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# Kaleido Festival features cultural program

By Terry Lusty, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

A fabulous fall season crept up on Edmonton this year, and with it came the Kaleido Family Arts Festival along 118th Avenue, between 90th and 95th Street.

The fun-filled annual event moved forward and, as in years past, incorporated a marvelous Indigenous component on Saturday, September 14 at the Takwakin (Autumn) Village where tipis, wall tents, an open stage area and a firepit made for a fine strolling, viewing and photography venue - especially for folks wishing to take in Native culture at its finest.

There was also tea and freshly cooked bannock to satisfy one's taste buds, as well as traditional games, artisans, selling their arts and crafts, storytelling and, of course, the joy of simply being around good people smiling, laughing and

savoring a fine weekend outing!

Performing Indigenous artists ruled the afternoon, walking visitors through a variety of contemporary talents such as traditional pow-wow demonstrations by the Running Thunder Dancers, Brianna Lizotte's Metis fiddle tunes, and Indigenous vocalist Tammy Lamouche who demonstrated her abilities at contemporary, soul and rhythm and blues songs.

Additionally, big bustle fancy and hoop dancer, Jerry Saddleback Jr., not only exhibited his skills but also provided a brief lesson to young and old alike on the intricacies of hoop dancing. Jerry Saddleback Sr., incidentally, was a veteran hoop dancer who mentored a number of younger dancers, including champions. A young dancer, Alyson Cardinal performed the hoop dance while



Brianna Lizotte at Kaleido Fest.



Hoopdancer Jerry Saddleback Jr. Photos by Terry Lusty

Al Crawford and Doreen Cardinal took turns at emceeing most of the afternoon's delightful entertainment. Numerous people in the audience swiftly pulled out their mobile phones to record the colour and energy demonstrated by these artists.

Continuing the magic of dance, the Red Thunder Dancers thrilled the highly captive audience with a perfor-

mance that featured intricate footwork, stylized dance patterns and amazing sweeping and swaying motions.

Indeed, Takwakin Village proved a most inviting, friendly and energizing place to spend the day. And hungry visitors were always welcome to locate the open firepit between tipis where free tea and bannock were available on a first come, first served basis.

The fiddling prowess of Brianna Lizotte got toes a-tapping and bodies swaying to the electric atmosphere created by this amazing musician.

While all this was transpiring, folks continued to tour around the village and take in the sights, sounds and experiences. The festival provided new experiences for many of the visitors, helping to raise awareness, bridge the gap between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities and aid the general process of reconciliation.

A hearty congratulations to the organizers for the exceptional Indigenous program element coordinated by M J Belcourt Moses and her assistant, Doreen Cardinal.

# Orange Shirt Day Run & Walk doubles in size

By Terry Lusty, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter



Morgan Chalifoux, 2023 recipient

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The fourth annual Orange Shirt Day Run and Walk, originated by Edmonton-based lawyer Anita Cardinal, witnessed tremendous growth this year in the city's river valley, just across the North Saskatchewan River from the Leg grounds by the Kinsmen Park Centre. Participants totalled 700 runners and walkers - almost doubling the numbers that took part last year.

While the past couple of years enjoyed warm, sunny weather, this year's temperatures were somewhat chillier. However, that did not deter the runners nor the supportive visitors who still managed to make their way to the commemorative event in droves, which helped the fundraising element that assists organizers in their support of a youth runners' initiative in Edmonton.

Even the local, provincial and federal politicians got caught up in the spirit of reconciliation and the accompanying Every Child Matters movement that now pervades all across the country.

Performing artists Stephanie Harpe and Maria Dunn made their appearance again this year to entertain the on-hand crowd that formed a virtual sea of orange with all their brightly coloured orange garments. To Harpe and Dunn, the occasion and opportunity to perform vocal arrangements is simply another shining example of giving back to the community.

The run and walk also played host to a number of exhibitors, displays and information booths with representation from the Canadian Native Friendship Centre, Edmonton Public Library, the city's Indigenous Relations Office, and others.

As the afternoon wore along, the overhead sun shone brighter and warmer, the runners started completing their circuits and medals were draped around the necks of all participants. This year's wood-carved necklaces were in the shape of a feather, suspended from an orange ribbon. Always a fine memento for participants to take home, as a reminder of the role they played in the spirit and continuing drive towards reconciliation.



Round Dance at the Edmonton Orange Shirt Day Walk and Run. Photo by Terry Lusty



# Brendan Moore elected new National Chief of CAP

Article and photos by Terry Lusty, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter



Newly elected: Brendan Moore and Shawna Jean

Ottawa was a beehive of activity recently as delegates from across Canada converged on the city's Marriott Hotel for the 53rd anniversary of the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP). This particular year, 2024, was a more emotional one for many delegates in that an election was taking place for the two senior-most executive positions - the National Chief and the Vice-Chief. Once the counting was concluded, the New Brunswick candidate, Brendan Moore, was declared the new National Chief.

Moore, of Mi'kma'ki and Scottish heritage, has a record of 14 years with the New Brunswick Aboriginal Peoples Council and was strongly endorsed by that body in his quest for the national chieftanship. He possesses a strong athletic background and is a man who walked the Red Road to arrive at the point he has in his life.

The race for the position of National Vice - Chief was highly contested with five delegates in the running. After the first round of balloting, three of the five were caught up in a real nail-biter as they were deadlocked in a three-way tie. After round two of balloting, however, it was an exuberant Shawna Jean from Alberta who prevailed and was acknowledged as the new Vice-Chief.

Jean is a dedicated hockey mom, a business supporter and community supporter. She and her husband, Dwayne, are the proud parents of four children in northern Alberta.

When not performing Indigenous Congress of Alberta Association (ICAA) business, she may be found at a board or committee meeting, doing research, volunteering, jingle dancing, or giving back to her community in one way or another. In short, she keeps extremely busy, lives her Cree culture and serves her community well in more ways than one. That kind of commitment will serve CAP very well down the road.

One day earlier, Sept. 19, a special forum on Indigenous people with disabilities was the focus of attention. The 11 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. presentation began with an opening prayer by Maritimer Georgina Knockwood (a.k.a. Red Fox Woman) and remarks from the National Chief, Elmer St. Pierre. Tied into the session was the opportunity to review differing ideas, concepts, understanding and views regarding the widespread need for programs that accommodate and advocate for those with challenging conditions. Special guest speaker Dr. Lynn Gehl from Toronto delivered her thoughts and happens to be an ardent advocate for Indigenous rights including for those with disabilities. A follow-up round table addressed such matters as need, barriers, treatment, shortfalls and prospects of developing not only recommendations, but potential solutions and improvements.

At the Sept. 20 start of CAP's Annual General Assembly (AGA), a land recognition of Algonquin Territory was offered. This was succeeded by a number of annual reports and St. Pierre's acknowledgement of the commitment of the Elder and Youth Council that lends attention to community wellness and the Sixties Scoop.

Additional funding plus expansion of

child welfare are of concern he added as is the lack of support for land rights which he deems "counter productive" to what CAP's been fighting for and, thus, "entrenches old colonial approaches rather than advancing reconciliation." He additionally blasted the feds for neglecting capacity development and funding, and not adequately dealing with the CAP - Daniels decision which he says is "minimal."

St. Pierre further criticized the United Nation's (UN) work in human rights as an "exercise in futility" regarding the Native community, as well as being shut out from a seat to deal with other matters, including reconciliation.

Outgoing vice-chief Kim Beaudin, reported on concerns related to Indigenous identity, political

advocacy and MMIWG&2S awareness. Funding and aiding the urban Indigenous population are always an issue he added, as are corrections, civil liberties, justice, wellness, and more.

Other brief reports came from the Elders Council with particular mention of housing, justice, youth-Elder relations, communications,

Continued on page 8

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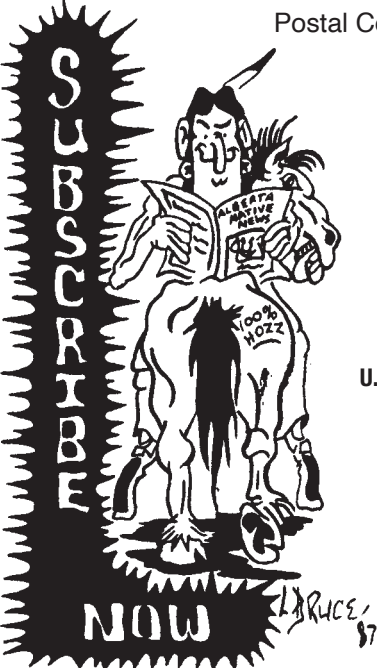
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## The number of deaths at the hands of police officers is appalling

By First Nations Leadership Council

The First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) is appalled by the unprovoked violence used against First Nations people by several law enforcement agencies across the country, resulting in the tragic deaths of nine individuals in just the last month.

This shocking and horrific behaviour is a result of the deep and ongoing systemic racism First Nation peoples face in this country, the severe lack of cultural competency among law enforcement officers, and the failure of Canada to provide adequate and effective policing to First Nations peoples.

In 1995, the Supreme Court of Canada ruling of R. v. Gladue acknowledged the systemic over representation of Indigenous peoples within the Canadian justice system. This ruling proves the inherent biases of our existing justice system that continues to harm First Nations people.

As outlined in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action thirty and thirty-nine, the FNLC calls on the federal, provincial and territorial governments to take accountability for the over-policing and criminalization of First Nations peoples in this country. We, as the FNLC, call on all levels of government to track and report on instances of violence resulting in the death of First Nations people at the hands of law enforcement agencies.

The FNLC will continue to advocate against the discriminatory treatment of First Nations peoples in B.C. by law enforcement agencies, and demand culturally competent and sustainable policing practices for First Nations peoples. We, as the FNLC, call for justice, accountability and a higher level of oversight during the investigations of the incidents, ensuring that First Nations voices are heard,

respected and honoured.

"On September 30, Canada marked the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, yet First Nations families across the country continue to grieve their loved ones who have been struck down by police," said BCAFN Regional Chief Terry Teegee. "Indigenous peoples continue to be ten times more likely to be killed by police than the average Canadian. This is totally unacceptable, and Canada needs to stop dragging their heels and support the implementation of a National Indigenous Justice Strategy, including the provision of adequate resourcing for Indigenous police forces," he concluded.

"Joining law enforcement does not grant officers a license to kill, yet recent incidents reveal a harrowing reality that demonstrates the brutal and unjust mistreatment of Indigenous peoples," stated Hugh Braker, First Nations Summit Political Executive. "The loss of these cherished Indigenous lives speaks to a lack of compassion by the police, and the FNLC condemns the broken colonial, state-sponsored systems that allow these deeply racist organisations to operate as they do. We are deeply shocked and outraged by recent events, and we will continue to stand firm in our pursuit of transformative systemic changes to eradicate racism in the justice system."


UBCIC President Grand Chief Stewart Phillip concluded, "We are concerned that the police have grown all too comfortable employing deadly force on Indigenous peoples without facing consequences. The FNLC stands in solidarity with those mourning loved ones who have lost their lives in interactions with police. Canada must take immediate action to outlaw 'wellness' checks by police and invest in restoring justice by and for Indigenous peoples. We extend our most heartfelt condolences to the families, communities, and loved ones affected, and we remain steadfast in our commitment to ending police violence."

Jack Piché, Hoss Lightning-Saddleback, Tammy Bateman, Jason West, Stevan Dedam, Daniel Knife, Ronald Skunk, Jon Wells and Joey Desjarlais, we honour you and will stand together to carry your memory forward.



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# First Nations chiefs reject \$47.8 billion child welfare agreement

By Jeremy Appel, LJI Reporter

First Nations leaders from across Canada voted down a \$47.8-billion child welfare settlement with the federal government at an Assembly of First Nations (AFN) special chiefs’ assembly on Treaty 7 territory.

The special meeting, which occurred from Oct. 16 to 18 in Calgary, focused on a draft agreement AFN leadership, Chiefs of Ontario and Nishnawbe Aski Nation reached with the federal government in July focused on long-term reform of the First Nations Child and Family Services (FNCFS) program.

On Oct. 17, the assembly’s second day, 267 out of 414 chiefs, or 64 per cent, voted against finalizing the agreement with the feds.

The following day, delegates in attendance overwhelmingly voted to overhaul the negotiations process, with 186 votes in favour, seven opposed and 10 abstentions.

The agreement was designed to address what the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT) found in 2016 to be Canada’s discrimination against First Nations families and children by systematically defunding the on-reserve child welfare system.

The CHRT tasked the feds with reaching a \$40,000-per-child compensation agreement with First Nations, as well as an agreement towards long-term reform of the First Nations child welfare system to assure decades of discrimination doesn’t repeat itself.

AFN National Chief Cindy Woodhouse Nepinak, who was elected at a special chiefs assembly last year, urged delegates to vote in favour of the draft agreement in her Oct. 16 opening remarks, emphasizing that the agreement is just a “starting point” towards revitalized First Nations self-governance.

“For generations, provincial and federal governments imposed colonial laws to redefine us. Now we can define ourselves,” said Woodhouse Nepinak.

“We have secured the money, we’ve negotiated control. Now it’s your choice.”

The national chief cautioned that there’s no guarantee First Nations will get a better deal if they turn down the draft agreement, given “Canada’s current political reality.”

“Time is running out on this government. You don’t have to be a political scientist to figure out that there’s a good chance we will be dealing with a different government sooner than later,” Woodhouse Nepinak noted.

“And based on that history that we know, can we count on a Conservative government to negotiate a better deal on First Nations child welfare?”

Cindy Blackstock of the First Nations Family and Child Caring Society was one of the leading voices opposed to the agreement.

The Caring Society, as it’s otherwise known, took the federal government to the CHRT alongside the AFN, but played no role in negotiating the settlement agreement.

Acknowledging in her Oct. 16 remarks to the assembly that \$47.8 billion “is a very large number,” Blackstock noted some “fine print” in the agreement that called its ability to deliver on its promises into question.

Section 383 of the agreement notes that all of the funding commitments outlined in the agreement “remain subject to annual appropriation by the Parliament of Canada, or other necessary approval processes required by the Government of Canada.”

In practice, Blackstock said, this means that the AFN is being asked to vote on a “one-year funding agreement with a lot of discretion from Canada after that.”

The “other necessary approval processes” mentioned in the agreement, Blackstock added,

are “undefined” and “arbitrary,” which she suggested could be prone to abuse.

Even if the agreement did provide consistent funding for its 10-year duration, other critics questioned what would happen if discrimination persists after a decade.

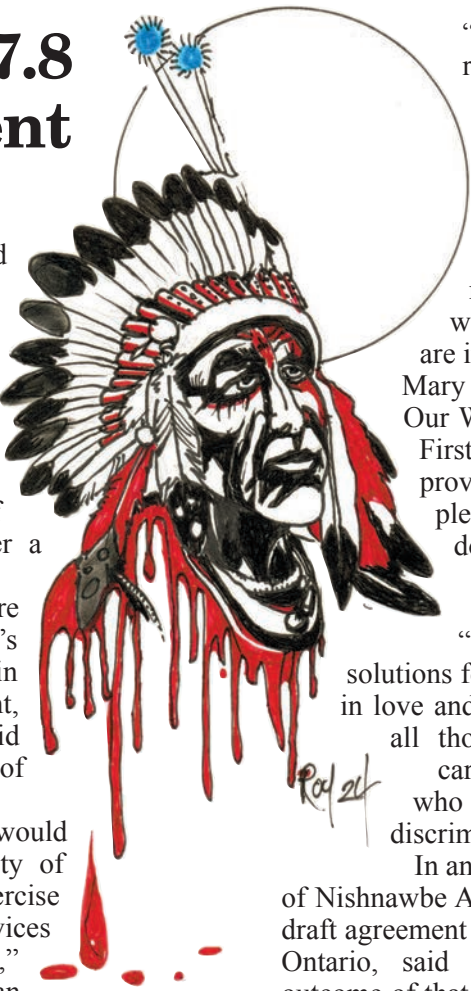
Additional concerns were raised about the AFN’s “overly dominant role” in implementing the agreement, which Squamish Nation said came at the expense of regional representation.

“These shortcomings would have undermined the ability of First Nations to exercise meaningful control over services affecting our children,” Squamish Nation said in an Oct. 18 statement.

Another criticism was that the agreement only applies to First Nations people who went through the on-reserve child welfare system.

Natalie Starlight Fraser, a youth and social worker from Siksika Nation, told delegates how she was taken off reserve when she was three and placed into foster care. Once she aged out of the system at 18, she went “straight to the homeless shelter.”

Since she was off reserve, Fraser received support from the provincial government, which ended when she turned 22.



“I need chiefs to step up for off-reserve youth, because they deserve justice and healing no matter where they are located,” said Fraser.

“Reserves are a colonial concept. This is our land. These are our kids, and not being on reserve does not dictate their worthiness. It is not their fault they are in the Alberta system.”

Mary Teegee, chair of the Our Children Our Way Society, which represents 25 First Nations child and family service providers in British Columbia, was pleased to see the agreement voted down.

“Today is a day of dreams,” she said in an Oct. 18 statement.

“We came together to get the best solutions for our children—solutions rooted in love and justice. Our work here honours all those children we have lost and carries hope for a new generation who will not suffer from Canada’s discrimination.”

In an Oct. 17 statement, the leadership of Nishnawbe Aski Nation, which negotiated the draft agreement alongside the AFN and Chiefs of Ontario, said it was “disappointed” in the outcome of that day’s vote but respected the will of the majority.

However, the statement said it was “shameful” to see delegates applaud as the agreement was voted down, accusing many of those who celebrated of “being those in the child welfare agencies who will continue to benefit from the status quo.”

“Instead of moving forward together in a strength-based approach, we saw the divisiveness that unfortunately just continues to cause harm to our children,” it read.



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# Canada must meet its Treaty obligations for clean water

By the Chiefs Steering Committee on Technical Services

Indigenous Services Minister, Patty Hajdu met with Chiefs from Treaty 6, 7 and 8 in the Alberta Region this month. The Minister requested the meeting and it is the third time Treaty Chiefs have sat down with her since Bill C-61 was tabled in 2023. First Nations of Treaty 6, 7 and 8 were not consulted prior to Canada’s drafting of the Bill. This proposed legislation is expected to pass into third reading in Parliament before the year is over with none of the significant concerns of the Chiefs Steering Committee on Technical Services addressed thus far. Minister Hajdu has committed to the establishment of a Treaty Bilateral Table on Water with Treaty Chiefs in the Alberta Region. Treaty Chiefs are cautiously optimistic that the Treaty Bilateral Table on Water and Related Infrastructure will demonstrate their expectation for Honor of the Crown when discussing water and First Nations jurisdiction.

However, the Treaty Chief’s meeting with Minister Hajdu comes at a tenuous time, due to Canada’s formal, legal position in response to the Shamattawa First Nations national class-action lawsuit on clean water, launched last week. The Shamattawa First Nations lawsuit picks up where

the original First Nations Water Settlement Agreement leaves off and aims to address the continued urgent lack of access to clean drinking water in First Nations across Turtle Island. The Chiefs Steering Committee stands with the Shamattawa First Nation as water is a basic, human right and that Canada has a duty to all First Nations.

The statements of defense from Canada’s justice lawyers are cause for grave concern about the commitment of Canada to working on Treaty recognition in the area of water, among other issues. This legal case, coupled with the Minister’s comments in the House Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs (INAN) on October 10th, 2024, and her recent comments to the media, demonstrates how Canada is moving quickly to absolve itself of First Nations’ Treaty rights to water and related infrastructure with Bill C-61.

As Chief Rupert Meneen, Tall Cree Tribal Government in Treaty No. 8 Territory asserts, “C-61 is meant to offload Canada’s legal responsibility regarding clean and safe water for our peoples and will leave First Nations with the

## Orange Shirt Day Performers



Dawn and Margaret Burnstick performed for the crowd at the Orange Day Walk/Run in Edmonton. Photo by Terry Lusty

gross liabilities that successive Governments of Canada created after decades of underfunding and inadequate infrastructure services.”

# New recovery centre slated for Smoky Lake County in 2026

By Jeremy Appel, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

A new provincially funded addictions recovery community is slated to open in Smoky Lake County, located near Métis Crossing, in 2026.

The Healing Waters Recovery Community will offer free, culturally appropriate treatment for Métis people, including opioid agonist therapy, counselling, employment support, financial and other support, for up to 300 people a year, the Otipemisiwak Métis Government announced in August.

Kaila Mitchell, the Otipemisiwak secretary for mental health and addictions, emphasized in an interview with *Alberta Native News* that while the recovery centre is open to anyone seeking

treatment, its programming will be oriented towards Métis people in Alberta.

“Our culture is healing, and when you’re disconnected from your culture, it creates a sense of isolation and lack of identity,” said Mitchell.

“Participating in your culture and feeling grounded in who you are is really important. It’s a huge determinant of mental health. People don’t tend to, from my experience, finish programming in places where they don’t feel welcome or where they feel out of place.”

To that end, she said, it was important to have the recovery community located near Métis Crossing.

“It’s land that’s tied to Métis past and present, it’s a beautiful area, and it will help create that strong cultural foundation for people who get on the land treatment in their recovery journey while they’re at the facility,” Mitchell explained.

The Healing Waters project was originally a “dream” of the late Métis Elder Herb Belcourt, which was corroborated by feedback from many Métis Nation of Alberta citizens, said Mitchell.

The nation then held engagement sessions with county residents to inform them of where the facility was slated to be built and how many jobs it would bring to the community.

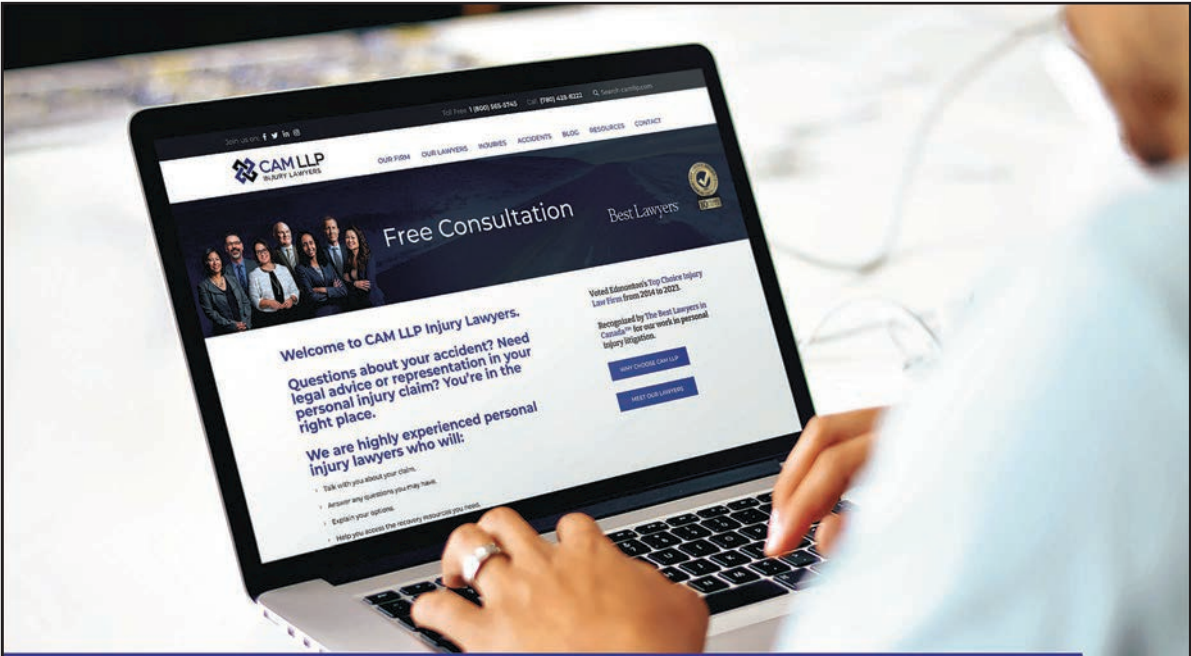
According to Mitchell, Healing Waters will have somewhere between 40 to 60 full-time staff, who will deliver programming developed by the Otipemisiwak’s Métis Government’s Health Department.

The Alberta government, which has committed to building a “recovery-oriented system of care,” has been supportive throughout the process.

The province has committed \$35 million to construct the facility and will be providing operational grants once it opens.

“This partnership will provide life-saving addiction treatment to those in need and rebuild families and communities affected by this disease,” Minister of Mental Health and Addiction Dan Williams said in an Aug. 16 joint

Continued on page 7



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# New book is a guide to learning the Nakoda Language

Learning a new language can be a daunting task and preserving a language presents a whole other layer of challenges. However, as authors Vincent Collette, Tom Shawl and Wilma Kennedy point out, the Nakoda language was spoken for millenia but due to the trauma of residential schools it is now seriously endangered. There are only a handful of elderly speakers left.

“The Nakoda language is a gift of the Creator and is at the very core of Nakoda cultural identity,” explain the authors in the forward of their new book, published recently by University of Regina Press. They then present a well thought out tool that documents, revitalizes, strengthens and teaches Nakoda language and culture.

*Nakón-wico’i’e né uspénic’iciyac / Practising Nakoda: A Thematic Dictionary* is a user-friendly guide that teaches core Nakoda vocabulary and how to use it in conversation.

*Practising Nakoda* contains basic Nakoda vocabulary, organized into 30 themes (such as animals, clothing, directions, and time) and divided into sections meant to enhance daily and ceremonial communication (including dances, ceremonies, and ceremonial clothing). The guide provides words for every theme from which the reader can forge a general view of word formation patterns.

In a thematic dictionary, words are not organized alphabetically but are grouped according to the root element or their meaning. Since Nakoda is a polysynthetic language where words are often built up with many elements that attach to the root, this is a necessary format that enhances the learner’s “morphological awareness.” The guide will help learners identify the root of each word, along with the “morphemes,” critical to the successful learning of the Nakoda language, and the comprehension of complex vocabulary.

Vincent Collette is a professor of linguistics at the Université du Québec à Chicoutimi, and the editor of *Nakón-i’a wo! Beginning Nakoda* and *A Concise Dictionary of Nakoda (Assiniboine)*. He is interested in Indigenous languages of North America, and is specialized in historical linguistics, semantics, and morphology.

Tom Shawl has worked as a Nakoda culture and language instructor at the Aannii Nakoda college in Fort Belknap and jr./sr. high in Harlem, Montana. He currently manages the Teeples IGA

## River Cree Round Dance



A large round dance event was held at the River Cree Conference Centre this month to raise awareness and honour Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women. Photo by Terry Lusty.

grocery store in Browning, Montana, and is an instructor for the YAM program based out of Montana State University.

Wilma Kennedy (1923–2020) Heñága hótá’i wíya (Echo of the elk woman) was an educator and activist from Carry the Kettle Nakoda First Nation. She was involved with the Nakoda community’s culture and traditions, and co-authored *Nakón-i’a wo! Beginning Nakoda* and *A Concise Dictionary of Nakoda (Assiniboine)*.

*Nakón-wico’i’e né uspénic’iciyac / Practising Nakoda: A Thematic Dictionary* can be ordered from University of Regina Press or from your favourite book seller.

## Recovery centre cont. from p 6

statement with the Otipemisiwak Métis Government, referring to addiction.

The provincial government has committed to building 11 recovery communities across the province, five of which are planned for Indigenous communities, including Healing Waters.

According to documents obtained by *APT News*, the four First Nations with recovery communities being built on their territory—Blood Tribe, Enoch, Siksika and Tsuut’ina—have stopped implementing the province’s recovery addiction treatment policy, due to concerns that it was drafted without Indigenous consultation.

A key concern is that treatment centres are required to use the My Recovery Plan app, which collects patients’ personal health information and

stores it in a private database that is outside First Nations’ control.

Organizations that use the app are forced to sign a non-disclosure agreement which prohibits them from criticizing the company.

Mitchell said this isn’t a concern the Otipemisiwak Métis Government shares at the moment.

“Our First Nations cousins can speak for themselves, and we absolutely honour their voice, but right now there’s not a lot to comment on, because we’re focused on the development of our truly incredible recovery continuum,” she said.

Mitchell added that the Alberta government “has been a really good partner on this recovery centre initiative.”

Learn Nakoda vocabulary and how to use it in conversation.

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A THEMATIC DICTIONARY

Vincent Collette, Tom Shawl,  
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## Proudly partnering with Maskwacis First Nations

Capital Power has signed a 3-year partnership and equity option agreement for our Halkirk 2 Wind project with Louis Bull Tribe, Ermineskin Cree Nation, Montana First Nation and Samson Cree Nation of Maskwacis.

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# Our cover artist: Raven Mohan

"Spirit of the Snow" is an evocative piece of art by Raven Timothy Mohan that blends the spiritual symbolism of a snow owl with the intricate patterns of a dreamcatcher. The owl's luminous golden eyes draw the viewer in exuding an aura of wisdom and silent vigilance. Its feathers, pristine and detailed with subtle Celtic patterns, represent the artist's deep connection to both Celtic and Native heritage. Surrounding the owl are the delicate threads of a dreamcatcher, weaving together the elements of protection, dreams and ancient traditions.

The dreamcatcher's circular form subtly frames the owl, adorned with beads and symbols that represent balance and connection to the spirit world. The vibrant, swirling patterns in the background evoke the mystical energy of dreams, with bursts of blue, orange, and violet, alluding to the fusion of cultures and the merging of the physical and spiritual realms.

Artist Raven Timothy Mohan explains, "This artwork symbolizes the harmony between Celtic

and Native traditions, united through the powerful imagery of the owl and the dreamcatcher. The owl, often seen as a symbol of wisdom and foresight is a sacred animal in both cultures. In Celtic mythology, it is associated with the moon and hidden knowledge, while in Native beliefs, it is a guide for the soul in the dream world. The dreamcatcher, rooted in Native traditions, serves as a protective shield, filtering out negative energies and fostering positive dreams and visions."

"Spirit of the Snow" reflects the artist's exploration of dual heritage, honouring the ancestral wisdom of both Celtic knotwork and Native symbols. The work invites viewers to contemplate the merging of different traditions, where dreams, protection and spiritual insight come together in a unified vision.

To view more art by Raven Timothy Mohan visit [whiteravenartstudio.com](http://whiteravenartstudio.com)



Stand Tall © by Raven Timothy Mohan

## Brendan Moore cont. from p 3

correctional services and varying events, occurrences and engagements.

CAP also presented reports on finances, special resolutions and bylaw recommendations.

The organization hosted its dinner and gala on Friday evening, Sept. 20 in the Victoria Ballroom of the Marriott Hotel.

Towards the conclusion of the banquet dinner and gala, the Congress paid homage to two delegates by presenting them with an Aboriginal Order of Canada for their inspiring careers and dedicated efforts at the community level. The youth category was bestowed upon British Columbia's Rainbow Eyes (a.k.a. Angela Davidson); the adult category to (yours truly), Alberta's Dr. Terry Lusty.

In her nomination of Dr. Lusty, Shawna Jean praised his longevity in helping and contributing to the Native community in several ways. He is, she stated, "well known as an Elder, activist, historian, author, poet and journalist" who has been recognized with an Honourary Doctor of

Laws and "continues to contribute to our community through sitting on boards, supporting Indigenous initiatives and sharing photos and stories of our Indigenous history."

The youth recipient, Rainbow Eyes, is known for being a key defender of old growth forests over the past four years in the Fairy Creek region of B.C. She initially got her inspiration while attending the Vancouver Island University First Nations Stewardship Technical Training Program and has worked diligently, helping to protect water, wildlife, lands, trees and cultural values for the coming generations. Her earlier involvements in Calgary consisted of helping cancer survivors, following her own battles with the ailment. She is also known for her role with the Green Party and as a spokesperson in the arena of lessening resource depletion and climate change.

Both recipients, Terry Lusty and Rainbow Eyes, were honoured with standing ovations.

The CAP banquet and gala evening concluded



CAP outgoing National Chief Elmer St. Pierre with newly elected National Chief Brendan Moore.

on a high note as delegates hung out and kicked up their heels on the dance floor and some even participated in karaoke singing.

Giving the final word to the newly-elected National Chief of CAP, Moore later shared the following message: "We're going to have to start building relationships and getting known and start meeting with various Indigenous organizations and communities. Start to build trust at that level and have people understand we're working on these things as well and have them understand [our] perspectives on it so we can come together and be more unified."



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## NEWSPAPER FOR SALE

After 40 years of publishing the Alberta Native News, the owners wish to retire. We are hoping some enterprising individual(s) with a passion for communicating Indigenous issues will carry on with publishing the newspaper. It is not easy in this day and age to produce a print media with a supporting digital presence but it is something that serves a vital interest for the Indigenous communities across Treaty 6, 7 and 8 territories.

**Expressions of interest from serious individuals are welcome.**

**Please contact Deborah Shatz, [nativeads@gmail.com](mailto:nativeads@gmail.com)**

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**By John Wirth**

She learned her craft over four arduous years in Calgary at The Alberta University for The Arts - an esteemed fine art institution. This familiar feeling that Brooke describes was the reason for her interest and a challenge to move forward in life. Could she still carve time out of a busy schedule to create any ceramic-ware for herself? To this she replied, "Not anymore, I put my energy and time into getting involved in all the school activities and my classes."

*John Wirth is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter.*



**Brooke Whiskeyjack is paving the way for future artists.**

[illegible]



# Cree artist shares beadwork and moose hide craftsmanship

By John Wirth, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Through her exquisite beadwork and traditional moose hide craftsmanship, Taylor Fehr is working to expand upon the rich heritage of her ancestors. Taylor is proud to be an Indigenous Nehiyaw (Cree) woman from Treaty Six Territory in Saskatchewan.

She is a talented and accomplished creator who specialises in harmonising the teachings of beadworking and the labour-intensive process of tanning moose hide into jewellery and fine wearable artwork. She performs the beautiful tradition of her peoples with great reverence to the land on which she lives as a guest on the unceded territory of the Halqeméylem, Skwxwúmesh, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations.

“I learned how [to] bead and got mostly inspired by my dad,” says Taylor. “He made all his regalia himself when he danced powwow. He

tanned his own hides and harvested his own porcupine quills. I never really got into it as a kid but as I got older, I appreciated his work more.” Taylor is currently passing on the traditional knowledge of processing and tanning moose hide using the traditional methods.

She reflects that, “I’m beyond grateful to be working beside my dad and sharing the knowledge of tanning hides.” During the process of creating a pair of striking moosehide canoes inlaid with glass beadwork, she stated that, “moose hide can be very difficult to work with sometimes. If you’re sewing through two layers [of the moose hide] you’ve got to pull out your pliers and that can take up quite a bit of time.” It was also a difficult process to hand sand the paddles that were a part of a set of earrings she was creating. Difficult, she said “but it’s definitely an accomplishment.”

With her goal of developing her “authentic signature piece” complete, Taylor continues to be a student of the art. The piece resembles the traditional home of her Cree ancestors in the form of a tipi; the designs were ornamented with porcupine quill, the fur from a rabbit and dentalium shell. For the benefit of those unfamiliar, these dentalium shells are from a mollusk that resembles the tusk of an animal. It has been praised and used by First Nations’ and Inuit peoples’ art for its distinct beauty and cultural significance in ceremony.

Taylor is a true supporter of the diverse local community of Indigenous artists in Vancouver. She says, “Being in those spaces where I’m at Indigenous markets around other creative artists gives me a sense of belonging. If I didn’t have beadwork in my life right now, I don’t know if I



Stunning earrings created by Taylor.



Taylor Fehr and her father.

traditional “strength is in our braids” powwow where the Northern Cree were the host drum group. By using her instagram page, she is able to promote Indigenous events throughout the city.

Taylor curates a social media account to connect with her clients and organise with fellow creators. Currently, she is in the process of setting up an Indigenous Market of her own. She is launching the market with the kind collaboration of the Bladerunners organisation - a community-based program that operates in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia.

The Bladerunners program bridges the gap for the urban Native community. They provide useful job training and job placement, counselling support, life skills for wellbeing to cater specifically to Aboriginal youth and young adults in the heart of downtown Vancouver. They are using this opportunity to have Indigenous small business owners come together to generously share their creations.

This development will provide a safe space to share Indigeneity with the entire community of the Greater Vancouver Area.


“It’s important to me to do this kind of work and have representation of our arts and culture in my bead work as an urban Indigenous artist because I want to be able to pass down everything I’ve learned on to the next generation” states Taylor. “I’ve taught many friends and family how to bead and seeing them make their own pieces and grow into their own artwork is really rewarding and heartwarming.”

You can find more of Taylor’s art on her business instagram page, [taylorthecreator333](#).



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# A day in someone else’s work boots

As a kid growing up on the Driftpile Cree Nation in Treaty 8 in northern Alberta, Deana Chalifoux wasn’t sure what she wanted to do when she grew up. That is until high school when she took part in a program that gave her exposure to multiple trades. Through that program, Deana found her calling as a welder.

Now a maintenance planner at the Syncrude site near Fort McMurray, Alta., Deana credits her trade for the opportunities she’s had in her career, and she wants other Indigenous youth to have those same opportunities.

One of the youth in the tour, Tayden Shott shadowed a welder in the Syncrude workshop.

“I believe that to see change, you must be part of the change,” says Deana, who helped launch a pilot with the Fort McKay First Nation (FMFN) that saw youth from the community spend a full day at Syncrude’s Central Maintenance Services

(CMS) and Support Services in early June.

Called *A Day in the Life of CMS and Support Services*, Deana pitched the idea of hosting Indigenous youth from a nearby community almost two years ago. While those who heard her pitch supported her vision, it took a lot of logistics and planning to make it happen.

Working with a small team that included members of Suncor’s Indigenous Workforce Development Team, Indigenous and Community Relations and FMFN Skills, Employment, Training committee representatives, Deana developed an agenda that included in-classroom discussions on safety, presentations from leaders, and an interactive day with tradespeople in the CMS shop and Support Services.

“I want to inspire youth and strike a spark for apprenticeship,” says Deana. “Youth deserve to know that there are more career options in our industry outside of being a heavy equipment operator. There are so many opportunities in CMS and I would love to see them filled by Indigenous people.”

While on the tour, Tayden Shott, felt that spark. He went to site thinking he wanted to be a heavy equipment mechanic but left CMS wanting to be a welder.

“It was a good day in the shop,” says Tayden. “I was surprised by the size of the machines and



Deana Chalifoux pitched the idea of hosting Indigenous youth from the region to understand trades and career opportunities.



Tayden shadows a welder in the Syncrude workshop.

enjoyed watching the demonstrations. It made me see that there are a lot of trades options out there.”

Tayden, a Grade 12 student from the Fort McKay First Nation, an archery athlete and trapper, spends a lot of time on the land but had never been to Syncrude’s maintenance shop before his visit. Being able to see what a day in CMS is like, meet tradespeople and leaders gave him new insight into what a career in the trades at an oil sands mine is like.

“The students got a VIP tour of CMS and Support Services and met a lot of very skilled tradespeople who were excited to talk about their work. They got to see what a career in the trades can offer, and what a day in the life of a welder looks like,” says Deana. “I look forward to having more students come in and inspiring the next group.”

Deana and the team are already working on the next Indigenous youth tour, with plans to host it before the end of the year.



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