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# Flying Canoë Volant Festival takes flight in YEG: Jan. 29 – Feb. 1

Thanks to the continuing support of their presenting sponsor ATB and numerous other community and corporate partners, La Cité Francophone / Centre Communautaire d'Edmonton is pleased to present the Flying Canoë Volant (FCV) on the evenings of Wednesday, January 29 to Saturday, February 1, 2025 (6-10 pm each evening). They had 100,000 visitors in 2024 and expect the same wonderful participation to this year's inclusive, iconic and community - connecting cultural celebration. For full details visit [flyingcanoevolant.ca](http://flyingcanoevolant.ca).

Here are just a few of the Festival highlights : The legend of the Flying Canoë will be brought to life once again with illuminated artworks by Dylan Toymaker, Virginie Rainville, Big Art (Calgary), Native Counseling Services of Alberta, Strathearn Art Walk Society, Firebrand Studios, True North Absurdities and Inventa (ATB), among many others, throughout the Mill Creek Ravine and Rutherford School Grounds.

In conjunction with their signature visual art, patrons will experience cultural programming in the Mill Creek Ravine by valued collaborators Native Counseling Services of Alberta, the Cunningham Family Band, beloved French-Canadian storyteller Roger Dallaire, and many more.

The FRANCO DÔME (Rutherford school grounds), presented by UNIS TV and Franco Music, is back with DJs, light shows and live

music with renowned Québec and Albertan musicians!

New this year, the Projection Dome (Rutherford School Grounds) is presented by Parallèle Alberta and the French Quarter BIA and will feature non-stop 360 degree short films during the entire festival. They will also have family films on Jan 31 and Feb 1!

FrancoQueer will take over this venue on January 30 for an evening of DJs, Videos and a Drag Show! Activate Arts Alberta will join in the canoe by hosting Little Chippers Ice Carving workshops on the Rutherford school grounds Jan 31 and Feb 1.

Radio Canada – Ici Alberta will present fun and interactive activities on 91 Street as will numerous other festival partners and sponsors. Food trucks – Squirrely Squirrel and Flipside BBQ will assist in satisfying any hunger after a long portage throughout the festival site!

CAFÉ bicyclette and La Cité francophone will be your go to sites for incredible food experiences, as always.

The true Canadian triathlon will continue once again with the Portage on the Prairie Relay consisting of a portage, an axe toss and bucksaw! You can register for this fundraising activity by visiting [flyingcanoevolant.ca](http://flyingcanoevolant.ca)

The festival will be held at La Cité Francophone, Rutherford school and grounds, and include portions of the Mill Creek Ravine.



**Flying Canoë Volant features French-Canadian, First Nation, and Métis traditions and illuminates Edmonton's Mill Creek Ravine.**

Keep your eyes and ears open for the many FCV mystical characters who will invade the Mill Creek Ravine, telling their tales of Flying Canoës and other sorcery.

The Flying Canoë Volant Cabaret (Théâtre Servus Credit Union) will feature the Chant'Ouest Festival January 30th. Flora Luna, Tammy Lamouche – Bryce Morin, Meera Sylvain, PONTEIX (Saskatchewan) Rooster Davis Band will perform on January 31 and JONES (Québec), La Troupe Zéphyr Dance, The Goddamsels and Second Hand Dream Car on February 1.

We encourage everyone to join in some winter magic, community joy and cultural excitement.

## MLA Brooks Arcand-Paul brings humility to Alberta's Legislation

By Laura Mushumanski, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

"It is not easy bringing understanding of reconciliation into action," said MLA Brooks Arcand-Paul when asked about *Bill 209: Reconciliation Implementation Act*.

Within the understanding of Indigenous Knowledge, bringing reconciliation into action involves an emotional, mental, physical, and spiritual journey of slowing down to really listen, engage in introspection, and walking with new knowledge by putting it into action. Over time this becomes a way of knowing and understanding the world differently. In this case, the reconciliation principles within Bill 209 provide an overview of how to advance reconciliation and put it into action; how to go about supporting community in a good way through acts, thoughts, and walks of humility.

Before Bill 209 was introduced on November 4, 2024, First Nations Edmonton-West Henday MLA Brooks Arcand-Paul met with the Assembly

of Treaty Chiefs within Alberta to talk about how as leaders, they can collectively support legislation that implements reconciliation into the Alberta Government. Reconciliation within Bill 209 also supports the Truth and Reconciliation (TRC) 94 Calls to Action report that was implemented in 2015.

"[I] don't see a lot of humility [within legislation]," noted the MLA. "I try to keep it as a core."

Arcand-Paul understood the importance of meeting with the Assembly Treaty Chiefs to discuss how to support community and bring Indigenous law understandings and principles into Bill 209. The importance of this was to build treaty relations with Indigenous Nations and Non-Indigenous people through legislation, so in turn Indigenous peoples and communities can be supported in accordance with the TRC reconciliation principles. With respect to the Assembly of

Treaty Chiefs, Arcand-Paul heard about the Indigenous peoples'

principles of walking in a good way, directly related to the Seven Sacred Teachings: Love, Respect, Courage, Truth, Honesty, Humility, and Wisdom.

The purposes of the *Bill 209: Reconciliation Implementation Act* are embedded in the understandings of reconciliation as an action towards holding the Alberta Government accountable and responsible to advance delivery of programs and services for Indigenous peoples to support their livelihood and well-being. This also includes reconciliation principles as stated in the TRC 94 Calls to Action—that all Government decisions be made in accordance with these principles. There needs to be transparency by the Alberta Government to establish and report on measures taken that coincide with the calls to action, respectively, and to follow through with engaging in meaningful and honourable consultation where any decisions are guided by the Supreme Court of Canada.

These purposes outline how the Alberta Government can engage in reconciliation as an understanding of how to acknowledge Indigenous ways of knowing, being, doing, and understanding that directly impacts community, ecological relationships as sustainable knowledge in how to engage in the continuation of life for all that reside on Mother Earth, including the water

Continued on page 12

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# Tracey Warren: Put the joy of life ahead of your work

By Laura Mushumanski, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

“When you find something that you love—your passion, it is easier to not give up. It’s your walk to your gift, to you,” says founder of Child Safe Canada, Tracey Warren. Work is important, but putting the joy of life ahead of your work is fundamental for living a good life.

Back in 2002, Warren began Child Safe Canada because safe education “means everything to me [by] being together and helping each other.” It is fostered in prevention, support, and how we are guiding children by teaching and walking with kids at younger ages on how to stay safe.

Warren grew up on the streets, and that came with a lot of challenges for her that led to her role within community “serving an important purpose ... by being able to give back [to community] in a meaningful way.” The safe education programs that Tracey started doing on her own grew into accessible education from coast to coast that community agencies utilize to teach safety for youth.

Being a Cree/Metis woman and knowing the importance of community and taking care of each other, Warren also created safe education programs for Indigenous communities with Indigenous reflected content. Child Safe Canada provides learning packages with nations to run the programs themselves in their own communities, including educational information on asking for guidance, reaching out for help, and anger management—having in mind that these programs are there to “plant



seeds to start and take root” with children.

“It is a lot easier to be brave when you are doing what you love—you will be successful if you do it in a good way.”

Involved in community all her life, Warren shares a long link through her ancestors as Metis people have always stayed safe through education and Ways of Knowing, doing what “us Metis do: we survive and thrive.”

The teachings that Warren walks with are embedded in “Indigenous persons, we are one: kind, honouring, genuine, present... it all starts and ends with what we know [by] listening and [that] brought me to where I am today.” A mentor along the way showed Tracey “what was ‘right’... [acknowledging] families and children [and asking them] what is it that you need?” Another teaching that influenced Warren was “being a kind and gentle person about sharing knowledge” and since then Tracey has honoured these teachings by bringing them into how she walks in the world everyday.

The mother of two daughters, they have “now become my mentors, learning from them [and being able to] walk forward in the same and in different ways because the world is changing fast, and it is important to listen and learn.” Another way that Warren continues to learn is by “connecting and bringing humility to the land, grandmother moon, trees... teaching gratitude, understanding challenges, being humble,



Child Safe Canada Director Tracey Warren

and taking time to listen to the wind...And going to the land, building a relationship with the land and how important it is to make connections and be [continuously] connecting.”

“As long as you have water in your tea, you will always have tears,” Warren shared when speaking about finding courage to keep moving forward - the courage that comes with crying. She also shares an understanding that “listening to all our relations, and taking the teachings and putting them into practice is bravery... It is a lot easier to be brave when you find something that you love.” Warren shared about understanding the courage it took her to keep going, that “the greatest success of all is that I never gave up.”

There will be hard times, she added, “Hard times are okay—as long as you do it in a good way, you will [always] know where you don’t want to be. It is not always easy, keep following with what is right [for you], the value that you bring has no price. And never work so much that you don’t have time for beading.”


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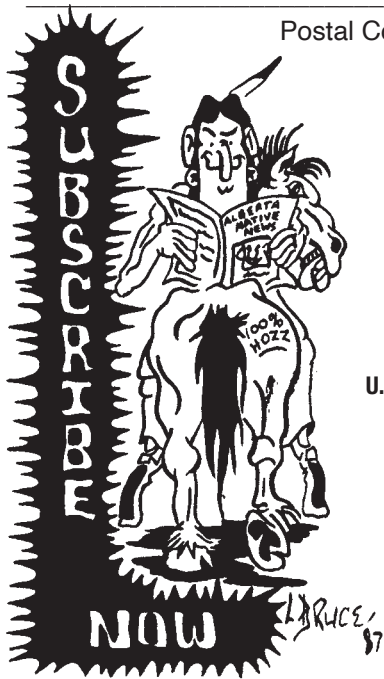
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## Report confirms that tailing spills were largely under-reported

By Jeremy Appel, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

A recently released scientific study on the Alberta Energy Regulator's (AER) poor monitoring of tailings spills merely confirms what Indigenous people have long known to be true, says the executive director of Indigenous Climate Action (ICA).

Sherwood Park-based geologist Kevin Timoney's report, published in the peer-reviewed *Environmental Monitoring and Assessment* journal on Jan. 3, found that the AER has significantly underreported spill volumes and their environmental footprints, and that the regulator had conducted routine inspections in just 3.2 per cent of tailings spills.

"This report is just another addition to a bunch of glaring reports that come out, get some media attention and disappear," Eriel Deranger, ICA's executive director, told *Alberta Native News* in an interview. "Business continues as usual in the sector and industry."

Last year, a report in the *American Association for the Advancement of Science* journal found that the Alberta Emissions Inventory Report and Canada's National Pollutant Release Inventory had underestimated air pollution from the oil sands by 6,000 per cent.

"Not only are they under-reporting their emissions," Deranger said, "but they are over-reporting their cleanup, and the AER is failing to do their job in responding to the toxic waste spills."

Timoney conducted his research by filing a freedom of information request for all AER documents relating to 514 tailings spills reported from January 2014 to May 2023, including photos of the spill sites, and comparing them with the figures publicly reported in the AER's field inspection system database.

In one instance, the AER publicly reported a spill of 44,596 m<sup>3</sup>, but internal AER documents revealed that the true spill volume was 4,459,680 m<sup>3</sup>.

In another spill, the AER database reported a spill's footprint as 100 m<sup>2</sup>. In the internal documents, that figure was 465 m<sup>2</sup>, but photographs of the site revealed the latter figure too was an underestimate.

"Images show spilled bitumen, soil contamination in a large footprint, and contact with vegetation," Timoney wrote in the study. "Both the spill volume and spill impact were visual estimates."

Deranger, who is from Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation (ACFN), noted federal and provincial authorities' well-established track record of concealing information from downstream Indigenous communities.

In May 2022, the AER notified ACFN and Mikisew Cree Nation (MCN) that discoloured water had accumulated near Imperial Oil's Kearl mine. The First Nations heard nothing more until February 2023, when 5.3 million litres of contaminated wastewater from a holding pond leaked into the surrounding environment.

This lack of transparency isn't confined to the AER. Transport Canada concealed a 2017 report that found the dock in Fort Chipewyan—a key transport hub in the remote community—was surrounded by land contaminated with traces of arsenic, mercury, lead, polycyclic aromatic hydro-carbons and uranium.

"Over the last decade that I've been working directly with my community, I can't tell you the amount of times that a community member, a land user or a hunter has reported foam, oil slicks, things on the water systems and stating, 'something's happened,' and us being gaslit by the AER and industry to say that nothing has happened," said Deranger.

She added that this has a major psychological impact on Indigenous communities, compounding the negative environmental and physical health effects of unchecked oil sands extraction.

"These are huge, huge violations of our Indigenous rights in the community and a failure of the government to uphold their fiduciary obligations to also ensure that Indigenous rights are protected in the pursuit of economic endeavours in the region," Deranger said.

Melanie Dene, executive manager at ICA, expressed frustration that Indigenous concerns about what's happening to their lands are only taken seriously when they're validated by settler scientists.

"I feel that Indigenous knowledge supersedes Western science," said Dene, who is from MCN. "It's our science, our land users, our traditional knowledge holders, that have been saying this since the very beginning. They have been witnessing it for the last 50 years."

An AER spokesperson said the regulator is aware of Timoney's report and "subject matter experts will review the data for a more comprehensive response at a later time."



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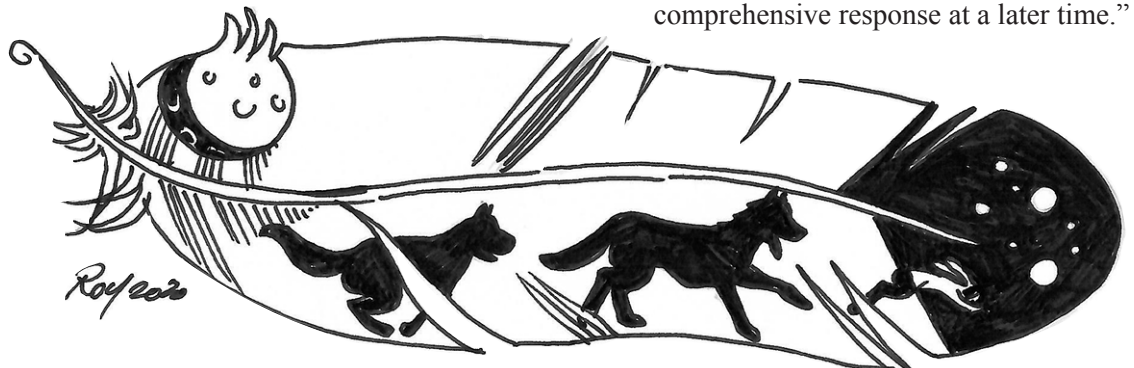
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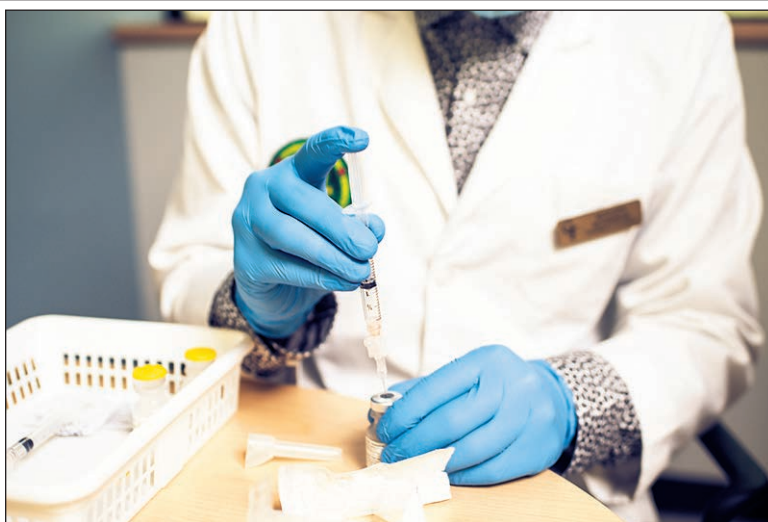


Roy 2020



# HELPING WITH HEALING

## Rewarding careers for Indigenous pharmacists



Alberta has the broadest scope of practice for pharmacists in Canada. To learn more about the national Indigenous Pharmacy Professionals of Canada organization visit [indigenouspharmacy.ca](http://indigenouspharmacy.ca).

Many of the modern medicines we benefit from today were developed based on traditional healing resources — herbs and animal products used for centuries by elders and healers in communities across Canada and around the world. These traditional practices have helped pave the way for breakthroughs ranging from a simple aspirin for a headache to the most advanced chemotherapies that can overcome cancers. Pharmacists today play an increasingly critical role in continuing the tradition of guiding others to the right treatments and ensuring their medications are used effectively. That’s why graduates of the four-year Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) program at the University of Alberta (U of A) are in high demand.

“Our voices as Indigenous students are extremely valuable to the field of pharmacy,” says Brooklyn Smith, a Métis student from Spruce Grove. “This program provides us with an opportunity to create meaningful change in our communities and in healthcare. Alberta offers the broadest scope of practice for pharmacists in Canada... and studying at the U of A allows me to stay close to home while pursuing a career where I can give back to my community.”

Smith believes pharmacy is one of the most accessible forms of healthcare. “I wanted a career where I could create a safe space to educate patients about their health, empowering them to make informed decisions about their medications and well-being.”

Home of Alberta’s only PharmD program, the U of A is able to offer experiential learning in hospitals, community clinics, research labs and more — including rural placements in at least 32 communities across the province.

“There is a shortage of primary care providers in rural and suburban communities, which provides an opportunity for pharmacists to step up and provide an enhanced level of service to patients in these communities,” says Ann Thompson, clinical professor with the Faculty of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences.

The PharmD program incorporates 40 weeks of experiential learning over four years. In 2024, 31 per cent of the 134 students in their four-week placement selected a rural or suburban option — and they all reported having valuable learning experiences. By fourth year, students are completing a total of 32 weeks of advanced placement. “Our program is designed to prepare you for a rewarding career in pharmacy with a strong emphasis on practical experience and community health,” says Thompson.

Experiencing a wide range of clinical rotations in both rural and urban communities has been invaluable to Smith. “It has highlighted gaps in healthcare access and the pharmacists’ critical role in bridging them,” she says. “These rotations also taught me the importance of collaborating with other healthcare professionals.”

Kalbie Hokanson, a proud Métis graduate of the program in 2022, balances multiple roles with dedication: she works full-time at St. Albert and Sturgeon County Primary Care Network and serves as Board Secretary for the Indigenous Pharmacy Professionals of Canada (IPPC). “The U of A ensured our training and education prepared us for the responsibility of this role,” says Hokanson. “The opportunity to work with and be taught by a variety of pharmacists in our clinical skill labs showed us the variety of career options available as well as the compassionate and giving back attitude of the profession.”

Growing diversity in pharmacy ensures better representation of the people the profession serves. Each year, the U of A reserves nine spots for qualified Indigenous applicants. By creating these pathways, the faculty contributes to the journey


of Truth and Reconciliation while fostering more Indigenous pharmacists to serve communities in Alberta. To further support these students, additional funding opportunities have been established. Thompson says the growing demand for Indigenous pharmacists underscores the need for dedicated spaces. “Beyond Alberta, we recently had a pharmacist in the Yukon reach out to offer placements providing care to patients in the north, including Inuit communities.”

Indigenous learners pursuing this rewarding career benefit from university-wide resources like First Peoples’ House, a hub of support and community for First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) students. Offering tailored programs, services, advising and scholarships, First Peoples’ House fosters empowerment and cultural connection on campus.

“These strengths, plus a high level of support from the pharmacy student group APSA and the professors providing wrap-around care for students, create a great foundation for new pharmacy graduates stepping into the workforce,” says Hokanson. But, she believes there is a misconception about what pharmacists do. “I would encourage any student thinking about pharmacy to reach out to a pharmacist, whether in the community, a hospital or in primary care, and interview them about their position. The only way to truly see and understand the role of a

pharmacist is to speak to one!”  
Alberta pharmacists enjoy a broad scope of practice, including offering health advice, precision medicine, disease screening and lab test interpretation. Career opportunities are diverse, spanning community pharmacies, hospitals, ambulatory clinics, primary care networks, or exploring interesting roles as a drug utilization reviewer, health policy advisor, medical researcher and more!  
Hokanson is passionate about her role as a pharmacist in Alberta and encourages prospective students to consider the benefits of this in-demand career, including opportunities to work in their home community. “If you are looking for a health-care career with good work-life balance, rewarding service to the community and lots of problem-solving, pharmacy might be right for you!”

Learn more about how the U of A supports cultural teachings at [www.uab.ca/fnmi](http://www.uab.ca/fnmi).




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# Indigenous journalist Stephanie Joe brings humanness into story

By Laura Mushumanski, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Literary Journalist, Stephanie Joe grew up in the Yukon on her traditional territories that connected her to her ancestors, learning and engaging in traditional ways of living that supported families and community. In her youth, she was proud to be Indigenous until she became a teenager, feeling it was “no longer cool to be native, and turned away that part of myself.”

Then when Joe was attending a creative writing program in Kelowna, British Columbia, she learned that many people, including her English instructor were just starting to learn about the true history of Canada, Indian Residential Schools, how Indigenous peoples were displaced, and how intergenerational transmission of trauma affected Indigenous people—yet for Joe, it was always a part of her life.

As Stephanie shared her own lived experiences and that of her family’s, her instructor wanted to learn more and share this knowledge in a good way with others. This led to Joe researching about what happened and her own reality of “that’s my life” that was hard for her to grapple with—the genocide of Indigenous peoples and the current repercussions of what trauma does to the human body-heart-mind-spirit. In 2014, Stephanie entered a literary journalism program through SAIT and her passion for writing Indigenous stories came a reality.

“My intention was to tell Indigenous and First Nations stories,” she explained.

Reporting on Indigenous events “felt right” for Joe, “I knew I was on the right path, doors kept opening for me, so many opportunities came—this is where I am supposed to be.” For the past 10 years Joe has reported and shared stories relating to Calgary in the media, being published in magazines, as well as writing for keynote speakers. She then ventured into working for an Indigenous public relations company, working

with lots of First Nations across Canada.

When it came down to writing, Joe’s process to get into a writing headspace is also one that involves getting into a heart space—pulling from her own heart and place of understanding of “what it was like to have a dad that went to residential schools.” For Stephanie, “writing is almost like a spiritual experience. You need time to spend with spirit, be guided by spirit, you come to a spiritually vulnerable position, you need to learn not to allow anything that is not supposed to be there.” Soon Joe came to an understanding that for her, she “writes to gift stories for community to benefit community.”

Joe started to notice the impact her writing had on Indigenous communities and how important it is for Indigenous writers to write Indigenous stories—the stories that have been misinterpreted and miscommunicated by an outsider looking in.

As Stephanie continued to walk with a deeper understanding embedded in the importance of storytelling and sharing stories in a good way, she realized how often stories and information being shared about Indigenous peoples, especially Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women were dehumanizing the women in the media—the tipping point of how bringing humanness into a story is crucial for supporting underrepresented populations.

These stories alone have and continue to shape the life trajectory of Indigenous peoples, the untold narrative of the beauty and rich cultures of Indigenous peoples’ knowledge as multi-dimensional ways of knowing, being, doing, and understanding worldwide—and that can only be told through the lens of Indigenous peoples. How these understandings and Ways of Knowing enrich the lives of all our relations with the understanding of humility as one of the fundamental ways of walking in the world. This



Literary journalist Stephanie Joe.

understanding and way of life to Indigenous peoples is not understood by everyone, where this misinterpretation of Indigenous peoples continues to fail Indigenous peoples within our communities that force them into barely surviving.

“It is important to tell our stories from our lens because of how stories are told,” added Stephanie.

When writing, Joe “feels connected, not alone—I felt like I belong and it was going to be okay... Indigenous people doing stuff made me feel less alone,” yet inside the classroom she had a very lonely academic experience of “often being the only little native girl in the classroom.”

Writing Indigenous stories, the work is never easy because of the emotional, mental, physical and spiritual hardship that comes with any kind of experienced trauma within family systems and communities. And for all the Indigenous sharers of stories, “your voice is so important now more than ever—our communities haven’t had the proper representation, we need more storytellers as Indigenous people... be proud, your story is important, and you are the only one that can tell your story... you are very qualified to do that.”

## Second Story Press Indigenous Writing Contest is Open!

Second Story Press recently announced the launch of their fourth Indigenous Writing Contest, inviting submissions from Indigenous writers. Second Story is excited to hold this new contest in partnership with GoodMinds.com - a First Nation owned business based on the Six Nations of the Grand River Territory in Brantford, Ontario, with a passion for books by First Nations, Métis, and Inuit authors. Both companies are excited to see what books will come from the contest this year, adding to the profound range of Indigenous literature.

This contest focuses on contemporary writing that reflects the experience of Indigenous (First

Nations, Métis, and Inuit) Peoples written by an Indigenous writer aged 18 or older. All entrants must be citizens or permanent residents of Canada. The contest is open to manuscripts written for young children, middle grade, young adult, or adult audiences. The winner will be offered a publishing contract from Second Story Press. The jury will be particularly interested in contemporary stories with an urban setting.

The contest deadline is January 31st, 2025. All entries must be made online via Submittable.

Previous winners and runners-up of the Second Story Press Indigenous Writing Contest include *Naaahsa is an Artist!* by Hali Heavy Shield;

*Auntie’s Rez Surprise* by Heather O’Watch; *The Train* by Jodie Callaghan; *The Case of Windy Lake* by Michael Hutchinson; *Stolen Words* by Melanie Florence; *The Mask That Sang* by Susan Currie; *What’s in a Bead?* by Kelsey Borgford; and *The Water Walker* by Joanne Robertson.

The jury for the contest will be announced shortly, and the winner(s) will be announced in spring 2025. For complete information on the submission process, go to Submittable.

Contact [contest@secondstorypress.ca](mailto:contest@secondstorypress.ca) for all inquiries.

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# Trudeau’s tenure lauded but key issues remain unresolved

By Jeremy Appel, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

In the wake of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announcing his resignation on Jan. 6, Indigenous leaders across Canada praised him for his commitment to truth and reconciliation while acknowledging that there’s still much work to get done.

Assembly of First Nations (AFN) National Chief Cindy Woodhouse Nepinak said in a statement that Trudeau presided over “important progress in areas such as clean water, housing, education, and child welfare,” but cautioned that there have been “significant delays in progress on key issues” in recent months.

She noted that the AFN has “not yet received a commitment” from the federal government on reaching a new child welfare reform agreement after the original \$47.8-billion deal was voted down by the AFN membership, “which we have repeatedly sought.”

The federal government is reportedly in the process of negotiating a standalone child welfare reform deal with the Chiefs of Ontario (COO) and Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN), based on the terms of the original offer, which those organizations endorsed.

The national chief also expressed concern over the fate of the federal government’s First Nations Clean Water Act, or Bill C-61, which is supposed to establish minimum standards for drinking water in First Nations communities and provide First Nations with an unspecified level of funding to meet those standards.

The Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs was in the process of preparing a report on the legislation when Trudeau announced his decision to resign and prorogue parliament, meaning the legislation will have to be reintroduced when the House of Commons reconvenes on March 24.

Woodhouse Nepinak cited discussions on border mobility and a November 2024 Supreme Court ruling that provincial and federal governments must fund First Nations policing as other policy areas the AFN is “committed to working with the next Prime Minister and federal leaders to advance.”

In a statement, Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) president Andrea Sandmaier highlighted the February 2023 Métis Nation within Alberta Self-Government Recognition and Implementation Agreement her organization signed with the Trudeau government, calling it “a significant milestone in affirming the inherent rights of the Métis Nation within Alberta and laying a foundation for self-determination.”

However, Sandmaier noted that “Canada’s

obligations under this historic agreement have yet to be fully implemented.”

A Federal Court judge ruled in March 2024 that the government erred in excluding the Fort McKay Métis Nation and Métis Settlements General Council from the terms of the agreement, ordering the agreement to be amended but not quashed.

Sandmaier urged “the next government, whoever forms it, to prioritize addressing outstanding claims stemming from the historic fraud of the Scrip system.”

“True reconciliation requires not only words but tangible actions to redress these past injustices and ensure a future founded on equity and respect,” she wrote.

After the Red River Rebellion ended in 1870 and the province of Manitoba was established, the Crown began giving individual Métis people pieces of paper known as scrips that entitled them to a small parcel of land or cash payment.

In 2013, the Supreme Court ruled that the scrip system failed to provide recipients with the land promised to them.

David Chartrand, president of the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF), which took the feds to court over the scrip system, called Trudeau the “most visionary Canadian Prime Minister we have ever experienced, in terms of reconciliation.”

In a statement, he cited Trudeau’s adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, legislation giving First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities control over their child welfare systems, and recognition of the Métis right to self-government as some of his “undeniable” achievements.

“Our Citizens have their own political affiliations and perspectives and have every right to their own views. But let me be clear that these advancements were never available to us in the past, and our place in Canada’s confederation as proud founders and builders remained unacknowledged for decades,” wrote Chartrand.

A statement from the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC), which represents Treaty 1 First Nations, noted that despite Trudeau’s progress on



reconciliation, “significant challenges remain.”

“We commend Prime Minister Trudeau for his commitment to reconciliation and fostering dialogue with First Nations,” said Acting AMC Grand Chief Betsy Kennedy. “However, we urge the next leader to prioritize transformative change and address the critical issues still affecting our communities.”

The AMC called on “all political leaders” to prioritize equitable health-care, housing and education funding, implement all Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Inquiry Calls for Justice, uphold Treaty rights, and commit to “respectful, accountable partnerships with First Nations.”

“This leadership transition is a pivotal moment,” Kennedy added.

“First Nations have long been stewards of this land and champions for justice. We look forward to working with the next Liberal Party Leader and all elected officials from the various political parties to build a future grounded in reconciliation, equity, and shared prosperity.”

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# Building relationships in education

By Laura Mushumanski, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

An Indigenous understanding of relationality is that everything is connected, that there is a degree in which everything on Mother Earth is connected all the way down to the concepts we use, the way we think, and how we share knowledge. Embedded in this understanding, this Indigenous Worldview—that is made up of philosophy, psychology, and spirituality—is that with relationality comes accountability. And when we do things with a good heart and in a good way by building and strengthening relationships, we are able to walk gently in the world and take care of all our relations—including the bees, water, animals, and Mother Earth.

Learning is an action associated with how we engage with knowledge, and when being open to learning new things also comes vulnerability. As learners are vulnerable, this too is part of

their own learning journey as an exploration into self-discovery and how they walk in the world. As learners, both our lived experience and knowledge passed on becomes part of our own medicine bundle.

A medicine bundle is a concept and understanding that the knowledge we walk with is an accumulation of blood, sweat, and tears that come with unlearning—where it is finding courage to sit with ourselves and reflect on all that we have experienced, both heavy and light, all to come to

know things differently. Wisdom, usually within the body, is the lightbulb moment of realization, clarity, and calmness similar to what comes after the rain.

One of our sisters educates from an understanding that “seeing each other as extensions of community [creates] depth and richness [by] walking alongside a [person’s learning] journey.” Kathryn Crawford, our kind-hearted and compassionate educator out of Ambrose College in Elbow River (aka Calgary), questions “How do we understand how we are interacting with the environment... how do we change the content that we are working on?”

Crawford applies care and thought into how she engages with learners by honouring each learner’s story and creating a space for people to learn and find meaning in place. This is how Kathryn engages in Indigenous Ways of Being—bringing worlds together to unlearn and relearn in different ways.

Over time, when engaging in concepts of relationality, Crawford came to know that the starting point to building and strengthening relationships, is to be open to being present to learn from others. As Indigenous educators, we walk with Indigenous pedagogies that support the understanding of humility and how we can help others along their learning journey.

Within higher education, Crawford became curious how to build relationships and try to walk alongside others who are doing meaningful work. One thing that Kathryn always engages in is following protocol by consulting Elder’s different opinions and perspectives on how to build and strengthen meaningful relationships.

Initially Crawford never wanted to be a teacher. She started her learning journey within academia by studying genetics and found herself being drawn to the body. That grew her interest in neurodiversity thinking through psychology that led her to engaging with learners to “building a whole new structure with their thinking [by] seeing possibilities of seeing things differently.”

Within Crawford’s own learning journey, her medicine bundle became an accumulation of her own lived experiences and the richness of knowledge that was shared with her in a good way, shaping her perspective of how to dismantle barriers within a learning environment as a transformative nature and process. Over time what walking in ceremony has taught Kathryn is it is a “response(ability) to have the ability to respond” in a good way as a sharer of knowledge.

Crawford’s advice when leaning into exploration and learning of our own self-discovery, “As you move into different things, your relationships change with people. Be okay when these [relationships are] falling away, grieve them and continue to move forward...trust who you know yourself to be—hold that tight, see and spend more time with [yourself]. Recognize, acknowledge, pay attention and be in reciprocal relationships with people who see you for who you are, places that see you and foster creativity...[and spend energy] where you are meant to be.”



Kathryn Crawford

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# John Ritchie: Always looking forward

By Laura Mushumanski, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Our enthusiastic Metis brother John Ritchie of Hideaway Adventure Grounds shared that “when you have a dream, share it loud and proud, that’s what people grab onto.” This knowledge that Ritchie walks with came over time, after his own adventures led him to open his business, located on “160 acres of unspoiled wilderness within Kikino Metis Settlement in Northern Alberta.”

After living in big cities for quite some time, Ritchie moved back to his home community and started learning land-based skills. While having a background in financial accounting and economic development, at the age of 50 years old, John wanted to make his dream a reality.

The beginning of Hideaway Adventures Grounds was a humbling experience for Ritchie—and also a learning adventure he was about to dive deep into. At first, there was no power and no running water like the days of hard knocks of kohkom and mosom in the bush, leading him to learn traditional skills in the bush that our ancestors used to survive.

Back in 2015 Ritchie was managing campgrounds as a contractor with his own company. That led to an opportunity to work with the Friendship Centre in Lac La Biche forming partnerships with Alberta Parks while creating authentic Indigenous Experiences, then traveling to Sydney, Nova Scotia in 2016 for an International Indigenous Tourism Conference and sharing stories in Indigenous ways on Indigenous terms.

In 2018 Hideaway Adventure Grounds got started. “Bring your own tent” caught wind, and the first of its kind, “Metis tents on a Metis Settlement... took off right away.” Ritchie formed an alliance with Indigenous Tourism Alberta to help grow and promote Indigenous tourism in Alberta. And then Covid came to town.

While everyone was in shambles of what to do, so was John. This opportunity “gave time to catch-up, slow down, and develop programs... [I had to] reach my head out of my ass [and get to work],” he said.

As time went on, Ritchie continued to come up with innovative ideas that supported his

understanding of both Indigenous Economic Development and Tourism as part of Indigenous Reconciliation and Resurgence. John then launched Hideaway Trading Post, “the stars were in alignment,” he met with fellow Metis Traders and created a Metis retail selling space for tourists and learners to engage in Metis culture.

When Covid restrictions let up, Ritchie started to host Indigenous youth camps, providing space and teaching youth outdoor survival skills, including building shelters by engaging and working as a team. These alliances that John formed became an influential part of Indigenous Economic Resurgence—as the economic driver for the province of Alberta. He started to grow collaborations and actively support community initiatives with community partners.

Fast forward to 2024, Hideaway Adventure Grounds grew in magnitude to have four trapper tents on decks with tin roofs, four new cabins with electricity, four additional trapper tents, and two tipis, “narrowing in on ‘what is hideaway’ while focusing on engaging in cultural experiences and activities.” These endeavours, along with mentorship within Indigenous Tourism has led Ritchie to prepare for upcoming Rendezvous Canada, showcasing Indigenous Tourism as an opportunity to invite the world traveler into the heart of Northern Alberta and Kikino Metis Settlement.

Over time Ritchie learned to reach out and ask for support from community. He started to market Kikino Metis Settlement as a tourism destination and work with Travel Alberta for product development as his Hideaway alliance to “share cultural knowledge with people... People come to learn and like to talk to me and listen [to my stories].” John’s overnight success took 10 years in the making and is still a continuous process of learning and growing alongside a team.

Looking back, Ritchie acknowledges how far Indigenous people have come since contact. He remembers his mother not talking about culture, “it was shunned upon—it wasn’t shared, honoured or talked about, [we] lived culture, but



it wasn’t explained to us ... I did not realize how much survival skills my mom taught us. Even living in the city, I knew how to process a pig’s feet... to this day I won’t eat hedge cheese.”

“I grew up with these things,” Ritchie shared after reflecting on culture and what it means to him. And to this day, John is still in “amazement of what I discover and rediscover of who we are... we still grow as long as we choose to move forward. That is what makes us [Metis] so different and why some are successful and some not... [My] definition of success changed over the years [into] having the freedom to do what I want to, when I want to do them.”

Over the years Ritchie engaged in cultural understandings and ceremony that led him to “finding that teacher person within me... culture and teachings helped to share life in a positive way with youth.” But prior to coming to this awareness, during junior high, John came to terms with becoming either a social worker or a financial planner. His decision was based on “not wanting to be what people took away [from our communities].” Fast-forward a few decades later and within the past 6 years, Ritchie has never “worked so hard and tirelessly, [yet it has been] so rewarding” because he chose to make his visions a reality.

Never viewing himself as an educated person, advice that John shares for entrepreneurs is “don’t put too much value in that stamp of approval,” it is your efforts and lived experience that contribute to your knowledge, and like many—after all this time, “I didn’t think I had anything to say.”

## Apply for Alberta Blue Cross Indigenous scholarship by Jan. 31

Alberta Blue Cross is reminding Indigenous students across the province to apply for its Indigenous scholarship program. The final application date for the scholarships is January 31, 2025. Potential applicants are encouraged to register soon.

The Alberta Blue Cross Indigenous scholarship program offers 9 scholarships of \$1,500 every year. The scholarships are awarded based on personal goals, financial need and community involvement. To increase accessibility, the scholarship is now eligible to Indigenous students in any year of study. Previously, the program offered 3 scholarships to first year students who had just graduated high school and 6 scholarships to mature students in their first year of study. Now, students in any year of study who are attending an accredited post-secondary institution in Alberta are eligible to apply.

“We’ve been privileged to support some incredible individuals in their education journeys through this program,” says Brian Geislinger, senior vice-president of Corporate Relations and Community Engagement with Alberta Blue Cross. “We are thrilled to be continuing this program for 2025.”

As part of Alberta Blue Cross’s commitment to wellness, the long-standing Indigenous scholarship program is intended to support not only the financial wellness of Indigenous

students, but the overall wellness of the communities they give back to. At the same time, the program helps advance equitable access to post-secondary education for Indigenous students. Alberta Blue Cross has been running the Indigenous scholarship program for over 25 years, and in that time, more than 100 scholarships have been awarded to Indigenous students. Alberta Blue Cross also sponsors a long-standing program that provides scholarships at every Alberta post-secondary institution across the province. Funding for both programs come from Alberta Blue Cross’s community foundation.

“In 2024 we received a record number of applications for our Indigenous scholarship program and based on this demand we removed potential limits for application, allowing for more entrants in any year of study,” says Geislinger.

The deadline to apply is January 31, 2025. Scholarship recipients are selected by an external committee with expertise in academia and Indigenous education. Successful applicants will be contacted in early March.

More information about the scholarship program, including application forms for Indigenous students, can be found at [community.ab.bluecross.ca/programs/indigenous-s-scholarships.php](https://community.ab.bluecross.ca/programs/indigenous-s-scholarships.php).

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# Missing and murdered Indigenous relatives conference held in YEG

By Jeremy Appel, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The City of Edmonton's inaugural missing and murdered Indigenous relatives (MMIR) conference concluded on Jan. 10 with a feast and round dance to highlight Indigenous resilience in the face of settler colonial violence.

Dubbed "Gathering: The Strength of Our Stories," the two-day event brought together 250 attendees and volunteers from across the country to hear panelists and keynote speakers discuss the scale of the crisis and different approaches to addressing it.

The federal government initiated an inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls (MMIWG), which released its final report in 2019. Concluding that MMIWG are victims of a Canadian genocide, the report produced 231 Calls to Justice.

As a result of this report, the federal government adopted its Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ People National Action Plan in 2021, and Edmonton city council passed its own plan the following year.

The Edmonton conference widens this scope to include the relatives of all Indigenous people who went missing or were murdered.

Kyla Pascal, a strategic planner with the city's Indigenous Relations Office, told *Alberta Native News* that while Indigenous women and girls, as well as 2SLGBTQ+ people, face "distinct issues when it comes to colonial violence," it's important to "recognize that men and boys are an important piece of the conversation."

Pascal said the conference is a direct product of the city's action plan.

"We really just wanted to create a space where folks could come together, we could hear some of the solutions from folks, both locally and across the country, and just be together, learn and work together, thinking about future solutions or collaborations that we can work towards for this issue," she explained.

Keynote speakers included Rachel Wuttunee, who manages urban Indigenous relations for the City of Vancouver, and Melina Laboucan-Massimo, a Lubicon Cree climate and Indigenous justice activist from Little Buffalo in northern Alberta.

There were discussion panels on 2-Spirit and Queer and men and boys' perspectives on MMIR, and how art contributes towards healing, as well as municipalities' role in addressing the crisis.

MMIR is such a "big



Drumming set the tone for the MMIR gathering.

issue" that addressing it requires "coordination and support" across all levels of government, Pascal added.

While many Calls to Justice, such as those concerning child welfare and criminal justice reforms, are outside municipalities' control, the city has a major role to play on the transit, housing and harm reduction policy fronts, she noted.

Another major role the city can play is "uplifting, supporting and funding community work" that addresses MMIR, which is the conference's purpose, said Pascal.

In a Jan. 9 city news release, conference panelist Lorrie Lawrence with the Indigenous Artists Market Collective referred to events like the MMIR conference as "good medicine that is healing for all."

"Coming together to share our experiences and teachings is the good medicine our missing and murdered Indigenous Peoples, their families and the community need to heal and to prevent more being lost," said Lawrence.



As a sign of solidarity, a Round Dance concluded the The Strength of our Stories gathering.

## Jodi Calahoo Stonehouse: No one gets left behind

By Laura Mushumanski, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

When asked what advice Jodi Calahoo Stonehouse would give her younger self, she said, "You know more than you think you know... be brave and be confident." That came from her own lived experiences leading up to her current role within community as an MLA for the New Democratic Party within the Alberta Government.

Calahoo Stonehouse, the first First Nations woman within the Alberta Government has had the honour to learn and walk beside "lots of amazing Indigenous women [and] incredible spiritual people" within leadership that shaped her to become who she is an Indigenous woman, how to use her gifts for good, and the role she has within community. Jodi also spoke to ceremony being an integral part for leadership—where ceremony, an emotional, mental, physical and spiritual practice of connecting with self and all our relations, teaches us about how to strengthen how we understand and walk in the world in a good way through acts of humility.

Engaging in ceremony for all her life, Calahoo Stonehouse came to understand that this part of her life is foundational in guiding community and supports her leadership in the "importance of taking care of our vulnerable people—that no one gets left behind." One person in particular that was an influential teacher and integral to her values was her mother, teaching her that "you treat every human being with integrity, grace, love, and respect."

For Jodi, there have been diverse and rich

teachings, where her strong Haudenosaunee traditions taught her "don't take more than you need." This understanding is embedded in everything we do, including how we share knowledge and engage in protocol. It is behind the inequity within all our communities that has led to Indigenous peoples being the ones that face the most systemic barriers because of this malpractice of sustainability within reciprocal relationships and treaty relations. And like a plant, you do not take just because it is there, you build a relationship with it, get to understand the plant and come to know that the integrity of the relationship builds on values and connections, not a need to hinder the essence, integrity, and spirit of the relationship. Otherwise, there are imbalances and inequities within communities leaving most to barely survive.

The teachings that Calahoo Stonehouse walks with are how she upholds the integrity of relationships within legislation and the Alberta Government. It goes beyond taking care of our vulnerable relatives—it is also the understanding that we take care of the waters, the land, the animals—all our relations by honouring natural law and being a good neighbour.

Within this understanding of natural law, is also Calahoo Stonehouse's understanding of the seven generations and to "make space for the generations...peace, love, friendship, respect... as long as the sun shines and the rivers flow" ... we need to think about the collective, not leaving



MLA Jodi Calahoo Stonehouse

anyone behind and making sure our future generations have a planet."

This understanding of reciprocal relationships and honouring treaties in good faith is much more than land acknowledgements, instead it is a walk of life, a practice that is embodied into a way of life, and knowledge embedded as a way of understanding how to be a good relative to all that reside on Mother Earth.

"What are we going to do?" Advocating for governments to do better and be accountable,

Continued on page 11



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# Activist Leonard Peltier’s prison sentence commuted in final days of Biden administration

By Jeremy Appel, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

In one of his final acts in office, U.S. President Joe Biden commuted the sentence of Leonard Peltier, a Native American activist who was convicted of killing two federal officers on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota in 1975.

Biden didn’t outright pardon Peltier, an 80-year-old elder of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa who survived the federal Indian boarding school system—the U.S. equivalent of residential schools—but permitted him to serve the rest of his sentence from home.

A Jan. 20 statement from Biden cited Peltier’s age, poor health and the fact that he “has spent the majority of his life (nearly half a century) in prison.”

Biden commuted Peltier’s sentence over the objection of Christopher Wray, his FBI director, who wrote a letter to the president in early 2024 calling Peltier a “remorseless killer,” although Peltier has consistently maintained his innocence.

Peltier was a leader in the American Indian Movement (AIM), which in 1973 led an occupation of Wounded Knee, the site in South Dakota where the U.S. military massacred 300 Lakota people in 1890, to protest violations of their Treaty rights.

In response, U.S. law enforcement spent the next three years engaged in a campaign of surveillance, harassment and violence against local AIM members, killing 64 people.

In this context, Federal Bureau of Investigation agents Jack Coler and Ron Williams entered Jumping Bull Ranch on Pine Ridge Indian Reservation to arrest a young Native man in June 1975. There were 30 AIM members gathered on the ranch, including Peltier, who had been invited by elders.

A shootout ensued, resulting in the deaths of Coler and Williams, as well as local Native Joe Stuntz, whose death was never investigated.

Peltier was charged in the officers’ deaths, as were fellow AIM members Dino Butler and Bob Robideau. Fearing an unfair trial, Peltier fled to Canada, where he was extradited by the RCMP and returned to the U.S. to stand trial in February 1976.

Peltier was convicted in 1977, despite prosecutors admitting they had no direct evidence tying him to the officers’ killing.

Documents obtained by his lawyers through a 1980 freedom of information request revealed that key ballistics evidence that called into question whether his gun was used to kill the officers was withheld from the defence, but the Court of Appeal denied a 1986 request for a re-trial.

Amnesty International USA executive director Paul O’Brien cited “serious human rights concerns about the fairness of his trial” in a Jan. 20 statement applauding Biden for commuting Peltier’s sentence, although Amnesty has long called for full clemency.

Peltier’s release was applauded by the National Congress of American Indians, who called him “one of the longest incarcerated Native American political prisoners.”

“After nearly 50 years of unjust imprisonment, President Biden’s decision to grant Leonard

Peltier the opportunity to return home is a powerful act of compassion and an important step toward healing,” said NCAI president Mark Macarro in a statement.

Deb Haaland, a member of the Laguna Pueblo tribe who became the first Native American cabinet secretary when Biden appointed her secretary of the interior in 2021, said she was “beyond words” about the commutation of Peltier’s sentence.

“His release from prison signifies a measure of justice that has long evaded so many Native Americans for so many decades,” Haaland wrote on Twitter.

Musician and activist Tom Morello, who played guitar in the American rap-metal band Rage Against the Machine (RATM), celebrated Peltier’s release on Twitter, posting a link to the music video for his band’s 1992 song “Freedom,” which brought attention to Peltier’s plight.

“For almost 5 decades human rights organizations, Native American activists, average everyday people and bands like RATM have lobbied for the release of political prisoner, [sic] Leonard Peltier,” wrote Morello.

“Leonard has become a friend over the years and I am so glad at 80 years old and in poor health he will be able to spend his remaining years with family and friends.”



## Left behind cont. from p 10

Calahoo Stonehouse sees the greed and political will that needs to shift. Because right now the “reality [is] systemic barriers within our own homelands—we have much work to do to build equity ... currently Indigenous children in the nation [get] less per dollar in funding for education.” Jodi acknowledges that “all children have access to education except First Nations children.” What message is this sending to First

Nations children? she asks. This gap in the quality of education stems into the social determinants of health, leading to poverty, incarceration and more social inequities. Supports are needed to fill the gaps.

Being a good relative and honouring the Truth and Reconciliation (TRC) 94 Calls to Action is embedded in the acts of humility. It is an action of how we can collectively learn and walk with doing better, as currently “Alberta has more kids in care than any other province in Canada”—

understanding how in 2025 this is an alarming concern and how Indigenous children also deserve to have a good life and be taken care of.

And where do we go from here? Calahoo Stonehouse says that we can start “[by] making our communities safe, [inquire about the TRC], look how we got into this in the first place and what does it mean to be in a time of genocide?... Reconciliation needs both of us... this is complex work we have to do, and it is possible.”

## NEWSPAPER FOR SALE

After 40 years of publishing the Alberta Native News, the owners wish to retire.

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## Our cover artist Bill Roy

By Deborah Shatz

The stunning image on the cover of this month's Alberta Native News is entitled "Raven and the Moon" and it is a creation of contemporary artist William Roy who passed into the spirit world recently. He will be missed in our hearts and on the pages of the newspaper. Bill was one of the first illustrators to contribute drawings to *Alberta Native News* back in the 1990s and over the years we have come to appreciate his quiet sense of humour and his honour. Looking at the 30 years portfolio of his illustrations, which are now housed at Wakina Gallery, we get a warm sense of who he was, how he evolved and how he viewed the world.

Each month, Bill would bring pictures to our newspaper office which would most often reflect what he saw out his window or on his walks or in his imagination. Or how he was feeling on any given day. It was always a pleasure to see him.

Bill was a talented Saskatchewan-born, Métis artist whose art ranges from whimsical to dark and from simplistic to complex reflecting his many layers of emotions and experiences. Roy had a past to overcome and he worked hard to become centred to the point of being able to

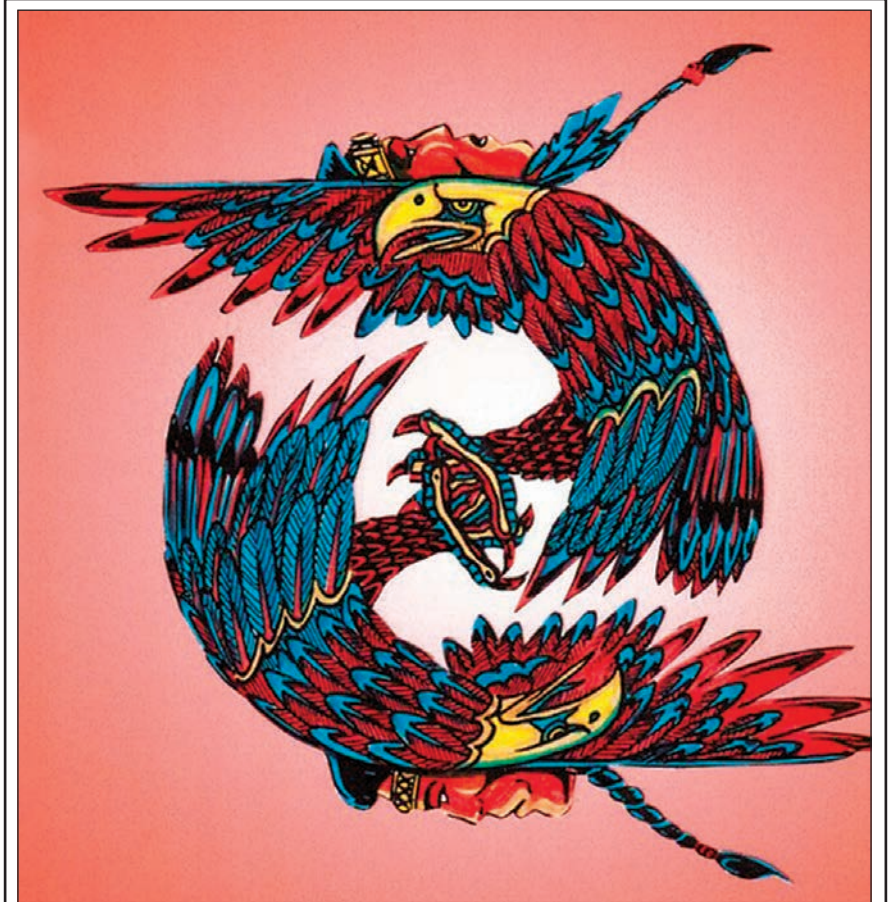
mentor young people.

He recently joined the Wakina Gallery staff at JP School in Edmonton for a large PD Day to commemorate National Indigenous Peoples Day. Bill sat at table and did what he does best – drew images representing traditional spirituality or animals. He loved to turn traces of his hands into family gatherings. He was at first quite shy and wasn't comfortable being approached by the teachers but as he drew, delegates became enthralled with his process and he relaxed into a very warm give and take with them, describing a bit about his background and his art.

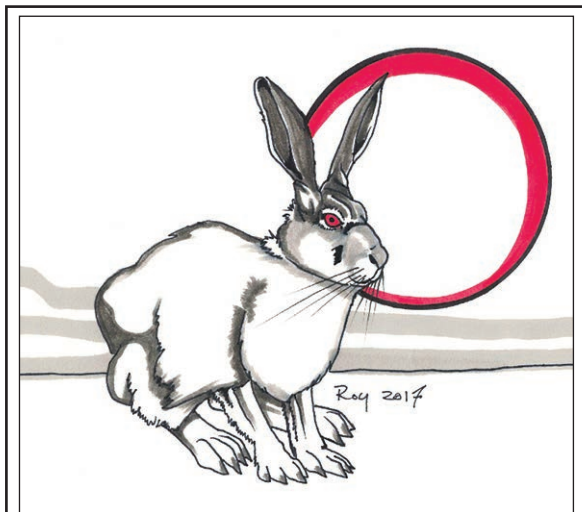
"I discovered my artistic ability with a crayola crayon and a clean kitchen wall when I was just five years old," explained Bill, with a glint in his eye. "I guess I've pretty much had a pen or pencil or paintbrush in my hand ever since. I know that my work is appreciated in some circles and though some have said they find it a bit dark, there is the lighter side that keeps me prodding forward, seeking a path to a better way of life that includes my children, my culture and my freedom."

Bill's family, like so many other Indigenous families in Canada, was severely affected by the Indian Residential School era, and over the years he made a lot of bad choices. But he turned his life around and gained control over his demons; his art was a stabilizing factor. Whether he was creating a wall size mural or a small logo or over 30 years' worth of cultural illustrations in *Alberta Native News*, Bill Roy let his imagination soar in his art.

At the Indigenous Night Market at River Cree Casino this summer, Wakina Gallery presented some of Bill's illustrations for sale alongside



Red Eagles greeting card by Bill Roy. Available at [wakinagallery.com](http://wakinagallery.com)



Bunny by Bill Roy. Visit [wakinagallery.com](http://wakinagallery.com)

### MLA Arcand-Paul cont. from p 2

and how it gifts us life. And where these reciprocal relationships and understanding are an understanding of how to walk with knowledge and go about sharing and conducting policies within Government in a good way.

Part of why Arcand-Paul brought Bill 209 into legislation was not only to "bring Cree levity into legislation" but also to "bring more humanness *nehiyawé* into space."

The *nehiyawé* lawyer, Arcand-Paul wanted to make a big change and bring his connection to culture and sacred teachings including Blackfoot Ways of Knowing to the province - things that were lacking within the Alberta Government, "a decolonial radical act of love [in] a meaningful and fulsome way."

While this bill will be the first of its kind, reconciliation principles are factored into how *Bill 209* is to be implemented. The principles are intended to advance reconciliation, guided by the

Seven Sacred Teachings, with the understanding of respecting Indigenous Nations and Indigenous Peoples. These principles also include the Alberta Government acknowledging the historical impacts of Indigenous peoples and their rights including inherent rights of Indigenous peoples, as well as aboriginal and treaty rights both recognized and affirmed in section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982. These principles are to also respect the rights of Indigenous Peoples when decisions are made by the Supreme Court of Canada. Further, practices and legal traditions, Indigenous Peoples' languages and cultures should be purposeful and respectful. Inquiry between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples should result in deeper understanding of historical and current relationships, and commitment to concrete and constructive actions that improve relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

These principles are embedded in what Arcand-Paul speaks to about bringing humility and

humanness into legislation, as a way to support Indigenous peoples that coincide with the 94 Calls to Action to create an equitable approach to engaging in good relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. In respect to both purposes and principles, Bill 209 emphasizes on Indigenous worldviews embedded in respect for one another, humility as in being a good relative and supporting one another including Mother Earth and *wahkohtowin* understanding of 'we take care of each other,' and the ongoing understanding of walking in a good way as a process and learning journey of action and accountability.

While moving in the direction of Truth and Reconciliation, these steps embedded within the *Bill 209: Reconciliation Implementation Act* are necessary for the provincial government of Alberta to do better by Indigenous Peoples as an act of humility so future generations can thrive in all aspects of life—together.

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