

Distributing across Alberta for over 40 years!



ALBERTA NATIVE NEWS



Visit us now at
albertanativenews.com



Publication Mail Agreement No. 40050628
Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to:
Circulation Department:
#206, 8944 182 Street
Edmonton AB T5T 2E3
natnews@shaw.ca
Tel: (780) 421-7966

Funded by the Government of Canada Financé par le gouvernement du Canada

Volume 42, Number 02, February 2025
ISSN #08294135
www.albertanativenews.com

EDITOR: Deborah Shatz

ADVERTISING:
Dan Moser 780-421-7966

Alberta Native News is published monthly for distribution to Native Bands and Metis Settlements across Alberta, Saskatchewan, British Columbia and Northwest Territories.

All rights reserved. No part of this newspaper can be reproduced without written permission from the publisher. The opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Editor. Alberta Native News is published by 320754 Alberta Ltd.

For change of address, please send both old and new addresses. We welcome your stories, pictures, artwork and opinions. Please send anything you would like to have published to our office.

SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Alberta Native News
#206, 8944 182 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5T 2E3

Name _____
Address _____
Postal Code _____

SUBSCRIPTIONS

\$67.20
per year

\$116.55
for two years
(includes GST)

U.S. SUBSCRIPTIONS

\$86.25
per year

\$161.00
for two years
(no GST)

**Catch the Magic
Castledowns
Bingo Association**

12222 - 137 Avenue, Edmonton, AB
780-457-4670

Start Times:
Afternoon: 12:00pm • Evening: 6:00pm
Late-Night: 10:05pm

Our Pots:
Loonie Pot 1 • Loonie Pot 2
Full Card Insurance • Odd/Even
• Double Action • Crazy C • Houdini (Late-Night)

**Tuesday is Half-Price,
Wednesday is Player and Guest of the Week!**

**Last Saturday of every month
is our Bonanza Month-End Special!**

Play the Starburst to win a \$100 Ticket!
Ticket for our \$20,000.00 Bonanza Blitz.
The next Blitz will take place
April 4th 2025, July 4th 2025.
Tickets are on sale 4 weeks prior
to the day of the event.



SLCN says it wasn't consulted on proposed data centre project

By Jeremy Appel, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation (SLCN) says it wasn't consulted before celebrity businessman Kevin O'Leary announced plans to build the "world's largest" artificial intelligence (AI) data centre on its traditional territory.

In a Dec. 9 press release, the Municipal District (MD) of Greenview announced its "groundbreaking partnership with O'Leary Ventures to build an off-grid natural gas and geothermal power infrastructure to support the largest AI data centre industrial park in the world."

Dubbed "Wonder Valley," the AI data centre is slated to be built in the Greenview Industrial Gateway (GIG) near Grande Prairie, a piece of former Crown land that was transferred from the provincial government to the Greenview municipality in 2021 for industrial development over SLCN's objections.

"One of our core values for the project is to engage with First Nations Indigenous communities to create a mutually beneficial relationship and one that honours the people and the lands for many years to come," said O'Leary Ventures CEO Paul Palandjian in the press release.

On Jan. 13, Chief Sheldon Sunshine penned a cease-and-desist letter to the provincial government regarding the project, which Premier Danielle Smith described as "fantastic news for Alberta" in the Greenland MD press release.

It was through this press release that Sunshine said he learned about this project, "which will have massive effects on our water and our land."

"Our people have traplines in this area; we rely on the water from the Smoky River; and it is one of the few areas accessible to exercise our way of life, which has been systemically eroded by unmitigated cumulative effects resulting from the provincial government's authorizations of industrial development in our territory," the SLCN chief noted.

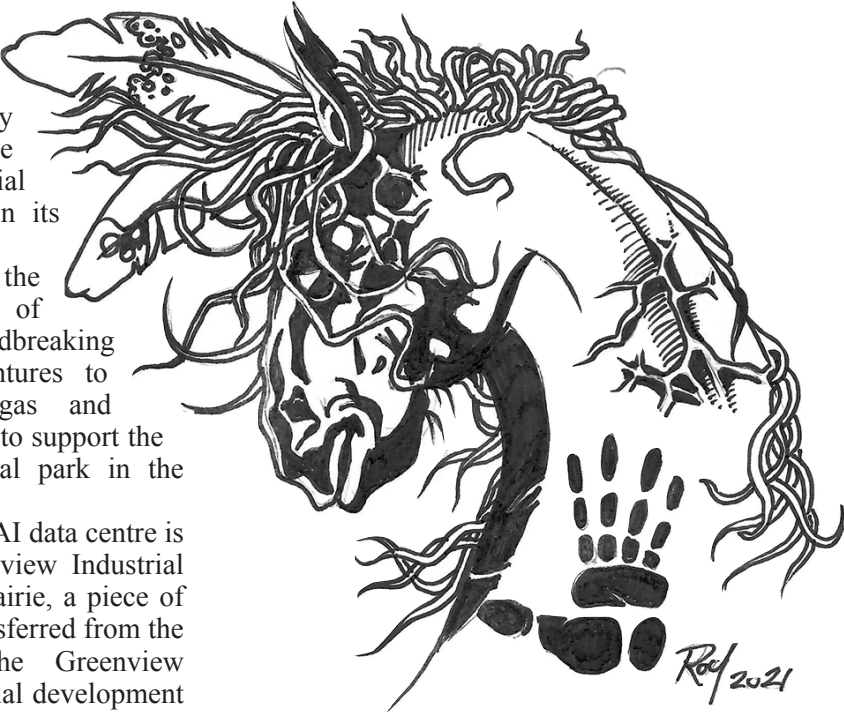
Northern Alberta is a coveted location for AI data centres due to its cold climate during most of the year, which limits the need for air conditioning to prevent computers from overheating.

In April 2023, Greenview MD re-zoned the GIG "to accommodate complex industrial developments."

A "fact sheet" from the GIG about the project claims it will create 2,000 to 4,000 construction jobs during the construction phase and that each project phase will create 100 to 150 maintenance and operations jobs.

The data centre will be powered by off-grid natural gas and geothermal energy. "Ongoing discussions with midstream natural gas producers in the area are focused on securing a reliable and sustainable supply for the Data Centre," the fact sheet says.

According to O'Leary, the \$70-billion site will generate 7.5 gigawatts of power over the next five



to 10 years, with its first phase costing \$2.8 billion for 1.4 gigawatts.

He told *CityNews Edmonton* that someone from the ruling United Conservative Party proposed the project to him and Premier Smith assured him she would ensure he could get the necessary permits.

In an earlier Fox News appearance posted to his YouTube channel, O'Leary claimed that Smith "provided a permit" for 200 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, and that he and Smith were "moving all over the world" to secure private funding for Wonder Valley.

According to the GIG fact sheet, each phase of the project will require 538 billion cubic feet of gas per year.

In a Dec. 12 op-ed for *Sherwood Park News*, published three days after Greenview MD announced its plans for the data centre, Minister of Technology and Innovation Nate Glubish boasted that his ministry "has been working with the O'Leary team for several months to assist in navigating Alberta's regulatory framework."

The SLCN letter blasts the "provincial government's apparent coordination, behind closed doors and to the exclusion of our Nation, for a massive development on our traditional territory."

NDP MLA Brooks Arcand Paul, who before being elected worked as a lawyer for Alexander First Nation, told the *Macleod Gazette* "that when projects of this magnitude don't include Indigenous consultation, they can be stalled indefinitely."

Calling O'Leary a "failed federal Conservative leadership candidate," in reference to O'Leary's aborted 2017 campaign, with ties to U.S. President Donald Trump, Arcand Paul said he doesn't understand "why this project has even been intimated in this province and why we have a premier already lauding it for the benefits it will bring."

Kaber's Story: Balancing duty, family, and education

Kaber Koski's career as a first responder is evidence of his dedication to service, community, and lifelong learning. As Deputy Chief of the Sucker Creek First Nation fire department, Kaber has devoted over 11 years to firefighting and emergency response and has continually sought to enhance his skills and knowledge to better serve those in need.

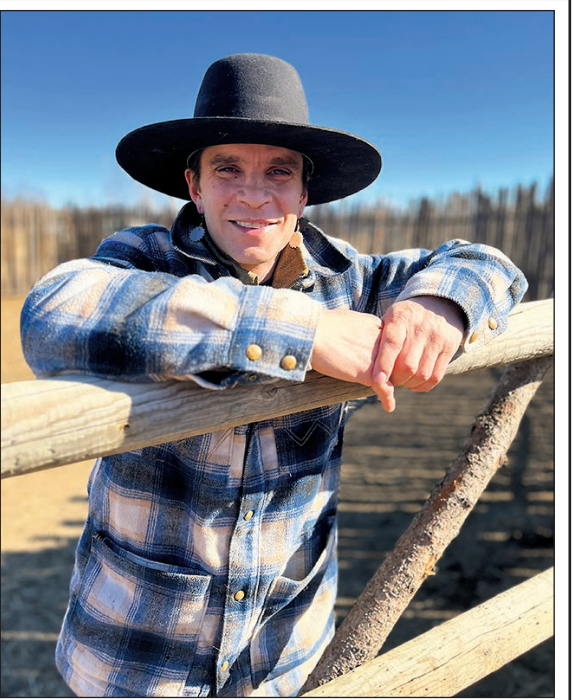
Earlier in his career, Kaber became certified as a professional firefighter, HAZMAT technician, and fire training instructor through a fire academy in Texas, USA. However, Kaber decided to expand his expertise to include emergency medical training upon recognizing the need for further emergency response skills in his community.

Kaber embarked on his educational journey at Northern Lakes College, earning his Emergency Medical Responder certificate in 2018 before enrolling in the Primary Care Paramedic (PCP) program a few years later. "I decided it was time to take the next step in life and complete the PCP program," Kaber shares.

Dedicated to giving back to his community, Kaber continued to provide firefighting services with the fire department while pursuing his studies. Balancing the demands of family life and career with his studies was a challenge, but Kaber soon found strategies to cope with his competing demands. "Managing my time was pretty difficult," he acknowledges. "But, eventually, I discovered the time of day when I work best and without interruption. For me, that was usually in the late evening."

As father to 11 children, the demands on Kaber's time were extreme, but he remained committed to his educational goals and soon noticed how his studies empowered his parenting. "My wife and I have a blended family," Kaber shares. "Our eldest is 16 years old, and we currently have another on the way. I actually assisted in the delivery of our last two children after I started the PCP program, so I felt quite prepared. My wife delivered our children at home in a teepee. It was incredible."

Looking to the future, Kaber remains committed to serving northern communities as a Primary Care Paramedic, with plans to continue his education at NLC by enrolling in the Advanced Care Paramedic program. His dedication and hard work have not only inspired his own career aspirations but have also influenced his eldest daughter, who plans to follow in her father's footsteps by entering the Primary Care Paramedic program upon her graduation from high school.



NLC alum Kaber Koski is serving his community as a primary care paramedic with plans to continue his education at NLC


Offering advice to those considering a career in first response, Kaber emphasizes the importance of commitment. "Make sure the career is right for you," he advises. "Volunteer, go on ride-along calls. It takes a lot of courage."


Through his unwavering commitment to his community and his own personal growth, Kaber serves as an inspiration to all who aspire to make a difference in the lives of others.

Northern Lakes College offers many programs through Supported Distance Learning. Get more information at www.northernlakescollege.ca/programs-courses




Powwow dancer Kaber Koski

 **APPLY FOR A CREDIT PROGRAM** on March 5, and we'll waive the \$50 application fee.




Wednesday March 5, 2025 1pm - 4pm

Just like our programs, the NLC Open House is
available everywhere, at a campus, or online!



Get more information at
www.northernlakescollege.ca/open-house



Indigenous Edmontonians oppose proposed Public Spaces Bylaw

By Jeremy Appel, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Dozens of speakers signed up to comment on the City of Edmonton's proposed Public Spaces Bylaw at a Feb. 10 Community and Public Services Committee meeting, a majority of whom objected to it, including several Indigenous speakers.

The proposed bylaw, which has been in the works since 2022, merges the Conduct of Transit Passengers, Parkland and Public Places bylaws, as well as aspects of several other bylaws which deal with the use of city spaces.

As presented, the bylaw would ban spitting, public drug use and panhandling near roads, sleeping outdoors and feeding wildlife. It would also require organizers of events with more than 100 expected attendees to obtain permission from the city and liability insurance coverage for \$2 million.

Judith Gale of Bear Claw Beaver Hills House, an Indigenous-led outreach group for people who are unhoused, told the committee that it's "really egregious that you're picking on our brothers and sisters."

She noted how Edmonton has nearly 5,000 unhoused people, who are "disenfranchised from every aspect of society, even their families."

"We have got to take care of our most vulnerable and stop treating them like untouchables," said Gale.

According to the city's 2023 Housing Needs Assessment, Indigenous people represent five per cent of Edmonton's population, but compose 55 to 65 per cent of its unhoused population.

Earth, another speaker from Bear Claw, said that she's observed a notable increase in unhoused people "losing their lives while living outside," deaths which often go unreported.

"Their lives are so undervalued by those in positions of authority that they often remain nameless," said Earth.

Citing the early 2024 sweep of encampments and the city's decision to pay \$225,000 to fence off the former encampment sites, Earth said that "those in positions of power have wielded their authority to make the lives of unhoused individuals increasingly unsafe, resulting in dire consequences."

The proposed bylaw, which imposes a \$25 fine

for panhandling, would only make matters worse, Earth added.

Rachelle Gladue, co-founder of the Tawâw Outreach Collective, told the committee that having worked in security on the one hand, and supportive housing, shelters and harm reduction on the other, she can "see both sides clearly."

Gladue, a 2-Spirit mother and Indigenous social work student at Yellowhead Tribal College, said she doesn't "feel safe" raising a child in Edmonton, and has considered moving to a different province.

"Consider how the lack of safety here makes me feel the need to leave my own homeland, the land that you guys acknowledged," she said, referring to the land acknowledgement at the beginning of every city council meeting.

"I should not feel so inclined to leave my own land, but the city's policies are making it impossible for poverty and crime to be eliminated, making public safety harder to achieve."

The fatal flaw in the proposed bylaw, Gladue said, is that it assumes "everyone has the same abilities and opportunities," failing "to account for diverse and complex needs."

"The message is clear—public survival is not permissible," she said.

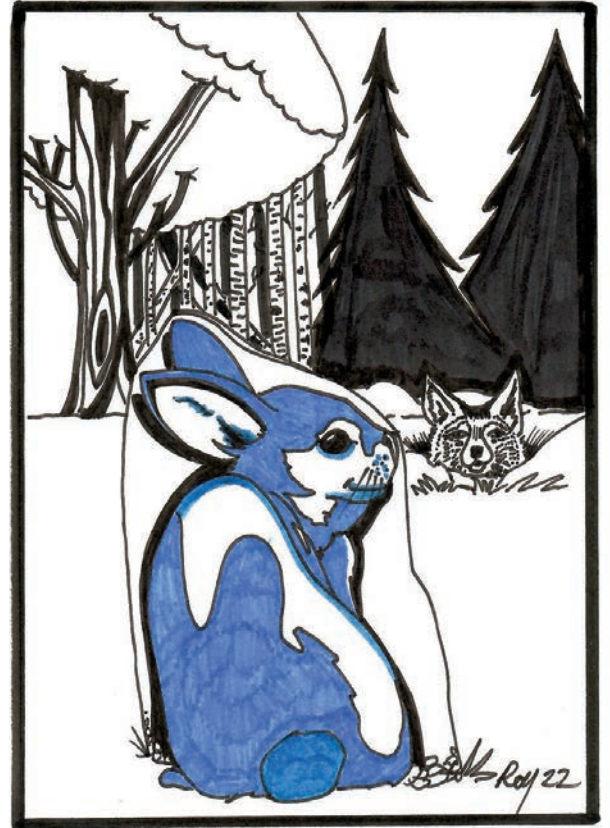
Edmonton Chamber of Commerce VP of economy and public engagement Heather Thomson expressed the chamber's "strong support" of the bylaw, which she argued is "designed to balance the safety [of] both housed and unhoused individuals."

"We cannot maintain the status quo with regards to public spaces. It's just not working right now," said Thomson.

But not all business groups support the bylaw. Alberta Avenue Business Association executive chair David Plamondon, who owns the Indigenous-themed tabletop board game store Pe Metawe Games disagrees.

"This particular bylaw, as it stands, has a disproportionate effect on folks who are already vulnerable, who the system has already failed, and who are already experiencing houselessness and poverty," Plamondon told the committee.

"There's no reason why somebody should be



doubly punished for having to do what they can to survive."

Jakob Cardinal, a MacEwan University business student from Saddle Lake Cree Nation (not to be confused with former *Alberta Native News* reporter Jacob Cardinal, also from Saddle Lake), said the overrepresentation of Indigenous Edmontonians in the city's homeless population is a manifestation of an "unrelenting trail of broken trust."

"First Nations people did not have any homeless [people] until your governments were put into place," said Cardinal.

But, he emphasized, the proposed bylaw impacts all Edmontonians.

"Respecting the diverse needs of equity-deserving populations is integral, but while remaining under the ever-strengthening grip of capitalism, we all one day may need some type of equity initiatives," said Cardinal.

He noted how people "freeze to death outside of" the city's \$600-million publicly funded hockey arena, and that snow clearing and emergency medical workers refer to the people they find frozen to death on the streets as "popsicles."

"How many more popsicles will this council allow?" said Cardinal. "According to you, the number one concern is drug use in public places, not the rise in the number of people freezing to death."

The committee voted to recommend council pass an amended version of the bylaw, which affirms Edmontonians' Charter rights and exempts feral cats from its provision banning feeding animals.



Healing Support Fund

ARE YOU A SURVIVOR OF FORCED OR COERCED STERILIZATION OR DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO IS?

You are not alone. The Survivors Circle for Reproductive Justice has launched a national Healing Fund to provide healing support funds to First Nations, Inuit and Métis survivors.

APPLY TODAY

Survivors

- Up to \$10,000 for individual healing
- Up to \$30,000 for Assisted Reproductive Technology

First Nations/Organizations/Groups

- Up to \$30,000 for community projects led by survivors

DEADLINE TO APPLY IS MARCH 31, 2025



Apply Now!

Questions?

Phone Number: 1-877-386-0750

Website: ReproductiveJusticeSurvivors.ca



Located 2 miles West of Barrhead on Highway 18.
Site 13 Box 6 RR2
Email: rob@barrheadautoparts.com

780-674-3443
1-888-577-4377

WWW.BARRHEADAUTOPARTS.COM

Quality Used Parts

- Computerized Inventory
- Licensed Mechanics
- Quality Used & Rebuilt Parts For Cars & Trucks
- Competitive Labor Rates
- Buying Scrap Vehicles
- Used Pipe & Assortment of Metal
- Used Vehicles



RED DOG
Consulting & Contracting Inc.

Peat
780-291-0077
redawg@hotmail.ca

WTA Chainsaw Safety Training
LV3 Faller & LV2 Bucker
Survival Training
Forestry Consulting & Contracting
Wilderness Camps & Workshops

“Mindfulness is in our tradition” with Andrea Deleeuw

By Laura Mushumanski, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

There is all this talk about going to the bush and walking around - but what does this mean? Why is there this constant talk about feeling held by the land - as if it's Creator's gift to jam and butter on fry bread. And then the talk about mental health - there is so much to learn, and which direction do we go from here?

The first time our *iskwew* sister, Andrea Deleeuw was gifted tea and Bannock from an Elder while immersing herself into community was at her local friendship centre. This is where feelings of being genuinely “loved, cared for and connected” came full circle for her—and how much this gesture makes a world of a difference when visiting with all our relations. Ahh... visiting, the one act of service that connects us all together—the spirit of learning about others, really listening that involves the heart, and bringing out each other's big belly laughs...

You see, these are understandings from an Indigenous worldview. “[These] approaches that are grounded in Indigenous knowledge, are inherently different [with a] sense of home, pride ... so much of the work is grounded in ceremony and teachings.” Deleeuw came to know that much of Indigenous traditions are grounded in being a good relative through acts of humility - mindfulness.

Our *nimis*, sister, Andrea, is the Alberta Regional Mental Wellness Coordinator with Thunderbird Partnership Foundation. She has been walking in the world of Indigenous social work all her life with her gifts from Creator to share with the world. These gifts she shares were taught to her from teachings of the land. The teachings are felt when being with the land. For Andrea it is always about going and visiting with the land, learning from the land, and “how the land has healed” her.

Offering tobacco, is an act of gratitude, honour, and humility. The land, when visiting, will never ask you for anything in return, instead take your time when visiting to really listening and connecting. Deleeuw, over time and as a life-long learner of what Mother Earth continues to teach her, observed that, “you will receive what you are meant to receive ... all of these practices of intentions, offerings before we do things—be ready to receive and make connections.”

The spirit of the land, and when connecting with the land - away from technology - our senses start to become familiar to the world around us. The more we visit, the more familiar everything becomes, where internally our bodies start to feel safe, at ease, and grounded. This understanding came to fruition when Deleeuw was processing her grief, “I felt the land hold the grief for me... no other human could hold that grief.” In turn, what started to happen was an easing within Andrea's nervous system, the part of our body that allows us to sense both safety and connection, as well as when things are unfamiliar and unsafe. This is where Deleeuw found safety and connection during a challenging time in her life.

And as Andrea continued to venture into an Indigenous way of knowing “the land,” she discovered, “we're learning from everything—people, languages, plants—if we are attuned and have a willingness to be open [by] going outside to get outside” the healing can happen.

“Every interaction we have is how we walk in the world,” observed Deleeuw. This teaching has

become a part of her purpose and has shaped the medicine bundle she carries as a way of life, and being able to share this knowledge in a good way.

If there is one thing that Andrea can share with others that she has learned along the way is, “trust that all of this adds to the next thing, ‘nothing is for nothing.’ Everything is going to be important... what is the lesson to be learned there?”

Andrea Deleeuw is the Alberta Regional Mental Wellness Coordinator with Thunderbird Partnership Foundation. She can be reached at adeleeuw@thunderbirdpf.org.



Andrea Deleeuw describes the importance of being mindful in all our interactions.



Building mutual trust and respect matters.

Building relationships is a journey. We are committed to working with Indigenous communities to learn, grow and earn trust.

From open and honest dialogue to developing business agreements and equity partnerships, we're putting our energy into creating opportunities that create mutual benefit for years to come.



Visit us online
and follow us
@ABNativeNews

Tipawan: Finding balance and humility with Leona Karakunte

By Laura Mushumanski, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The word for a Cree person, *nehiyawé*, comes from the root word *newo*—meaning four. And in a *nehiyawé* understanding, we are a four-part person: emotional, mental, physical, and spiritual; the four parts that interconnect with each other also make up the four quadrants within the medicine wheel. Some also say to incorporate into our medicine wheel finances, and social relationships - taking time to visit with family and friends.

The medicine wheel is a holistic understanding that as a four-part person, we learn to balance all four quadrants of our own medicine wheel every day as a holistic understanding of how we take care of ourselves so in turn we can take care of others. With us being at the center of the medicine wheel, we are the medicine in our own medicine wheel.

Now imagine your own medicine wheel as a tire, and if you were to be driving down the street and your medicine wheel is not in balance—you would be driving around like Fred Flintstone down a severely bumpy road, perhaps a rez road while head banging unintentionally to the sound of your vehicle bottoming out.

Tipawan in *nehiyawewin*, the Cree Language, translates to balancing your emotional, mental, physical and spiritual health - an Indigenous understanding of how to take care of ourselves and everything on Mother Earth in a good way. This does not mean a person has to be perfect to be loved, seen, cared for, shown dignity, or acknowledged. Instead this is a practice of understanding oneself and in turn walking with humility towards all our relatives; and for our *iskwew* sister Leona Karakunte, balance and humility is a way of life.

“I am passionate about working with Indigenous people. It’s who I am... it’s not a job for me. And for me, working with Indigenous people is hard because you have to bring your authentic self to everything that you do... As Indigenous people, everything that we do comes with spirit, whether we know it or not,” shared Karakunte as she reflected on her role within human relations while walking alongside Indigenous peoples for almost two decades.

As Indigenous people, described Leona, a fluent *nehiyawewin* speaker, “We are inherently in tune to being humble. It is really hard for us to

talk about ourselves because we don’t want to sound like we are bragging... We are taught not to brag about ourselves, to not think you’re better than everyone else, to really be on a level playing field with everyone.”

Over the span of Karakunte’s learning journey so far, she noted how many times she was ‘triggered’ when working within her vocation as a voice for Indigenous peoples to be represented. Over time, Leona came to the understanding about “[being] your authentic self and being triggered... When you are in that trigger space, I think that is when Creator is trying to show you where you need to heal and where you need to grow. And when you start to look at it from that perspective, is when you really start to grow and learn finally.”

As someone who grew up living the *nehiyawé* way, the teachings that were shared with her came full circle to how she walks in the world today. “I believe Creator has put me where I am at, I don’t believe that it has been my own.... I truly believe that there is a great power, and I have been put in these positions, and it is not about me. If it was about me, I would just mosey on, collect a paycheck and go home—I don’t feel right about that. If I am not creating space for Indigenous voices, no matter what I do or work, if I am not able to be a voice for our people—past, present and in the future—then I don’t feel satisfied, I don’t have peace.”

That peace feeling that Leona brings into conversation speaks to how her connection with Creator and the teachings along her journey so far have shaped what she has come to know differently. “It doesn’t matter what I do—for me it is about connection, connecting with people because I think inherently, we are born with that... I never really understood it at first... Why is this happening to me? ...Why am I hitting all these roadblocks?...Why do I have to work so hard compared to the non-Indigenous Caucasian woman sitting next to me with blonde hair and blue eyes. Why do I have to work ten times harder than her?... But then I started changing my focus and started looking at, what is this teaching me? Then there are days that I just think: okay Creator, I am done learning... Just give me a little break... can I just have one easy day, just one hour?”

In those moments of heavy times, and what Leona was speaking to was what healing feels like, sounds like, and looks like—going into the unknown, the dark and mystery of things, to find light, all while trusting Creator that things will be okay. This is where Karakunte learned to let go of control, by transitioning what felt uncomfortable and unbearable into teachings and gifts.

“We have our own idea of what our life should be, but then there is Creator that has it planned out for all of us—and I don’t know what that looks like yet for me...and I hope that someday when my time comes to go to the other side, that whatever I have done, no matter what role I have done—that I have created a positive impact on people that I have worked with.”

The humility understanding that Karakunte has come to know is embedded in the challenging times that she went through, and she started to walk with a perspective of seeing people, places, and things as gifts and teachings. This too has supported her role of walking alongside Indigenous people as a helper within our communities to shift systemic barriers. ... “and really planting those seeds of systemic changes for our people, the future of our children, and my grandchildren that have yet to come. And for me, if I have hit that mark, that is satisfying—maybe that is what Creator has in store for me, that is why I am here... in this form, to be part of that systemic change—to be in the dirt, in the grime and dirtiness [and] being that seed, to be able to



Leona Karakunte

hopefully create change for the betterment of our people.”

And this talk about seed planting—when any seed is immersed in soil, it too needs nutrients to be able to germinate. The seed itself is submerged into darkness for as long as it takes until one day when it is ready to sprout and venture into an unfamiliar part of life - growth.

As Karakunte so eloquently spoke about connecting to spirit, this was only when she found what that feeling of peace within her own self was all about, and only after she came to exploring what the other side of comfort is. “That peace [feeling]—that is peace in your spirit—knowing in your intuition that gets into your stomach—I think that is our Creator’s way of keeping us in check and saying “okay, you are at peace because this is familiar to you.” The unfortunate part is, I have been in that space of toxicity that was familiar to me, so I also found peace in the chaos, and when I went through my healing journey, I realized that my sense of peace was obscured to some degree where chaos was peace to me— and then through the healing where Creator put me in situations where I didn’t have a choice but to heal.”

The healing journey itself—as noted by Karakunte, is not all butterflies and rainbows, and within the body, these are growing pains, where it feels excruciatingly painful... what neuroplasticity is inside the body as we two-legged beings find courage to connect with spirit and engage in things that aid us in good health: emotionally, mentally, physically, and spiritually.

Another lesson that Leona learned is, “if you are being stubborn guess what... Creator is even more stubborn than you are, and Creator knows what is best for you. So, in that time, in those moments when I am in that space where I am down in the dirt and on my knees and crying, and at my very lowest of low, is when I realize that hey this is not good for me, I need to move on.”

Like a seed of a spruce tree immersed in soil, the tree cannot grow into this magnificent being—unless it learns to outgrow its original space.

“You can’t grow in those comfort spaces—there is a time and place for that, for you to rest and for you to do what you need to do when your body needs to regroup, like I said there needs to be balance—there is a time when you need to go out of your comfort zone and go into the unknown and be uncomfortable, because growth is never comfortable—it’s just not. It is hard and it sucks, and it hurts, and there are so many different emotions, the fear of the unknown, and not being in control, and being out of control—especially traumatized people like to be in control, and when you finally just let go... that’s when it becomes the most scariest time. I do it with my hands and my knees shaking and I trust in the Creator to protect me and guide me no matter what I do.”

The spruce tree only reaches its mature size, by sitting in darkness and conserving energy until one day it outgrows its protective shell, and in


Continued on page 11

DISCOVER CALGARY LIBRARY

- Books and eResources
- Arts & Culture displays
- Indigenous Services
- Programs
- Events - and much more!

All free with your Library Card – FREE for all residents of Calgary and surrounding area Indigenous communities.

calgarylibrary.ca



NRCB | Natural Resources
Conservation Board

PUBLIC NOTICE

SCOTT PIT PROJECT

Heidelberg Materials Canada Limited

PROPOSED APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Heidelberg Materials Canada Limited (Heidelberg) is proposing to mine 2 million tonnes per year of sand and gravel at the Scott Pit Project, to be located on 05-26-02-W5M in Rocky View County, Alberta, for a period of 25 to 30 years. The aggregate materials from the mining area are proposed to be transported via an overland conveyor system to Heidelberg's existing Spy Hill processing facility within the City of Calgary.

The Alberta Lieutenant Governor in Council, on the recommendation of the Minister of Environment and Protected Areas, prescribed the Scott Pit Project as a reviewable project under section 4(f) of the *Natural Resources Conservation Board Act*.

Pursuant to the order from the Lieutenant Governor in Council, the Natural Resources Conservation Board (NRCB) will be reviewing the application for this project in accordance with the *Natural Resources Conservation Board Act* to determine whether the project is in the public interest. The NRCB has prepared Proposed Application Requirements for this review and invites the public to review and comment on these proposed requirements. **Your name and comments submitted will be accessible to the public.**

The Proposed Application Requirements and associated project information can be viewed at the NRCB website:

Natural Resources Conservation Board
www.nrcb.ca/natural-resource-projects/natural-resource-projects-listing/474/scott-pit-project

The proponent maintains a website with associated project information at:

Heidelberg Canada Materials Limited www.ScottPropertyProject.com

Anyone wishing to provide written comments on the Proposed Application Requirements must submit them by March 31, 2025, to:

Manager, Board Reviews
Natural Resources Conservation Board
Email: Laura.Friend@NRCB.ca

NRCB Review Process

If you would like to receive updates about this project you can sign up on the NRCB website project page: www.nrcb.ca/natural-resource-projects/natural-resource-projects-listing/474/scott-pit-project

All documents received by the NRCB regarding this project are accessible on the NRCB website project page. Under section 24 of the NRCB's Rules of Practice, all documents filed related to this proceeding must be placed on the public record unless otherwise ordered by the Board, subject to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

For more information on the NRCB review process, please refer to the NRCB website (www.nrcb.ca), or contact:

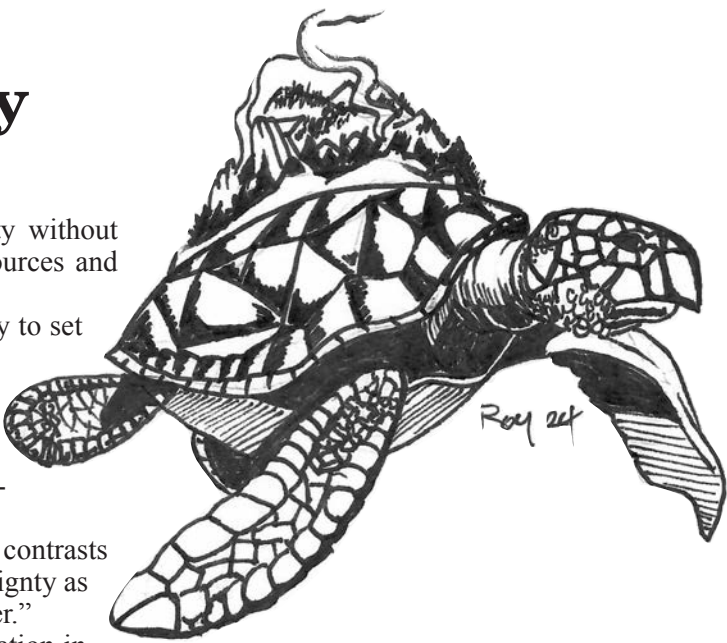
Laura Friend, Manager, Board Reviews
Natural Resources Conservation Board
Telephone: (403) 297-8269 (Toll-free in Alberta by first dialing 310-0000)
laura.friend@nrcb.ca

Dated at Calgary, Alberta, on February 18, 2025.

William Y. Kennedy, General Counsel, NRCB

Report: Achieving Indigenous sovereignty & shared prosperity

By Jeremy Appel, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter



A new report says Canada can advance Indigenous sovereignty by fostering respectful nation-to-nation relationships rooted in co-existence and non-interference, and giving Indigenous laws equal weight to Canadian law.

The report, *Honouring Indigenous sovereignty towards a future of collective prosperity*, is the fifth and final edition of international consultancy firm Deloitte’s series that asked Indigenous youth leaders for their perspectives on various aspects of reconciliation beginning in 2022.

The Indigenous youth leaders interviewed for this edition identified four priorities, which the report is divided into: Indigenous Peoples and Land, Self-Governance, Nationhood, and Truth-telling and Learning.

Byron Jackson, the former CEO of Piikani Nation in Treaty 7, is Deloitte Canada’s director of nation building services.

He told *Alberta Native News* that while there were some “collective agreements” among the youth leaders interviewed, the report reflects how the “notion of sovereignty has really shifted.”

A major point of agreement, said Jackson, was how participants viewed sovereignty “through the land and the relationship that Indigenous Peoples have within that land.”

The report notes how the youth participants collectively defined Indigenous sovereignty as “taking responsibility for their relations to the land, to animate and inanimate beings and to each other.”

“Sovereignty involves having freedom to self-

express and live one’s cultural identity without encroachment, with the necessary resources and spaces to do so,” the report continues.

“Finally, sovereignty means an ability to set and have those boundaries respected. This ability manifests in having authority on what happens on their traditional lands, to their community, to their relatives (human and non-human), and to oneself.”

Jackson noted how this definition contrasts with the traditional definition of sovereignty as a “supreme authority or dominant power.”

Paris Pepin, 27, of Sagkeeng First Nation in Treaty 1, one of the Indigenous youth leaders involved in the report, emphasized how land is a “huge part of our sovereignty.”

“So much of our language and our culture is based on the land. it gives us everything that we need,” she said in an interview.

One way governments and business leaders can facilitate Indigenous sovereignty, the report notes, is by simply recognizing it. This can take the form of adopting relevant Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which has been adopted by the federal government, as well as subnational governments in Quebec, British Columbia and the Northwest Territories.

The report links to the City of Edmonton’s Indigenous Framework as an example of “[r]ecognition of Indigenous sovereignty in action.”

Another recommendation is for governments, businesses and landowners to establish “reciprocal relations” with Indigenous communities on the land in which they operate through land-sharing agreements and co-management protocols.

“If such land decision-making arrangements are not tenable, resource revenue sharing may be an option for parties as mutual compromise,” the report adds.

The Treaty Land Sharing Network, which launched in parts of Alberta in July 2024, is presented as a case study in land sharing, in which landowners, farmers and

ranchers open their land to Indigenous people to engage in traditional practices.

The report, Jackson added, also examines the role of “culturally rooted” Indigenous governance structures, the need for Indigenous relationships with federal and provincial governments based on “mutuality and reciprocity, rather than hierarchy,” and taking control of the narrative about Indigenous Peoples.

Pepin said her major takeaway from the report is the need for a “mindset shift” among both Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities to counter misperceptions about Indigenous Peoples and their governance structures.

“From an Indigenous perspective, a lot of us have been so misled before when we’ve tried to bring forth our ideas of sovereign nations, so that disheartens a lot of communities,” she said.

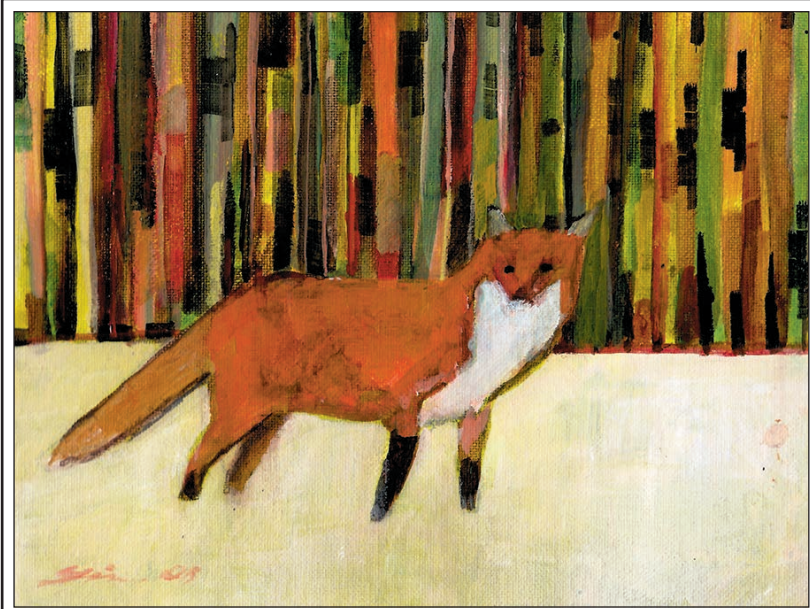
“And then too with non-Indigenous [people] there might be some underlying remains and vestiges of that paternalistic outlook, where it’s like, [Indigenous people] don’t know how we should conduct things.”

To correct misconceptions, the report proposes a policy of “Indigenous narrative sovereignty,” presenting the federally funded Indigenous Screen Office, which distributed \$11.9 million to 236 Indigenous filmmakers in 2023, as a case study.

The positive impact of respecting Indigenous self-determination isn’t limited to Indigenous people.

Citing Canadian government data from 2016, the report notes that self-governance agreements increased scores on the community well-being index by four points for Indigenous community members and five points for all residents.

“Indigenous ways of knowledge can benefit us all, like the land benefits us all, the air, the water,” said Pepin.



Sanford Red Foxx © by Linus Woods. Available at wakinagallery.com.



Our People. Our Product. Our Service.
It's what sets us apart.

YOUR ONE STOP FOR...

- Septic Tanks (up to 5m burial depth)
- Holding Tanks (up to 3m burial depth)
- Water Cisterns (up to 3m burial depth)
- Lift Stations
- Sumps

- Oil & Grit Separators
- Advanced Wastewater Treatment Systems
- INFILTRATOR® Field Systems
- Pumps, Pipe & Fittings
- Fleet of Picker Trucks for Delivery

20 YEAR WARRANTY ON ALL CONCRETE TANKS • CSA APPROVED

Toll Free: 1-800-232-7385
Calgary - Edmonton
www.wilbert.ca



ALBERTA WILBERT SALES



Complete Hair Services for the Whole Family!
Specializing in Colours

Mon - Sat 10:00am - 9:00pm
Sun 11:00am - 6:00pm

*“We welcome our many friends
and clients when you visit Edmonton.”*

West Edmonton Mall
(lower level phase 1)
780.444.1346
www.angela hairstyling.com

Indigenous boardgame teaches about kinship

By Laura Mushumanski, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The basis of a relationship, treaty, “[is] kindness, respect and love—how you maintain that relationship and [learning] how to reconcile what is going on,” replied Shautnee Fryingpan when asked what treaty is and why it is important. And when speaking to the boardgame *Exploring wâhkôhtowin*, Fryingpan reflected on her own understanding of kinship relations, “what is my responsibility to that relationship” ... an understanding of treaty, as a reciprocal relationship that also embeds the understanding of sustainable practices on Mother Earth.

Exploring wâhkôhtowin is a board game that is currently free to access as an online game. It reminds us about the truths of settler presence within Treaty 6 Territory, while affirming the commitment to honouring the spirit of friendship when the original treaties were signed.

The game is focussed on the teachings of *wahkohtowin*, embedded within the understanding of kinship, and taking care of all our relations as if they were our kin. It teaches both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to start thinking about the meaning of Treaty, and the impacts of Treaty relations and how to better relations amongst Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. As mentioned within the online boardgame synopsis, the game addresses that “first steps to rebuilding relationships is knowing the shared history of these territories and the impact of events, policy, and legislation on us all.”

And *wahkotowin*, shared by James Neblabush, is “not just a noun— [it is about] actively talking about relationships with others... a continuation of relationships, engaging, and hopefully gives the learners a sense of agency in their lives.”

The roadmap for building understanding between communities was founded by a collective group of people from the Yellowhead

Indigenous Education Foundation, the Indigenous Knowledge & Wisdom Center, and the Edmonton Shift Lab, with the focus on what it means to be a Treaty partner and embody current Treaty.

Rabia Naseer, another collaborator, reflected that “a lot of people do not realize that they are a treaty person. [Their] present is being influenced by history, and how history impact[ed the] lives of everyone on this land.”

Finding the missing gap to how Indigenous relations within Turtle Island has undergone through acts of colonialism and genocide supported the foundation to the boardgame *Exploring wâhkôhtowin*, where the physical copy of the game will be released in 2025 for purchase. The game itself is intended to be an interactive and accessible way to gain insight and perspectives on the history of legislation, colonial policy, and agreements between Indigenous and settler relations.

The game has gained attention and recognition by the Intercultural Innovation Hub; it was one of



Members of the team who developed 'Exploring wâhkôhtowin' an initiative that seeks to engage youth and new learners on the topic of wâhkôhtowin (loosely translates from Cree for relationships) and Treaties.

10 projects awarded a US\$20,000 grant to help support the development and growth of *Exploring wâhkôhtowin*.

The boardgame is a cooperative 2- 4 player game, intended for ages 14 and up. The game is played in rounds, while moving through the four seasons of the year. And while exploring *wâhkôhtowin*, players are representing an Indigenous family possessing knowledge, skills, and resources for survival. Through the rounds, each event card guides players through major events that happened throughout history within Treaty 6, with the sole intention of the game being to facilitate discussions while sharing knowledge on *Exploring wâhkôhtowin*.





Shop Local for Your Hearing Care!

Hearcare Canada is 100% Canadian-owned and operated. When you choose us, you're supporting a local business and receiving expert, personalized hearing care directly from the owner.

- ✓ Hearing Tests
- ✓ Hearing aid fittings & flex trials

Located in Belmead Professional Centre, we acknowledge that we operate on Treaty 6 territory, the traditional lands of the Cree, Métis, Nakota Sioux, Saulteaux, and Dene peoples.

Support local. Choose Hearcare Canada.

#214, 8944 182 Street NW, Edmonton
Call 780-695-2273
to book your appointment.

SKIRTSAFIRE FESTIVAL

MARCH 6 - 16, 2025

OCÊPIHKOWAN: IT HAS ROOTS

At a time where mental illness is plaguing our communities and we are losing our people to suicide, one Indigenous artist has found ways to root herself and grow through the pain. Mental illness, PTSD and suicide survivor Sissy Thiessen Kootenayoo turned to her community, culture and art to rise above her struggles. Through *Ocêpihkowan*, Sissy and co-producer Michelle Nieviadomy create a safe space for the life-saving practises of honesty, vulnerability and supporting one another. Utilizing the branches of art, expression, culture and teachings, *Ocêpihkowan* is a tree rooted in hope, light and life.

Both performances will be followed by an optional 25 minute panel discussion. Mental health panelists will be speaking about their experiences as Indigenous professionals living and working in community during the ever-growing mental health epidemic.

March 11 & 12
7:30pm
WALTERDALE THEATRE
10322 83rd AVE NW, EDMONTON

SCAN FOR TICKETS



Suitable for ages 14+

Tickets range from pay-what-you-will up to \$27.75 (plus additional fees). Complimentary tickets available for Indigenous people.

skirtsafire.com @skirtsafire #yegherstory



FUNDING
INDIGENOUS
RESURGENCE IN
EDMONTON

Special Thanks:



Venue Sponsored by:



Igniting career paths for Indigenous youth

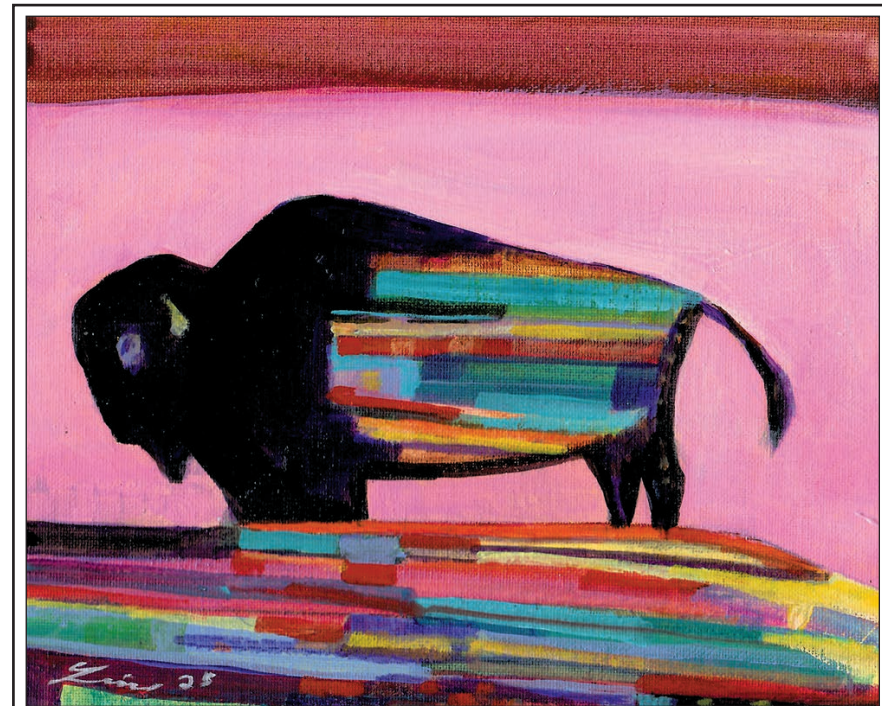
By Regan Treewater, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

SPARK 2025 is igniting career paths for Indigenous youth ages 16 to 30 for yet another exciting conference season. After the success of their inaugural year, Karen McCarthy, the Managing Director for the Inspire Group of Companies commented in a recent phone interview with *Alberta Native News* that: “We identified a need within our Indigenous communities.” This need was the initial ‘spark’ for the project, and now the empowering career conference is establishing itself as an annual undertaking. “You’ve heard the proverb about giving a man a fish versus teaching him to fish. We know that people would much rather have the confidence to build themselves up.” She continued by explaining that within Indigenous communities youth are often motivated to go out and do something meaningful, but lack the information, skill-set, training, or support to shift gears and move their career potential from park, to drive: accelerating their dreams to manifest as their future.

Beginning on March 18, the three-day event will kick off with a pipe ceremony presided over by Clifford Cardinal from the Saddle Lake Cree Nation. This will be followed by a networking event featuring Sheena Kaine, former boxer turned fashion model and Makayla Mantal, a nursing student from the University of Alberta. These two young ladies are invited to speak about their experiences preparing for careers and overcoming obstacles to follow their dreams. Delegates will be attending from across Alberta, British Columbia, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. McCarthy and her team are hopeful that with increased public awareness and outreach, they will be able to attract youth from the Territories and the Yukon. Event emcee Orest Zwodzdesky

will be introducing distinguished speakers and presenters throughout the proceedings, including: Shane Chartrand and Tammy Lamouche. During lunch breaks there will be even more options for engagement with presentations by Hayden and Cameron Saddleback and Linsay Willier. Already, if this does not sound like a standard career fair, that’s because it is something far greater. “We’ve definitely planned for time so that the delegates can network and explore booths set up by companies and organizations from different spheres of the work world, but it’s also about building skills and preparing our youth for getting out of their shells and launching their careers. We want to set them up to succeed,” McCarthy elaborated.

Organizers know that there are jobs out there, and there is a wealth of Indigenous talent out there with the potential to build careers in these positions, but that it is a matter of facilitating connections and building knowledge. “People might know that they are interested in something like healthcare but have just never taken that extra step of imagining themselves in that career. We have different postsecondary institutions and vocational trades schools attending the conference, for delegates to map out a path between their interests and connecting them with future careers.” McCarthy is sensitive to the reality that it can be an even more daunting leap for Indigenous youth to move out of their comfort-zones after a lifetime of societal marginalization, or even simply a lack of access because they come from extremely remote communities. “Some of our attendees are visiting an urban environment for the first time.” She carefully noted that: “We don’t want to take youth away from their communities but rather empower them to help build the vitality of the places they come from. Many of the businesses that come to recruit at the conference are active in remote parts of the province.”



'Buffalo Path People - Follow a buffalo path all your life' by Linus Woods. See wakinagallery.com

Some delegates may be arriving with a polished resume in-hand, while those still


in high school may not yet know how to put one together or what should be included. Organizers have this covered too. “This year, there is time built into the schedule for networking and approaching potential employers with resumes,” McCarthy noted. “But we also have pre-conference workshops for resume writing and building interview skills to support delegates as they go talk to different companies and organizations.” For anybody who remembers the overwhelming anxiety of looking for their first job, the prospect of ongoing support throughout the career investigation process sounds like a dream come true.


The conference offers Indigenous youth the opportunity to learn more about careers in STEM, public service, trades, healthcare, and arts and culture. “After our conference last year, we saw that our youth also had interest in learning about how to become performers, artists, and actors. So this year we made sure to address this.” Youth will have the opportunity to explore the five themes represented guided by guest speakers and industry professionals.

The vulnerability of going out and approaching potential employers is enough to make most people want to recede into their comfort zones, but organizers have found a fun way to encourage networking. “We have these passports that the youth take around and get stamped as they visit different vendor booths, then at the end of the conference, there’s a draw for prizes: tablets, laptops, things that could really help a person as they begin to further their education or improve their skills.”

The three-day event has the goal of connecting potential employers with Indigenous talent – breaking down the societal barriers endured by persons from marginalized communities. The diversity of industry representation at the conference is a refreshing emphasis that within the workplace employers are seeking to support and amplify Indigenous voices. Registration to attend is still open and those interested are invited to visit: <https://www.sparkcareers.ca/>. Employers interested in promoting Indigenous empowerment within the workforce are also encouraged to visit the website. McCarthy and her team are busy with preparations, but they are also eagerly looking forward to hearing good news from their delegates in the future as they propel their success in the career direction of their dreams.

Managed & Produced By:

INSPIRE GROUP OF COMPANIES LTD.




SPARK

CONFERENCE


MARCH 18 - 20, 2025


8:00 AM - 4:00 PM





EDMONTON EXPO CENTRE, EDMONTON, ALBERTA

IGNITING CAREER PATHS FOR INDIGENOUS YOUTH

EXHIBITORS

SPEAKERS

WORKSHOPS







PERFORMANCES

SPARK is a 2 day event designed to bring together Indigenous youth (ages: 16-30) from across Western Canada. Indigenous owned companies, industry, educational institutions, businesses, and career development resources will be available to highlight the number of careers available to them.

EXPLORE, DISCOVER & FIND A PATH THAT'S UNIQUELY YOUR'S.




We are actively seeking sponsors for this event and sponsors for our Indigenous youth.

In addition, the Sparks event team is doing a call out for exhibitors from STEM, Arts and Culture, Health, Public Service, and Trade professions to connect with and inspire our youth.



REGISTER TODAY!

SPARKCAREERS.CA | @SPARKYOUTHCAREERS





To advertise your business or community event, call Dan at Alberta Native News: 780-421-7966 or email natnews@shaw.ca

First Nations water rights can't be debated

By Jeremy Appel, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Last month in Maskwacis, Samson Cree Nation and the International Organization of Indigenous Resource Development co-hosted the International Seminar on Treaties and Indigenous Laws, which featured presentations on upholding Treaty rights through national and international legal frameworks.

Albert Barume, an international human rights law expert from the Democratic Republic of Congo who was appointed UN special rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous Peoples in December 2024, was in attendance via video-conferencing.

On Jan. 24, the seminar's final day, Kehewin Cree Nation Chief Vernon Watchmaker addressed the conference on behalf of the Chiefs Steering Committee on Technical Services, a group of chiefs from Treaties 6, 7 and 8 that has been harshly critical of the federal Liberals' proposed Clean Water Act.

Chief Watchmaker told *Alberta Native News* that his presentation focused on the "Crown's obligation to provide clean, safe water to our nations."

"It's not just a favour, it's a duty enshrined in our Treaty. Our rights to water, land, resources remain intact and they must be upheld by Canada and the province of Alberta," Watchmaker said.

"Our relationship with water is definitely on a different level. We have a spiritual connection. It's not just about potable drinking water."

The Clean Water Act was killed when Prime Minister Justin announced his resignation and prorogued parliament on Jan. 6.

Tallcree Tribal Government Chief Rupert Maneen, who represents Treaty 8 on the committee, previously told this newspaper that the legislation was a "dump-and-run" scheme, in which the federal government was to establish minimum standards for on-reserve water infrastructure and make "best efforts" to provide First Nations with funding to meet those standards.

But Canadian government lawyers have argued in court that they have no legal obligation to provide this funding.

The committee has also criticized how the government drafted the legislation without direct input from Treaty First Nations, opting instead to consult with the Assembly of First Nations, a

lobbying organization that isn't itself a signatory to any Treaty, although its membership is composed of Treaty First Nations.

Chief Watchmaker added that Trudeau's prorogation provides an opportunity for his successor, who will be elected by the Liberal party membership on March 9, to get it right.

"We don't know what the makeup of the government is going to be, but it's not going to change our position," said Watchmaker.

He added that it's not just government but industry that needs to be part of the conversation. Oil sands mining and climate change-induced droughts, Watchmaker said, are "destroying our water."

"Canada and Alberta have basically put corporate profits over the well-being of First Nations," he said.

He said Barume, the special rapporteur, "acknowledged our concerns," namely the importance of Treaty rights in Canada.

Barume committed to meeting with the steering committee at some point in the near future, said Watchmaker, although nothing is scheduled yet.



Tipawan cont. from p 6

turn shares its medicine with us.

"I was going out of my comfort zone—out of that zone of thinking only about myself. We are not meant to be here on earth just to think about ourselves, Creator creates us to serve. We are here to serve...That process was painful."

The Mother of two, was gifted children during two challenging times in her life, Karakunte humbly said, "My children have saved my life... it has been the children—they are a gift from Creator, and that is the highest level of responsibility you can be given as humans here on earth, the responsibility of another life and the most honourable thing that you can do... that is a gift from Creator."

Leona has transformed her own story by seeing it as medicine to help others and being of service with the understanding of sustaining life so that the generations to come can thrive.

"I speak my language quite a bit, Cree is my first language... I didn't speak English until I was eight years old, and I had to have an interpreter in grade one, I used to be so ashamed. And now—it is completely opposite. I am so proud of how I was raised and how I grew up... I grew up the old way. I grew up trapping as a kid, going out and gathering berries, gathering firewood, water, and everything that you needed in life—and even to this day I do not allow my tap to just run freely, because I know the value of water. And I don't take for granted the blessings that I have now, the


good things that I have which is that I have running water, I have heat—I just turn on a wall and just push a button and my heat comes on. I don't have to run outside and go get an armful of firewood and put it in the stove. My mom still lives like that, she's 82 years old ... I still go out there and experience that life and it is also humbling, and it is also a good reminder where I come from."

Those humbling reminders, and how they connect to balan-cing our emotional, mental, physical and spiritual health are what regulates our emotions and behav-iours, through teach-ings of humility. That in turn grounds us. Leona came to this understanding as she sat with her own understanding of who she is and where she came from. "I think ... for us Indigenous people, to live and work in spaces that we do, whatever that may be—we always need grounding. And how we ground ourselves is to remember where we

come from, remember who we are, how connected we are to the land...When I am feeling chaotic and out of balance, I literally go out of town or go down by the river, go for a walk and be out in nature - because when you are out of balance, that is when you start making decisions that are not healthy for you ... Creator gives us all that we need—we just need to be more open to that."

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



BELCOURT BROUSSEAU
Métis Awards
creating possibilities

POST-SECONDARY FUNDING

Up to \$10,000

Criteria

- Be Métis
- Intend to pursue Post-Secondary
- Financial Need

Open for all years of study

Contact: 780-977-5515
communications@bbma.ca

Deadline: March 31st
bbma.ca

Our cover artist Linus Woods

By ANNews staff

The beautiful image on the cover of this month's *Alberta Native News* is titled 'Singing to the Snow' by acclaimed First Nations artist Linus Woods.

Woods, who lives on the Long Plain First Nation reserve in southern Manitoba, is an artist's artist. He loves creating art and is most himself with a brush in hand. Although many patrons have encouraged him to market his art with limited prints or greeting cards, he has so far preferred to only paint and sell originals, while keeping his rates affordable for everyone to enjoy.

Woods is no stranger to Amiskwaciy Waskahikan. He has served several terms as a popular artist-in-residence at Highland Junior High School in northeast Edmonton and his art is much sought after in Alberta's capital city.

Woods credits his work's appearance at galleries, including Wah-Sa in Winnipeg and Bearclaw in Edmonton, for helping him build a large following, but these days he tends to eschew art galleries, because he doesn't want to be limited in the types of paintings he pursues. Those looking to purchase his art can do so either at Winnipeg Art Gallery's gift shop, at the occasional art market, like the ones at Powwows or in Enoch at River Cree, or via

the boutique Wakina Gallery in Edmonton (wakinagallery.com).

"I don't have one style of painting," he told *Alberta Native News*. "I paint so much and there are so many things I like painting."

Woods describes much of his art as "whimsical," including paintings of rabbits in different scenarios, inspired by his natural surroundings on reserve.

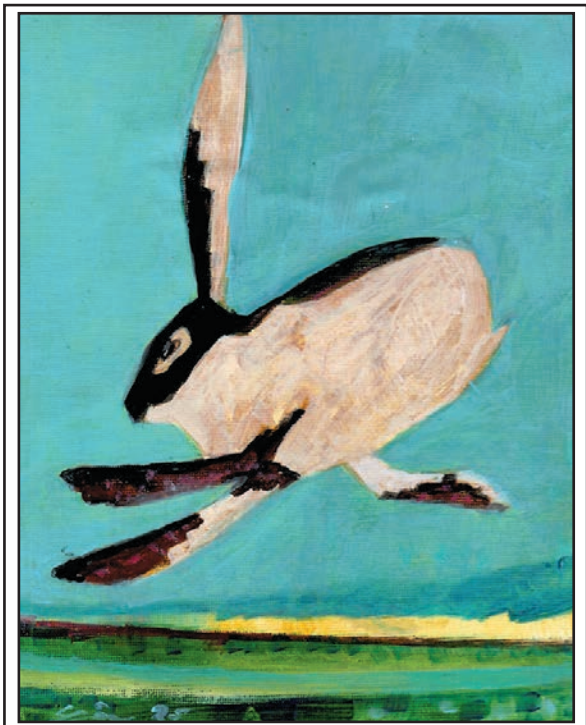
"It's half realism and half cartoon," he explained. "Because I paint these little, hidden characters. We used to call them spirits. I had no way to explain them to some viewers. I called them 'little grandfathers' hidden all over the place. In some of these paintings, you really have to look to find a little cherry tree in there."

Linus's good nature and sense of humour shine through in conversation and sometimes in the titles of his art. He titled the fox image which appears on page 8 'Sanford Red Foxx' and the rabbit image which appears on this page is titled 'Pretty Dang Dog Gone Good – Outrunning a Storm.' He also has a spiritual side which comes through in naming his art. The bison on page 10 is titled 'Buffalo Path People – Follow a buffalo path all your life.'

Woods said he's not constrained by the traditional stylings of his nation's art, which is Ojibway and Dakota, incorporating stylings from Cree, Inuit and South American Indigenous Peoples as well.

Some of his paintings reflect his deep concerns about the impact of industry on the environment and the dwindling habitat for northern wildlife. He also loves painting aliens and although his wildlife images are most prevalent, he says, "Those are going to be worth more when I'm gone. They are the kind I prefer to paint."

Woods also communicates a broad spectrum of



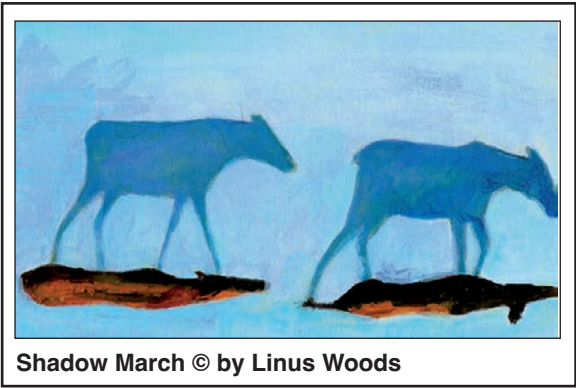
"Outrunning a storm" by Linus Woods.

emotions in his art. In some paintings, he tells a story of movement where you can feel the speed of a galloping horse or the crashing waves of a river. In others, he conveys the still of a meadow or a cloudy sky with such detail that you immediately feel at ease.

There are many elements contained in each of Woods' images. His large paintings are breathtaking, but even the smaller images and the portraits are full of surprises and expression – and his use of colour is amazing, sometimes vibrant, other times layered but always interesting.

Woods' mastery of his craft continues to amaze art lovers – the range of his subjects and techniques is diverse and elicits a sense of awe and wonderment in everyone who views his art.

Linus Woods' paintings can be viewed and purchased at wakinagallery.com.



Shadow March © by Linus Woods

local artists | exclusive collection | original pieces



WG | Wakina Gallery

carvings • paintings • illustrations • cards

780-237-1556 www.wakinagallery.com