

Eagle Feather NEWS

FREE

La Loche feels the love despite tragedy

Memorials have been created across Saskatchewan to remember and honour the victims of the La Loche School shooting. Pictured below, they are: Marie Janvier, Adam Wood, Dayne Fontaine and Drayden Fontaine.

(Photo by Chelsea Laskowski)



By Fraser Needham
For Eagle Feather News

LA LOCHE – Within a few short, horrifying minutes, life in the northern Saskatchewan village of La Loche was changed forever.

On Jan. 22, brothers Dayne Fontaine, 17, and Drayden Fontaine, 13 were shot to death.

Moments later, police say a 17-year-old youth entered the grounds of the local school and began shooting again, killing teacher Adam Wood, 35, and educational assistant Marie Janvier, 21.

Seven others were also seriously injured in the shooting, four of



whom still remain in hospital.

A 17-year-old male has been charged with multiple counts of murder and attempted murder. He cannot be named under the Youth Criminal Justice Act.

In the ensuing weeks, the mostly Dene community of about 3,500 has struggled to come to terms with the tragic incident, which is unprece-

dent in the province's history.

The healing will likely continue on forever in the northern village located about 500 kilometres northwest of Prince Albert.

The shootings have elicited an outpouring of support and sympathy from both across the province and country.

Prime Minister Justin

Trudeau and Premier Brad Wall both visited La Loche in the days following the shootings. Canadian tennis player Milos Raonic dedicated his win at the Australian Open to the shooting victims.

However, the incident also brought on unprecedented media attention to the community, much of it unwanted.

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Coming In March - Women's Issue

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Lighting the way home for victims of tragedy

By **Andréa Ledding**
For Eagle Feather News

In La Loche, the story of community pulling together in tough times shows the beauty, strength, and resiliency of the Dene and Métis community, the North, and the country in general.

On Facebook, La Loche resident Tanisha Montgrand wrote to national media: "I think you forgot to mention (the real story) taking place. You missed the entire North uniting as one to support those involved. Last night Highway 155 lit up with support from every community ... as they drove my beautiful friend Marie home one last time."

Northern communities including Green Lake, Beauval, Buffalo Narrows, Canoe Lake, Turnor Lake and Bear Creek all had turnouts of hundreds waiting for Marie Janvier's return by candlelight vigil, who then joined in the processional until it stretched several kilometres long. The same was done for the return of Dayne and Drayden Fontaine "so that we keep company with our own and they don't return alone in darkness," commented one woman who wished to remain unnamed. "That's just how the North is."

Or as Tanisha Montgrand wrote: "Even on the darkest of days people will come together and lift each other up and I



This photo taken at a vigil in Stanley Mission went viral and was shared hundreds of times and seen by tens of thousands of people. (Photo by Prestin Mercredi-Flemming)

think that's the real story right now."

In Saskatoon, Myrna LaPlante of SIIT was busy collecting donations for the seven families supporting family members in critical condition at RUH. Gas and coffee cards, practical items, and hotel coverage were all areas which the FSIN helped organize for these families, and the community sprang into ac-

tion, not only practically but also with prayer vigils and songs across the province.

The Gordon Oakes Red Bear Centre at the University of Saskatchewan held its first official event to support the students of La Loche. Sara-Jane Gloutnez attended the circle to offer support.

"My partner and I are both graduate

students and my mom is a teacher. The events at La Loche hit so many parts of my identity as a student, teacher, and researcher fighting against injustice in my community. I wanted to be with my community to support them and grieve for La Loche."

Candace Wasacase-Lafferty, Director of Aboriginal Initiatives at the U of S, noted that with a significant number of northern students, and the larger body of Indigenous students, everyone was impacted but wanted to offer support, too.

"There were people from all over campus, from other groups – non-Indigenous students, Muslim students, international students – everyone experiences trauma differently and there's that shared empathy. Staff and faculty came as well."

Sharing and prayer was led by Elder Louise Halfe and Rosalie Tsannie, a Dene speaker, also drove in, leading the closing and asking Dene students to come forward.

"Students took turns afterwards at the mic to express what they were thinking and feeling – overwhelming support, understanding, empathy and calls to action," said Candace.

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Shining a light on problems

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For more than two weeks, the village was inundated with reporters from national media outlets.

Multiple stories focused on the social problems La Loche faces – the high suicide rates, problems with drugs and alcohol, poverty and violence.

Other stories noted the overall lack of economic development for a community of this size and the fact that there is no sit-down restaurant, hotel or local bank.

The people of La Loche remain in a state of mourning, with the school slated to be closed until at least Feb. 22.

“The community is hurting and the tragedy is still very painful, very difficult,” said Georgina Jolibois, the local Member of Parliament for Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River.

“Family and friends, young people, elders and other family are doing their best to heal and move on. So, it’s still a difficult time.”

Jolibois is also the former mayor of La Loche.

Leonard Montgrand, executive director of the La Loche Friendship Centre, says it has been particularly difficult hav-

ing the local school closed for such an extended period of time.

He says the La Loche Community School is not only a place of education, it is also the hub for a number of recreational sports activities for adults and youth which includes the only weight lifting room and gym in the village.

Montgrand says, in the meantime, the friendship centre is offering day and evening programming for young people to help fill the gap but the reopening of the school will go a long way in returning the community to some form of normalcy.

“The biggest thing I feel, personally, is our school has to get going somehow to get a sort of routine and normalcy back to the community,” he says.

“That’s something that the teachers, the community and the Northern Lights School Division, along with the students, are going to have to do some groundwork and figure out a strategy to get everybody back in the school system.”

Both Jolibois and Montgrand say the outpouring of support in this time of crisis has been much appreciated.

This includes provincial funding for



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau visited La Loche and laid flowers at the memorial for the victims of the tragedy.
(Photo by Chelsea Laskowski)

four victim services workers.

However, they also say the tendency of some media to sensationalize the tragedy and focus only on the community’s negatives has been extremely hurtful.

Montgrand points out there are many positive things currently going on in La Loche including the fact the community won the National Association of Friendship Centres Award of Excellence for 2015 and plans are underway to build a new friendship centre.

“A lot of the reporters were good, they were respectful and a lot did good pieces,” he says. “That being said, we’ve had some reporters that I just don’t know where they are coming from or what they were thinking. They already had their minds made up when they got into the community. They just looked around, saw the community for what it was and we never had a chance. They never really tried to make a connection with the people.”

Can any long term good come out of the tragedy?

Montgrand says he is hopeful that by shining a light on some of the social and economic problems La Loche currently has, there is now a window of opportunity to actually do something about them.

He says the people of La Loche desire all of the amenities communities of a similar size have in Saskatchewan but the community just needs a little provincial and federal help in attaining these services.

Jolibois says she hopes the tragedy makes people see just how badly health services, particularly in the area of mental health, are lacking in the community.

“The health centre requires major changes – increased existing services in mental health and addictions, ensuring families have access to traditional healing and therapies, better emergency care and improved access to physicians in the clinic site.”

Tight community helping others

• Continued from Page Two

She added it was “something we will continue to talk about and honour well into the future. It’s far from over, we will continue to offer services and support ... lots of people want to help.”

Currently, the northern SARCAN (Prince Albert and La Ronge) are accepting donations for La Loche as well as Saskatoon Sutherland, with possible plans to expand the program. Even internationally, Ontario’s Milos Raonic dedicated his Australian Open win to La Loche. Saskatchewan snowboarder Mark McMorris did the same with his Colorado world’s competition and is gathering sports equipment for La Loche. He hopes people see Saskatchewan in a positive light.

“It’s just such a tight community of people wanting to help others. We can only move on and just try and talk about it and make sure kids realize we live in an amazing place.”

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La Loche needs help, not flawed analysis

I was in one of the airport newsstands in Toronto last week and the headlines 'A Small Town's Grief: A Nation's Shame' jumped out at me.

It was Maclean's magazine and so I picked it up. The story didn't disappoint me. It was as sensational and heart wrenching as all stories told about Indigenous people and communities in our country when a tragedy happens.

The language is the same. They are written so the privileged can feel guilty or defensive or just tut, tut, and go on about their business because after all "what can they do about it."

The sensational headlines sell newspapers, up the ratings and the tragic story helps people feel whatever emotion is reserved for us and then, as one young man in La Loche said in another interview, "Everybody will leave and nothing will change."

Oh yes, I know the premier came and laid his flowers, as did the prime minister and the National Chief and the National Métis President, but what is that really about and what will change for that young man and for all those beautiful young people.

In the same issue, another headline reads 'Time to Help People Escape the North'. The writer gives the usual information then writes, "The small remote community (La Loche) sits next to the Methye Portage, one of the most important links in the earliest European exploration of Canada. The journals of these paddlers, looking for new routes to the Pacific, record a state of constant fighting among the Aboriginal peoples. Disease and fur traders, plagues literal and figurative, followed the explorers close behind.

"After this came the missionaries, the reserves and the residential schools. As Canada kept moving forward, becoming one of the most

prosperous nations in the world, the people of the north stayed isolated, economically and socially."

He goes on with a litany of statistics and ends with the statement "The North itself is violent and has been forever."

The same has been said and written over and over again about the North and about our country by Non-Indigenous

newspaper reporters, filmmakers, novelists, poets or travel writers for over 100 years, longer in the East.

They have described our land and landscape as "harsh, violent, dark, angry, bleak, depressing, evil, and brooding, empty of any kind of civilization and fine things."

He ends his wisdom with, "If we really want to end the violence and depravation that plagues Canada's remote communities, we need to help them (indigenous peoples) leave these communities, forever. And if we are still not ready to do that yet, then the least we can do to help is to send them a backhoe as they keep digging graves."

This man really believes that moving northerners to the south and plunking them down in clean, welcoming, rich cities which we all know have streets of gold, and crowds of people just waiting to welcome Indigenous people and where everyone will just integrate and live happily ever after, is the answer for what he calls the North's violence and deprivation.

I am so angry I could scream! It is hard to believe that a man who writes about national and international affairs knows nothing about the workings of colonization, never mind

the mentality of mining and extracting resources and what that does to a people's lives and spirits.

Yes Mr. Gilmore, those old time journalists were right; we were

fighting all over the North when those explorers came through looking not just for a route to the Pacific, but searching also for the rich resources of our

lands.

Fighting is what people do any place in the world when they are dying from virgin soil diseases and plied with alcohol. In case, Mr. Gilmore you don't know, virgin soil means both European diseases and alcohol arrived in the North long before our people actually saw a white man. Google it, sir!

I grew up in the North, not as far as La Loche, but far enough that I can say it is my homeland. It's a beautiful place, the land is as gentle, if not more so, than those anywhere in Europe.

It has not been soaked with blood by centuries of war or by the burning at the stake or boiling in oil of its people or like in more recent times just bombing and destroying peoples and lands.

I am smart enough to know that the fighting is not for freedom but rather for its resources. The people in my North are kind hearted, generous and above all they are resilient. They love their land that is why they have not emigrated to anywhere else even as they watch their land and their people being destroyed, their resources hauled away, mined and clear-cut leaving everything, the land, water and creatures poisoned and polluted.

The people of La Loche are strong good people with kind and generous hearts who have been given, like all Indigenous peoples, a dirty deal.

Mr. Premier, you can lay your flowers down but it was only a couple of years ago when you said the North does not need social programs, it just needs Cameco!

La Loche, like hundreds of our communities all over our country, needs help. Surely if you meant something else you could have said it in a kinder and more generous way. After all, the people of the North have been generous with you.

All our kids can't wait for the big jobs you promise and sometimes give. They need help now.

If mining and hauling away uranium has to happen, then a good chunk of that money should go to communities and pay for the change that has to happen. Those resources, after all, belong to the people of the North.

To the people of La Loche, those of you who lost family members, to the shooter, I am sure I speak for many people when I say how full our hearts are and how much we feel for you and that seems so small compared to your grief and pain, but we send our love to all of you, and our strength.

We know how hard you all work to have a good community, from the teachers who work with children in the school, to the people who work with youth, the people who bring food home for families and the people who speak out against development or who speak for a fairer deal and more equal treatment by government and the multi nationals.

For all of you, kisahki itinah.

And Mr. Gilmore you know what you can do with that backhoe!



Eagle Feather NEWS

Box 924 Saskatoon, Sk S7K 3M4
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Publications Mail Agreement No.: 40027204

OSSN #1492-7497

Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to: EFN Circ., P.O. Box 924 Saskatoon SK S7K 3M4

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Subscriptions: Annual Canadian subscription rate is \$25 per year, \$26.25 with GST. Bulk subscriptions are also available, call our office for details. Subscription requests can be mailed or emailed to our office. Forms are available on our website.

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This issue printed on: February 11, 2016 Next issue to be printed on: March 10, 2016

Good to see this government is listening to us

To begin, we send our deepest sympathies and prayers to the people of La Loche.

To the families of the victims that passed away and the people still in the hospital, we are thinking of you constantly.

Brothers Dayne and Drayden Fontaine, Educational assistant Marie Janvier and teacher Adam Wood will forever be remembered by the people of La Loche, Saskatchewan and Canada.

help heal the community and to offer hope, and a place, for young people to heal and go forward. We will donate. Will you? La Loche, we continue to keep you in our thoughts.

Many developments in the past month have given rise to hope as well. The Human Rights decision on the behalf of the First Nations and Family Caring Society and Assembly of First Nations proved that the federal government

... or saved for that matter.

Federal Ministers Carolyn Bennett and Jodi Wilson-Raybould are nearing the end of their cross Canada tour of consultations with families of missing and murdered Indigenous women. This is an important step in the process leading to the national inquiry into the issue.

Hopefully they name the commissioner or commissioners soon and get on with the process. Just in the process they are taking, you can tell that this current federal government is contemplative and respectful of consulting with the community which is a refreshing change from the dark days of the bullying Harper government.

And this government continues to reach out. Minister of Health Hon. Jane Philpott came though Saskatchewan recently and made a couple of interesting stops. The File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council and the All Nations Healing Hospital welcomed the federal Minister of Health Jane Philpott for a tour of the hospital; a leading example of a First

Nation owned and operated health facility that has gained recognition as one of the best in the country.

Minister Philpott also toured another successful Saskatchewan First Nation health facility on her trip, the Standing Buffalo First Nation Lakeview Lodge, a personal care home. The Minister reiterated her support for Indigenous led health initiatives.

And lastly, did you know that it only takes six months for new Canadians to adopt the same stereotypes and resentments towards Aboriginal people as your average Canadian? To counter that, the Saskatoon Tribal Council held a welcome to Treaty 6 ceremony at Wanuskewin Heritage Park for over a dozen Syrian refugees that will be settling in Saskatoon and area.

What a smart and proactive way to ward off racism and to also welcome some people who have been through a literal hell in their war torn home country.

What a great display of leadership and citizenship.



FHQ Tribal Vice Chair Elaine Chicoose, Okanese First Nation Chief Mary-Anne Daywalker-Pelletier, Federal Minister of Health Hon. Jane Philpott, Saskatchewan Minister of Health Hon. Greg Ottenbreit, Nekaneet First Nation Chief Jordy Fourhorns, Starblanket Cree Nation Chief Michael Starr.

One thing missing in La Loche is a proper place for young people to hang out and do healthy activities ... or just hang out and be safe.

One of the victims, Marie Janvier, had always hoped for a place for young people. They have now started a Go Fund me campaign to build a youth centre in La Loche. They want to raise over \$300,000.

"This recreation centre represents hope and the commitment that January 22, 2016 cannot and will not define the community of La Loche," says the write-up on the page.

If you have the resources, please think of donating. It is the least we can do to

discriminated against First Nation children by underfunding on reserve child and family services.

This decision has set precedent and should lead to increased resources to help take care of our kids, so that the government doesn't continue to take them. And this decision should not just be interpreted for the one funding stream.

This should also mean equal funding in education, health and other categories. And that should give us hope. Imagine if communities in crisis (and there are many) had the proper resources to provide proper services for the last fifty years. Imagine the lives we could have changed

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Where have all the inquiries gone?

So there I was. The Dirkster, innocently tanning in the hot January sun along with the other manly specimens of Dirk Nation, when someone brings up the tragedy in La Loche.

Inevitably, the topic turns to preventing catastrophes, and the subject winds its way to inquiries and commissions.

"We need action, not more talk" was the drift of our comrade's worry. Let's call him Sprinkles. We don't need to get into why.

Like a velvet butterfly drawn to a flame of caramel and unicorn giggles I could not help but become intrigued, stimulated and mentally aroused.

For the Dirkster, it was not hard to sympathise with Sprinkles. For the Dirkster is nothing, if not a man of deep emotion, tremendous feeling, and wondrous taste.

When you consider all the commissions, task forces, and inquiries in the past 25 years or so, it is easy to become cynical. What good has come of these reports and well intentioned recommendations?

In mainstream Canada, and in Saskatchewan, you can almost feel the collective eye-rolling when yet another task force is being demanded. Just more waste of taxpayers hard earned moolah, is

the common complaint.

Just as worrisome is the almost legitimate cry that governments almost always do nothing of any use once the reports have been safely shoved onto an out-of-the-way shelf, to begin its real task of drawing in dust.

But let's set aside for now the fact that some of these inquiries and commissions actually get acted on, and some real change is realized.

What Dirk finds attractive is they start conversations. Questions are asked, research is done, and answers emerge – answers that might have gone unexamined and never seen the light of day.

Some of these answers will be very difficult for certain segments of society to stomach.

Some hearts and minds will not be changed; in fact, some will even become even more hardened and narrowed because these topics threaten the very core of their identities.

The thing with the failure of core-ideas then, there is an expectation you change your mind. Y'know, accept responsibility for becoming a better human

being. But that crap is too hard.

It's much easier to evade responsibility and blame others as the source of misfortune. These are the types who typically leap up and down about political correctness has run amok.

By the way, that's how you win elections:

tell others it's not your fault for your failed and miserable life and create fear of "the others." Just ask Stephen "Battle-hair" Harper.

On the other

hand ...

There are a surprising number of people in the mainstream who are possessed of brains and compassion, and who are open to new ideas and the tough questions. They genuinely want to know, why?

Why do communities like La Loche struggle? And some, like Dirk, would add, what helps communities like La Loche to survive?

Why do a disproportionate number of First Nation and Metis women go missing and are murdered? And just as thrilling, why do so many of our sisters thrive, but go unreported in the media?

Why did Prime Minister MacDonald

and his criminal descendants like Duncan Campbell Scott impose the residential school system? And just as telling, why does First Nation culture and pride persist?

Dirk knows firsthand, when these conversations take hold in communities and organizations in a respectful, patient and thoughtful manner, hearts and minds can change.

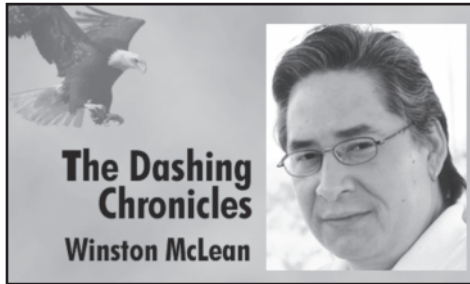
And even though there are rewards and punishments within the maze of bureaucracy to sustain the status quo, hearts and minds can be won there too. It's slow and sometimes painful for those involved, but it can happen.

Personally, Dirk wants to know, why do some reports and recommendations "fail"? Of course, an equally intriguing tale would be, why do some commissions and inquiries "succeed"?

So yeah, while it is important to know why tragic, criminal and evil situations arise so they can be thwarted, it's just as vital to know why good fortune, prosperity and heroism triumphs, so we can flourish the hell out of that stuff and make more.

That's what I told Sprinkles, as I returned to working on my Saskatchewan February tan.

Dirk says, My medication is making me rhyme.



The recently opened Gordon Oakes Red Bear Student Centre at the University of Saskatchewan, designed by renowned Métis and Blackfoot architect Douglas Cardinal, was inspired by elders' teachings and the natural beauty of the prairies, creating an intercultural gathering place dedicated to Aboriginal student success.

For our campus community, the centre will celebrate Aboriginal culture and support our growing First Nations, Métis and Inuit student population through services, programs and events. People from across all cultures can come together to meet and learn in this welcoming place in the heart of campus.



An estimated 200 people turned out at the Saskatchewan Legislature to show their support for the people of La Loche. (Photo by Jeanelle Mandes)

Crowd of Regina teachers gathers at Legislature to honour La Loche

By Jeanelle Mandes
For Eagle Feather News

REGINA – The front steps of the Saskatchewan Legislative Building was glowing with over 200 people holding candles to honor a northern community six days after a fatal school shooting that sent shockwaves nation-wide.

Following the tragic La Loche school shooting on Jan. 22, teachers in Regina gathered together to organize a walk and a candlelight vigil in honor of the community.

"The province was in such shock on the weekend nobody really knew what to do, we didn't have any answers. We're almost pinching ourselves and saying, 'no it's not real it can't happen here'," says Juanita Tuharsky, an educator with the Regina Public School.

A friend of Tuharsky lives in the community and she felt her friend's pain. It was then she came up with the idea of putting it on Facebook asking people's thoughts on organizing a candlelight vigil.

"I thought it was going to be very small ... then it grew. I thought I was going to have about 20 people and ended up with 200," she said.

The walk started at the Royal Saskatchewan Museum and ended at the front steps of the Legislative building. The majority of the walkers were holding candles, some carried flags or an eagle feather. At least one participant was

pushing their child in a stroller.

Elder Norma-Jean Byrd, who did the opening prayer, said she worked in La Loche which is how she became familiar with the community. Byrd states how desperate the community is for help.

"(We need) to support La Loche so they know that people care and we wish the best for them. And for the ones in the hospital, we need to say a prayer for them, their families and all the people in the community.

"This is a tragic thing because it harms a whole community. I really feel for the children because they're never going to forget this," said Byrd.

Participants of the candlelight vigil ranged from educators, young children and politicians such as Trent Wotherpoon who said the turnout was heartwarming with people from all walks of life involved.

"Clearly we're all in this together whether it's La Loche in the Far North or here in Regina," said the Deputy Leader of the Saskatchewan NDP.

"It's a time to grieve and mourn loss. It's important that we all stand together to recognize the horrifying loss and hurt in the subsequent days to take steps towards action and to improve the lives of people."

The event ended with the crowd singing along to Ben E. King's Lean on Me and placing the candles in the snowbank in front of the building.

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Creating a culture of sobriety

By Linda Mikolayenko
For Eagle Feather News

"We have many days to celebrate getting drunk," says Harold Johnson, as he begins to list them. Christmas, New Year's, Super Bowl, St. Patrick's Day...

"We don't have a single day to celebrate sobriety," he adds as he embarks on a six-month journey to raise awareness and get a discussion going about alcohol.

From January through June 2016, Johnson is stepping aside from his responsibilities as senior crown prosecutor in La Ronge. For this project, he is joined by his wife, Joan Johnson, and Carla Frohaug, who are both normally employed with Community Corrections.

"The three of us working together, I couldn't imagine a better team," says Johnson.

Their task, under the broad heading of the Northern Alcohol Strategy, is to engage the communities within the Lac La Ronge Indian Band and Montreal Lake Cree Nation territories in finding some answers to the problems caused not only by addictions, but also, as Johnson puts it, "binge drinking, over-drinking, and a culture of drinking."

Johnson has experienced the impact of those problems both professionally in his work with the legal system, and personally – two brothers were killed by drunk drivers.

Whether they drink or not, Johnson figures one in two people in northern Saskatchewan will die as a result of alcohol.

The Northern Saskatchewan Health Indicators Report 2011 states that "the consumption of alcohol has been linked with increased mortality and hospital-



Carla Frohaug has joined Harold Johnson and his wife (missing) Joan Johnson on a campaign to promote sobriety in the North.
(Photo by Linda Mikolayenko)

ization from a variety of health-related conditions, including cancers, digestive diseases (e.g. liver and stomach diseases), unintentional injuries (e.g. falls, motor vehicle accidents, drowning), intentional injuries (e.g. homicides, self-inflicted injuries), and infant conditions (e.g. low birth weight, fetal alcohol spectrum disorders)."

In addition to the human cost, there are economic implications. Johnson says significant healthcare costs in the province are attributable to alcohol, and businesses suffer when staff do not dependably show up for work, or are less productive because of hangovers.

Frohaug says they have already begun the process of meeting with band, town and village councils for permission to consult with grassroots folks. The intent is to bring back what people have to say to the community leaders, so that they can come together on a multi-faceted plan that can address alcohol-re-

lated harm on a number of fronts.

"I think this is an opportunity to support and empower communities to take some ownership over a big social issue for northern people," says Frohaug.

"I look forward to what comes from our consultations."

One of the questions Johnson will be asking is, "What can you do to promote sobriety?"

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MMIW pre-inquiry makes Saskatoon stop

By Fraser Needham
For Eagle Feather News

SASKATON – Two Liberal ministers say the government wants to ensure it gets a national inquiry in to missing and murdered Indigenous women right by seeking the necessary input from victims and their families.

Justice Minister Judy Wilson-Raybould and Indigenous and Northern Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett were in Saskatoon in early February as part of a pre-inquiry phase.

Previous government inquiries, such as the 2012 B.C. Missing Women Commission of Inquiry, have met with heavy criticism for taking too narrow a scope and failing to properly consult with those affected.

This is why Wilson-Raybould says the government believes it is important to seek the input of Indigenous victims of violence and their families before proceeding with the full inquiry.

"We are committed to ensuring that their voices are heard and are heard broadly," she says.

Bennett adds it will be unlikely all affected parties will be completely happy once the inquiry is launched but the government will certainly do its best to listen to as many voices as possible.

"When the commission is launched,

if the families can feel that they've been properly listened to, when they can see their fingerprints on the blueprint of the inquiry, we will feel we have done well," she says.

The ministers are currently in the process of consulting with Indigenous victims of violence and their families in a series of closed-door meetings across the country.

Prior to Saskatoon, the government held pre-inquiry meetings in a number of locations including Ottawa, Vancouver, Winnipeg and Regina.

Wilson-Raybould and Bennett say they are hearing a number of things in the meetings including a significant amount of hurt, pain and mistrust of public institutions.

"We've heard again the unequal application of the justice system," Wilson-Raybould says.

Bennett says both police and media have not fared much better in the eyes of victims and their families.

"The role of the media is upsetting to people," she says "For children to find out in the media that a woman was stereotyped and they didn't even say she was a mom is pretty hard for children to hear a report of a murdered mother like that."

Saskatoon Police Chief Clive



Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada Minister Carolyn Bennett and Minister of Justice Jodi Wilson-Raybould took questions from the media during their stop in Saskatoon women.
(Photo by John Lagimodiere)

Weighill, who is also the president of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, is on the record as saying he is not in favour of a national inquiry because he believes it will delay a concrete action plan to deal with the underlying issues that make Indigenous women more vulnerable to violence.

However, Bennett says she doesn't believe the government needs to choose between one or the other.

"We believe we have to do both. We need the inquiry to get to the root causes of so many things including the child welfare system but also the systems of policing, the judicial sys-

tem. But in the meantime we need to get on with enough shelters, enough housing, beginning to reform the child welfare system, poverty, education."

The Liberals announced the national inquiry shortly after getting elected last fall.

They have committed to launching the full inquiry sometime in 2016.

The whole process will take about two years and cost \$40 million.

A 2014 RCMP report estimates 1,181 Indigenous women were either killed or went missing between 1980 and 2012.

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Little boy's wish is to see Disneyland one last time

By Jeanelle Mandes

For Eagle Feather News

CARRY THE KETTLE FIRST NATION – Marcus Haywahe loves to draw cartoons, collect Amiibo characters for his Wii U game and listen to the Nakoda app on his iPad.

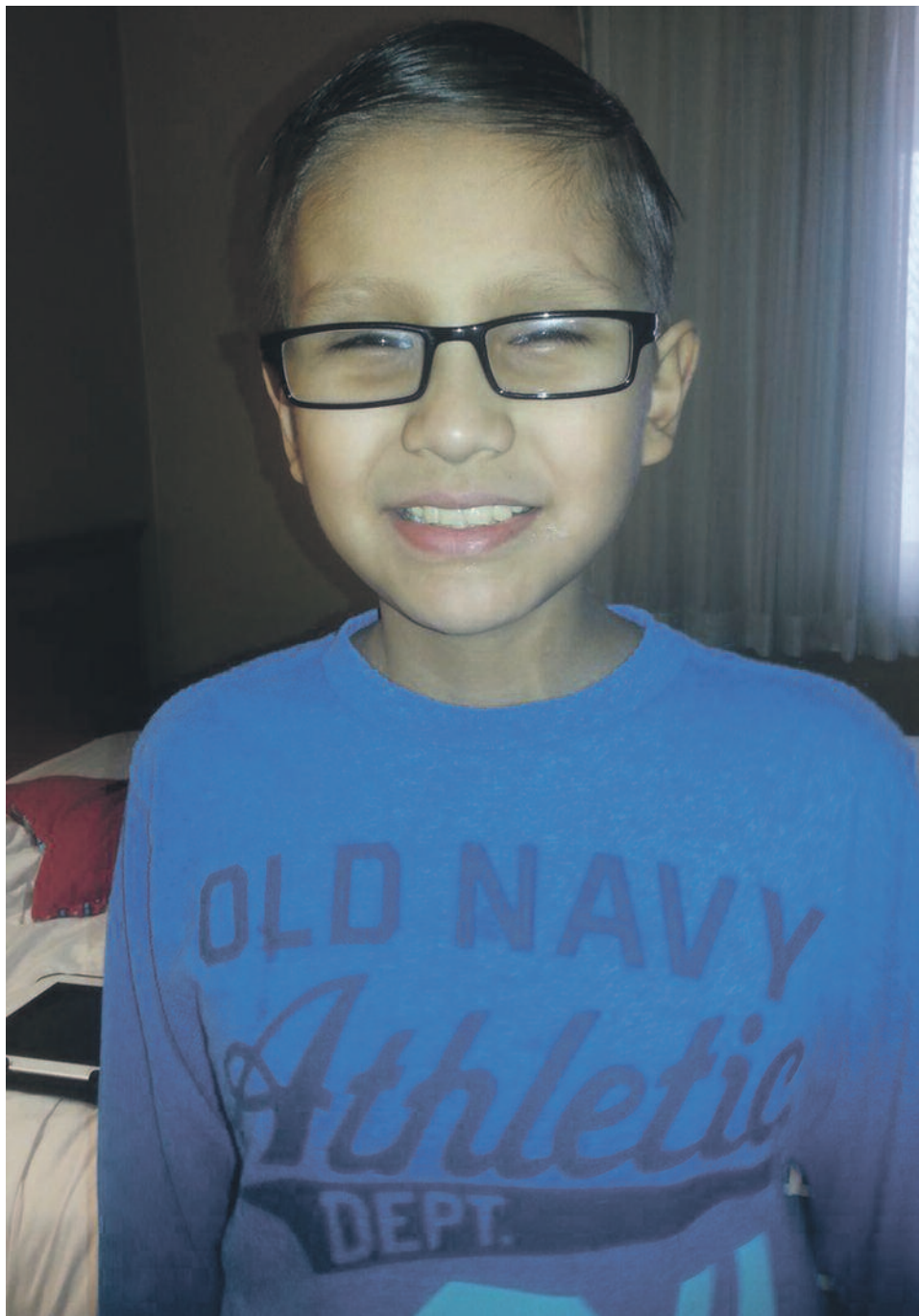
The 10-year-old boy from Carry the Kettle First Nation also likes to play soccer but with his brain tumour diagnosis – called medulloblastoma – his mobility will soon be limited. His cancer went into remission for awhile but returned in December.

“We had a talk one night about his cancer coming back and he cried a bit. He looked at me asking if he’s going to die ... and said ‘I don’t want to go. I want to stay here with you guys,’” says Laurie Delorme, reciting her grandson’s heartbreaking confession.

The Grade 5 student stays with his grandmother during the week and returns home to Regina and his mother, Megan Haywahe, on the weekends and during his weekly appointments.

Marcus is currently on his second week of oral chemotherapy treatment and despite the unfortunate situation he’s in, he remains optimistic by focusing on his wish to go to Disneyland to experience the excitement and fun he had when he went to Disneyworld following his initial diagnosis back in 2012.

“He said ‘can I please go there one more time’ and I said okay,” Delorme says. “Before Christmas I sat down with my daughter (Megan) and



Marcus Haywahe’s cancer was in remission but returned late last year. The brave little boy would like to make another visit to Disneyland.

said ‘okay this is what we need to do. We need to get him over there before things get a little too complicated for him.’”

Delorme, who is also Marcus’s school teacher, reflected back on the fun her grandson had and recalled his favourite ride which was Space Mountain.

“Him and his mom went on (the ride) and she freaked out and all he did was laugh. She thought he was crying and he said ‘yeah, I’m happy ... I’m laughing here.’”

That experience was made possible by the Children’s Wish Foundation which only grants one wish for a child diagnosed with a life-threatening illness.

Marcus is looking forward to the rides and seeing all his favourite Disney characters again but mainly he is looking forward in creating memories with his parents and grandparents.

“This little guy has created a big family, I thought we were in this by ourselves but we’re not,” says Delorme. “Maybe that’s Marcus’s purpose on Earth here is to create a bond between people, (which) has brought a lot of love and support for the family.”

Marcus’s family and home community is hoping to have his dream come true by making fundraisers including a GoFund Me page called ‘Marcus’ Second Fight’ aiming to raise \$15,000 which is currently at \$5,465. They plan to leave on April 3 to the 9.

GEORGE GORDON FIRST NATION ELECTION INFORMATION

Nomination:

February 25, 2016
9:00 A.M - 12:00 P.M.
George Gordon Education Centre

Election:

March 31, 2016
9:00 A.M. - 8:00 P.M.
George Gordon Education Centre

For further information contact:
Howard McMaster, Electoral Officer

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Tribunal finds funding for on-reserve children lacking

**By Fraser Needham
For Eagle Feather News**

In a groundbreaking ruling, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal has ruled Ottawa discriminates against First Nations children living on-reserve when it comes to child welfare services.

The decision comes roughly nine years after the First Nations and Family Caring Society and Assembly of First Nations launched the complaint against the federal government.

First Nations groups have long argued a lower level of support by Ottawa for child welfare services on-reserve, as compared to what children living off-reserve receive from provincial governments, has resulted in many First Nations children needlessly ending up in the child welfare system.

The CHRT ruling calls on the federal government to cease the discriminatory practice and take measures to fix and redress it.

As part of these measures, the tribunal says Ottawa needs to completely redesign the child welfare system and ensure culturally appropriate services are provided as part of the changes.

The ruling also says the federal government has been far too narrow in terms of applying Jordan's Principle, which says jurisdictional disputes between Ottawa and the provinces should not result

in inequities in terms of the level of services First Nations children receive.

Cindy Blackstock, executive director of the First Nations and Family Caring Society, has sparred with the federal government over the issue for years.

She says in some ways the ruling is bittersweet.

"What I find the most shocking of all about this case – I am a social worker – why did we have to bring the Government of Canada to court to get them to treat First Nations children fairly? Little kids, why would it be okay to give a child less than other children?"

Blackstock adds First Nations children are three more times likely to end up in the child welfare system today than during the Indian residential school system.

Assembly of First Nations Chief Perry Bellegarde says the tribunal's ruling provides an historic opportunity for the federal and provincial governments to work together as part of ensuring no First Nations child is left behind.

"We welcome the decision because it's all about First Nations children getting these services and programs on-reserve and so they win," he says.

"There's an opportunity now to fix the system and make sure that those needs are addressed immediately. But more importantly we want governments,

all governments, to recommit to the implementation of Jordan's Principle. That's what this speaks to. Is to recommit and make sure that services to children, whether you're on-reserve or off-reserve, get met."

Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations Chief Bobby Cameron says the CHRT ruling speaks to the larger issue of serious funding gaps in a number of areas for First Nations people living on-reserve.

"It (ruling) not only mentioned the under funding for child welfare on-reserve as opposed to provincial communities, it's the same thing with education, with housing and all these other items," he says.

"Everything is connected. So, that's certainly going to be one of the next issues of discussion to move forward on but, more importantly, to implement the TRC (Truth and Reconciliation Commission) recommendations and how it's connected to the tribunal decision. They're all interconnected and we look forward to meeting with provincial and federal officials to implement those decisions."

Initial reactions out of Ottawa to the CHRT ruling are positive.

"This is wrong," Indigenous and Northern Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett says.



CINDY BLACKSTOCK

"You are not allowed to remove a child for poverty. If there's no food in the fridge, you get some food in the fridge. We really have to take a look at these incentives that are fracturing families and taking children away from their culture and their history and where they do badly. This is hugely important to us to re-jig the incentives."

Bennett would not put a dollar figure on how on the Liberal government plans to address the tribunal's recommendations but she did note there is an upcoming budget.



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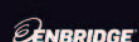
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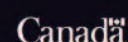
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Student Centre will be gathering place of Aboriginal students



Architect Douglas Cardinal and U of S Chancellor Blaine Favel.

(Photo by John Lagimodiere)



Artist Michael Lonechild and Thunderchild First Nation Chief Delbert Wapass present the portrait of Gordon Oakes created by Lonechild.

(Photo by John Lagimodiere)



Dana Carriere, Aboriginal liaison of the U of S Graduate Students' Association and chair of the Indigenous Graduation Students' Council, and Feather Pewapisconias, president of the Indigenous Students' Council, present a blanket to Jean Oakes, widow of Gordon Oakes. (Photo by John Lagimodiere)

SASKATOON – A decade-long chapter of planning, designing and construction closed at the University of Saskatchewan recently as the doors of the Gordon Oakes Red Bear Student Centre officially opened on Feb. 3.

Fittingly, it was also the anniversary of the Treaty leader's passing which made the day even more emotional for the family and friends of the late Gordon Oakes.

The grand opening brought dignitaries and Aboriginal leaders to the U of S campus, including National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations of Canada, Perry Bellegarde, as well as members of the Oakes family after which the centre is named.

The celebrations included an intimate pipe ceremony and a performance by Juno award-winning musician Susan Aglukark, along with a number of speakers.

"I welcome the opening of the centre as it sends a strong signal of openness and support to Aboriginal students," said Chancellor Blaine Favel, a graduate of the U of S Indian Teacher Education Program who was also mentored by Gordon Oakes.

"I believe it will enrich their individual student experience and also contribute to a broader campus-wide reconciliation with First Nations and Métis

people. The passion of the late Gordon Oakes was that First Nations people retain their distinctiveness in languages and spirituality.

"I believe he would be humbled by this honour but pleased that the U of S is making such a strong commitment to his vision. He was a beloved man, with a timeless message of hope and optimism that First Nations and Canadians can co-exist in harmony and prosper together."

U of S President Peter Stoicheff said this centre is part of the momentum "building across Canada to help fundamentally alter and improve the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples.

"Educational institutions such as the U of S have a significant role to play in this, and this new centre will demonstrate in a very real way to current and potential Aboriginal students that they are welcome here – that this is their campus, too."

The centre is designed to be an inclusive, welcoming gathering place for everyone on campus and is the new home of the Aboriginal Students' Centre, which offers supports to encourage the personal and academic success of students.

Please check out the photo gallery and extended article at www.eaglefeathernews.com



Image: *the the*, 2014. Documentation of performance with Stefan St. Laurent L'Écart - Lieu d'Art Actuel - 7 Biennale d'art performatif

REMAI MODERN TURN OUT Featuring Tanya Lukin Linklater – *the the* Saturday, February 20 at 7 p.m.

Artist Tanya Lukin Linklater will develop a new version of her performance, *the the*, in Saskatoon. This work is based on texts written by the artist that address memories of girlhood within the complexities of race, gender, and the poverty she experienced growing up in America in the 1980s. The texts are paired with choreography along with live performance in Cree by Randy Boyce and contemporary dance. Curated by Troy Gronsdaahl.

La Troupe du Jour, Studio 914, 914 20th St. W, Saskatoon, SK

Doors open at 6:30 p.m. | Performance at 7 p.m.

Tickets at the door: \$12 / \$10

A conversation with the artist and public discussion with Lori Blondeau and Tasha Hubbard will follow.

Visit remaimodern.org/prelaunch for more info.

The James Hotel is the Remail Modern Turn Out hotel partner.



Your easy guide to understanding UNDRIP

By Dawn Dumont
For Eagle Feather News

If you want people to think that you're a smart Aboriginal, you should know – or at least be able to fake that you know – what the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples or UNDRIP is: “Right the UNDRIP, very ... uh ... politically significant. I heard Angelina Jolie worked on it.”

Now is an excellent time to bone up on your UNDRIP because the Trudeau government said that they will be implementing it.

The UNDRIP is a historically significant document that may improve the lives of millions of Indigenous people around the world. It was developed and passed by the United Nations. The UN is an international body so the UNDRIP falls under international law.

When I went to law school, I wanted to be an international lawyer because I imagined it involved a lot of travelling in fancy suits – little did I know it also meant marrying George Clooney! (I settled for criminal law which, at best, meant dating a guy who beat a fraud charge)

International law governs things like treaties and conventions which are legally enforceable legal instruments. The UNDRIP, however, is a declaration, not a

treaty. A declaration reflects a commitment by countries to move in a certain direction under certain stated principles – they are not legally binding. Declarations are more like moral obligations like how you don't use other people's toothbrushes when using their bathrooms.

The United Nations defines Indigenous peoples as those who lived in a country or geographical region before an ethnically or culturally different people arrived. These new people then “became dominant through conquest, occupation, settlement or other means.”

This definition of Indigenous peoples includes about 370 million people spread across 70 countries world wide. It includes groups such as the First Nations of Canada, the Endorois people of Kenya, the Mayas in Guatemala, the Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders of Australia and the Maori of New Zealand. And out of all of these groups we all know that the Maori are generally considered the coolest.

The UNDRIP was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2007. There were 144 countries in favour, 11 abstentions and four countries against. Those dicks were Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States. As late as 2014, Canada

was the only United Nations member still refusing to commit to adopting the UNDRIP. But as mentioned above, Canada has now had a change of heart (or has acquired one?)

The UNDRIP is an effort to catalogue Indigenous historical grievances, modern challenges and socio-economic, political and cultural goals. It took 25 years to create. The writers make it clear that it doesn't create new rights for Indigenous peoples, instead its goal is to stop the violation of existing Indigenous rights and inherent human rights.

So what's in this bad boy? There are 46 articles in the Declaration addressing everything from land ownership to language protection to improvement of economic and social conditions to equality between the sexes. Article 45 also states that these are “minimum standards” so countries can treat Indigenous people better than the Declaration expects, y'know if countries wanted to show some initiative.

Implementing the UNDRIP will have huge implications for development across Canada. According to the law in Canada, governments have a “duty to consult” but under the UNDRIP, they must obtain “free, prior and informed consent.” This means that

First Nations must be able to participate in decisions that affect their lives. They must be given all the information necessary to make a good decision and they should be given time to make that decision.

should also be able to use their own First Nation decision-making processes. And finally, the consultations end when First Nation communities and the government come to an agreement. This is a much higher standard than currently used by governments in Canada.

There are many noteworthy and timely aspects of the UNDRIP. Article 22 recognizes the special needs of women, children, elders and other vulnerable groups. It also acknowledges the need to combat discrimination and violence against them. Article 33 says that Indigenous peoples may determine their own membership which will have important implications for current Indian Act definitions of status.

Implementation of the UNDRIP can go further than governments. Corporations, courts, tribunals and educators should also implement the UNDRIP in their decision-making.

I'm even implementing it on an individual basis – tonight my partner will be vacuuming the rug as per Article 44 citing gender equality (of course this means, I also have to cook dinner for once).



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Students inspired by glimpse of opportunities in job market

By John Lagimodiere
Of Eagle Feather News

SASKATOON – The Future is Yours Career Expo is the largest career for Saskatoon and north students in Saskatchewan.

Over 900 of them attended an event this year that was packed with role models, inspirational speeches and almost 60 exhibitors who want to recruit the next great First Nation or Métis employee.

“We expend a lot of time opening doors. And these partnerships are starting to pay off,” said Saskatoon Tribal Council Chief Felix Thomas.

“And these students, they are seeing there is a life out there. It may mean leaving the reserve. Or it may mean getting those skills and taking them back to reserve. That is what we are hoping. We are trying to build some leadership skills so when these young people become leaders in their communities, hopefully their quality of life will improve.”

The event has a full time person coordinating it and many Tribal Council staff add hundreds of hours leading up to the Expo.

They also rely on sponsorship to fund it. For the last three years PotashCorp has been the main sponsor.

“This is a great opportunity to talk about career development and also for us

to look for future employees. It is part of giving back to support the development of youth but also to some extent our own interests to make sure we are well positioned competitively to attract these people to jobs.

“We have a variety of different employees working at our booth. And you know what, they love working at PotashCorp and that is really what they want to share with the students,” said Leanne Bellegarde, Director Inclusion and Diversity at PotashCorp.

“We have been sponsoring for a couple years now and we are pleased to work with the Tribal Council who have brought an incredible level of support and a great turnout of over 950 students once again and a great array of exhibitors. They are a great partner with us.”

Nefertiti Rosler and Rachel Linklater-Prosper came to the Expo with their school mates from Oskayak High School. They were impressed with the variety of exhibits.

“I learned that there are more jobs than just the culinary arts out there,” said Nefertiti.

“I could join PotashCorp or I could join construction or the trades. There are lots of other things out there to do and a lot to learn today.”



Oskayak High School students Nefertiti Rosler and Rachel Linklater-Prosper discovered many career opportunities at the Future is Yours Career Expo.

(Photo by John Lagimodiere)

It was eye opening to Rachel as well.

“I am realizing I am interested in a lot more careers than I thought I would be. This has been very interesting,” said Linklater-Prosper. “Now I want to be a city cop. I want to protect and make the streets better in our city.”

That is all music to the ears of Tribal Chief Thomas.

“Some of these vendors have been here all eight years recruiting students

and now they see their investments paying off as well,” said Tribal Chief Thomas.

“We have a good partnership with PotashCorp. It takes a partnership and investment on both sides to make these things possible.

At the end of the day the biggest benefactors are the kids and the vendors.

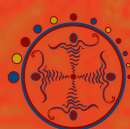
“They plant some seeds but they get some future employees,” says Thomas.



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Deal means more potash industry jobs

REGINA – An agreement signed between the File Hills Qu'Appelle Developments LP (FHQ Developments) and K+S Potash Canada GP (KSPC) has outlined both parties' commitment to improving labour market participation and employment opportunities for Saskatchewan First Nations and Métis people.

Through this partnership, KSPC and FHQ Developments will work towards identifying, advancing and securing mutually beneficial workforce development, employment and training strategies for First Nations and Métis people, with a particular emphasis on the Legacy Project mine site.

"The development of meaningful partnerships with both First Nation communities and Aboriginal suppliers and contractors has resulted in many tangible outcomes for Saskatchewan First Nations," said Edmund Bellegarde, President and Board Chair, FHQ Developments and Points Athabasca FHQ.

"K+S Potash Canada has played an important role in moving towards a more equitable and positive, long-term relationship with Aboriginal people, communities and businesses in Saskatchewan and their work in this regard is a model for collaboration and partnership in the mining sector."

FHQ Developments is a First Nation economic opportunities and wealth creation corporation. The Partnership's

owners are File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council and its 11 member First Nation communities: Carry the Kettle, Little Black Bear, Muscowpetung, Nekaneet, Okanese, Pasqua, Peepeekisis, Piapot, Standing Buffalo, Star Blanket, and Wood Mountain. Together the communities represent more than 15,000 member citizens, and over 435,000 acres of reserve lands.

This year, KSPC's Legacy Project will be moving into the production phase. While the shift from construction to operations will mean the number of contracting opportunities and employment with contractors will be reduced, KSPC is now working to finalize their permanent workforce. With over 150 permanent employees left to hire, KSPC wants to be an employer of choice, attracting, recruiting, and retaining Aboriginal employees.

"The task of creating a representative workforce can be challenging, and requires an ongoing commitment to identify opportunities and, where high levels of skill or training is required, as is the case with many jobs in the mining sector, identify suitable candidates for employment and training," added Maryann Deutscher, Senior Manager, Human Resources.

During the construction phase of development at the Legacy site, Points Athabasca FHQ Contracting, a Saskatchewan-based, Aboriginal owned



Colin Braithwaite, VP, Health, Safety and Security, KSPC; Terri Uhrich, General Counsel, KSPC; Luis Mendoza, Chief Financial Officer; Terry Bird, Manager of First Nations and Metis Initiatives, KSPC. (Seated) Chief Edmund Bellegarde, President and Board Chair, FHQ Developments and Points Athabasca FHQ and Maryann Deutscher, Senior Manager, Human Resources, KSPC.

and operated construction firm, secured significant business and employment development opportunities, including delivering a 70 per cent participation rate for First Nations employment, and directly employing more than 140 File

Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council members at the mine site in the past two years.

"This partnership is a win-win opportunity for KSPC and FHQ Developments," said Christopher Adams, General Manager, FHQ Developments.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY



GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE of Native Studies and Applied Research

The Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research invites applications for the position of **PROGRAM HEAD** at the **Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP)** in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

Comp Code: 1604 200S Mar 31

SUNTEP is a four year fully-accredited Bachelor of Education degree program offered by the Gabriel Dumont Institute in cooperation with Advanced Education, the University of Regina, and the University of Saskatchewan.

Duties and Responsibilities: Under the supervision of the Executive Director, the SUNTEP Saskatoon Program Head will be responsible for: recruitment, supervision and evaluation of Faculty and students; arrangement for the delivery of instruction by staff and University personnel; provision of appropriate student counselling and student teaching placements; liaison with University and school officials; some teaching duties within the program may be required; partnership development and community building to advance the profile of the Institute, and any other duties consistent with the Program Head position, as assigned by the Executive Director.

Qualifications: The ideal candidate will have a Master's degree in Education or a related discipline, must have multiple years of related and successful experience teaching at the K-12 level, 3-5 years of supervisory experience, a good knowledge of Métis culture and history, an understanding of issues in cross-cultural education, and well developed oral and written communication skills. A knowledge of and demonstrated proficiency in the use of a variety of software programs is essential.

For more information on the position or the Institute, please visit <https://gdins.org/>

Remuneration: \$86,942-\$115,700 (commensurate with experience and qualifications)

Term: June 2016 – ongoing (Start date negotiable)

Location: Saskatoon, SK

Deadline for receipt of applications: March 31, 2016

Please quote competition code when submitting cover letter and resume to:

Mr. Jim Edmondson, Director of Human Resources
917 - 22nd Street West, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7M 0R9
Ph: (306) 657-2272 Fax: (306) 975-0903 Email: hr@gdins.org

Gabriel Dumont Institute has permission from the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission to hire affirmatively. (EX93-15)

Please state in your cover letter if you are of Métis ancestry.

Only applicants short listed will be contacted

DIRECTOR ABORIGINAL RELATIONS



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- Participating on the organization's senior leadership team and providing strategic leadership to ensure United Way practices authentic engagement with the Aboriginal communities in Saskatoon;
- Developing partnerships and building relationships with key individuals, groups and organizations to identify opportunities for community investment, community building and resource development;
- Supporting organizational development and capacity building efforts within Aboriginal organizations and organizations funded by United Way;
- Providing support for Aboriginal cultural awareness and inter-cultural development initiatives both internally and externally; and
- Assisting United Way in identifying and implementing opportunities from the perspective of reconciliation.

The successful candidate will have:

- a strong understanding of the Aboriginal communities in Saskatoon and surrounding areas;
- demonstrated knowledge of First Nations, Métis and Inuit history and cultures;
- a proficient ability to cultivate and maintain meaningful professional relationships;
- the ability and desire to engage and mobilize individuals and organizations around social issues in our community and United Way's mission;
- a post-secondary degree in a relevant field (or a combination of education and experience);
- excellent oral and written communication skills; and
- desire to work in a highly collaborative environment.

Preference will be given to candidates possessing a minimum of eight years experience working in community development within a First Nation or Métis context. The ability to speak or understand a First Nations or Métis language will be considered an asset.

United Way of Saskatoon and Area is proud to offer a competitive compensation and benefits package, and the personal reward of being part of a team devoted to building a community that is great for everyone who lives here.

United Way of Saskatoon and Area encourages applications from individuals within identified equity groups, as defined by the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission. United Way of Saskatoon and Area relies on section 48 of The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code for this measure.

Qualified candidates should submit their application to:
Interim CEO, United Way of Saskatoon and Area
100-506 25th Street East, Saskatoon, SK S7K 4A7
E-mail: office@unitedwaysaskatoon.ca

Application deadline is Tuesday, March 1, 2016.

A full job description is available online at www.unitedwaysaskatoon.ca.

Partnership creates huge northern company

**By Fraser Needham
For Eagle Feather News**

Two northern Saskatchewan First Nations have teamed up with a Saskatoon welding company as part of a new major multimillion-dollar partnership.

The partnership includes the English River Dene Nation, Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation and JNE Welding.

The company brings together combined revenues of \$296 million, a payroll of \$54 million and 1,000 employees.

As part of the agreement, English River and PBCN will each hold a 30 per cent share in the new company with JNE retaining the remaining 40 per cent.

JNE Welding founder and CEO Jim Nowakowski, who recently turned 60, says he is starting to think about succession planning.

He says he has worked with English River on projects in the past, through their subsidiary Des Nedhe Development, and approached them about 20 months ago about a potential partnership.

Des Nedhe CEO Gary Merasty, who is a PBCN member, played a key role in bringing Peter Ballantyne on board.

Aside from wanting to ensure his company remains in good hands after he retires, Nowakowski says he wants to

make sure as many avenues as possible for economic development and job creation are open to the province's Indigenous population.

"I've recognized for a very long time that our First Nations people need a leg up, they need some help from time to time to access new opportunities," he says.

"And I've been active with different First Nations communities over a period of time because I want to see them do better. I felt that was very, very important and I felt that I have gained some business experience and if I can share some lessons with them and help them perhaps make better decisions then we would all be better off, we would all benefit."

Des Nedhe Development CEO Gary Merasty says even though the Saskatchewan economy is currently experiencing a slight downturn with the fall of oil and potash prices, they believe the partnership is a good long-term investment.

"I think there is a tremendous amount of opportunity," he says. "We're going through a bit of a slowdown in the economy right now but I think with being able to package together the full suite of services – being a full service company – our construction company, Tron,



Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation Chief Peter Beatty, JNE Welding CEO Jim Nowakowski and English River Dene Nation Chief Lawrence McIntyre at the announcement of a new partnership on January 29. (Photo by Fraser Needham)

working with JNE, can offer fabrication and installation services for a lot of these types of projects not only in Saskatchewan but across Canada or even North America."

Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation Chief Peter Beatty agrees the new partnership provides a good investment opportunity.

"Basically, it means we're diversi-

fying our portfolio in our investment arm," he says. "We're involved in a number of different areas including hospitality, trucking, our petrocan stations. This is a new area that we're glad to get into – steel fabrication. So it's a new thing for us and we're glad for that opportunity."

JNE Welding has been in operation since 1980.



The Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations is seeking applicants for the position of Trustee of the First Nations Trust.

The First Nations Trust was created by the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) pursuant to a Trust Indenture in 2003. The purpose of this Trust is to distribute monies due to First Nations from the profits of SIGA casinos and SGC casinos.

Position: Trustee

Responsibilities: The Trustees are responsible for the distribution of funds received pursuant to the Gaming Agreements between the FSIN and the Government of Saskatchewan. The Trustees are primarily charged with ensuring full compliance with the Gaming Agreement and Trust Indenture including ensuring proper reporting from the Beneficiaries and accountability to the Beneficiary and to the FSIN.

Qualifications:

- 18 years of age or older and not have the status of bankrupt,
- Does not hold elected Indian Government office,
- Bondable,
- Never convicted of an offence involving fraud, dishonesty, breach of trust, theft or forgery,
- Have education or business experience, or a combination of both, suitable to being a Trustee,
- Never been declared mentally incompetent by a Court of competent jurisdiction.

Term: Successful applicants will be appointed to a three year term.

Application: Interested candidates should apply in writing including:

- A statement of your interest in becoming a trustee and your qualifications;
- A copy of your current resume or C.V.;
- A Current Criminal Records Check;
- A Current Credit Report (eg. Equifax);
- A statement whether you live on reserve; and
- The names of three references.

The closing date for receiving applications is February 26, 2016

Applicants should be submitted to:

Office Administrator - First Nations Trust
202E Joseph Okemasis Drive Saskatoon SK S7N 1B1
Fax: (306) 931-4425
Email: firstnationstrust@sasktel.net

Please Note: Candidates selected for interview will be contacted. No phone calls please.

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The ideal candidate will be a self-declared Aboriginal person who possesses a graduate degree (ideally a PhD.) or equivalent in a relevant discipline and has at least five years of progressive leadership experience. You should have experience working in a university or other post-secondary institution as well as experience working at a senior level with Aboriginal organizations or governments. You must have an understanding of Indigenization as a concept and of its implications for the University along with a solid understanding of public policy, particularly as it applies to Aboriginal people. You must have a strong positive reputation within, and understanding of, Saskatchewan's Aboriginal communities.

For full details regarding this exciting opportunity and to apply, please visit our website at: www.uregina.ca/hr/careers

The University of Regina is committed to an inclusive workplace that reflects the richness of the community that we serve. The University welcomes applications from all qualified individuals, including individuals within the University's employment equity categories of women, persons with disabilities, members of visible minorities, aboriginal persons, individuals of diverse gender and sexual orientation and all groups protected by the Human Rights Code. Preference will be given to self-declared applicants.



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College of Engineering, industry partnership benefits U of S students

By John Lagimodiere
Of Eagle Feather News

SASKATOON – The grins on Rowan Spetz and Cole Unruh's faces were almost as big as the giant \$5,000 cheques they received from Leanne Bellegarde of PotashCorp.

The engineering students are some of the first participants in a new program at the College of Engineering at the University of Saskatchewan. PotashCorp is the first partner to join the college in the Indigenous Peoples Industry Partnership Program. The money they earned from a summer internship at PotashCorp will go directly toward their almost \$8,000 tuition.

"This program is a core component of the support and engagement initiatives our college is developing for Indigenous students," said Aaron Phoenix, associate dean academic at the College of Engineering.

"We are thrilled that PotashCorp is our first industry partner in the program and look forward to working with them and getting more students involved."

Spetz and Unruh worked for PotashCorp over the summer of 2015 as a pilot for the program. The pilot was successful and the college and PotashCorp have signed an agreement to formalize the arrangement. While one of the students is graduating this spring, the other is continuing in the program with PotashCorp and will work for the company again this summer. Two other engineering students will join him this spring.

According to Leanne Bellegarde, Director of Diversity and Inclusion at PotashCorp, the employer and the student both benefit from the program.

"The students are contributing as part of the team. They challenge all of us with new and innovative and fresh thinking. That's an important part of this program," said Bellegarde at the signing ceremony.

"Most impressive is seeing the students enter the program and then seeing them when they leave feeling much more confident and knowledgeable and having a better sense of what the future holds for them. This is a long term investment in the labour force of the future for us at PotashCorp."

"We get great summer talent and have a stronger talent pool in the future for us to draw on. I think it contributes to the entire talent of the labour pool in the province."

Matthew Dunn is the Indigenous Peoples Initiatives Coordinator for the College of Engineering. He knows how important on the job training is for engineers.

"Companies can create relationships and mentor students to hit the ground running once they graduate. PotashCorp is our first but there are more partners to come," said Dunn a graduate of the college who also worked at PotashCorp where he earned his Professional Engineer status.

"Working within industry has really helped me at my current job working with indigenous engineering students. I can provide practical advice and hopefully help guide them into careers after they get their degree."

"This program and the money they earn allows students to just focus on their classes and not worry about getting a part time job every year or stress about finding a summer job. It will really help with retention."

Currently there are 60 self-declared indigenous students in the college but Dunn wants to do better.

"Our goal is to double that. This program is a great example of student supports and career support we are able to offer."

Rowen Spetz is in fourth year of civil engineering and he spent the summer working in technical services for PotashCorp where he learned about business.

"I not only got the engineering training but the business related feeling that helped me a lot in the summer. It was a great experience, they were really friendly," said Spetz who is eager to return for his last summer posting.

But the program isn't just about the job.

"Mathew has been great. If we have questions we can email him or go right to his office. As soon as I get into the building I walk right by his office and see him in there and his door is always open."

Both Spetz and Cole Unruh intend to apply at PotashCorp once they convocate.

"I had a real good experience and helped create a program that was a maintenance program," said Unruh who will convocate this spring as a Mechanical Engineer.

"The work Matthew does to create these links to PotashCorp is instrumental in this program. It gave me a real foothold in the industry."



Leanne Bellegarde of PotashCorp gave giant cheques to Rowan Spetz and Cole Unruh as part of their summer internship at PotashCorp. They were joined by Matthew Dunn who is the Indigenous Peoples Initiative Coordinator for the College of Engineering.

(Photo by John Lagimodiere)

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Norma McKay, Sr. Fire Inspector

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5907, avenue Dewdney	400, place Brand
Regina (SK)	Saskatoon (SK)

Veuillez noter que ces séances seront présentées en anglais.

To reserve your place, use the contact details below. Pour réserver votre place, utilisez les coordonnées ci-dessous.

FDIV-ProActive-Recruiting@rcmp-grc.gc.ca
1 877 RCMP-GRC (1 877 726-7472)

Spreading the cooperatives message

Partners hope new fund will stimulate co-operatives in Indigenous communities

**By Fraser Needham
For Eagle Feather News**

Various partners hope a new \$5 million dollar fund will help get co-operatives off the ground in Western Canadian Aboriginal communities.

The fund is being provided as part of the Co-operative Innovation Project and will be distributed over five years.

University of Saskatchewan Professor Murray Fulton says Aboriginal communities can face unique challenges in terms of starting up co-operatives.

"The knowledge of co-ops in Aboriginal communities is substantially less than the rest of rural and Western Canada and there will be a significant effort needed to get that knowledge of co-ops out there," he says.

Fulton adds setting up a co-operative in an Aboriginal community can take longer than in a non-Aboriginal community.

"For us from the outside coming in, we need to go through a lengthy set of protocols and getting to know the people in the community and getting their trust. This is key work that has to be done and it cannot be rushed."

Over the past year the research project has contacted 37 per cent of the rural and Aboriginal communities in Western Canada.

It found that 23 per cent of rural respondents and 41 per cent of Aboriginal respondents said they do not know what a co-operative is.

The five-year Co-operatives First Fund is intended to help with the various costs of getting a co-operative off the ground such as attaining the necessary legal and professional services, developing communications and business plans and conducting feasibility studies.

The research also shows co-operatives could potentially help fill gaps in such areas as health care, housing, industry and business development.

Plans are under way for Co-operatives First to host Community Inspire meetings across Western Canada over the next few years.

Partners in the Co-operative Innovation Project include Federated Co-operatives Limited, University of Saskatchewan and the Plunkett Foundation.



Federated Co-operatives CEO Scott Banda announced an innovative cooperative program that they hope will catch on in Aboriginal communities. (Photo by Fraser Needham)



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Truth and Reconciliation important: U of S

By Fraser Needham
For Eagle Feather News

SASKATOON – University of Saskatchewan President Peter Stoicheff says it is crucial the institution tries to live up to the calls to action in the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as best it can.

“It’s important for the University of Saskatchewan to be as engaged as it can possibly be with the whole challenge of reconciliation,” he says.

“So last week’s opening of the Gordon Oakes Red Bear (Students’ Centre) was an example of that, the passing at our academic council the motion that we would bring in Indigenous ways of knowing and experience into all of our academic programming is another example and trying to build Aboriginal understanding into all of our student experiences is another example.”

February 8-12 is Aboriginal Achievement Week at the university.

As part of the week’s activities, the U of S signed a memorandum of understanding with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation on February 9 to provide greater access to information on Canada’s history with Indigenous peoples.

The NCTR is located in Winnipeg on the campus of the University of Manitoba.

It is a permanent electronic archive of all statements, documents and other materials gathered by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

The archives currently hold about five million electronic records with roughly 40,000 of these available to the public.

The MOU will provide researchers, students and the broader community at the U of S the ability to access the vast resources the NCTR has to offer.

This includes a soon to be placed link to the NCTR database on the library’s public computers and training for librarians on how the database can be most effectively used.



University of Saskatchewan President Peter Stoicheff (left) and National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation Director Ry Moran (right) sign a memorandum of understanding on February 9.
(Photo by Fraser Needham)

The library also plans to expand its resources and records available to the NCTR through the Indigenous Studies Portal and its contributions to Saskatchewan History Online.

“This is a critically important step in the journey of reconciliation as we move forward,” NCTR Director Ry Moran says. “Sharing this information in respectful and responsible ways with the Canadian public, with researchers, with students is something we had been asked to do by survivors, by the agreement.”

The University of Saskatchewan is one of nine post-secondary institutions in Canada that have signed similar memorandums of understanding with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.

Aboriginal Achievement Week also featured a number of other events over the course of the week.

These events included a motivational talk to students by Métis filmmaker Marcel Petit on Monday and a presentation on achieving Indigenous

success in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) and the student achievement awards gala on Thursday.

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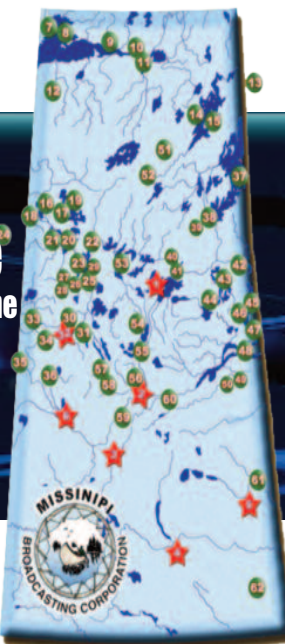
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Old kid shows versus new kid shows

Let me put on my cranky pants, with suspenders, as I rant about something that really winds me up.

Kid's shows these days are superficial crap piles that build unreasonable expectations into the minds of preteens.

Check out the shows produced by the American networks – the actors are so preternaturally good-looking they could be vampires. (Have you ever seen Zendaya? She's basically a young, less homicidal, Naomi Campbell.)

Their hair is so perfectly styled that a hurricane couldn't disrupt it. There may be one kid who weighs slightly more than normal Hollywood weight – but that's the designated "funny one."

Now, I know the producers have thousands, maybe even millions, of child actor reels from which to cull their genetic winners – but the kids watching don't know that. They may think that's how people their age are supposed to look.

And do not get me started on the shows' content. The kids on these shows don't have normal problems – they're all recording artists, running their own clothing stores or insanely wealthy from some indeterminate source.

Whose reality is that? The children of the 62 people who control 85 per cent of the world's wealth?

Despite the fact that the characters are dripping with privilege, the writers expect us to believe that these kids are normal and, even ... sympathetic. That they're just regular kids who sometimes feel bad and need their friends to help them out of jams – like that time they accidentally mistook an oil Sheikh for a hair stylist.

Don't you hate it when that happens to you?

Back in my day, we had kid shows that taught us morals, values and that a good story could trump Canada's pathetic production values.

Take Degrassi, for instance. Now I'm not sure which incarnation of Degrassi that my siblings and I used to watch after school, but the kids in that show could



have been plucked directly from my school.

They had pimples, weight problems, and crappy clothes. Some had extreme hairstyles – Spike, so named for her spiked hair – but for the most part they had the same bad hairstyles that we were all striving for at the time (a tiny satellite dish of hair in the centre of your forehead.)

The stories on Degrassi were realistic. The kids in the show were experimenting with things that sometimes were bad for them – which is where the writers punished them quickly and ruthlessly.

Spike had unprotected sex – boom, she was pregnant! Shane tried drugs – boom, he was brain-damaged!

I'm glad none of the characters experimented with an Ouija board or their head would have been rotating

like an owl for the rest of the season (though realistically with a Canadian budget, they would have replaced the actor with a real owl.)

After Degrassi was over, we were subjected to another Canadian masterpiece – The Littlest Hobo, about a German Shepherd who didn't wanna settle down (maybe tomorrow?).

Each episode, this philandering canine would stop at a place, befriend a kid and their family, and solve a crime. It helped that the criminals always articulated their entire plan out loud while the littlest hobo lurked nearby.

Once he knew the details, this pet detective wouldn't run and tell like some snitch (ahem, Lassie), he would thwart the crime using his own ingenuity. In a few episodes, he actually untied people with his mouth! I have fully functioning fingers and I can't even untie people – or a dog, ironically.

Then at the end of each episode, the kid would yell: "Hey Blue" (they always gave the dog a stupid name), "where you going?" But the dog hobo would trot away without looking back. I always thought the fact that he left was mean – there's a whole generation of kids out there with German Shepherd trust issues.

What a lot of people don't know is that five different dogs actually played the Littlest Hobo. After the series ended, four of them wasted their TV money and died broke and alone in tenement doghouses.

Back in my day, kid shows were humble; the focus was on story, not on the wardrobe budget. So, when you turned off the TV for dinner you felt like you were a normal person having a normal life ... albeit with a mediocre dog that couldn't even solve a simple B & E.

Arts Board Deadlines

The Saskatchewan Arts Board announces the following deadlines for applications to programs that support the work of Saskatchewan artists and schools and communities wanting to engage in arts activities:

Culture on the Go – Touring
February 16

Independent Artists Program
March 15

Indigenous Pathways Initiative
April 15

SaskFestivals Program* – Annual and Multi-Year
April 15

Artists in Communities* – Artist in Residence Projects
May 1

Artists in Schools* – Artist in Residence ArtsSmarts After Hours
May 1

Premier's Centennial Arts Scholarship
May 1

Prince Edward Drama Scholarship
May 1

For applications, visit: artsboard.sk.ca/grants

APPLICATIONS AND SUPPORT MATERIAL MUST BE POSTMARKED ON OR BEFORE THE DEADLINE DATE UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED.

(306) 787-4056 (Regina)
(306) 964-1155 (Saskatoon)
(800) 667-7526 (Toll-free)
grants@saskartsboard.ca
saskartsboard.ca

*Funded through the financial assistance of SaskCulture Inc., thanks to funding from Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund for Sport, Culture and Recreation.



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Former NHLer takes his story to the stage

By Fraser Needham

For Eagle Feather News

SASKATOON – At one time, Theoren Fleury liked to burn the candle at both ends.

In his heyday during the 1990s and early part of the millennium, the feisty right winger was one of the best players in National Hockey League making stops in Calgary, Colorado, New York and Chicago.

However, Fleury was also well known for his destructive behaviour off the ice with serious addictions to drugs, alcohol and gambling.

In the production, Smyth wears skates for the duration of the performance moving around on a simulated hockey rink with a synthetic ice-like surface.

It was Fleury's idea to turn the book into a play and he says wants to share his story with as wide an audience as possible in the hopes that others who have suffered similar traumas will feel comfortable sharing their stories as part of a healing process.

"I think if you take all of the hockey out of my story, I'm telling the majority of people's stories who suffered some

"Where I have found a lot of my healing is in Aboriginal spirituality. I've been to 130 First Nations communities since 2009 and I finally took the cotton out of my ears, put it in my mouth and started to listen. I've met some incredibly powerful spiritual people along the way and they have taught me what spirituality really is all about and that is having a relationship with myself first so that I can have relationships with other people."

Perhaps what is most amazing about Fleury's story is, aside from all the emotional challenges he faced growing up, are the physical challenges he also faced in getting to the NHL.

At 5'6" and 150 pounds, he is one of the smallest players ever to play professional hockey and no player of this

size has ever dominated the sport as Fleury did during his prime.

When comparing today's NHL to his era, he says he has no doubts as to which period is tougher for a player to break into.

"I was playing against guys that were 100 pounds heavier than I was. We were breaking sticks over each other's backs and arms and no penalties. It's funny, when we have a Connor McDavid (2015 NHL first overall draft pick) come on the scene it's like a monumental thing.

"But when I was playing there were 60 Connor McDavids playing in the NHL. So what does that tell you?"

Playing With Fire: The Theo Fleury Story played from January 13-31 at the Persephone Theatre in Saskatoon.



Theoren Fleury was a diminutive dynamo on the ice but it was his wild off-ice life that got him into trouble.
(Photo by Fraser Needham)

Clean and sober, he co-wrote the book *Playing With Fire*, with Kirstie McLellan Day in 2009.

The autobiography tells of Fleury's humble beginnings growing up in small town Manitoba and his drive to succeed, which led him to being one of the top players in junior hockey and later the NHL.

The book also documents the sexual abuse he suffered at the hands of former coach Graham James, his struggles with addictions and quest to find himself after he retired from professional hockey in 2003.

Playing With Fire was eventually made into a documentary and now it is has been made into a one-man play starring Shaun Smyth as Fleury.

sort of childhood traumatic experience. I lived with my secret for 30 years before I told it and I've had guys in their eighties come up to me and tell me their story for the first time.

"So, the more we put the story out there, the more 'me toos' we get, the more empowered people we get, the more advocates we get and then change will happen."

Fleury says his healing process is ongoing and he has come a long way in dealing with some of the anger he had when he wrote *Playing With Fire* almost seven years ago.

He adds a big part of this healing process has been rediscovering his Métis heritage.

Gala Evening May 27th, 2016
TCU Place, Saskatoon

All nominations must be in by April 22nd, 2016. No exceptions.

For more information and nominations, visit www.sasktel.com/saya, contact aboriginal.youthawards@sasktel.com or call toll free 1.866.931.6205

 **SaskTel**

"Helping Each Other"

Fans in a hurry to see Saskatchewan Rush professional lacrosse games

By Fraser Needham
For Eagle Feather News

SASKATOON – Professional lacrosse has come to Saskatoon and Jeremy Thompson is a big part of the Saskatchewan Rush team.

The 28-year-old transition/defender hails from the Onondaga Nation near Syracuse, New York.

He is in his fifth year in the National Lacrosse League.

The Rush team spent the last ten years in Edmonton before moving to Saskatoon this season. The team's first seven seasons in Edmonton were losing ones before things started to turn around in 2013 and they posted a 9-7 record.

Rush then went 16-2 in 2014 finishing in first place before going 13-5 last year, finishing first again and capping off the year with a league championship.

Thompson says although both the team and professional lacrosse are new to Saskatoon, they like what they see so far.

"I came out here a couple of weeks ago for the training camp and I got a tour of the city and it is amazing the amount of support we have," he says.

"First Nations people welcomed me with a Christmas dinner and it was unbelievable – hundreds of people came out. It is very exciting First Nations people are supporting the team and everything has been just first class so far."

Rush won its first game of the season defeating Calgary 10-8 and rocked the crowd at its home

opener against Vancouver on Friday, Jan. 15.

Coming off a league championship, the pressure is on the team to prove itself once again this year.

However, even though the season has just begun, Thompson says so far, so good.

"Winning the Champion's Cup last year is a high accomplishment but for us it's a new year, new season and we're sticking together as a team, family and we're very excited about this year coming up."

Professional lacrosse players need to supplement their income with other jobs and Thompson is a Nike endorsed athlete as well as having his own lacrosse company with his brother.

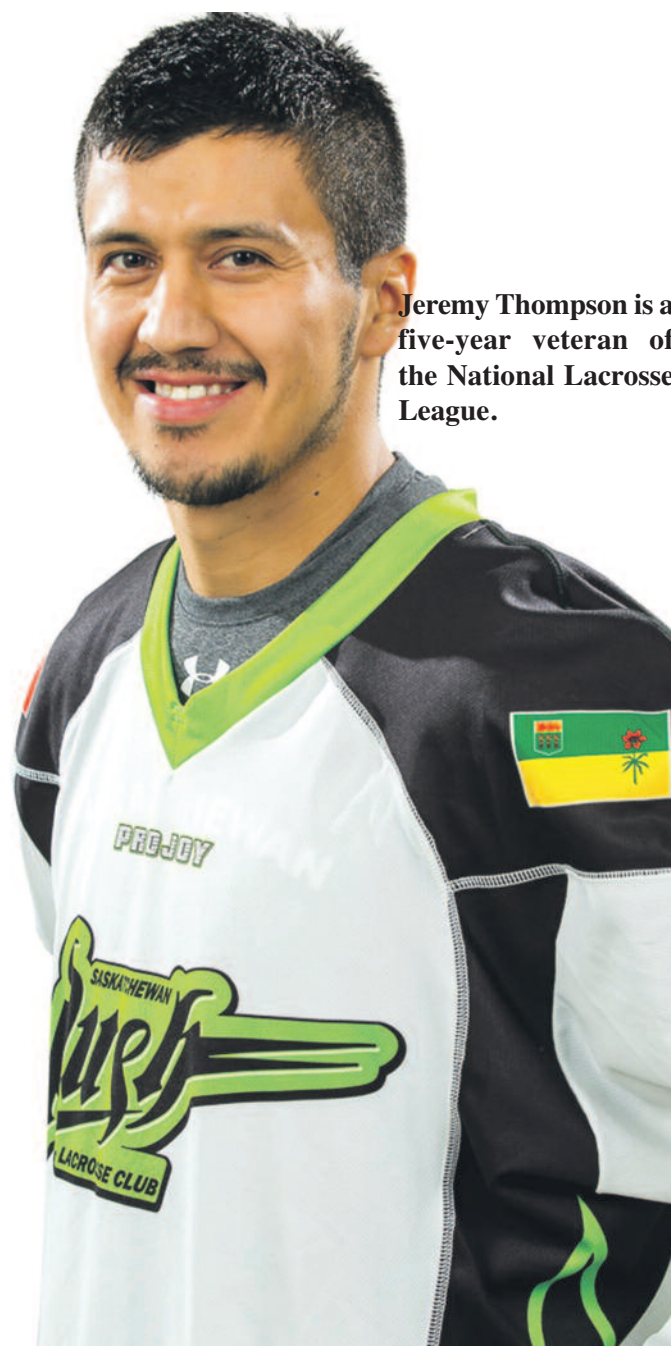
This requires him to juggle these activities while traveling all over North America to make games.

Nevertheless, Thompson says for him lacrosse, which was created by Indigenous people, is more than just a game; it's a way of life.

"Lacrosse to us, to our community, is more than just a sport as we know it today. It's like a medicine to our people."

The National Lacrosse League is comprised of nine teams. Canadian teams include Toronto, Saskatchewan, Vancouver and Calgary. U.S. teams include New England, Buffalo, Georgia, Rochester and Colorado.

The Saskatchewan Rush are currently 3-1 and at the top of the Western Conference. The season is 18 games long



Jeremy Thompson is a five-year veteran of the National Lacrosse League.



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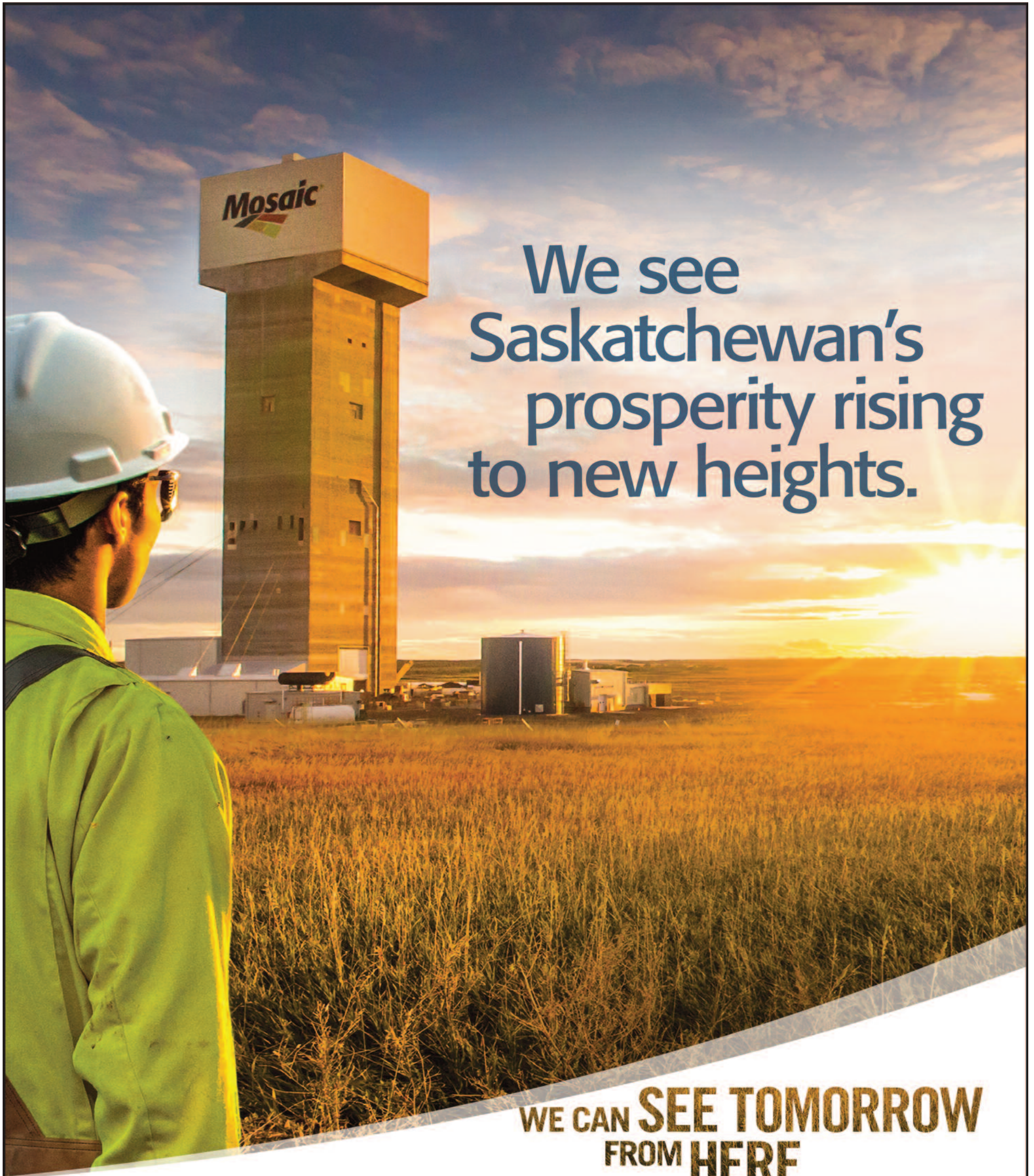
First Nations, Metis
or Inuit Ancestry
Pee Wee (Born 2005 or later)
Bantam (Born 2003 or 2004)
Midget (Born 2001 or 2002)
Youth (Born 1999 or 2000)
Open (Born 1998 or earlier)

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