime grave-digger.

"I try to find a way to block it out of my mind," he said. "None of these skeletal remains were in

> caskets. None of the graves had markings of any sort, such as cross of head stones. All the skeletal remains were the size of young children."

> Furthermore, the Society has said that there was also an accidental excavation of a mass grave located in the Sacred Heart site. This mass grave consisted of multiple child-sized skeletons that were wrapped in white cloth.

> This means that not only were individual graves being

found accidentally, but a separate mass grave was also discovered.

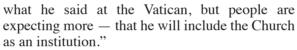
The Society believes the mass grave is made up of students from the Sacred Heart Residential School. They said that at one point, there was a massive outbreak of typhoid fever that caused the entire student population to perish, and that those in the mass grave are most likely those children.

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three sites for those various reasons, seeing how we could have a meaningful impact within a very limited scope. But that places on all of us a responsibility to make sure those venues, once chosen, still are going to have a national impact."

Governor General Mary Simon however, does not believe the visit will culminate in any concrete action, such as: issues of compensation, unclassified documents, or extradition and criminal charges for main abusers.

Simon, the first Indigenous Governor General in Canada's entire history, told *The Current* in an interview, "I suspect that it's going to be similar to



"I don't know if that will happen or not ... I'm just talking about some of the expectations that I've heard from some of the Indigenous leaders."

While she believes that institutional apologies are important for the healing process, Simon says,

"But it can't just be words, it has to be followed with action."

Meanwhile many Indigenous Nations have been accepting of the visit, with statements coming from Grand Chief George Arcand Jr., the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, and the Metis National Council's Cassidy Caron.

"We hope that the Vatican will work closely with us in the spirit of reconciliation to ensure that there is adequate resourcing for any and all survivors who wish to attend," Caron said in a statement.







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