Prof took the long way to the front of the class

Ron Laliberte’s scholastic potential took a little longer to be realized but now he is a professor at the University of Saskatchewan and he is determined to see other Aboriginal students succeed.

Becoming a tenured professor was the furthest thing from Ron Laliberte’s mind when he was growing up. “I always liked school,” he says. “But I never did that well because when you’re that poor, you move around a lot. It’s not that I wasn’t capable.”

Growing up poor was an obstacle, but it didn’t hold Laliberte back, and now he knows just how capable he is. He has earned his Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Calgary and has a tenure position in the Department of Native Studies at the University of Saskatchewan.

“I used to think when I was young that I wanted to be a lawyer,” Laliberte explains. “Then I’d have respect, status, and wealth, and I’d get out of this rut.”

Laliberte’s accomplishments, along with those graduates from the First Nations University of Canada and the U of S’s Native Studies department, were honoured during a round dance that was held at the university on May 30. It’s been a long road to get to where Laliberte is today. His family moved all around Prince Albert, which is why he struggled in school. Laliberte found himself working construction, and it was then that he took night classes and achieved his Grade 12.

After working the trades resulted in an injury, Laliberte decided to try some university classes. He says he never imagined he’d end up at the front of the class.

“I was horrified by the whole environment. It scared me. I had no self-esteem,” he says.

But Laliberte had mentors along the way, such as Dr. John Thompson, who inspired Laliberte with his great teaching, and Dr. Laurie Barron.

“He offered lots of advice, and could see the need for role models, and I guess saw me as a person with some potential.”

Dr. Roger Makaa, department head of Native Studies at the U of S, also sees Laliberte as someone with potential.

“We’re incredibly proud of Ron,” he says, explaining that for an older, mature student such as Laliberte, it can be more of a struggle than it would be for a younger student.

“I think of him as a role model. He came from a poor Métis family and through hard work made it through to the pinnacle of the university.”

Makaa also notes that “there’s no one that doesn’t like Ron.”

He’s quick to point out that it isn’t just Laliberte who has earned a doctorate degree recently in the Native Studies department; Robert Innes and Priscilla Settee also earned such accolades.

*Continued on Page 2*

West Side Stories: The Métis of Northwestern Saskatchewan profiles the lives of the people who lived in that region.
Congress notes progress of Aboriginal education

"By recycling, we're down to one bag of garbage a week!"

>Continued from Page 1

"It's a pretty notable event - three Saskatchewan Aboriginal people with doctorate degrees - when you think of where Aboriginal education has been in the past." How far Aboriginal education has come and can still go was a topic for discussion at the U of S last month during the Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences, an eight-day conference for academics, policy makers, and the public. Around 6,000 people attended the conference.

A number of associations hold conferences during Congress, and the Canadian Indigenous Native Studies Association was one of them.

At the conference, scholars presented papers, and there were workshops and smaller sessions on topics like where Native Studies is going, economic development, and research. Makaa says such a conference is a good gauge of how his department is doing at the U of S, but also nationally and internationally.

Makaa says his department is "probably one of the most progressive departments and programs around. We're right up there with all the leading groups."

He credits this to a young faculty where each member has a Ph. D., something Makaa says is unusual for a Native Studies department.

He also says it is unusual to have everyone on faculty of Indigenous ancestry, which he does.

"It makes us a strong and prominent team. In the next two or three years, I believe we will achieve landmark developments."

Makaa says the department is not without its struggles. Native Studies is a young field, so there is not a lot of literature or research, and there is always a struggle to get more money and to get more staff.

>Continued on Page 11
Princess Anne honoured with Cree name

BY MORGAN BEAUDRY

O other member of the royal family attends more events and engagements throughout the world each year, so the name Elders bestowed on Princess Anne at a special ceremony on the lawn of Government House on Sunday, June 3, 2007 is a fitting one.

"The wolf is the protector. (When) she travels, that white wolf will travel with her and protect her and watch her so that nothing will happen to her," said Elder and FSIN Senator, Margaret Keewatin.

Keewatin gave The Princess Royal the Cree name Wapis-kí-mahéhkàn-iskwew, or White Wolf Woman, during a public ceremony attended by the Lieutenant-Governor, Dr. Gordon Barnhart, his wife, Naomi, the Treaty Four Chiefs, FSIN Vice Chief Lyle Whitefish, Vice Chief Glen Pratt, File Hills Qu’Appelle Tribal Chairman Edmond Bellgarde and many other dignitaries and special guests.

Accompanied by a drummer and singer, Princess Anne stood encircled by five woman Elders. As they faced each of the four directions in turn, Keewatin called out the name in Cree so that the spirit "would come and be with the princess from then on.

"She told me she was very honoured by the name when I explained (the meaning) to her," said Keewatin.

The Elders then draped the princess’s shoulders with a satin and silk shawl, embellished with cut glass beads and ribbons, designed by Tracey George Heese.

Heese said she meditated for several days before beginning the shawl, which took about a week to complete.

"It’s a tremendous honour and a gift to do that for her," said Heese, who has been commissioned to make shawls for many prominent people including the former Lt. Gov. Dr. Lynda Havenstock.

Princess Anne was visibly impressed with the gift and spent several minutes admiring it while talking with the Elders about its design and meaning. She also kept it draped over her arm on her walkabout where she was introduced to Aboriginal leaders, First Nation veterans and other honoured guests.

The princess arrived in Regina on June 1. Her four-day visit to the province included a stop in Yorkton the following day. She attended a riding demonstration and an event in celebration of Yorkton’s 125th anniversary of becoming a settlement. In Saltcoats she was presented with a scarf and a table piece made of the newly registered Saltcoats tartan. That evening she returned to Regina for an inspection of the past and present members of the Royal Regina Rifles, of which she is colonel-in-chief.

On June 3, she was in Regina for a full day of events starting with a church service at St. Paul’s Cathedral, a ceremony at the Saskatchewan War Memorial on the Legislative Building grounds followed by the naming ceremony, a tour of the RCMP Heritage Centre, laying a wreath at the RCMP Depot Division Cenotaph and attending the inaugural presentation of the Saskatchewan Youth Awards at the Hotel Saskatchewan Radisson Plaza where she was also staying as a guest. Princess Anne departed the following morning at 10 a.m.

The monarchy’s busiest royal has made six official visits to Canada since 1970 in addition to about a dozen brief stopovers and personal visits. During one of these unofficial visits — to Winnipeg in 1999 during the XIII Pan Am Games — she was given the name of Oginma Kwens, meaning ‘Little Royal Lady.’ The name Oginma Kwe, meaning ‘Royal Lady’ had been previously conferred on both her mother, Queen Elizabeth, and on Queen Victoria.

Starting in the East, The Elders and Princess Anne faced each of the four directions as a singer sang verses of an honour song. The song was followed by four beats of the drum, after which Elder Margaret Keewatin called out the name to be given to Princess Anne in Cree.

(Photos by Morgan Beaudry)
Most Canadian citizens are aware of the plight of First Nation people. They have heard about the residential schools, the land claims, bad water and so on and are well aware of the dragging of the feet of the federal government when it comes to solutions... even bland ones at that.

Based on that history, most Canadians understand that the First Nation people of Canada have every right to protest on June 29 on the National Day of Action. Understanding the right is one thing, supporting and enjoying the protests is another.

The Assembly of First Nations wants all citizens of Canada to send emails and letters to the Prime Minister of Canada urging him to improve conditions in First Nation communities. Grand Chief Phil Fontaine also wants people to get together and hold peaceful rallies and marches to bring awareness to the plight and to show solidarity throughout Canada. The biggest rally is expected to take place in Ottawa.

There are some Chiefs that want to go over the line and block roads and train tracks. Rebel Chief Terrance Nelson from Manitoba intends to do such things, much to the chagrin of Fontaine who rightfully believes that events like that set us back. Nelson usually just talks to himself speak and is partially infamous for wading into the David Ahenakew trial. His comments were followed shortly thereafter by an apology to the Jewish community.

Last year a few activists took it upon themselves to barricade a bridge near North Battleford in "solidarity" with the people in the dispute at Caledonia. Unfortunately, no one was around the May long weekend and caused backups of around two hours. Not a lot of sympathy coming from that crowd and the John Gormley callers had a bad day... so did Gormley.

Here in Saskatchewan we have never been really been faced with protest and dispute in a really public setting. Yes, we have marches to remember murdered and missing women and to raise awareness around other social issues, but rarely in the last decade has there been a political protest of note.

Even Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations Chief Lawrence Joseph has made little or no mention of the Day of Action. It seems as though the Federation will go with a bit of media awareness but no rallies or protests. Smart idea.

The best thing to do to turn the tide is to keep information readily available to answer people’s questions about First Nations issues including lands, rights and progress. Information is power, and that power allows people to turn up the heat on the government of the day to change the way things are done in this country. Just deliver that information in a good and caring way and not in your face. In your face does not and will not ever work.

It has to be reinforced that peace and friendship were very important tenants of the Treaty relationship. It has worked to this point. Grab a friend or a neighbour and drag them down to the park this National Aboriginal Day and show them a good time. That gesture will go a long way. Longer than a roadblock that’s for sure.

Most Canadians want First Nation people to succeed but they do not want to be delayed on their way to or from the lake on a Canadian long weekend. I don’t know if that is good or bad, but that seems to be the way it is.

My, how times have changed!

I recently had the chance to facilitate four public presentations by Saskatchewan Police Service Chief Clive Weighill. Chief Weighill was under orders from his Elders advisory board to have four public meetings to explain the new redeployment of officers in the city. The meetings were in the north end, east, west and central districts.

There was low participation in the east and north ends and the main concerns were graffiti and traffic.

There was good turnout, though, at W.P. Bate Community School and at the final forum at the White Buffalo Youth Lodge.

The Youth Lodge had approximately 100 people and after a presentation by Chief Weighill, he was peppered with comments and questions from people from the Aboriginal community for over an hour. Three years ago it would have been an ugly sight; but now the crowd was supportive of the police service and the changes that were coming (the inner city will see a noticeable rise in the police presence in their neighbourhoods).

When the Aboriginal Liaison Constables Keith Salski, Mike McClean and Preston Parramore were introduced, they received a standing ovation. It was quite a sight.

When one thinks back to five years ago and the separation between the police service and the community, we shudder. Morale was low, no one was talking and things were going downhill fast.

Enter Chief Weighill and up goes morale, people come to the table and the Aboriginal liaison officers get a standing ovation.

With the economic boom we are in and the prospects for Aboriginal people getting better each day, the Saskatoon police service united and working with us, record numbers of Aboriginal people in post-secondary education and a new casino coming this summer things have never looked so good...

Now let us hope the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan election goes off as smoothly as it looks so far. Wouldn’t that be a wonderful thing?
Second thoughts about tipi teachings, medicine wheels

During the 1970s the Elders at the Saskatchewan Indian Cultural College (SICC) were often called upon to make presentations. In response to this demand the Elders came up with an interactive presentation they called the "tipi concept".

A small, six-foot tipi was constructed with each pole representing an Indian value. The tipi itself was described in accordance with certain teachings. The presentations went over well but a question remains if the teachings were of the old culture or of a more modern vintage.

The tipi has since acquired a sacredness it may not have originally known nor had been intended by the SICC Elders. The raising of a painted lodge given through vision and mystery was and is quite another matter.

There are old stories of the warrior societies disciplining slackers and useless people by tearing their tipi to shreds with knives. An unlikely practice if the tipi was "sacred" (The warrior societies primarily acted as a police force despite what Indian gangsters may think today.)

The medicine wheel is another concept which may have an old origin but has since rapidly evolved in many new and increasingly complex directions. It has become quite an elaborate, if not intellectual, exercise more in keeping with an organizational chart in a corporate boardroom.

A Dakota Sioux friend of mine once said, "For me it is very simple. There are four corners to Creation and where they cross it is sacred." His statement leaves me thinking and touches me in a way far deeper than she was speaking. I wonder, has the influence of the boarding schools soaked in so deeply it now affects how some Elders behave today? The domineering behaviour I have often witnessed appears more an echo of the old boarding school premise and runs much the same as the culture.

Contrast this behaviour to old Cree teachings. Have Elders ever been forced to attend ceremonies including sweat lodges.

I've sat listening to Elders speak for hours on end and I've seen some Elders become upset with people struggling to sit through it all. I began to wonder whose needs were being met.

I once saw an Elder get after some little girls for playing with sticks while stories where an Elder speaking to his people thrusts a knife into the earth before him and states, "If I say anything to offend any of you take this knife and cut me."

The demand to move First Nations teachings into the classroom has created an interesting dilemma. The history translates well but the spiritual simply doesn't break down into point form on a white board.

Compare the statement, "The Indians regarded all life as sacred" to the following story. This one is from a 45-year-old Cree in Alberta who is recounting his early years with his grandfather. He said when he was a little boy his grandfather gave him a yellow fluffy chick. He was told to take care of it and so he did. The chicken grew feathers and there came a time when the grandfather instructed him to kill, pluck and cook it.

With tears streaming down his face the boy did as was told. He ate his pet.

This man says when he goes shopping at the supermarket he sees long rows of plastic wrapped chickens and he is reminded of his pet from so long ago. (I now feel guilty for wolfing down all that KFC over all these years.)

The meaning is in the story. The power is not the man who told it but the story itself. He was sharing a life lesson.

My old dad said many years ago if someone misbehaved the old ones would often say, "Be good to him. He is only a child." The child they spoke of may be a 50-year-old man or woman who was deemed a "child" because they had not learned from life's lessons.

Tipi teachings and the "medicine wheel" concepts may have originated and evolved to meet the needs of the classroom.

The values inherent to both, however, come fully alive and touch our lives in much deeper ways through the much older tradition of the story teller.
Métis presidential challengers talk politics

BY DAVID SHIELD

It’s finally here. After months of negotiations, the Métis people of Saskatchewan are heading to the polls.

With the election only weeks away, Eagle Feather News talked with three of the top contenders for President of the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan (MN-S). All three candidates arrive on the scene with large amounts of experience, making this a particularly tight race. So, without further ado, on with the candidates!

PHILIP CHARTIER

Philip Chartier says he has what it takes to be the next MN-S president.

A longtime fixture of Métis politics, Chartier says he brings decades of experience to the table. He also says he has the ability to bring some much-needed unity to the Métis Nation.

“You’ll always have people disagree with the way we’re moving forward. And that’s right, that’s what democracy’s all about. But as a leader, I’d be willing to sit down with everybody. And if people disagree, I’ll sit down and listen to what the agreements are and come up with a consensus of how we move forward,” he says.

Chartier says he wants to begin negotiations with provincial and federal governments as soon as possible. Eventually, he says he would also like to bring industry to the table in order to strengthen the Métis economy.

“I’m hopeful that the consultations will lead to some agreements and partnerships with industry which would create employment and contracts with independent Métis contractors. We sorely need that in order to keep our Métis business people some sort of foothold and to be treated equally as other Aboriginal people are.”

Chartier also says he wants to start working on Métis land claim issues.

“It’s land that’s been set aside for Métis. We must move forward on that agenda and secure a land base, because if we’re going to continue to be a strong nation, we need a land base to operate out of. We need to start somewhere,” he says.

Chartier says he would work at including smaller locals in the MN-S’s work.

“I’ve been visiting the smaller locals and talking to people, and their main frustration is that the MN-S has not been seeing the smaller locals. Basically, they’ve been left out of the bigger picture. I hope that when I get in as President, I’ll be able to reorganize and get these locals active again.”

ROBERT DOUCETTE

This won’t be the first time Robert Doucette has walked up to the plate at a Métis election.

Initially declared the winner of the 2004 MN-S presidency, Doucette says he’s not bothered by the events of the last three years.

“I’ve never looked for vindication. All I’ve wanted was an opportunity for Métis people to have a voice in our organization, and that voice was heard. All credit goes to Métis people.”

Ultimately, Doucette says he wants to see a new vision for Métis politics in Saskatchewan.

“People have said that they want replaced leadership, because they’re not generating any new ideas, and there’s no real ‘pop’ to the organization. We want new energy and a new mandate.”

Doucette says the best way of doing that is by making constitutional changes to the way things are currently run. That includes an MN-S Access to Information Act that would give Métis access to everything from salary information to minutes of Provincial Métis Council meetings.

Doucette says making these changes is essential.

“We have to get our house in order, we have to stabilize the organization and make it accountable to Métis people. That’s the first and foremost thing we have to do. If we don’t have a stable organization, nobody’s going to listen to us,” he says.

Doucette also says it’s important to protect land set aside for the Métis. He says the best way to do that is to reform the already existing Métis Act.

“For example, in that Métis act, it talks about the whole discussion over land, and I think some of these Métis farms should be brought under the Métis act for their protection, just like they have the Métis settlements act in Alberta.”

Ultimately, Doucette says if he’s elected, he’ll make sure to work with everyone in the community to get the Métis Nation’s values across.

“I’ll work with anybody, as long as their main goal is to advance the interests of Métis people across the province. If they’re in it for themselves, that’s a non-starter for me. I care about Métis people and that’s all I’ve ever done in my life. And when we get the opportunity to govern, we will make people proud again.”

ALEX MAURICE

Alex Maurice says if he’s elected President, he will bring a wide and varied group of experiences to the job.

A Métis businesswoman, Maurice has served in the armed forces and has also held a number of different posts in the MN-S over the years.

Maurice says he’s focusing on five main points in his campaign this year. He says he wants to keep his platform simple.

“I’m not a believer in promising the world because I’ll never fulfill it. I get a kick when I see some of the candidates’ brochures. They’re promising the world, and the world they’re promising is what already exists within the Métis nation,” he says.

Maurice says his platform focuses on land claims, universal programs for Elders and economic development.

Maurice says it’s especially necessary to increase economic development within the province’s Métis people.

“I’m a firm believer that we need to end the cycle of dependency and start building on self-sufficiency. We’re going to build it on the PMC level, and then we’re going to take it out to the AGMs.”

Maurice also wants to decentralize the Métis political process and have meetings outside of urban areas. Ultimately, he would like to see annual meetings held in Batoche around the Back to Batoche festival.

“I don’t agree that we should only have AGMs out in the cities. I think we need to have our AGMs in Batoche; around the days of Batoche, where we need to have hearth sessions. You’re put into leadership role to take the heat, you’re there to take the good and the bad,” he says.

Maurice says he also wants to focus on providing living conditions for Elders in the Métis community.

“Feel for the Elders that are on fixed incomes, especially in the wintertime. The Elders up here always have a dilemma every month end – do they pay for their prescriptions, do they pay for their heating fuel and how much do they buy? That, to me, is a disgrace to ourselves as a Métis nation,” he says.

VOTE Darren Deschambault

For Vice President of the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan

I want to run for the position of Vice President of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan because many Métis in this Province want to see change with respect to the way we govern ourselves. This will be a new era, if the people take a chance on the next generation of leaders such as myself and begin this new era of working together for the betterment of all Métis in this Province. Whether you’re in jail or living on the streets or living a tough time making ends meet with your families. We need a good leader that will look after all Métis interests regardless of where you live.

drdenredeschambault@hotmail.com

MÉTIS NATION-SASKATCHEWAN ELECTION

On June 27, 2007, elect Bob McLeod Area Director, Western Region II A

Bob is ready to steer the Métis Nation in the right direction! He will:

• Work with all regions, both urban and rural, to develop needed programs, services and rights policy.

• Work to ensure that the Métis Youth & Youth of Saskatchewan have a strong voice within our organizations.

• Stabilize the MN-S to make it accountable to the Métis people so we can have pride in our institutions.

Highlights of Bob’s Achievements:

• Negotiated long-term funding for Infinity House

• Affordable Housing Champion

• CUMFI Wellness Project

• Employment Readiness Program

• Project Hope

• Many other Partnerships, Projects and Committees

For more information contact Bob @ 227-2986 or 242-2683

On June 27, 2007 elect

May Parenteau-Henderson

SECRETARY Métis Nation-Saskatchewan

“I will work for the betterment of all Métis citizens. You can trust me.”

• When elected as Provincial Secretary, I will take responsibility for the Registry of the Métis citizens of Saskatchewan. I will ensure that every Métis person is counted, registered and receive their cards promptly and efficiently.

• Accountable to the Métis people.

• Work for all Métis people.

• Continue to lobby for Métis rights with all levels of Government.

• Restructure the Métis Nation affiliates so that they are responsible to the needs of Métis at the community level.

MAY REPRESENTS HONESTY, ACCOUNTABILITY, INTEGRITY & RELIABILITY.

For more information contact May @ 270-9896

In 2007 elect Robert Doucette for President Métis Nation-Saskatchewan because he will:

• Stabilize the organization and make it accountable to the Métis people of Saskatchewan

• Lobby and challenge the Federal/Provincial governments to secure Aboriginal post secondary funding rights for Métis people.

• Create new and effective partnerships with the public and private sectors to create employment opportunities for 1000+ Métis people by the end of 2008.

• Ensure the Powley decision is utilized to protect and defend the collective Aboriginal rights of Métis people.

For more information contact Robert Doucette at electdoucette2007@hotmail.com or phone (306) 651-7332

June 2007

Eagle Feather NEWS
Chief Electoral Officer making final preparations for June 27

Meanwhile, over at Chief Electoral Officer David Hamilton’s main office, the CEO of this year’s election says the electoral process is going quite well.

He says he was impressed with the number of candidates seeking election this year.

“There’s been quite a good response from across the province for candidates that are up for election, and there are a number of positions that are in by acclamation,” Hamilton says pre-registration is currently in full swing, with many people coming in to sign their waivers and receive their voter ID cards. While he says it would be better if everyone voting pre-registered, he says voter registration will still be available on voting day, June 27.

“Those who are unable to be pre-registered by June 19 can still register to vote at advance polls if one is held in your community, or definitely on polling day as well. So on Election Day 2007, if you haven’t registered, you can go in and register and still vote, if you meet the qualifications,” he says.

The CEO says his office has received many calls asking about which voters list will be used in the next election. Hamilton would like to remind everyone that no previous voters list will be used in this election.

“I think a lot of people are happy when they know we are starting from the bottom and there will be a secure register. And they’ll be able to, if they do register and qualify, they’ll be able to vote.”

Leonard John MONTGRAND
Northern Region III:
Don FAVEL
Louis G. GARDINER
George SMITH

Western Region I:
Alex A. MORIN
Don N. MORIN
Mavis TAYLOR

Western Region IIA:
René BELHUMEUR
Bob McLEOD
Penny HURTON
Gerald MORIN

Western Region III:
Lelia R. MARNOLD
Karen LatOQUE

More information on the 2007 election is available at www.metiselections.sk.ca.
Episkenew advocates for First Nations health issues

BY MORGAN BEAUDRY

It’s something we don’t think about but we do it about 15 times per minute. Breathing keeps our blood oxygenated and our organs alive but First Nations people are in a life and death struggle battling rates of respiratory disease far above the national average.

That sad fact, supported by data, studies and statistics, galvanized Dr. Jo-Ann Episkenew into action. Episkenew, who joined the board of directors of the Lung Association of Saskatchewan at the association’s annual general meeting in April, hopes to bring the board new insight and understanding of aboriginal health issues.

“Everyone is focused on hospitalization for diabetes but the rate of hospitalization from lung disease is three times greater,” said Episkenew, an associate professor of English at FNUT and the newest member of the Lung Association of Saskatchewan’s board of directors.

She earned her BA in English in 1991, an honours degree in 1992, a masters degree in 1994 and her PhD in 1996. Her doctoral dissertation examined the connection between First Nations literature and health.

Stories are important; they can make you sick, and they can heal,” said Episkenew, who is proud of her Metis heritage and hails from the Transcona area of Winnipeg. Her interest in Indigenous literature and drama as part of healing led to a research collective. With funding received from the Indigenous Peoples’ Health Research Centre, Episkenew and colleagues Dr. Linda Goulet, an associate professor at First Nations University of Canada, and Dr. Warren Linds, associate professor at Concordia University, will work First Nations youth using theatre to explore health-related issues, their consequences and possible outcomes.

Using the forum theatre approach, youth act out a scenario then repeat it several times, changing roles and reactions to create a new drama with a new outcome. Taking a new approach to the tragedy of respiratory disease is something Episkenew hopes will better outcomes for aboriginal health, too.

“I’d like to see is the Lung Association do research that looks beyond the biomedical,” said Episkenew.

“I’m interested in knowing why people who have knowledge of how something effects them still continue to do it.”

A former smoker herself, Episkenew was exposed to smoke in childhood courtesy of her father’s two pack a day habit. According to statistics she’s read, Episkenew says that respiratory disease current accounts for 83 per cent of hospitalization of Aboriginal children under five years of age.

Tuberculosis is another environmental-related respiratory disease having a disproportional effect on First Nation’s people.

According to the 2005 Saskatchewan Tuberculosis Control report, TB rates were 170 times higher in Status Indians and 110 times higher in Metis.

Overcrowding and poverty compounded and limited access to health care - situations common in many First Nations community - are what make Aboriginal people particularly vulnerable to this infectious disease.

In addition to her new board position, Episkenew is a research associate with the IPHRC, and was appointed to the Federal Judicial Advisory Committee for Saskatchewan, by Saskatchewan’s Minister of Justice and Attorney General, The Hon. Frank Quennell.

Episkenew and her husband, Clayton, have a blended family of 15 children, 27 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild.

“It’s important for me to work towards improving the health of our communities, both First Nations and Métis,” said Episkenew.

“I plan to advocate Aboriginal health issues and to bring more understanding of these issues to the board.”

Dr. Jo-Ann Episkenew is determined to bring attention to the issue of lung disease in the First Nations population. She is a member of the board of directors of the Lung Association of Saskatchewan.
If John can quit smoking anyone can ... go for it!

Smoking stinks. I have tried to quit many times and maybe that's the problem—I try and don't actually quit.

Whatever my issue I know that I am getting closer to being a non-smoker. Many of you may have seen the stop smoking ads with John Lagimodiere, my boss, and publisher of Eagle Feather News. He has successfully quit smoking and is now the poster boy for the Smokers Help-Line. He has been on television, newpapers, buses and even garbage cans, but did you know his face is also in bathrooms across the province?

I have to tell you about my weekend. I went out with a couple of friends this weekend to a little pub. My friends and I were there to support a friend who was playing in the band, they were so great—I didn't even want to go to the bathroom for fear of missing something. Anyhow, I finally made it to the little girls room — my bladder was about to explode.

I closed the stall door, sat down to do my business. I noticed this familiar face staring at me — IT WAS JOHN! The stop smoking poster of him was hanging on the bathroom door. I laughed and laughed and finally had to cover my face, so as not to see his face, while I went about my business.

I don't know if I will quit smoking but I definitely check the posters in the bathrooms before doing my business. In all seriousness, if you are wanting to quit smoking and have been unsuccessful in the past, call the Smokers Help-Line @ 1-877-515-5333 it's free and it's confidential. I figure I'll give them a call, if John can quit smoking — anyone can quit smoking... 

Have you ever heard the expression "and a child shall lead us?"

I recently listened to a 13-year-old girl from Canada give a speech in Brazil — the topic: climate change. This young lady, along with a couple of her classmates, raised the $5,000 needed to travel to Brazil with the sole purpose of addressing the committee on Global warming and demanding change.

Her key message: "if you don't know how to fix it — don't break it."

Simple but true. It was a powerful and moving presentation. From the mouths of babes.

A gentleman in Regina was recently struck by a school bus. The bus driver had parked the bus in a parking lot but forgot to engage the emergency brake. Unbeknownst to the driver the bus began to roll backwards toward the street.

A concerned citizen jumped behind the bus to try and get the bus to stop... he was unsuccessful in his endeavour and the bus ran him over. Fortunately for the man he wasn't hurt too bad. I bet you he never tries that again... 

Many of us are aware that there are over 500 murdered and missing Aboriginal women in Canada. The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) launched the national Sisters in Spirit Campaign in March 2004 to raise public awareness of the alarmingly high rates of violence against Aboriginal women in Canada. What can you do?

NWAC is very excited to embark on this five-year research, education and policy initiative. Specifically, the funding is designed to increase public understanding and knowledge at a national level of the impact of racialized, sexualized violence against Aboriginal women often leading to their disappearance and death.

The initiative will be undertaking qualitative (life histories) and quantitative research on racialized, sexualized violence against Aboriginal women with cooperating families who have female family members that are missing or have been murdered, in order to gain a better understanding of circumstances, root causes and trends.

The initiative will develop community education/action kits for use by community organizations, as well as host some workshops and conferences.

NWAC will work with participating families and the community to develop a policy agenda in order to influence required changes with government and community.

We all have a responsibility to bring this issue to the forefront of the Canadian public. Contact the Sisters in Spirit web site to find out more www.sistersinpirit.ca

Enjoy reading your letters and emails. If you have any questions or concerns that you want addressed please send a message to sandee2sasys@yahoo.ca

Congratulations to all the students on their graduations and convocations - you make us all proud!

Elvis
BY AMBER MAXIE

Contrary to popular belief, Certificates of Indian status, commonly known as the treaty card, do not provide First Nations people with access to unlimited health care.

According to Alexis Tervo, Communications Officer for Health Canada, the treaty card is one requirement to receive uninsured health benefits.

But it does not guarantee coverage. In fact, coverage is determined on a case-by-case basis. Dawn Starblanket discovered how unreliable coverage can be, but as her daughter, Starlene Starblanket, pointed out, "Unfortunately she had to get really sick first."

Over a period of six months, Dawn Starblanket was given several low-cost generic versions of medications, all of which failed to improve her medical condition.

Dawn Starblanket developed jaundice and was recently informed that she was in danger of developing acute liver failure. Starlene Starblanket believes it was caused by the generic drugs that were prescribed. Finally, Dawn Starblanket was put on a more expensive drug, one not originally covered by Health Canada.

"She's been on this new drug for a month now and it seems to be working," says Starlene Starblanket.

It wasn't an easy process to get the new prescriptions. A letter from the doctor as well as repeated phone calls to Health Canada each time the prescription needs to be filled is still required to keep Dawn Starblanket on her current medication.

"It's getting through the red tape, trying to get the best care for my mother," says Starlene Starblanket.

Eligible First Nations people are provided with a limited range of necessary health related goods and services, only when they are not covered under any other private insurance plans or provincial or territorial health and social programs. For many First Nations people, this creates confusion and a financial strain as they are bounced between organizations and sometimes have to cover their own health costs.

One Regina woman was shocked to discover that only part of her mouth was covered by her plan.

"I had my teeth cleaned and I was informed that only the top teeth were covered," said Tanja Maxie, a member of the White Bear First Nation.

Maxie, a university student and mother of three, finds this confusing. Nobody knows which plan covers what service, in her opinion. And in the midst of the debate are people trying to look after themselves and stay healthy.

"It’s sometimes hard to find the money to cover even simple things," Maxie says.

Health Canada could not be reached to comment on these cases.

Since 1945, Health Canada has provided services geared toward helping First Nations and Inuit people obtain and maintain health to a level on par with the rest of Canada. They continue to work in cooperation with First Nations people and communities to this end.

In recent years, statistics have shown improvements in the health of First Nations people.
SaskTel Aboriginal Youth Awards honoured province's best

BY MICHAEL GOSSELIN

The 9th Annual SaskTel Aboriginal Youth Awards were held recently at TCU Place in Saskatoon to celebrate just a few of our province's young people and their substantial achievements.

The gala event had a little bit of everything and provided the packed house with entertainment, humor, profound accomplishment and inexpressible pride that radiated off every older/person there.

All of the youth nominated for awards in their respective categories are exceptional individuals who achieve good grades while volunteering for school and charity events and programs, participate in a plethora of extracurricular activities while, often times, managing to work part-time jobs.

Like any other annual event, organizers strive to improve on the previous year and Chairperson Colleen Cameron said these awards definitely proved the committee had done their job well.

"Of course each year is special but these awards represented a really diverse group of youth," she said immediately after the event.

"Some years we would have rural nom-inees and other years we would have more urban nominees. I think this year we really achieved a balance.

Greetings were brought by Minister of Saskatchewan Communications Deb Higgins, Minister of Northern Affairs Joan Beattie and FSIN Vice-Chief Guy Lonechild. Minister Beattie paid homage to this year's nominees by reading an excerpt of a speech prepared by 13-year-old Outstanding Achievement nominee Kendon Kennedy discussing the importance of leading an active, positive lifestyle.

Joseph Naytowhow then provided awe-inspiring entertainment as everyone else in attendance seized the opportunity for nourishment.

Shortly after all the plates were cleared and the delectable deserts were consumed with vigor, it was time for the ceremony we'd all been waiting for.

The 2006 Outstanding Achievement Award Winner, Rachel Ross, who missed the last school dance of the year to be in attendance, made a heart-felt speech about what the award has done for her over the past year.

The audience then choked back tears as she garnered the courage and determination needed to finish her speech after announcing the passing of her beloved mother only one month ago.

Master of ceremonies Donnie Speidel did an exceptional job of keeping the program on track as each youth held the spotlight while their accompanying profile was read by various professionals.

Unlike year's prior, nominees in the Perform-ing/Fine Arts category were given the opportunity to take the stage and demonstrate their respective talents. Flutist Cassandra Kayla Roy was the first to perform and wowed the audience with her im-pressive ability. Adam Jack was up next and crooned with fashionable ease and style while Jingle Dress Dancer Chantel Redmen hit each step with impeccable precision and grace.

On this evening, however, an unlikely form of performance art managed to get everyone in attend-
dance singing with a southern drawl and gyrating their hips. Elvis impersonator Jonathon Timmins, or John Elvis if you will, of Oskayak Community School took over and upon concluding his per-formance, left everyone wondering if he had really left the building because we all wanted more!

"I started listening to Elvis when I was three," he said after the program. "My dad, John Sr., was a huge fan and bought me the '68 comeback spec-

Like any Elvis impersonator true to his craft, he spoke only in character.

Without taking anything away from all the nominees who are all winners in the hearts of their families, communities and our province as a whole, this year's recipients are: Howard [Hal] Cameron, Spirit; Chantel Redmen, Performance/Fine Art; Jordan Bear, Technology/Science; Jessica Big Eagle, Leadership; Shasta Bear, Sports; Stacey Houghton, Community Service; Verne Martel, Recreation; Brennan Beaty, Education; Nicole Waskewitch, Culture; and Jordan Mihalicz, Outstanding Achievement.

"I'm very proud of being Métis," Jordan Mihalicz said after winning the award, "I'm very thankful for what I have learned from everyone, especially my family.

"I'll always try for a deeper understanding of my people and I'll always do my best to help the people who need it.

On a day when only hours earlier a Sage Walk was held in the streets of Regina's North Central neighborhood to raise awareness of the struggles of our young people living there, the SaskTel Aboriginal Youth Awards recognized what each and every youth in our province is capable of when given the chance to pursue their dreams.

"Just take it one step at a time," said Mihalicz calmly, "Anyone can achieve anything they want... you just have to take it one step at a time."

Words spoken by an impressive young man that all of us should learn to live by.

- Editor's Note: If this story sounds familiar, it's because we ran it last month... most of it. Un-
fortunately some of it was lost due to a computer glitch. Now you've got the whole story! We apol-

Life is a gift. Please respect it.

Buckle up.

Whether you're travelling in the city or in the country, everyone in the vehicle needs to buckle up.

Life is a gift from the Creator, respect it. Always wear a seatbelt and use the right safety seat for kids.
Morale high at once-beleaguered Saskatoon Police Service

Re-deployment, new chief given credit for new era of crime fighting

BY MIKE GOSSELIN

A feeling of positive change and high morale has been floating around the Saskatoon Police Service headquarters of late. Gone are daily negative media reports, insecurity of individual staff members and confusion of who actually does what within the force.

"All those negative aspects of the Saskatoon Police Service have culminated of late and now we’re able to move on and put into practice what we have learned," said Insp. Lorne Constantinoff. "Although we’ll never forget about Neil Stonechild and Darrell Knight, we now have some closure and are able to move forward."

The high morale can also be at least partly attributed to the hiring of new police Chief Clive Weighill, a 32-year veteran of the Regina Police Service.

"Chief Weighill is from Regina and knows the issues we face in Saskatoon because the two cities are very similar," Constantinoff said of his new boss. "He’s a real team player and welcomes input from everyone."

In addition to accepting feedback from his staff, Weighill is also very open to community input and speaks to the heart of the issues faced by communities as a whole, something Constantinoff believes is very important to the people working under him.

"He takes a real common sense approach and that is very meaningful to police officers. Our objective is to reduce crime and make communities safe," Weighill added.

Another facet of playing a major role in the positive change is the re-deployment strategy that took effect city-wide on June 3.

The police have broken down the city into three regions: East, Central and Northwest. An inspector will head each region and become directly accountable to that geographical area.

Chief Weighill is quick to point out the reason for the re-deployment strategy.

"We want higher visibility of officers. We want to take away the opportunity for crime and we want our officers to have more time to spend dealing with crime, complaints and community concerns within their own region," he said. "But let’s be clear this is not an enforcement strategy."

The Saskatoon Police Service traditionally operated with 12 or 13 districts with one or two officers for each platoon. Those officers would float from district to district, making no one accountable to one area and the ability to communicate very difficult. Although traditional methods of reporting crime and complaints will not change, residents can also contact their region.

"You can still call 911 or the general phone line but people can also contact us (the regions) directly," said Constantinoff, who is the Inspector in charge of the Central Region. "We will be anchors in each area."

As for police presence in each region, a recent study made the equation relatively simple. It was found that 30 per cent of crime took place in the East and Northwest regions respectively and 40 per cent took place in the Central region.

"It’s a correlation between crime and human resources," explained Constantinoff. "So we have re-deployed 30 per cent of uniformed officers each in the East and Northwest regions and 40 per cent in the Central region.

Weighill has made some dramatic changes in re-organizing the Saskatoon Police Service.

"Although we never forget about Neil Stonechild and Darrell Knight, we now have some closure and are able to move forward."
MOUNT ROYAL POW WOW

Approximately 3,500 people attended this year’s annual Saskatoon West Intertribal Pow wow, The Gathering of Communities at Mount Royal Collegiate High School. The pow wow was collectively hosted by seven community schools while a number of local residents exhibited and sold their arts and crafts. Dancing and drumming contests for ages ranging from tiny tot to adult attracted over 175 dancers from across Saskatchewan. The pow wow is a gathering for school and neighbourhood communities to celebrate spring’s arrival. Sponsorship was provided by the Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools and the Saskatoon Public schools as well as a number of businesses and government and community organizations. (Photo by Deirdra Ness)
**Test Your Knowledge!**

1. Where was Louis Riel born?
   - a. Batoche
   - b. Pembina
   - c. St. Boniface
   - d. Regina

2. Where was Louis Riel hanged for treason?
   - a. Saskatoon
   - b. Ottawa
   - c. Regina
   - d. Winnipeg

3. Whose play, *The Velvet Devil*, was made into a feature length film on CBC?
   - a. 9
   - b. 25
   - c. 10
   - d. 4

4. How many seasons was Moccasin Flats on the air?
   - a. 9
   - b. 25
   - c. 10
   - d. 4

5. In what Regina neighbourhood does Moccasin Flats take place?
   - a. Piapot
   - b. Thunderchild
   - c. Lac La Ronge
   - d. Poundmaker

6. Which First Nation is Gordon Tootoosis' home?
   - a. Piapot
   - b. Thunderchild
   - c. Lac La Ronge
   - d. Poundmaker

7. Where is a statue honouring the great Gabriel Dumont located?
   - a. 9
   - b. 25
   - c. 10
   - d. 4

8. In the Battle of Batoche, the Métis ran out of ammunition and were forced to use what?
   - a. bows and arrows
   - b. swords
   - c. hand-to-hand combat
   - d. rocks and nails

9. How many years has Eagle Feather News been publishing?
   - a. 9
   - b. 25
   - c. 10
   - d. 4

10. How many Saskatchewan First Nations does FSIN represent?
   - a. Fort Pitt
   - b. Fort Carlton
   - c. Fort Qu'Appelle
   - d. Fort Walsh

11. How many FSIN Vice-Chief’s are under Chief Lawrence Joseph?
   - a. 1901
   - b. 1814
   - c. 1885
   - d. 1876

12. What year was Treaty 6 signed?
   - a. 1901
   - b. 1814
   - c. 1885
   - d. 1876

13. Where was Treaty 6 first signed?
   - a. Fort Pitt
   - b. Fort Carlton
   - c. Fort Qu'Appelle
   - d. Fort Walsh

14. What year was John B. Tootoosis first elected Chief of Poundmaker First Nation?
   - a. 2
   - b. 5
   - c. 7
   - d. 13

15. How many children does John B. Tootoosis have?
   - a. 2
   - b. 5
   - c. 7
   - d. 13

16. What does Janice Acoose teach at FNUC?

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**Celebrating National Aboriginal Day**

Visit www.firstsask.ca for more information on FirstSask Credit Union.
17. Long-time FNFC Professor Gail Bowen, who recently retired, is also an acclaimed author. What mystery series does she write?

18. What was Bowen’s reason for retiring from FNFC?
   a. salary
   b. other opportunity
   c. politics
   d. didn’t like her boss

19. When explaining his background, Grey Owl said he was of mixed blood. What descent did he say he was?

20. Who played Grey Owl in the feature-length movie about his life?
   a. Pierce Brosnan
   b. Anthony Hopkins
   c. Brad Pitt
   d. Adam Beach

21. What is the name of the new housing fund announced by INAC Minister Jim Prentice in April?

22. What does this new housing fund do for First Nations people?
   a. absolutely nothing
   b. acts as collateral to allow for negotiating with lenders
   c. free down payments for housing
   d. makes houses magically appear on First Nations around Saskatchewan

23. Who won a Juno for Aboriginal Recording of the Year in Saskatoon this year?
   a. Kinnie Starr
   b. Eekwol
   c. Leela Gilday
   d. Susan Aglukark

24. Who recently appeared in Eagle Feather News and ran the Boston Marathon in Tom Longboat’s honour this past April?

25. What year did Tom Longboat shatter the Boston Marathon record by five minutes?
   a. 1899
   b. 1901
   c. 1940
   d. 1907

GOOD LUCK! Let us know how you did.
Painted Hand Casino Pow Wow brings culture to urban centre

L ed in the grand entrance by a beaver of the eagle staff, the 7th Annual Painted Hand Casino Pow Wow dancers showed their regalia and steps as they filled the performance floor.

The opening on Friday evening featured a blaze of colour and a profession of styles, beaded deerskin alongside the fabrics of today's society, in a space that was surrounded by seating for drum groups and the podium.

People from throughout the prairies plus Montreal and Arizona arrived to socialize, enjoy the dancing and win prizes which were traditional currency such as blankets and tobacco in the old days and are now modern currency.

Curtis Standing, casino general manager, said the pow wow is run by the casino's employees.

"Every weekend they used to go and see their family and celebrate their culture," he says.

"At the casino most of our work is done on the weekends so they can't go home. We're trying to bring that culture to the urban centres.

"It's a really positive imagery of our own people," Standing said. "Nowadays we see a lot of what's on MTV and stereotypes."

Pow wows are an antidote to that.

"We get to feel good about who we are, We get to know who we are and we get to pass this on to our children and our grandchildren."

Standing said it is the responsibility of today's First Nations adults to make sure they keep the culture alive.

"It's our responsibility, not the government's."

Holding pow wows as gatherings of First Nations is a tradition that goes back to before today's adults were born, back into ancient times, he said.

"It's, of course, about singing and dancing. We have our own heroes, our own dramas. I think it's a celebration of who we are as First Nations people. It's also an opportunity for us to see each other because we all live in different communities."

"Gatherings give us an opportunity to get together. It's a good way for us to keep our languages alive to reaffirm our relationships."

Standing said that First Nations culture, like any living culture, is always evolving. That is reflected in the new styles of costume and dance.

"It's the same as our languages. We have new works and new ways of saying things. "We continue to evolve and we continue to live."

Dancers lead the way in the grand entry at the Painted Hand Casino Pow-Wow grand entry on Friday, May 18. (Right) Clara Ironstar, 7, of Regina, shows her jingle dancing skill. (Photo by Ann Harvey)

BY ANN HARVEY

SASKATCHEWAN PARTY MLAs

Aboriginal Affairs Critic
June Draude
Kelvington–Wadena
1-800-234-4134

Deputy Aboriginal Affairs
Don Morgan
Saskatoon Southeast
955-4755

Official Opposition Leader
Brad Wall
Swift Current
1-800-234-4129

Labour Critic
Glen Hart
Last Mountain–Touchwood
1-877-723-4488

Celebrating National Aboriginal Day

"Saskatchewan's Aboriginal Community is an integral part of our province's identity. National Aboriginal Day enables all people of Canada to recognize and celebrate the contribution of Aboriginals to the fabric of our society."

-Your Saskatchewan Party MLAs

National Aboriginal Day, June 21st

Credit unions recognize and appreciate the culture, heritage and significant contribution of Aboriginal people.

Saskatchewan Credit Unions
Make it Real
Re-naming ceremony fitting tribute to Richard Ostrosser

BY SOLOMON CVR

Richard J. Ostrosser was a man who devoted his career and his life to educating Aboriginal people.

"It seemed that his calling was to try and help people," said his father, David Ostrosser, about how his son devoted his life to Aboriginal people.

On the day after his 46th birthday, Richard Ostrosser died suddenly of a brain aneurysm on June 18, 2006. He was a pioneer in Aboriginal education that contributed to a higher quality of education for those less fortunate.

"He was a counselor on top of being a teacher so he had an emotional tie with many people and when he passed a lot of people were hurt," said his employer, Myke Agecoutay vice-chairperson of the File Hills Qu’Appelle Tribal Council.

In recognition of Richard Ostrosser’s many years of service to the Aboriginal community, the Treaty Four Education Centre building at 240 Argyle Street in Regina has been renamed the Richard J. Ostrosser Building.

The building, located near Argyle Street and Sherwood Drive, is home to an educational program that Richard Ostrosser developed in 1995 at Scott Collegiate and continued to teach until the end of his life.

The program helped First Nation and Métis students achieve an adult Grade 12 diploma.

The renaming ceremony took place on October 20, 2006. It was attended by dignitaries from the provincial government, the File Hills Qu’Appelle Tribal Council and the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations. "He sought the facility, designed a new floor plan, painted the walls, scrubbed the floors and built a new driveway all pretty much by himself," said Myke Agecoutay, the Vice Chairman of the File Hills Qu’Appelle Tribal Council when recounting how Richard toiled for months on the building.

It was Richard’s goal to design and implement a sophisticated, comfortable educational facility for Aboriginal students to enjoy and that is what he did. Unfortunately, he passed before he could enjoy the fruits of the project he worked so hard to bring to reality.

Agecoutay said that the community was shocked and is still in disbelief over Richard Ostrosser’s death.
A
ceremonial smudge walk through
Regina's North Central neigh-
bourhood proved to be a success
with many people participating.
The procession, led by 12-year-old
Kenton Kennedy, walked a 3.4 km route
through the community. It was a time for
the people in a community with a high
number of First Nations to come together
and experience their culture first hand.
The main message of this event was
to reintroduce culture and bring aware-
ness to the community that has had a long
history and reputation of violence, poverty,
gangs, drugs and sex trade work-
ers.
The significance of the ceremony
was illustrated by having Kennedy lead
the procession, signifying the importance
and role of the next generation in the
healing process. Although the weather
conditions were not ideal, it did not affect
the determination of the people's mes-
sage.
The sound of pow wow singers filled
the air as Kennedy held the smudge bowl
and led the procession made up of area
residents, leaders and dignitaries as they
walked through the neighbourhood. The
walk signified a purification of the neigh-
bourhood. Traditionally in First Nations
culture, the smudge ceremony is a way
of cleansing ones self from negativity.
Onlookers lined the streets or
watched out their windows to see what
was happening.
"The smudge walk was organized by
First Nations leaders in response to the re-
cent negative profiling of the commu-
nity," said one of the organizers, Myke
Agecoutay, a Vice Chief of File Hills
Qu'Appelle Tribal Council.
"When we do the walk we know it's
not going to be like a sudden fairy dust,
where everybody is good over night. We
know that's not going to happen, but what
the walk does do is it provides that aware-
ness."
In addition to Agecoutay, First Na-
tions leaders representing the File Hills
Qu'Appelle Tribal Council, Gilbert Pas-
ripeepeesick of the Yorkton Tribal Coun-
cil, and Guy Lonechild representing the
Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Na-
tions organized and attended the event. It
also included Elders from the five
Saskatchewan Nations: Cree, Salteaux,
Nakota, Dakota and Lakota.
Warren McCall, MLA for Regina El-
phinstone-Centre, and Wade Murray, city
councilor for Ward 6, which encompasses
North Central, also came to show their
support for the neighbourhood.
Elementary schools Sacred Heart and
Albert Community School both sent
classes to the event. Joan McDonald, a
teacher from Albert Community School,
spoke about how violence affects chil-
dren.
"We have to start addressing the vio-

cence," said McDonald. "It's become nor-
mal in this area, (children) have come to
expect the violence and disrespect. They
are desensitized to it. This is a way to
draw attention," said McDonald. For or-
ganizers of the event, the message they
want to get out is that violence is affecting
the area and that the residents and leader-
ship in North Central are ready to address
it and begin a healing process.
The ceremony of purification is
meant to help to bring the subject of cul-
ture closer to the youth who live there.
"Hopefully a lot of these young kids who
are part of the community see this," said
Agecoutay.
"We want to re-introduce that to them
and hopefully it grabs some of them so
some of them want to learn more about
it."
The walk finished up with a commu-
nity barbeque for everyone.
Film powerful exposé of violence against Aboriginal women

"The violence has got to stop. It has to stop. It has to stop," Janice Acoose said in a powerful tone on the stage of the Broadway Theatre.

Acoose, a professor at the First Nations University of Canada in Saskatoon, was speaking immediately before the Saskatchewan premiere of Finding Dawn, a documentary by Christine Welsh about missing and murdered Aboriginal women in Canada.

Acoose is also a subject in the film and told her own painful story of sexual abuse, prostitution and recovery, a story that is, unfortunately, too common among our women.

Welsh was also on hand to witness a packed house take in her award-winning film that tells the story of three missing or murdered Aboriginal women in Canada.

Finding Dawn identifies factors contributing to violence against Aboriginal women and how Canada’s history has played a major role.

The film begins on Vancouver’s Downtown East Side where Dawn Crev was missing and was subsequently identified as victim Number 23 on the Picton farm in Port Coquitlam, British Columbia.

The audience was then taken down the Highway of Tears where Ramona Wilson was murdered on the same night as high school graduation parties were held in her hometown.

The Highway of Tears refers to the stretch of the Yellowhead Highway and Highway 37, between Prince George and Prince Rupert in northern BC where many women have gone missing and, in many cases, have ended up murdered.

The film then shifts to Saskatoon where mother and student Daleen Bosse (Muskego) went missing in the early morning hours in 2004 and has never been found. She is just one of at least 17 Aboriginal women to go missing in Saskatchewan since 1964.

In the film, Acoose says she could easily have been one of the women who went missing or was murdered and speaks to her devout love of family and cultural values as the factors that helped her straighten out her life.

Finding Dawn is a documentary with a powerful purpose; to spread awareness about violence against Aboriginal women and institute change regarding mainstream perceptions of them.

The film definitely achieves this but misses on how to effectively make these changes on a broader scale.

Welsh is able to identify historical, social and colonial factors contributing to the violence but is unable to address the root problem; the past and potential perpetrators responsible for harming our women.

It is assumed making this statement while tackling the issue of missing and murdered women may have created more backlash than it was worth, especially in Aboriginal communities, but it has to be dealt with sometime soon.

Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal men must be educated and made aware of their responsibility for respecting women and they need to be taught from a young age. Tomorrow’s Knights, for example, is a program developed by British Columbia’s Logan Starmen for young men that teaches them their role in a family setting, their responsibility to respecting women and how discussing their feelings can alleviate pent-up stress and emotion in a safe, secure setting.

Programs like Tomorrow’s Knights have the potential to help make profound change toward no longer feeling the pain of losing or missing another mother, sister, daughter, niece, cousin or friend.

This isn’t to take away from what Finding Dawn accomplished and Christine Welsh has been rightfully applauded for her bravery, wisdom and care for each and every missing and murdered Aboriginal woman in Canada.

Finding Dawn can be ordered through the National Film Board of Canada. For more information, call toll-free NFB Customer Services: In Canada: 1-800-267-7710. You can also learn more about the making of Finding Dawn by visiting the NFB website at: nfb.ca

Happy National Aboriginal Day from the staff at Eagle Feather News

Eagle Feather
NEWS

Buckley Belanger
MLA - Athabasca Constituency

"We celebrate the rich traditions of the First Nations & Metis peoples of Saskatchewan on National Aboriginal Day - June 21, 2007"

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"The Saskatoon Fire and Protective Services send best wishes this National Aboriginal Day."

Saskatoon Fire & Protective Services encourages applications for positions in our department from the aboriginal community.

For more information contact: Saskatoon Fire & Protective Services Community Relations 975-2574
Indian and Northern Affairs Minister Jim Prentice meets the media in Saskatoon.

Few answers from Prentice

BY MICHAEL GOSSELIN

The Saskatoon Tribal Council hosted the Sustainable Housing Development Conference at TCU Place in Saskatoon recently.

Over two days, attendees were given the opportunity to take in presentations from an onslaught of housing players, ranging from the Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Housing Corporation Buckley Belanger to Martin Chiclo from First Sask Credit Union.

The person everyone wanted to see, however, was Jim Prentice, the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, and his thoughts on First Nation sustainable housing. After waiting for Prentice to arrive – he was 45 minutes late – the audience was surprised to hear him simply recite the April 20 announcement of the First Nation Market Housing Fund.

The $300 million fund is set to become available next year and will enable First Nations people the ability to borrow towards owning their own homes. The fund will act as collateral enabling First Nation people to negotiate housing loans with lenders.

“Social housing alone can’t define the future,” Prentice said immediately after his appearance. “First Nation citizens are going to have to have the same opportunities as everyone else to own their own property.”

Prentice pointed to bands like Lac La Ronge and Whitecap as prime examples of how home ownership can work on the reserve but failed to address how to do it for everyone. Issues such as poverty, unemployment and poor health plagued many First Nations, making it seemingly impossible for home ownership for many people.

“My band has built up debt and many of our members won’t qualify (for the Fund),” said Starblanket Cree Nation Chief Irvin Starblanket. “In the next 20 years there’ll be no housing and our population is still growing.”

Starblanket is not against people owning their own homes but sees it as merely another form of assimilation.

“We need to restore our Treaty right to shelter. It is stated (in the Treaty) that when a band expanded, the government was to accommodate.”

Roland Crowe agrees with that sentiment.

“We need to reinstate the housing commission. If we are to adapt to program structures, we’re in trouble. Policies designed by other people for us have never worked, so why will they work now?”

Prentice was questioned on how to address issues such as poverty and unemployment as barriers to home ownership. He stated home ownership and the Market Housing Fund will not fix everyone’s problems and the government still supports social housing.

Saskatoon Tribal Council Chief Joe Quewezance wondered how many people the Market Housing Fund will actually benefit.

“The majority of First Nations in Saskatchewan don’t have the ability to sustain development and provide job opportunities so they can buy their own homes,” he said.

“How are they going to achieve home ownership on-reserve when there’s no economic opportunities at all?”

Housing shortages, increasing populations and economic hardships were also topics of discussion at the conference, all of which offer a high level of frustration and difficulty to the players involved.

On a positive note, a discussion on the future of sustainable First Nation housing recognized the potential for improved economics and employment by utilizing First Nation skilled labor and trades people for construction and development.

Saskatchewan Credit Unions and You

There are many similarities between cooperatives and the aboriginal community. We share many of the same values about the importance of community and working together. Saskatchewan credit unions are member driven...locally owned and governed, where each member has a voice.

Saskatchewan credit unions are an integral part of the fabric of this province. As community based organizations, they are keenly interested in the people and communities they serve.

Credit unions have provided financial services to Saskatchewan members for 70 years and during that time they have also played a meaningful role in supporting community social programs and economic development initiatives.

Today, Saskatchewan credit unions serve over 523,000 members through 320 outlets across the province – from northern hamlets like Buffalo Narrows to rural communities scattered across the south.

Employing more than 3,000 people in towns and cities across the province, credit unions are a strong and important part of Saskatchewan’s economy. They take pride in investing in the dreams that help our members and communities succeed.

Credit Unions – Careers with a Difference

Saskatchewan credit unions offer a diverse variety of career opportunities. From financial advisors and accounting professionals to information technology professionals and client services representatives, credit unions offer career opportunities in a wide variety of fields.

The financial services industry is constantly changing and this means that ongoing training and development of our employees is essential to our continued success. Credit unions support internal development and advancement of our employees.

Saskatchewan credit unions value the talents and skills of our employees. We provide our employees with competitive salaries and comprehensive benefits packages. In addition, significant bonus and profit sharing opportunities exist within the system.

Whatever your dream is, make it real

Saskatchewan can boast that more than half our population belongs to a credit union. As community based cooperatives, a key element of our vision is our close relationship to the communities we serve. Throughout our history, we have been a key contributor to the social and economic well-being of our members and their communities.

As locally-owned financial institutions, you can also say that credit unions belong to their members and communities. And they are here to stay.

Whether it is starting your own business, investing in education, buying a car or starting a new career, your credit union can help make that dream a reality.

In the coming months, Dana Soonias, Manager - Client Relations and Aboriginal Business, will provide commentary on products and services offered by credit unions and how they can be structured to meet the needs of members.

Watch future issues of Eagle Feather News for more information on Saskatchewan credit unions or visit www.saskcu.com. If you have questions about the credit union system or their products and services, you can contact us at communications@saskcentral.com.
The building now occupied by the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology will be used for carpentry and pre-employment skills training, with welding added before long.

**SIIT happy in its new premises**

**BY MICHAEL GOSSELIN**

The Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology (SIIT) recently held an open house at their new building for partners, industry, staff and media recently in Saskatoon.

The building, located at 501 23rd Avenue West, is large enough to potentially house all trades training programs for the Institute.

"The building was found by Leonard Manitokken (SIIT Project Manager) and myself," said Industry and Trades Coordinator Vince Morissette. "Each year we find buildings to house our training needs and we were lucky enough to find this one."

The building will initially be used for carpentry and pre-employment skills training, with welding added within the next year.

"This building really expands our horizons," continued Morissette. "We really needed to be centralized in order to offer our students a better education."

Traditionally, SIIT would find buildings in and around Saskatoon to house training programs but felt this tendency took away from student experience.

"The (SIIT) Department of Trades has been growing rapidly and we always rented space on the open market to accommodate this growth," said SIIT Dean of Trades Guy Poncelet. "This seriously restricted the amount of training we could offer. As well, our equipment is often stored in trailers and moved around a lot which results in things breaking and getting damaged. We really just needed a home for our training programs."

Although SIIT does not yet own the building, they have a three-year lease on the property. Poncelet is quick to add they are seeking ways to buy the building.

"Now that we have a lease on the building, there are the challenges of paying the rent. We are looking for new and continued partnerships that could see us potentially own this space."

With the continued shortage of skilled labor in Saskatchewan, SIIT recognizes the serious need for pre-employment programs to ready less-skilled individuals for the job site.

"After some of these people go through a pre-employment program and then get some experience working, we can further help them become apprentices and eventually journeymen in their area of interest," continued Poncelet.

The plan for the 2007/2008 trades training year includes Level 1, 2 and 3 carpentry training, two construction preparation programs and a new trades/industrial preparation program. Program not yet funded but on the radar for this year are: residential framing, concrete, drywall/steel stud, painting and women in trades training programs.

More information on how to attend SIIT, call them at (306) 244-4460 or visit their website at: www.siit.sk.ca
Eagle Feather
June 2007

Literacy festival stresses importance of reading skills

BY CARMEN PAULS ORTNER

D oors and windows thrown open as blankets are shaken out, clutter pulled out of corners and tossed away, and fresh air and flowers brought in: that’s what spring is all about. The first-ever Northern Literacy Festival, held in Prince Albert in April, had many of the same goals: shaking out the dusty old stigmas, seeing what projects and ideas from the past are worth keeping and what didn’t work, and gathering up armfuls of new ideas from those who know the issues best.

The festival, organized by Northlands College co-ordinator Sandra Butler, was seen as the first step in revising the Northern Community Literacy Network, a collaborative group of literacy professionals that has slipped into dormancy over the last couple of years. The next step, perhaps to set up regional meetings, to once again get community people engaged in literacy advocacy, training, information-gathering and partnership building.

More than 70 delegates – including teachers (from K-12 through to university-level), literacy students, librarians, health professionals, municipal administrators, mayors and councillors – gathered in the Mariboro Inn to talk through the literacy issues they face in their communities.

Seated at tables decorated with inspirational centerpieces – small trees "springing" words made out of children’s alphabet blocks – small discussion groups worked on definitions of literacy, expanding it far beyond the simplistic “ability to read and write” to include, for example, cultural and technological literacies.

They discussed their “big picture” concepts of what literacy in the North should look like, talked about past initiatives, and came up with specific ideas to try, both on the local and the regional levels.

They also pointed out gaps or problems in resolving these issues, such as missing resources or a lack of “buy-in” from those with political or financial clout.

To provide the northern delegates with additional inspiration, the festival organizers arranged for information booths from literacy groups, and a showing of a video produced by the NCLN on a successful past project, “Cook, Read and Write”, which taught northerners at a low literacy level to become cooks.

Between the discussions, Saskatchewan Literacy Commissioner Margaret Lipp and Saskatchewan Aboriginal Literacy Network co-ordinator Carole Vandell shared a broader picture of literacy issues in the province, while Carey Rigby-Wilcox and Vera Tourangeau shared stories about their own experiences.

Lipp, the festival’s first speaker, started off by explaining the rationale behind the provincial government’s recent investment in literacy issues, which is to improve literacy for all ages and all geographic regions, as a way to further economic growth.

“All people in Saskatchewan need the advantage of learning … so they can take part in the rich social and economic fabric of the province,” she said. “What we want to do is raise the bar for everyone.”

The commissioner gave several definitions of literacy, and shared statistics regarding literacy levels amongst Saskatchewan’s adult population, notably those in the workforce and in urban aboriginal communities. She also praised the delegates’ willingness to develop community-based solutions, and not ignore the issues or stigmatize those with a lower level of literacy.

Rigby-Wilcox, a recipient of the 2006 Premier’s Literacy Award and the festival’s noon-hour speaker, is now a published children’s book author, but 16 years ago, she was unable to read or write, despite having graduated from high school.

She shared some of her childhood and young adulthood experiences of “working the system” to hide her inability to read or write, and explained how her inability to read a story to her young son finally pushed her into a greatly-feared library and a tutoring program.

“All I wanted to do was read the book to my son … I didn’t want my son to be embarrassed by his mother,” said Rigby-Wilcox, who continues to meet weekly with her tutor, Lisa Vargo, more than 16 years after they first began working together.

“Lisa’s gift was literacy,” she said. The Saskatchewan Aboriginal Literacy Network’s Vandell introduced delegates to her organization’s work, describing its history, vision, goals and role, and introducing its board members, several of whom attended the festival.

She also talked about several recent SALN initiatives, and asked the northern delegates to provide her with their input about making the network more effective for their needs.

Tourangeau, a native children’s rights advocate and former teacher from the PEEPekisis First Nation, closed out the group of formal speakers. The night a former student committed suicide, Tourangeau heard a pleading voice coming from nowhere and everywhere, crying out, “Miss, it hurts!”

Weeping, Tourangeau pulled out the trunk in which she had stored her small students’ writings and pictures, and in going through it, she found a poem of her own, describing some of what she was hearing from her students.

She read that poem at the boy’s funeral the following week, and some time later decided to put together a book.

“Miss, It Hurts”, is her anguished plea on behalf of children on her reserve: an edited collection of raw outpourings from her former students, chronicling their experiences of neglect and physical and emotional abuse.

It was so important as a classroom teacher … to give those kids a voice, a place that they could express themselves,” she said.

“No one was speaking for our children. I knew (after her student’s death) that it was time to speak so that our people will take off their shame blankets and face the pain so that our people could be healed.”

Although on the surface her talk was not about literacy issues, it was clear that Tourangeau and the northern delegates share the same goals: paying attention to the issues, building self-esteem, and ultimately giving a voice to those who have been kept silent – often by shame – for too long.
Mr. Answer Guy on men, equal rights and communication

From the Editor: Dirk Dashing is away this month, getting his head examined for faulty wiring. He may not have enough. In his stead we bring you Mr. Answer Guy, Eagle Feather News' answer to Oprah, Dr Phil and Jerry Springer.

Our first letter comes from C. Urley Tows, from somewhere east of Macklin. She asks: "Mr. Answer Guy, what's up with Father's Day, anyway? Aren't we just encouraging them by celebrating their existence. Is there a protest group I can join?"

Well, Ms Tows, Father's Day was created to support the equal rights movement for men. This began in 2000 B.C. - that is, "before cable" - when bands of shepherders would gather to complain about the unfair advantages women had over men, including the ability to give birth and the blessings of large, fleshy muscles on their chests. We called them "breasts," but this was later shortened to "breasts" because too many letters in a word tend to burn the meat between our ears.

These shepherders felt they were being discriminated against on the basis of gender, which is science-speak for, "It's cause we're dudes." We formed a union. Today we call that government. It's a good thing this ancient union did not succeed in its mission. For instance, had the campaign for "main breasts" succeeded the entire sweater industry would have collapsed a year later, in 1999 B.C. and millions of sheep would be walking around saying "cripes it's hot."

Think about it. If men had breasts nothing would get done since we would be too busy playing with our chestal-areas. It's hard enough trying to get us to mow the lawn let alone take out the trash. We do not need the complications of additional gear to lug around and admire.

As for a protest group to join may I suggest www.ihatemen.com.

Our second letter comes from Daphne Dafree of Melfort, and she asks: "Mr. Answer Guy, I'm having trouble communicating with my husband. He's a great guy, but I get the feeling we're not talking. Help me to understand what he is saying."

Since your name is so, well, daft, I feel I have to help you out. At the risk of offending all the male readers out there - both of them - I am going to reveal the keys to "man-speak." In return all female readers should send me emails thanking me for the secrets I am about to reveal. For instance...

When he says, "I'm going fishing," it really means "I'm going out with the guys to hoist way too many beverages to my lips, sit in a boat with a stick while the fish swim by in complete and utter safety."

When he says, "It's a guy thing," it really means "There is no rhyme nor reason to what I am doing."

Do not try to impose a sense of logical order or rational thought to my actions.

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NOW IN REGINA!
The fine folks at Mississippi Broadcasting recently received some good news. After some deliberation the CRTC has awarded MBC a license to broadcast their radio station in Regina. This comes on the heels of Saskatoon residents being able to tune in a couple years ago. Also granted license to broadcast in Saskatchewan was Aboriginal Voices Radio out of Ontario.
Here is a Q&A with MBC General Manager Deborah Charles.

What does this license for Regina mean to MBC?
This means that our people in Regina will finally be able to receive MBC programs that are more culturally relevant to their perspective and way of viewing the world and also gives them the opportunity to hear the Aboriginal artists that are seldom given airplay on the other radio stations. They will also have a chance to hear news and information programming that is specific to our Aboriginal way of life.

Will this change the content of your programming? Will there be news from the south?
MBC has prided itself on its quality of program content on our long road upward in the world of communications and we are recognized for that quality so I would say that the content of our programs can only continue to be refined and made better.
As the second part of your question, yes MBC will be looking at an increasing coverage of news and information that will be especially relevant to Regina listeners and we hope to have a locally based news reporter/stringer in place shortly after our signal starts being heard in Regina ... though I want all our listeners to know that we at MBC will also maintain our very strong coverage of all Aboriginal relevant information and news from all parts of Saskatchewan and Canada ... just as we have done over the past 23 years.

How are you different from Aboriginal Voices Radio?
I see no true way to compare us to AVR as all the people associated with MBC work for a very different operation. MBC is a “public trust” that is owned, operated and controlled directly by our people here in Saskatchewan and has an elected Board of Directors. Our mandate is the use of Aboriginal Languages that are spoken by us here in Saskatchewan in our daily programs. We cover what is relevant to our people from Aboriginal Music Festivals/Competitions to Trappers, Outfitters and Fishermen’s conventions.
MBC places a priority on getting Aboriginal people from the communities to express their viewpoints and share their ideas, philosophy and wisdom with all our listeners.
I would guess that if there is a major difference it is that we have always seen MBC as a having a responsibility to ensure our people and their views are heard rather than just broadcast to.

What can we expect next from MBC?
We have come so far in Aboriginal communications in the past couple of decades and taken on so many different challenges that I would only be safe in saying that our listeners can expect the to hear more and better programs that are relevant to our Aboriginal Perspective. MBC has been built on the blood, sweat and tears of literally hundreds of our people who have contributed as staff and board members. Personally, I mostly consider the solidarity and faithful loyalty of all of the Aboriginal Listeners as the key factor in MBC’s growth and success as a voice for our people that is ever increasing in its strength and relevance to the daily lives of our listeners.

Anything else we should know?
We at MBC know that just as sure as the sun will rise tomorrow there will be new challenges MBC will have to face ... and also new opportunities to serve our people.

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Call for Entries:
First Peoples Publishing Award:

Eligibility Criteria:

- The book must be published in an Aboriginal language.
- The book must be at least 200 pages in length.
- The book must be published in Canada.

Other Award Categories:

- Best First Nations Fiction
- Best First Nations Non-Fiction
- Best First Nations Poetry
- Best First Nations Drama

For more information and complete eligibility criteria: www.saskawards.ca

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Saskatchewan Book Awards - Celebrating First Peoples publishing since 1997.
Marathoners find anything is possible with dedication

BY RYAN BLACK

Mission impossible. That was what Ben Hernando and the other staff from the North Central Family Centre thought when they first presented with the idea of getting a group of high-risk youth to compete in an international marathon in Las Vegas.

But last December all 15 members of the team finished the 42-kilometre marathon successfully.

"Finishing a 42-kilometre marathon is not easy, it's very hard. So if you can do that, you can do anything," said Hernando.

Hernando saw that there was an opportunity to teach the youth life skills through running, but wasn't sure how to get them to commit to the training.

"If I offered these kids, train hard for five months and I will take you to Saskatoon for a marathon, do you think I would get one kid who would train? No," said Hernando.

"So I had to offer them something serious, something they would want really badly."

Hernando's own passion for fitness and health helped him to compete in 26 marathons across the world, and it was in running where he saw the opportunity to help the youth at the family centre.

"When you train, you run 30 kilometres, you go home, you get tired. So you don't spend much time hanging around, so it keeps you out of trouble, and again hopefully you quit smoking and drinking and drugs and stuff like that," said Hernando.

Besides teaching a healthy way of life for the kids, the marathon specifically is used as a way to help the youth learn skills they can apply to their daily lives.

"Marathons are not just about running, it teaches self-discipline, motivation, dedication and commitment. If you can train for and finish a marathon, anything is possible," says Hernando.

This year, the team has grown to 20 members and they are planning to compete in two more marathons in Saskatchewan, one in Manitoba and one in Jamaica in December.

The hope for these youth is that they can apply what they are learning from running to their lives, and use their experiences to help themselves and their community.

Tryane Bird, who is part of the group training right now, has had run-ins with the law in the past. He credits the family centre and running with turning his life around.

"If I didn't find this place two years ago," said Bird, "my life would have ended right at a dead end."

Bird used to be heavily involved in the street life of North Central Regina, but says that he has almost completely removed himself from that life.

Bird already is proud of his involvement in the marathon team, and views his experience as an opportunity to help other members of his community.

He already works at the family center and he says after the Jamaica marathon he would like to carry on running and possibly teach other young troubled individuals to do what he's doing.

"I would like to take what I've learned and share it with others who didn't have the chance."
Outdoor road hockey game has become part of the community in Saskatoon

On any given Sunday you can stroll by the cage at Bedford Road Collegiate and see a serious ball hockey game. For more than a decade locals have gathered to play. The puck (ball) drops right around 3 p.m., rain or shine.

Many have past through the cage, and Fabian, who has played there for three years says that “everyone is welcome and that the day goes by better when they have about four teams of five – plus a goalie.”

During the winter the game changes venue and they travel down the road to Princess Alexandra School where they play in the gym. Those games are played on Thursday evening.

So, if you find yourself compelled to get out there and find a new summer activity, get your team together and come on down any Sunday until the snow arrives.

New Super League showcases local basketball talent

The Super Six Basketball League is the brainchild of Sean Tyson, a former professional player who sees this city as no different than any other in which he has played throughout his career.

Tyson’s vision is to develop talent locally and present basketball on a stage that is not distinguished by region, but rather by talent. He feels that the talent here, as well as some of invitees, can make up a league that will be good enough to attract pro and college scouts from abroad.

Games take place over a six week period every Sunday evening at Nutana Collegiate. This year there was a draft where teams and talent were split between six teams. Each team plays each other once over the course of the schedule.

In the future, look for the Super Six League to grow on all levels and continue to showcase the best Saskatoon has to offer on the court.

Summer Games headed to Red Pheasant

The Saskatchewan First Nation Summer Games will be hosted by the Red Pheasant First Nation from July 22-July 26. With over 3,000 participants made up of athletes between the ages of 8-17 years that represent their Tribal Council, the games showcase some of the best young talent the province has to offer.

Athletes will participate in softball, golf, athletics, and soccer. This year’s demo-sport will be a road race.

Each of the ten Tribal Councils is allowed to bring 320 athletes from First Nations within the surrounding territory of those particular Tribal Councils.

The games serve as a great opportunity for the First Nations youth to gather and participate in sport. Through such activities it is the hope that these athletes take on characteristics such as responsibility, commitment, and determination and that these qualities are part of them long after the games end.

A GREAT VIEW

The goalie keeps the eye on the action from his vantage point at one end of the rink.
Peacekeepers pedal to raise diabetes awareness

Peacekeepers Pedaling for Aboriginal People with Diabetes (PPAD) recently returned home from their latest journey, this time reaching Thunder Bay.

Launched in 2005, PPAD’s mission is to promote healthy lifestyles, increase awareness about diabetes and raise funds for the Canadian Diabetes Association by bicycling across Canada two weeks at a time over five years.

In 2009, organizers Const. Keith Salzl and Const. Tony Nadon, along with U of S student Michael Linklater, cycled from Vancouver to Saskatoon. It was a huge success, resulting in full sponsor support until 2009, the year they will reach the Atlantic.

Last year saw Salzl and Nadon cycle 1,500 km throughout Saskatchewan, stopping at many First Nation communities along the way. This year’s journey took them from Saskatoon to Thunder Bay and turned out to be the toughest leg to date.

“We got to Wynyard and some people there felt genuinely sorry for us. But we still had to put in our 120 km”

Feeling sorry for himself while participating in PPAD is not an option for Salzl.

“For every negative, there’s a positive,” he explains. “On rough days, either due to weather or hills, we’d end up meeting people suffering from diabetes and realize our day wasn’t so bad.”

Salzl was surprised when many of them equated their situation with that of the pedaling peacekeepers.

“Some of those people would tell us our journey was like having diabetes. You have your good days and your bad days.”

The good balanced the bad when entering Ontario on their way to Thunder Bay. Salzl said he was daunted with the hills but taken aback by the scenery of the Canadian Shield.

In 2008, Salzl and Nadon will cycle from Thunder Bay to Ottawa and finish out their cross-Canada tour the following year.

With all the effort it takes to operate and participate in PPAD, Salzl, who is an Aboriginal Liaison with the Saskatoon Police Service, is quick to point out why he got involved in the first place.

“This was a way for me to say thanks to the Elders for all they have done for me personally and their support for me in my job.”

**PEDAL POWER**

Members of Peacekeepers Pedaling for Aboriginal People with Diabetes take a break from a grueling journey that took them to Thunder Bay, Ont. “May 23 was the hardest day we have ever had since we started,” said rider Const. Keith Salzl. “We had sleet, rain and of course strong wind.”

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**PRIDE LIVES HERE**

1-888-4-RIDERS or Visit the Ticket Office at Mosaic Stadium

www.riderville.com
The 2007 Saskatchewan First Nation Summer Games will see friendly competition with the 11 tribal councils that are spread across the Province of Saskatchewan.

Sporting events include; athletics, golf, soccer, softball and a road race.

Expect over 3,500 first nation athletes aged 8-17, and 3,000 spectators, parents, volunteers, chaperones, MANAGERS and coaches.

JULY 22, 2007
OPENING CEREMONIES Sponsored by the Potash Corp.
(GRAND ENTRY, ATHLETE PARADE & FIRE WORKS DISPLAY)

JULY 22-26, 2007
THE GAMES
(RED PHEASANT FIRST NATION & THE BATTLEFORDS)

JULY 26, 2007
CLOSING CEREMONIES
(MEDAL PRESENTATIONS)

SEE YOU AT THE GAMES! 1 1

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL
(306) 445-9996 OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT
www.2007summergames.ca

Volunteers are needed in the following areas: Medical Services, Food Services, Sports, Traffic Control, Merchandise, Special Events, Facilities, Marketing/Sales, Ceremonies, Transportation, Athletes Village, Accommodations, Cultural & Wellness Workshops.