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# Miyowatisiwin Camp Inspire gives participants a taste of firefighting

By Kinnukana, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Miyowatisiwin Camp Inspire took place from June 2-4, 2023, at the Edmonton Fire Rescue Services' Poundmaker Firefighter Training Centre in Edmonton, Alberta. This free inaugural, three-day interactive camp promotes firefighting as a viable and rewarding career for Indigenous Peoples of all backgrounds and genders.

The camp is a partnership between the City of Edmonton and Enoch Cree Nation. Enoch Cree Nation gifted the City of Edmonton with the camp's Cree name, *Miyowatisiwin* Camp Inspire. *Miyowatisiwin* means "being of good character" and embodies the traditional values of Indigenous Peoples, which are based on respect, love, humility, courage, truth, wisdom, and bravery. *Miyowatisiwin* is reflective of what Fire Services looks for in the characteristics of a firefighter.

Fire Chief Matthew Stamp of Enoch Fire Service said, "We have been working with Edmonton Parkland County for quite a few years now and we have great relations with them. We just signed an agreement in the new year. It is a two-way agreement, so Enoch Cree Nation assists the county with Fire Services too when needed. Enoch Cree Nation Fire Services has grown a lot over the years and there is lots of opportunity for work."

The Miyowatisiwin Camp Inspire for Indigenous Peoples is taking place for the first time this year and the program leaders hope that it inspires Indigenous participants to pursue employment as firefighters. The first camp began in 2020 and focused on individuals who identify as women of gender. Two female participants from the 2020 camp recently graduated from further training and are now working as

firefighters for the City of Edmonton.

The camp incorporated Indigenous culture into the program and opened and closed with a ceremony led by Elder Jesse Morin and Rocky Morin, a counsellor and spiritual leader. Over the three-day period, the camp provided participants with an introduction to the fire service in a safe, inclusive way; simulated fire ground training; skills and information that participants can take back to share within their community; and it provided an opportunity for self-growth and confidence building. Overall, the camp also provided participants with an opportunity to work alongside members of the Edmonton Fire Rescue Services, ask questions and meet others interested in the firefighting profession.

Chris Turner, Recruitment and Outreach Liaison with Edmonton Fire Services and the coordinator of the camp said, "We have seen a lot of barriers get pushed past here, some people deal with claustrophobia, some people deal with fear of heights, it seems like within the family group that the participants have developed they are definitely able to help each other and encourage each other to push past obstacles throughout the weekend."

There was a total of fourteen Indigenous participants at the camp, mostly from the Edmonton area but Grayson Lawrence flew in from British Columbia just to attend. When asked how the weekend was going so far, Grayson said, "Absolutely amazing! Breaking stuff has been my favorite thing, we got to bust down a couple of doors yesterday and bust down some drywall and crawl through it – some mission impossible stuff." Grayson also shared that he has learned that there is so much that goes on in this job and it



Edmonton Fire Chief Joe Zatylny and Enoch Fire Chief Matthew Stamp at the Miyowatisiwin Camp Inspire.



Participants Grayson Lawrence and Leah Laroc.

is not just about doing the job right, it is about caring about what you are doing. The participants also enjoyed rappelling down six stories at the Poundmaker Training Centre. Edmonton Fire Chief Joe Zatylny shared that a participant can lose at least eight pounds of water for each drill that they do.

The camp provided good hands-on experience and allowed participants to get a taste of what it is like to be a firefighter. Fire Chief Matthew Stamp concluded by saying, "It is giving hope, being inspired as First Nations, Indigenous peoples. We are always looking for that sense of belonging. This is more of an invitation to say no

*Continued on page 4*



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# Athabasca University, Red Crow Community College partner on new Indigenous programs

**Certificate programs strengthen connection with Indigenous communities, create more options for Indigenous students**

Athabasca University (AU) has launched a new partnership with Red Crow Community College (RCCC) to create more options and opportunities for Indigenous students to pursue post-secondary education.

The Alberta-based institutions are offering 2 new programs, including the Niitsitapi Business Administration (NBA) certificate through RCCC, located in Stand Off, Alta., which includes several courses delivered by AU. Graduates of that program can continue learning at AU through the Indigenous Community Economic Development and Planning (ICED) Certificate, or a bachelor's degree.

**Certificate programs developed by Indigenous scholars**

ICED is a 1-year certificate program that includes 8 courses on economics planning for Indigenous communities and organizations. The program is led and developed by Indigenous business scholars and practitioners with the intent of providing knowledge and skills that can benefit a student's home community.

"Designed with a lived Indigenous context in mind, the program provides learners with relatable and relevant content, flexibility, and supports to reduce systemic barriers to success," explained Dr. Lisa Watson, dean of the Faculty of Business. "I am continually humbled to hear learners' stories and I am excited to see the great things they will continue to accomplish going forward."

The NBA is also a 1-year certificate program with 3 of the 10 courses provided by AU. Upon completion of the certificate, students can continue their studies for another year and earn a dual institution certification—NBA diploma, through RCCC and an ICED certificate through AU. In addition, the ICED certificate can count toward AU's Bachelor of Commerce, Indigenous Business Major, which can then be used towards AU's world-renowned online MBA.

**Student hungry to learn from Indigenous Ways of Knowing**

Maxine Willows of Cardston, Alta. was planning on taking a year off from counselling to care for her grandson while her daughter pursued a teaching degree. But when she came across a

Facebook ad for the NBA certificate, she was intrigued at the possibility to continue learning.

When she started the program in September, Willows says she felt a little overwhelmed and excited by all the knowledge she was taking in. Prior to starting the program, she didn't pay much attention to things like the Indian Act or Treaties and the impact they have on the lives of Indigenous people in Canada.

"I'm seeing things differently now," Willows said. "I never really looked into the Indian Act or the Treaties. They were just there. But now when I look, I realize, that's kind of what hinders us. We still have to go through, in some sense, an Indian Agent."

Now in her second semester, Willows says she's starting to connect what she's learning with her career as counsellor. When it comes down to it, "the community needs to be there," she said.

"They need support to get started. It's the same as in counselling. People need support too. I'm connecting things together."

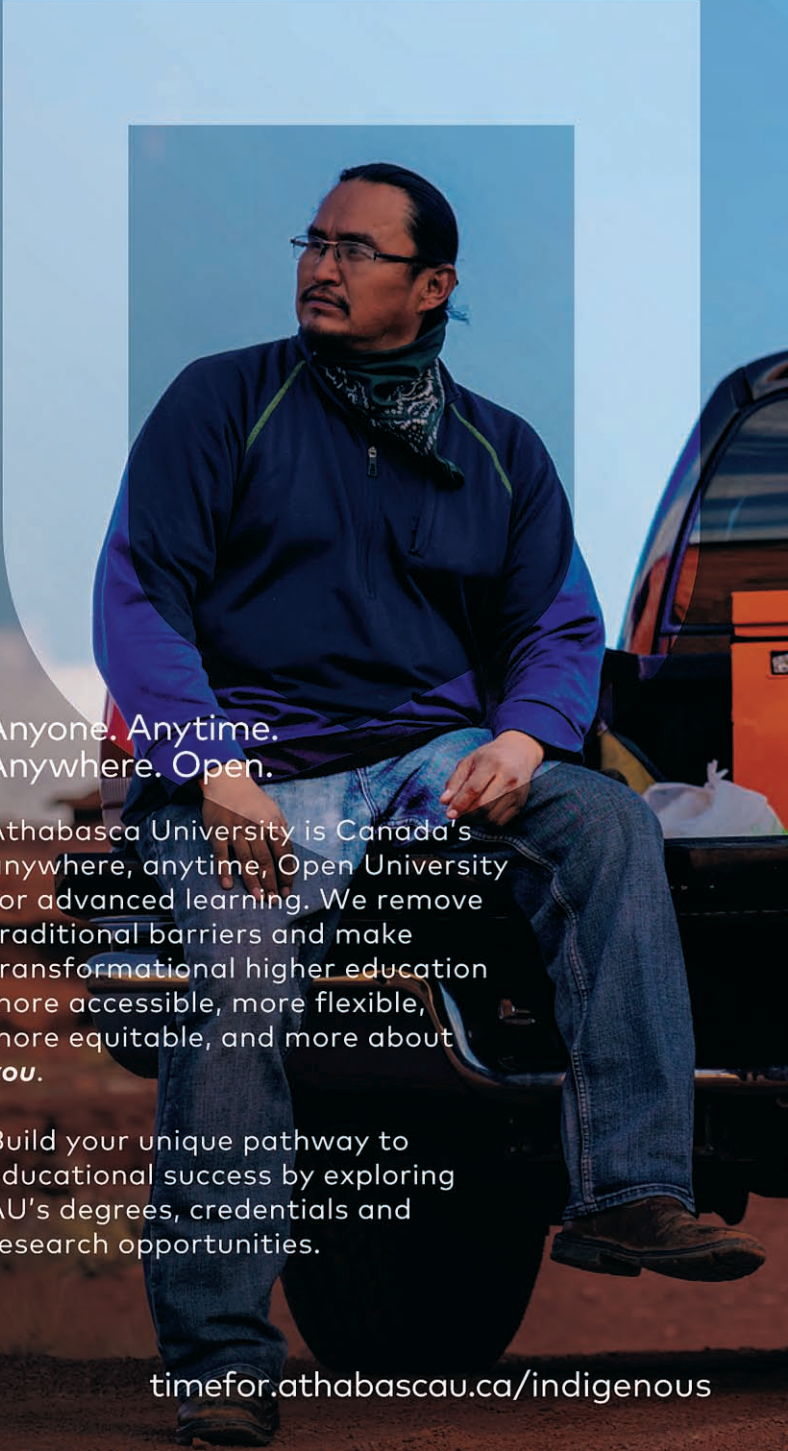
While Willows is undecided on whether she will continue on her education journey beyond the NBA certificate, one thing is for certain—as she connects with her Indigenous perspective and those of others, she is hungry to learn more. She wants to make a difference in her community.

"I'm going to go, listen a little more, and understand a little more now," she said.

Learn more about Indigenous programs offered at AU.



NBA Student Maxine Willows



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# Chantelle Redman’s story: Good Works

Chantelle Redman began working with children in 2019, when she was hired as a teacher’s assistant in *Mimiw-Sakahikan* School. As an Indigenous woman who had graduated through the provincial school system, Chantelle was aware of the lack of cultural supports available to Indigenous children and families. However, when Chantelle began her work as part of an Indigenous school led by the *Maskwacis* Education Schools Commission, she was inspired by the important role the institution played in the community. Working collaboratively with families to preserve the Cree language and empowering young students with cultural knowledge, the school prioritizes engaging in community events, supporting family involvement, and providing an exceptional educational experience.

“I noticed the good work the school was doing right in the beginning, and I thought, the best way for me to contribute to the education of these kids is to go back to school myself, and see what I could learn,” says Chantelle.

Chantelle found quick success in her studies. After first completing the Northern Lakes College Early Learning and Child Care Certificate, she wasted no time in enrolling in the Early Learning and Child Care Diploma program. With both the certificate and diploma programs completed, Chantelle went on to register in the University of Calgary’s Community-Based Bachelor of Education, a program that allows NLC students to achieve a four-year teaching degree while staying

in their own communities, by providing non-Education coursework (such as Math, Science, Early Childhood Education, Revitalization of Indigenous Languages, English Language Arts, and Social Studies) through NLC, while obtaining the required major courses through the University of Calgary. The program is facilitated through online, blended, and onsite delivery methods.

With the support of her family – many of whom had graduated from NLC programs themselves – Chantelle felt confident in her ability to succeed. She grew to know her instructors as supportive and attentive professionals and found passion in what she was learning.

“Because I’m First Nations, learning about the conditions my ancestors had went through in pre-confederation times kind of opened my eyes,” says Chantelle. “This is the history that needs to be taught. We need to know about their achievements and hardships. This is a way for growth - for the younger generation to learn about where they come from. So just learning about my culture has been rewarding.”

As well as providing historical context, Chantelle has found her education to be immediately useful in the classroom. She explains, “Incorporating what I learned into the class setting has been a big help for me, both practically and mentally. But I feel like what I’m learning has helped my students, because I’m able to provide them with even just a little bit more



than I could before.”  
In the future, Chantelle hopes to teach her own elementary classes. She is focused on continuing her career with the *Maskwacis* Education Schools Commission in order to continue supporting her community and its young families. With an attitude of acceptance and respect, Chantelle’s philosophy is one driven by viewing the youth in her care as children instead of students. “That’s what we are taught to do above anything else; build those relationships so the kids know they can trust you.”  
But equally important, stresses Chantelle, is that the safe adults in young people’s lives trust themselves. “You need to believe in yourself,” she counsels to others interested in seeking secondary education. “It is doable, and you can do it. You just have to organize your life, set your goals, and follow through. Because it’s so rewarding when you do.”

**Camp Inspire** *cont. from p 2*  
matter how small or what your race is, if you are First Nation, it is an opportunity for all, no matter

your size and no matter if you are female. It is engaging with the ones that want this as their dream and something they have a passion for but might have some doubt that they do not belong, or

it is not for them. This is an invitation to say we want you to be part of the team!”



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# Sixties Scoop survivor reclaims identity through powwow dancing

By Kinnukana, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Adam North Peigan, a member of the Piikani First Nation, began powwow dancing when he was in his early 40s. Adam, a sixties scoop survivor, did not have an opportunity to dance as a child because he was not connected to his culture and traditions while growing up in non-Indigenous foster and group homes. As an adult, Adam wanted to learn more about his First Nation culture and traditions. One way Adam began learning was by attending powwows. He was mesmerized by the diverse colours of regalia and the different dance styles. Adam was also captivated by the grand entry where all the dancers would open up the celebrations. Whenever he watched it, he felt like he wanted to participate but at the same time he did not know where to begin.

Adam decided to go to a First Nations ceremony with an Elder to ask for guidance. He made an offering of tobacco and asked his spiritual grandfathers for direction. After the ceremony, he went home, and the pieces started to fall together for him. Adam knew the power of ceremony and prayer was helping him.

It all began with a friend who gave him a bustle – a traditional part of a man’s regalia worn during a powwow. The men’s bustle is typically made of a string of eagle feathers attached to a backboard. Dancers wear a bustle, which represents the cycles of Mother Earth and the unity of everything. The eagle flies the highest and carries the prayers of the people skyward, making its feathers extremely sacred. The bustle needed some repair work and Adam had to learn how to make the repairs and fix the eagle feathers. It took three winters for Adam to fix his bustle and collect all the other pieces that he needed for his regalia. His wife Lena and her family helped to make his traditional outfit pieces by doing all the beadwork by hand.

Adam now has his regalia, a powerful form of historical dress that represents his own life, interests, and family background. When you go to a powwow you will never come across the same regalia. Every dancer has their own historical dress that is made personally for them based on their own traditions and cultural backgrounds. Before every powwow, Adam prepares his regalia by smudging all the pieces in order to cleanse them. Once he is done dancing at a powwow, he takes the time to pack the items away carefully in a safe space.

Adam danced for the first time at a powwow in British Columbia during a May long weekend. He is a traditional dancer and learned to dance by watching others at powwows. He learned the unique styles and the beats that must be followed. He recalls being nervous and scared that he did not know the protocol well enough. He was so passionate and dedicated to dance that he overcame his fears and did not let them stop him from dancing. Adam even travelled to the biggest powwow in Albuquerque, New Mexico in 2010 to dance at the *Gathering of Nations* where there were about five thousand dancers and about a hundred drum groups. He has since travelled all over North America to many powwows to dance and celebrate.

There are many different dance styles, but Adam likes to perform the traditional dance. In his culture, the dance portrays the buffalo hunt. Buffalos are important to his Nation because they provide food, clothing and shelter as the hides are used for teepees. The traditional men were scouts in the buffalo hunt and played a key role in making sure the hunt is successful.

Adam said it is hard to explain what dancing in a grand entry and powwow is like. It overwhelms you and you tune out the world. Some powwows today are becoming too commercialized and focus more on the benefits of competitions.

Adam believes that being a dancer is so gratifying and gives him back his cultural identity. He likes to dance at traditional powwows rather than the more competitive ones. The traditional powwows allow you to enjoy yourself more and have a fun time. It is a place where you can build camaraderie with other dancers and focus on the cultural celebrations. An Elder once told Adam that a powwow is a ceremony where everyone gives thanks to the creator for giving us life. Adam is grateful that powwow dancing has helped him to reclaim his loss of identity and to celebrate who he has become as a strong First Nations person.



Sixties Scoop survivor and advocate Adam North Peigan in his powwow regalia.

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Good Luck to all who enter!



# Alberta elects three Indigenous MLAs

By Jeremy Appel, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The results are in from the 2023 Alberta provincial election and there will be three Indigenous MLAs when the Legislature returns with a diminished UCP majority. There hasn't been an Indigenous person in the Legislature since 2015.

In Edmonton-Rutherford, Jodi Calahoo Stonehouse won a landslide victory for the NDP with 64.2 per cent of the vote.

In Edmonton-West Henday, the NDP's Brooks Arcand-Paul won 57 per cent of the vote.

For the UCP, Scott Sinclair won Lesser Slave Lake with 64.3 per cent of the vote.

Sinclair's riding was previously represented by Metis PC MLA Pearl Calahasen from 1989 to 2015, when she was defeated by NDP candidate Danielle Larrivee, who lost in 2019 and ran again in 2023 against Sinclair.

There hasn't been three Indigenous MLAs since 2008, when Calahasen, Frank Oberle and Mike Cardinal — all PCs who represented northern ridings — sat in the Legislature.

Sinclair's grandfather, Sam Sinclair, lost the PC nomination to Calahasen in 1989.

"It's everything kind of full circle that way," Sinclair told *Windspeaker*. "I think (my mooshum) would be very proud of me."

Sinclair expressed a desire to collaborate with his Indigenous colleagues across party lines.

"I'm a very collaborative person and I would listen to anybody on any issue, and I would certainly respectfully communicate with the other Indigenous members of the assembly," he told *Windspeaker*.

"But I don't consider myself only Indigenous

either. I consider myself a really great leader and a person who is relatable to all people in my region. I look forward to representing all of them equally."

Premier Danielle Smith excluded Sinclair — the first Indigenous UCP MLA — from her cabinet, which includes half her caucus. Rick Wilson, who is not Indigenous, is returning as Indigenous Relations Minister, a position he's held since 2019.

Newly elected Edmonton-West Henday NDP MLA Arcand-Paul, in-house legal counsel for Alexander First Nation, where he is from, told APTN News that his and Calahoo Stonehouse's victories represent a "huge... win for our communities."

"This will be a strong voice to ensure that every single Albertan, whether they are Indigenous, whether they are queer, whether they are members of communities that require diversity and inclusion, we will speak with them on their behalf," he added.

Upon his victory, Alexander First Nation posted a graphic on Facebook congratulating their "own newly elected MLA."



Newly elected Alberta MLAs: Brooks Arcand-Paul (Edmonton - West Henday), Jodi Calahoo Stonehouse (Edmonton - Rutherford) and Scott Sinclair (Lesser Slave Lake). (Photo from Twitter).

"Keep making us proud," it said.

Calahoo Stonehouse, who is from Michel First Nation, campaigned across the province for the NDP, going to Banff, Canmore, Morley, Lesser Slave Lake and Driftpile.

She introduced NDP leader Rachel Notley at election headquarters on election night, speaking about our "mutual obligation" under Treaty 6.

Enoch Cree Nation Chief Billy Morin offered his congratulations to Calahoo Stonehouse and Arcand-Paul on their victories.

"Both have the talent to be leader of the NDP and ultimately run for Premier one day," Morin added.

# Papaschase drone fleet helps members serve the community

By Jeremy Appel, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

On May 24, Papaschase First Nation provided a public demonstration of its new drone technology that will be used to survey sacred spaces on the

band's traditional lands and help the broader community in Edmonton.

The event occurred at the Strathcona Remote

Flyers Club at the south end of Strathcona Science Provincial Park. It opened with a traditional blessing of the drones and pilots before a demonstration of four drone capabilities — mosquito spraying, heat seeking, image capture and calibration.

Papaschase has its own fleet of Transport Canada-certified drone pilots, who are trained via Papaschase Security Services.

"It gives people another opportunity to get involved in environmental monitoring and they can be involved in projects, or as required," Papaschase Chief Calvin Bruneau told *Alberta*

Continued on page 8


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# Indspire celebrates a stellar group of award recipients

Indspire is celebrating its 30th Anniversary along with the recipients of the 2023 Indspire Awards. Twelve outstanding Indigenous achievers from a diverse list of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities were honoured during a celebratory gala entitled *Honouring Indigenous Excellence* held last month in Edmonton. Their accomplishments will also be celebrated during a special broadcast on Sunday, June 18 at 8 p.m. (8:30 NT) on APTN, APTN lumi, CBC TV and CBC Gem, and heard on CBC Radio One and CBC Listen at 8 p.m. (9 AT, 9:30 NT).

The Indspire Awards reached a significant milestone this year as 2023 marks 30 years of honouring First Nations, Inuit, and Métis individuals who demonstrate outstanding achievement across Turtle Island and beyond. To commemorate this special anniversary, this year's gala event included an evening reception, dinner, and post-reception where stories and accomplishments of Laureates present and past were shared with guests.

The Indspire Awards represent the highest honour the Indigenous community bestows upon its own people, recognizing Indigenous professionals and youth who demonstrate outstanding career achievement on a national level in a variety of fields, including: the arts; business & commerce; culture, heritage & spirituality; education; health; law & justice; public service; sports; and lifetime achievement. Three Youth Award winners are also being honoured for their accomplishments, serving as role models to other First Nations, Inuit, and Métis youth in their communities and across Canada.

The recipients of the 2023 Indspire Awards are: Youth Recipient Reanna Merasty (Barren Lands First Nation, MB), Youth Recipient Willow Allen (Inuvik, NT), Youth Recipient Ruby Bruce (Manitoba Métis Federation, MB),

**Arts:** Sandra Laronde (Temagami First Nation, ON). For over 30 years, award-winning arts innovator and leader Sandra Laronde has been changing the cultural landscape across Turtle Island – and around the world. She is the founder of game-changing arts organizations, including Red Sky Performance, a leading company of contemporary Indigenous performance that has won numerous awards and created an enduring worldwide legacy. She also founded Native Women in the Arts (NWIA), the Temagami Artistic Collective, an Associate Artist program for next-generation Indigenous leaders, as well as the Director of Indigenous Arts at the Banff Centre for nine consecutive years.

**Business & Commerce:** Kylik Kisoun Taylor (Inuvik, NT). Kylik Kisoun Taylor's entrepreneurial dreams began out on the land, learning traditional ways and stories from his father, uncles and grandparents. Immersed in his Inuvialuit and Gwich'in background, he channeled the skills he learned along with his

passion for community development into a thriving tourism business, serving as both owner and guide. Created when Kylik was just 19 years old, Okpik Arctic Village provides national and international visitors with an authentic experience of Inuit culture and the unique atmosphere of the North.

**Culture, Heritage, & Spirituality:** Jennine Krauchi (Manitoba Métis Federation, MB). World-renowned artist Jennine Krauchi began her inspirational artistic journey at the kitchen table, surrounded by her father's clothing and her mother's beadwork. Her mastery of traditional Métis beadwork coupled with her vibrant designs have educated thousands about Métis culture. With an innovative mastery of techniques in multiple media, Jennine has not only preserved and restored important Métis cultural artifacts, but also created new ones, teaching the world about the richness, strength, and beauty of Métis culture through her art.

**Education:** Lori Campbell (Montreal Lake Cree Nation, SK). Lori Campbell knows firsthand just how crucial representation is for Indigenous peoples in the post-secondary sector. This intergenerational survivor of the residential school system and member of the Sixties Scoop generation didn't envision herself at university until her basketball career brought her to the

University of Regina. Four degrees and many years later, she embodies a notable force for change within academia. She has been instrumental in Indigenizing curriculum, mentoring young Indigenous scholars, and decolonizing the academy, publishing numerous papers and reshaping reconciliation narratives.

**Health:** Dr. Christopher Mushquash (Pays Plat First Nation, ON). Dr. Christopher Mushquash's work has real-world impacts that stretch beyond community boundaries, reshaping policies and paradigms. A professor in the Department of Psychology at Lakehead University, he is also a Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Mental Health and Addiction.



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# Run For Reconciliation supports IRSS survivors and raises awareness

By Kinnukana, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

On July 1, 2023 the 3rd annual Run for Reconciliation will take place at the Lions Park in St. Albert which is located on Treaty 6 territory and the homeland of the Metis. The race is held every year on Canada Day to raise awareness about First Nations, Inuit and Metis children and families who were and continue to be impacted by Residential Schools. The event starts in the morning and runs from 9-11 am to allow participants to start their Canada Day celebrations off by honouring the many Indigenous children who never made it home from residential schools across Canada.

Amanda Patrick, the founder of the event is an avid runner and when she heard about the unmarked graves that were found in Kamloops, British Columbia in May of 2021 she decided to do something to raise more awareness about residential schools. Amanda said, “I did a video on Instagram and asked my fellow runners to run with me on Canada Day to honour these children. The event just took off, I thought I would get maybe twenty people to show up, but I had over four hundred attend the first year. It was pretty amazing!”

People wanted to also donate money, so Amanda also started a Go Fund Me account. Every year this event grows and has shown that many people want to demonstrate their support in raising awareness for this important cause.

This year, there will be two distances available, a 5-kilometre run and a new option to complete a 3-kilometre walk. The run/walk will begin at the Lions Park and will end at the St. Albert Healing Garden. There will be a clearly marked path for both the runners and those that

wish to walk.

As participants run or walk, they will have time to connect and reflect on the survivors, their families, and those children who never made it home. Each participant will be provided with an orange ribbon that they will carry with them, and when they complete the run/walk and reach the Healing Garden they can tie the ribbon around the posts of the gazebo as a sign of remembrance. Cards and markers will also be made available for anyone who wants to leave a personal message on their ribbons.

The event is open to anyone who wants to participate, and it is free to attend. Participants can sign up in advance and also purchase an orange T-shirt to wear on the run/walk that is designed by an Indigenous youth. Participants may also bring their dogs with them as long as they are on a leash. There is free parking located next to the Lions Park and if all the spaces are taken, there is also paid parking available across the street from the park.

As in other years, the goal is to raise a

minimum of 1,996 dollars, to align with the same year (1996) that the last residential school closed. This year, the funds raised from this event will be donated to the Legacy of Hope Foundation. The foundation is a national Indigenous charitable organization with the mandate to educate and create awareness and understanding about the Residential School System, including the intergenerational impacts. The foundation also works toward addressing racism, fostering empathy and understanding and inspires action to improve the situation of Indigenous peoples today. They also support the ongoing healing process of Residential School Survivors, and their families and seeks their input on projects that honour them.

There are many survivors of Residential Schools today who are still dealing with the trauma that they endured. This event provides an opportunity for others to be active in the reconciliation process.

If you would like to participate in the event, you can sign up in advance at Home | #RUNREMREC (square.site).

To learn more about the upcoming event, follow on their Facebook Page – (5) July 1st Run For Reconciliation | Saint Albert AB | Facebook

If you need special accommodations, or have any questions or inquiries reach out to event organizers by email at runremrec@gmail.com.



This year's Run for Reconciliation will build on the success of last year's event. (File photo).

## Papaschase *cont. from p 6*

Native News. “People want training to upgrade their skill set to be employed.”

He said Papaschase was a bit behind some other nearby nations when it comes to drone operating, so Bruneau said nation administration saw this as an opportunity to get up to speed.

The non-profit Project Safe Canada, which offers drone pilot training to many First Nations, approached Papaschase about training some of its members a few years ago.

“We decided to create some projects that will

open up the door for us to do more training with our people,” Bruneau said.

It’s important to “embrace technology,” which can open up many possibilities if it’s used appropriately, he added.

“If you come up with good ways of using the drone technology, I think it can be a positive thing,” said Bruneau.

The drones’ water and air sampling capabilities could prove a game changer for Papaschase as they work on various development projects down the road.

The heat seeking drone will be particularly valuable as wildfires like the one’s we’ve seen this year become more frequent, with their ability

to locate where a fire has started. They’re also useful for search and rescue operations, because they allow pilots to locate body heat.

This technology has an important role to play within the context of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.

Bruneau highlighted the technology’s versatility.

“We want to train security people who are also environmental monitors,” he said. “They are very multifaceted.”

Federal funding from the Aquatic Habitat Restoration Fund and The Total Accumulative Effects Initiative enabled the pilots to be trained in drone mapping and water sampling.



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# A Safety Message for Homeowners

By Utility Safety Partners

As the snow melts, homeowners start to think about outdoor yard projects. We happily stare out the window envisioning the new deck, garden, gazebo, fence, play structure and firepits. Maybe the old tree needs to be replaced with a younger, greener model? Spring is a time for endless possibilities, and we start watching YouTube and DIY channels then heading in droves to the local Home Depot or Canadian Tire to buy tools and materials to create our perfect home oasis.

Despite carefully preparing for the job at hand, there is a critical planning step that many homeowners miss – with potentially disastrous results. Click Before You Dig is not just a message for contractors and professional excavators using heavy equipment. Every time you put a shovel into your yard, you risk injury or damage to an underground facility you didn’t realize was there. Rebar and other support for plants and trees has punctured gas lines. Shovels have split fibre optic and telecommunication lines. Post hole augers have driven through live electrical lines.

Each time a homeowner damages a line on their yard, we hear the same stories: “I thought those lines were buried deeper”, “I thought all the utilities were in the front” “I thought it was safe to put the post in the same hole as the old one”, and often, “I thought Click Before You Dig was for contractors.” These common assumptions have resulted in serious injury and expensive repair costs – don’t let it happen to you.

**Click Before You Dig is a free service for anyone disturbing the ground. No job is too big or too small.**

This year, include a request for line locates in your home projects plan. The web site is easy to use, and we have live Chat agents available to answer any question you have while completing the request form. Once you have requested locates from Utility Safety Partners, you need to consider if there are lines in your yard that aren’t located by the free service. For example, you may have services provided by a company that is not registered with USP. You may have a power line running from your house to a workshop or a gas line to your garage. Those lines were privately buried, and the locators hired by the facility owners can only mark the main utility feed that runs to your meter. Any other lines are your responsibility as the property owner. You can hire private locators to find and mark those lines before you start work. CAPULC.ca is a good place to start looking for a private locator in your area.

When all the lines on your property are identified, plan to work



safely and carefully around them. Respect the hand-dig zones and consider changing the dig site if necessary. For more information about the process and your responsibilities, please visit [www.utilitysafety.ca](http://www.utilitysafety.ca) or our YouTube channel. And, Dig Safe.

*This article was provided by Utility Safety Partners.*

## New exhibit features Haida metal carvings

Bill Reid Gallery of Northwest Coast Art is presenting the Vancouver premiere exhibition of *The Art of Dimension* from July 4 – October 15, 2023. A vibrant celebration of Haida metalwork practices, and a powerful artistic affirmation of Indigenous knowledge sharing across generations, *The Art of Dimension* features the copper, gold and silver carving artistry of Haida Gwaii’s lauded Skil Xaaw Jesse Brillon, alongside Bill Reid’s own masterful repoussé works. Brillon is widely known for his excellence in specialty precious metals techniques, including repoussé, chasing and lost-wax casting.

“Bill Reid is credited with introducing the European repoussé technique to the art of the Northwest Coast and inspiring and mentoring Indigenous artists in the craft,” says Beth Carter, Associate Curator with the Bill Reid Gallery of Northwest Coast Art. “With only a handful of Haida artists working in these techniques, Jesse Brillon has become one of the leading artists practicing repoussé and chasing today. We truly believe these mediums deserve celebration, visibility, and a public platform for their importance in Haida art and culture.”

Growing up as a close family friend to Bill Reid profoundly impacted Brillon’s artwork. His first paid commission at age 18 was painting a Bill Reid original, drawn by the artist in the galley of a seine boat. Brillon cites Reid’s immense body of work in repoussé as a major influence in his own metalwork artistry.

The exhibition further honours the roles of mentorship and family connections through the emerging voice and cedar sculptural works of Brillon’s niece and protégé, award-winning Haida and Cree artist Haaylingtso Marlo Wylie Brillon, who also makes her Bill Reid Gallery debut.

*The Art of Dimension* features 14 recent elaborate repoussé carvings, along with cedar carvings and painted works by Jesse Brillon. Several modern works by Bill Reid will be showcased to encourage a dialogue

*Continued on page 20*

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# Powwow Times CEO grateful for Indigenous Kinship

By Chevi Rabbit, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Patrick Mitsuing, CEO of Powwow Times, has risen to the top of his craft as an internationally recognized champion men's fancy powwow dancer. Originally from northern Saskatchewan Makwa Sahgaiehcan First Nation, Mitsuing made headlines this year when he performed at Super Bowl LVII in Arizona.

In an exclusive interview with Alberta Native News, Mitsuing shared his humble roots, culture, dedication to community building, and family values.

"I grew up without my family, my dad left when I was four, and I have not heard from him ever since; I don't know if he's alive. My mom left shortly afterward; she was only 16 years old and wasn't ready to raise a child," said Mitsuing.

However, despite this adversity, he has been able to build a successful life for himself and maintain a positive relationship with his mother.

Mitsuing was raised through Indigenous Kinship and credits this form of family system for his strong foundation and for his continued success.

It's important to recognize the role that community and kinship play in Indigenous cultures, and how they can provide support and guidance in times of need. Wahkohtowin reflects the idea that all things are inter-connected and

interdependent, and that we have a responsibility to care for and support one another as members of a community.

It's heartwarming to hear about Mitsuing's uncle who became his kinship dad and bought him his first professional outfit and how it helped him become a champion dancer.

"Last year, my uncle, well, I should say, my dad, passed away, and he was a big reason why I am a dancer, and he supported my journey as a dancer," said Mitsuing. His uncle had a profound impact on his life and the Mitsuing Family is planning a special event to honour and memorialize his kinship dad/uncle, later this year.

Patrick's commitment to powwow culture led to the formation of the Powwow Times, which transformed his whole life. Now the largest online media site for Indigenous culture, song, and dance, their mandate is the revitalization of Indigenous languages and the promotion of healthy living through Indigenous culture and decolonization.

His passion for the men's fancy dance also led him to build a business that helps others create their own bustles ([www.makebustles.com](http://www.makebustles.com)).

It's fascinating to learn about the cultural significance behind this popular dance form. Mitsuing offered these insights into the origin of men's fancy dance.

"The horse - it moves, it's so powerful, graceful in the way it moves; it's fast but it can also trot. The hopping around and the movement were all incorporated into the dance," he explained.

This dance form has become one of the most popular dances at powwows – both traditional and competitive - showcasing the athleticism and artistry of Indigenous dancers.

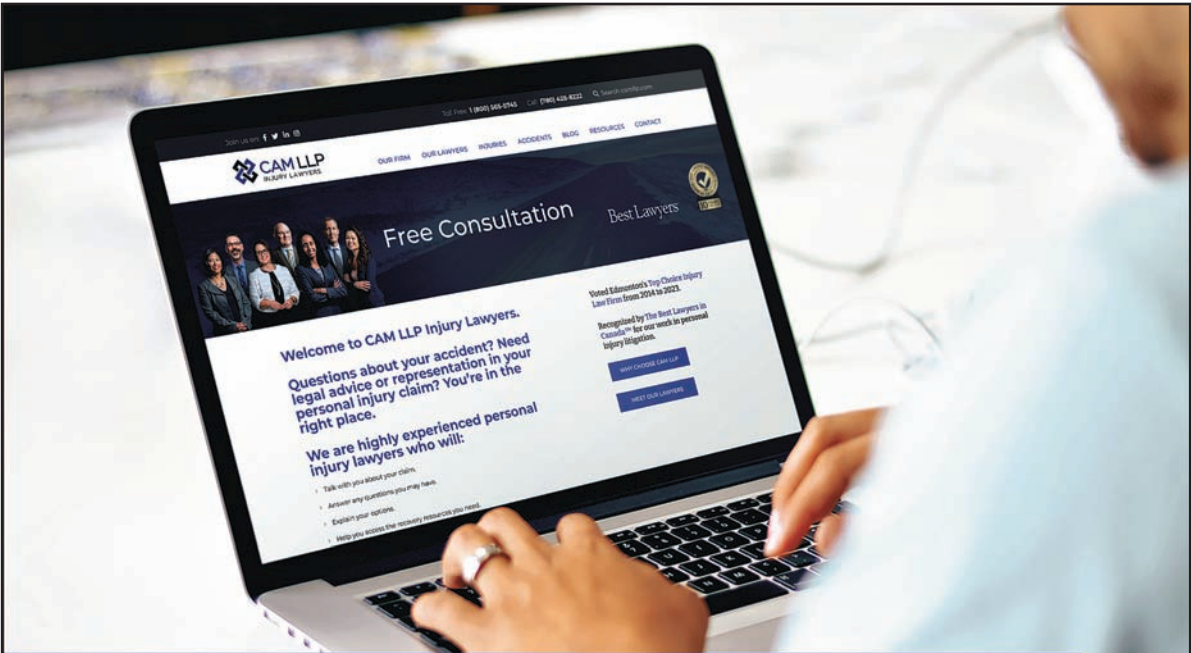
As Mitsuing explained, the men's fancy dance originated from a historical event when Indigenous tribes were at war with each other. The tribes came together to make peace, and during the Treaty, they exchanged songs for



Powwow Times CEO Patrick Mitsuing and his son are both committed to Powwow culture. (Photo supplied).



Patrick Mitsuing in powwow regalia.



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horses.

The kids would mimic the horses' movements as they danced to these songs, despite being told not to by their elders.

And that was the birth of powwow's most popular dance – the Mens Fancy Dance.

Mitsuing's performance at the 2023 Super Bowl was a huge moment for Indigenous people and it was culturally significant, as it brought the beauty and richness of powwow dance to a wider audience. By sharing his talent and passion for dance, Mitsuing has inspired many Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, including children and youth who look up to him as a role model.

"It was such an historic moment for us to be a part of it," he said.

Mitsuing's dedication to his craft and his awareness of the impact he has on others, especially the younger generation, is admirable. His son's aspiration to dance powwow on the moon is a testament to Mitsuing's influence on the next generation of dancers.

As an artist, Mitsuing recognizes the importance of using his platform to create positive change and to showcase his culture's traditions and values. His performance at the Super Bowl is an excellent example of how art can bridge cultural differences and bring people together.

Overall, Mitsuing's commitment to his craft and his community is truly inspiring, and his passion for dance has left a lasting impression on those who witnessed his performance.

Mitsuing ends the interview by saying, "The kids are watching, the youth are watching, and the kids are opening their eyes to what is possible for them."

"I'm honored to be a part of that," said Mitsuing.



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# Powwow Grand Entry is an inspirational experience

By Kinnukana, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Ermineskin Cree Nation 2023 Powwow Celebrations took place at the Maskwacis Bear Park from May 26 – 28, 2023. The event opened on May 26 with the First Grand Entry on the East side of the arbour. At the beginning of every powwow, there is always a grand entry where everyone rises to their feet and removes their hats, the drummers sing the grand entry song as an elder leads a parade of dignitaries and dancers into the gathering space. Participants hold flags that represent the various groups in attendance. The dancers join in an opening dance that welcomes everyone to the celebration. A Grand Entry is a beautiful remarkable sight and even more touching if you can participate in the ceremony.

Dr. Karen Aberle, a city councillor, had the opportunity to participate in the Grand Entry at Ermineskin Cree Nation. She was representing the City of Wetaskiwin as a dignitary. Dignitaries from the surrounding areas are invited to attend and participate in the Grand Entry as a sign of support and respect for the First Nations celebration. Dr. Aberle said, “I had the privilege of being part of my first Grand Entry at the Ermineskin Powwow. It was an incredible experience I will never forget.”

Dr. Aberle has attended powwows in the past, but this was her first time being a participant. In the procession, she proudly walked along with



The Grand Entry at Ermineskin Cree Nation Powwow last month.

other dignitaries behind the First Nations Chiefs and Council Members and in front of the RCMP Officers. There is a particular order that is followed for all grand entries. Once inside the arbour, she was surrounded by about six hundred dancers in all their beautiful regalia. The dancers dance sunwise (clockwise) around the dance arbor, showing the audience that they are ready to begin the celebrations. Dr. Aberle shared how being there in that moment felt to her. She said that if you ever have the opportunity to stand in the middle of all the dancers, all the culture and traditions while listening to the drumming of the grand entry song it just grounds you.

Dr. Aberle has been on her reconciliation journey, and she is focused on how she can better understand her Treaty responsibilities as a non-Indigenous woman. In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) defined reconciliation as the process of “establishing and maintaining a mutually respectful relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in this country.” Dr. Aberle has a British and German background and was born and raised in Calgary but has been living in Wetaskiwin for the past nine years. While studying archaeology at the University of Calgary, she had the opportunity to be involved in Indigenous ceremonies when invited, mostly with the Blackfoot and Tsuut’ina

Nations. Dr. Aberle appreciates Indigenous culture and said that when she moved to Treaty 6 Territory, she had everything new to learn again because of the differences in the culture and traditions. She said it is important not to be pan-Indigenous and she tries to learn as much as she can about all First Nations and encourages others to do the same.

Dr. Aberle said she loves attending powwows and how they bring all Nations together and everyone to celebrate the various cultures. When asked what advice she would offer to other non-Indigenous people who are looking to become more involved with powwows, Dr. Aberle encourages everyone to just go to a powwow. Powwows are open to everyone, and anybody can attend. She said that sometimes people are reluctant because they wonder if they are welcome and if they can go there. Some people think that they will feel like outsiders, but you won’t. If they just go once, they will realize that everyone at the powwow is so welcoming, honest, and open to sharing. It is a celebration of culture. It is something we should all learn more about. The powwow is a wonderful opportunity to witness Indigenous culture in a fun and respectful way and to be doing your part in reconciliation with First Nations in Alberta.



Wetaskiwin Councillor Dr. Karen Aberle.

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# Powwows and Gatherings

**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 15 - 18**

Fort McKay Treaty Days,  
Fort McKay First Nation, AB

**June 16 – 18**

Canoe Lake Cree Nation Traditional Powwow.  
clcfn05@sasktel.net 306-304-1444

**June 18 – 24**

Family Day & Powwow Handgames  
Tournament. Enmax Park, Calgary, AB

**June 21**

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**June 21**

National Indigenous Peoples Day Traditional  
Pow Wow. Heritage Farm & Village,  
North Battleford, SK.

**June 21**

AFCC Traditional Round Dance. Calgary, AB.  
Alanna Manybears amanybears@afccalgary.org  
587-572-3376

**June 23 – 25**

Saddle Lake Cree Nation Powwow.  
Saddle Lake, AB

**June 23 - 25**

Kahkewistahaw, SK. Bernard Rob Memorial  
Powwow Grounds.

**June 23 - 25**

Between the Lakes 2023 Pow Wow. SnPink'tn,  
Penticton, BC. South Okanagan Events Centre.  
250-488-7199

**June 23 & 24**

Alberta Metis Fest 2023, 17339 Victoria Trail,  
Smoky Lake, AB

**June 24**

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

**June 24 & 25**

Red Pheasant Cree Nation Youth Soccer  
Championships. Holy Family Fields,  
North Battleford, SK

**June 30 – July 2**

Siksika, AB

**July 1 & 2**

Muskeg Lake Cree Nation 31st Annual  
Traditional Pow Wow. Muskeg Lake, SK  
306-713-0810

**July 1 & 2**

One Arrow, SK

**July 4 – 6**

Red Pheasant 7th Annual Competition Powwow.  
George Benson Memorial Powwow Grounds,  
Red Pheasant, SK

**July 7 – 9**

Zagime Anishinabek 36th Annual Powwow  
Celebration. Zagime, SK. 306-697-2831

**July 7 – 9**

Maskekosak Enoch Cree Nation Annual  
Competition Powwow. Enoch, AB.  
powwow@enochnation.ca

**July 7 – 9**

Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation Powwow.  
Alexis Nakota Sioux, AB.

**July 12 & 13**

Calgary Stampede Grounds

**July 14 – 16**

Onion Lake Powwow. Onion Lake, SK

**July 17**

Sweetgrass First Nation Treaty Day 2023.  
Sweetgrass Pow Wow Grounds.

**July 18 & 19**

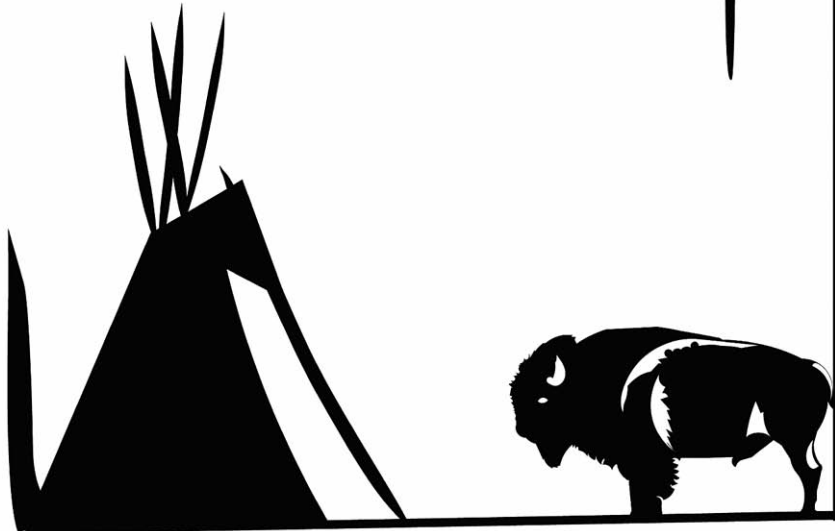
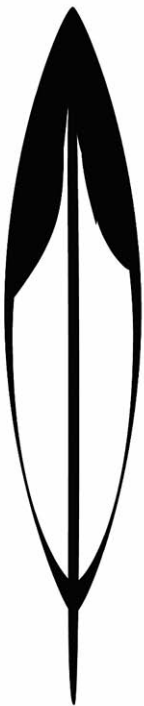
Sweetgrass First Nation Annual Traditional  
Powwow. (July 17 camping day).  
Sweetgrass Powwow Grounds, SK

**July 18 – 20**

Ministikwan Lake Cree Nation Powwow &  
Hand Game Tournamant. Ministikwan Arena,  
Ministikwan Lake, SK.

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**Thank you, Hai, Hai, Masi Cho.**



# — Join the Powwow Trail

<b>July 20 - 23</b> Back to Batoche Days. Batoche, SK.	<b>August 4 – 6</b> Frog Lake, AB.	<b>August 17</b> Confederacy of Treaty 6 First Nations Competition Powwow at Enoch Cree Nation.
<b>July 18 - 23</b> Kanai Rodeos. Red Crow Park, AB	<b>August 4 – 6</b> Kamloopa Powwow 42 Annual. Kamloops, BC.	<b>August 18 - 20</b> Poundmakers Annual Pow Wow – Competition Pow Wow. 25108 Poundmaker Road, St. Albert, AB powwow@poundmaker.org
<b>July 21 - 23</b> Kainai Powwow, Golf Tournament, Fastball & Slowpitch Tournaments. Red Crow Park, Kainai, AB. Stickgame Tournament. Kainai Sports Centre, Kainai, AB.	<b>August 4 – 6</b> Beaver Lake Powwow. Beaver Lake, AB.	<b>August 18 - 20</b> Piapot First Nation Powwow. Piapot, SK.
<b>July 21 - 23</b> Peepeekisis Cree Nation No. 81 Traditional Powwow. Peepeekisis, AB.	<b>August 5 &amp; 6</b> Muskoday First Nation 30th Annual Traditional Pow Wow. Muskoday, SK.	<b>August 18 - 20</b> Big River, SK.
<b>July 21 - 23</b> Thunderchild First Nation 55th Annual Pow-wow and Handgame Tournament. Thunderchild, SK.	<b>August 8 – 10</b> Little Pine, SK.	<b>August 18 – 23</b> Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation Traditional Pow Wow & Round Dance. Sturgeon Lake, SK.
<b>July 26 – 30</b> Tsuut’ina National Annual Celebration Powwow. Tsuut’ina, AB.	<b>August 8 – 10</b> Sunchild, AB.	<b>August 25 – 27</b> Beardy’s & Okemasis’ Cree Nation Competition Pow Wow. Duck Lake, SK. bocnpowwow.ca
<b>July 28 – 30</b> Kawacatooso First Nation Powwow. Kawacatooso, SK.	<b>August 9 &amp; 10</b> Pasqua First Nation Pow Wow. Pasqua, SK.	<b>August 25 – 27</b> Ochapowace, SK.
<b>July 28 – 30</b> Kehewin Cree Nation Powwow. Kehewin, AB.	<b>August 11 – 13</b> Standing Buffalo Pow-Wow. Standing Buffalo, SK.	<b>August 26</b> Cold Lake First Nation, AB.
<b>August 3 – 6</b> Mosquito GrizzlyBears Head Lead Man, SK.	<b>August 11 – 13</b> Waterhen Lake First Nation Powwow. Waterhen Lake, SK.	<b>September 1 – 3</b> Flying Dust First Nation Powwow. Flying Dust, SK.
<b>August 4 – 6</b> Pheasant Rump Nakoda First Nation Competition Pow Wow. Pheasant Rump, SK.	<b>August 15 – 17</b> Moosamin First Nation Pow Wow. Moosamin First Nation Arena, Cochin, SK. 306-386-2206	<b>September 1 – 3</b> Celebration of Culture, Honouring the Sacred. Pine Lake Camp, Red Deer, AB. salvationista.ca/COC23
	<b>August 15 – 17</b> Cowessess First Nation Traditional Powwow. Cowessess, SK.	

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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.

We extend our respect and gratitude to Indigenous leaders, Elders, knowledge keepers, teachers, healthcare workers, parents, care providers and others who are working hard to build strong communities.

We encourage everyone to join in the celebration of National Indigenous Peoples Day, to acknowledge the pain and the suffering that has been endured by Canada's Indigenous Peoples and take the opportunity to become meaningful allies.



# 'Little Bird' thoughtfully explores identity and the Sixties Scoop

By Regan Treewater, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Questions about identity, belonging, and the eternal search for self-definition are universal ones that transcend the boundaries of time and space, but also those of cultural or national affiliation. At the core of the great human experience, everyone just wants to feel safe. Such security is often related to community and family. For some Canadians this knowledge of one's roots may be a treasure trove of stories and cherished photographs, but for far too many survivors of generational trauma and government sanctioned abuse, a discussion about genealogy is a much more haunting exploration. Ontario-born writers Jennifer Podemski and Hannah Moscovitch beautifully and poignantly narrate the story of Bezhig Little Bird, played by Canadian actress and rising star Darla Contois, in the newly released Crave APTN series *Little Bird* (2023). The journey of main character Bezhig Little Bird is also the story of Esther Rosenblum.

Like far too many Indigenous children victimized the Sixties Scoop, Bezhig and her younger brother and sister are forcibly taken from their mother by government social workers Jeannie and Adele (played by Janet Kidder and Alanna Bale). Bezhig is adopted by a loving and well-intentioned Jewish couple, Holocaust survivors, and raised within an affluent home in Montreal's Jewish community as Esther Rosenblum. The name "Esther" is given to her by her adoptive Jewish mother Golda, in honour of a sister lost in Poland during the Holocaust.

"The second I heard 'Jewish' and 'Indigenous' I was like 'yes'! That's definitely something I want to do," commented writer Jennifer Podemski remembering her reaction when first approached to work on the project. Born in Toronto to a Jewish father and Indigenous mother, Podemski's own upbringing in a Jewish area was itself a crossroads of cultures and identities.

"I am a person who is deeply immersed in multilayered identity being Jewish, having a dad who was born in Israel. [...] My grandmother and grandfather on my mother's side are residential school survivors. At the center of this I am a storyteller immersed in the cultures that make up my identity," Podemski elaborated further during a recent phone interview with *Alberta Native News* enroute to her next stop along a tour of promotional events.

"As Indigenous storytellers we are responsible for upholding authenticity around our stories. Since the beginning of screen stories, our Indigenous stories and perspectives have been filtered through the lens of non-Indigenous storytellers, which has created a false narrative about who we are, where we come from, and the experiences we've had."

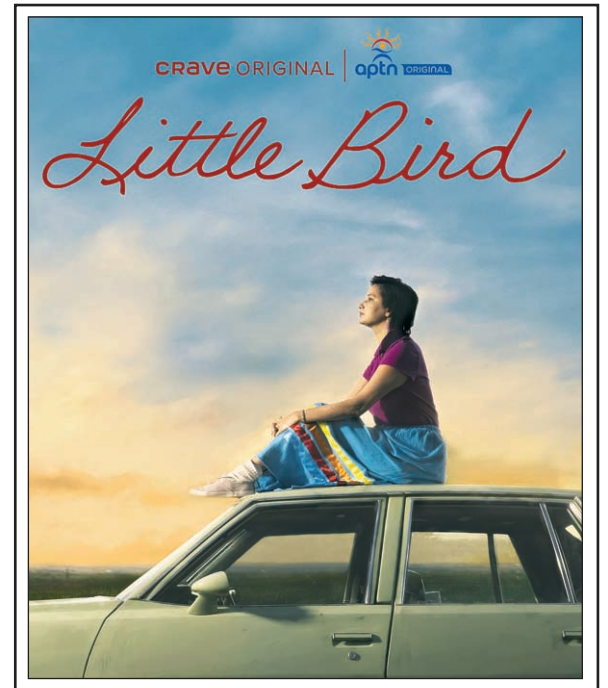
*Little Bird* is more than just a narrative exploration of identity though, it is a loving examination of mothers and daughters – the families of birth, and the families of circumstance. As Esther is driven to rediscover the truth about Bezhig, her younger self, it is a painful road for the woman who raised her as well. Golda, dazzlingly portrayed by Lisa Edelstein, a primetime staple, and instantly recognizable Hollywood face, has poured all her love, hopes, and dreams into her adopted daughter Esther.

"Being raised very aware of what happened to our family during the Holocaust, I was really proud to be able to play this part and represent that story," said Edelstein in a recent phone interview with *ANNews*. "What I was really trying to grab onto in the performance was that particular generation of Jewish women that I knew, who didn't smile in the way we smile now. [...] They laughed when it was funny but there wasn't a necessity of having emotional approval from the world," she explained further.

"I think the most important thing is having a heart that is open enough to accept the difficult reality that you may have been complicit in, and I think that's really Golda's journey. In no way did she understand what was happening in the Sixties Scoop when she adopted her daughter. [...] But when her daughter confronts her about what that system really was, she's resistant, like most people, because no one wants to be a part of something so ugly," she concluded meaningfully.

Edelstein's performance is nuanced, moving, and captivating as Golda experiences so many dimensions of loss and love.

The protagonist must find a way to merge the identities of Bezhig and Esther to find peace for herself before marrying and starting her own family. Her journey is simultaneously heartwarming and profoundly excruciating. This collision of emotions from the entire spectrum of



humanity is condensed into Esther's story – each episode more poignant than the last. The questions raised are not just about the story of one young woman, but the many stories of a lost generation of children robbed of their sense of self identity by institutionalized colonial values.

Beneath a thin veil of performed acceptance, there is judgement and discrimination. After overhearing derogatory and hateful remarks made by her fiancé's mother, Esther begins to see that the community she thought she belonged in does not consider her one of their own. Such traumatizing moments ignite within the viewer introspective reflection surrounding how we, as a society, treat one another, and whether we, as individuals, are truly as accepting as we present ourselves to be.

"Everybody is going to take away something different," explained Darla Contois during an on-the-road phone interview with the *ANNews*. "It depends where you're ready to hear from, where you're ready to listen from, and what you're ready to take in. As Canadians this story is part of our collective history and it's something that we need to understand and be part of in order to move forward together."

Opposite a longtime TV veteran like Edelstein, up-and-comer Contois was entrusted with the role of a lifetime, in a performance that showcases her thoughtful talent and compassion for her character. She remembers the late-night phone call from Podemski where she was first offered the part, and how she burst into uncontrollable tears of joy.

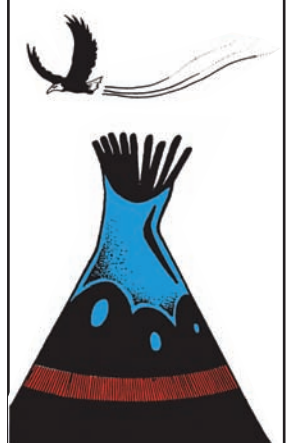
*Continued on page 22*

## Happy National Indigenous Peoples Day!

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

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# Blue Jean Jacket Day launches in Edmonton

By Paula E. Kirman, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter



Participants at Blue Jean Jacket Day in Edmonton on June 6. (Photos by Paula Kirman).

A community of family members, survivors, allies, and advocates gathered in Edmonton on June 6 to mark the first annual Blue Jean Jacket Day. The day is intended to become an annual event to honour missing, murdered, and exploited Indigenous men and boys (MMEIMB), comparable to Red Dress Day.

The small but passionate group gathered in downtown Edmonton to listen to family members and do a short march to Okîsikow (Angel) Way at 97th Street and 101A Avenue. Okîsikow Way honours women and gender diverse people who have experienced violence.

Blue Jean Jacket Day was organized by a grassroots group, including April Eve Wiberg of the Stolen Sisters and Brothers Action Movement and Stephanie Harpe, a local musician and activist who created the Indigenous Men and Boys Support Group of Edmonton.

“There are over 700 murdered and missing Indigenous men and boys in this province no one

is talking about about it,” said Harpe, who also noted a gap in funding and opportunities for Indigenous men and boys.

Harpe explained that Indigenous men and boys are at risk of human trafficking and labour trafficking, where Indigenous men are hired at lower rates and put in dangerous situations. She also discussed how Indigenous men can be victims of “starlight tours” where they are picked up by the RCMP or police and dropped off outside of the city in the middle of the winter.

“April and I go everywhere to do this work and see all of our women and girls and it's wonderful, but we go home to broken men, to broken boys, who need all of this love, all of this teaching, all of this attention, and more resources and funding opportunities,” says Harpe.

The organizers hope that Blue Jean Jacket Day, like Red Dress Day, will become a national movement.



Stephanie Harpe holds up a pin that was specially made for Blue Jean Jacket Day.



April Eve Wiberg leads chants before the march.



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# Alberta UCP retains control but with a difference

By Rob Houle, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

On May 29, 2023, Albertans voted to stay the course following the provincial election. However, the course ahead may not be what Albertans were accustomed to prior to the election, and serious questions exist on how long the ruling party can maintain their thin majority. As well, the returning government will have to take a significant inventory of their elected members, and fill key roles once the legislature reconvenes.

Following tumultuous and combative campaigns, approximately 62% of Albertans participated in this election. This number is 5% lower than the previous election, reflects over 140,000 Albertans and may be part of the reason the Alberta New Democratic Party (ANDP) was unable to gain power this go around. In any event, there should be a full post-mortem done on the ANDP following their second straight defeat to the United Conservative Party (UCP) and Premier shrouded in controversy.

Once the dust had cleared late on election day, the ruling government retained power with the weakest majority since the legislature rose above 80 seats, securing just 49 electoral divisions. In comparison, Ralph Klein’s first victory as leader of the Conservatives was the previous low for a ruling party in Alberta (51 seats in 1993). What does this mean for Albertans? Well, it creates a situation of uncertainty where any misstep by the UCP could result in party instability and a reality in which people are sent back to the polls before 2027.

The risk of instability will only be increased given how different the incoming government will look in comparison to the previous. Six key Ministers will not be returning to form government, including the Deputy Premier Kacee Madu and the Minister of Justice Tyler Shandro. Although each wrestled with their own controversies before the election and throughout their term, they held key positions and would have provided some experience to incoming party members.

Providing a glimmer of light in the results is the election of 3 Indigenous candidates, including the lone Indigenous candidate running for the UCP, Scott Sinclair. Brooks Arcand-Paul and Jodi Calahoo-Stonehouse round out the total for the NDP, with both being elected on the island of Edmonton. While they provide some diversity in the faces that fill the legislature, whether their presence can manifest some change remains to be seen.

All in all, the election seemed to mirror what is taking place across the country, and North America to a degree. Communities continue to see rampant division and a troubling rise of populism and internet academics. Unchecked and unhinged theories seem to be gripping a growing portion of society, and the Premier of the province is part of their ranks. Whether these beliefs enter the decisions of government remains to be seen, or will Albertans keep them to a dull roar until the next election.

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# June 17: APTN Indigenous Day Live

On June 17, join APTN at The Forks in Winnipeg to celebrate National Indigenous Peoples Day (NIPD) with APTN Indigenous Day Live (IDL). This year, IDL will honour the next generation of Indigenous leaders under the theme of “Celebrating Our Youth.” IDL 2023 will feature a full day of free activities for the entire family, culminating in a joyous concert that will broadcast live across Turtle Island via multiple platforms.

The free evening concert, hosted by Anishinaabe rapper Samian and Métis/Saulteaux-Cree actress Jessica Matten, will feature show-stopping performances from The Halluci Nation, Laura Niquay, Mumu Fresh, Aysanabee, Digging Roots and more. The multilingual concert will kick off on the main stage at 7 p.m. CT.

Audiences can tune in to this special broadcast live at 7 p.m. CT (8 p.m. ET) on APTN, AMI-tv, the APTN YouTube channel and Indigenous radio stations MBC Radio and NCI FM. An encore presentation of the IDL concert will air across all APTN channels on June 21 as part of the network’s special programming for NIPD, and audiences can also listen to it that day on 95.7 ELMNT FM, 106.5 ELMNT FM and CKLB Radio. IDL 2023 will be available for streaming on APTN lumi beginning on June 21.

“*APTN Indigenous Day Live 2023* will highlight the important role Indigenous youth play in shaping our collective future,” said APTN CEO Monika Ille. “The event will serve as an opportunity for APTN to raise young people’s voices through dance, music and visual art. We are so excited to showcase the immense talent of Indigenous communities across the country.”

Generous financial support from the Government of Canada has enabled IDL to bring communities together in celebration of NIPD.

“It’s wonderful to highlight our talented youth in honour of National Indigenous Peoples Day!” said the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Pablo Rodriguez. “Young people inspire us and push us to keep our minds open. Thanks to them—and for them—we will never cease our efforts to

ensure a better world for future generations. This celebration, which lets us take another step down the path of reconciliation, is an occasion you won’t want to miss!”


APTN Indigenous Day Live (IDL) is proud to bring Indigenous and non-Indigenous people together in celebration of National Indigenous Peoples Day (NIPD) and the summer solstice.

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Indspire *cont. from p 7*

**Law & Justice:** Madame Justice Ardith Wal’petko We’dalx Walkem (Cook’s Ferry Indian Band, Nlaka’pamux Nation, BC). At the heart of Justice Ardith Walpetko We’dalx Walkem’s illustrious legal career are the Nlaka’pamux teachings she learned in childhood. This advocate for reconciliation in the justice system is renowned and respected for her work on behalf of Indigenous peoples legal traditions. She is the very first Indigenous First Nation woman to serve as a Justice of the Supreme Court of British Columbia, and her work on key Indigenous title, rights and treaty rights decisions such as (*R. v. Morris*, 2006) set powerful precedents for how Indigenous rights should be respected.

**Public Service:** Shirley Cuillierier (Member of Kahnesatake Mohawk Nation, QC.). Shirley Cuillierier has been striving to create a safer, more inclusive nation for over 40 years. Beginning her career in the RCMP as a Constable and ultimately retiring in the role of Assistant Commissioner, she has consistently advocated for increased Indigenous representation and for a greater awareness of how policing impacts Indigenous communities. Shirley is known as a leader that recognized the need for transformational changes to address systematic inequalities that Indigenous people face when involved with the criminal justice system. She excelled at improving and fostering positive relationships with Indigenous organizations and domestic/international policing partners. She created the RCMP Circle of Change to effect policy/training amendments on issues related to violence against Indigenous women/girls and has testified before the House of Commons and the Senate on matters related to human traffick-ing and human rights. She was appointed the RCMP’s Senior Advisor on Reconciliation to advance and promote the principles of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).

**Sports:** Joe Dion Buffalo (Samson Cree Nation, AB). Whether he’s in front of the camera or performing gravity-defying feats at a skatepark, athlete and actor Joe Buffalo is an inspirational man on a powerful mission. This residential school survivor has become a legend in the skateboarding community for his skills and his work as a role model to young Indigenous skateboarders, whom he mentors through the Nations Skate Youth organization. After over-

coming issues with substance use originating from his time at residential school, Joe became a professional skateboarder and has been sponsored by many notable brands, including Van’s and Colonialism Skateboards. He has travelled all over Turtle Island for competitions and demos and has frequently been featured in high-profile industry magazines.

Joe draws strength from his heritage and was recently the subject of an acclaimed documentary entitled *Joe Buffalo*, which he co-wrote and was executive-produced by legendary skateboarder Tony Hawk. It appeared at festivals such as SXSW across Turtle Island and won numerous awards, further raising Joe’s profile even as it broadened awareness of the residential school system in Canada.

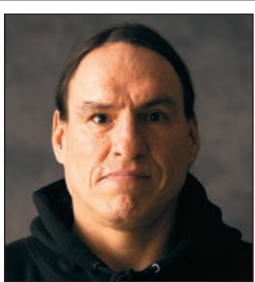
**Lifetime Achievement:** Albert D. Marshall (Eskasoni First Nation, NS). Elder Dr. Albert Marshall has devoted his life to tirelessly preserving, strengthening, and spreading Mi’kmaq culture, language, values, and concepts. He is a co-creator of the influential Etuaptmumk/Two-Eyed Seeing (E/TES) guiding principle, which serves to integrate traditional Indigenous ways of knowing with other systems of thought, synthesizing them to create a strong, healthy common ground. Not only has it been profoundly meaningful for Indigenous peoples, it has also been important for non-Indigenous organizations who are endeavouring to become healthier, more welcoming spaces for Indigenous peoples.

Elder Albert and his late wife, Elder Dr. Murdena Marshall, travelled across Turtle Island to speak about E/TES to a wide variety of institutions, promoting E/TES as a model for intercultural collaboration. Elder Albert has published widely, with his works serving as valuable guides that have shaped everything from environmental decision-making to health research to economic development.

Within his Eskasoni community, Elder Albert shares his knowledge through workshops and



Shirley Couillierier  
- Public Service



Joe Dion Buffalo  
- Sports



Albert Marshall -  
Lifetime Achievement



Lori Campbell  
- Education



Dr. Christopher  
Mushquash - Health



Madame Justice Ardith  
Walkem - Law & Justice

mentors youth as well as adult community members who want to learn more about their Mi’kmaq culture. His work with the Unama’ki Institute of Natural Resources has been influential for decades.

Whether he was speaking in Europe about the dangers of Agent Orange, working to achieve recognition of Dakota sacred lands at Oheyawahi in Minnesota, or teaching in Eskasoni about the importance of eel harvesting, Elder Albert has always remained firmly rooted in the Mi’kmaq Seven Guiding Principles – and has touched countless hearts and minds in the process.

“We have many reasons to celebrate during this year’s Indspire Awards ceremony,” said President & CEO Mike DeGagné. “The 30th Anniversary is a meaningful opportunity to honour this year’s Laureates along with the 408 Indigenous leaders who have received Awards in the past; it also stands as a testament to the friends, family, loved ones and co-workers who have assisted them in their important work. We are pleased and proud to recognize the contributions made by so many people, creating generations of Indigenous achievement coast to coast to coast.”

“APTN is thrilled to celebrate three decades of Indspire’s important work with the 30th anniversary broadcast of the Indspire Awards,” said APTN CEO Monika Ille. “Each year, the Indspire Awards give us a new opportunity to show our gratitude to the Indigenous leaders who are at the forefront of positive change in their communities. These changemakers remind us that we have the responsibility to grow, to do right by our communities and to become the authors of our own stories.”

“As the Awards mark their 30th anniversary, we’re honoured to celebrate this important milestone with our partners at Indspire and APTN, recognizing three decades of Indigenous leadership,” said Barbara Williams, Executive Vice-President, CBC. “On June 18, we look forward to sharing the impressive accomplishments of this year’s Laureates with audiences across the country, shining a spotlight on the positive impacts they’ve made in their communities and far beyond.”

Once again, each recipient was presented with a beautiful gold pin featuring a Canadian diamond unearthed from the Diavik mine in the Northwest Territories and supplied by Rio Tinto.

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 2021-22, Indspire provided more than \$23 million through 6,612 bursaries and scholarships to First Nations, Inuit and Métis students across Canada.



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# Ben Calf Robe Powwow celebrates First Nations Culture

By Paula E. Kirman, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter



A vibrant Ben Calf Robe Traditional Powwow returned to Edmonton last month with an amazing group of dancers, drummers, singers and a large crowd enjoying the celebration of culture. (Photos by Paula Kirman)

The 39th Annual Ben Calf Robe Traditional Pow Wow took place on May 13th at Clarke Stadium in Edmonton. This was the first time the event was held since the last one in 2019.

The unseasonably warm day brought sunshine and a large crowd to the outdoor venue to enjoy the dancing and drumming. There were also craft

and food vendors.

This year’s theme was “Honouring Our Sacred Gifts – Our Children.” The host drum group was Cree Confederation from Saddle Lake. Fawn Wood performed during the supper break. Wood is a Plains Cree and Salish music artist from Saddle Lake Cree Nation. She won the Juno

Award for Traditional Indigenous Artist of the Year in 2022.

The Ben Calf Robe Traditional Pow Wow was presented by Edmonton Catholic Schools and Indigenous Learning Services, in partnership with the City of Edmonton.

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# Indigenous artworks installed at Edmonton City Hall

In commemoration of National Indigenous History Month, the City of Edmonton and Edmonton Arts Council have permanently installed four new Indigenous artworks, now on display inside City Hall.

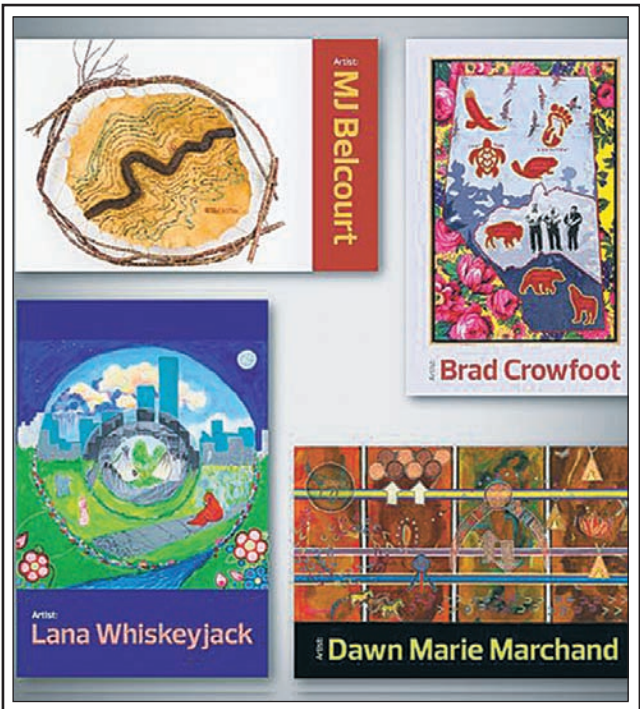
This artwork collection is a direct response to the City of Edmonton’s Indigenous Framework and Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Call-to-action #8) and MMIWG2S+ commitments and actions to ensure the resurgence of Indigenous cultures and histories in city spaces, especially those accessible to the public; so that Indigenous Peoples can see themselves reflected in these spaces.

“It’s my hope these artworks inspire all to

contemplate how we will reflect our history, culture, and our relationships with Indigenous Peoples through their art, including what our visitors will see, and what we will see, both inside and outside the front doors of our facilities,” said Ward Dene Councillor Aaron Paquette. “Indigenous art helps us to understand who we are and where our place is.”

In 2019, the City of Edmonton invited Indigenous artists Melissa-Jo (MJ) Belcourt Moses, Brad Crowfoot, Dawn Marie Marchand, and Lana Whiskeyjack to capture the spirit and discussion from various community conversation events held by the

*Continued on page 23*



## New exhibit *cont. from p 9*

between the two artists’ work. Marlo Wylie Brillon’s four featured cedar artworks reflect her close connection to Jesse Brillon, and his important role as a mentor for her artistic development since she was a young child.

Gallery visitors are also offered a rare and personal viewing of special dowry pieces created by Jesse Brillon for the 2022 marriage of his sister, Kalga Jaad Erin Brillon to artist Andy Everson. This was the first clan feast of the Laana Staadas clan in more than 150 years. These pieces include a printed canvas Laana Tsaadas Dance Screen, copper and ermine jhlk’yah (headdress), and a gold repoussé crest pole bracelet with abalone shell inlay. Also featured is Marlo Wylie Brillon’s carved K’aaxada (dogfish shark) mask which was danced at the celebration.

The Art of Dimension premiered at the Haida Gwaii Museum in 2022. Bill Reid Gallery has

expanded the original exhibition to include further information about Bill Reid’s artistic influence on Jesse Brillon, a deeper exploration of the history of Haida metalwork, and additional details about the special marriage feast held by the Laana Staadas clan.

A series of ancillary events will support The Art of Dimension, including an opening celebration on Saturday, July 8, several workshops, an artist demonstration, artist talks, and public programs.

Admission information and a full list of events and registration details at: [billreidgallery.ca](http://billreidgallery.ca)

Skil Xaaw Jesse Brillon resides in his home village of Skidegate, Haida Gwaii where he balances commercial fishing and a love of the environment with his art career. After high school, he apprenticed with Haida artist Don Yeomans and Gitksan master jeweller Phil Janze. Brillon has achieved a mastery of the form and now creates museum quality pieces individualized by their fineness, boldness, and depth. His works are held in private collections globally and have been exhibited at the

American Museum of Natural History, the Museum of Vancouver, the Haida Gwaii Museum, and the Comox Valley Art Gallery.

Emerging artist Haaylingtso Marlo Wylie Brillon has studied Haida art from her uncle, Skil Xaaw Jesse Brillon, Kwakwaka’wakw art from Chief Kwamxalagalis Andy Everson, and steam bending to create bentwood boxes from Richard Sumner, a Kwakwaka’wakw master bentwood box-maker and carver. Marlo was awarded two YVR Emerging Artist Scholarships (2019 and 2020), providing an opportunity to exhibit her work at the Vancouver International Airport and the Museum of Vancouver.

Bill Reid Gallery gratefully acknowledges the support of exhibition partners BMO, Carter Auto Family, City of Vancouver, Province of British Columbia, and the RBC Emerging Artist Program.

*The Bill Reid Gallery of Northwest Coast Art is an initiative of the Bill Reid Foundation. Established in 1999 as a non-profit charitable organization, the Foundation’s mission is to preserve the art and perpetuate the legacies of Bill Reid.*

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# Voting in First Nations Communities

By Rob Houle, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

With the dust settled on another provincial election, it is important for both parties in Alberta to examine how First Nations voted. As we analyze the numbers, it is important to note that voter turnout is often low in Indigenous communities. This does not only pertain to provincial and federal elections, but remains the standard for band elections as well. This reality is largely due to the fact that First Nations only gained the right to vote 60 years ago, and is only compounded by the fact that party engagement in communities is often lacking.

With that in mind, it is important to analyze the data regardless, given the election was close in many ridings, and that a path forward in the future may require some of the First Nation vote.

For the purpose of this article, the writer utilized Elections Alberta data and focused primarily on ridings in which the United Conservative Party (UCP) retained power. This includes many rural ridings, and an important one that the Alberta New Democratic Party (ANDP) had previously held.

When we looked at the data, there were 10 ridings of importance, with 25 polls held in First Nation communities. It appears that although 25 polls were held, that is about half of the First Nation reserves in Alberta (over 50). Again, these polls did not include those in which the ANDP regained or retained power.

Of note, voter turnout hovered at a low of 0% (Mamowintowin) to a high of 38.6% (Calling Lake) for polls analyzed. All 25 polls examined averaged a voter turnout of 19.7%, which left close to 8,000 votes off the table. Going further, of the noted polls, 20 voted overwhelmingly in favour of the ANDP candidate, with only 5 leaning towards the UCP.

Turning our focus to one riding in particular,

Lesser Slave Lake, which saw UCP candidate Scott Sinclair enter the legislature, the inactivity in First Nations communities highlights a lost opportunity for the official opposition. In that one riding alone, there were 9 polls hosted in First Nation communities. These polls reflected 2500 voters, of which 1872 did not participate in the election. Given that the ANDP had previously held this seat following the 2015 election, and that they lost the seat for a second time by approximately 2500 votes, it is significant.

Not only do these results indicate a lack of engagement by both parties in Alberta, but a real failure of the ANDP to keep First Nations voters engaged. It also signals a real problem with democracy in our communities, one that has deep roots in colonialism and disconnection. Some detractors may say that engaging in foreign elections only furthers the colonial machine, however one cannot ignore that voting and participation remains one of our fundamental rights as citizens. Also, it is somewhat detached from reality to not participate, knowing that the ruling party will have great influence on First Nations lives on the ground.

One needs to look no further than the massive evacuations and displacement within the North of the province as an indicator of this impact. Further, if we are to be true partners in moving the relationship forward, we must come to the realization that neither party is going anywhere, and we should be willing to choose who to do business with. Lastly, the outcomes of this election should spur some action by our leaders to advocate for greater participation and encourage members to have a real say on the future of Alberta.

## Powwow Dancing at Westglen School

By Terry Lusty, LJI Reporter



Hundreds of students from various city schools gathered at Westglen School on 127 Street in Edmonton for their fourth annual powwow on June 2. Pictured above is traditional male dancer Charlie Favel from Montana, he was everyone's favourite photo subject at the event.



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Ben Calf Robe Powwow returns to Edmonton in full force



For the first time since 2019, the Ben Calf Robe Powwow returned to kick off the powwow season in Edmonton. (Photos by Paula Kirman).

‘Little Bird’ *cont. from p 14*

“I think in Esther it’s complicated for her to navigate her own personal history with being raised by a mother who lost her family in the Holocaust and then also understanding that her birth family has suffered through the genocide of residential schools, the Sixties Scoop, and also mass murder. [...] Esther just has so much love for her mother and so much love for her birth

family and where she comes from that it just ends up being a really beautiful, incredible story,” the leading lady commented. Contois is of Cree-Saulteaux heritage and a 2014 graduate of the Professional Training Program at the Centre for Indigenous Theatre. *Little Bird* is her breakthrough role, and the journey has been an intense one. She worked with a dialect specialist to perfect the Montreal-Jewish accent of Esther, studied Judaism and Jewish culture through intensive instruction in preparation for the role.

She even became a connoisseur of Jewish food – matzoh ball soup being her favorite. Now, the series is ready for binge watching, and the young ingenue can only sit back as audiences fall in love with Esther and her story.

“I think inherently it’s a nerve-wracking

experience overall. But I think that putting that trust in the directors and putting that trust in everyone who has had a hand in getting this show to audiences makes me feel a lot better.”

When asked what she admires most about the character she spent so much time inhabiting, Contois commented thoughtfully: “I think the thing that I admire about her the most is her tenacity to really understand and to take care of the people around her. Because while she’s going through this incredibly tumultuous journey, she’s also conscious and trying so hard to not be disrespectful to her Jewish mother and to not be disrespectful to her Indigenous family and I think she just has so much love for the people around her and that’s something I really admired, and I really enjoyed playing.”

The story is gripping, and the characters compelling to watch. What comes through most is the humanity of the project. Audiences care about Esther, and along with her they will celebrate her victories, and cry sincerely with all she must endure. *Little Bird* is now available to stream on Crave and APTN.

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault**  
Member of Parliament  
Edmonton Centre

Contact Our Constituency Office  
Tel.: 780-442-1888  
E-mail: [randy.boissonnault@parl.gc.ca](mailto:randy.boissonnault@parl.gc.ca)

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# Happy Pride Day and Month

By Xavier Kataquapit

Happy Pride Month to the LGBTQ+ and Two Spirited community. I was very happy to see that in Kirkland Lake recently the Mayor and Council celebrated Pride Day with a ceremony announcing a rainbow colour sidewalk in the downtown core. There are also many other celebrations of Pride Day and Pride Month being held in Northern Ontario and across Canada which is a great thing to see.

Myself and my friends are either gay, bisexual, LGBTQ+, Two Spirited or supportive of these groups and that makes me feel safe and confident of who I am and where I am. Many Indigenous gay people refer to themselves as Two Spirited and Indigenous people, especially before colonization, have a long history of being open and tolerant of sexual identities. It is good to see that the world is moving to a more open, less hateful mindset when it comes to sexual preferences.

Many of my older friends talk about the 1950s, 60s, 70s and 80s and the struggle they had to go through being gay or being part of the LGBTQ+ community. Those were the days when racism, bigotry and homophobia were more or less normal. You also have to remember that homosexuality was decriminalized in Canada in 1969. Thank goodness things have changed to a great degree. However, there are still some fundamental religious groups that are being used by powerful interests to move our democracies and our beliefs in fascist, right wing directions and using homophobia as a tool works for them.

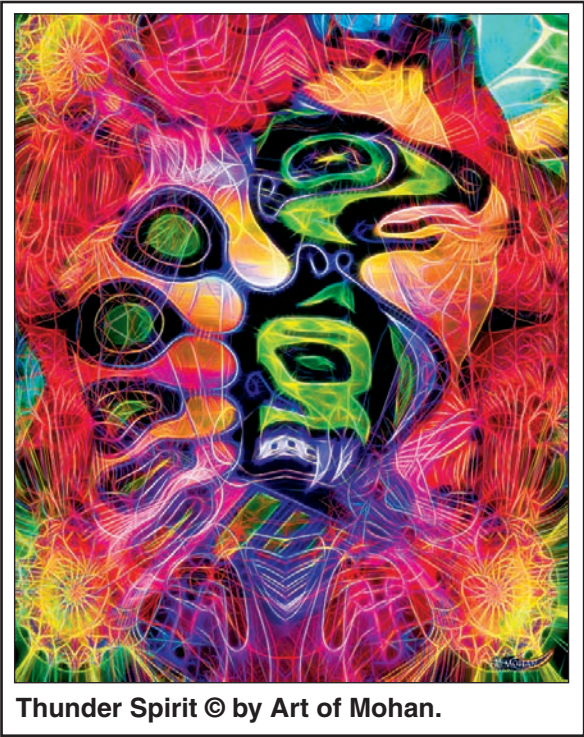
Most Christians I know are big believers in being open and loving and they do not have hate in their hearts. However, there is a core group of people who are being manipulated to the right with the use of hatred in terms of sexual preferences, race, environmental and conservation ideals as well as a democracy more

interested in sharing the wealth. It is up to us to rise against all of this hate and including the idea that justifies any kind of war and violence in this world. We all should realize by now that war is just about sacrificing our young people for the benefit of those who make money on conflict.

Congratulations to all those who support Pride Day and Pride Month as they are standing up for people and being supportive with love and care rather than hate and intolerance. People have been killed, discredited and marginalized because they were gay and part of the LGBTQ+ identity. Finally there is hope that love and sanity will prevail and our world and it's people will become more loving and open. However, that is not a guarantee as things could change quickly with right wing governments getting elected and deciding on how things develop. That is why I am so excited about so many people standing up against hate and supporting Pride Day and Pride Month. We need to keep doing this and to make sure that those who preach hate and intolerance do not prevail.

If you are Indigenous, gay and part of the LGBTQ+ identity, you really understand what it is to be in a minority and oppressed. We certainly know what homophobia, racism and bigotry is all about having experienced it first hand. I urge all my brothers and sisters to stand up to the hate and promote love and peace as much as possible. You can do this by attending pro LGBTQ+ Two Spirited events and ceremonies, communicate your feelings and ideas to those in your circle at work, in your family and everywhere you live.

Do not let fear stop you because we have to remember the poetic writings of German Lutheran pastor Martin Niemöller recalling the growth of intolerant language and ideas in Germany during the war years when they persecuted Jewish people. "First they came for



Thunder Spirit © by Art of Mohan.

the Communists and I did not speak out - Because I was not a Communist; Then they came for the Socialists and I did not speak out - Because I was not a Socialist; Then they came for the trade unionists and I did not speak out - Because I was not a trade unionist; Then they came for the Jews and I did not speak out - Because I was not a Jew; Then they came for me and there was no one left to speak out for me.”

The lesson in this quote is that wherever you see hate being promoted never go along with it and fight it as much as you can because if you do not, your own safety will be at risk in a world where fascist and right wing ideals prevail. If you do not push back on hate and anti-democratic ideas you and the generations to come will pay for it in a world that is dark and oppressive.

Happy Pride Month to everyone.

For more columns by Xavier Kataquapit visit [underthenorthernsky.com](http://underthenorthernsky.com).

## Artworks *cont. from p 20*

City in order to collect feedback on the development of the City’s Indigenous Framework.

The Indigenous Framework was created as an intentional step forward for the City of Edmonton to meaningfully support Truth and Reconciliation efforts with Indigenous Peoples who live, work, and connect with Edmonton for a variety of reasons.

Each artist was asked to tell a story through the creation of a visual art piece, and these artworks embody how the City, as an organization, should live out kinship and how to be a good relative to each other and to the land.

"The installation of these artworks by four remarkable Indigenous artists is a testament to the reclamation of Indigeneity in public spaces in our city, and a reminder to us all that we are all connected through creativity, story and relationships," said Sanjay Shahani, Executive Director of the Edmonton Arts Council.

The artwork collection is located on the northeast side of City Council Chambers, on the second floor of City Hall.

The four artworks will be displayed prominently outside of City Council Chambers as an important reminder of the Mayor and Council

and City Administration’s commitment and responsibility to build good relations with Indigenous Peoples and to recognize that we all have roles to play on the journey of Truth and Reconciliation.

The accompanying video, Spirit and Art: Learning Through Stories, is also available to watch and includes additional details on the intent and spirit of the artworks by each artist.

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