

Distributing across Alberta for over 40 years!



Cover art by Rick Noname.
Reprinted with permission of WakinaGallery.com

Grad rediscovers Indigenous roots, becomes first in her family to earn a degree

Kethra Stewart is an Indigenous scholar, musician, triathlete, and role model to her daughter.

Every morning for the past five years, Kethra Stewart (Master of Health Studies '25) has woken at 6:30 a.m. to make breakfast and pack lunch for her daughter, Keira, before rushing out the door to make the daily school drop-off. Once the school bell rings and goodbye hugs are exchanged, Stewart shifts focus from full-time mom to full-time university student.

"When she's at school, I'm at my desk. Even after she goes to bed, sometimes I'm up until 11 or 12 o'clock at night working," she says.

When she wasn't studying, the single mom from Saddle Lake Cree Nation who now lives in Kelowna, B.C., was likely busy with other family activities such as teaching Keira cello—a lifelong

passion she's proud to share—or shuttling to and from swimming lessons, ballet, powwow dances, or kung fu. On top of it all, Stewart trains as a triathlete.

In other words, the days are full and evenings are long, but she wouldn't have it any other way as she strives to create the best life possible for the family. And Athabasca University (AU) played a big role in making it happen.

"I'm the first of my family to get a degree. I'm the first of my family to do a master's degree, to be brought up in both Western views and also learning the Indigenous Worldview," Stewart says.

Everything Stewart has achieved, including her recent Master of Health Studies degree from AU, would be unrecognizable to her younger self. The decades in between have been marked

by healing and self-discovery, including a reconnection with her Indigenous roots, and gaining knowledge to help ensure that Indigenous People have access to timely, culturally safe health care.

In search of self

Stewart is one of three children, but she was separated from her birth family at six months old and placed with a foster family and later adopted. She grew up in the Edmonton region as an only child and excelled in music, especially cello, which she started playing at age three.

During her early teens, she started struggling with self-identity and turned to drugs and alcohol to "mask how I was feeling." The road to recovery wasn't easy, but she persevered and eventually went back to school and became an emergency medical responder, later upgrading to become an emergency medical technician.

Stewart's interest in health care grew, and she earned a health-care aide certificate

and later a diploma in massage therapy. By 2017, Stewart decided to build on her education and pursue a bachelor's degree in health sciences.

Rediscovering Indigenous Knowledge and Traditions

Two years later, Stewart and Keira moved to the British Columbia interior where they started exploring their heritage, attending powwows, meeting Elders, raising awareness of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, and joining The Women of Turtle Island.

"I've been really blessed to meet a lot of people along the way who have helped us and inspired us to become part of this community."

The combination of worldviews—Two-Eyed Seeing—also influenced Stewart's education. She started learning about Indigenous health, health policy, and health promotion during the final year of her bachelor's degree and decided to make that the focus of her research at AU through the Master of Health Studies program.

Working to improve health care for Indigenous People

In addition to the flexibility of online learning, which allowed her to study and raise a child, one of the appeals of the thesis program was that she could choose a research topic that combined her life experiences as an Indigenous woman but also 20 years of professional experience in health care. Her research focuses on Indigenous health and health equity to improve cultural safety training among all health professions, particularly in massage therapy.

"There are a lot of inequities happening still within hospitals, clinical settings, even massage therapists, pharmacists, acupuncturists, and holistic providers. The more I looked into that, I found that a lot of people aren't even aware."

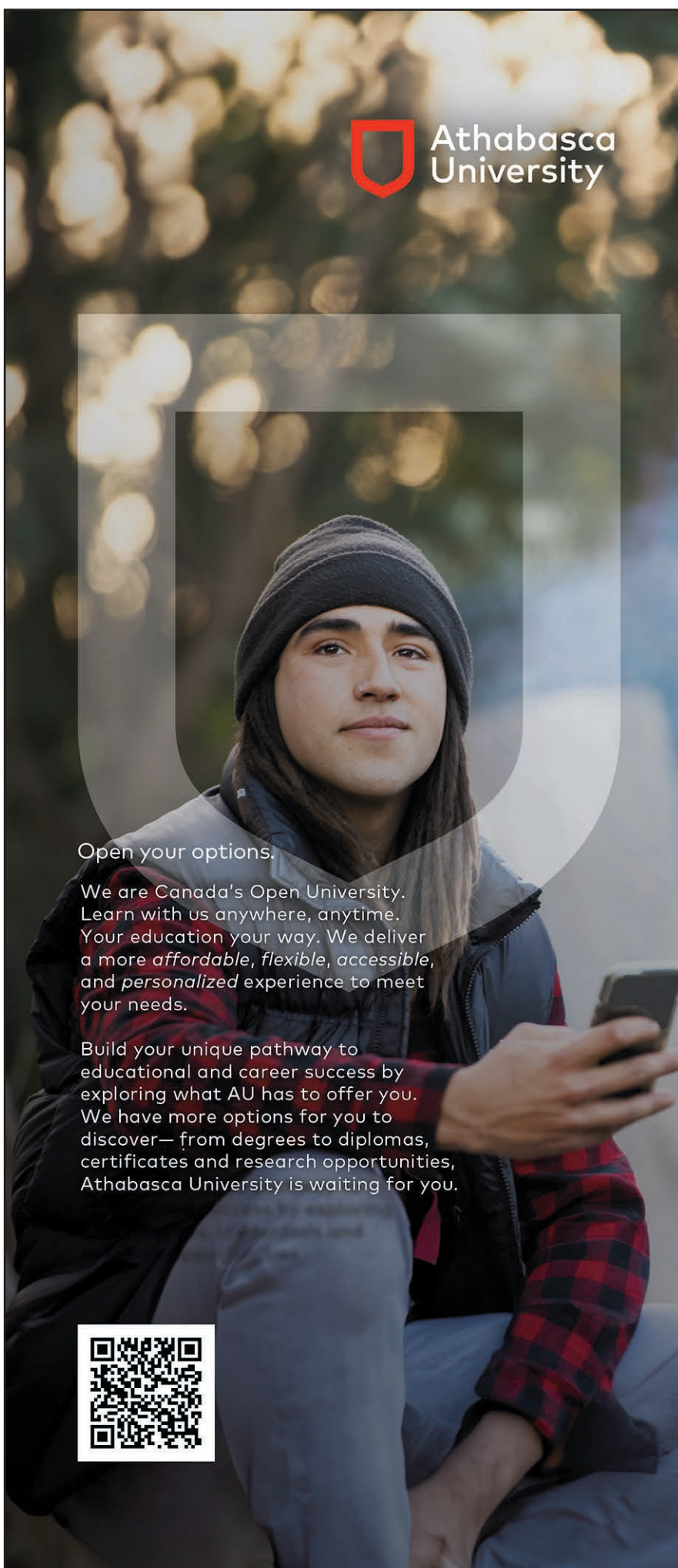
Stewart credits AU and the Master of Health Studies program for providing opportunities to engage with Indigenous communities, especially when it came to her capstone project—the culmination of two years of research into health equity and promotion.

The work can't—and won't—stop. Thanks to her master's experience at AU, Stewart hopes to take another step academically and professionally by going to medical school.

Through it all, Stewart's inspiration to succeed continues to be Keira.

"I knew that if I just applied myself, I could get the highest education possible. And here I am getting a master's degree. It's crazy. It's unbelievable. It's amazing. I'm very blessed and very grateful."

Your future can start here. Learn more about AU's programs, flexible online study options at athabascau.ca.




Athabasca University

Open your options.

We are Canada's Open University. Learn with us anywhere, anytime. Your education your way. We deliver a more *affordable, flexible, accessible, and personalized* experience to meet your needs.

Build your unique pathway to educational and career success by exploring what AU has to offer you. We have more options for you to discover— from degrees to diplomas, certificates and research opportunities, Athabasca University is waiting for you.




CONVOCATION
Athabasca University

Athabasca University graduate Kethra Stewart is the first in her family to earn a degree. The flexibility at AU helped make it possible.

What Are the 3 Secrets of High-Impact Grant Strategies?

By Rolando Inzunza, Founder of Axioma Consulting

When I think of the communities we’ve supported - like Chard Métis Nation, Beaver Lake Cree Nation, Chipewyan Prairie First Nation or Conklin Métis - I see one common thread: success came not from working harder, but from working smarter.

Here are three secrets every Indigenous leader should know:

Build a funding calendar, not a wish list.

We map out every major funding opportunity for 12 months so you know what’s coming before deadlines hit. We have a database of over 200 Indigenous-focused grants and growing every week.

Pair quick wins with long-term plays.

We start by securing small grants for urgent needs while developing larger, multi-year proposals for housing, health, and workforce development.


Turn reporting into your best sales pitch.

Funders fund results. We treat every report as a chance to show impact, build trust, and set up the next “yes.”

These aren’t just tactics—they’re what allowed Axioma’s partner communities to achieve a 75% success rate.

Rolando Inzunza is the Founder of Axioma Consulting, where he and his team partner with Indigenous communities to simplify grant writing and secure results. Since 2024, Axioma has helped clients access over \$6.2 million in funding for projects that matter most. Learn more at axioma.ca.



 *Want these strategies applied to your Nation?*

Let’s build a customized funding calendar together. Visit axioma.ca to start.



WRITERS WANTED!

Use your writing skills to help Indigenous communities and non-profits secure critical funding!

- ✓ No grant writing experience required
- ✓ Remote work – flexible hours
- ✓ Supportive training & mentorship

If you are a detail-oriented writer, eager to learn, and ready to make a difference

APPLY TODAY!

axioma.ca | axioma.ca/career

Carving for Sale



"First Catch of the Day" "is an original soapstone carving by Dene carver Anthony Antoine that is currently on exhibit and available for purchase at WakinaGallery.com.

The sculpture measures 5" wide and 13" high. It weighs 8.5 lbs.

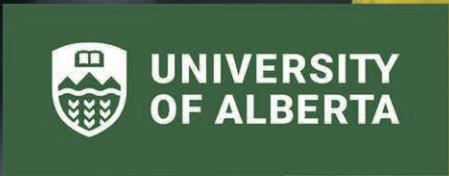
The piece is signed by the artist and comes with a signed certificate of authenticity.


For information visit wakinagallery.com or call 780-237-1556.

FREE APPLICATION DAYS FOR INDIGENOUS STUDENTS


September 30 – October 9, 2025

Apply Now at UAB.CA/FNMI





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 09, September 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.

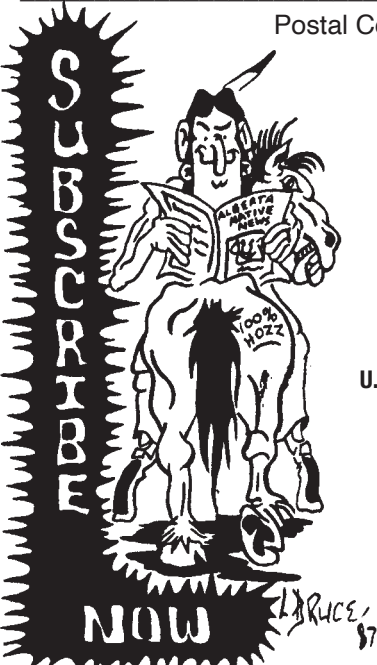
All rights reserved. No part of this newspaper can be reproduced without written permission from the publisher. The opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Editor. Alberta Native News is published by 320754 Alberta Ltd.

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
on October 3, 2025.
Tickets are on sale 4 weeks prior
to the day of the event.



Accelerated Action needed on Implementing UN Declaration

National Chief Cindy Woodhouse Nepinak released the following statement in response to the Department of Justice Canada’s release of its Fourth annual progress report on implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (UNDA).

“Today’s report is itself a call to action – for Canada to improve its efforts to work alongside First Nations to build true Nation-to-Nation partnerships so we can accelerate progress on the UN Declaration,” said National Chief Woodhouse Nepinak. “We appreciate the increased level of detail and transparency in this report compared to previous years, but it still reveals an ongoing lack of meaningful measures to ensure Canada’s policies, legislation, consultation processes and mandates are aligned with the spirit and intent of the Declaration. Action will be especially important as Canada is aiming to advance major infrastructure projects and build a stronger economy. Respect and real partnership will be key to progress.”

“We are concerned with the Government’s planned reduction in spending towards First Nations’ priorities, including support for First Nations to meaningfully participate in implementing the UN Declaration,” continued National Chief Woodhouse Nepinak. “AFN’s 2025 Pre-Budget Submission identifies \$30 million over the next 5 years to continue the important work of implementation, including processes, mechanisms and legislation to ensure First Nations’ free, prior and informed consent.”

“After four years of slow, incremental progress in implementing the UNDA, First Nations continue to advocate for stronger commitments and decisive, transformative actions that recognize and implement First Nations’ sovereignty,

nationhood, inherent rights and title and our right to free, prior and informed consent,” added BC Regional Chief Terry Teegee, AFN portfolio holder on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. “The recently disappointing failure of the Canadian federal government to properly engage and consult with First Nations on the One Canadian Economy Act (Bill C-5) reveals the deeply embedded colonial practices that inform laws and policy in this country and the struggle to overcome these frameworks. Without true co-development, the recognition of free, prior and informed consent, and First Nations participation at critical decision-making tables across all levels of government, UNDA risks being another symbolic gesture incapable of addressing the historical and ongoing injustices First Nations peoples face. First Nations remain watchful and engaged, ensuring that progress on UNDA translates into meaningful and lasting change on the ground.”

“We encourage all Canadians to learn more about the UN Declaration, and we urge the federal government to meet its obligations to upholding First Nations’ inherent and Treaty rights, title, and jurisdiction as affirmed in the UN Declaration,” concluded National Chief Woodhouse Nepinak. “We will continue to press for processes that respect First Nations-driven solutions, including strengthening relationships with provinces and territories who have an obligation to uphold the Declaration. The AFN will be sharing its own progress report on Canada’s implementation of the UN Declaration, based on mandates from First Nations-in-Assembly, in the coming weeks to supplement Canada’s own reporting.”





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



Samaria Nancy Cardinal shares her journey

By Laura Mushumanski, LJI Reporter

Rooted in Indigenous ways of knowing and healing, Flower in the Wind Therapy is a place where, “we walk side by side with you,” shared Samaria Nancy Cardinal, a Blackfoot-Metis Therapist. “We do not feel we are the expert, you are. We just have a toolbox to assist you on your healing journey.”

Being the daughter of well-respected Elder, Douglas Cardinal, Samaria was raised with teachings and traditions that her ancestors walked with. These teachings, along with her lived experiences as an Indigenous women facing adversity, and academic learning braid together a welcoming safe space for others to be understood and heal.

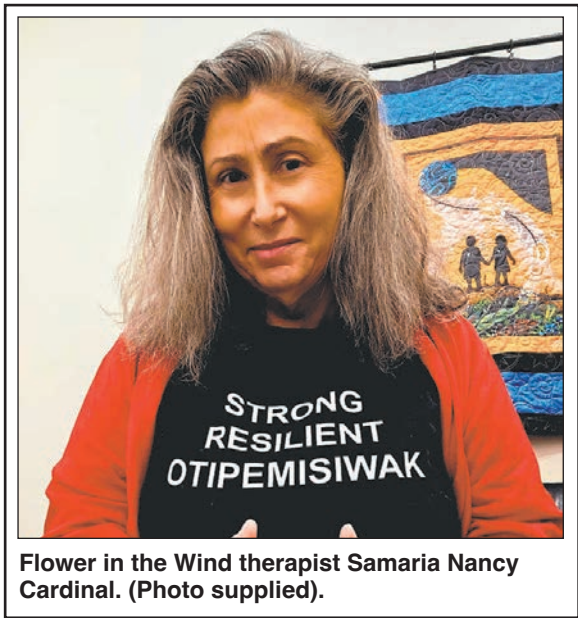
The barriers that Cardinal kept coming across throughout her life led her to eventually hitting rock bottom; this is when she decided to make a change in her life. “I had something to do, I decided to change my life; at the time I didn’t know about our trauma,” Cardinal shared about how cultural trauma impacts not only the whole person – mind-body-heart-spirit – but also the community and society at large.

After becoming a healthcare advocate and noticing that she was not being heard, Cardinal went back to school at the age of 58 years old.

Passing with honours, she first obtained a diploma in Social Work, followed by a bachelor’s degree. And as the letters started to accumulate next to her name, she decided to enroll in a Master of Social work program specializing in clinical practice, ultimately leading her to becoming a therapist. “I wanted to become a therapist and help people in a cultural way,” she said. “I wanted to walk as somebody who understands what another person has been through; I am helping them from my heart. I am an advisor, that’s really all I am.”

For Cardinal, “Flower in The Wind holds a deep meaning,” she explained, “that a flower starts as a seed in the ground, but that seed must fight to crack open and grow roots. Those roots need nourishment to survive. The flower must push through soil and rocks to reach the sun. When it blooms, the wind may blow, but the flower always carries its beauty and looks towards the sun to live.” Flower in The Wind Therapy offers, “hope. A reminder that no matter how strong the wind, every flower can find the sun.”

Flower in The Wind is located in Calgary, Alberta, and can be accessed in-person or virtually. The practice also partners with agencies



Flower in the Wind therapist Samaria Nancy Cardinal. (Photo supplied).

and companies to support Indigenous clients to enable them to access therapy without any financial barriers.

Therapy techniques that Cardinal is trained in are Dialectical Behavior Therapy, EMDR Therapy, IFIO Couple’s Therapy, Internal Family Systems Therapy Informed, Indigenous Focused-Oriented Therapy, Mindfulness-Based Therapy, and Narrative Therapy. For more information, Samaria can be contacted by email, samaria@flowerinthewindtherapy.ca, or by phone: 403-827-3179.

Alberta Métis need a seat at the MPO table

The Otipemisiwak Métis Government (OMG) is calling on the Government of Canada to ensure Alberta Métis representation on the Indigenous

Advisory Council for the Major Projects Office. The Major Projects Office (MPO) oversees development projects that will have significant and lasting impacts on Canadians and communities across the country, including the Métis within Alberta. In August 2025, the Prime Minister affirmed that these projects would be built in “true partnership with Métis,” a commitment that requires direct engagement with each recognized Métis government.

“As the government of the Métis Nation within Alberta, representing the largest Indigenous population in Canada, the OMG must be included on the Indigenous Advisory Council to reflect the vital and historic role our Citizens have played, and continue to play, in building Canada,” said OMG President Andrea Sandmaier. “If the Métis Nation within Alberta does not have a seat at the

Continued on page 7

NOTICE OF VOTE



Otipemisiwak
Métis Government

This November, the Otipemisiwak Métis Government will be holding the Provincial Women’s Representative By-Election and District Captain and Council Elections.

The Women’s Representative by-election will be held provincewide. The District Captain election will be held in Calgary Nose Hill Métis District. District Councillor by-elections will be held in Wabasca-Desmarais Métis District, and St. Paul-Cold Lake Métis District (Fishing Lake Metis Settlement/Elizabeth Metis Settlement Sub-District, and Youth Councillor).

From November **16-22, 2025**, eligible Métis Citizens will have the opportunity to vote by one of the following methods:

IN-PERSON VOTING

Polling stations will operate throughout Alberta from 8 AM to 8 PM during the voting period. Exact dates and addresses of polling locations are yet to be confirmed, and will be posted at **MetisElectionsAB.com**

MAIL-IN VOTING

A mail-in ballot will be sent to each Citizen who is eligible to vote. Ballots can be mailed prior to the voting period. If you don’t receive a mail-in ballot, or need a replacement, visit **MetisElectionsAB.com** to request one.

ELECTRONIC VOTING

You can vote online at any time during the vote period. More details will follow about where and how to vote electronically.

To learn more about the vote, including the process for nominations or how to request voting assistance, visit **MetisElectionsAB.com**

A stylized signature in black ink, likely belonging to Del Graff.

Del Graff, Chief Electoral Officer, Otipemisiwak Métis Government

Notice issued on September 2, 2025

The \$5 payment to First Nations that defines Treaty Promises

By Kinnukana

Every year, Treaty First Nations members across Canada are reminded of the promises made generations ago between Treaty First Nations and the Crown. Among those promises is the annual \$5 treaty payment, a symbolic amount that originates from the numbered treaties signed in the late 1800s and early 1900s. While the amount has not changed since those treaties were signed, the payment remains a visible reminder of the Crown’s obligations under those agreements. For many, the \$5 is not about the dollar value, but about recognition, history, and the enduring nation-to-nation relationship.

Former Chief, Leroy Wolf Collar, of Siksika Nation stated, “The \$5 is a symbol of sovereignty of First Nations government – it represents a treaty agreement between two sovereign nations (Federal Crown and First Nations). According to international law only sovereign nations can make treaties (pacts). Since treaties are, by definition, only entered into between two or more nations, they are historical proof that the Crown recognized the sovereignty of Indian nations. A treaty can be defined as a formal agreement, written or oral, between Sovereign Nations, which sets out the purpose of the agreement. This is what the five dollars symbolizes.”

The federal government also recognizes the \$5 treaty payment under Section 72 of the Indian Act. Section 72 says that monies that are payable to Indians or to Indian Bands under a Treaty between the Majesty and a band may be paid out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund. Treaty Day ceremonies, held in communities across the country, often include the distribution of this \$5 payment. The payments are not just financial exchanges. They are opportunities to come together, honour cultural traditions, and reaffirm treaty relationships. Elders, leaders, and families participate in ceremonies that serve both as reminders of colonial history and celebrations of Treaty First Nations resilience.

In today’s digital era, receiving the treaty annuity payment has become more accessible.

Members who are unable to attend an event in person may register for direct deposit through Indigenous Services Canada. By providing banking information and confirming status details, Treaty First Nations members can have the annual five dollars deposited directly into their bank accounts.

Although the \$5 payment hasn’t changed in over a century, many Treaty First Nations members emphasize that the value of treaties goes far beyond any monetary amount. For some, the annual payment is a reminder of promises still waiting to be fully honoured, such as commitments to education, health care, and land. For others, it remains a symbolic link to ancestors who signed treaties expecting respect, partnership, and recognition of sovereignty.

The unchanged \$5 payment has also become the subject of legal challenges. In late 2024, Bears paw First Nation launched a class-action lawsuit against the federal government, arguing that Canada has failed to uphold its treaty obligations by not adjusting the annuity for inflation since 1877. Chief Darcy Dixon has said the unchanged payment is “a hollow promise,” pointing out that five dollars can no longer even buy a simple meal. The lawsuit seeks inflation-adjusted compensation and has sparked debate across Nations about how best to pursue justice. The case has not yet been certified, but it highlights growing frustration that Canada continues to benefit from treaty lands while Treaty First Nations remain tied to a symbolic amount.

Former Chief Leroy Wolf Collar said that “the only other concern that I have is that this \$5 is paid out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund where our non-renewable resources are deposited, for example, oil and gas royalties, which means in essence we pay ourselves the \$5.”

For Treaty Annuity Payment Information, eligible members can visit sac-isc.gc.ca for a list of First Nations that are entitled to treaty annuities. For dates and times of your First



Former Chief Leroy Wolf Collar of the Siksika First Nation. (Photo supplied).

Nation's treaty payment event, contact your First Nations office.

According to Indigenous Services Canada Treaty First Nations members can receive their payment at any local or regional event. If a member can’t attend they can download and fill out a Treaty Annuity Payment Request form at ISC forms by category and email it to: treatypay-paiementdetraite@sac-isc.gc.ca to request payment by direct deposit or cheque. Make sure to include a copy of your Secure Certificate of Indian Status (SCIS), Certificate of Indian Status (CIS), or other government-issued photo identification with the form. If submitting by email, attach the identity documents to the same email as the form. Individuals who are 18 or older must complete their own payment request form. If you are requesting payment on behalf of dependents aged 18 or older, proof of guardianship must be included.

Kinnukana is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter.



ADVANCING INDIGENOUS RECONCILIATION MEANS TAKING MEANINGFUL ACTION

Learn more at cenovus.com

Sharing cultural teachings via equine assisted learning

By Laura Mushumanski, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

“Horses will give you the self-awareness to recognize your feelings and emotions which will lead you to your own healing path,” shared Karla Bergum, owner of Mane Attraction Stables & Spirit Evolution, a home away from home that offers life skills development through equine assisted learning.

Bergum has always been proud to be Metis and loves to share about Metis culture whenever she can. The idea of combining her love for working with horses and sharing Metis culture came to fruition in 2020. Karla combined the 7 Grandfather Teachings along with Medicine Wheel teachings into ways she could facilitate equine life skills development programs for women and youth.

“Horses are truth tellers,” shared Bergum, “they bring the truth out from within you in a magical spiritual way. When this is happening, people don’t realize what the horses are doing for them.” This is true for Karla; after a day’s work as an Indigenous Liaison Officer within Corrections Canada, she experiences a lot of healing by just being with the horses. “When I come home and be with and smell the horses, I forget about any heavy stuff and am able to feel grounded.”

Whether Bergum is walking with Indigenous peoples within Corrections Canada or with Spirit Evolution, one thing remains the same – she supports learners with building self-confidence and leadership. These skills are based on teachings about balancing our emotional, mental, physical, and spiritual health. “Right now, I am living my dream. I love teaching culture where people are happy to learn it and are interested in learning about Metis people,” said Bergum.

Another magical thing about horses that

Bergum shared is that “they show us how to regulate behaviours and emotions by gifting us a true picture of ourselves. You can always try to pretend with the horses, but they can always tell your energy... Horses can hear your heart rate from 4 feet away of them. The healing part of them, they will synchronise their heart rate with yours, so if you are fearful, they will also be fearful. They match your energy and will teach you how to change your behaviour and energy, so people will want to be near you.”

These moments with the horses are special and unique to everyone who shares space with these beautiful teachers of self-acceptance and healing. And over time, with the healing spirits of horses and culture, Bergum has come to know her own truth and walk, learning and sharing with others. Advice she shares is “always stand up tall and look people in the eye. Don’t be afraid. Always remember that you are good enough and learn to not worry so much about what others think...like a strong Metis woman would do.”



Karla Bergum is owner of Stables & Spirit Evolution where life skills are nurtured through equine assisted learning. (Photo supplied).

Mane Attraction Stables & Spirit Evolution is located southeast of Olds, Alberta. To engage in experiential learning while walking with the horses, Karla Bergum can be contacted by email, maneattractionstables17@gmail.com or phone at: 403-990-0786.

Alberta Métis cont. from p 5

table, it would undermine reconciliation and weaken the very nation-building these projects are meant to achieve.”

“We have supported Canada’s economic agenda in good faith, including through our participation in the Canada-Métis Summit and discussions on the Building Canada Act,” said President Sandmaier. “Now, we need to see that commitment reflected through the meaningful inclusion of Alberta Métis in decisions that directly affect our Citizens.”

Since 1928, the OMG has governed the Métis

Nation within Alberta. Recognized through two self-government agreements with Canada, it is the official representative voice of over 73,000 Métis Citizens, with a constitutional duty to convey their needs and priorities.

“The Otipemisiwak Métis Government has a long, proven record of constructive engagement with governments and industry on resource development and infrastructure projects, and is uniquely positioned to ensure that nation-building initiatives proceed responsibly and reflect the knowledge, priorities, and lived experiences of Métis Citizens,” states an OMG release.

“The OMG expects the Government of Canada

to guarantee full and fair Métis representation on the Indigenous Advisory Council for the Major Projects Office. Anything less would be unacceptable – and a serious step backward on the path to reconciliation.”



‘Forgotten Dreams’ takes new look at ancient rock art sites

By Laura Mushumanski

Red ochre is a natural clay carrying a red pigment that was historically used to create rock paintings, also known as pictographs. In Indigenous cultures rocks are known as one of our eldest living relatives. Rocks share stories but they do not always hold a spiritual meaning. They represent an Indigenous territory – a living landscape. In some cases, earth pigments were not used at all, instead rock carvings known as petroglyphs were used to share stories that can be found in the recent ‘rock art’ publication *Forgotten Dreams*.

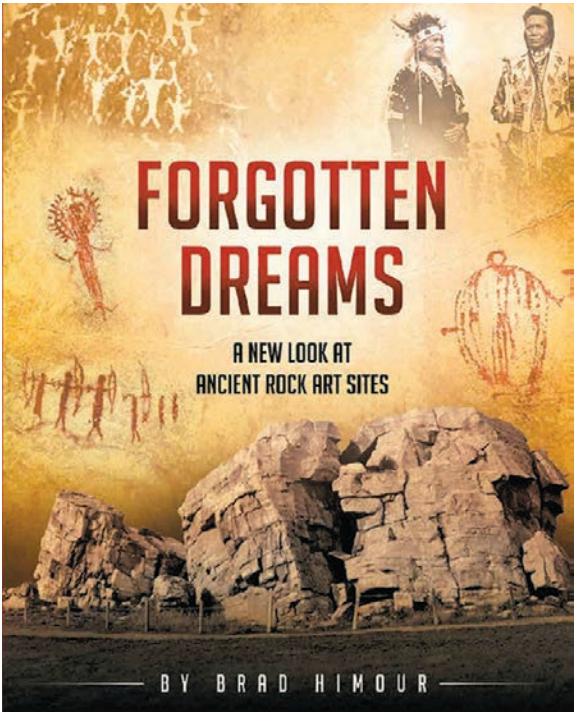
From the moment that the author of *Forgotten Dreams*, Brad Himour, found archeology, he knew “it was a perfect fit” for him. Since 1994 he has been an Indigenous liaison in archaeological studies. In 2013, he was awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Medal for Indigenous engagement in Western Canada. For the past 15 years, while working on *Forgotten Dreams*, Himour built relationships with Elders and Knowledge Keepers on how he could combine Western Science with Indigenous Knowledge to share stories in an educational and respectful way.

“The power of the book [*Forgotten Dreams*] is in the images and Elder quotes that are placed throughout the book,” shared Himour, while discussing that the stories of the living landscapes speak for themselves. The knowledge that each wisdom carrier shared about their own ancestral

knowledge is one of the fundamental parts of the book. “If you want to understand the meaning of these living landscapes, you need to ask the ones that are keepers of that knowledge in a good way,” said Brad. He says that he is just a conduit, a helper bringing stories together.

Many of the living landscapes that are shown within *Forgotten Dreams* are in remote areas, including the ‘Shield Barring Warrior’ at Cochrane Ranch Historic Site, and the ‘Okotoks erratic’ located in Okotoks Provincial Historic Site. ‘Grotto Canyon’ near Canmore, Alberta has pictographs of flute players, a hunter wearing a ‘Two Horned’ headdress, and a row of Elk below it while sharing story of their landscape. The ceremonial site located along the Sinclair Creek in Kootenay National Park shares knowledge on the Ktunaxa and Secwepemc (Shuswap) peoples who have a strong tie between pictographs and spiritual activities. These 17 different sites that are shared within *Forgotten Dreams* take the reader on an adventure to learn about the importance of the transfer of knowledge within Indigenous Knowledge Systems.

For Himour to capture the red and orange pigments of the pictographs displayed throughout *Forgotten Dreams*, the photos were digitally enhanced by using a NASA engineered software called ‘Dstretch.’ This technology enabled the living landscapes to be seen digitally, so the stories being shared from Elders and Knowledge Keepers could come alive, depicting the cultural and spiritual significance and symbolism of

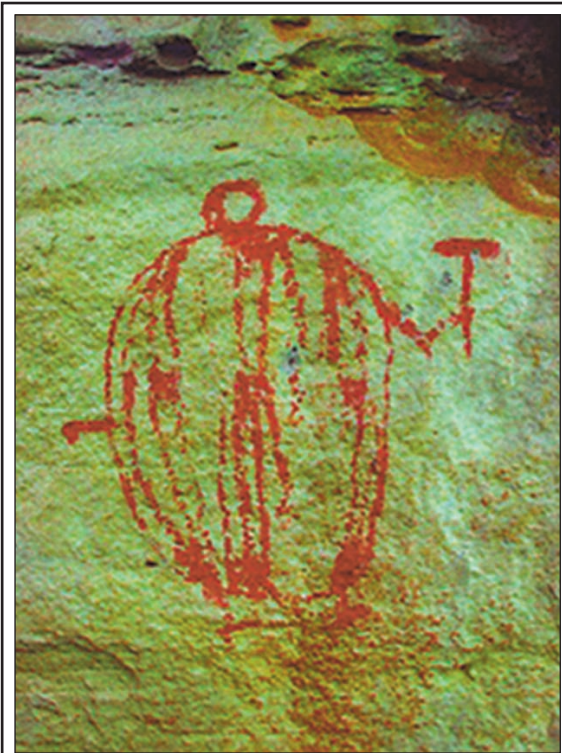


different historic sites throughout Western Canada.

The last and 18th chapter of the book consists of stories from Blackfoot and Shuswap groups sharing the differences in the methodologies used and protocols of how pictographs were made. “And within these cultural landscapes,” shared by author Brad Himour, “these beautiful locations are places where the spirits live, and we are all part of that connection.”

To learn more about Brad Himour’s rock art book, visit: forgottendreamspictographs.com

Laura Mushumanski is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter



Red Ochre image of Cochrane Ranche from "Forgotten Dreams" by Brad Himour.

Angela's

HAIRSTYLING

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.angelashairstyling.com

2025

Empowering Indigenous Voices

Nov. 12-13

Edmonton Inn & Conference Centre

There is a strong desire to share information on the latest developments in our Indigenous community. One of the goals of ICWC is to share new and innovative practices with other regions and territories. We all have a common desire to help our people and our children. This important gathering is one step for bringing various stakeholders together to educate, inform and share valuable information.

Please visit our website to register:

ICWC.ca

@ICWC

info@ICWC.ca

780.245.5949

Indigenous Council appointed to advise on major federal projects

By John Wirth, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Eleven Indigenous political leaders across Canada have been appointed to advise the newly created Major Projects Office (MPO). The Indigenous Advisory Council (IAC) is tasked with “creating opportunities for equity ownership and responsible resource management through meaningful participation with Indigenous peoples.”

From public opposition to potential influence, Alberta leader Grand Chief Trevor Mercredi, a former critic of Bill C-5, has been appointed to represent the province’s economic interests. The council is also joined by experienced LNG (natural gas) developer and former chairperson of the First Nations LNG Alliance, Crystal Smith of the Haisla Nation, based in Kitimat, a western shipping hub for overseas markets.

What is at stake?

Major projects that increase GDP productivity – or potentially pollute ecosystems – are experiencing “fast-tracking.” One could interpret this as the point of UNDRIP being codified and bureaucratized. Because development is often not optional, Indigenous involvement has become the next mission statement. The legislation aims to provide high-paying jobs in these sectors, and it is the IAC’s role to ensure that Indigenous peoples benefit through skilled labor training and negotiations over natural resource management.

The MPO can be seen as the “enforcement arm” of Bill C-5. It was established in August following the legislation’s passage in June, which the Carney administration described as addressing “a need to build a stronger, more competitive, and prosperous economy.” The MPO is headquartered in Calgary, Alberta, alongside several major energy corporations, including Cenovus, Suncor, and Canadian Natural Resources Ltd., to name a few. This strategic positioning further enables the “fast-tracking” of development.

The office serves as a single point of contact for Indigenous relations, communities, and the federal government, aiming to coordinate projects efficiently while reducing regulatory delays inherent in consulting communities and Indigenous Nations. Additionally, the MPO coordinates financing for these projects. With the support of the newly elected IAC, it will formally pursue equity ownership opportunities not limited to the Indigenous communities themselves.

The MPO’s leadership is structured as a

corporation overseen by CEO Dawn Farrell and guided by the IAC. Council members, hand-selected from First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities by the Carney administration, serve an initial two-year term with mandated quarterly meetings. The IAC is financially backed by the legislation, which created a \$10-billion loan guarantee program – originally set at \$5 billion but doubled in response to recent events – to ensure community equity in the development of their lands.

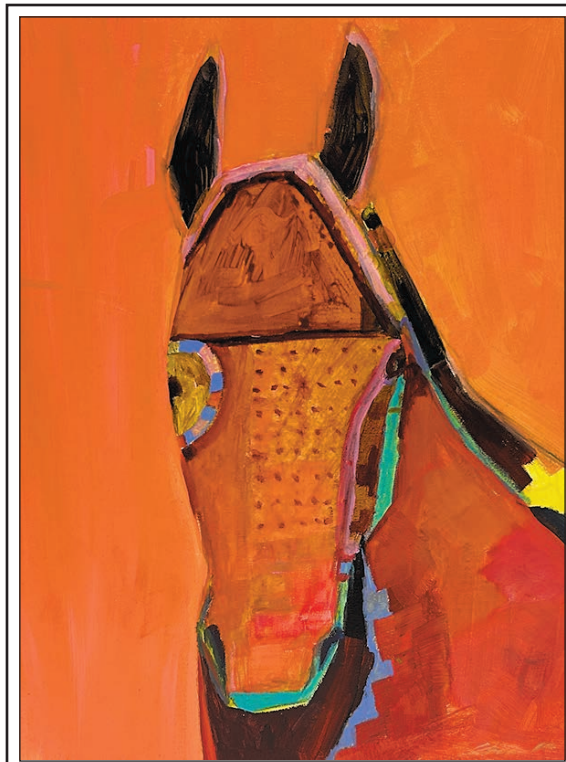
Alberta Perspective – Grand Chief Trevor Mercredi

Respected Dene Grand Chief of Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta, Mercredi represents lands rich in oil, gas, and other mineral resources. He has publicly denounced Bill C-5, arguing that it bypasses proper consultation and undermines foundational treaty rights. His transition from critic to IAC member raises important questions: Will he continue his hardline stance for Indigenous rights during his term, and how will his actions align with his previous rhetoric now that he holds an influential position with major stakeholders?

British Columbia Perspective – Crystal Smith

Honoured Chief Councillor of the Haisla Nation in Kitimat, BC, Smith is regionally involved in LNG and coastal resource projects. She has a proven track record in negotiating both equity participation and environmental safeguards while balancing development with community priorities. Reflecting her longstanding approach to resource development, she emphasizes:

“The Haisla Nation has studied the LNG



Horse © by Linus Woods, available for purchase at wakinagallery.com

industry for more than 10 years,” states Smith. “And we recognized early on that there was value in us joining the global stage to ensure our voice and our values are contributing to a better future.”

Together, Mercredi and Smith exemplify the diversity of perspectives on the IAC, representing both critical oversight and development-focused expertise across the Canadian energy sector.

What comes next?

The country waits with bated breath for the MPO’s first projects to roll out, potentially with a new approach to Indigenous engagement. Tensions build around our relationship with this government office – partnership or oversight – and the question remains: do our representatives hold the keys to real change, or is this symbolic – once again?

YOU BELONG
AT CALGARY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Get a free Library card - FREE for all residents of Calgary and surrounding Indigenous communities.

• Indigenous Services

• Books and eResources

• Arts and Culture

• Programs

• Events

• And more!

calgarylibrary.ca/join

Every Child Matters. Every Person Has a Place.

This September 30th, on the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, we honour the children who never returned home and the Survivors of residential schools. Their truth is the reason safe, cultural spaces are not just important—they are essential.

For decades, the Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary has been that space. A place to find support, share a meal, hear our languages, and celebrate our resilience. We are a home for all Indigenous people in the urban environment—a place to heal, to gather, and to belong.

The work of reconciliation happens every day in Friendship Centres across the country. It happens when an Elder shares a story, when a youth learns to bead, and when a family finds the support they need.

This month, we ask you to not only remember, but to act. Support the ongoing work of healing and community building.

Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary (AFCC)
For event info or to become a sponsor,
please contact: info@afccalgary.org

Donate & Learn More: www.afccalgary.org
Connect with us on @afccalgary afcc.org

NSD summer school wraps up with strong numbers & positive feedback

By Curtis Walty

Northland School Division’s Summer School Program, offered through Northland Online School, concluded on August 1st with more than 200 students from across the province successfully completing courses and earning a combined total of 941 high school credits. Students participated in flexible online learning, connected daily with teachers for support, and explored a wide range of core and optional courses.

This summer, 208 students enrolled in the program, including 36 from Northland School Division. Together, they completed 202 courses. Classes included core subjects such as Math, Science, English Language Arts, and Social Studies, as well as Career and Life Management (CALM), Physical Education, Forensics, Food Safety and Work Experience.

37 students registered to write August diploma exams in 30-level courses, with writing locations arranged in communities across the province. Students stayed engaged through virtual office

hours on Zoom and email communication with teachers.

“At Northland School Division, we are committed to thinking outside the box to support student success,” said Tanya Fayant, Board Chair. “This summer school program gave current Northland students another pathway toward high school completion, while also giving students from other parts of Alberta the chance to experience the quality of education we offer. With so many students from outside the division expressing interest in continuing with us, we look forward to building on this momentum.”

“I want to congratulate every student who took part in Northland School Division’s Summer School Program for their hard work and commitment to learning,” said Cal Johnson, Superintendent of Schools/CEO. “This program is another way we are helping students thrive. I am grateful to the school leaders and teachers who made the program a success, to families for supporting their students, and to neighbouring



school divisions who referred families so more students could benefit from this opportunity.”

Feedback from students and families has been very positive. Many shared that they appreciated the program’s flexibility, the strong support from teachers, and the ease of using the Hapara platform. Hapara is a classroom management tool which helps teachers organize assignments, monitor progress, and provide timely feedback.

Several students have already expressed interest in continuing with Northland Online School for the 2025-2026 school year, including through dual enrollment. Northland School Division is already applying what was learned from this year’s Summer School Program while also exploring how to make the Registered Apprenticeship Program more effective for students who choose that pathway.



Notice of Nomination Day Local Authorities Election Act (Section 26)

Northland School Division
Province of Alberta

Notice is hereby given that **Nomination Day is September 22, 2025**, and that nominations for the election of candidates for the following offices will be received at the local jurisdiction office listed below. The **nomination period began on January 1, 2025**, and will remain open until **12:00 noon on Nomination Day**.

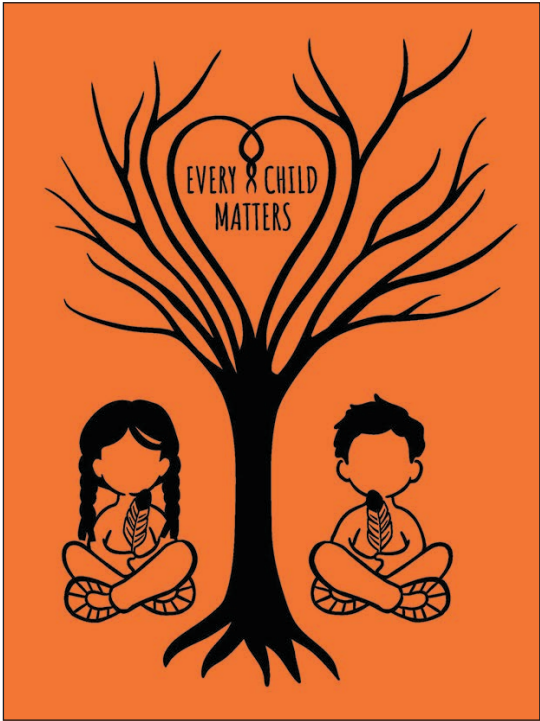
Ward	Office(s)	No. of Vacancies	Location of Local Jurisdiction Office(s)
1	Trustee	1	Paddle Prairie School Paddle Prairie Métis Settlement, Alberta
2	Trustee	1	Susa Creek School Susa Creek, Alberta
3	Trustee	1	Gift Lake School Gift Lake Métis Settlement, Alberta Bishop Routhier School Peavine Métis Settlement, Alberta
4	Trustee	1	Hillview School East Prairie Métis Settlement, Alberta Grouard Northland School Grouard, Alberta
5	Trustee	1	Elizabeth School Elizabeth Métis Settlement, Alberta J.F. Dion School Fishing Lake Métis Settlement, Alberta
6	Trustee	1	Mistassiniy School Desmarais, Alberta
7	Trustee	1	St. Theresa School Wabasca, Alberta
8	Trustee	1	Calling Lake School Calling Lake, Alberta
9	Trustee	1	Bill Woodward School Anzac, Alberta Conklin School Conklin, Alberta Father R. Perin School Janvier, Alberta

Northland School Division
9809 – 77th Avenue, Peace River, Alberta T8S 1C9
Dated at the Town of Peace River
In The Province Of Alberta
This 21st Day Of July, A.D., 2025

Douglas Aird
Returning Officer

Nomination papers are available at the local jurisdiction locations listed above or at Central Office, located at 9809 77 Avenue, Peace River, Alberta, T8S 1C9. For more information, visit our school board elections webpage at nsd61.ca/governance/elections. If you have any questions, please contact Central Office at 780-624-2060 or 1-800-362-1360 and ask for Returning Officer Douglas Aird.

Every Child Matters



The Orange Shirt Society’s 2025 Every Child Matters T-shirt contest winner is Sloane Cameron, a Grade 6 student from Innisfail, Alberta. Her design showcases a tree, a heart, and children. The tree to represent nature and the heart to symbolize that every child matters and is equally important. The children in the design are holding feathers as an Indigenous representation; however, she drew them without faces so that they have no expression and can represent any child.

To Sloane, Orange Shirt Day supports Indigenous children and reminds others that all children matter. It is a reminder of Orange Shirt Society CEO Phyllis Webstad’s story, how as an Indigenous child she had her shirt taken away and her hair cut so that she looked like everyone else.

“What a tremendous achievement, Sloane. We are exceptionally grateful for your beautiful creation.”

local artists | exclusive collection
original pieces

WG



Wakina Gallery



carvings • paintings • illustrations • cards

780-237-1556
www.wakinagallery.com



The journey continues

Explore our 2025 Indigenous Reconciliation Action Plan






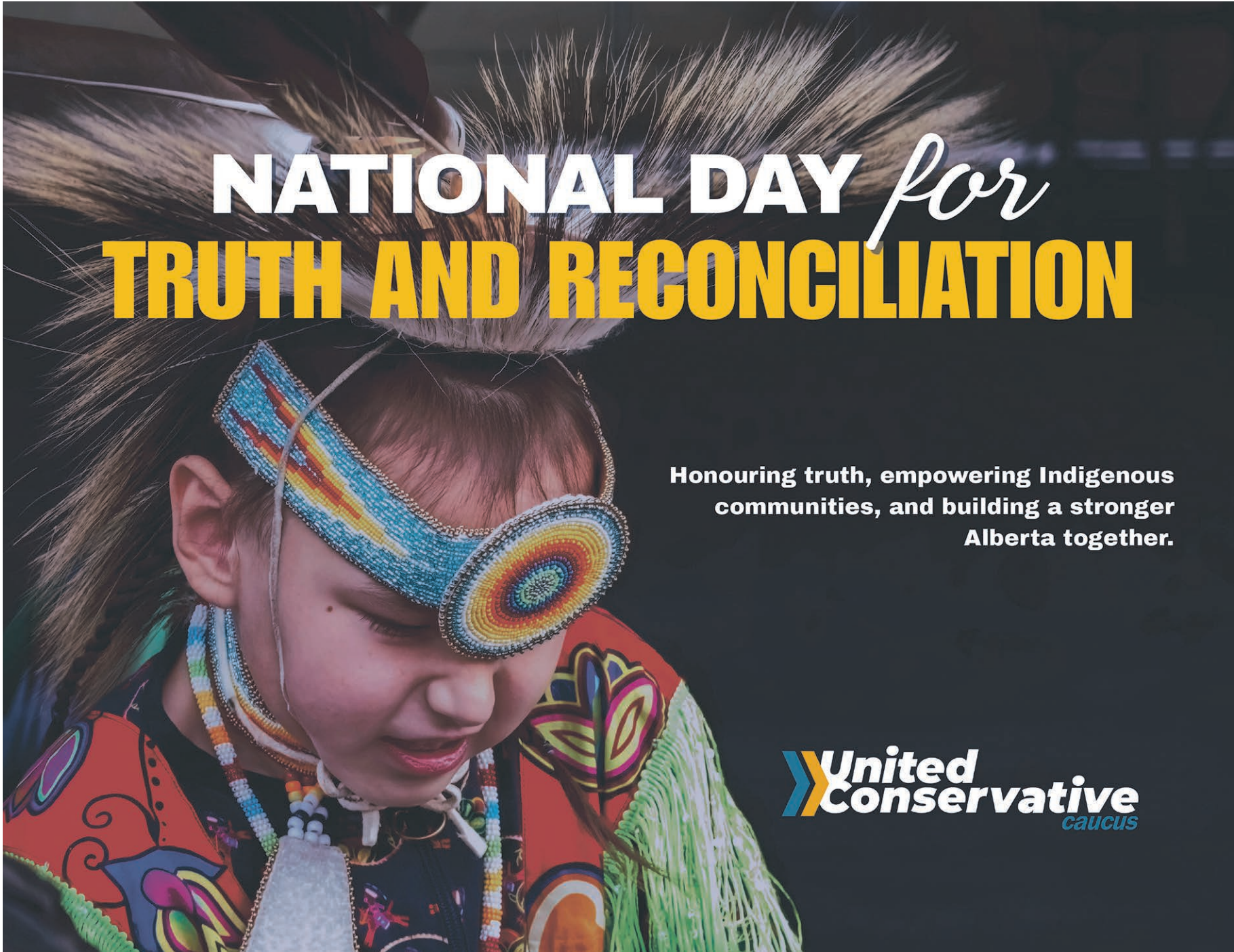
Learn more at enbridge.com/IRAP

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



NATIONAL DAY *for* TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

Honouring truth, empowering Indigenous communities, and building a stronger Alberta together.

