

Eagle Feather NEWS

FREE

Mirasty new head of RCMP

Commander of F Division Russ Mirasty accepts the flag to symbolize that the transfer of command is complete, making Mirasty the first Cree person to command F Division. (Photo by Michael Bell)



Welcoming a new era of respect, co-operation

Despite its stated goal to protect Aboriginal people from white whiskey peddlers and to make the Canadian West safe for everyone including the wave of settlers, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and its predecessor the Northwest Mounted Police have had an often troubled relationship with First Nations and Métis people.

Mistrust and allegations of racism have surfaced in the very communities the Mounties are sworn to serve.

But a new era of understanding seems to be on the horizon. Recent events bode well for an improved spirit of co-operation between Saskatchewan's Aboriginal people and the national police force.

One of Saskatchewan's own, Russ Mirasty, a member of the Lac La Ronge First Nation, has become

the Chief Superintendent of the RCMP's F Division.

"To be able to head the RCMP in your home province — what an honour," Mirasty said. "It couldn't get any better for me." (See story on Page 22)

Corporal Dani Herman, a member of Cowessess First Nation, has been appointed to the post of Métis coordinator for the RCMP.

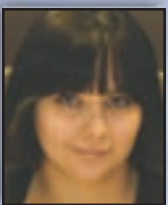
Herman acknowledges that there is some history to overcome in her new role.

"We always harboured a bit of hard feelings. If it wasn't for the North-West Mounted Police, the Métis might have taken their rightful place in society."

But the 38-year-old officer says it's a time for reconciliation.

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STAR PERFORMER

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HIGH PRINCIPLES

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LOOKING HEAD

Shauneen Pete has guided First Nations University through some times. Now she's excited about the future. - Page 23



SMOOTH THROWER

He claims to be a football novice but Brandon Assoon demonstrated some raw talent at a recent football clinic. - Page 26

Welcome to our
Women's Issue
Coming In April:
Arts & Entertainment Issue
CPMA #40027204

Bison the favourite on Wanuskewin eatery's menu

By John Lagimodiere
Of Eagle Feather News

It is a typical morning for the kitchen staff at Wanuskewin Heritage Park. Two of the meeting rooms overlooking the valley are full of people meeting. One a government group, the other a First Nation organization having their quarterly meeting, keep the staff busy with needs for coffee and muffins. But soon the harder work of feeding them a proper traditional lunch will begin.

Kevin Merasty is the executive chef at Wanuskewin. The 11-year employee is a 17-year veteran of the food industry and is a red seal chef. He knows the Park inside and out and he knows his menu and he knows what people like.

"People come here for bison," said Merasty matter of factly. "Bison stew is our most popular item, likely followed by the shaved bison, or the bison sliders, or the bison smokies or the bison burgers. That and bannock"

Turns out the place has bison and bannock.

The menu has diversified in the past while. You can get bison in many different ways, and you can get fries, salad, soup, rabbit, bannock pizza. You name it, it's likely on the menu.

Chantelle Bonsan works in banquets and food services and she agrees with Merasty about what is the most popular fare.

"Bison stew no doubt," said Bonsan. "Anything with bison in it, really."

Great food always helps a day of meetings pass by, but people who go to Wanuskewin also get rooms with great views. Views that sometimes lead to distractions.

"We see deer all the time out here," adds Merasty. "About six years ago when the restaurant was on the other side, we saw

two coyotes chasing down some deer. We watched them get chased across the whole ridge. It was very interesting to see.

"We also have tons of weasels poking their heads out of the snow while they hunt mice."

Bonsan agrees that the location makes Wanuskewin a special place to work and to have meetings.

"It is awesome. When I set up rooms, you just look over the valley and see lots of deer. It has a real good feel to it. The nature feel. When I drive up here in the morning it is so beautiful. This allows you to get out of the hustle

and bustle of the city," she said.

Now Merasty and Bonsan have to hustle back to work to prep for lunch.

"We throw a twist on traditional food out here. We get lots of questions. What is traditional food? We have lots of traditional ingredients, but we aren't going to serve pemmican!" he joked. "But we do have rabbit! And wild rice salad."

"Believe me," added Chantelle Bonsan. "We always get compliments to the chef!"



Kevin Merasty is the executive chef and Chantelle Bonsan works in banquets and food services.

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Maria Campbell to perform in Vagina Monologues

By Michael Bell
For Eagle Feather News

Fans of the award winning play, The Vagina Monologues, are in for a treat. Not only is the play being presented in Regina, but Maria Campbell is coming to perform one of the now famous monologues.

Chelsa Reil, the event's organizer, says she's been trying for three years to get Campbell to perform, and this year it finally worked out. The famous Métis author will join other notables on stage such as CBC broadcaster Michelle Hugli Brass, professor Shauneen Pete and musician Teagan Littlechief.

The show's profits will be donated to Hope House, a women's shelter in Regina run by Aboriginal Family Services. Reil hopes the show will raise money for the shelter, but also awareness about violence against women.

"Violence toward women can happen to anyone that you know," Reil says.

Reil speaks from personal experience. She knows family members and friends who have struggled though violent relationships in the past.

"I wanted to raise awareness that there is violence in the community, let people know that it is a reality for us here in Regina," she said.

Part of what motivates



Chelsa Reil is thrilled to have renowned Métis author Maria Campbell as one of her performers.

Reil to organize the event is that the Monologues help women talk to other women about violent relationships they may be in.

"(I want) to let women know that instead of keeping it inside, you can talk about it, and that you can get away from (violent relationships)," she said.

The Vagina Monologues is part of V-Day, a global activist movement to end violence against women and girls. The movement has raised over \$75 million and educated millions of people about the issue, according to a press release.

If you go to see The Vagina Monologues, you are in for a roller-coaster of an emotional ride. Reil says that one monologue will be happy or funny, the next will be vulgar or sad.

But each one of them is very real.

"One will make you cry, and the next one will make you laugh your ass off," Reil says.

The Vagina Monologues will be performed at the Royal Saskatchewan Museum Theatre in Regina on Friday April 29 at 7 p.m. For more information, contact Chelsa Reil at (306) 351-0676 or email chelsareil@glacsy.com.

Tickets are \$15 in advance and \$20 at the door plus a donation of a toy or a children's book.

A large advertisement for PotashCorp. On the left, a mine operator wearing a hard hat and safety gear is working in a dimly lit underground mine. On the right, there is a large pile of white potash crystals. The text "Good people" is prominently displayed in the center. Below it, a paragraph states: "At PotashCorp, we have always been committed to the wellbeing of the communities in which we operate. We recognize that First Nations and Métis communities will be essential partners in our success. This is why we have pledged to strengthen ties with the Aboriginal community, to increase opportunities for First Nations and Métis people and businesses, and to continue our commitment to environmental stewardship. Learn more at www.potashcorp.com." The PotashCorp logo and tagline "Helping Nature Provide" are at the bottom right.

Good people

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PotashCorp
Helping Nature Provide

Dan Peake, mine operator, Rocanville

Editorial

Protecting our women

The coverage of International Women's Day events in Saskatchewan reveals some stark and often disturbing contrasts.

We hear about celebratory lunches, pamper parties and light airy events around the province. Then there are reports of an Aboriginal event and often it is a solemn memorial to murdered and missing women. Despite repeated outcry and outrage, Aboriginal women in Saskatchewan are still being abused at the same rate as they were ten years ago,

Many folks blame racism for the outrageous number of abused and missing and murdered Aboriginal women. Racism may have played a role in the past with police practices and sloppy or lackadaisical investigations, but the majority of abused women in our community are hurt by First Nation and Métis men.

Some recent examples support this observation. A reserve in northwestern Saskatchewan was home to a man who kidnapped his former girlfriend and held her in his parent's basement for days where he beat and abused her. When the police came to investigate, this man's parents, allegedly respected Elders, told the police there was no one there. The police returned with a search warrant and found the woman. She had to be removed in an ambulance as she could not walk. The Chief of the reserve defended the Elders.

Just last month, Ian Andrew Gamble, 24, received nine years in jail for two sexual assault convictions. Gamble was convicted for attacks that took place 20 days apart in May 2008. At his trial, his family took the stand and gave contradictory evidence to defend him, evidence the judge ultimately ignored. Gamble, who was smiling during the testimony from one of his victims, later told the court his mom taught him to respect women. The judge didn't buy it.

After he was convicted, Gamble's family caused a ruckus in the courtroom, refused to recognize the jurisdiction of the court and intimidated court staff. Not a shred of sympathy for the women who were assaulted.

And don't even get us going on how our gangs treat women. We pray every day for women caught up in that horrible situation. It seems like every week we get press releases from the Saskatoon Police Service about another young girl who is missing from the family home for weeks and has been known to live in a "high risk" lifestyle. Their average age is 14. Are they running to the streets and gangs for fun? Or are they running from something at home. Either option sucks.

Addressing the problem is the big challenge as it is often taboo to bring it up, even as your co-worker, or auntie for that matter, sports another black eye courtesy of their spouse. These are scary and sensitive situations and many people just do the MYOB thing and hope that someone else intervenes. It is difficult to confront people, especially family members, about abuse, because you also fear you may become a victim as well.

The police are trying to help. They arrest people they suspect of being abusers, but oftentimes the victim doesn't want to testify because of the repercussions. They have Aboriginal liaison officers and they have also changed the way they investigate and communicate about missing women cases. But they can only do so much.

It has to be the community that makes a difference by standing up and saying no more. There are groups out there that offer support and an escape from bad situations. More people are talking about the issue. Heck, many powerful women will be on stage in Regina talking about violence against women and "down there" at the Vagina Monologues in April.

Things are happening but not fast enough. If we continue to turn a deaf ear and remain mum to abuse, we are just as guilty as the abusers. These are our moms, sisters, wives, daughters and grandmothers. Those relations should inspire hugs, not violence.

Coming next month

April is our arts and education edition. That month we will feature new and established musicians, painters, wordsmiths and a special Year of the Métis music and variety radio show that was recently taped at CBC studios in Regina for broadcast on National Aboriginal Day.

We may even have a guest columnist....plus a profile of the biggest teenage heartthrob in Indian country ... you know who we are talking about!

See you next month.



RACE RELATIONS

Mayor Don Atchison readies to raise the flag during the Opening Ceremony for Cultural Diversity and Race Relations Month. He was joined by honoured guest, David A. Walden, Secretary-General of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, Saskatchewan Human Rights Commissioner Judge Arnot, and Cultural Diversity and Race Relations Committee Chair Michael San Miguel. March 21st is the International Day for the Elimination of Racism. Look around your community for events on that day.

(Photo by John Lagimodiere)

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THIS ISSUE...LAST ISSUE...PAST ISSUES.

Finding a home for truth to reside

I attended the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) conference in Vancouver called "Sharing Truth: Creating a National Research Centre on Residential Schools."

Over 500 people attended including a strong Saskatchewan presence—U of S, Saskatchewan Archives Board, SICC, FNUiv, Eugene Arcand on the TRC Survivors Committee, Don Worme the TRC lawyer, and many others.

One of the mandates of the TRC is to create a National Research Centre to house its growing collection of documents, photographs, testimonies, church and government records, art and other media on the residential schools and their impacts. At the conference, people from around the world shared their experiences with truth and reconciliation commissions and told us what they did with all the materials that were collected.

The speakers shared stories about the atrocities committed against their people before their truth commissions were created. We learned that since the 1960s there have been over 40 truth commissions established in countries that experienced genocide and other horrible atrocities. Rwanda, Guatemala, El Salvador, East Timor, South Africa, Australia, Bangladesh, the former Yugoslav and many more. All over the world where

Indigenous peoples or ethnic minorities live in Third World conditions or are targeted for 'ethnic cleansing' they have experienced genocide, death squads, stolen children, and other horrible crimes against human life.

The numbers are staggering. Millions of people have been victimized by racism and greed all over the world. The survivors

carry deep wounds and the commissions were established to provide a safe place for them to share their experiences (truth telling) and to encourage reconciliation between the survivors and the perpetrators.

Everyone stressed how important it is to keep the memories of these atrocities alive to memorialize those who did not survive, to honour those who did, to educate the public, to encourage the perpetrators to come forward, and to ensure that atrocities like these never happen again. The long term goal is to reach reconciliation though most made it clear that reconciliation will not happen until some serious restorative justice takes place first.

Many ideas on how to create a national research centre on residential schools were offered by specialists from other research and archives centres.

We heard speakers from the various Holocaust museums, the Kigali Genocide Memorial (Rwanda), the Liberation War Museum of Bangladesh, the Chile Museum

of Memory as well as representatives from North American Indigenous museum collections like the National Museum of the American Indian, The Qikiqtam Truth

Commission, the Canadian Museum of Civilization, Haida Gwaii Museum, and the Seneca Nation of Indians Archives.

Universities from across Western Canada were there in powerful numbers making it clear that they were going to submit bids for the National Research Centre to house the TRC collection. There were also Indigenous representatives who argued that the national centre be controlled and owned by First Nations people. What was striking is that most of the people there, including George Erasmus, Phil Fontaine and other speakers, urged that the Centre be a collaborative venture in the spirit of reconciliation.

Non-Indigenous people also need access to the stories to understand what happened. Many people stressed that one large central research centre would only benefit those who

had the resources to travel. There was much talk of developing one large centre and a series of regional centres that reflected local experiences and were accessible to those most directly impacted by the residential schools in those regions.

The TRC has a lot of work yet to complete before its mandate is up in a few years. In addition to its national events, research projects, truth telling sessions, commemoration projects, the TRC has to come up with a plan to house the collection. The conference provided many insights, experiences and ideas from around the world so the TRC has lots to work with.

As a daughter, a granddaughter and a cousin of IRS survivors, I envision a place nestled somewhere safe and peaceful in our territories where I can take my old aunties, children and grandchildren to help keep the memories of our family alive. As a researcher, I envision a place where the testimonies are preserved and protected by rigorous rules of access and use, yet available in some way to all Canadians. I envision a place where we can all hear the stories, see and experience the living conditions, read the words, and celebrate our survival. A safe place where politics cannot interfere, and where all Canadians can take ownership of this history as we struggle towards reconciliation.



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Of Métis people and toasters

Upon first reading news reports that the federal minority Conservative government plans to ask the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) to help it figure out who are the Métis people of Canada, one might have been forgiven for thinking April 1 had come early this year.

The identification of 'the Métis people' whose rights are affirmed and recognized in the Constitution of Canada is an issue for constitutional statecraft. It requires political action on the part of Métis people and their legitimate representatives, and on the part of governments that have constitutional obligations to respect the law of the Constitution.

What role can the Canadian Standards Association, which ordinary citizens like your humble writer usually associate with a stamp on toasters and other kitchen equipment, play in dealing with this complex issue?

All this gives an interesting new meaning for Métis people to the slogan on the CSA website: "You may not be aware of it but standards touch us all..."

Whatever results the federal politicians and bureaucrats may be expecting from their apparently secretive approach to the question of Métis identification, it is pretty well a sure bet that they are on the wrong track. If you think that the CSA may have a role in identifying "Quebécois Vieille Souche" or the Cree people, then you might support its role in identifying the Métis people.

There are universal principles that dictate

certain minimum requirements in such cases. They include the right of self-determination held by all peoples, and other human rights, as well as some fundamental principles of Canada's own constitution. Because the issue of identifying a distinct people is essentially a matter for the people, and therefore a political and social issue, good old-fashioned common sense must guide any strategy.

A good first step would be a public campaign to explain the difference between citizenship rights and the special constitutional rights of the Aboriginal peoples and to explain why the concepts of 'equality' and 'race' are not at issue. Any worthwhile project to formalize recognition of the group rights of the Métis people must consider public opinion.

It is essential that all Aboriginal peoples be identified as part of the same national process; Indians, Métis and Inuit. The archaic Indian Act and the antiquated policies behind it must fall, and First Nations and others must be allowed to decide who belongs to their communities and nations.

Any process that tries to identify Métis people alone is doomed to fail. Individual persons must have real choices about their identity and not be seduced by economic or other incentives provided by governments, as now happens with



Comment
Paul Chartrand

Indian status. To choose between living well or living in poverty is not a real choice. Individuals must have a choice in deciding upon their constitutional status.

Preferring one identity over another

must be based upon universally appealing factors such as your family, your neighbours, the people who understand you because of your common language and seeing the world through the same eyes.

Aboriginal rights, like Treaty rights, are collective rights. The group has the rights and only those who belong to the group can exercise the rights. If the purpose is to identify among Canadians those who have the right to enjoy collective aboriginal and Treaty rights then the first focus must be upon the group or collective itself.

The rights-bearing community or nation must be identified. Once that is done then it is the prerogative of the group to decide who belongs. The individual must agree to identify as a part of the group, just like any individual is free to accept or reject one's family or national identity. The group or community or nation must make a rational decision. The process is not a chance to get rid of troublesome cousins or other miscreants.

It can be said, "Yes, unfortunately, he is one

of us." This is what 'community acceptance' must mean. The process must start with an agreed identification of 'core' aboriginal communities.

For Indian people those are the 'bands'; for Métis people there are communities that are indisputably descendant from the well-known historic Métis people. Canada has relevant experience already in agreements that identified Inuit communities.

One of the difficulties now is that governments and Métis service organizations focus on identifying individuals who may be eligible to receive particular public services or acquire membership in the organizations. This focus on the individual is fine for those purposes but for the purpose of identifying a 'people' and those who belong to 'the Métis Nation', at least for constitutional purposes, it is the antecedents or background of the community or nation that matters, not the personal antecedents of individuals.

The common error of failing to observe this distinction has led to much misunderstanding, including in the Supreme Court of Canada's Powley decision in 2003.

I have dealt with pretty well all these issues in my various publications over the years. Since all this is already in the public domain, the federal government knows what to do as a matter of practical sense and constitutional obligation, and there is no need to spend taxpayers' money on the CSA. Now if we could get a better toaster for bannock?

Call for Nominations



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Rank Comix

Adam Martin



Sask Party's Jennifer Campeau makes political history even before provincial election is held

By Andréa Ledding
For Eagle Feather News

Jennifer Campeau has become the first female Aboriginal candidate for the Saskatchewan Party, winning a contested nomination for Saskatoon Fairview.

An instructor and PhD student in Native Studies at the University of Saskatchewan with an MBA from the Edwards School of Business, Campeau is proudly Métis and no stranger to politics. Clarence Campeau is an uncle, his brothers were in politics, and her own brother Alvin is in politics and supportive of her bid for a provincial seat.



JENNIFER CAMPEAU

"It was an exciting nomination race and I'm looking forward to now speaking with constituents to better understand their needs and priorities," said Campeau following her nomination victory.

"The province is growing, our economy is strong and I believe the people of Saskatoon Fairview are looking to get on board."

Campeau's research focuses on entrepreneurship, economic development, nation building and governance, and she also works with the Saskatoon Tribal Council as a Junior Achievement Coordinator. With a busy schedule, she's had to

fit campaigning in between projects and school.

"I'm in a PhD program doing course work, I wanted to work in Indigenous development within Aboriginal communities," she explained. With classes ending in another four weeks, time will be freed up for politics.

"I guess I was always interested in leadership. Originally I wanted to go into Aboriginal politics, but going into provincial politics just makes sense."

She is interested in issues like education and affordable housing, is part of the Indigenous Grad Students Council, and her work with Junior Achievement youth is a passion as well.

"Bringing entrepreneurship into the Aboriginal community with the school age students is important," she said.

"Especially with Saskatchewan growing as fast as it is, economically, it's important that our youth be included as well."

While the competition for candidacy was very exciting, the process led to personal growth, and a hint of what will be in store over the next eight or so months leading up to the November election.

"Just realizing the support that's behind me, just coming to that realization, was very profound. It gave me a little more confidence," she said.

Not only did her fellow students get behind her, but she was joined at her nomination meeting by Chief Felix Thomas from the Saskatoon Tribal Council, former Tribal Council Chief Joe Quewezance, and Oliver Cameron.

"I walked in with the three of them. It gave me the confidence that I could do anything if I had backup."

Campeau feels that the Saskatchewan Party's guiding

principles around economic development and entrepreneurship tie into her research area and her goals to help Aboriginal people develop a strong economic base.

"I'm looking forward to actually being a part of the whole political process and creating awareness in terms of voter registration for Aboriginal people; getting them to come out and participate in the provincial elections," she said, adding most of the work will be on the ground, door-knocking and speaking to the community.

"Saskatoon Fairview is pretty diverse (with) a significant Aboriginal population, but also significant immigrant population as well."

The new immigrants are often business people who want to create a better life for their families.

"I just think that we need to create a relationship and build that bridge with our other Indigenous brothers and sisters who are coming over."

Campeau credits many, including her mother, for stressing the importance of education and independence.

"I had some really good role models. I was engrained with a good work ethic just from being around my family," she says.

Her mother was the first in her family to get a university education as a social worker.

"She just always stressed the importance of education and how being better educated will open new doors in terms of being financially comfortable and independent."

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Trena Raven and Scarlett Desjarlais are both pursuing careers within the Saskatoon Health region. (Photo by John Lagimodiere)

Saskatoon Health Region striving to build representative workforce

By Darla Read
For Eagle Feather News

Scarlett Desjarlais first learned of the Saskatoon Health Region's Step Into Health Careers program when she saw a flyer while she was looking for a job at CanSask Career and Employment Services.

The 24-year-old was accepted into the program and did 13 weeks of classroom work that included improving her employability skills. Desjarlais is now qualified to work as a client attendant and food services worker.

"It was probably one of the best decisions that I made because it opened a lot of doors for me to get into the health region," says Desjarlais.

"If I didn't take the program, I'd probably be working some entry-level position and not making very much money, and now I'm making above average wage while going to school."

Since completing the course, Desjarlais has been a busy woman. She first worked as a food services worker at St. Paul's Hospital in Saskatoon, then, as well, at Luther Care. This past fall she was accepted into the University Of Saskatchewan College Of Commerce, and during the summer she got a job within the Saskatoon Health Region in People Strategies.

She says taking the STEP program was a good opportunity.

"The Health Region is really hard to get into," she explains. "And taking the program would take me a step further."

Trena Raven, a representative workforce consultant with the Region, says the goal of the program is to train and recruit Aboriginal youth into the Health Region in entry-level positions like client attendants, sterile processing workers, operating room attendants, unit assistants and

food services workers.

"We're trying to build our representative workforce, and after each program we hire roughly 14 to 18 people from these programs."

There have been five programs since 2007. It's been very successful: 68 people have been trained and 63 hired. Of those who have been hired, 70 per cent have retained their jobs.

There will be three more intakes, with one beginning soon in May. The training will be for client attendants and environmental services workers, but there will also be a life skills and cultural component to look at addressing barriers First Nations and Métis youth face when looking for jobs.

Gabe Lafond, manager of the program, says it's important to be representative of the community the health region is serving.

"A lot of our patients are First Nations and Métis, and it's important that we have that visibility out there for our patients so they feel welcome and that they're a part of the Health Region."

Bonnie Blakley, vice-president of people strategies, says this not only helps build a representative workforce, but a healthier community overall.

"When we talk about the health of a community, we often forget that employment is a big factor in that. Linking our youth from our community to jobs, where they have an income, is positive for their health, their families and then they become role models in their community."

Desjarlais is already a role model as she holds down her three jobs while studying Commerce. Her goal is to major in Human Resource and one day become one of the managers within the Health Region's human resources sector.

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Strong Saskatchewan women led the way

Women are the backbone of our communities and the foundation of our families.

Women have always been the life givers and caretakers. In our family it was our Kohkum who held our family together and when she died it passed on to my aunties and soon it will be my generation who takes over.

March 8 was International Women's Day – a day for the world to celebrate the political and social achievements of women. There is a saying, "We've come a long way baby!"

When you look at the things that women have had to do throughout history this statement rings so true. In the early 1900s women marched through the streets of their cities demanding the right to vote in elections and 11 years later they were successful.

First Nations women were not granted the right to vote until 1960. We've still got a long way to go in comparison.

The Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) was in its infancy in the 1960s and women like Carole Sanderson were fighting for Indian control of Indian education. At the same time, in the United States, black people

were standing up for their rights and we saw the civil rights movement spread across the states.

In the 1970s women were burning their bras and shouting: "I am woman, hear me roar."

The feminist movement was in full swing as women demanded equal pay for equal work. Aboriginal women were struggling from the effects of the Residential Schools.

In the late 1970s and 1980s we saw



Sandee Sez
Sandra Ahenakew

Indian Teacher Education Program (ITEP) and Indian Social Work Program. Many Aboriginal teachers came out of this program and to this day ITEP continues their good work.

Ruth Ahenakew was one of the first students to graduate from the ITEP

one of the first women to graduate with her Bachelor of Social Work.

The University of Saskatchewan was attempting to attract First Nations students with their

Aboriginal women are graduating from law school and engineering. Deborah Chatsis from the Ahtahkakoop First Nation was one of those women. Today she is the first Aboriginal woman to be appointed as the Canadian Ambassador to Vietnam. Way to go Your Excellency!

In 1999, Mary Ellen Turpel Lafond from the Norway House First Nation in Manitoba was the first Aboriginal woman to be appointed a judge to the Provincial Court of Saskatchewan.

So here we are in 2011 and Aboriginal women continue to outnumber men in universities and are making their marks in the trades as well.

"A Nation is not beaten until the hearts of their women are beaten into the ground."

Aboriginal women have come a long way. Ginger Rogers could do everything Fred Astaire did but she did it backwards wearing high heels.

To all my she-roes thank you. If there is a special woman in your life who made a difference – tell her.

I enjoy reading your letters and emails. You can write to me C/O Eagle Feather News P.O. Box 940 Station Main Saskatoon S7M 3M4 or email Sandra.ahenakew@gmail.com.

"A Nation is not beaten until the hearts of their women are beaten into the ground."

more Aboriginal single mothers than ever before and a new generation of children raised by women alone.

Saskatchewan Indian Federated College was established in the 1970s and the majority of the students attending were women. Noreen Ahenakew was

program. She taught in First Nations schools across Saskatchewan and was a role model and she-roe (female version of hero) to many students over the years. Her hard work and dedication will be remembered by all who worked with her.

Fast forward to the 1980s and

Dealing with menopause

By Flo Lavallee
For Eagle Feather News

Statistics say that 60 million women will have menopause symptoms in America by the end of 2010. We are at that place in time now. The temperature of Mother Earth may rise from so many hot flashes!

Seriously, menopause is intended by Nature to reduce hormones by the ovaries with few side effects. Our stressful habits mean that many women need to change the way they live to support our hormones.

Evening of Primrose Oil, Calcium and Magnesium with Vitamin D, Licorice Root and Siberian Ginseng will assist to stimulate the hormone producing glands to regulate body energy after menopause.

Peri-menopause is when a women's period may continue for two or three months, then stop for a few months and then come back again. Periods may be late, early, short, long, heavy or light and the length of time varies.

Menopause is normal and ordinary. It may be natural or premature by having an operation to remove a woman's uterus and ovaries. Some women have found that certain things may trigger hot flashes: exercise, spicy foods, alcohol, coffee, excitement and stress.

Vaginal dryness and itching and increased yeast infections. Progesterone

Cream is very helpful. Some women call it "Happy Cream."

Eating yogurt is considered good for those women who have yeast infections. Probiotics are helpful also.

Medical and non-medical treatments for menopause should be explored before women make an informed decision. Having your thyroid checked is also important as your thyroid is your third ovary

Women are more cautious about having sex in that period of their life as their chances of becoming pregnant are greater.

Healthy Food Plan for those with menopause:

Eat fewer calories- less sweets, starches, fatty fried foods, pop. Cut down on cholesterol such as egg yolks, organ meats. Eat more iron rich foods like beans, beets, purple cabbage, green vegetables, whole grain cereal, oatmeal, blueberries, saskatoons and frozen yogurt. Eat less fats: butter, hard cheese, lard, ice cream, lunch meats, and pork. Eat farm chickens, wild meat, wild rice, brown rice, cabbage. Drink six to eight glasses of water daily.

Exercise helps control weight, relieves stress, increases circulation, improves body shape, increases bones, and helps joint stiffness.

Suggested reading: What your Doctor won't tell you about Menopause, by Dr. John Lee.

good food bites

Gardening Season is Around the Corner

There's nothing better than making a salad from ingredients you have grown yourself, eating peas right out of the pod, and carrots fresh out of the ground! Children are more likely to try vegetables they have grown themselves. Seeds are inexpensive if you share with a friend.

Where can you find somewhere to put in a garden?

- A pot or two on your steps or balcony, with at least 6 hours of sun per day
- your own front or backyard
- unused space in a family or friend's yard
- a community garden in your neighbourhood.

It's possible to grow a lot in a small space, especially if you plant seeds and bedding plants "especially suited for containers." Containers must be big enough to hold the plant (15 – 30 cm deep), allow water to drain and be sturdy enough to last the entire season.

Purchase specialty potting soil for containers. It has ingredients that help retain water and contains slow-release fertilizer. Containers dry out quickly, and will need to be watered every day.

In a yard you can dig up a small space to plant your vegetable garden. Remove any grass, weeds, and stones and turn the soil to a depth of 30 cm. You may need to add new soil and a bag of compost to improve the existing soil. Plant seeds and add your bedding plants according to the package or label directions. Start planning now, but don't plant until mid or end of May when the danger of frost is over!

If you want to find a community garden near you, contact CHEP.

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MACSI serving community once again

By John Lagimodiere
Of Eagle Feather News

The newly renovated Métis Addictions Council of Saskatchewan Treatment Centre in Saskatoon is ready to serve as a place of hope for people struggling with addictions.

Wendel identified \$132,000 apparently paid to contractors for construction work that was never done, leasing of vehicles and mileage claims that reached nearly \$100,000 in 2004 alone, credit card advances that reached \$14,884 in 2004 and the purchase of personal items, including a garden tractor, picture windows, veterinary services and a boat rental that totalled \$7,533.



MACSI Executive Director Shauna Lafontaine and Saskatoon Regional Director Cindy Harder are glad to have the Saskatoon facility back up and running.
(Photo by John Lagimodiere)

The Saskatoon centre was temporarily closed for much needed renovations in 2010. From installing a new furnace to painting and renovating the existing men's and ladies areas, a total facelift was needed for the centre to continue to provide services to clients.

"Without this centre, many of our people suffering from addiction could not get the help they need to heal," says MACSI Chair, and President of the Métis Nation - Saskatchewan Robert Doucette.

"Centres such as this one in Saskatoon are crucial to those suffering from an illness that has plagued our communities for far too long. This project was supposed to happen long ago, but greed got in the way. Now we can move forward."

In October 2004, the provincial auditor outlined more than \$500,000 in inappropriate spending at MACSI. Auditor Fred

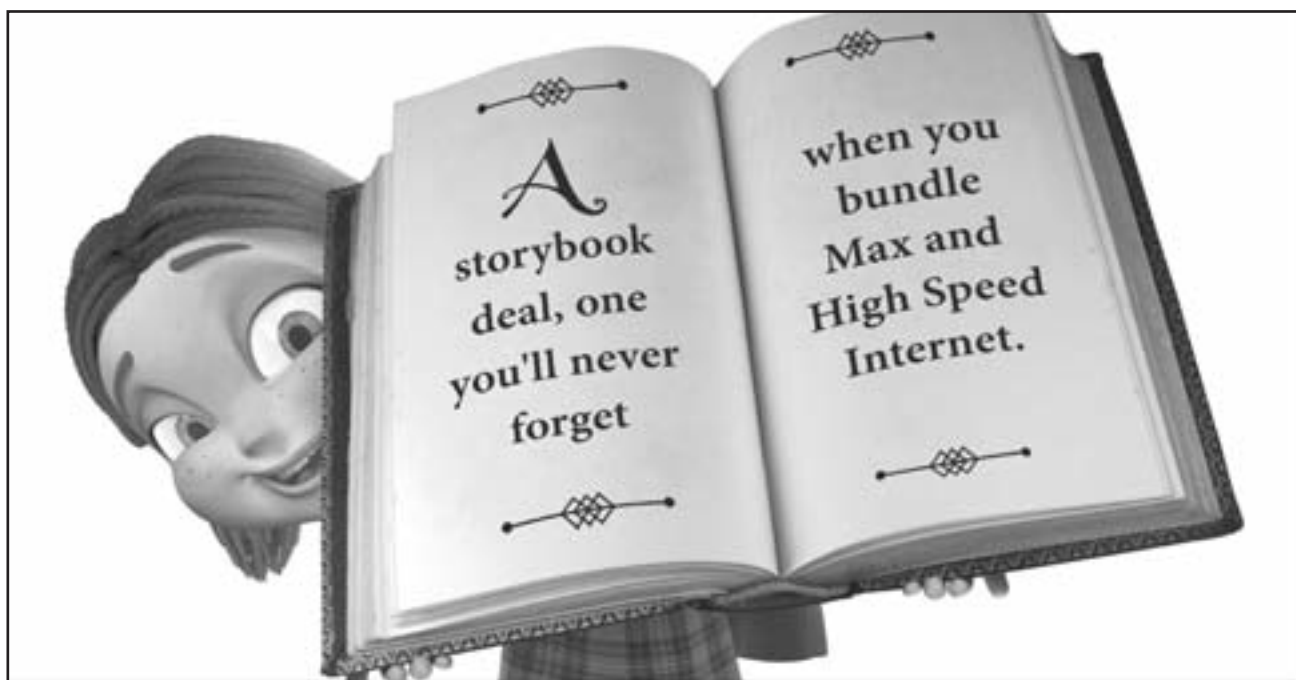


MN-S President Robert Doucette is chair of MACSI.

a community-based organization established in 1969 to provide alcohol and drug recovery, reintegration and healing programs to Métis and off-reserve Indian peoples of Saskatchewan. While services target Métis and Indian peoples, the Council's services are open to all citizens of Saskatchewan regardless of status.

The Saskatoon Centre provides in-patient treatment, education, counseling, group process, skill development, 24-hour supervision, and out-patient services. The in-patient centre is a co-ed residential facility that provides service to clients in a safe, supportive, chemical free-free environment. Treatment is a 28 day structured program designed to assist clients in the healing journey where they look at their spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical well-being.

Two men are facing charges in regards to the alleged fraud. Métis Addictions Council has three treatment centres in the province, in Prince Albert, Saskatoon and Regina. The Council is



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FSIN health conference focussed on family, children

By Jennifer Dubois
For Eagle Feather News

‘Children and Families First’ was the theme for the FSIN Health and Wellness conference held at the Queensbury Convention Centre in Regina. More than 1,100 people were registered.

Kyle Prettyshield, FSIN executive director, said the focus was on First Nation Families and the wellness of tomorrow’s leaders.

“Our Elders are always telling us we have to keep that link because they are our future leaders, and this gathering is the bridging of knowledge translation between the Elders and the youth and some of the families that are having difficult times right now,” he said.

The FSIN hopes the conference will contribute to positive changes.

“We said let’s look at the health but also focus on our families and the wellness of our children and look at it in more of a positive light,” said Prettyshield.

Everyone from leadership, Elders, healers, families, and child welfare agencies were invited to the three-day conference.

Presenters from all over spoke on a wide variety of topics pertaining to healthy families, showcasing Aboriginal talent with presenters such as, Don Burnstick and Voices of the North.

Presenter Colby Tootosis spoke about confronting and overcoming the crisis’ that affect First Nations people, in particular, Residential Schools. He said taking part in this year’s event was about improving First Nation communities.

“I think it’s important for more of these conferences



Cora Ostlund, Vera Delorme and Teresa Stevenson enjoyed the family aspect of the conference.

(Photo by Mike Dubois)

to come. I would like to see more people jump on this opportunity, because FSIN’s offering up these resources for people for free,” he said.

Vera Delorme, a councillor for Cowessess First Nation, said it was a unique conference.

“It was really good because they included the whole family. Kids were included and most times they’re not,” she said.

There was a wide variety of activities for children, ranging from ice skating, games, face painting and seminars educating youth about their rights and respon-

sibilities.

Seven First Nation healers from around Treaty Territory were also invited. Delorme said it was something she did not expect to see at a conference.

“The healers were a first, with teepees and everything, people sitting and waiting, and it was paid for, so that helped a lot of people if they wanted to see a healer,” she said.

Delorme left the conference in a positive light.

“The way they did it with the kids, grandparents, and parents, the whole family, was great to see,” she said.



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Lonechild vows to stay

By Darla Read
For Eagle Feather News

The saga surrounding Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations Chief Guy Lonechild's leadership continues.

Most of the three-day Winter Legislative Assembly was dominated by the topic, as some chiefs presented a petition calling for his resignation, which Lonechild refused to do. A resolution was also passed that could make it easier to remove him through a non-confidence motion. Twenty-five band council resolutions are needed to get that moving.

All of this followed the revelation in late January that Lonechild had been charged with impaired driving and evading police in an incident about six weeks before he was elected Chief. Some former and current chiefs began calling for his resignation. Lonechild pleaded guilty to the impaired driving charge and will be sentenced later this month in Saskatoon.

Since Assembly, five of the six living former FSIN chiefs sent a letter to various media outlets, once again calling for Lonechild's resignation, suggesting publicly that Lonechild do the "honourable thing" and step down in the "best interests of our people and the collective unity of the province."

The letter, signed by Alphonse Bird, Roland Crowe, Blaine Favel, Lawrence Joseph and Sol Sanderson, went on to say it was not a commentary on Lonechild's current legal and personal troubles, as "we are all human and have all made mistakes in the past."

It has been suggested that Lonechild's alcohol and legal problems are being used

people's toes to reform the First Nations University of Canada.

However, Bird says that's not the case.

"Him deflating all the issues to FNUC and other issues is not a factor in this one. Not at all."

Bird says Lonechild does have pockets of support, "but the majority are asking and if he's not there, somebody else will take his place tomorrow."

Little Black Bear Chief Perry Bellegarde is the only former FSIN Chief who didn't sign the letter, but he says he supports the intent, just not how it was handled. He says it should have been sent to Lonechild directly, instead of to the media, so he would have a chance to respond.

"Because alcohol and drugs has had a hold on our people for so, so long that whoever holds that office of the Chief must be a role model. And this is about maintaining the honour and integrity of the Office of the Chief. It's not a personal attack on Chief Lonechild.

"We're part of that process, as well internally within the executive, to do things according to our policies and ask him to look at his resignation, in a respectful way. And, once that

The Warrior Society demands that Guy Lonechild step down immediately as chief of the FSIN.

The Warriors of the Ocean Man First Nation, Pheasant Rump Nakota First Nation, and White Bear First Nation

The Warriors' message was brief and to the point.

as an excuse to get rid of him because it's felt in some quarters that he stepped on



Beleaguered Chief Guy Lonechild continues to fight to stay at the helm of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations despite his legal problems.

process is done, I'm sure all of the leadership will support him on his healing journey."

Bellegarde's reserve is one that has passed a band council resolution in order to move forward with the non-confidence motion.

Lonechild issued a press release a day after the chief's letter hit the news.

"The door to the office of the Chief is always open," Lonechild said, promising that he will continue working with chiefs to revitalize the FSIN and rebuild FNUC.

He went on to say that the voice of the FSIN had never been stronger when dealing with government and industry.

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Greyeyes determined to stick to her principles

By Andréa Ledding
For Eagle Feather News

Jarita Greyeyes was elected as youth representative to the FSIN, including a position on the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Youth Council, when she moved home to Muskeg Lake after completing her Masters in Indigenous Governance at the University of Victoria.



JARITA GREYEVES

But her time with the AFN Council was short-lived. She introduced a resolution on transparency and accountability, involving an annual disclosure of all travel and per diem expenses, meetings attended, and a narrative report available on the website and regional offices.

"The motion had seven in favor and nine abstentions," Greyeyes explained, and while technically the motion passed, "What I really felt in the room was that if people were abstaining there wasn't the support that I really needed to stay on the council."

"I cannot, in good conscience, be associated with an organization that refuses to disclose individual council members' travel and per diem expenses."

"By not fully supporting the motion that I moved today the council has shown itself to be opposed to the principles of transparency and accountability that I hold dear therefore I immediately resign from my position of Saskatchewan Youth Representative," Greyeyes said in a statement following her resignation.

She says her resigning doesn't signify a lack of commitment to the youth or her people here, rather her respect for those who elected her for her experience, education, and values. She continues to work provincially, and her male counterpoint to the AFN Youth Council remains there.

"It just seems very straightforward. I'm

really concerned that they couldn't have that unanimous support for this motion. Abstaining to me really signified that people didn't support those values that I felt were key to our moving forward," she said.

"You have to take a position – and abstaining wasn't taking a stand."

She has had a number of people including chiefs and councilors who were happy she led by example on this issue.

"It was the right choice for me, and the support confirms I'd made the right decision. And, of course, I'll continue to work and continue to improve youths lives in Saskatchewan, just not necessarily with the formalized youth council."

Meanwhile, Greyeyes is busy on Muskeg Lake where she's helping revise a constitutional development process, out of political turmoil that created a really strong community desire for self-governance and community vision.

"Muskeg is doing some really progressive and exciting things when it comes to governance work," she explained. "We're going to be holding a Cree law gathering with Elders sharing Cree law, and the primary Cree principles for governing self and governing community ... to return to original principles and a day-to-day governance, to truly come together as community to develop written statements about who we are and how we want to govern. The

Cree law gathering will help with fundamental Cree ideas because we are part of a larger Cree nation."

She describes it as tremendously exciting work putting her theory into practice, and is honoured to be involved in a people-and-participation driven process.

"What we're trying to do here is make sure this is a document that will work for us for many many generations. That doesn't happen overnight," she said. "When you want people's ideas and feelings reflected in the documents it happens one step at a time, with community consultation and feedback."

She's been working on it for more than a year but the process has been ongoing for 15 years.

"It'll come when everyone's ready for it and participating and contributing to the project," Greyeyes says.

"Other communities have done constitutions but not like this. We're definitely trailblazers in Saskatchewan."

She hopes other communities will be inspired and they have done some partnering with Onion Lake already. She also admires the amazing emerging women leaders here. "I'm just so excited to be home, and certainly excited to work with other young Indigenous women who share these goals, young educated women working to make Saskatchewan a better place."

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Tourangeau play deals with gang issue

My Kookhum Prayed For Me to be performed at Treaty Four conference

By Leisha Grebinski
For Eagle Feather News

The upcoming Treaty Four Education Conference is showcasing a play inspired, developed, and performed by youth.

The play, called "My Kookhum Prayed For Me" is based on a book written by Vera Tourangeau who decided to turn the book into a play specifically for the conference which takes place April 19-21 in Regina.

She says the story captures the wise advice of an Elder who is trying to help young people stay out of gangs.

"We lose a lot of the children to gangs. They are leaving the reserve and when they get to the city they join gangs. We see them leaving the schools left and right because they made a decision to join a gang."

Tourangeau, who was a teacher for 10 years and now works with the Treaty Four Student Success Program, saw some of her students struggling with issues of suicide, addictions, and crime.

"It just gave me this incentive to write this play about these kids that are lost," she says. "A Kookhum can walk into a school and the kids suddenly turn respectful."

The play is directed by Erroll Kinistino and will be performed by many youth from Treaty Four territory.

Tourangeau's goal with the play, and through her public speaking, is to encourage youth to stay positive.

"I tell them about how we have these

gifts and abilities inside. It's not these walls that we put up like anger. I say 'don't bring shame to your people. When you walk, walk with honour and courage.'"

Tourangeau encourages youth to be real warriors who embrace compassion, honour, and integrity.

Tourangeau says she is excited to have it showcased in front of a group of educators.

"We're really moving forward with the treaty right to education and that's what Kookhum says in the play, 'this is our time this is our moment in history.'"

The conference will also feature keynote addresses from Ted Nolan, former NHL hockey player and coach and Dr. Gabor Mate who is currently a physician in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. His area of expertise looks at connections between mind and body health, such as Attention Deficit Disorder.

Lori Whiteman, Program Director of the Treaty Four Student Success Programs says the conference is open to all educators, Elders, social workers, and community leaders.

The sessions will focus on the areas of literacy, numeracy, and student retention. But Whiteman says the main goal of the conference is to honour and embrace the treaty right to education.

"My greatest hope is to keep building on this network of Treaty Four educators," she says.

"We have done some significant work



Vera Tourangeau's play captures the advice of an Elder who is trying to encourage you people to avoid the gang lifestyle.

to establish this network of treaty four schools. It is nice to showcase the program as well as First Nations education from a reserve standpoint to the rest of the world," says Whiteman.

"This conference dispels a lot of the

stereotypes about schools on reserves and the type of education that takes place there."

This is the 13th Annual Treaty Four Education Conference. Eight hundred people are expected to attend.

U of R President Timmons honoured by FNUniv

By Jennifer Dubois
For Eagle Feather News



Vianne Timmons gets wrapped in a Starblanket by the FNUniv Elders, Isadore and Velma.

(Photo by Mike Dubois)

It's been a year since the students at First Nations University of Canada created a movement to keep their school open. To shine a more positive light on the University, an Honouring Ceremony was held on February 10.

Dr. Vianne Timmons, President of the University of Regina received a gift for the role she played to save the school.

"I'm extremely humbled by the gesture from the students. I think not only that I got this beautiful blanket that's seeped in such wonderful tradition, but that it came from the students, that they took this time to honour me," she said.

After months of protesting, funds were placed in the hands of the U of R. Timmons continued to fight on a political and professional level for FNUniv. She said supporting the movement has only showed her what strength the students possess.

"I think what I learned the most is the power of students, the power of their voices, the power of their convictions and I think that's something that I will never

forget and will always hold with me," she said.

Students who were involved with the movement, such as Cadmus Delorme, said Timmons commitment and support will not be forgotten.

"She did a lot behind the scenes and nobody really knew how much of an impact she made. She had her own university to look after but yet she still took on duties of First Nations University of Canada," said Delorme.

Timmons is still confident the school will have continued success.

"Things are in extremely good shape one year later, better than what I ever anticipated. They've restructured the First Nations University and they are now sustainable," she said.

Currently, the FNUniv has funding to cover for the rest of the semester and Jesse Robson, Student Association president, is confident the University is making the right changes for funding to continue for the following year.

"Student life at First Nations University of Canada has taken a positive turn and continues to grow to what our visionaries, students and future students would want," said Robson.

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Conference Highlights Include:

- Keynote Addresses from Dr. Gabor Maté, Senator Sol Sanderson, Ted Nolan & Edie L. Holcomb
- Engaging Workshops from Presenters such as David Bouchard, Trudy Loftsgard and many other industry professionals
- Elder / Youth Panel (*sponsored by SaskCulture*)
- Pre-Conference Keynote and Workshop featuring Dr. Gabor Maté, M.D.
- Gala Evening Dinner hosted by Cory Generoux of APTN's Bionic Bannock Boys featuring the premiere of the play, "*My Kobbum Prayed For Me*" written by Vera Tourangeau and a Keynote Address from Ted Nolan (*sponsored by Ministry of Education – First Nations, Métis & Community Education*)
- Treaty 4 Education Conference Awards (*sponsored in part by SaskGaming*)
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Elders Mike Pinay, Danny Musqua, Gladys Wapass-Greyeyes, Alma Kytwayhat, and Thelma Musqua received blankets for their dedication to the Office of the Treaty Commissioner. (Photo supplied)

Elders' contributions recognized by Office of Treaty Commissioner

By Leisha Grebinski
For Eagle Feather News

The Office of the Treaty Commissioner is honouring Elders who are helping share the oral history of Saskatchewan's First Nations people.

"We couldn't do the work we do without the Elders," says Susan Beaudin, the Treaty Learning Network Co-ordinator. "Not only are they our teachers, but they are the traditional knowledge keepers."

Since the provincial government's decision to mandate treaty education in schools, Beaudin has travelled around the province with Elders to lead workshops for teachers.

The teachers then go into classrooms from kindergarten to Grade 12 to share what they learned about treaties.

"What the Elders show is that our oral traditions are still alive and well," says Beaudin. "What they do is speak about treaties and life under the Indian Act. I can stand up and say the facts, but the Elders talk about their real-life experiences."

Elder Alma Kytwayhat has worked with the Office of the Treaty Commissioner since 1996.

Kytwayhat, who is Cree and from the Thunderchild First Nation, explains the original intent of the treaties when she speaks at workshops.

"Our treaties say that we're supposed to live together in harmony."

Kytwayhat says when she was younger, people never learned about the treaty negotiations that took place in Saskatchewan.

"You learned about other countries and how they do business but never our own," says Kytwayhat.

She says that by learning about treaties, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people may start to better understand each other.

"If they attempt to understand the history of the First Nations people that are here, I think that will change their attitude."

She says this might give non-Aboriginal people a different perspective on Aboriginal people and the circumstances they are in.

"The only thing many people know is the negative things about First Nations

people. That they are good for nothing or they just see them as drunk," explains Kytwayhat.

"They become more knowledgeable about why First Nations people are living in poverty," says Beaudin. "We do not want to be known as victims or have people pity us. We tell it how it is and I think that's how the Elders become such powerful speakers in these workshops."

Gladys Wapass-Greyeyes, sister to Kytwayhat, is also an Elder who works with the Office of the Treaty Commissioner. She too hopes treaty education will help bring people of Saskatchewan together.

"It's about time there were attitude changes and that we really get to know one another. It's time we look at the positive and the successes of First Nations people and not just focus on the negative," she says.

Wapass-Greyeyes attended residential school where she wasn't allowed to speak her language or practice her spiritual traditions.

"When they took us into residential school they tried to whip the language out of us. They tried to teach us the newcomer way of life and they made us ashamed of who we were," she says.

"But the two months of every summer, my parents would take us out and travel and live in a tent. My mother would teach us about plants and the birds. We learned a lot of things from my mother and I held on to her teachings."

Now she passes those stories on to others.

"I talk to them about the world view of our people. I learned through all the stories that were told to me."

To honour the Elders, Beaudin says the Office of the Treaty Commissioner held a special gathering for the Elders and their families.

"They told me in their lives, they have never experienced this kind of honour," notes Beaudin.

"I feel good about being part of a team that is teaching treaties in the classroom. I'm hoping it will build good relationships and create peace, and friendships, and harmony because we are all creations of the creator," says Wapass-Greyeyes.

The Office of the Treaty Commissioner has five main Elders that share stories at workshops but Beaudin says she will draw on other Elders from the community.

"For example if we are in Dene country, I invite a Dene Elder," she says.

Each Elder brings something special to the workshop, says Beaudin. Some focus on the role of women while others talk about residential schools or the impact the Indian Act has had on the lives of First Nations people.

"They have a way of telling their stories in a very dignified yet humorous way," says Beaudin.

Beaudin says the response to the Elders

is almost always positive.

"The Elders make it very real and people come to realize that there is a treaty relationship that does exist," says Beaudin. "They tell us that they weren't aware that such negative things happened to First Nations people in Canada."

Beaudin says the Elders spark a passion in many of the people they speak with.

Beaudin says their stories are definitely making a positive impact.

"I'm hoping with all youth and teachers learning about the treaties and promoting it, that it will bring out what the treaties were based on – to get along," says Wapass-Greyeyes.

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Interim President Shauneen Pete has played an integral role in getting the house in order at the First Nations University of Canada. (Photo by John Lagimodiere)

First Nations University balances budget, making plans for future

By John Lagimodiere
Of Eagle Feather News

Dr. Shauneen Pete's Blackberry is broken and it has her quite upset.

"It has my schedule, my contacts, my email. I am not right without it."

Forgive Ms Pete for fretting, but as the Interim President of the First Nation University of Canada, she has to know her schedule and she has to have her contacts nearby to assist her and her executive in the rebuilding of the important institution.

Her daughter, on the other hand, is quite happy that it is broken.

"I promised her we would take some days off and spend them together and she stipulated that I couldn't bring my phone. So I guess she wins."

Pete is deserving of a short breather. She and her executive have been working their fingers to the bone to get the University to a position where it is more stable than ever.

"We finally have a balanced budget after seven years," said Pete over the clatter of dishes and voices in a busy coffee shop on Broadway in Saskatoon.

"All of our debt is paid off. The sale of the Saskatoon property allowed us to get to a place to plan forward and not think about the past. We are moving forward really proactively. We have a status quo budget this year.

"We presented one for \$12.3 million to the federal and provincial governments. But we will be asking for more next year as we have collective bargaining coming up then. This was not often budgeted for in the past. We are also working on our communication and branding."

It is almost a luxury for the staff at the University to be planning for the future. When she was first hired, crisis was the order of the day.

"The rollercoaster from April 1 to July was intense. We were planning to close the doors the first week I was there. We had no money for payroll. Then we got some money, then we did the agreement with our partners and then we secured the rest of the money for the academic end.

"We had such relief when we finally took closing the doors off the agenda. We worked around the clock. The executive team was amazing," said Pete.

Plans for the future are mighty. To start, the University celebrates its 35th year in 2011 and will be hosting their 33rd Annual Powwow on April 16 and 17. There will be celebrations throughout the year to mark the anniversary.

They also intend to focus on student recruitment and retention and securing a downtown Saskatoon campus for the Social Work school. The board is also starting its strategic planning and have to hire a President. Pete has applied for the position.

"It is so much easier for the board, and for us to hire staff and recruit students because we offer stability now. The agreement we have with our partners and the close relation we have with the University of Regina brings resources to us and we use them wisely," said Pete.

"The support of U of R President Vianne Timmons has been amazing. We feel good about where we are."

With that Pete was off to a meeting at the Saskatoon campus and finally to a well deserved break with her daughter.

COLLEGE OF NURSING

➤ ADVANCING ABORIGINAL NURSING STUDENTS

Working towards balanced, healthy, aboriginal communities in Saskatchewan by increasing the number of Aboriginal Peoples in the healing careers is the vision of the Native Access Program for Nursing (NAPN).

For 25 years, NAPN has been making a difference in the lives of aboriginal students enrolled in nursing at the University of Saskatchewan. The program was established in 1985 to meet the specific academic and personal needs of aboriginal students.

NAPN provides a wide array of services that support students academically and personally.

- Academic and career advising
- Access to Elders and culturally appropriate counselling
- Advocacy – childcare, housing, funding concerns
- Tutoring, mentorship, computer, and internet access
- Leadership opportunities

"Our approach is to connect with every student in first year and begin fostering a relationship with them," says Trudy Unger, NAPN advisor, Saskatoon. "This has proven to be key in assisting students achieve academic success. The result has been an increasing number of aboriginal students who graduate from the nursing program," she adds.

The students who come to NAPN for help require more than a program that provides services to them. Bev McBeth, RN, NAPN advisor, Regina explains, "NAPN is a community. We build this community through a variety of activities – both social and academic."

➤ STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



Chris Boychuk was inspired to become a nurse by his grandmother and the nurses who provided care to his brother.

Chris Boychuk is a third year nursing student at the College of Nursing. He is well-known to the advisors at NAPN as an outstanding and dedicated student. "He has a bright future with tremendous career possibilities in nursing," says Rhonda Goodtrack, RN, and NAPN advisor.

"Go for it!"

Chris Boychuk, nursing student, Saskatoon

1. What inspired you to choose nursing?

My grandmother worked in home health care and was very close to her clients. My brother Mike had cancer while still in high school; he went through a terrible ordeal. The nurses and other health care professionals treated Mike from a holistic perspective. I aspire to be like my grandmother and the nurses who provided my brother with constant and diligent care.

2. What difference has the services and people of NAPN made to your university career? Future nursing career?

The support and guidance from NAPN has made a world of difference to my education and future. Through NAPN, I have been able to participate in presentations to high school students, mentor at a NAPN Health Science Summer Camp, attend a national health conference, and provide tutoring services.

3. What advice would you give to First Nations or Métis high school students?

Go for it! If you want to go to university and think, "I can't do it", just know that you can do it! Speak to a guidance or career counsellor for advice. You can go as far in life as you want to - you just need to take that first step and try.

NAPN Team:

Heather Cote-Soop, Regina
Rhonda Goodtrack, RN, Saskatoon
Bev McBeth, RN, Regina
Trudy Unger, Saskatoon
Shannon Wood, Saskatoon



www.usask.ca/nursing
The new Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) begins in September 2011.

Campeau Fund adds services to assist Métis entrepreneurs

By Darla Read
For Eagle Feather News

Métis entrepreneurs now have a one-stop shop for the resources needed to become successful in their business ventures. Earlier this month, the Clarence Campeau Development Fund announced the launch of its Métis Economic Development Sector, which includes a new website and business directory of Métis businesses in the province.

"We believe that the Métis Economic Development Sector office at CCDF will provide a much-needed entry point for those interested in doing business with the Métis," says Métis Nation – Saskatchewan Minister of Economic Development and CCDF Chair Bob McLeod.

"It will also provide support for the creation of partnerships, joint ventures and new business that create jobs and wealth for the people."

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada is providing \$150,000 a year for three years with CCDF matching that and eventually assuming full responsibility of the sector after the three years.

Métis Economic Development Sector director Monica Brunet says the purpose of the sector is to act as an "information broker" when it comes to developing Métis business opportunities in the province. She says the sector's web site will provide expertise on business development and management strategies and act as a conduit for information between industry, government and entrepreneurs.

"Métis people haven't had any resources to go to if they're wanting to start businesses, so this is really creating opportunities so they have a starting place and they know where they can come," explains Brunet.

Brunet, who grew up in Domremy, spent seven years with CCDF before moving into the Métis Economic Development Sector position. She's owned several of her own businesses, everything from hair dressing to marketing, sales and web-based businesses.

She says Métis people are very entrepreneurial-spirited, noting it was often a matter of survival.

"Most come from big families and had to make money and be creative."

Brunet says some of the priorities of the sector include building capacity, creating awareness of programs and services available to the Métis entrepreneurs and communities in Saskatchewan, advocating on behalf of Métis entrepreneurs and community-based projects, as well as assisting in creating jobs and wealth for Métis people.

She says there are a lot of programs available to Métis entrepreneurs. For example, she says CCDF has six programs including a loan program, business plan development program, after care and management and marketing skills and now it's just a matter of communicating that.

"Métis people have been entrepreneurial since the beginning of times. They're probably one of the first business owners in Saskatchewan, and until about 12 years ago, there were no programs available to help them access capital and help them get going. Clarence Campeau coming in has just been a huge success for the province."

McLeod agrees that this sector couldn't have come at a more opportune time. "The economic growth in Saskatchewan provides opportunities for our Métis people and communities like never before."

Brunet says in the past year with Métis Economic Development Sector, she's dealt with entrepreneurs all across the spectrum from home-based businesses to franchises. Brunet says it's an awesome feeling helping people make their dreams come true.

"I have clients I haven't dealt with in years who call me up," she says. "They become family members."

Any Métis interested in starting up their own business can contact the Métis Economic Development Sector office or visit www.metiseconomicdevelopment.com.

Monica Brunet knows Métis people are very entrepreneurial.





Métis Economic Development Sector

- Builds capacity for future business development
- Creates awareness of programs and services
- Provides technical expertise
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- Creates a strong and dynamic business community
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Deegan humble about leadership

By Jesse Robson
For Eagle Feather News

A graduate of the First Nations University of Canada, a full-time research analyst for the Crown Investments Corporation, the president of a fund that strengthens the economy and a single mom, Cherish Deegan says she still doesn't consider herself a role model.

It might seem like she's got a lot on her plate, but Deegan has gained strength from past experience.

"Achieving my educational goals wasn't just a personal aspiration, but the key in providing a better life for my daughter," she says.

Originally from Carry the Kettle First Nation, Deegan appreciates the way she grew up.

"Kids these days don't know what they're missing. We used to create our own forms of fun. We'd build tree houses and snow forts and create backyard kitchens with old pots and pans," she says. In the city, she encourages kids to be active and play sports.

Deegan finished her post-secondary education in 2006 with a Bachelor of Business Administration and kept moving forward. Since then, she's been involved with casino marketing, human resource management and now Aboriginal business development.

"One of my goals is to assist in being a link between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community," Deegan says.

In her role as a volunteer with the Regina Aboriginal Professionals Association, she played an important part of an initiative that saw Parliament name the month of June, National Aboriginal Month.

For Deegan, it's not just about creating awareness. It's about activating inclusive workforces.

"I want to encourage cultural engagement and promote employment opportunities for First Nations and Métis people." The First Nations Métis Fund (FNMF) does just that.

FNMF is a group that invests in Saskatchewan's

economic development. Deegan is their president. They will give as much as \$3 million into an Aboriginal business that shows sound potential for success.

She knows that success in life isn't just about herself.

"I believe that the greatest strength in the Aboriginal community is the people who promote the idea that if one succeeds, we all succeed," Deegan says. An example of that has been her role as a mother.

"My six-year old daughter, Latasia, has been my rock."

Deegan's success has led her to

be featured in the Proud Generation calendar, a calendar that showcases young Aboriginal leaders.

"It's been an amazing and humbling experience. It's an honour to stand alongside the others in the calendar," she says.

As a First Nations woman in her twenties, Deegan has seen tremendous success. More importantly, Deegan is showing her daughter that if Mom can do it, so can she. However, Deegan knows there's more work ahead.

"I don't consider myself a role model because I have yet to reach my full potential," she says.



Cherish Deegan is a reluctant role model.

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From left, SIGA CEO Zane Hansen, Dakota Dunes GM Gary Daniels, Neil Sasakamoose, Executive Director BATC, SIGA Board Chair Ray Ahenakew, Senator George Peeace, Yellow Quill Saulteaux First Nation cutting the ribbon, Saskatoon Tribal Council Chief Felix Thomas, Saskatoon Tribal Council Vice Chief Geraldine Arcand and Chief Larry Cachane of Yellow Quill First Nation.

First Alliance passes first big test with Dakota Dunes Casino expansion

A 5,000 square foot expansion at the Dakota Dunes Casino has created some firsts for SIGA and its affiliates.

"Well, this is actually the first time we have used First Alliance as our general contractor," said SIGA CEO Zane Hansen. "And, it is the first time that a First Nation

owned business has been the general contractor for any of our major projects."

First Alliance is a general contracting company owned by the Saskatoon Tribal Council and the Battleford Agency Tribal Council. Saskatoon Tribal Council Chief Felix Thomas was pleased with the results.

"This was the first big project of First

Alliance and it shows that we can do high level projects," Chief Thomas said of the 5,000 square foot \$3 million dollar expansion to the smoking room at the Dakota Dunes Casino.

"This is a first step into a lot of successful ventures for us and this project will be one of our showpieces."

Next for First Alliance is developing student apartment buildings on Avenue H South in Saskatoon.

The casino expansion comes just in time for many of the patrons of the smoking room. It was often overcrowded and very busy.

"This renovation really reflects the strength of the Saskatoon market for us," added Hansen.

"The staff have done an incredible job. We wanted to invest in the player environment and the smoking room here was just too busy so we wanted to expand it out and improve the air quality and the player experience."

"We always have to be strategic as to where you make investments. Saskatoon is a key market and there is room for growth this expansion lets us service one aspect of our customer base and more options on our main floor to look at some redevelopment."

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- Candidates will be asked to complete a confidential Workforce Profile identifying they are either a student of Aboriginal ancestry or a student with a disability.

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RCMP officer hopes to heal historical wounds

By Diane Adams
For Eagle Feather News

Historically, The RCMP and Métis people have had a troubled, even violent history. Dani Herman wants to change the way Metis people look at that relationship.

Herman is Saskatchewan's first RCMP Métis Coordinator. She was appointed to the post with the RCMP's F Division in September. The 38-year-old corporal is originally from Cowessess First Nation, and grew up in Regina.

She says the Métis people and the RCMP have more in common than people might think.

"Our overall goals are safer homes and communities. We want to work together with the Métis communities to ensure (those things)," she said.

Herman says the RCMP created her job because they recognized they didn't have direct contact with the Métis people.

"We've always worked with the First Nations communities," she said.

"We then identified that the Métis communities are their own unique groups, and we want to work together with them.

Eventually the RCMP hopes to assist Métis communities to develop their own programs and strategies for keeping their homes and streets safe.

Herman says the first step is to start building relationships. She's hoping to meet with Métis leaders from across the province.

Karen LaRocque is one of the leaders already working with Herman. LaRocque is the Regional Director for Western Region No. 3 of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan.

LaRocque says many Métis people resent the Mounties and their predecessors, the North-West Mounted Police (NWMP). In 1885, the NWMP helped to defeat the Métis during the North-West Rebellion.

"We always harboured a bit of hard feelings. If it wasn't for the North-West Mounted Police, the Métis might have taken their rightful place in society."

For LaRocque, Herman's appointment signals a time for reconciliation



Corporal Dani Herman

between the RCMP and the Métis people.

"It's time, its really time for us to start partnering with the RCMP and getting them out into the communities."

LaRocque says she's excited to start building better relationships with the police force. She adds that Herman was a perfect choice for the position – not only because of her passion for policing, but because she's a woman. It's a change she's seeing in Métis organizations, as well.

"When I saw

Dani walk in, it was very refreshing. It was like, 'all right, not only are the dynamics changing within our organization, but they're also changing with the RCMP.'"

Herman says policing has been a great career choice.

"I think (women) really bring that

different perspective to policing," she said. "I hope to be a good role model for the youth out there. Not only for females, but aboriginal females."

Herman credits her older sister, Deborah Porter, for exposing her to police work. Porter is now a sergeant with the Drugs and Organized Crime Branch at RCMP National Headquarters in Ottawa.

She says Herman showed an aptitude for policing very early – especially when Herman joined her on ride-alongs.

"It was a busy time, she spotted the plate number of a gas and dash ... she ended up actually seeing the plate before I did," Porter recalls.

"It ended up being a stolen vehicle. It was pretty exciting for her, pretty exciting for just about any police officer."

Porter says the RCMP was a great career choice for herself, and her sister.

"Our journeys have been positive and our experiences have been positive (with the RCMP)."

Herman agrees.

"The RCMP has a lot to offer, you don't have to be a certain type of person to be a police officer, there's all kinds of jobs you can do in the RCMP.

Herman says she's looking forward to visiting Métis communities across Saskatchewan.

Affinity Credit Union Welcomes First Nations Business Development Manager

Affinity Credit Union is pleased to announce the appointment of:

Chris Sicotte

First Nations Business Development Manager



Chris will lead the delivery of lending and investment services to First Nations Bands and business entities across Saskatchewan.

Chris has extensive experience in the financial services sector having worked for RBC Royal Bank as Assistant Manager of Aboriginal Banking for Saskatchewan, for Peace Hills Trust Company as Credit Officer and for TD Canada Trust / First Nations Bank of Canada as a Commercial Account Manager. Throughout his career, he has developed strong relationships with First Nations and Métis communities both in Saskatchewan and across Canada.

"We are very pleased Mr. Sicotte has accepted the position of First Nations Business Development Manager. He will be an asset to our organization," said Mark Lane, Affinity Credit Union Chief Operating Officer. "He has a background in banking, is an excellent relationship manager and is well known in the First Nations and Métis communities."

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Credit Union

Mirasty returns home to take command of RCMP's F Division

By Michael Bell
For Eagle Feather News

Two young men dressed in red serge solemnly pick a table up and move it to the centre of everyone's attention. Two pens are placed on the table and a large leather upholstered chair is positioned. The Mounties' foot falls echo off the shiny blonde floor up to the high ceiling of the drill hall. A crowd of 100 or more sits quietly on stepped bleachers.

The outgoing commanding officer of F Division, Dale McGowan, and the incoming commanding officer, Russ Mirasty, both step toward the table. McGowan sits first to sign a large parchment, followed by Mirasty. Their boss, RCMP commissioner William Elliott, is also there to sit and sign.

Then the three men stand in front of the table to face three columns of F Division men and women assembled before them. A command is barked, and a tall Mountie steps forward bearing a long pole with a flag wrapped around it. He presents the flag to McGowan, who receives it and passes it to Elliott, who passes it to Mirasty, who then passes it back to the flag bearer, who returns to his position among the troops. The transfer of command is complete.

The ceremony has surely occurred hundreds of times across the RCMP's numerous divisions. But this one was special, even historic.

Special because Mirasty joined the RCMP in Saskatchewan's F Division in 1976, and now he comes home to command it at the rank of Chief Superintendent. But it's historic because Mirasty, a fluent Cree speaker and member of the Lac La Ronge Indian Band, is the first First Nations person to command an RCMP division.

Since joining the RCMP 35 years ago, Mirasty has served in seven different divisions including Saskatchewan, Prince Edward Island, Alberta, British Columbia, and Newfoundland. Throughout his career, he has performed a variety of police work including police dog services, highway patrol, and general detachment policing. Mirasty also held numerous executive level positions, most recently as the Director General of National Aboriginal Policing at RCMP headquarters in Ottawa.

The change of command ceremony was held in the afternoon of February 9, but was preceded that morning by a pipe ceremony in which members of the RCMP and visiting dignitaries participated. Alluding to this fact, National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, Shawn Atleo, said it was a historic day that conveys the spirit of the original treaties, which were about two peoples coming together to ensure safety and security. The RCMP has made its relationship with First Nations in its top five national priorities, added Atleo.

"And in my view, this appointment here today, in this very ceremony, speaks to the reconciliation that I believe is the era upon which we have embarked," Atleo said.

Chief Superintendent Mirasty also addressed the assembly. He thanked his family and said the chance to lead F Division was "still unbelievable."

The RCMP enjoys a high level of trust from Saskatchewanians but that hard work was required to maintain it.

"It's a trust we must hold dearly," he said.

The RCMP embraces diversity, and allows its members and employees to contribute in meaningful ways, he said.

"I do hope some young person or persons will be motivated by my appointment and see that they too can be a great part of this organization at every level," Mirasty said.

After the ceremony, Mirasty stood before reporters who asked him about the state of relations between the RCMP and First Nation communities, and how that might change under his command. Mirasty spoke of the importance of maintain-

ing good relationships between the RCMP and the communities they work in, and the need to understand the issues facing each community.

"When the community realizes you have that kind of keen interest, there is a really honest effort to get to know that community better, then they're more receptive to work with us," he said.



Russ Mirasty



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L-P reporter determined to write stories of First Nations communities

By Barbara Woolsey
For Eagle Feather News

Outside the newsroom, *Regina Leader-Post* reporter Kerry Benjoe is a self-described introvert. But that never stopped her from becoming a storyteller.

"When I got into journalism, it wasn't for recognition," said Benjoe, originally from the Muscowpetung First Nation.

"I like telling other people's stories. I always thought that it was my role to tell positive stories and the stories that aren't being told."

Among her many accomplishments, Benjoe is the *Leader-Post's* first Aboriginal reporter in over 100 years. She is also this year's recipient of the Women of the Dawn award in journalism.

"Receiving the award really hit home," Benjoe said. "I realize that I am making a difference in the community."

She started at the *Leader-Post* in 2006, after completing an English degree and the Indian Communication Arts (INCA) program at what is now the First Nations University of Canada. Benjoe originally intended to become a lawyer, but soon found a passion for current events and news-writing in the program.

"I really liked the immediacy of it," said Benjoe. "I liked the adrenaline rush of doing breaking news and being in a newsroom. You get the story, you work hard, you write it and then it's out there."

As a journalist, she learned the impor-

tance of being adaptable and stepping outside her comfort zone.

"There's no time to be shy in this job," laughed the reporter. "I had to totally throw that (shyness) aside and become assertive and straight-forward."

Even before reporting, Benjoe was always determined. She is the first university graduate in her family and a mother of three. She also raised four of her nieces and nephews. Getting an education meant a lot of hard work and quite a few sleepless nights.

"It's important for me to show (my kids) they can do whatever they want," said Benjoe.

"There are no limits to what they are capable of. I want my children to be able to look back and be proud and say, 'That's my mom.' That has kept me going even when it hasn't been easy."

She covers a variety of different topics for the *Leader-Post*, from politics to social issues. Benjoe is particularly passionate about stories from the First Nations community. She has extensively written about treaty policies and conditions on reserves.

"I think we have a responsibility as a society to show the other side of Aboriginal people," said Benjoe. "When I was growing up, the only time a First Nations person was in the paper was in the court section. How can our young people overcome that stigma? That's why we have to tell those success stories about the



Kerry Benjoe is a born storyteller, a great asset for the Regina *Leader-Post* reporter.

athletes, the stars and others in non-traditional roles."

Benjoe has become a success story herself – she likes to stay busy and still dreams about going back to school to pursue that law degree.

"Anything worth having doesn't come easy," she said. "You have to work at it to really understand and appreciate where you've been and where you're going."

"Nothing is impossible."

CONTACT conference will be held in April

By Andréa Ledding
For Eagle Feather News

The upcoming CONTACT conference is in its seventh year, and will be held on April 5 and 6 at the Travelodge in Saskatoon. Geared towards educators, career practitioners, school counselors, employers and human resources specialists looking for networking, inspiration, and expert insight, this year's theme is 'Engaging Diverse Communities in Workforce Connections'.



MIKE LICKERS

"The focus of the conference is to educate individuals about the current labour market in Saskatchewan," explained Janet Uchacz-Hart, Executive Director of Saskatoon Industry-Education Council (SIEC).

"Keynote Speaker Andrew Ramlo is Director of Urban Futures in Vancouver and basically he's going to talk about the Saskatchewan landscape from a demographic – and futurist point of view."

SIEC is a non-profit corporation working with school divisions, community based organizations, and government

agencies. The conference is targeted for groups that work with employers, also providing labour market information for those looking to do work in Saskatchewan.

"Another keynote speaker is Mike Lickers from Calgary, who works with Ghost River Rediscovery," Uchacz-Hart said, describing Ghost River as youth and individuals finding their way towards bettering their situations, using tools such as outdoor education.

"Urban Aboriginal leadership is a balance between the two worlds – Aboriginal communities and how they're intertwined with the urban centres and so forth."

Other presenters include Lynne Bezanson, Dr. Norm Amundson, and Gray Poehnell, the author of a number of Aboriginal programs, strategies, and books, including Guiding Circle, an Aboriginal career development program.

"We're looking at different ways we can take the teachings of different communities and engage them in career development," Uchacz-Hart added.

"There are always some strategies you can use in any workplace or any setting to better yourself or upscale or go on to the next job you'd like to have. Interesting practical things people can take away to counsel others."



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Denendeh tells the story of La Loche

I saw a press release a while ago about a student documentary bringing light to the effects of colonization in La Loche. When it aired on CBC late last August, I was busy and didn't have time to look into it. I'm so happy I remembered that it was called Denendeh, and that I later found it on Youtube.

Being a big fan of documentaries, I wasn't sure what to expect from a student film, but I was pleasantly surprised at the quality of the editing, story and sound of Denendeh.

Six students made up the crew: Kent Morrison, Karin Yeske, Kellah Lavoie, Sarah Fitzgerald, Molly Thomas, and Annie McLeod.

Producer Kent Morrison was inspired to do the story after talking to a friend of his who worked in La Loche and believed most people in southern Saskatchewan were clueless about life in the North.

"It got me thinking of my own limited knowledge of people living north of Prince Albert," says Morrison. "I did some calling and a bit of research and the idea took off from there."

As students of the University of Regina's School of Journalism, they had only the February break last winter to shoot it. Five of the students drove to La Loche and spent most of the week there making connections and interviewing people.

They wound up with 20 hours of footage that would take the remainder of the semester to edit.

Part of me was very curious to see how the community would react to such

a topic, as well as the non-Aboriginals that live and work there. I was also curious about potential parallels with other First Nations communities in Saskatchewan. Would this 22 minute

film accurately depict the effects of colonization in all the northern communities of Saskatchewan?

Probably yes and no. There's no easy answer. Each and every First Nations community in Saskatchewan is different and has a different story because it is comprised of a select group of people with their own customs and traditions.

Two Cree communities next to each other may have similarities, but they also have differences; differences that become distinctive as the group evolves together over time. The same can be held true for every other linguistic group in Saskatchewan.

There is no cookie-cutter solution, and the Elder featured in Denendeh, Marie Lemaigre, raises a valid point: when outsiders attempt to solve their problems, it only makes things worse, and creates the illusion that they are incapable of solving problems themselves.

Morrison was aware that they might face obstacles during filming.

"The root of the film is the idea that outside influences had caused big change in La Loche throughout its history," he

says. "By making the film and going there, we understood that we ourselves would be coming from the outside and influencing life there."

"We knew going in that the subject matter of the film would not sit well with everyone in the town," continues Morrison.

"During shoots there were people that approached us demanding we leave or asking us to stop filming. We did everything we could to be respectful to their wishes and still maintain the integrity and goal of the film."

What I love most about this documentary, aside from the more technical

elements, is how it incites discussion about the negative effects of colonization. And adversely,

the positive things that resulted because of contact. It would be easy enough to dwell on all the things that went wrong and continue to go wrong in First Nations communities, but that would be

ignoring the strength and resilience of people who are quickly growing savvy and learning to balance their modern education with more traditional teachings.

The trick is to find that balance, and to learn how to effectively use those tools to better oneself and the community.

I think Denendeh would be a great film to show middle years, high school and even post-secondary students to get them talking about and analyzing their own communities. It would be an opportunity to think about the changes that have occurred, and the changes that still need to occur.

Unsurprisingly, Denendeh is already cleaning up awards. It won two awards at the National Student Film Festival 2010 in Regina (Sound and Editing) and it also won Best Film (in the Small Budget category) at the Journalism for Human Rights DocFest in Toronto.

It has also been selected to be shown at the World Film Festival in Montreal in August.

"I think it turned out better than expected," says Morrison. "I knew we had a good topic when we went up, but we met with some incredible people when we were there that really helped us tell the story." See it for yourself on youtube:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xLw3n02BpQo&feature=related>

If you have an artist, entertainer or event that you think should be featured in Eagle Feather News, drop me a line at: snazzyjess@hotmail.com.

See you next month!



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Team Buffalo plays hearts out for Mooshum Sydney

The Robert Cappel memorial hockey tournament is held at the Lebrecht Eagle Dome in February each year. It has become a premiere tournament in southern Saskatchewan.

This year's tournament saw Team Buffalo win the Rec division.

"Team Buffalo began three years ago at the request of our grandparents, Sydney and Monica Buffalo of Daystar,"

said Cory Alexson-Buffalo.

"It was their wish to see all their grandchildren play together on one team."

Since their first tournament victory, the Dennis Knight Family Memorial, Team Buffalo



Team Buffalo members are: back row left to right: Koda McCarthur-Buffalo, Blaine Buffalo, Lenny Keshane Jr., Alfie Bear, Carter Buffalo, Travis Keshane-Buffalo, Justin Keshane-Buffalo and Chief Lloyd Buffalo. Front row l to r – Robert Cochrane, Patrick Thunderchild, Cory Alexson-Buffalo, Trevor McNabb-Buffalo.



The Piapot Eagles won the 40 Plus Division defeating the Oilburners.

has placed respectably in eight out of the eight tournaments entered, either winning it all or placing second.

"Win or lose, Mooshum's only words before game time was have fun and work hard, play with respect and honor each other," added Alexson-Buffalo.

"Those were his words not just at the rink but everywhere he went."

In the rec division, the White Bear Rampage took second and the Cote Alliance took third.

In the 40 plus division, the Piapot Eagles won the final over the Oilburners.

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Youth football camp scores big



Smooth throwing Brandon Assoon.

BHP Billiton, together with the Const. Robin Cameron Memorial Foundation recently hosted 100 Aboriginal youth at the First Annual BHP Billiton Aboriginal Youth Indoor Football Camp.

The lucky youth were up for three fun, intense and action packed days indoors at the City of Saskatoon's SaskTel Indoor Soccer Centre, where they were trained and mentored by a coaching squad of CFL veterans and elite varsity level coaching staff.

The event was kicked off with dignitaries and drums and even a quick scrimmage with Premier Brad Wall playing quarterback for one team. The idea is to introduce young Aboriginal people to the game

of football to help increase participation across the province.

"Ensuring all kids are introduced to the many benefits associated with football is very important to me," said camp co-chair and ten-year CFL veteran Kelly Bates, who was raised in Humboldt, and currently plays for the CFL's Edmonton Eskimos.

"After research and consultation with Saskatchewan's Aboriginal community, we knew this camp would well-serve this goal." Saskatchewan Roughrider's Neil Hughes, Luca Congi, Keith Shologan and Marcus Crandell, and Edmonton Eskimo and Saskatoon-born Graeme Bell are just some of the players that came out to deliver the football training.

Brandon Assoon came in from George Gordon First Nation to take part in the camp. The smooth throwing lefty was impressed with the camp, and when asked where he played, he was like most of the kids at the camp: "I don't, I'm just learning."

The tight spirals this kid threw would say otherwise. Needless to say, the camp impressed many young minds over three days.

"The mission of the Const. Robin Cameron Memorial Foundation is to ensure that Aboriginal young people in Saskatchewan continue to realize their potential, and know that they can achieve any goals they set in life," said Howard Cameron, Robin Cameron's father and a member of the Const. Robin Cameron Memorial Foundation board of directors.

"We are so proud to be a part of this initiative, continuing to ensure Robin's legacy lives on."

Eagle Feather Sports Roundup....

If you are a hockey fan, get out your datebook and write these dates down. The **Sweetgrass First Nation** is hosting the **2010-2011 FSIN Youth Hockey Championships** in North Battleford and Battleford, March 18, 19 and 20. The **2011 FSIN Provincial Hockey Championships** take place April 8, 9, and 10 at Jemini Arenas in Saskatoon.

The big news is that the **Saskatoon Tribal Council (STC)** has been selected to host the **2011 National Aboriginal Hockey Championships** in Saskatoon April 26 – May 1, 2011. The Tribal Council will also host the games in 2012.

The 2011 NAHC will be a smaller event with less teams participating but it will still be a competitive field as Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta have confirmed entry of their male and female teams.

"The Saskatoon Tribal Council is proud to say that we like setting the bar high to put on an excellent event for the youth to participate. We have the experience, dedication, commitment and manpower to make the NAHC a showcase of Aboriginal youth," says **Mark Arcand**, host organizing committee co-chair.

Summer Games

The beaking has started already! And the Summer Games are still over five months away! The Facebook page for the **2011 Summer Games** to be hosted by **Thunderchild First Nation** has some lively banter between three time overall defending champs ACTC and all comers over who will take the crown in August.

The folks at Thunderchild are expecting over 10,000 athletes, coaches and family members to arrive for the Games that run August 6-12. The Games have become the largest gathering of Indigenous people in Saskatchewan.

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12:15 p.m.	-	Community Lunch
1:45 p.m.	-	Giveaway
3:00 p.m.	-	Round Dance ends

For more information contact: Jodie Fuchs: 883.7557 - fuchs@cpcc.sk.ca

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First Nations soccer teams to compete in Europe

By Andréa Ledding
For Eagle Feather News

This summer, two Saskatchewan First Nations soccer teams, also known as Native Sons FC, will be traveling to Sweden and the U.K. for a two week soccer tour that includes two international youth tournaments.

Sweden's Gothia Cup in Gothenburg, also called the World Youth Cup, will have 1,600 teams from 72 nations participating, followed by the Liverpool-Knowsley Cup in the U.K.

The main objective of the team is to prevent alcohol and drug use in First Nations communities by introducing sports and culture which teaches respect, teamwork, and traditional teachings. Team members were chosen not only for their skill but their ability to work as a team and act as community role models, and provide leadership at the local, national, and international level.

Nina Michael, captain for the girl's team, says that the tryouts that took place in Saskatoon last fall were hard work, but showed off the many great players. Michael has been playing soccer since she was six years old, and eleven years later is now in high school at Bethlehem Catholic High School in Saskatoon.

"All the girls were from different areas and reserves and we had a big tryout. There were plenty of girls that tried out so the girls on the team are all fortunate to make it," Michael said.

"It was a pretty hard practice, lots of running, conditioning, and hard drills."

Michael's parents are from Beatty's and Sandy Lake, but they live in Saskatoon with Nina and her three younger brothers, who are also into soccer.

"I was surprised to be captain, I didn't know I was

going to be," said Michael. "They said I had good leadership and was a good guide for them and that the role came naturally to me."

The summer soccer trip in Europe is unique, because they will be the only First Nation team (and one of the only Canadian teams) participating. As well, they have been asked to perform their indigenous cultural dances at each of the opening ceremonies and at other venues throughout Europe, showcasing tradition and culture at an international level.

This is probably at least part of the reason they were recent recipients of a Circle of Honour award for best new team from FSIN.

"I'm excited to go somewhere I haven't been yet (and) to be able to show my culture and traditions to everyone over there," said Michael, who is pumped about seeing Europe for the first time.

"Last year they had dancers and people were very entertained with it and I guess we'll have a second opportunity to have that happen, to show our pride in what we do."

Michael is also interested in meeting new people from different countries and playing against them at an international level.

"We're working hard at practices, besides our usual soccer teams we meet a couple times a month plus fundraisers and team meetings. The girls are training themselves doing fitness, and on different teams (and) sometimes different sports. But all for the same goal."

Michael adds that a focus on your own goals is the secret to success.

"Just pick a point and clearly focus on it. Play with all your heart and passion. My dad always says, just put your heart into it."



Nina Michael is captain of a team going to Europe.

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FSIN Celebrates 65 Years

FEDERATION OF SASKATCHEWAN INDIAN NATIONS MILESTONES

February 24, 1946 – The League of Indians of Western Canada, the Protective Association for Indians and Their Treaties and the Association of Saskatchewan Indians unite to become the Union of Saskatchewan Indians, the precursor to the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations. The first executive of the Union consisted of:

John Tootoosis – President	John Gambler - member-at-large
William Bear - member-at-large	Ernest Goforth - member-at-large
Joe Iron Quill - member-at-large	John Skeeboos - member-at-large
Angus Merasty - member-at-large	Alan Ahenakew - member-at-large
Gladys (Dreaver) Johnston - member-at-large	

1946 to 1958 - the Union of Saskatchewan Indians undertook:

- Establishing an investigation into the conditions that Indians were compelled to live in;
- Lobbying to improve social services through the provision of pensions to the aged, and assistance to the poor;
- Improving reserve day schools, medical services and assistance, and reserve roads;
- Expanding and mechanizing reserve farming;
- Determining membership and adoption; and
- Opposing the proposed transfer of the control of Indian Affairs from the Federal Government to the Province.

1958 – The Union of Saskatchewan Indians undergoes renewal to become the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians (FSI).

In subsequent years, the FSI established a number of unique and successful institutions including:

- Saskatchewan Indian Agriculture Program
- Saskatchewan Indian Cultural Centre
- Saskatchewan Indian Federated College later the First Nations University of Canada
- Saskatchewan Indian Equity Foundation
- Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies

October 19th, 1982 - The FSI becomes the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) and the FSIN Convention is adopted. The first Indian Legislative Assembly is created.

1992 – Treaty Land Entitlement Framework Agreement is signed

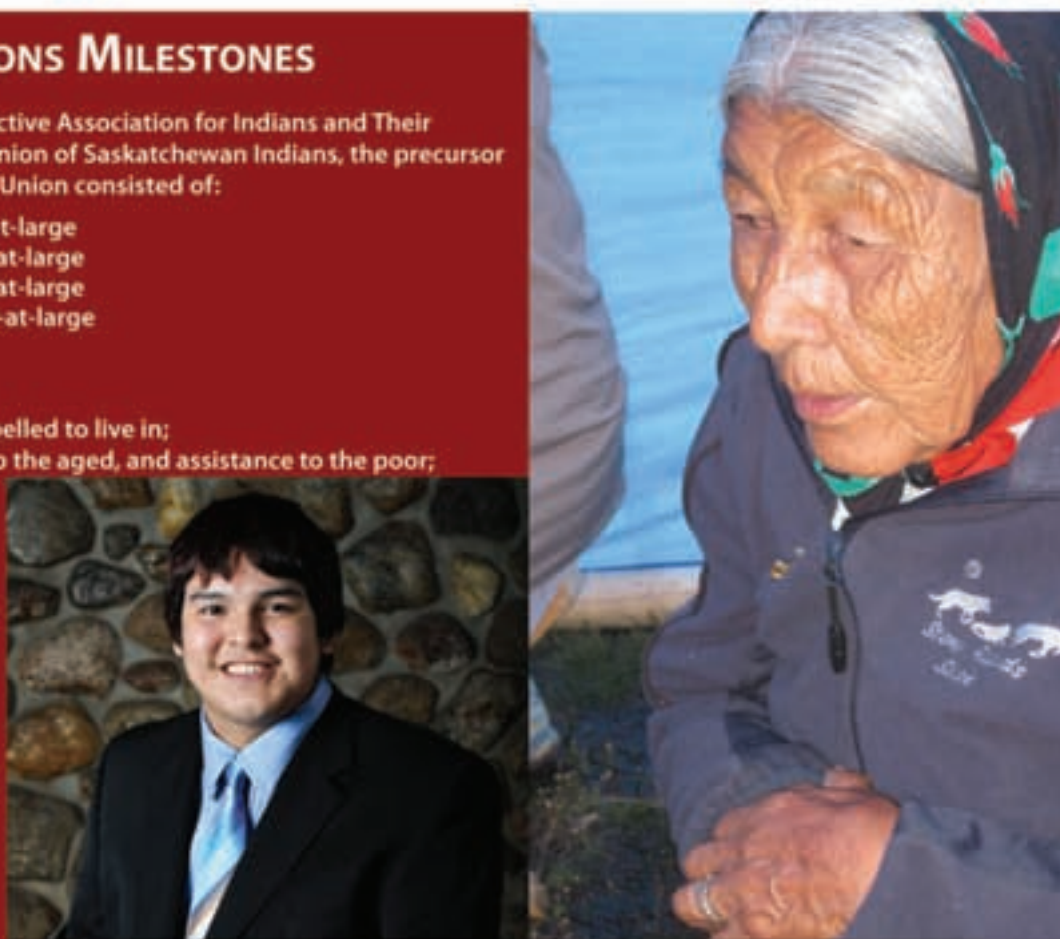
1994 – Gaming Framework Agreement is signed

1996 - Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority is established

2007 - Saskatchewan First Nations Prevention Services Model and Accountability Framework Agreement. First Nations Child and Family Services Institute is established

2008 - Memorandum of Understanding on First Nations Health and Well-being in Saskatchewan is signed

2009 – Saskatchewan First Nation Resource Centre of Excellence is established



Tansi, Eglanate, Ahneen, Hau Koda to the Elders, youth, Veterans, Chiefs and Councillors and community members of the 74 First Nations of Saskatchewan.

I am pleased to announce that the FSIN is celebrating its 65th Anniversary this year.

The celebrations officially kicked-off this past February with a Pipe Ceremony, Feast & Round dance at Wanuskewin in honour of the day – February 24th, 1946 – when First Nations from across Saskatchewan met in Saskatoon and united to form the precursor to the FSIN, the Union of Saskatchewan Indians.

Our founders recognized the importance of standing together in unity to protect and promote our Treaty rights and advance the social, economic and cultural aims of First Nations people.

Today, as a collective, we can all look back with pride on our strong and unified foundation and unwavering commitment to bettering the lives of our children, families and communities.

For many of our Elders, now is truly our time to realize the vision of our Treaties and share the pride in our identity and heritage.

We have a great responsibility to continue working together in the best interests of First Nations people in our Treaty territories, guided by our Elders and governed by the democratic laws, customs and policies of our institution.

The Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations has been actively carrying out the mandate of the Chiefs-in-Assembly to revitalize our organization and renew our commitment to promoting, protecting and honouring the Treaties.

This Revitalization effort has built on a Strengthened Treaty Agenda, with the FSIN Executive focusing on a Rights Based Approach to Education, Health and Wellness, Restorative Justice and Economic Opportunities. This Era of Reconciliation also includes the fulfilment of Canada and Saskatchewan's commitment to stronger and more respectful relations with First Nations governments, and by leadership that stands shoulder to shoulder for a principled approach on equitable funding for K-12, post-secondary and life-long learning education.

In recognition of the accomplishments of our First Nations leadership, the FSIN plans to host many more exciting commemorative events throughout this year, in which I hope all First Nations people of Saskatchewan will be able to share.

With the continued input and direction of our Chiefs-in-Assembly, and the guiding wisdom and knowledge of our Elders and youth, we are charting a better future for First Nations people.

As Chief of the FSIN, under the New Era, New Leadership mandate, we are promoting a more respectful Treaty relationship between all First Nations, Canada and Saskatchewan.

Chief Guy Lonechild,
FEDERATION OF SASKATCHEWAN INDIAN NATIONS
Indian Governments of Saskatchewan



Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations
Protecting Inherent and Treaty Rights since 1946

65TH ANNIVERSARY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

First Nations Leadership Forum on Governance

Saskatchewan Indian Cultural Centre Pow wow

Launch of a Commemorative Anniversary Book 'FSIN - 65 Years'

'Honouring Our Founders' FSIN Feast & Rounddance

FSIN Youth and Elders Gathering

FSIN/SIGA Pow wow