

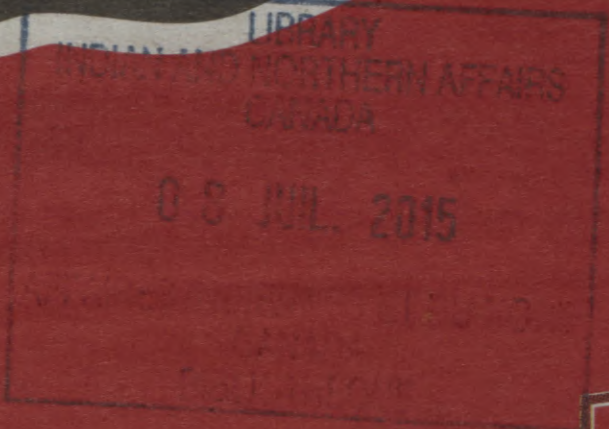
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Honouring Memories, Planting Dreams

A child carries a heart to be planted in a heart garden on the grounds of Rideau Hall. It was the final event on the last day of the closing ceremony for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on June 3. The planting of hearts is in remembrance of children who lost their lives at residential schools. Similar ceremonies were held between May 31 and June 3 across the country to coincide with the TRC's closing event.

Please see more stories and photos starting on page 8.

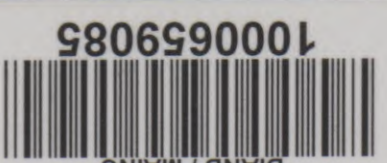
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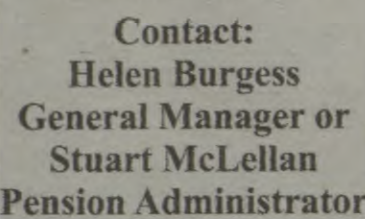
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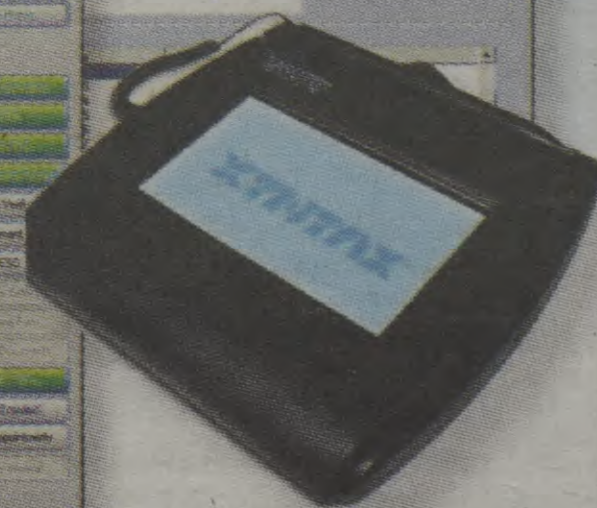


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Peel Aboriginal Network (PAN) showed their resourcefulness when they celebrated their kick-off to Aboriginal History Month in Mississauga. They converted their parking lot on Britannia and Hurontario in Mississauga into a celebratory venue complete with hoop dancing, barbecues, face painting, arts and crafts, and vendors selling everything from fine art to quill earrings to very hot sauces.

TRC offers Canada a second chance 8

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission has slammed the federal government for not implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. On May 6, the Conservatives voted down a bill that would ensure that the laws of Canada were in accordance with the declaration.

Survivors weep for those who died 9

Annie Johnston and Madeleine Jackson held each other and wept softly as Truth and Reconciliation Commissioner Dr. Marie Wilson talked about the children who had died at residential school, many of whose names were not recorded. And for more than half, the cause of death was not known.

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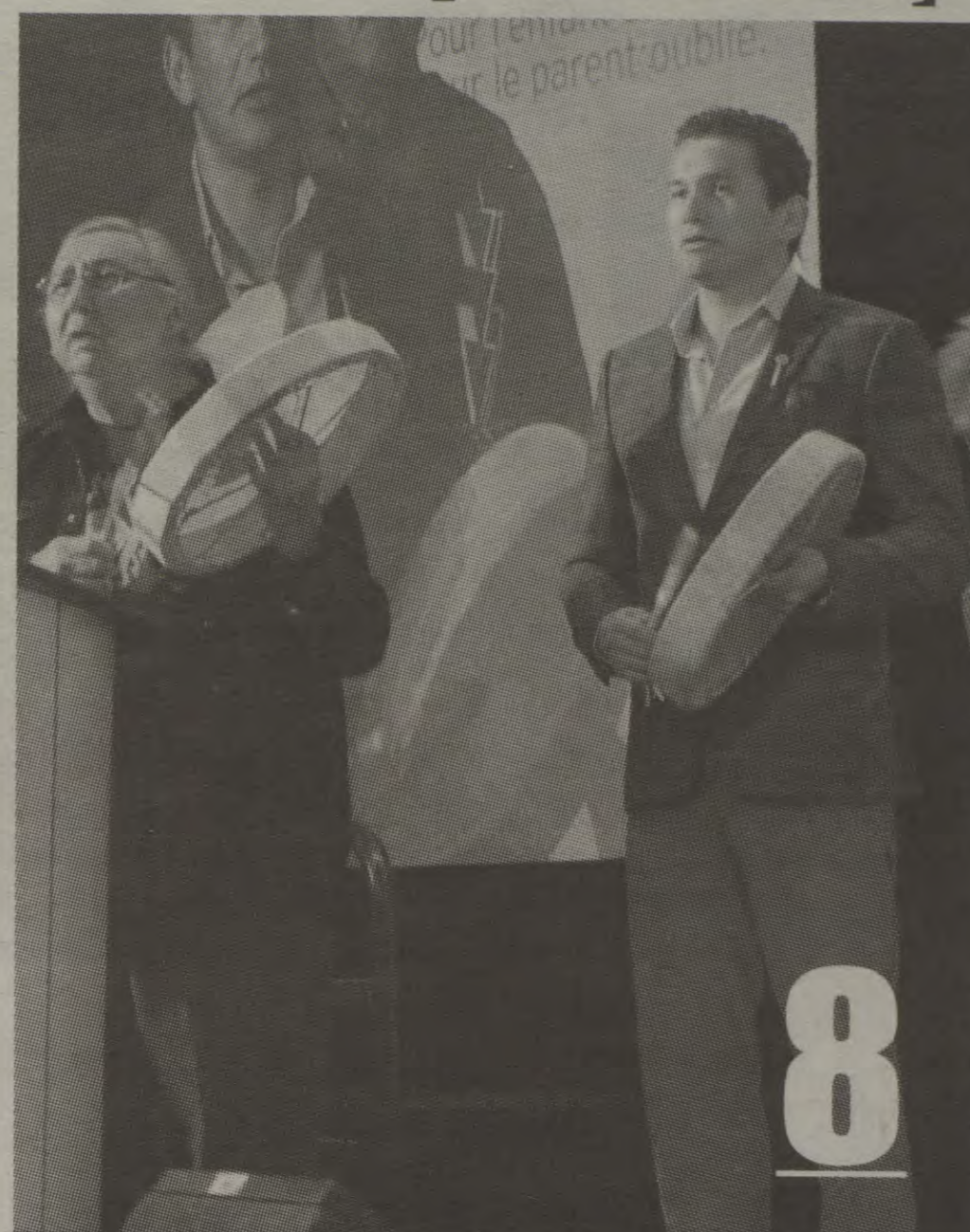
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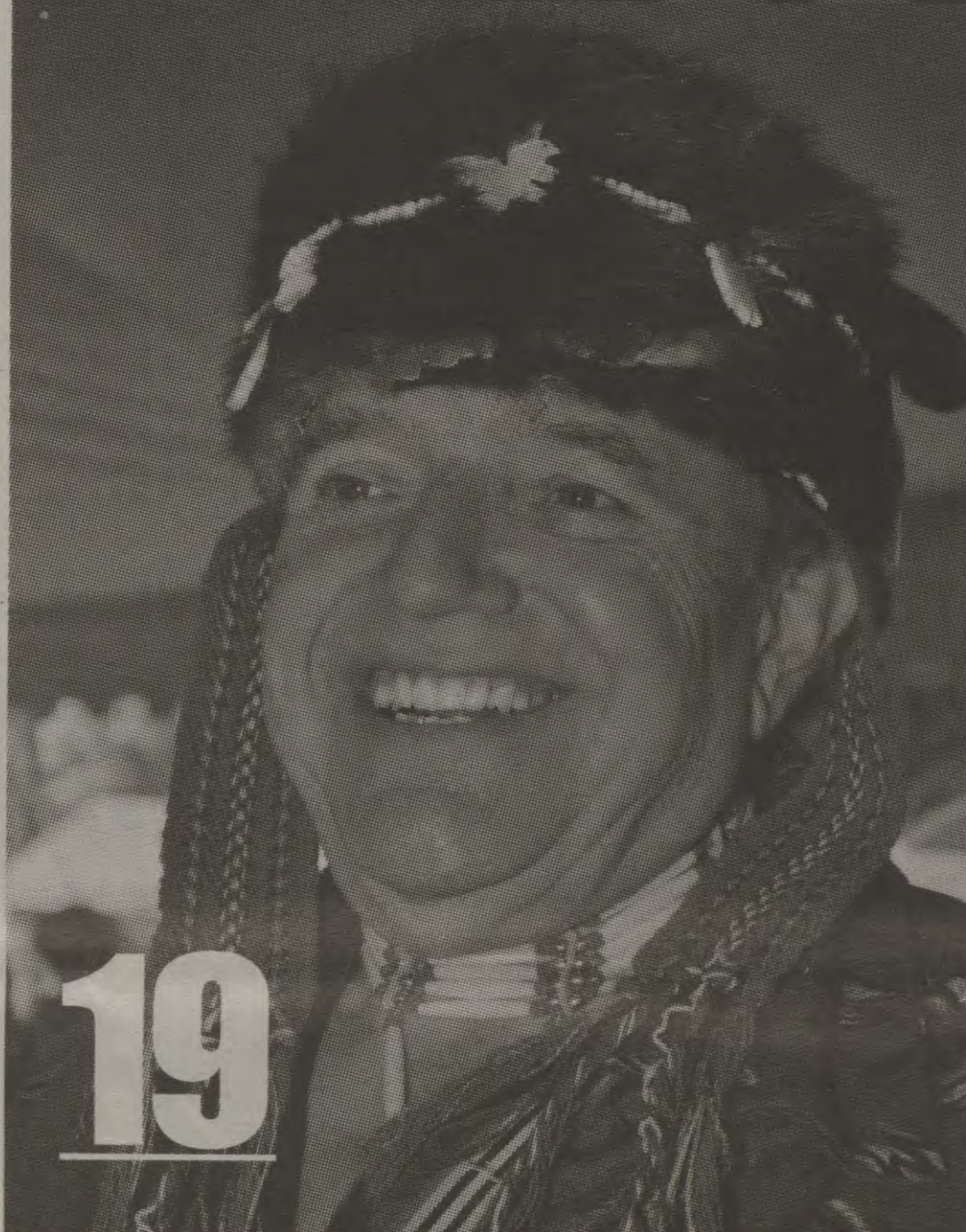
While other kids in Wikwemikong, on Ontario's Manitoulin Island, were running around with baseball bats and jars for catching frogs, Josh Peltier carried paint brushes or a sketchpad.

Surrounded and inspired by great Woodland Anishnaabe artists like Leland Bell and Daphne Odjig, Josh continued creating until he realized he needed to expand his horizon.

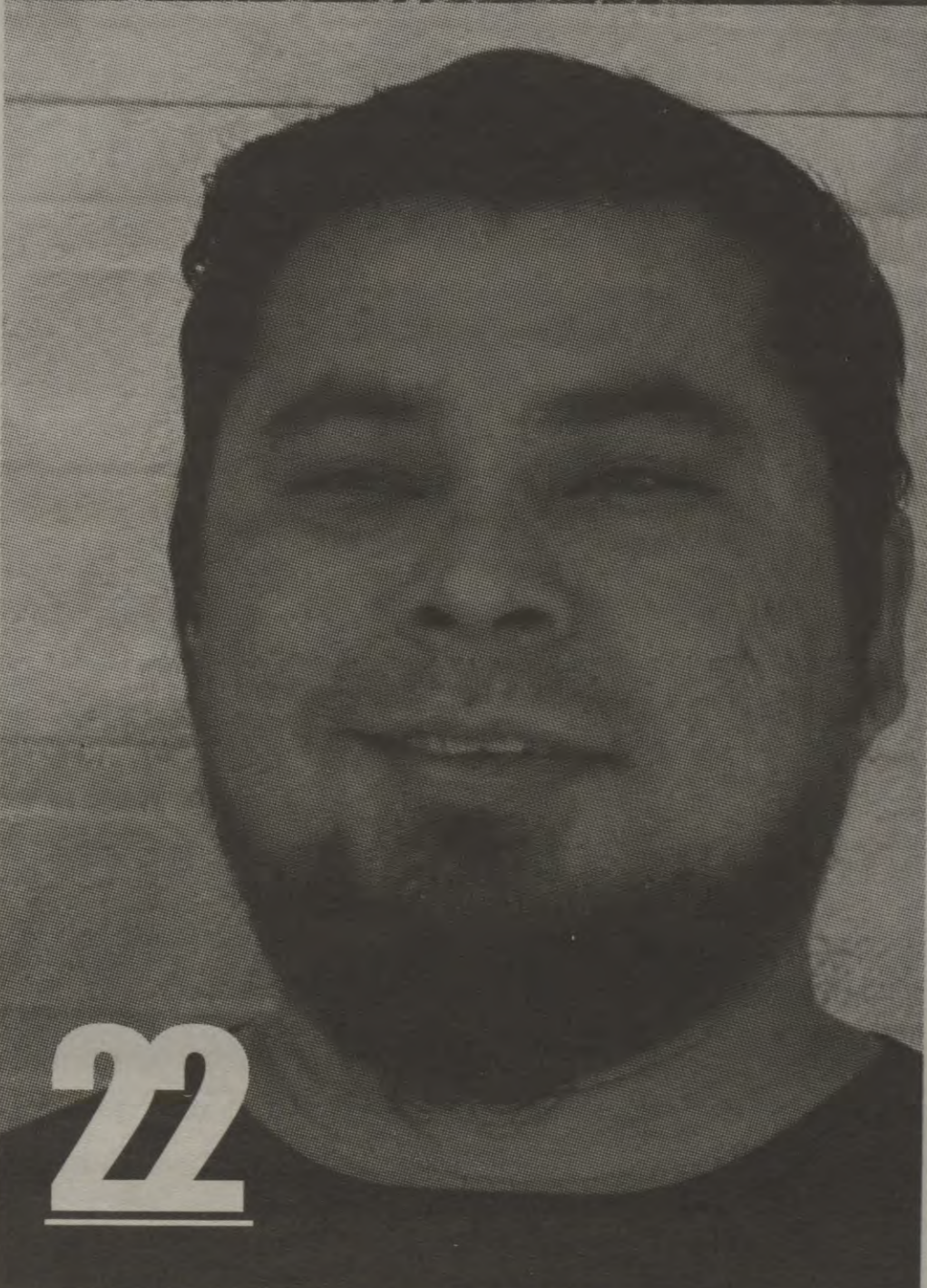
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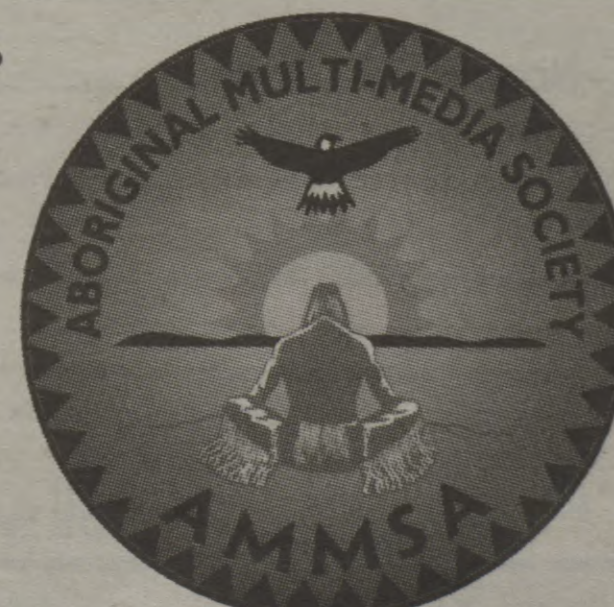
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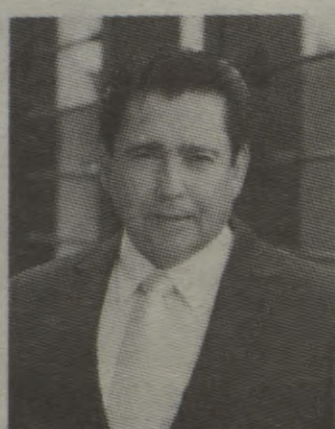
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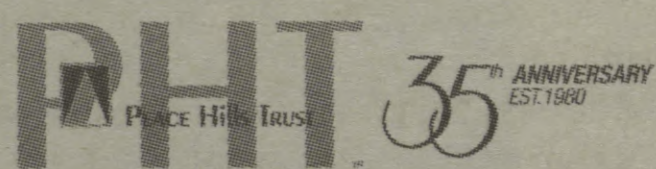
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Robert Louie LL.B., OC, of Kelowna, B.C. is the Chief of the Westbank First Nation. He is also the Chairman of the First Nations Lands Advisory Board. He served as a member of the Board of Governors with the University of British Columbia and as a member of the President's Advisory Council of the University of British Columbia Okanagan (UBC-O). Chief Louie is a former practicing lawyer specializing in Native law. He has served on numerous other boards and advisory bodies and has been the recipient of many awards and recognitions over the years. By far the most prestigious, was his appointment as an Officer to the Order of Canada.

Peace Hills Trust Company's past Chair, Mr. Warren Hannay is retiring after 27 years of service. We thank Mr. Hannay for the leadership and many contributions he has made as past President, CEO (retired 2008) and Chairman.

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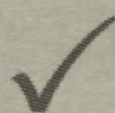
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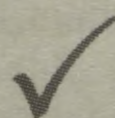
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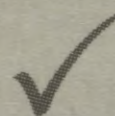


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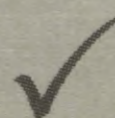


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Get off the pot, Ottawa, and demonstrate that your words are more than just a bunch of consonants and vowels strung together and carried into the world around us to fill the silence with noise. Every word uttered should be considered a precious gift, a reflection of what's in a person's heart, their thoughts and speak to their resolve. If you don't mean it; don't say it.

Aboriginal Affairs Minister Bernard Valcourt has committed by his words not to "forgive and forget, but to remember and change." This is what he told reporters June 2 after the Truth and Reconciliation Commission delivered a summary of its final report and 94 recommendations, which provide a roadmap to improved relationships between Aboriginal peoples and non-Aboriginal Canadians.

"It's not going to be an easy journey" but the federal government is committed to the work of reconciliation, Valcourt said. "I'm confident that we can build on the important work that's been done and continue to heal as a nation."

So why, oh why, Minister is your government making this journey more difficult than it needs to be? Tell the people representing your government at Justice Canada that part of your commitment to the people of Canada is to provide Aboriginal claimants with the documents that they need that will validate the abuse they suffered at the hands of residential school staff.

What are they trying to protect by withholding these documents? Six years of testimony from thousands of residential school survivors has made it clear to everyone, except the most obtuse and ignorant of Canadians, that terrible abuse happened. By not providing the information in these documents, your government

stands with the abusers. It's sick, and cruel, and the exact opposite of the "important work" of healing a country.

Those people who attended St. Anne's Residential School in Fort Albany, Ont. and those that attended Bishop Horden in Moose Factory should not have to battle government lawyers for documents they need for their Independent Assessment Processes. Canada's lawyers are required to provide this documentation by virtue of your commitments in the settlement agreement. This is a legal requirement, and, if your words mean anything, Mr. Minister, a moral obligation, a sacred commitment.

And tell your government's lawyers to leave the black Sharpies at home. In August 2014, the federal government handed over about 40,000 pages to survivors' lawyers, but they were so heavily redacted they became "nearly useless" to their compensation claims. Providing documents that are heavily redacted is not living up to your obligations Canada. It doesn't serve your core duty to these survivors. Canada, by being a part of the settlement agreement, you have made a commitment to the truth.

"I think what we're seeing is the failure of the federal government to show good faith in this process," Charlie Angus, New Democrat MP, told APTN. "The government is responsible for collecting documents regarding the history of an institution and whether or not criminal acts occurred, sexual or physical abuse."

It's not your duty to protect the people that committed these horrors.

Mr. Minister, on June 2, you didn't just represent the silo of Aboriginal Affairs when you spoke about the TRC's report. You were speaking for Canada that day. Stand up, Mr. Minister, and animate your words with action.

Windspeaker

Indigenous Bar Association calls for First Nations inclusion

The Supreme Court of Canada recently released its decision in *R. v. Kokopenace*, a case involving the under-representation of on-reserve First Nations residents on jury rolls in Ontario. The decision, from the highest court in Canada, is disturbing in that it fails to take account of the "substantially different cultural values and experiences of aboriginal people" and ignores previous rulings from the same Court which recognizes and affirms the unique role and identity that First Nations occupy in the founding of this country.

"This decision calls into question the important advances in reconciliation that have been made between First Nations people and Canada," said Koren Lightning-Earle, president of the Indigenous Bar Association.

Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin has publically stated that reconciliation "is founded on an ideal of equality and mutual respect. It eschews discrimination in all its forms. In this sense, it takes us back to the early relations between Europeans and First Nations, and our initial historic phase of cooperation based on mutual need and respect."

"Ensuring First Nations people are properly represented by a jury of their peers is a foundational component of Canada's criminal justice system. The disregard of Aboriginal peoples being tried by a representative composition of a jury is discriminatory and offends the principles of the *Charter*," said Lightning-Earle.

Denying Mr. Kokopenace his section 11

Charter rights also stands in stark opposition to the recent recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report, which calls for, "establishing and maintaining a mutually respectful relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in this country. In order for that to happen, there has to be awareness of the past, acknowledgement of the harm that has been inflicted, atonement for the causes, and action to change behaviour."

In the spirit of advancing reconciliation, the Indigenous Bar Association calls upon the Government of Ontario to heed the advice of Justice Iacobucci's report *First Nations Representation on Ontario Juries*, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's final report, *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling the Future*, and Justice Harry LaForme of the Ontario Court of Appeal, to immediately address the standard for the inclusion of First Nations on the jury roll which can only be seen as a change to the current behaviour.

Justice Iacobucci in his final report provided the following insight, "...meaningful progress can only be made in improving the representation of First Nations peoples on Ontario's jury roll if steps are also taken at the same time to respond to the systemic issues that have prevented First Nations peoples from participating in Ontario's justice system."

Opinion from the Indigenous Bar Association

[rants and raves]

Page 5 Chatter

The Aboriginal Pavilion for the TORONTO 2015 Pan Am/Parapan Am Games is the lone "official" Indigenous music and arts

festival for the games, and organizers have announced a full line-up of musicians and multi-disciplinary artists who will "transform Fort York Historic Site's Garrison Common grounds into one of the summer's hottest free admission festival destinations," reads a press release. The Pavilion marks the first time in the history of the games that there has been such a large and strong Aboriginal music, comedy, dance and multi-disciplinary arts presence during the world sporting event.

The Pavilion's Opening Night extravaganza kicks off on July 16 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. And then it's music, comedy and dance and theatre until July 26. More than 40 Indigenous music talents from across North America are in the line-up, including A Tribe Called Red, Crystal Shawanda, Quetzal Guerrero, Don Ross, Leela Gilday, LightningCloud, Digging Roots, Susan Aglukark, Derek Miller, Cris Derksen, Bitterly Divine, George Leach and Reyes Poetry and Sacramento Knox. Comedians include sketch comedy group 1491s, Candy Palmater, the "half-breed humor" of Dustin Hollings (of the Banned Council), and Ryan McMahon.

The gaps in economic outcomes between Aboriginal people

and non-Aboriginal Canadians remains large, said Chief Clarence Louie, chair of the National Aboriginal Economic Development Board. The NAEDB released its first Progress Report on the state of Aboriginal economic development June 17 in Osoyoos, B.C.

The report builds on the 2012 Aboriginal Economic Benchmarking Report, which set 10-year targets for the purposes of tracking the economic progress of Aboriginal people in Canada, including closing the gap in economic outcomes by 2022. But three years in, the gap remains significant.

For First Nations on reserve, the employment rate declined from 39 per cent to 35.4 per cent and the unemployment rate increased from 24.9 per cent to 25.2 per cent. Improved outcomes can be seen, however, in Inuit and Métis populations. Inuit unemployment declined from 20.3 per cent in 2006 to 19.5 per cent in 2011. The average income gap between Métis and the non-Aboriginal population was reduced by 6.7 per cent.

The overall Aboriginal population grew at an average rate of 3.6 per cent per year from 2006 to 2011, four times faster than the non-Aboriginal population.

"The NAEDB is concerned that much of the economic potential of Aboriginal people remains unrealized," said Dawn Madahbee, vice-chair. "The only way forward is through economic, business, education, employment and community development led by strong governance, political will and sufficient targeted financial investments in these areas."

The NAEDB has released eight recommendations, including making closing the gaps for First Nations on reserve a government-wide priority. The federal economic agenda needs to concentrate on First Nation treaty rights, obligations and working relationships, a press statement reads.

The NAEDB calls for the establishment of a Aboriginal-led Task Force on Aboriginal Education. It calls for investments in Aboriginal skills development and training aligned with concrete employment opportunities. It's recommended that water and waste management systems be a priority for all Aboriginal communities in Canada, that the suite of Aboriginal business programming and Aboriginal Financial Institutions be supported with capital and expertise to build "a vibrant network of Aboriginal businesses throughout Canada."

NAEDB calls for an Aboriginal youth strategy, focused on improving education, business and employment outcomes. And the group has turned its attention to data collection, which needs to be continuously improved and expanded, so that economic and social progress can be tracked and improved.

"The Board firmly believes that economic development is the foundation for real reconciliation and true collaboration between governments, private sector businesses and all Aboriginal people," said Chief Louie. "It is clear that there is still much work to be done before Aboriginal people are in the same position as other Canadians to contribute to and benefit from one of the world's wealthiest economies. It is essential that we continue to enact policies and programs that will drive economic development and contribute to closing the gap." A second Aboriginal Economic Progress Report is scheduled for 2018 to track and assess advancements made in closing the gaps.

The Métis National Council said it was gravely disappointed

that after six years of interventions to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), it was not invited to participate in any way in the final public national event. Without explanation or notification, the Métis Nation did not receive an invitation nor information on this closing event held in Ottawa in June. After having suffered exclusion from the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement, the Prime Minister's 2008 apology and the mandate of the TRC itself, this final act of exclusion will have profound and negative effects on the aspirations of reconciliation between all Aboriginal peoples and the rest of Canada, reads a press statement.

"For an Aboriginal people who have experienced decades of marginalization, many of whom attended Métis residential or boarding schools, this latest exclusion is inexcusable and demoralizing" said Métis Nation President Clément Chartier. "For 10 long years I attended the Ile a la Crosse Métis boarding school, one of the oldest such residential schools in Canada," the statement reads. Many suffered psychological, physical, cultural, emotional and sexual abuse at the hands of the servants of the Catholic Church, he added.

Education is key to reconciliation

Guest Column
Grand Chief Gord Peters
Association of Iroquois
and Allied Indians

To the children we lost, the ones who survived, and the families who were never the same without them, we honour and recognize your stories and your truths.

For more than 100 years, our children were taken from us. Our communities and families suffered as 150,000 little boys and girls were removed from their homes and taken to schools where their language was beat out of them, where they faced unimaginable abuse and trauma, and where many lost their lives.†

As the Truth and Reconciliation Commission comes to a close, we continue the work of healing our Nations, and recognize the truth of Canada's history of assimilation and annihilation of our peoples. We must remember that despite the horrific genocide practiced through the residential school system, our peoples and our Nations are still here. With every breath of our Nations' survival, we continue to reclaim our



Rather than honour the terms of the Treaties, through which our Indigenous Nations generously shared our resources with the newcomers, Canada instead chose the path of establishing its Nationhood through genocide.

Grand Chief Gord Peters



languages, cultures and land, and in this way we honour each and every one of those children.

Residential schools had one singular purpose – to solve Canada's "Indian problem." Canada could not build itself out of nothing. The fledgling settler state required unfettered access to lands and resources to establish as a country. In this respect, our peoples—our children—were seen as an obstacle to be overcome and put down.

Rather than honour the terms of the Treaties, through which our Indigenous Nations generously shared our resources

with the newcomers, Canada instead chose the path of establishing its Nationhood through genocide.

To this day, it amazes me how few Canadians know about residential schools or the fact that the last school wasn't shut down until 1996. We are not talking about a chapter of history that is generations behind us, but a practice that came to a close less than 20 years ago – the same year that brought us eBay.

There are 94 recommendations in the Commission's report which cover a broad scope of changes in areas such as justice and

education. Specifically within policing, it is encouraging to see one recommendation point to the need for independence within the RCMP.

While this reaffirmed independence would give the RCMP greater oversight to investigate crimes free of governmental interests, it recognizes the history of police abuse throughout the era of residential schools on behalf of the government.

Throughout the commission we've heard stories of police removing children from their homes in the middle of the night, refusing to investigate

schools known for abuse, and acting largely in the government's best interest.

While each recommendation is critical in its own way, perhaps one of the most hopeful is the call for curriculum reform. Indigenous and Canadian children would be able to learn together about residential schools, the true history of Canada, and Indigenous cultures. When we are all working from the same history, with the same understanding of Treaty responsibilities, we can move away from apologies and begin to rebuild our relationships in a good way.

The report also harkens back to the 1996 Royal Commission, which was largely ignored after its release. Canada cannot allow these recommendations to collect dust as was seen with the 1996 commission. This as a second chance to make things right, and Canada must seize it.

Through renewed relationships, both Canada and Indigenous Nations can grow and thrive on our respective paths, living in mutual friendship, peace and harmony – as our Treaties always intended.

Day scholars class action certified

By Shari Narine
Windspeaker Contributor

KAMLOOPS

Court action launched by the Tk'eml'ps te Secw'epemc and Shishalh Indian Bands on behalf of their own day scholars will have an impact on all Aboriginal people who were day scholars at Indian residential schools from 1920 to 1997.

"It's been a rough journey but it was amazing when I got the call from our legal team that we'd been certified. I was very overwhelmed," said Jo-Anne Gottfriedson, day scholar legal action coordinator for Tk'eml'ps te Secw'epemc Indian Band.

On June 3, the Federal Court in Vancouver certified a class action lawsuit that allows the bands to move forward in seeking compensation from the federal government for three different classes: survivor class, descendant class and band class. The lawsuit represents all First Nations, Metis and Inuit who attended Indian residential schools as day scholars.

"Now we're going to be dealing with those devastating impacts in a legal procedure," said Gottfriedson. "Every residential school that had day scholars is in

that class action."

Chiefs of the Tk'eml'ps te Secw'epemc and Shishalh Indian Bands began talking in December 2010 and decided to pursue compensation for their day scholars together. On Aug. 15, 2012, they filed a class action in federal court.

"The whole case is predicated on the loss of language and culture," said Gottfriedson, who was a day scholar for seven years at the Kamloops Indian residential school. "Our people have endured a great loss because they attended on a daily basis and they were not any different than the ones who stayed there because they endured the same abuses."

The Kamloops IRS was the largest Indian residential school in Canada, operating from 1890 to 1978. The Sechelt Indian residential school operated from 1904 to 1975. Between the two schools there is an estimate that more than 300 day scholars are still alive. But that number continues to dwindle, said Gottfriedson, as age and health claim more survivors.

Day scholars did not qualify for the Common Experience Payment under the Indian Residential School Settlement

Agreement. All residential school survivors, who were on the school roll of one of 139 recognized Indian residential schools, were eligible to receive \$10,000 each through CEP for the first year of attendance and \$3,000 for every successive year.

Gottfriedson said the CEP amount is only the starting point for negotiations for the day scholar action.

She is hopeful that other First Nations will join the class action lawsuit and will also financially contribute to the cause. But if they don't, Gottfriedson says Tk'eml'ps te Secw'epemc and Shishalh Indian Bands will continue to bankroll the effort.

Gottfriedson says a settlement agreement between the federal government and day scholars does not have to be a lengthy litigation.

"If Canada is willing to sit down and negotiate with us, (that) would be the ideal situation," she said. She is hopeful that in the spirit of reconciliation this is the route the federal government will take.

While one set of day scholars is further down their path to both recognition and compensation, there is another set of day scholars, who is still looking for both.

Ray Mason, chair for Spirit Wind Canada, represents day scholars who attended schools in church basements or church or government-built institutions in their communities that were not also residential schools. These day scholars do not qualify for representation under the Tk'eml'ps te Secw'epemc and Shishalh Indian Bands class action law suit.

Mason was a day scholar for a year, attending a school on Peguis First Nation.

"I got strapped. I don't know how many times in a day because I couldn't speak English," he said. He was also strapped and further abused at the three residential schools he attended.

"B.C. being certified will help our cause," he said. "In a sense, (the court) is saying, 'Okay, we abused day scholars.' It will help us in a similar fashion because we are day scholars as well."

In April 2009, Spirit Wind filed the National McLean Day School Action in a Manitoba Court of Queen's Bench.

"We are at the point where our research is almost complete. We're one step away from certification," said Mason, who added they are still gathering names of day scholars who fit in this category

and are up to 11,000. "We feel that we have a very strong case and we feel that Canada owes us something."

Financing the effort has been a struggle, he says. Spirit Wind is applying for its charitable number so it can solicit donations.

Mason is not optimistic about the federal government's desire to make amends to day scholars.

"They're trying to avoid anything to do with resolving this dark period in the history of Canada because of the fact that they know they're going to have to come up with a large problem, a very expensive problem," said Mason. "I don't see Canada readily knocking on our doors and saying, 'Come on, let's get this over with.' But they shouldn't give us such a hard time because we're going to end up winning anyway."

Day scholars were not included in the apology to Indian residential school survivors delivered by Prime Minister Stephen Harper in 2008. In the summary of the final report recently released by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, day scholars received a passing mention. However, day scholars were invited to tell their stories at TRC events over the past six years.

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Celebrating the culture - in Mississauga

By Barb Nahwegahbow
Windspeaker Contributor

Mississauga

Peel Aboriginal Network (PAN) showed their resourcefulness when they celebrated their kick-off to Aboriginal History Month in Mississauga. They converted their parking lot on Britannia and Hurontario in Mississauga into a celebratory venue complete with hoop dancing, barbecues, face painting, arts and crafts, and vendors selling everything from fine art to quill earrings to very hot sauces.

June 6 marked the second annual celebration known as The Gathering hosted by PAN, a friendship centre. PAN's assistant director, Solange Losier, said, "it's a way to bring families and the community together for a fun day to share and enjoy our culture. It's an inclusive event and everyone is welcome."

About 150 people participated throughout the day. PAN staff and volunteers were kept busy barbecuing hot dogs and burgers, painting faces and teaching the art of making dreamcatchers.

Lisa Odjig, two-time World Champion Hoop Dancer and, in 2000, the first woman ever to win the title, had the crowd waiting in anticipation from the minute she appeared in her red dance regalia. The anticipation built as she laid out 17 hoops on her makeshift stage and spoke to the audience about her journey.

A member of Wikwemikong Unceded Indian Reserve in northern Ontario, Odjig told the audience she's been hoop dancing since she was a teenager in high school. Her uncle Gordie Odjig, she said, "taught me my first 12 hoops."

When Uncle Gordie gave her that first lesson, she connected with the hoops, she said. "It was one of the most best and the most memorable nights of my life," she recalled.

Her uncle told her, "These are not just hoops. You have to learn to respect them. They'll take care of you, they'll dance with you. Even when you're out there by yourself, you're not by yourself. You're dancing together."

The Hoop Dance is a storytelling dance and a teaching dance, Odjig said. "The hoops themselves represent the circle of life. It symbolizes the beautiful sun, the moon, the land, the hoops create formations such as the plants, the animals, the birds. A celebration of life."

Odjig didn't disappoint the crowd when she danced and skillfully maneuvered 17 hoops, all without missing a step or dropping a hoop. Cameras clicked as spectators sought to capture the magic of the Hoop Dance.

Several children stepped up when Odjig offered to teach them some of the basic steps, especially after she said, "anyone can learn



World Champion Hoop Dancer Lisa Odjig at The Gathering in Mississauga June 6

PHOTOS: BARB NAHWEGAHBOW

this."

In an interview after her performance, Odjig reflected on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's summary report.

"No matter what," she said, "we've got to stay up and be strong, still celebrate life, celebrate who we are, where we come from. That's always something to be proud of and life is so short. We've got to make the best of it."

Painter Jay Bell Redbird, also a member of Wikwemikong, was another featured artist at The Gathering. "I wanted to come out and share my work and hopefully inspire some people," said Redbird. "I like to support the work PAN is doing."

Redbird grew up surrounded by artists, including his father Duke Redbird, Norval Morrisseau, and his uncle Leland Bell, all of whom he counts among his mentors. They influenced his work, sharing techniques and traditional teachings and buying him art supplies.

An important part of his work as an artist is teaching, said Redbird. He especially enjoys working with young up-and-coming artists. "I was always fascinated with Norval and my uncle Leland," he said, "and they took the time to teach me, so I like to do that for the kids and new artists."

What advice does he give them? "Go to ceremonies, do some sweats, some fasting, get connected. That's mostly how I do my work."

The 2011 Census identified



Kris Noakes, Co-Executive Director and Co-Chair of Peel Aboriginal Network with some of the attendees at The Gathering

more than 12,000 people of Aboriginal ancestry in Peel Region. In addition to Mississauga, Peel Region includes Brampton, Caledon and Malton.

PAN opened as a cultural centre in 2009 providing cultural programming to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. It has evolved into a centre that provides courtwork and social services and cultural awareness training to schools in Peel.

PAN continues to offer a broad range of traditional cultural and healing programs like Talking and Drumming Circles, and Full Moon Ceremonies.



Artist Jay Bell Redbird at The Gathering in Mississauga

TRC offers Canada a second chance

By Shari Narine
Windspeaker Contributor

OTTAWA

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission has slammed the federal government for not implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. On May 6, the Conservatives voted down a bill that would ensure that the laws of Canada were in accordance with the declaration.

"The Canadian government's rejection of the implementation work with respect to the declaration sends an unfortunate message to Aboriginal people in Canada at a very sensitive time as well as to all Canadians and to the world," said TRC Chair Justice Murray Sinclair.

The TRC has directed the federal, provincial, territorial and municipal governments to fully adopt the declaration as the framework in moving forward with reconciliation.

It has also recommended that the churches, who are party to the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement, formally adopt and comply with the declaration.

These were some of the 94 recommendations put forward by the TRC on June 2 when it delivered a nearly 400-page summary of its final report.

"Our 94 recommendations endeavour to confront the complexities associated with reconciliation," said Sinclair.

The recommendations are all-encompassing, making it clear that the legacy of residential schools has impacted every aspect of Aboriginal life. There were seven generations of Aboriginal children, or 150,000 students, that attended residential schools.

The federal government and churches began operating the schools in the 1870s, with the last one closing in 1996. If the schools had operated for 20 or 30 years, said Sinclair, the devastation would not have been so far-reaching. But the depth of loss



PHOTO: SHARI NARINE

About to deliver their findings of six years of work are (from left) Truth and Reconciliation Commission members Chair Justice Murray Sinclair, Dr. Marie Wilson and Chief Wilton Littlechild, with Phil Fontaine, who spoke for the residential school survivors.

over the generations made it impossible for communities to reach out to their children and help them heal.

"We're calling on you to open up your mind, to be willing to learn these stories, to be willing to accept that these things happened," said Commissioner Chief Wilton Littlechild.

"Our recommendations should not be seen as an itemization of the national penance, but as an opportunity to embrace a second chance at establishing a relationship of equals, which was intended at the beginning and should have been continued throughout," said Sinclair.

The TRC has also recommended that the federal government work with Aboriginal peoples to develop a Royal Proclamation and Covenant of Reconciliation. This proclamation, said Sinclair, would build on the proclamation of 1763, which promoted a nation-to-nation relationship between the Crown and Aboriginal peoples, and which successive governments have ignored.

The creation of a National Council for Reconciliation has also been recommended. The

NCR would be an independent, oversight body that would monitor and report annually to the public and Parliament "to ensure that government accountability for reconciling the relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the Crown is maintained in the coming years."

The TRC has called for a statutory holiday marking a National Day for Truth and Reconciliation as well as a Residential Schools National Monument, to be installed in a highly visible, publicly accessible space in Ottawa. It calls for similar monuments to be installed in provincial and territorial capitals.

The TRC also wants the Pope to issue an apology on behalf of the Roman Catholic Church. On June 11, Prime Minister Stephen Harper met with Pope Francis. A news release issued by Harper's office stated, "Harper also drew attention to the letter sent by Bernard Valcourt, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, to the Holy See regarding the Truth and Reconciliation Commission."

With no indication that Harper specifically spoke about the apology, Bellegarde said in a

statement, "It is deeply disappointing to learn that the Prime Minister met with Pope Francis today and did not ask the Pope to come to Canada to formally apologize to survivors for the role of the Catholic Church in the residential schools."

The TRC also calls for a national inquiry into murdered and missing women and girls.

Other areas the recommendations covered include child welfare; education; language and culture; health; equity in the legal system; professional development and training for public servants; community-based youth programs; national review of museums and archives; equitable access to jobs, training and educational opportunities in the corporate sector; more Aboriginal-inclusion in media and media-related schools; support for Aboriginal peoples in sports; and treaty information for all immigrants to Canada.

In response to the recommendations, Anglican Archbishop and Primate Fred Hiltz, who also represented the United and Presbyterian churches and the Catholic Entities, said the TRC's recommendations were

both acknowledged and accepted.

"We will continue to share in the work of healing and reconciliation respectfully following the lead of Indigenous communities and leaders and to offer leadership among non-Indigenous Canadians where and how that is appropriate," said Hiltz.

Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada Minister Bernard Valcourt, who was present when the summary was presented, said, "Since the creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Canada has worked to fulfill its response and obligations under the settlement agreement and will continue to do so."

But that hasn't been the case, which has been demonstrated by repeated court action by the TRC to have the federal government release relevant documentation, as directed by the IRSSA.

TRC Commissioner Dr. Marie Wilson said that the 2008 apology, although delivered by Prime Minister Stephen Harper, was an all-party undertaking.

"There hasn't been enough action by our country. That doesn't belong to any one party," she said, pointing out that statistics presented in the TRC's summary indicate that life for Aboriginal people has not improved over the course of the commission.

The summary was a topic of discussion in the House of Commons the day it was released.

Liberal leader Justin Trudeau committed his party to implementing the recommendations and challenged the Conservative government to do the same.

"(The TRC) has issued a large number of recommendations. We are still awaiting the full report. The government will examine all of these and, obviously, read them before deciding what the appropriate next steps are," said Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

The full report is to be delivered by the end of the year.

Centre to keep the survivors at heart of work

By Shari Narine
Windspeaker Contributor

OTTAWA

Survivors were the focus of the work undertaken by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission over the past six years, and will be the focus of the work undertaken by the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation going forward.

"This is all about survivors," said centre director Ry Moran, adding that the centre will continue to take the statements of survivors who were not yet ready to speak to the commission. "This is critical and something that we are deeply committed to."

The NCTR was created by the



PHOTO: SHARI NARINE

Jerry Saddleback and Wab Kinew perform an honour song for the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation with NCTR representatives on stage (from left): governing circle member Eugene Arcand, University of Winnipeg President Dr. David Barnard, Director Ry Moran and governing circle member Cynthia Wesley-Esquimaux.

commission as part of the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement. In the summary report delivered by the commission on June 2, the TRC directed the centre to continue collecting the documents mandated under the settlement agreement. There are still relevant records from the federal government and the churches, particularly the Catholic entities, that had not yet been received by the TRC. As well, the TRC called upon the federal government to commit \$10 million over seven years to the centre.

The NCTR is located in Winnipeg and hosted at the University of Manitoba.

See *Centre* on page 21.

Survivors weep for those who died



PHOTO: SHARI NARINE

Madeleine Jackson (left) and Annie Johnston, who went to Ottawa for the closing ceremonies for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, attended Lower Post residential school in northern British Columbia.

By Shari Narine
Windspeaker Contributor

OTTAWA

Annie Johnston and Madeleine Jackson held each other and wept softly as Truth and Reconciliation Commissioner Dr. Marie Wilson talked about the children who had died at residential school, many of whose names were not recorded. And for more than half, the cause of death was not known.

"(Some) died alone in the wilderness, trying to escape from oppression and conditions they suffered at the school. Some children got lost, some drowned, others were eventually found, huddled together, frozen to death," said Wilson.

And Johnston understands why. She ran away from the second residential school she was sent to. She was in her mid-teens and into her third year at a residential school in Whitehorse, Yukon. She was one of the lucky ones: she made it home and to freedom.

"It hurt ... especially when they said some of the kids were found frozen together," said Johnston. "Anything was better, you know, just to get away from this place."

"It was like we were in prison, in jail," said Jackson. "My parents didn't understand what was going on, what happened. When we were at the school for about a month, they let us do what we wanted. Then they started strapping us."

Johnston and Jackson both attended Lower Post residential school in northern British Columbia. Jackson was nine years old when she was taken from home and spent five years at Lower Post. Johnston was five years old and spent six or seven years in Lower Post before being transferred to Whitehorse.

Wilson detailed the tragic loss of lives when she spoke on June 2 as the TRC delivered the nearly

summary of its two-million word final report. Wilson said they have counted the deaths of 3,200 students – even if in one-third of those cases the students were not named and in one-quarter, the gender was not noted.

But that number is low, she said, and the exact number will never be known. Between 1936 to 1944, the federal department of Indian and Northern Affairs destroyed over 200,000 relevant files. And there is still documentation that needs to be reviewed to "find some of those precious names so they can be spoken aloud and remembered," said Wilson.

Analysis based upon other studies indicates that it is realistic to extrapolate that five per cent to seven per cent of the students, who attended Indian residential schools, died. With an attendance figure of 150,000, that means at five per cent up to 7,500 children could have lost their lives.

Death rates were high because medical care was poor; disease was unchecked; and buildings were fire traps. Students, neglected and suffering from physical, emotional or sexual abuse, took their own lives.

Most of the bodies of deceased children were not sent home, instead buried at cemeteries at the schools. Graves were left unmarked and many families still do not know where their children are.

"In some cases," said Wilson, "children were buried before their parents were even told of their passing."

Among the 94 recommendations made by the TRC is a handful that focuses on developing a national strategy that honours children who died at residential schools. This would include allowing the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation to develop and maintain the National Residential School Student Death Register, which was

established by the TRC, as well as ongoing documentation, maintenance, commemoration and protection of residential school cemeteries. Wilson said the work needs to be done in "close consultation" with Aboriginal communities.

"Mostly the causes of death found root in the same attitudes that enabled the schools to exist in the first place: a belief that Aboriginal peoples were inferior. A belief that they did not warrant investing in enrichment. A belief that their culture could and would be extinguished," said Wilson.

Such a belief has impacted Johnston's and Jackson's home community of Teslin.

"The community we came from, a lot of people went. And you shut down," said Johnston. "The devastation that it's caused, especially in the second generation, with my family, my children, you see it in the community."

Jackson said Teslin feels the full impact of seven generations of children attending Indian residential school. Many traveled the 184 miles to Lower Post residential school but others went to Grouard, Alberta, which meant they stayed away for three to 11 years.

"They didn't know their parents when they came back," she said.

Both Johnston and Jackson had a chance to tell their stories when the TRC held northern hearings in 2011.

"I apologized to my children, that I wasn't a good parent. None of us didn't know how to parent because our mothers never taught us. We were brought to school before we didn't even know what was going on. I apologized to them in front of everybody. They said they were sorry because they could feel my pain," said Jackson, who took four of her children with her to Whitehorse when the TRC was there.

Windspeaker News Briefs

The B.C. First Nations Energy and Mining Council

released a report June 3 saying mining companies should put dollars toward an emergency fund that would cover the damages caused by disasters like the catastrophic failure of the Mount Polley tailings pond in summer of 2014. The report says that more than 230 communities, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, live nearby the threat of mining operations, with 35 tailings ponds at 26 mines in 48 watersheds, which could impact 8,700 kilometres of fish-bearing waters, said the report. Chief Executive Officer Dave Porter, said the report calls for improvements to emergency measures, including funding a response team.

"Any mining company that operates in B.C. should be required to post funding contributions to the establishment of a super fund," he said, adding it should be more than \$200 million.

CBC has learned that Aboriginal Affairs held back \$1 billion

in funding to Indigenous peoples over five years, allowing critical needs in Aboriginal communities, like potable water, housing and education, to go unmet. In an email to the CBC, Aboriginal Affairs said that "lapsed funds" are carried forward to future needs and used on a variety of programs, though the spokesperson did not specify what the carried forward funds were used for.

CBC notes though that the planned budget for Aboriginal Affairs will shrink by \$1 billion by 2017/18. National Chief Perry Bellegarde said the Crown is failing to meet its fiduciary and human rights obligations to First Nations people. "The overall message I think we have to get out, not only to [Aboriginal] Affairs, but to Canadians in general, is that there's got to be greater investments in education and training and housing and water, and in focusing on the youth, because there's a high social gap that exists in Canada," he said.

Mi'sel Joe, Chief of the Miawpukek First Nation,

is attempting to repatriate the remains of two of the last members of the Beothuk Tribe from the Scottish Government and the National Museums Scotland. Chief Nonosbawsut and his wife Demasduit died in the early 19th century in Newfoundland and their remains have been stored at the National Museum of Scotland, "final examples" of the Beothuk. Shanawdithit, their niece, was the last known Beothuk. She died in 1829. "They were stolen, they were taken, they were grave-robbing, if you want to call it that, and it's long overdue that they come back to where they belong," Joe told the CBC.

National Chief Perry Bellegarde said the Assembly of First Nations

has identified 51 federal ridings where the Aboriginal vote could decide a majority and minority government in the upcoming election in October. AFN is working to mobilize the Aboriginal vote. "We are starting to harness that political energy, that political power," Bellegarde said. Aboriginal voters need to know which parties favor treaty implementation and support investments in First Nations. And the AFN wants to make sure Aboriginal voters are ready. The new Fair Elections Act has eliminated the vouching process, so it may make it more difficult, without the proper identification, for Aboriginal people to vote. A status card, while legal Canadian identification, cannot be used to identify yourself for voting purposes.

"There is a lack of humanity in the way that CFS operates,"

Manitoba's new First Nations family advocate told the Canadian Press. Cora Morgan, appointed by the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, said Child and Family Services doesn't treat children in care and their families as "human." She said the system is broken. CFS is taking children into care too quickly, without doing the proper investigations, and parents find it almost impossible to regain custody of their children. Morgan told the CBC that she advocated for a grandmother who wanted to bring her grandchildren out of foster care, and because the grandmother had sought Morgan's help, CFS cut off visitation rights. "We had a great meeting—or what I thought was a good meeting—that we were going to get some answers and the family was going to do what it needed to do," said Morgan. "And the following morning the CFS agency took away their visitation rights because they engaged me. And so with my involvement on Tuesday, it looked like they were in a worse-off position than when we started. I was devastated."

The Yinka Dene Alliance, made up of First Nations

in northern BC that have banned the Enbridge Northern Gateway Tar Sands Pipeline from their territories, are touring First Nation communities along the Energy East Tar Sands Pipeline route. They are sharing the story of how they came to understand the dangers associated with the Northern Gateway pipeline, and how they built a wall of opposition to the pipeline by creating the Save the Fraser Declaration.

The Declaration has now been signed by over 130 First Nations. The West Meets East tour started on May 30th with the March to the End of the Line event outside of Saint John, NB and spanned three weeks as it followed the Energy East route all the way to Winnipeg to end the tour on June 18.

Canada's top judge 'gets it', says Chief Commissioner

By Shari Narine
Windspeaker Contributor

OTTAWA

Supreme Court of Canada Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin's strongly spoken words of "cultural genocide" paved the way for the same words to dominate the work undertaken by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as it summed-up six years of uncovering the truth about Indian residential schools.

"Today I stand before you and acknowledge that what took place in residential schools amounts to nothing short of cultural genocide. It was nothing less than a systematic and concerted attempt to extinguish the spirit of Aboriginal peoples," said TRC Chair Justice Murray Sinclair as he delivered a summary of his commission's findings on June 2.

On May 28, at the Global Centre for Pluralism's annual lecture, McLachlin expressed the same view. She said early laws, which banned Aboriginal religion and cultural practises, which kept First Nations people on their reserves, and which took their children away to residential schools was meant to deal with what Prime Minister John A. MacDonald dubbed the "Indian problem."

"Indian-ness was not to be tolerated rather it must be eliminated. In the buzzword of the day, assimilation; in the language of the 21st century,



PHOTO: SHARI NARINE

Speaking after the march, Truth and Reconciliation Commission Chair Justice Murray Sinclair applauded Supreme Court Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin for calling the Indian residential school policy what it was: cultural genocide.

cultural genocide," said McLachlin.

Cultural genocide, said TRC Commissioner Dr. Marie Wilson, was a term "used by many, many, many of the survivors who spoke to us."

But it was a term that Prime Minister Stephen Harper refused to use when pressed during Question Period in the House of the Commons the same day the TRC delivered its summary, which included 94 broad recommendations.

"Does the Prime Minister agree with Justice Sinclair and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that the residential school program was nothing

short of cultural genocide?" asked NDP leader Thomas Mulcair.

Harper responded, "This was a policy of forced assimilation that not only destroyed the lives of individuals but of entire families and societies, and it has had long-lasting implications on entire communities in our country."

Mulcair pushed the subject by stating, "... A good way to move forward, a good concrete action, would be to recognize that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is right, that this was an attempt at cultural genocide."

Harper responded only by outlining the actions his

government had already taken to "improve the lives of Aboriginal people."

Others, like former Assembly of First Nations National Chief Phil Fontaine, Liberal leader Justin Trudeau, Green Party leader Elizabeth May, Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne, have not been shy to use the term.

"It's a cultural genocide. It will help open people's eyes," said Assembly of First Nations National Chief Perry Bellegarde.

In 1944, Raphael Lemkin, a Polish law professor, described eight dimensions of genocide—political, social, cultural, economic, biological, physical, religious, and moral—each

targeting a different aspect of a group's existence. But the Convention on the Prevention of Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, adopted by the United Nations in 1948, prohibits only physical and biological dimensions—it does not include cultural. Canada was one of the countries that opposed the inclusion of cultural genocide in the UN convention.

Lemkin said cultural genocide sought to eliminate a group's wider institutions in a variety of ways, such as the abolition of language, restrictions upon its traditional practices and ways, the destruction of religious institutions and objects, the persecution of clergy members, and attacks on academics and intellectuals.

"In its dealing with Aboriginal people, Canada did all of these," says the TRC's report.

"The present understanding of genocide preserves the body of the group, but allows its very soul to be destroyed," said the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs in a 2015 paper. "This is hardly a satisfactory situation Cultural genocide is a unique wrong that should be recognized independently..."

Said Sinclair on McLachlin's use of the term cultural genocide, "... When someone in that position, in that significance in society uses a phrase like that, that individual gets it, that individual understands the magnitude of the problem that they are talking about."

Reconciliation taken to the streets

By Shari Narine
Windspeaker Contributor

OTTAWA

Thousands of marchers, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, crammed Marion Dewar Plaza in Ottawa on May 31 for the first day of the closing ceremony of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

"My belief and hope is that Canadians are starting to get it," said Assembly of First Nation National Chief Perry Bellegarde. "Once that education and awareness process happens it leads to understanding that leads to action and that's what it's all about."

First Nations and Inuit leaders and TRC commissioners were joined by provincial, local and federal politicians, including Aboriginal Affairs Minister Bernard Valcourt, church representatives, Indian residential school survivors, their descendants and community members, in a five-kilometre walk from Ecole Secondaire de l'Île in Gatineau, Que. across the Portage bridge and Victoria Island down Wellington Street in front of the Parliament buildings to city hall plaza in Ottawa.

Signs along the route, in both



PHOTO: SHARI NARINE

Reconciliation Walk 1: Truth and Reconciliation Commission members (behind sign from left) Chief Wilton Littlechild, Dr. Marie Wilson and Justice Murray Sinclair lead the Reconciliation Walk.

provinces, expressed solidarity with the survivors and the work undertaken by the TRC. Car horns were honked and church bells rang out hailing marchers.

"We are all one," said Chief Robert Joseph, when the marchers reached Ottawa. "We stand at a monumental crossroads today. This is a historical moment

for hope and promise."

Joseph, who is an honorary witness for the TRC, also serves as the Ambassador for Reconciliation Canada and a member of the AFN Elders Council.

Survivor Annie Johnston, who attended residential schools in British Columbia and the Yukon,

said she was heartened by both the non-Aboriginal people who took part in the march and an Anglican minister and his wife, who walked beside Johnston and her friend Madeleine Jackson, also a residential school survivor.

"(The wife) was apologizing, and Madeleine told her it wasn't her fault, and she told

(Madeleine) it was her ancestors she had to say she was sorry for. It encouraged me," said Johnston.

Clara Hughes, multiple Olympic medallist and participant in the march, also spoke about her historical involvement.

See *Reconciliation* on page 21.



Raven's Eye: Special Section providing news from BC & Yukon

A former staffer in B.C.'s Ministry of Transportation

alleges that the ministry deleted more than a dozen emails concerning meetings regarding the Highway of Tears, located between Prince Rupert and Prince George, a place where as many as 30 women have gone missing or have been murdered. Former executive assistant Tim Duncan said he was told to delete emails requested under the Freedom of Information Act. And when he hesitated, another staffer took control of his keyboard and deleted them, saying 'It's done. Now you don't have to worry about it anymore.' Duncan said he was also told that 'It's like The West Wing. You do whatever it takes to win.' (The West Wings was a long-running television show dealing with the fictional inner workings of the people surrounding a U.S. President).

"I want to stress that this is not an isolated incident. It is my belief that the abuse of the freedom of information process is widespread and most likely systemic within the [Premier Christy] Clark government. I would ask that you please look into this further," he wrote in a letter to the province's privacy commissioner.

Joye Walkus wore a 300-year-old blanket

belonging to her late grandfather Henry Abel Bell to her convocation ceremony at the University of Victoria. The First Nations graduate earned a specialized degree in Aboriginal language revitalization. "I want[ed] my grandfather's memory, spirit, him, to be there ... and this blanket was the biggest representation that I could think of," Walkus told CBC. She is from the Kwakiutl Nation on Vancouver Island.

Walkus' grandfather sold the blanket to the Royal BC Museum more than three decades ago, but part of the sale's condition was that if his children or grandchildren wanted to wear it, they were allowed. It was a long process to get the blanket from the

museum, but it was worth it, Walkus said.

"I couldn't hold back the tears. It felt like my grandfather was hugging me," she said of graduation day.

Responding to the "calls to action" in the final report

of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the B.C. government has "strongly reaffirmed its commitment to advance the process of reconciliation with Aboriginal people." A press release June 16 from Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation Minister John Rustad said reconciliation was never going to be an easy journey... "But our commitment to reconciliation with Aboriginal people is unwavering and we are making significant progress." He said the TRC report includes many recommendations that can and are being addressed by the B.C. government in a broad range of important areas, including education, advanced education, health, child welfare and the justice system.

Premier Christy Clark faced a barrage of complaints

for choosing June 21 to celebrate International Yoga Day in B.C., with a plan to close the Burrard Street Bridge in Vancouver for seven hours at a cost of \$150,000. Called Om The Bridge, the goal was to hold the largest yoga event outside India. But it wasn't just the money that bothered people. As the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was delivering its final report summary and recommendations, some saw Clark's plan as ironic, with the premier failing to acknowledge that June 21 is National Aboriginal Day here is this country. Hundreds of people said they would show up to the Om The Bridge for a counter-event, and instead of yoga pants, organizers were asking people to wear traditional regalia and "bring your drums". After a Tweet from the Premier taunting "yoga-haters", Clark was harangued on social media,

which prompted her to roll up her yoga mat and say she wouldn't be participating because the day was being politicized. Sponsors soon pulled out and Om The Bridge became a sad memory. The Burrard Bridge is in the unceded territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations, and runs through a Squamish Nation reserve.

A clean energy project will harness ocean thermal

energy to heat a new First Nations residential community and will receive \$400,000 from the B.C. First Nations Clean Energy Business Fund. It will be an equity investment in a facility that will use the heat available, even in cold ocean water, to supply heat to a new town called Spirit Bay, a development of the Sci'anew (Cheanuh) Beecher Bay Band, reads a press release. Heat will be extracted from the ocean using heat exchangers and pumps and delivered to the residential development through a district heating system. The ocean thermal system will also create additional revenues for current and future band members, while providing a reliable, low-maintenance heating source for the Spirit Bay residents.

Ian Campbell, Hereditary Chief of the Squamish Nation,

is among the first cohort of 14 graduates from Simon Fraser University's Executive MBA in Aboriginal Business and Leadership. The program is Canada's first credited MBA for established Aboriginal leaders, entrepreneurs and others working with Aboriginal communities. Campbell, 41, has ambitious plans for his people. He now has the knowledge to forge ahead with ideas for projects that include developing the Jericho Lands and pursuing development and business collaborations with other nations, reads a press statement. "We're moving away from managing welfare to managing wealth," Campbell said.



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Saskatchewan Sage: Special Section providing news from Saskatchewan



Technology in the classroom for Aboriginal education

More than 200 students in elementary schools in Muskoday First Nation and Whitecap Dakota First Nation were selected to receive 75 educational tablets as part of a national initiative to bridge the digital divide for Aboriginal youth. The tablets were a result of a partnership between PotashCorp and One Laptop per Child Canada.

Smoke from forest fires force health evacuations

More than 400 people from northern Saskatchewan were evacuated June 6 and 7 after lightning strikes sparked upwards of 30 fires. About half were staying in Saskatoon at a soccer centre, in hotels or stayed with friends and family. An additional 175 were in temporary residence in Prince Albert. Evacuations took place from Sikachu and Clam

Crossing, both west of La Ronge, Clearwater Dene First Nation, near La Loche, Hall Lake, near Sikachu, and Sucker River, northeast of La Ronge. Residents with health conditions were sent south because of the heavy smoke. The Lac La Ronge Indian Band declared a local state of emergency on June 6 and those with health concerns were still off the reserve on June 10 because of air quality.

Investigation into in-custody death

The Saskatoon Police Service Major Crime Unit is investigating a sudden death that occurred on June 1 in the La Ronge RCMP cell area. On May 31, at approximately 12:02 a.m., an adult male was located unresponsive in the cell area, transported to La Ronge hospital and then to hospital in Saskatoon. He was pronounced dead on June 1. The RCMP has requested the Saskatoon Police Service conduct an

independent external investigation into the circumstances surrounding the in-custody death of the 43-year-old male from La Ronge. In addition to the independent external investigation, the RCMP has requested the Ministry of Justice appoint an independent observer.

Lonechild considering return to FSIN

Guy Lonechild, who was ousted as Chief of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations four years ago, is considering running for the provincial organization again. He has been gauging the reaction of chiefs and First Nations people and says he won't make a decision until later this month. Lonechild accepted a buyout package in the fall of 2011 after news broke of an impaired driving charge when he was pulled over in the early morning hours of Sept. 3, 2009 in downtown Saskatoon. Lonechild apologized and admitted long-standing problems with alcohol. Presently Kim Jonathan is serving as interim chief of the FSIN, having taken over when FSIN Chief Perry Bellegarde was elected as national chief for the Assembly of First Nations.

New project to improve response to sexual violence


A new project that will help prevent and address sexual violence against women and girls in rural and remote communities in Saskatchewan has received \$166,484 in federal funding. Sexual Assault Services of Saskatchewan will work with local organizations to develop and implement a strategy to improve how they respond to sexual violence. It will also share knowledge and best practices with organizations from Manitoba, Alberta and British Columbia to improve responses to sexual assault across western Canada. "Women and girls who have experienced sexual assault need access to specialized services and support, no matter where they live," said Dianna Graves, executive director for SASS.



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Saskatchewan Sage: Special Section providing news from Saskatchewan

Plea from former Whitecap Dakota First Nation accountant delayed

Hugo Gallegos, the former accountant for the Whitecap Dakota First Nation, fired his lawyer, delaying entering a plea in court on June 4. Gallegos was charged with fraud, theft and laundering in September 2013 after millions of dollars

allegedly went missing from the Whitecap Dakota First Nation. He fled to El Salvador prior to the charges being laid, but returned on his own accord in October 2013.

Community-based justice programming receives funding

Funding of more than \$1

million will be divided among the Saskatoon Tribal Council, Métis Family and Community Justice Services, Saskatoon Community Mediation Services, EGADZ and the Saskatoon Restorative Action Program. The money will support community-based efforts in Saskatoon aimed to reduce crime and make a positive impact on the lives of

people dealing with conflict. These Saskatoon agencies deliver a total of nine programs with a range of dynamic services. Depending on the program, they may resolve adult alternative measures referrals, assist Aboriginal people in the criminal justice system, help students learn to resolve conflict, and deliver crime prevention activities for

at-risk children and youth. These services increase the effectiveness of the criminal justice system and improve the futures for many Saskatchewan people.

Compiled by Shari Narine

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Opening Ceremonies: 2:00 pm Arena
Supper (Bertini): 4:30 pm to 5:30 pm Arena
Kids Bouncy: 3:30 pm to 8:00 pm

Jigging Prizes

18 & up 1) \$2000 2) \$1000 3) \$500	13 & 17 1) \$500 2) \$300 3) \$200	8 & 12 1) \$300 2) \$200 3) \$100	1 to 7 1) \$100 2) \$75 3) \$50	Golden Age 55 & Up 1) \$1000 2) \$500 3) \$250
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Talent Show Prizes

18 & up 1) \$3000 2) \$2000 3) \$1000	13 & 17 1) \$500 2) \$300 3) \$200	8 & 12 1) \$300 2) \$200 3) \$100	1 to 7 1) \$100 2) \$75 3) \$50	Golden Age 55 & Up 1) \$1500 2) \$1000 3) \$500
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Saturday, July 4th, 2015

Breakfast: 8:00 am to 10:00 am
Competitions: 10:00 am to 2:00 pm ~ Kids Bouncy Castles: 11:00 am to 6:00 pm
Workshops: 10:00 am - 12:00 pm
Bannock Making, Metis History, Jigging Lessons
Lunch (Bertini): 12:00 pm Arbor
Events: 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm
Log Sawing, Egg Toss, Sack Race,
2 Legged Race - Cash Prizes
Traditional Supper: 4:00 pm to 5:30 pm Band Office

Square Dancing Prizes

Professional 1) \$4000 2) \$3000 3) \$2000	Amateur 1) \$3000 2) \$1500 3) \$750	18 & Up 1) \$1000 2) \$750 3) \$500
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Fiddling Prizes

17 & Under 1) \$500 2) \$300 3) \$200	Golden Age 55 & Up 1) \$1000 2) \$750 3) 500
--	---

Sunday, July 5th, 2015

Finals in Baseball
BBQ to follow from McKay Metis Energy Service

Beer Gardens: 3:00 pm to 1:00 am
Evening Entertainment:
Nicely Put Together 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm
Northern Half Breeds 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm
Ernest Monias 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm
Donny Parenteau 10:00 pm to 2:00 am

We are looking for square dancer groups and will pay \$2,500.
Please call Susan Quintal at 780-799-0656.

Alberta Sweetgrass: Special Section providing news from Alberta



PHOTO: PAULA KIRMAN

Premier Rachel Notley and her Cabinet ministers: the NDP government after 44 years of Progressive Conservative rule in Alberta.

Notley, new Cabinet sworn in

Rachel Notley and her 11-member Cabinet were sworn in during an open-air ceremony on the steps of the Alberta Legislature on May 24. Close to 10,000 people came out. The ceremony included an honour song by Rocky Morin, of the Enoch Cree Nation, and a blessing from veteran and Métis Elder John Macdonald. "And we know that our future is brighter when First Nations can control their destiny and can trust a true partner in government to build a new relationship of respect," said Notley. Unlike her predecessor PC Premier Jim Prentice, Notley did not take on the portfolio of Aboriginal relations. Serving in that position will be Calgary-Buffalo MLA Kathleen Ganley, who will also be minister of justice and Solicitor General. Notley took on the ministry of international and intergovernmental relations.

Organs can be harvested from children who die in Alberta care

Treaty 8 Grand Chief Steve Courtoreille says organ donations from children who die in government care will be one of the priority issues raised when Chiefs meet with Alberta's new premier, Rachel Notley. Courtoreille says he was "disgusted" to learn that a policy implemented in 2006 allowed the government to harvest organs from children who died in care. In 2014, the policy was amended to include children who died while under temporary guardianship order. "We needed to know about the policy. We would have asked them to take it out," said Courtoreille. The majority of children in care in Alberta are Aboriginal. "It's bad enough that our children are taken from our homes, but now this?" he said. The government said it consulted with 18 First Nations agencies and 12 CEOs of Child and Family agencies. "Who are these agencies?" asked Courtoreille. "There are 44 First Nations in Alberta and somehow everyone was missed."

New AFN Alberta Regional Chief

Former Grand Chief of Treaty Six Craig Mackinaw will be taking on the position of Alberta Regional Chief for the Assembly of First Nations on July 1. Mackinaw defeated the only other candidate, Leila Houle, a member of the Whitefish Lake Band, in an election held May 21. Mackinaw also served as Chief of the Ermineskin Cree Nation from 2011 and 2014. He will replace Alberta Regional Chief Cameron Alexis. "I look forward to working together to address the very important issues facing First Nation communities in the Alberta region and welcome his knowledge and many years of political experience," said AFN National Chief Perry Bellegarde.

Nurse in Charge at Paul First Nation recognized

Donalda Stanley, the Nurse in Charge at Paul First Nation, was presented with a Health Canada Award of

Excellence in Nursing. Each year during National Nursing Week, Health Canada presents the award to three exceptional community nurses, one employed by a First Nations community, an Inuit community, and Health Canada. When considering nominees, the panel looks at nurses who demonstrate professionalism, leadership and sound judgement, and who support a discrimination-free environment. According to Health Canada Alberta's Dr. Diane Billay, Stanley acts as a mentor and coach to her colleagues and fellow community members. "I welcome challenges and I love change. Positive change keeps you moving, it keeps you striving for more, it keeps you hopeful that 'the best is yet to come,'" said Stanley. She began her career with Kehewin Cree Nation as community health nurse then Nurse in Charge. She then moved to work as Nurse in Charge for Frog Lake Morningsky Health and Wellness Society before moving on to Saddle Lake First Nation. Since 2012, Stanley has served as the Nurse in Charge at the Paul First Nations Health Centre.

New mutual aid agreement strengthens protection for Horse Lake First Nation

Horse Lake First Nation has signed an expanded mutual aid agreement with the County of Grande Prairie that will allow the closest county-owned or contracted fire department (Hythe, Beaverlodge or LacGlacé) to respond immediately when it becomes aware of an emergency. For the past 23 years, the county has had a mutual aid

agreement with Horse Lake First Nation that offered firefighting support, equipment and the necessary resources, but could only respond after receiving a request and permission. "This (new) agreement gives us a sense of security," said HLFN Chief Eugene Horseman. "It also speaks to the trust and respect both our communities have built up over the years."

O'Connor released by Nunee Health Board Society

The physician who had to fight against professional misconduct charges when he spoke out about high cancer rates in Fort Chipewyan, has been let go – by the community he advocated for. John O'Connor, who signed an agreement with the Nunee Health Board Society seven years ago to deliver on-call medical assistance, received his termination letter via email May 8. No reason was given in the dismissal email. However, former NHBS member and Mikisew Cree Nation Chief Steve Courtoreille says O'Connor's services were no longer required as changes were made by Alberta Health Services to provide physician on-call services elsewhere. O'Connor remains as director of health and family services with Fort McKay as well as retains hospital privileges in Fort McMurray.

OCYA report underscores impact of poverty on children, families

Two new investigate reports issued from the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate focus on two children, one of whom is a First Nations girl, who suffered serious injuries while in government care. The girl, dubbed Bonita, was in the care of her parents and her family was receiving services from Child Intervention Services. She was taken to hospital suffering from septic shock caused by severe, untreated dental abscesses. She underwent a number of surgeries and required trauma counselling. Bonita is now in kinship care and has contact with her family. "Bonita's circumstances have illuminated the significant issues of poverty and neglect that many children and families struggle with. I believe that by telling Bonita's story and acting on the recommendations that are in this report, child-serving systems can and must do better," said OCYA Del Graff, in a news release.

Van Camp wins literary award

Richard Van Camp, of the Dogrib (Tlicho) Nation from Fort Smith, NWT, is the winner of the R. Ross Annett Award for Children's Literature. Van Camp's book *Little You* was nominated along with *You're Just Right*, by Victor Lethbridge, a member of Wood Mountain Lakota First Nation. Also nominated in that category of the 2015 Alberta Literary Awards was Leanne Shirliffe, of Calgary, for *The Change Your Name Store*. The awards were presented at a gala on May 23 in Edmonton. There were more than 150 submissions to select 24 finalists from in eight categories.

Symposium on prescription drug abuse focuses on First Nations issues

Health Canada Minister Rona Ambrose recently met

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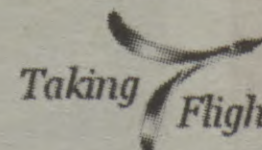
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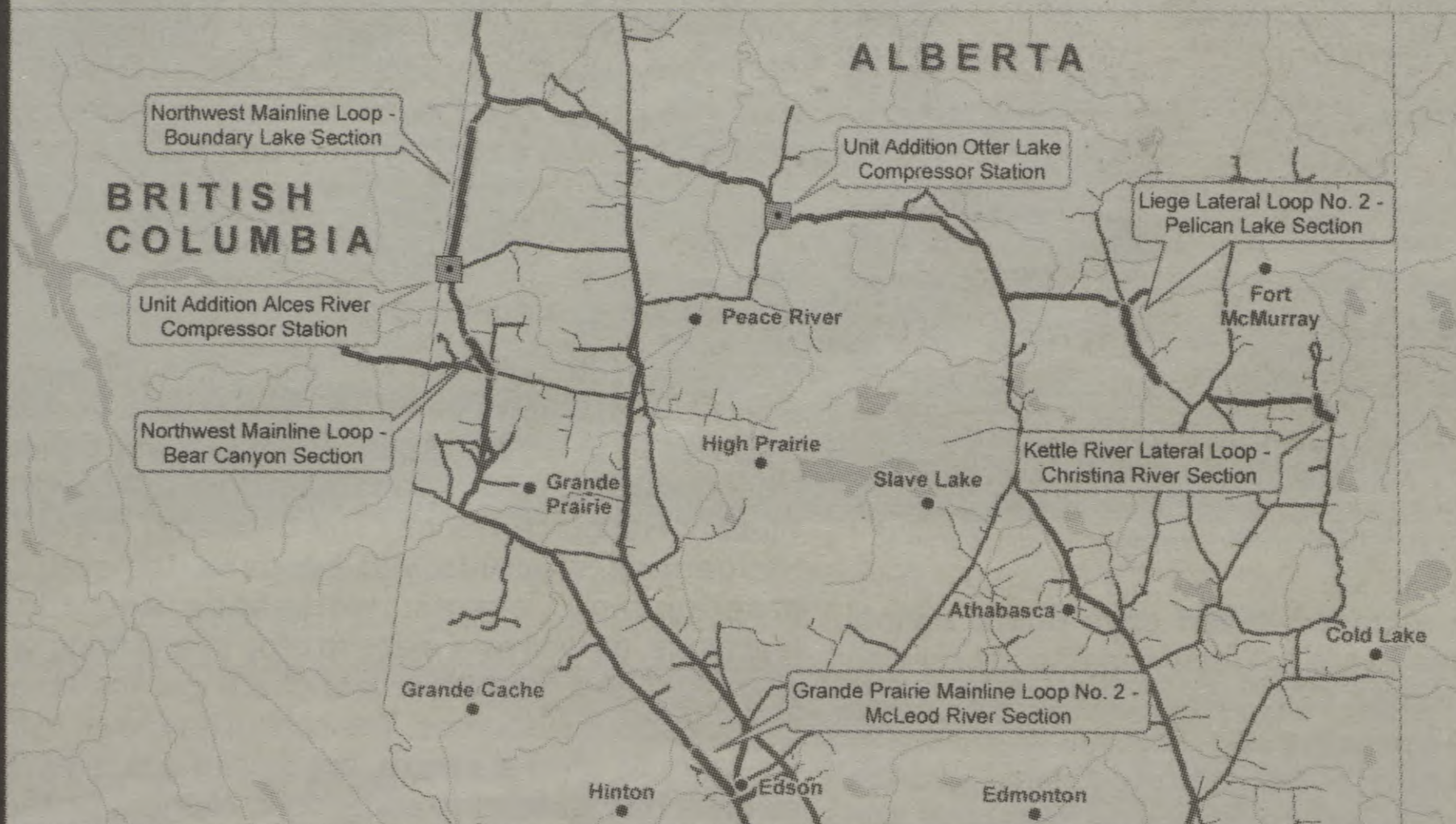
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Notice of Public Hearing and Application to Participate 2017 NGTL System Expansion Project

The National Energy Board (Board) has received an application from NOVA Gas Transmission Limited (NGTL) for approvals to construct and operate a proposed expansion to the NGTL System to receive and deliver sweet natural gas. This proposed Project consists of approximately 230 km of pipeline in five new and separate pipeline section loops and two compressor unit stations located in various areas in northern Alberta.



Participating in this Hearing

The Board will hold a public hearing for the Project and will conduct an environmental assessment pursuant to the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012* as part of the hearing.

The Board must hear from anyone clearly demonstrating they are directly affected by the Project, and may hear from those with relevant information or expertise. The Board will allow participation in the environmental assessment by those with relevant information or expertise to contribute.

If you wish to participate, you must complete an online application form. The List of Issues for the Project is available on the Board's website and will be part of the form. There are typically two ways you can participate in a hearing:

- **Commenter** - share your views on the Project with the Board in a written Letter of Comment.
- **Intervenor** - ask questions, present evidence, answer questions about your evidence, and give a final argument. Intervenors may also be eligible for participant funding. Learn more at www.neb-one.gc.ca/pfp

The Application to Participate form will be available at www.neb-one.gc.ca/applytoparticipate starting **18 June 2015** and will close on **9 July 2015 at 4:00 pm** (local time, Calgary, Alberta). The Board will review each application and will inform everyone who applied whether or not they will be allowed to participate and how.

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The National Energy Board is an independent federal regulator of several parts of Canada's energy industry with the safety of Canadians and protection of the environment as its top priority. Its purpose is to regulate pipelines, energy development and trade in the Canadian public interest.



with First Nations representatives, provincial officials, doctors, pharmacists, law enforcement and addictions specialists in Edmonton to discuss prescription drug abuse. The symposium was the second of its kind in as many years, with a specific focus on the increasing incidents of overdose and abuse of prescription drugs reported in First Nations communities across the province in recent months. Following the symposium, Ambrose announced \$13 million in federal funding over the next five years to increase the number of annual pharmacy inspections carried out by Health Canada. Working with pharmacies across the country, this will help to ensure the safe handling, storage and security of prescription drugs in Canada, and reduce opportunities for the diversion of prescription drugs for illegal sale and use.

City Hall, U of A host live webcast of TRC

Edmonton residents were able to gather in two locations to watch livestreaming of the Truth and Reconciliation's closing event. On June 2, the day the TRC releases its final report, the University of Alberta and City Hall Chamber were open to the public for viewing of the morning events taking place in Ottawa. In March 2014, Edmonton was host to the last national event and as a former host had committed to "working with the TRC and its local partners to support the Commission's closing events and the release of its final report on Indian Residential Schools," said Miranda Jimmy, projects coordinator, Aboriginal and multicultural relations for the city. As well, the city will be conducting informal consultations with concerned stakeholders to get feedback on how to commemorate the TRC's national event in Edmonton. Possibilities include public art or a monument.

Aboriginal youth instrumental in winning social justice award

The Youth Action Project on Poverty, John Humphrey Centre for Peace and Human Rights was one of two recipients of this year's Edmonton Social Planning Council's Award of Merit for Advocacy of Social Justice. The work undertaken by the Youth Action Project on Poverty was led by two Aboriginal youth, Stephenie White and Brandon Gladeau, who have struggled with poverty, criminalization and discrimination. They facilitated sessions, developed project outcomes and became significant role models for other participants. Their work focused on issues such as justice, security, freedom and dignity, and created a series of recommendations presented to the Mayor's Task Force for the Elimination of Poverty. The work of the project will build on these recommendations throughout the coming year. Also winning was the City of Edmonton Youth Council, which advocated for students to be allowed to form Gay-Straight Alliances in schools.

Deline leader to receive U of A honour

Danny Gaudet, Deline's chief negotiator, received his honorary doctor of laws degree from the University of Alberta on June 4. The degree recognized Gaudet for working "tirelessly" for his community. His work includes negotiating the Deline Final Self-Government Agreement, which passed in the Northwest Territories legislature earlier this year and will go before parliament. The bill will amalgamate certain aspects of municipal, territorial and First Nation governments, making Deline, pop. 559, the NWT's first self-governing community. Gaudet also developed local adult education programs, chaired a group that sought recommendations for injuries caused by the Port Radium Mine located nearby on Great Bear Lake, and created hockey training programs.

Revitalized Quarters Downtown to include new park

A revitalization plan for the Quarters Downtown includes giving the name of Kinistin, w Park to a planned green space along 96 street or the Armature between 102A and 103A avenues. The name means "us three" in Plains Cree and echoes the historical name of 96 street, which was Kinistino Avenue. At one and a half city blocks wide, Kinistin, w Park will connect to Louise McKinney Park and the river valley. Construction is expected to start in 2017, with design plans wrapping up next year.

Conference provides fuller story on homelessness

Indigenous understanding of home and community was one of the themes presented at the Right to Housing conference held June 5-6. Russell Auger, who is a service provider in the inner city, spoke on the topic. It was important to examine that aspect of homelessness, said conference organizer Jim Gurnett, as Aboriginal people are over-represented in the homeless population. Headlining the event was Michael Shapcott, one of Canada's leading housing policy experts and advocates. Jay Freeman, the City of Edmonton's executive director of housing and homelessness, presented a session looking at how Edmonton's activity around housing has ebbed and flowed over recent decades. Other conference sessions featured presentations on a range of the challenges to housing security such as youth homelessness and NIMBYism, and some of the success stories, including Ambrose Place and McCauley Apartment. The conference was presented by Edmonton Coalition on Housing and Homelessness, an organization involved in housing education and advocacy for nearly 30 years.

Compiled by Shari Narine

Ontario Birchbark: Special Section providing news from Ontario



PHOTO: SHARI NARINE

Cindy Blackstock, executive director with the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society, accompanied by a child, carries a heart to be planted in a heart garden on the grounds of Rideau Hall. It was the final event on the last day of the closing ceremony for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on June 3.

CHRT finds Government "retaliated" against children's advocate

The Canadian Human Rights Tribunal recently ruled that the federal government did retaliate against Cindy Blackstock, president of the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society and ordered the Department of Aboriginal Affairs to pay Blackstock \$20,000 for pain and suffering. The CHRT singled out the behaviour of David McArthur, former special assistant to then-minister Chuck Strahl. The dispute centres on a December 2009 meeting at the ministerial headquarters in Gatineau, Que. Blackstock said she was the only person barred from a gathering with the Chiefs of Ontario. "There is no doubt that the respondent's actions had a wilful and reckless nature," the ruling said. "Dr. Blackstock was the only individual excluded from the meeting, which supports her contention that she was singled out." Blackstock plans to donate the money to children's charities.

St. Anne survivors seeking further court direction on government documents

Nishnawbe Aski Nation Deputy Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler was in court June 9 in support of survivors in an ongoing legal battle with the federal government over documents relating to a 1990's criminal investigation into widespread child abuse at St. Anne's Residential School in Fort Albany First Nation.

In January 2014, Mr. Justice Perell of the Superior Court of Justice ordered Canada to produce these documents to claimants/survivors and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The documents, which are extensive police files relating to sexual and physical abuse by former school employees, should have been provided to the Independent Assessment Process in 2007.

The federal government has since provided over 12,000 documents representing some 40,000 pages of documents, but has not organized and summarized these documents and has improperly redacted significant information in many documents.

Counsel for the survivors are asking the Court to confirm that federal officials are required to provide summary reports discussing the allegations of abuse at the school and against particular people who are claimed to have abused the claimants.

Counsel will also challenge how federal government redacted names in the documents it gives to adjudicators, as well as the claimants. This means no one in these IAP hearings has access to a document without most names blacked out, which is not permitted under the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement.

Ontario teachers need more training on Aboriginal issues

A recently released report says public school teachers in Ontario are not receiving enough training on Aboriginal issues. Only 29 per cent of elementary schools and 47 per cent of secondary schools offer training on Aboriginal issues to teachers, said the report by People for Education, a research and advocacy group. The report comes on the heels of the release of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 recommendations, which included increased education in the classroom on residential schools and Aboriginal peoples. There has been some improvement, though, with 69 per cent of secondary schools offering students or staff Aboriginal education opportunities, compared to 61 per cent the previous

year. The majority of elementary schools in the province, however, do not offer any Aboriginal education opportunities, according to the report. The report shows that 96 per cent of Ontario secondary schools and 92 per cent of elementary schools have Aboriginal students.

Funding to support Mohawk language instruction

The federal government is providing \$72,614 in funding through the Aboriginal Languages Initiative to the Wahta Mohawks for language lessons and learning resources for 2015-16. Wahta Mohawks Chief Philip Franks said the First Nation is pleased to get the funding. "This is an important first step in the development of a language program that will form an integral part of the foundation for healing in our community. Healing through language and culture is a renewed focus of our health and social department programs at Wahta Mohawks," he said in a news release. The language learning resources will include print, audio and video resources and participants will learn grammar, conversational skills, reading and writing through virtual and one-on-one sessions.

Aboriginal student resource centre gets space

Niagara-on-the-Lake campus of Niagara College recently celebrated the grand opening of its Aboriginal Student Resource Centre. The dedicated space for Indigenous students will be used for cultural programming, events, workshops and Elder teachings, as well as a place to drop in and hang out, study, use the computers and check out the library for Indigenous resources. The school had been trying for years to open a centre, but limited space at the campus had stalled the endeavour. Niagara College has 180 self-identified Aboriginal students. Rick Anderson, acting vice president student and external relations, said the space will not only support students but is a launching point to share other world views. He expects international students and others will learn from it as well.

Compiled by Shari Narine

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Ontario Birchbark: Special Section providing news from Ontario

Art and education go hand in hand for Pan Am relay



PHOTO: NADYA KWANDIBENS

Santee Smith, an award-winning producer and choreographer from the Kahnien'kehàka Nation, Turtle Clan from Six Nations, is the main dancer in the Pan Am Path Art Relay finale.

By Sam Laskaris
Windspeaker Contributor

TORONTO

The international spotlight will be on Toronto this summer as the city hosts both the Pan American Games and Parapan American Games.

Prior to these athletic competitions, however, various groups are joining forces to bring Toronto some recognition through the Pan Am Path Art Relay.

These events, which include an Indigenous one called First Story Toronto, will help to celebrate the city's diversity, nature, arts and active outdoor living.

First Story Toronto, which will run from June 20 to 26, will consist of walking, cycling and bus tours along Toronto's lakeshore. It was organized with the assistance of those from The Native Canadian Centre of Toronto.

"Toronto has been around for only about 200 years," said Jon Johnson, one of the First Story lead organizers who will also serve as a tour guide.

"But the Indigenous history of this land is about 11,000 years old."

Chances are the majority of the city's residents don't even know that the name Toronto derives from the Iroquois name of Tkaronto.

First Story Toronto will kick off on June 20 with both bike and bus tours, departing from the Visitor Centre at the Fort York National Historic Site. A ceremony will then be staged at the waterfront campus of George Brown College.

Those on the tour will have an opportunity to listen to Aboriginal storytellers and learn about some historical city facts.

Tour participants will then cycle (or take the bus) to Underpass Park, where there will be a live art festival. Afterwards those on the tour will venture back to Fort York where there will be another Indigenous-themed arts festival.

Johnson is hoping First Story Toronto, as well as other events that make up the Pan Am Path Arts Relay, will drum up plenty of support for the Pan Am Games, which run from July 10 to July 26 as well as the Parapan American Games, which are set for Aug. 7 to Aug. 15.

"We want to build up excitement that the Games are coming," Johnson said.

"And hopefully it will draw some tourism for the Games as well."

Day 2 of First Story Toronto

will consist of a three-hour walking tour, which will start at Exhibition Place and conclude at Fort York.

The theme of this tour will be food, Indigenous medicines and the environment. A tour stop will be Fort Rouille, a fur trading fort from the 1700s.

The Day 2 walking tour, being held on National Aboriginal Day (June 21), will conclude at Fort York, where a powwow will be hosted by the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation, which has been appointed as the host First Nation of the Games.

Another walking tour is scheduled for June 22. This one will incorporate the themes of sports, arts and lifeways.

Bike tours will follow on June 23 and 24 and a walking tour will wrap things up on June 25.

Though all of the tours are free, there will be a varying maximum number of participants allowed. As a result, organizers are encouraging people to register for the tours beforehand.

Times for the tours and other registration details are available at www.panampath.org.

First Story Toronto will officially conclude at George Brown College on June 26. The finale is being called Talking Treaties and will include speakers who will be discussing treaty history and responsibilities. There will also be theatrical and arts activities which the public can take part in, as well as performances from local drum groups and a closing ceremony.

Devon Norstrom, the lead curator of the Pan Am Path Art Relay, believes First Story Toronto will be well received. And he's confident First Nation people will be content with the presentations.

"I've seen some positive noises coming from the partnering communities," he said.

Norstrom also said First Story Toronto will be an educational experience.

"I think people are ignorant of the history of Toronto," he said.

"I think there is a great need for this."

The First Story Toronto tours are just one of the weekly events that make up The Pan Am Path Art Relay.

The relay began on May 16 and will continue until Aug. 15.

It will be staged over the 84-kilometre Pan Am Path, which will include walking/running/cycling trails.

As part of the Games' legacy, there will also be ongoing construction, which will continue until 2017, to improve and even create additional path connections.

Notice of Participation at a Commission Meeting

Canada's Nuclear Regulator



The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) will hold a meeting on August 20, 2015 during which CNSC staff will present its *Regulatory Oversight Report for Canadian Nuclear Power Plants: 2014 (2014 NPP report)*.

This report provides an assessment of the safety performance at each nuclear power plant (NPP), makes generic observations, and identifies trends for the nuclear power reactor industry as a whole. It includes the annual update on the implementation of safety enhancements by licensees in response to TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi accident. The report also includes the annual update on the Darlington New Nuclear Project.

Date: August 20, 2015

Place: CNSC public hearing room, 14th floor, 280 Slater Street
Ottawa, Ontario

Time: As set by the agenda published prior to the meeting date

Meeting date and location may change. Check our website for the latest details.

The public is invited to comment, in writing, on this meeting item. Written submissions must be filed with the Commission Secretary by July 16, 2015 online at nuclearsafety.gc.ca/eng/the-commission/intervention or at the coordinates below. Please also include your name, address and telephone number.

You may submit your personal information on a separate page if you wish to ensure its confidentiality. All submissions are available to the public on request to the Secretariat.

The 2014 NPP report is available online or by sending a request through the Secretariat at the coordinates below. The agenda for the meeting will be available online after August 4, 2015 at nuclearsafety.gc.ca.

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Canada

[health] Indigenizing Psychology Symposium takes a Native worldview

By Barb Nahwegahbow
Windspeaker Contributor

TORONTO

Mohawk psychologist Dr. Rod McCormick believes in the healing power of nature. Halfway through his keynote address at a conference for mental health professionals on May 28, he assigned the participants a task. Go outside and focus on a piece of nature and ask a question or ask for help.

You have to approach it with humility and come back in five minutes were the only instructions he gave.

About 100 or so people trooped out of the Native Canadian Centre on Spadina Road in Toronto where the conference was being held. Some sat down on the tiny lawn and focused on a flower or a blade of grass. Others hugged a tree or communed with a pine cone. Still others looked to the sky. When the group reconvened, several participants were eager to share that the exercise had indeed worked and that their questions were answered or direction given by nature.

This took place at the Fifth Annual Indigenizing Psychology Mental Health Symposium hosted by the Indigenous Education Network. It wasn't the only thing that differentiated this gathering from other mental health conferences. Most of the speakers placed themselves within the context of family, community and cultural milieu. They also talked about their own personal experiences of trauma and recovery of identity. By so doing, they illustrated the complex mental health issues faced by Indigenous people and the Indigenous ways of healing.

The goal of the symposium was to build on previous and current conceptions of Indigenous psychology and to provide new information and solutions from Aboriginal knowledge.

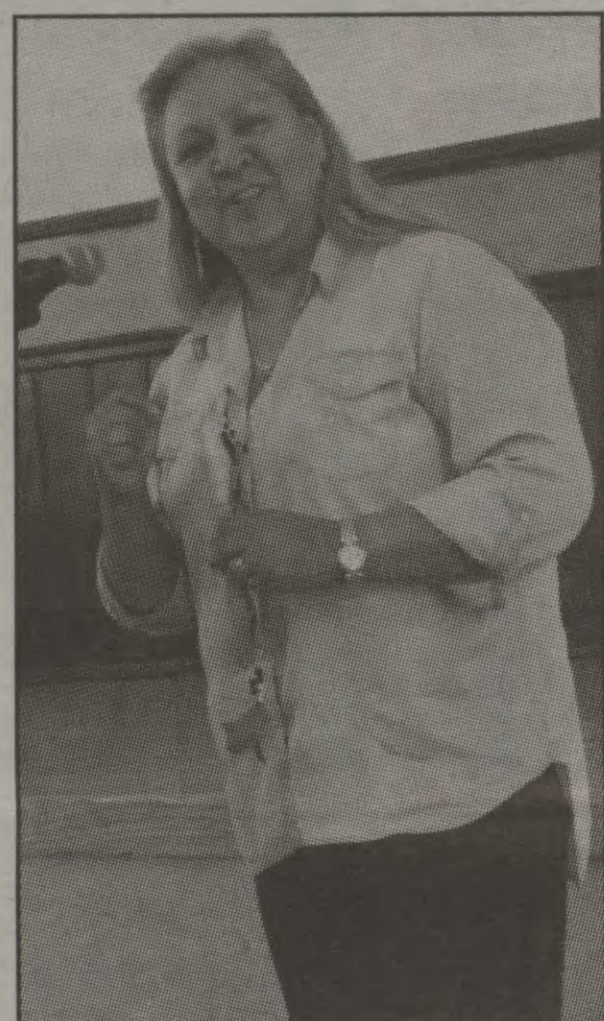
Conference Chair and Founder Dr. Suzanne Stewart, a member of the Yellowknife Dene Nation, said "The conference is oversold every year, and we have people coming from coast to coast."

A registered psychologist, Stewart is Associate Professor, Department of Counselling and Clinical Psychology at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto. She is also Special Advisor to the Dean on Aboriginal Education, and currently holds the Canada Research Chair in Aboriginal Homelessness & Life Transitions.



PHOTOS: BARB NAHWEGAHBOW

Mohawk psychologist Dr. Rod McCormick at Indigenizing Psychology Symposium in Toronto, May 2015.



Dr. Raven Sinclair, Associate Professor of Social Work, University of Saskatchewan.

Psychology has not been a hospitable place for Indigenous people, Stewart said. They are diagnosed with a western lens, and so, "having an event where we're talking about psychology from an Indigenous perspective, to not only community members but to mainstream psychology audiences is really encouraging," she said.

About half of the 120 attendees, said Stewart, were non-Indigenous and many of them practice in the mainstream health system. All of the keynote speakers, she said, are highly regarded successful western-accredited academics and they're all research chairs. They are also highly regarded in the Indigenous community as being rooted in traditional knowledge.

Dr. Rod McCormick is a Professor and Research Chair in Aboriginal health at Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops, B.C. Previous to moving to Kamloops, McCormick was a psychologist and professor of counselling at UBC for 18 years.

In his keynote address, he talked about how the Indigenous world view is one that is relational, that Indigenous people believe that



Dr. Suzanne Stewart, Psychologist and Associate Professor at OISE/University of Toronto.

all things are connected and inter-related. Indigenous people learn to live with, and learn from, nature as opposed to the western mechanistic world view, which seeks to control nature.

When we connect with nature, McCormick said, we can see that it provides us with many of the things we need for healing – family, perspective, guidance, empowerment, and balance. In the research and work that he's done with Indigenous people who are traumatized, he's found the natural world has been a source of healing and guidance for them. They've drawn strength from the mountains that have been there for thousands of years, and learned lessons about adaptability from the way that trees and birds and other plants and animals survive cold winters and hot summers. Nature is an important healing tool, he said, and not just for Indigenous people.

Dr. Raven Sinclair, member of Gordon's First Nation in Saskatchewan opened her keynote address by bringing out her shaker and singing a traditional song for the earth.

See *Indigenizing* on page 21.

Health Watch

Compiled by Shari Narine

Youth suffering mental health problems go without treatment

A study recently released by Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health in Ottawa indicates that a large number of young people from First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities suffer from mental health problems and drug abuse. However, they are not seeking help because of a lack of Aboriginal-specific services.

In a survey of 305 young people, the report found 48 per cent of respondents had a high chance of suffering from depression and mental health issues. Aboriginal youth are nine times more likely to be depressed than non-Aboriginal youth in Canada, the study said. Suicide rates are also three times higher among Aboriginal youth.

When asked why they do not seek help, Aboriginal youth said racism and stigma associated with depression have stopped them. Many said they would rather work with service providers who can incorporate teachings about their own culture.

These problems are only exacerbated by the lack of services directed specifically at young Aboriginals in the region, said Allison Fisher, the executive director of the Wabano Centre. There are few Aboriginal-specific mental health programs and no treatment centres for substance abuse tailored for Aboriginal youth in the Ottawa region, so many of those suffering, who want culturally-specific treatment, have to either go without or leave. The study was funded by the Champlain Local Health Integration Network.

HIV rates alarmingly high on First Nations

According to the most recent numbers available from Health Canada, there were 64 new HIV infections per 100,000 people on reserves, compared with 5.9 per 100,000 in the country as a whole. Mona Loutfy, an infectious disease specialist with Women's College Hospital in Toronto, thinks the rates could be even higher as little testing has been done on Saskatchewan reserves. A decade ago, Saskatchewan First Nations' rate of HIV was on par with the provincial population. But in 2011, the rate spiked to 95 per 100,000 on Saskatchewan reserves. HIV is most commonly spread by intravenous drug users sharing needles. Only a handful of Saskatchewan reserves do HIV testing. Loutfy said HIV-increase has spread into Manitoba and Ontario. She believes that Health Canada is not doing enough to address the issue. "I don't think they're being aggressive enough," Loutfy said. "I think they can do more."

Smoking cessation program kicks off

The Samson Cree Nation has launched a new initiative targeted at curbing smoking. Ekaya Pihtaw, a tobacco cessation project, aims to prevent the use of tobacco among young people and adults; protect from exposure to second hand tobacco smoke; promote cessation among smokers; and provide education and support to those who smoke to help them quit. Ekaya Pihtaw is working with the Alberta First Nation communities of Samson, Montana, Louis Bull, Ermineskin and Pigeon Lake. Between February and April of 2015, a survey conducted by the project of 839 adults and 52 youth determined that 45 per cent of the adult population smoked daily and 28 per cent smoked occasionally while 13 per cent of the youth population (under 18) smoked daily and 22 per cent smoked occasionally. As well, 55 per cent of the current adult smokers started smoking when they were between the ages of 13 and 16 years, so a priority of the project is to focus on prevention activities for children and youth. Ekaya Pihtaw is funded by the First Nation and Inuit Health, Federal Tobacco Control Strategy.

Financial gifts to help recruit, retain health professionals

The University of British Columbia has received two \$1-million donations to support its Centre for Excellence in Indigenous Health. The pair of gifts – one from Chancellor Lindsay Gordon and his wife Elizabeth, and the other from Rudy, Patricia, Caroline and Rory North – will be used to recruit and retain Aboriginal doctors, nurses, dentists, pharmacists and other health professionals. As well, nearly half of the Gordons' gift will provide financial aid for Aboriginal students, while the Norths' funding will support a summer science program and mentoring program aimed at Aboriginal high school students, and the creation of a new certificate program for Aboriginal health. The centre was created in 2014 to train more Aboriginal health providers, to optimize Indigenous curriculum in the health sciences, and to foster research into Aboriginal health issues.

New system for wider application of point-of-sale

A new system will allow customers to see how and when the Nutrition North Canada subsidy is applied to their grocery bill. This means that consumers will be able to clearly see the amount of the subsidy passed on to them, ensuring greater retailer transparency and accountability. The new system is a means to increase transparency, which is something northern consumers were asking for. Minister of Aboriginal Affairs Bernard Valcourt directed the Nutrition North Canada advisory board to provide advice and recommendations by June 1 on how to apply a point-of-sale system. "We strongly believe that Northerners deserve to see the NNC savings on their grocery bill and that a point-of-sale system is a step retailers should take to clearly demonstrate that the full subsidy is being passed on to consumers," said Valcourt.

Sports Briefs

Compiled by Sam Laskaris

Thompson helps Rush capture title

Thanks in part to Jeremy Thompson, the Edmonton Rush managed to capture its first National Lacrosse League (NLL) championship in franchise history.

Thompson, a member of the Onondaga Nation, and his teammates won the NLL title on June 5, thanks to an 11-10 victory over the Toronto Rock. With the win, Edmonton swept the best-of-three championship final in the minimum two matches.

The Rush cruised to a 15-9 triumph over the host Rock in the first game of the championship series on May 30. For Edmonton, which joined the league in 2006, it was the club's first NLL crown.

Thompson, a 28-year-old who was in his fourth NLL season, did not register a point in Game 2 of the final. But he did score twice and also added an assist in the opening match of the series.

Thompson had appeared in all 18 of Edmonton's regular season contests this season. He earned 15 points, including eight goals in those matches. He added four points (three goals, one assist) in the five Rush playoff contests.

For Thompson, who was also a member of the Iroquois Nationals that captured the bronze medal at the 2014 world men's field lacrosse championships in Colorado, this marked his third season in Edmonton. He had spent his rookie season in the NLL with the Buffalo Bandits.

Host community sought

The Aboriginal Sport and Wellness Council of Ontario (ASWCO) is seeking submissions from communities looking to host the 2016 Ontario Aboriginal Summer Games.

Organizers anticipate about 500 athletes will take part in these provincial games. Some of the events will serve as a qualifier or a means to identify potential athletes that will represent Ontario at the 2017 North American Indigenous Games. A site for the 2017 NAIG has yet to be announced. But there is a good chance that event will be held in Toronto as it was the only city that submitted a bid to host that multi-sport competition.

ASWCO officials are suggesting the provincial Games be staged sometime during the first two weeks of July, subject to the availability of facilities in the host community. It is anticipated the Games will last four to five days.

There are currently eight proposed sports for the provincial Games. They are archery, athletics (track and field), badminton, canoeing/kayaking, golf, rifle shooting, swimming and wrestling. Officials from those communities submitting a bid are welcome to propose additional sports or demonstration sports they would like to include in the Games.

Meanwhile, the host community for next year's Ontario Aboriginal Summer Games is expected to be announced on Sept. 7.

Final bid submissions are due July 17. Members of the bid review committee will then venture out of site visits throughout August.

Teams seeking more championship

Early indications are various Six Nations lacrosse teams could be in store for some more championship glory this year.

In 2014 three Six Nations clubs won their national titles while another squad advanced to the finals at its Canadian tournament.

For starters, the Six Nations Chiefs, won their second consecutive Mann Cup title, annually awarded to the top Senior men's team in Canada.

The Chiefs will in all likelihood be a force again this year. The club did lose its season opener, primarily because the majority of its key players were unavailable for the contest as they were finishing off their campaigns with their pro National Lacrosse League squads. But after dropping the season opener the Chiefs reeled off four straight wins.

As for the Six Nations Junior A Arrows, who captured the national Minto Cup last year, they were off to a solid 8-1 start this year. The Arrows were sitting atop the standings in their 11-team Ontario Lacrosse Association (OLA) circuit with the 8-4 Peterborough Lakers, who had played three extra games.

Meanwhile, the Six Nations Jr. B Rebels appear keen to defend their national Founders Cup crown. The Rebels were sporting a perfect 16-0 mark in their OLA loop.

As for the Six Nations Senior B Rivermen, they were the runners-up at their national Presidents' Cup tournament. This season the Rivermen appear keen to return to the Canadian tourney as they were off to a 7-2 start, good for top spot in their seven-squad Ontario league.

Also, though there is no Canadian tournament it can advance to, Six Nations' Junior C club is proving it will be one of the favourites to win its Ontario league.

This squad was undefeated after 10 regular season contests.

Nation gears up for hosting duties



Chief Bryan LaForme, the Chief of the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation

By Sam Laskaris
Windspeaker Contributor

HAGERSVILLE, Ont.

Chief Bryan LaForme has a busy schedule these days. And LaForme, the Chief of the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation, will continue to have his share of additional duties for the next couple of months.

That's because his First Nation has been designated as host First Nation for both the Pan American Games and the Parapan American Games, which will be held in Toronto and surrounding communities this summer.

For starters, the Pan American Games will run from July 10 to July 26. More than 6,000 athletes from 41 countries will participate in these Games. They'll be taking part in 36 sports.

The Parapan American Games, featuring athletes with a disability, will follow in August. These Games, which run from Aug. 7 to Aug. 15, will attract more than 1,500 athletes in 15 sports.

The Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation was named the host First Nation for this year's Games in May 2014. Officials from the First Nation and from the organizing committee of the Toronto 2015 Pan American/Parapan American Games were involved in the signing of the hosting agreement.

LaForme said the hosting gig is indeed a significant deal. And it's also a historical.

"This is the first time in Pan American Games' history they've had a First Nation acting as hosts," he said.

The Pan American Games, first held in Buenos Aires, Argentina

in 1951, are staged every four years. These Games take place one year before the Summer Olympics.

LaForme said reaching the hosting agreement was not an easy process as some Games' officials simply could not understand claims that events would be staged on Indigenous land.

"It took some time," he said. "There was a lack of education and knowledge on their part."

But it's not as if Games' officials are the only one who are unaware of LaForme's First Nation.

"Right now if you ask most people who the Mississaugas are they think you're talking about the city," he said. "It's an education process we're doing."

And it's been a rather lengthy ongoing process.

"We've been doing this for 20-plus years," LaForme said. "Sometimes it seems like you're making progress and it is building up momentum."

LaForme said at times it seems like any progress made takes a step back when different governments come into power or when new immigrants come into the country and they are unaware of the history of the land.

LaForme is content with the amount of involvement his First Nation has leading up to the Games.

This includes the late May trip he took to Mexico.

He was part of the Canadian contingent that travelled to Mexico, hosts of the 2011 Games to accept the torch.

"We were invited and we gladly accepted the opportunity to go and do that," LaForme said.

On May 30, LaForme was in

Toronto to participate in a torch lighting ceremony, which kicked off the torch relay.

"We're making a substantial impact with some of the things we are involved with," he said.

LaForme is also anxiously anticipating the Games' opening ceremonies, scheduled for July 10. This event will be held at Toronto's Rogers Centre, which will be called the Pan Am Ceremonies Venue throughout the Games.

"Once the Games start and people see how much we are involved with in the opening ceremonies, hopefully that will come through that this is First Nation land," he said. "But not everybody will get it. And not everybody will understand it."

LaForme said even prior to the Games, there will be yet another opportunity to educate people.

"Quite often there are misunderstandings of how First Nation people live," he said.

To this end, the general public is invited to a powwow that will be staged on June 21, National Aboriginal Day, at Toronto's Fort York National Historic Site. Besides watching some Native dancing and listening to music, those in attendance will be able to enjoy some Native food as well.

In recent years the powwow, which had been staged in the Mississaugas of New Credit First Nation, had attracted between 5,000 and 6,000 people.

"With Toronto being the size it is and the fact it's open to the public, we might have a lot more people this year," LaForme said. "It's being advertised everywhere you can think of. Our people are looking forward to it."

[education] Vickers delves into his past to inspire future graduates

By Debora Steel
Windspeaker Contributor

Nanaimo

Lawyer Louise Mandell was the first chancellor of Vancouver Island University to have the honor to sit in the seat of Knowledge and Wisdom. When it was unveiled, May 27, she closed her eyes, grounded herself in a silent meditation and sat on the chair made from reclaimed old growth cedar adorned with 24-carot gold leaf designs.

The chair, part of a suite made for convocation held at the university, was designed and constructed by world-renowned artist Arthur Vickers (Tsimshian/Heiltsuk). The suite is made up of the Chancellor's chair, (the Keeper of Knowledge and Wisdom), a President's and Vice-Chancellor's chair, the Keeper of Knowledge, and a bentwood box, out of which the university's graduates will receive their parchments.

It's a masterpiece, said the VIU President Dr. Ralph Nilson, that will inspire for generations.

The convocation suite was unveiled at a ceremony at the Nanaimo campus. Dignitaries at the ceremony included Lieutenant Governor Judith Guichon, whose own desk at Government House is a bentwood box created by Vickers. She was excited to see what mysteries in the wood the artist had exposed.

Also in attendance was Wayne Berg, chief commercial officer of Coast Capital Savings, which financed the suite's creation. It was a gift, not only to the school, but to the students.

"We know that encouraging people to pursue their educational dreams is a powerful way to build stronger communities, here in B.C. or wherever VIU graduates' lives take them," Berg said. "Now, when VIU graduates walk across the stage and see this beautiful suite built to celebrate them and their significant accomplishment, I hope they will

feel tremendously—and rightfully—proud of what they've achieved.

He remarked on the birth of VIU's new tradition for their graduates, calling the pieces together awe-inspiring.

"It's our hope that these inspiring symbols will also make them realize they are a part of something bigger than themselves, and that they will go on to inspire other young people to pursue their own educational goals."

"We live in a world of continuing relationships," said Mandell, "linked by a higher vision of what it means to be human. To Coast Capital Savings, the VIU community, Arthur Vickers, and all those who participated in this dream of creative partnership, I honor you. This transmuted spirit of creation will mold the mindset of all subsequent generations."

The cedar, many hundreds of years old, was collected from different parts of Vancouver Island. Before work began on the suite, the artist visited VIU and sat among the students, unbeknownst to them, in classes and where they gathered, to listen to them speak, gathering information on what the school meant to them, and how an education would transform their lives, said Nilson. And he came up with a design for the suite that told the story of that experience.

"This has been an amazing journey," said Vickers. He said he has extreme reverence for the ancient sentinels. The old growth trees have now found their new purpose, he said.

He took time to think about education and what it was all about for him. He thought about his grandfather who was a big influence in his life.

"We become who we are through the teachings of our ancestors," said Vickers. "The ancient wood, which has been recovered from Vancouver Island, has seen so many world events and through its growth rings it tells the story of our past and our history."

The suite is infused with layer upon layer of meaning through the creative spirit of one of our most gifted artists, said VIU's president.

On the chair of Knowledge and Wisdom, Vickers has placed a design representing an ancient old being that understands everything passed down from all cultures from grandparent to parent to child over the

generations. In that design is the front of the university, the claws of an eagle within the design hold firmly to the base of the chair.

In the chair of Wisdom is the design of a teacher holding her arms aloft, giving her students the best opportunity to achieve their goals.

At the ends of the bentwood box are designs representing students walking up to receive

their parchments. The front of the box represents the joy of students on receiving their degrees. These are just some of the designs on the suite. From the back the graduates will see other designs representing their journeys. The artist created 22 original images referencing students, teachers, the natural and spirit worlds, and the architecture of VIU.

See photos on page 23.



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Centre to keep the survivors at heart

(Continued from page 8.)

"The problem we are dealing with was manifested in an educational setting and we want a different educational setting to help lead to reconciliation. Education, research, deeper understanding, these are things that can help us together to build a better future," said Dr. David Barnard, University of Manitoba president.

Eugene Arcand, member of the NCTR governing circle and member of the survivors committee that helped guide the work undertaken by the TRC, said the centre would be operating long after the last survivor has gone. He said by 2050 there would be no more residential school survivors alive.

"This is a chance for us all," he said. "We have a tremendous responsibility and an opportunity toward our closing years to do it our way."

But continuing the work of the TRC does not lie in the hands of the NCTR alone. The closing ceremony saw seven new people inducted as honorary witnesses, taking the number to close to 80.

Honorary witnesses play an important role, said TRC

Commissioner Dr. Marie Wilson. The TRC realized early in its mandate that it could not educate about the Indian residential school experience on its own.

Those inducted as witnesses, she said, are prominent on a local, national or international level and in a wide variety of vocations. Some witnesses are individuals, and others, like the newly inducted Canadians for a New Partnership, are institutional.

Former Prime Minister Joe Clark spoke passionately about the role he has undertaken since being inducted as an honorary witness in the Saskatoon national event in 2012.

"The point is this work of reconciliation is ours to carry forward. And unless we all carry it forward together it will not happen," he said. "There is a difference between an apology and a priority. An apology is a recognition of past failures. A priority is a commitment to future success."

Clark added that it was important for the 94 recommendations provided by the TRC to be used as a guide in moving forward.

Reconciliation taken to the streets

(Continued from page 10)

"I stand here in shame of my ancestors, acknowledging what they have done but also stand here with great pride of being an honorary witness... and vow to be one of the people who corrects the ignorance," she said to the crowd gathered in Gatineau, where the march began.

Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson greeted the marchers at Marion Dewar Plaza, acknowledging Ottawa's location on the unceded territory of the Algonquin Nation and noting that, with 35,000 Aboriginal people living and working in the city, Ottawa had the fastest growing urban Aboriginal community in the country.

"We cannot change the past, but we can learn from it. We can recognize those who have been deeply affected and wounded.

We can work together as a community to build a renewed relationship with our Aboriginal community members, one that is based on mutual understanding, appreciation and respect," he said.

Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne, who spoke to survivors as she marched, also addressed the group in Ottawa. She talked about her personal connection, saying that her grandchildren's other set of grandparents had attended Indian residential school.

"While our federal government has apologized, a statement of apology will only take us so far. To give meaning to those words, to lift them off the page so they can make a positive difference in people's lives, government must be active agents in dismantling the system of oppression that they spent centuries building," said Wynne.

Wynne noted the action her government had taken, including revising school curriculum to include residential schools, distributing First Nations treaty maps to all the schools, and working with partners to develop community-driven, culturally-based programs and services.

TRC Chair Justice Murray Sinclair called the day "meaningful" for the commissioners, but said the work toward reconciliation was far from over.

"Reconciliation will not be achieved in my lifetime.... Reconciliation will probably not be achieved in the lifetime of my children. But reconciliation will be achieved if we understand this: You do not have to believe that reconciliation will happen; you have to believe that reconciliation should happen," he said.

Indigenizing Psychology Symposium

(Continued from page 18.)

"We're on a journey of remembering who we are as Indigenous people and the gifts we bring to the world," Sinclair told the audience. A "product of the child welfare system", she was adopted by a white family shortly

after she was taken from her family when she was about four.

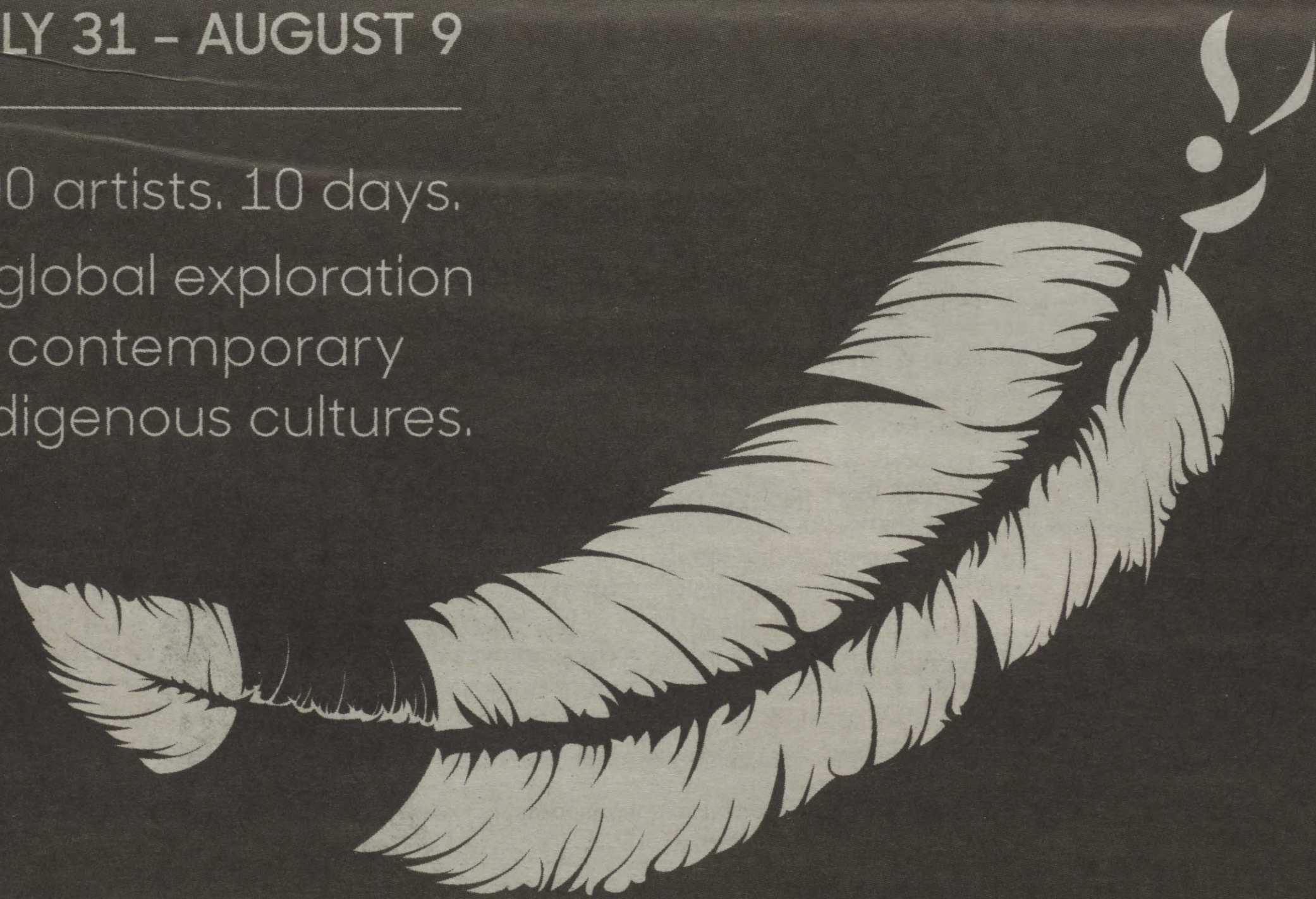
"The traumas we've undergone are totally connected to our colonial history," said Sinclair, including residential schools and the removal of children by the child welfare system. The colonial

agenda and the underlying reasons for the trauma remains the same, she said. "It's always about money. They want our land. They want our resources."

Sinclair is Associate Professor of Social Work with the University of Regina.

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Born artist gave all he had

By Dianne Meili

While other kids in Wikwemikong, on Ontario's Manitoulin Island, were running around with baseball bats and jars for catching frogs, Josh Peltier carried paint brushes or a sketchpad.

Surrounded and inspired by great Woodland Anishnaabe artists like Leland Bell and Daphne Odjig, Josh continued creating until he realized he needed to expand his horizon.

At 16, he left home for Toronto, where he enrolled in high school and got a part-time job selling coffee and soft drinks from a cart in a bingo hall. After completing school, he applied to OCAD (Ontario College of Art and Design) and graduated from the Sculpture and Installation Program, but painting, especially murals, remained his passion.

After living in the city for 11 years, Josh moved back to Wikwemikong in 2004 to take care of his daughter Caleja from a past relationship. He had worked for the Debajehmujig Creation Centre in Manitowaning before, but with his new credentials he was offered a job in 2008 to head the visual arts department. He also curated the centre's gallery and wrote and directed theatre productions.

"I came to Debaj and found out that I got to teach the way I wanted to teach," he said in a quote in the Manitoulin Expositor. "There are so many different things I can teach here and if I don't know how to do something I figure it out. As an artist I always find new ways to learn and create."

He lauded the Debajehmujig Creation Centre as a "one of a kind facility that opens you up to so many possibilities."

Joe Osawabine, Debajehmujig's artistic director, said Josh had unending commitment and passion for his community. "When he got back home he kept painting on canvas. Airbrushing acrylics was his specialty. Everywhere you go you can see his work. It's in the Wikwemikong band office and other places.

"When Josh worked on an installation called the League of Cultural Emancipators, he had

everyone in Debajehmujig take part. He made portraits of about 20 or so people in the community who were recognized as having revitalized the Anishnaabe culture in the 50's and 60's. He outlined each portrait like a paint-by-numbers painting and had the members come in and do the broad strokes. He'd come in behind and do the detailing. He made it into a beautiful community project. It wasn't just him doing it all. He loved to have others share in creativity. He was always making murals with the youth."

In the summer of 2006, while working on Biidaasigekwe (Sunlight Woman), a play in the Anishnaabe language, Josh met Jessica Wilde, a young performer from Kettle and Stony Point First Nation near Sarnia, Ontario.† He was smitten and, after working with her for only a month, asked her to marry him.

"I wasn't ready for marriage, but when he proposed, I said 'yes'," recalled Wilde-Peltier. "I'd always dreamed of being with an artist who had his own style. I wanted a smart guy, a funny guy. I couldn't believe it when I had the whole package."

Wilde-Peltier's mother consented to the marriage as long as Josh promised to bring her home whenever she wanted. "True to his word, if I was getting kind of homesick he'd just say 'all right, I'll start packing the van' and away we'd go," Wilde-Peltier said.

"He was a true romantic. When we visited Scotland as part of the Global Savages, he hired a bagpipe player to play for my birthday and then took me to Ireland. We worked, travelled, hung out together and had the same friends. We were together 24 hours a day."

The Global Savages, conceptualized by Osawabine and Ron Berti, Debajehmujig producer, is a travelling entourage of performers who share Anishnaabe history, culture and traditions with Canadian and †international audiences.

"We told people about our oral history as we learned it from our Elders – like the concept of



Josh Peltier

Turtle Island, stories of the thunderbird and underwater serpents, the imbalance of the world and the preservation of humanity," explained Osawabine. "Josh was so proud to represent the Anishnaabek nation out there in the world. He was always an ambassador for his community, his family, and for our nation as a whole."

After performing in the 2014 On Common Ground outdoor event in Glasgow, Scotland, Josh blogged that, as a kid, he didn't think that being an artist would take him anywhere but "I was born an artist and I won't and can't be anything else. I've only ever known how to be an artist. Even though we've never had a word for art, I've worked my

whole life, so far, as an artist and now I get the chance to share that with the world."

Josh was born on Dec. 6, 1976 to parents Alex (Nixon), and Genevieve (Zhunyip) Peltier. Though his parents parted ways some years ago, the family continued to get together regularly in the house Josh grew up in.

"His parents even brought their new partners to the gatherings and everyone still hung out. It was cool that way," said Osawabine.

When Alex passed away a year ago, Josh replaced his father as the family patriarch and encouraged the family to continue regular get-togethers.

Before his death, Josh was

working hard to reclaim his culture and was trying to find the courage to play the drum. A year and a half ago he began to create ephemeral art that eventually returned to the earth over time.

"He'd create something with animal hide pieces and just watch it over the months to see how the earth reacted to it. Or he'd work on canvas using natural materials like beehive comb, wood and feathers. He was finding new ways to take his art back to nature, the place where he came from," said Wilde-Peltier.

Josh passed away on April 20, 2015 from complications of liver and kidney damage. He was 39 years old.

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PHOTOS: SHARI NARINE

Hearts made by children were "planted" in a heart garden on the grounds of Rideau Hall. The planting of hearts is in remembrance of children who lost their lives at residential schools. Similar ceremonies were held between May 31 and June 3 across the country to coincide with the TRC's closing event.



Planting hearts in the garden at Rideau Hall: AFN National Chief Perry Bellegarde A young boy drums an honour song.

Vickers delves into his past to inspire future graduates



Artist Arthur Vickers stands with the convocation suite he designed for Vancouver Island University.



PHOTO: DEBORA STEEL

Chancellor Louise Mandell takes her place in the seat of Knowledge and Wisdom



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