

Eagle Feather NEWS

FREE

Gallery inclusive of Indigenous culture

Lyndon Linklater takes his role as Indigenous Relations Advisor at the Rемаi Modern Gallery very seriously. He was proud to help smudge the entire building before it opened.

(Photo by John Lagimodiere)



By Jeanelle Mandes
Of Eagle Feather News

The popular Rемаi Modern Arts Museum in Saskatoon incorporates Indigenous inclusion on various levels. Lyndon Linklater, who is the museum's Indigenous Relations Advisor, is a part of making that happen.

"We have started a journey together. By virtue of the (museum) involving an Indigenous perspective in

what they do says a lot about their character," he said. "It's a really exciting position to be in."

Linklater was offered the job last August and was asked from an Indigenous perspective how to make the place more inclusive for all people. He explained that elders are always essential in decision making and guidance discussions in the Indigenous culture.

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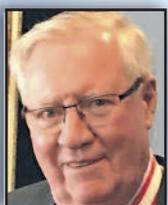
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Lyndon Linklater following a proud family tradition

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Linklater gathered about a dozen First Nation and Métis elders along with the museum's senior management team and Saskatoon's mayor. Following the meeting, the elders directed Linklater to start off by smudging the entire four-storey building which took approximately two hours to do. It was something that Linklater was proud to take part in.

"They are trying to be different and they are different because they are in unchartered territory. How they have gone about doing things thus far has really impressed me," he said.

"What kind of organization can say that they had their whole brand new building smudged and blessed with a pipe ceremony? Not too many places can say that."

After the building smudge took place, they had a pipe ceremony on the main floor where they invited some elders to bless the building and ask for good energies for the grand opening which took place on Oct. 21.

"It was a really great success," he said, of the opening. "We had powwow dancers, and Métis jigging and fiddlers to add to the celebratory component of the grand opening. That was the nature of my involvement with them."

Linklater's background includes tons of community work. He works for the Office of the Treaty Commissioner (OTC) on the Speakers Bureau by dealing with public education. He also does public speaking engagements from all spectrums – kindergartners, senior citizen homes, RCMP, and unions.

In his public speaking sessions, he provides public education about Indigenous history, culture, treaties, and contemporary issues. Linklater also works in the Regional Psychiatric Center by providing cultural services such as sweat-lodge ceremonies and other First Nations ceremonies, as a means for treatment and reha-

Linklater stands in front of a piece by artist Jimmie Durham from the show *At the Center of the World* currently at the Remai Modern. (Photo by John Lagimodiere)



bilitation. He does his own public consulting such as delivering awareness workshops and doing reconciliation work.

He learned these ways from his parents, Maria and Walter Linklater, who are respected elders and are also residential school survivors. His parents showed him a different way to live by introducing him and his siblings to their Indigenous culture and practises.

Today, he can speak his Cree language and understands the teachings of ceremonies that were handed down to him from his father.

"I can perform ceremonies and run sweat lodges. I have been learning and have been doing it. I am an oskapewis, an elder's helper," he said.

"My folks here are getting older. My dad said, 'You've got to do this for me now because I can't do it.'"

It's like I'm filling in now. That is kind of our story."

With the handed down traditional knowledge, he was able to incorporate some of his teachings into the Remai Modern Arts Museum. Hiring Indigenous staff and showcasing Indigenous artists and their works are a step forward to Indigenous inclusion, said Linklater. One of his favourite things is seeing syllabics written in the Cree language outside the building.

"There are many different components of art and it is important to maintain your culture. That is what makes us unique as people is our culture," said Linklater.

"As Indigenous people, we do have our own culture and some of our concepts have helped shape the world today, to make the world a better place. That is part of culture and part of that is art."

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Filmmaker tells her family story in her first documentary

By Chelsea Laskowski
For Eagle Feather News

When the first frames of Kiyari McNab's short documentary come on, she shies away from the images on the screen.

After a few moments, McNab stands up and walks over to a window on the other side of Andrea Cessna's home office, looking outside as Cessna and I watch the seven-minute video featuring McNab showing photos of her family and friends.

We listen to her archived voice tell the complicated history behind her connection to the people in those photos while McNab, in real time, fidgets uncomfortably.

McNab is an 18-year-old Cree-Ojibway woman in her final year of high school in Saskatoon who works part time on projects with Cessna's company, PPRPLN Productions. On screen we witness McNab's vulnerability, but also her confidence as Cessna tells me McNab is the videographer behind all the background footage in their documentary *Abnormal Freedom*.

It's McNab's first-ever film and is an official selection at the upcoming Hot Docs film festival in Toronto.

When the credits roll, noting McNab, Cessna, and Muskwa Lerat for their work, McNab is ready to share the story behind the name of her highly personal documentary.

"Living an abnormal life was normal for Indigenous youth ... and I like to be free and stuff and not be controlled or anything like that, be like bossed around, so I was like, 'Abnormal Freedom,'" McNab explained.

The film's style taps into oral tradition of storytelling, which is part of why Cessna said it is so special.

"Back in the day, Natives were to use pictures for their stories instead of writing. So that's why I wanted to use this," McNab said, pointing to the book of photos that she's held onto since she was nine years old.

"She was speaking these stories to me," Cessna said.

The film came about while Cessna worked with McNab through a digital storytelling program offered out of Core Neighbourhood Youth Co-op (CNYC) in Saskatoon. McNab's eye for photography, for framing shots, and for telling stories through visuals and – later on – sound, endeared the two to each other right away.

When *Abnormal Freedom* was complete, Cessna said she knew the film had legs to go beyond the original Saskatchewan Craft Council screening in Saskatoon. It will be screened a further three times at Hot Docs in Toronto at the end of April.

McNab said she is nervous, scared that she will hear commentary from "snobby artists" at the largest documentary film festival in North America. However, her determination to make a name for herself as a

Canadian artist shines through as she talks about how her photography has already been featured in exhibits across Saskatoon.

"I didn't expect myself to be a filmmaker and here I am now, so I really want more youth to get more into it," she said.

McNab said Cessna has helped make her childhood dreams of being a photographer come true.



Kiyari McNab, left, and Andrea Cessna, look over photography/film equipment they used in the documentary short.

(Photo by Chelsea Laskowski)

Living an abnormal life was normal for Indigenous youth ... and I like to be free and stuff and not be controlled or anything like that, be like bossed around.

– Kayari McNab

An advertisement for Nutrien. It features a woman wearing a white hard hat and safety glasses, smiling. The background is a blurred industrial or agricultural setting. The text "Together We Grow" is at the top left. The main headline reads "Her dreams make our dreams possible." Below that, a quote says: "We're working to help farmers around the world produce enough food for a growing population. And by supporting and encouraging opportunities for all people, we'll achieve our mission of feeding the future – together." The Nutrien logo and tagline "Feeding the Future™" are at the bottom right, along with the website "www.nutrien.com".

Arts stories are everywhere

First, I would like to pay homage to my editor boss, John, for giving me the task in putting this month's issue together.

I had no clue how much time and work it took putting this paper together.

When I was told I was given the opportunity to write the publisher's note, I had no idea what to base this piece on but it had to be something related to this month's paper theme.

I thought I didn't know much about arts and entertainment. Then it occurred to me. Writing is on the spectrum of art. According to a quick Google search, "any kind of writing can be an art, but creative thinking is the key." I had an 'aha!' moment.

As I sat in my living room with my laptop obviously on my lap, I felt like Carrie Bradshaw on *Sex & the City* contemplating my next writing piece – minus the *Cosmopolitan*. I looked around my living room and noticed the various pieces of art I have hanging on my walls.

At that moment, it clicked to me that I was surrounded by art every day. This painting pictured in this story was painted from my cousin/brother Raymond Mandes Jr. also known as Ojigimaw.

Over the years, he found his passion in painting and I fell in love with so many pieces he made. The colours were so vibrant and they stood out once you seen them. I wanted my home to feel colourful and vibrant so I bought a few paintings from him – family deal!

Last week, I made a call-out on my Facebook page asking for up-and-coming Indigenous artists living on reserve. Man! The responses were overwhelming. I had eight comments and numerous inboxes from my Facebook friends.

It was hard to choose but I picked a few who are featured in this month's edition. To know that there are so many Indigenous artists on-reserve who many aren't aware of sent me a wave of pride. Art is very much alive

in every community – Indigenous and non-Indigenous.

Over the past few weeks, I've interviewed and wrote various stories on individuals in relation to arts and entertainment. One story I found absolutely intriguing is about an Indigenous woman from a northern Saskatchewan community who spent over 20 years perfecting the craft of birch bark biting art. To know that is an old Indigenous tradition that continues to be practiced to this day is an inspirational thing to hear. It's something that I've always wondered 'how

the Sage-keeng's Finest but in my moshum's eyes, I was the best! Those were the good ol' glory days.

As you can see, arts and entertainment is important in every culture. People are always eager to learn about arts and entertainment in other cultures as well as their own. When I see non-Indigenous people at various Indigenous events related to the arts and entertainment, it shows they are curious in understanding more about us. That right there is one of the bridges that connects us all.

Every year in Regina, a festival of cultures called Mosaic gives people a chance to experience the variety of cultures we have in this city. Song, dance and artwork displays are seen amongst the various pavilions. It's an event I love to attend.

Another place that I love going to that showcases Indigenous artwork is Regina's Royal Saskatchewan museum in the Indigenous gallery. Anyone that knows me know that I'm a huge museum nerd. I love learning about history through art. Walking through that gallery showed me how important art was and still is in our Indigenous culture

whether if it's through beadwork or Indigenous pictographs on rocks, every art piece has a story behind it. So, overall, writing this piece about arts and entertainment wasn't so bad after all. Putting this issue together was fun and also gave me a deeper insight on how arts and entertainment is in my life every day. Many thanks to those who have shared their stories with me as an artist or an entertainer. Not only have you shared a piece of your life with me but for all our dedicated Eagle Feather News readers to read. Your stories will always linger on through the work you continue to do. Ekosi!



Comment

Jeanelle Mandes



This painting by my cousin /brother Raymond Mandes Jr (also known as Ojigimaw) hangs proudly on my living room wall and is a cherished part of my art collection. I even got the family deal.

(Photo by Jeanelle Mandes)

did they do that'. When life isn't so hectic, I'd like to take that time to sit, listen and learn about this style of art.

Finding entertainment stories is always easy. There's so much Indigenous talent out there whether if it's through listening to MBC radio and hearing Ernest Monias or watching videos being shared on social media of people performing – entertainment is always alive.

I would like to say back in my prime, I was my family's entertainment. My late moshum Edwin 'Sam' Mandes used to stomp his feet on the floor which was my cue to start jiggging. I may not have been as good as

whether if it's through beadwork or Indigenous pictographs on rocks, every art piece has a story behind it.

So, overall, writing this piece about arts and entertainment wasn't so bad after all. Putting this issue together was fun and also gave me a deeper insight on how arts and entertainment is in my life every day.

Many thanks to those who have shared their stories with me as an artist or an entertainer. Not only have you shared a piece of your life with me but for all our dedicated Eagle Feather News readers to read.

Your stories will always linger on through the work you continue to do.

Ekosi!

Eagle Feather NEWS

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Publications Mail Agreement No.: 40027204

OSSN #1492-7497

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

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

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This issue printed on: April 12, 2018
Next issue to be printed on: May 10, 2018

Fine arts student finds family background, passion for art

**By Jeanelle Mandes
Of Eagle Feather News**

After discovering her Indigenous background, an inspired First Nations University of Canada (FNUUniv) Fine Arts student also discovered her passion for Indigenous art.

Sarah Timewell, originally from Vancouver, relocated to Regina to pursue her studies at the one-of-a-kind institution.

“I really wanted to learn about my genetic history and my family because I was adopted. I also love art,” she said.

“Just seemed like the perfect opportunity to come and be immersed in the cultural teachings.

That’s how I ended up coming to the First Nations University.”

Timewell focuses on drawing and beading in the fine arts field. She has created various beadworks on purses, earrings, moccasins and moccasin boots. Right now, she is recreating a modern Métis version of a Cree woman’s hood which is halfway done. She also does floral beadwork which allowed her to discover a deeper meaning to the artwork.

“I know that there is a lot of symbolism in older beadwork. The way I design my pieces just ends up that they look more like what I’m trying to represent than symbolize anything,” she said.

When Timewell isn’t beading, she is curating at art exhibitions. The most recent gig she had was curating an exhibition called The Darkened Sky which “aims to show the beauty and diversity in darkness through works from the Arts Board’s Permanent Collection. The artists and artworks in The Darkened Sky reflect this diversity that consists of 15 artists, half men and half women, the exhibition highlights the beauty of darkness through a spectrum of artistic media. Works range from craft to fine art, with a wide variety of styles from representational to abstract



Indigenous artist Sarah Timewell discovered her passion for Indigenous arts which includes beading. This beadwork is from her Cree Woman’s Hood which is still in progress. (Photo supplied by Sarah Timewell)



and even folk art,” the Sask Arts Board says.

Timewell will be graduating from FNUUniv this spring with an undergraduate degree in Indigenous Fine Arts. She doesn’t have a specific career in mind at the moment but hopes to one day further her education with a Master’s Degree in Fine Arts so she can teach the subject to others.

“I came into it knowing that I want to include art in my career and my life but the specifics as to what kind of employment I see myself getting is pretty hard to say,” she said.

“Being a professional visual artist is not particularly lucrative. It’s a matter of finding a balance of something I can live off of, that is arts-focused. I have thought of curating and about pursuing professional artists in terms of applying for grants.”

The Darkened Sky exhibition began on April 1 starting in Hudson Bay

and will also be visiting La Ronge, Shaunavon, Melville, Lloydminster, Yorkton, Tisdale, Warman, and Prince Albert to name a few places. The exhibition is set to go on until February 2021, said Timewell.

Contributing to this exhibition was momentous to Timewell and is thankful for the experience she had.

“I’m so honored to have had the opportunity to work on this project. It was great to be involved because what they were looking for was to have a high Indigenous content in the show,” she said.

“It was great being able to select some of the work that may not have been going out to the rental venues. Bringing together some of the lesser known Indigenous artists was the highlight for me.”

“It was great being able to select some of the work that may not have been going out to the rental venues. Bringing together some of the lesser known Indigenous artists was the highlight for me.”

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Telling our own stories preserves our voice

In a couple nights, I finished Cherie Dimaline's book, *The Marrow Thieves*. Many times I had to stop and take a breath because it brought up so many emotions.

I won't give you too much info but the book takes place in a dystopian future, after the downfall of civilization as we know it. Picture Lemberg, Saskatchewan.

Though the book weaves together painful stories, it is ultimately hopeful which is cathartic for me. The last few months, since the Stanley verdict, brought a heaviness I wasn't expecting. I still went to work, still wrote, still looked after my little toddler.

But at the same time, I was slogging through all the racist and hate messages I saw online, and the hypocritical tone-policing when First Nations people tried to work through their grief, pain and rage.

For those of you who waded into the social media fray in defense of Indigenous peoples, you may have been called a "racist." This a common response when you point out racism and it is a garbage response.

As an Indigenous person or a minority, you cannot be a racist in this society. Canada is built on principles and systems of white supremacy. Like Terra Nullius which is Latin for "nobody's land."

Um, so millions of Indigenous peoples are nobody? Terra nullius is key to the Doctrine of Discovery. I'm sure you're all familiar with the history of Canadian explorers wandering around the continent "discovering things."

That would be like walking into a mall and say-

ing, "I claim all of this because it is empty of people I care about. Now that I've claimed this mall, I will proceed to discover New York Fries and gorge myself on fried potatoes."



Within a few seconds, security would have you in a chokehold.

The whole idea of an Indigenous person being racist is absurd. Certainly, an Indigenous person can say some ignorant shit about people who look different than you but that won't make you racist.

You do not benefit from the systems that are already in place. You may call a white person a nasty word but if they want, they can – and have – taken away our children. That's a powerful difference.

In addition to the *Marrow Thieves*, I've read some other great books this year. For those of you who enjoy saucy academic writing, there's Chelsea Vowel's "Indigenous Writes."

Vowel writes about elements of Indigenous identity in Canada. She tackles the confusing ins and outs of what is a "status Indian" and also what is the word for white people in various Indigenous languages.

Then there's Leanne Betasamosake Simpson's

"This Accident of Being Lost" which describes attempts to maintain culture amidst Euro-Canadian society. Every line is written with care; it's a book that is meant to be read out loud.

Writer Teresa Marie Mailhot's writing is like a bolt of lightning. Her memoir *Heartberries* just made it onto the New York Bestseller's list.

On the internet and at writer's festivals, I've also had the luck to meet and read other Indigenous writers such as Wayne Arthurson, David Alexander Robertson and Alicia Elliot.

Arthurson is a writer of mystery novels with Indigenous characters – an area that needed a lot of representation.

Robertson wrote the magical, "When We Were Alone" which is a children's book that talks about residential schools in a poignant but kid-friendly way.

Elliot is a great essayist and short story writer whose work forces Canada to confront its racism and misogyny.

There's loads more books and Indigenous writers out there that deserve your attention. And I hope that you seek them out because it is important to support Indigenous writers.

Obviously for the practical reason that if no one buys their work, then they can't afford to write. But also because it is important for Indigenous peoples to tell our stories in our voices.

That is, by the way, one of the messages that I got from the *Marrow Thieves*. There are those who would steal our voices and erase us from history – so every word that you type is an act of resistance.



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Onion Lake artist uses his talent to promote culture and language

**By Jeanelle Mandes
Of Eagle Feather News**

From sculpting, carving, creating powwow regalia to being the man behind the infamous puppet Emery Burninggrass, this Indigenous artist is paving a road to explore art in many forms.

Donnie Mac, from Onion Lake First Nation, is known for his creations over the years. When he was a kid, he wanted to dance powwow but didn't have the resources. It was then the idea of creating his own powwow outfit was born.

It wasn't until he was in his mid-twenties that he turned his idea into a reality. People started seeing his creations on the powwow trail and that's when the regalia requests started pouring in.

"I really enjoyed art, and I made my own powwow outfit (which) was my first step," said the traditional powwow dancer.

"People started ordering more stuff from me so I just became an artist."

His artwork and regalia products inspired him to open his own store two years ago called the 1876 Trading Post where he sells arts and crafts supplies and various gift shop items. His artwork started with rocks to carving on antlers, creating a variety of paintings and is now working on powwow dancer figurines.

Six years ago, Mac moved from Onion Lake to Prince George, B.C. It was a time where he got his

first recognition as an artist when he attended the Walrus Talks Art Conference where they picked the top 12 artists in Canada.

"I did reach a few highs in my career already. Then I moved back home and I carried that momentum with me because I knew it was needed," he said. "(In Onion Lake) we didn't have a crafts store for three hours so I took a jump at it and started my store like that."

From the Treaty 6 territory, the idea of his store name came from the year the treaty was signed in 1876 and coincidentally, it's also the last four digits of his treaty number. With his business booming, he was able to hire a full-time employee to look after the shop while he was out on the road focusing on his other business as a puppeteer.

"A buddy of mine told me to buy (the puppet) at a thrift store in Saskatoon a couple years ago so I bought him," he said.

"I start humouring the ugliness that our people adopted such as lateral violence so I just used Emery Burninggrass to try raise awareness by showing people how ugly it really looks but through a puppet."

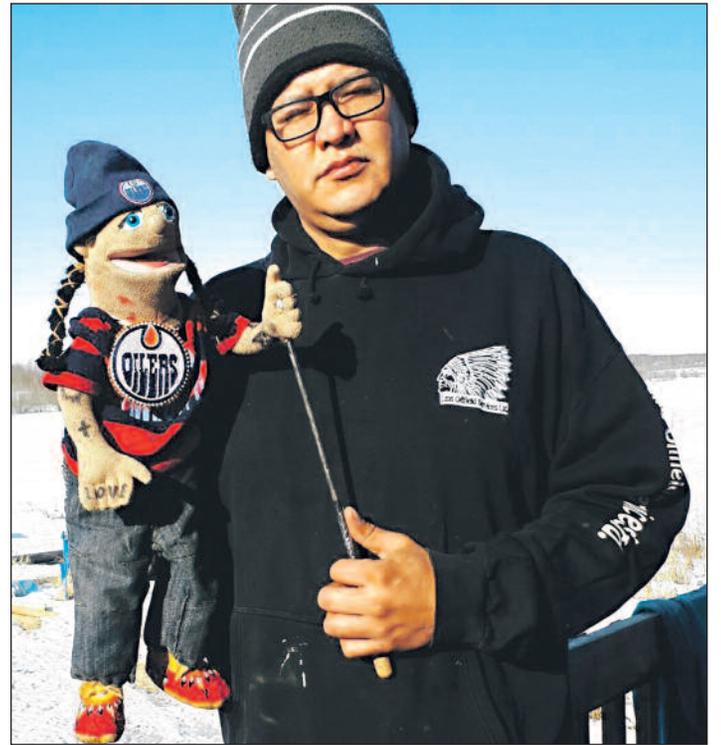
Mac created a Facebook account of Emery Burninggrass but had instantly exceeded the friends limit of 5,000. He created a page of his puppet which has over 7,000 fans. The humour of Emery Burninggrass has been a big hit through videos being circulated on social media.

Mac hit the road with his puppet performing gigs and has also brought in other little puppets as well.

"They say laughter is the best medicine and I truly believe that," he said. "On-reserve things don't happen so fast unless you make it happen for yourself. I was trying to find the gifts that I had and humour was one of them. Emery Burninggrass is pretty much just me but just in a different form."

Mac first started the gigs over four months now and finds himself busier than ever. He's travelled across Western Canada performing in various communities. In his kid-friendly shows, he promotes language and art and with older kids, Mac focuses on speaking on issues such as bullying and suicide to reach a wider audience.

"I do a puppet show and always show a positive message of whatever they want," he said. "Promoting culture, language, and brighter futures is pretty much what I do. That's my promotion."



Donnie Mac and Emery Burninggrass are always on the road performing various gigs to promote awareness, culture and language and importantly, humour.

(Photo supplied by Donnie Mac)



The Onion Lake First Nation artist creates various art pieces from paintings, sculptures, pow-wow regalia to making pow-wow dancer figurines that he sells at his own store called 1876 Trading Post.

(Photo supplied by Donnie Mac)

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Jayde Goodon has turned graffiti art into a livelihood that has taken him across Canada and allowed him to soon open his own tattoo studio in Saskatoon.



Graffiti artist paints a positive picture of controversial art

By Jeanelle Mandes
Of Eagle Feather News

A well-known Saskatoon graffiti artist lets his creative mind take over when he's spray painting on the side of buildings throughout Canada.

Jayde Goodon, a self-proclaimed proud Métis, found his passion when he was in Grade 9 flipping through pages of magazines.

"I got into it through article clips in hip hop magazines and I liked the way it looked and I got into that," he said.

"Me and my friends found a place to paint after schools and we got creative with the paint we had. We didn't have a lot."

Over the years, his paintings went from letters to characters to women's faces – more abstract stuff. More than 50 buildings and organizations allowed him to paint on their walls and he was even flown to Mexico to do a mural in a nightclub called Crush in Cabo. He has also worked in Saskatoon, Regina, Prince Albert, Moose Jaw, Vancouver and Winnipeg where he went down for a graffiti competition.

He said his graffiti art helps neighbourhoods look better where it's needed. He donates his own time and his own paint to contribute to different neighbourhoods with this artwork on the sides of buildings.

"People are giving me respect and stuff wherever I go and they see my name," said Goodon.

"I love creating it. I love when people see my work and I get pumped up about it. If I didn't do it, I don't know what else would be on that wall."

His prices vary depending on what people want but he tries to stay away from doing business logos as he feels it's not his art. He does what he envisions and picks the image.

When some people hear that Goodon is a graffiti artist, the association of vandalism and inappropriate words and pictures come to minds until they see the beautiful artwork he creates using spray paints.

"I think when people hear that I do (graffiti), they don't see what I actually do. They think broken windows, swear words and vandalism," he said. "But once they see what I do with a spray can, it gets looked at a

lot different."

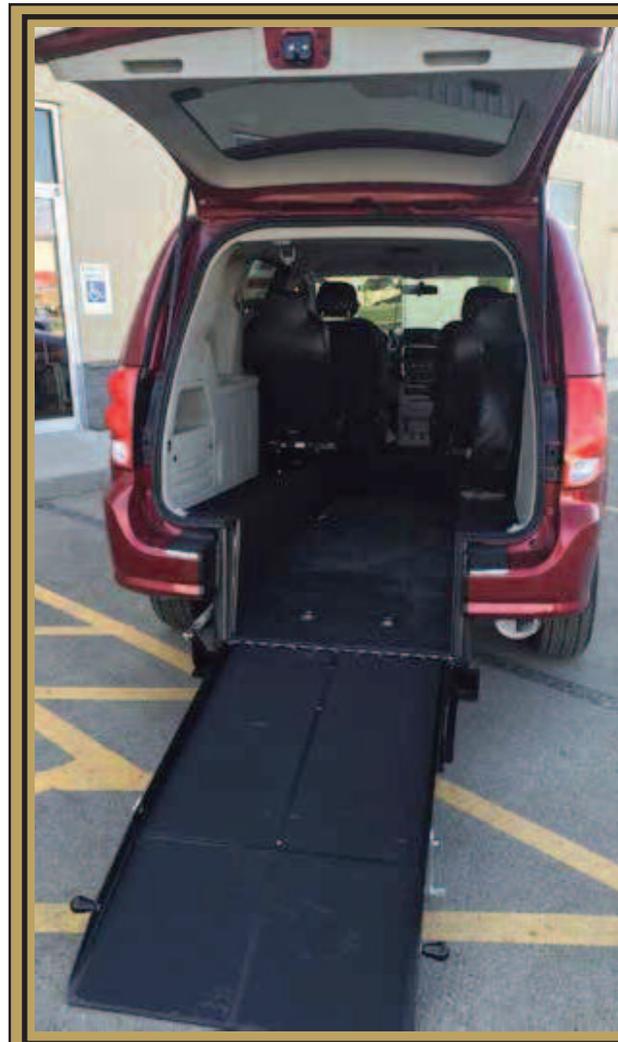
When he's not doing his graffiti art, he's being a full-time tattoo artist and will be opening up his own tattoo shop before the end of this month.

"My business will be located at 129 2nd Ave. North in Saskatoon called the Lot Nar which was inspired by an old animated movie called Heavy Metal," he said.

Whether if he's creating a graffiti art piece or tattooing, he's in his element doing what he loves.

"I'm happy people enjoy what I do," Goodon said.

Goodon's graffiti art can be found on his Instagram @WizWon and on YouTube videos.



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Carney puts the bite back in traditional Northern art form

**By Jeanelle Mandes
Of Eagle Feather News**

A birch bark biting artist from Northern Saskatchewan is keeping an old tradition alive by making it her passion and teaching kids a neat art skill.

Rosella Ross Carney, from Molanosa an hour north of Montreal Lake Cree Nation, lives in La Ronge during the week and travels to Sucker River as a Cree language cultural educator. She's been in this profession since 1989 and was first introduced to birch bark biting art from a resource teacher to show the students their talents, values and their way of life.

The artist inspired Carney to develop this skill and she has stuck with it since. Creating the birch bark biting art isn't easy and it took a lot of practice to perfect her art pieces.

Carney explained the process of perfecting an art piece.

"It takes a lot of skill to go into the bush and picking the bark, bringing it home, sorting it out, and taking it apart. You have to do that right away because if it dries it's harder," she said.

"You take white birch and you thin it out to really thin little pieces. You fold it up and you make designs. It's really fun to do it. It keeps me motivated. It's good and relaxing to have a creative mind to know what I am going to do next."

Carney has created butterflies, dragonflies, flowers, eagles, ducks and other animals through the birch bark biting. Once she gets started on one, it's hard for her to stop.

"I'd sit up late at night, working on my craft, and I got addicted to it," she said. "I am still biting today and I am still creating new things with it."

Her artwork has sold over the years since she first started. Carney's prices range anywhere from \$20 to \$100 depending on the size. She doesn't seek to make a profit off her artwork but does it to continue an old tradition and to teach others of all ages to continue this traditional skill.

"What I was told is that it was done a long time ago. Women used to do birch bark biting and they would use it as a design to do beadwork. They need a design to copy, so they would use that," Carney said.

"Some kids used to do it, and they would watch their elders do birch bark biting."

Carney has done birch bark biting workshops and been to different schools and reserves to teach this unique craft. She said as long a person has teeth, anyone can learn to do birch bark biting art.

"You have to have the imagination and hand and eye co-ordination," she said.

"People think I am magic, but I am not. It's just how your mind works. If you think you can do something, imagine it, then you can do it. That's how I think."

Carney's work can be found on her social media pages and is willing to go out and do workshops to teach anyone who is interested in birch bark biting art.

"I'd be excited to pass on the culture to whoever wants to learn," she said.



Rosella Ross Carney from northern Saskatchewan continues an old Indigenous tradition of birch bark biting art. (Photo supplied)

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Rapper rediscovers his dormant talent for music

By Chelsea Laskowski
For Eagle Feather News

Michael Vandale remembers the first time he wrote a rap. He was 11-years-old.

"It was chills down my spine. All I could think about was showing my friends and the pride that I got," he said.

Years went by and the Flying Dust First Nation resident kept writing, filling binders with his lyrics, but he didn't pursue performing in a serious way.

At 29, he's chasing that feeling once again. A group of friends in the industry, who were releasing music, inspired him to give it a try, even though he said he initially felt he didn't have much talent.

"They told me, 'You definitely got something, you gotta pursue that,'" Vandale said.

Starting off using a \$30 microphone, it took him months of steady practice to project confidence with his raps. Under the rap name Gucci Brady, he said he gets a thrill from how people react to him starting off a rhyme slow and picking up speed. Vandale is building his home studio, investing thousands into new equipment to make and record his own beats.

Vandale's Gucci Brady YouTube videos and the artist collective BRAYV Entertainment on Facebook are part of the new era of distributing music and building name recognition.

"You don't need a record deal to make music. You got some equipment, a microphone and a laptop, you're good to go," he said.

Gucci Brady is one-half of the rap group

Brayv Boyz along with Sask Savage, and said he's been doing a lot of collaborations lately to raise his profile.

The hardest part of living on-reserve is the dis-

tances, he said. Living near Meadow Lake means he's travelling at least three hours for a gig. Performing in Saskatchewan cities like Saskatoon and Moose Jaw and travelling across the country for shows in Vancouver and Toronto, is tough to juggle with his four kids – including a six-month-old – and a job as a waiter that he's held for years.

However, Vandale said when work is done and the kids are in bed he wants nothing more than to sit down, write and record.

"Now I feel, I hunger to be, I don't know, to be something successful," he said.

He said rapping has opened up doors in his life that he'd never expected or thought were possible.

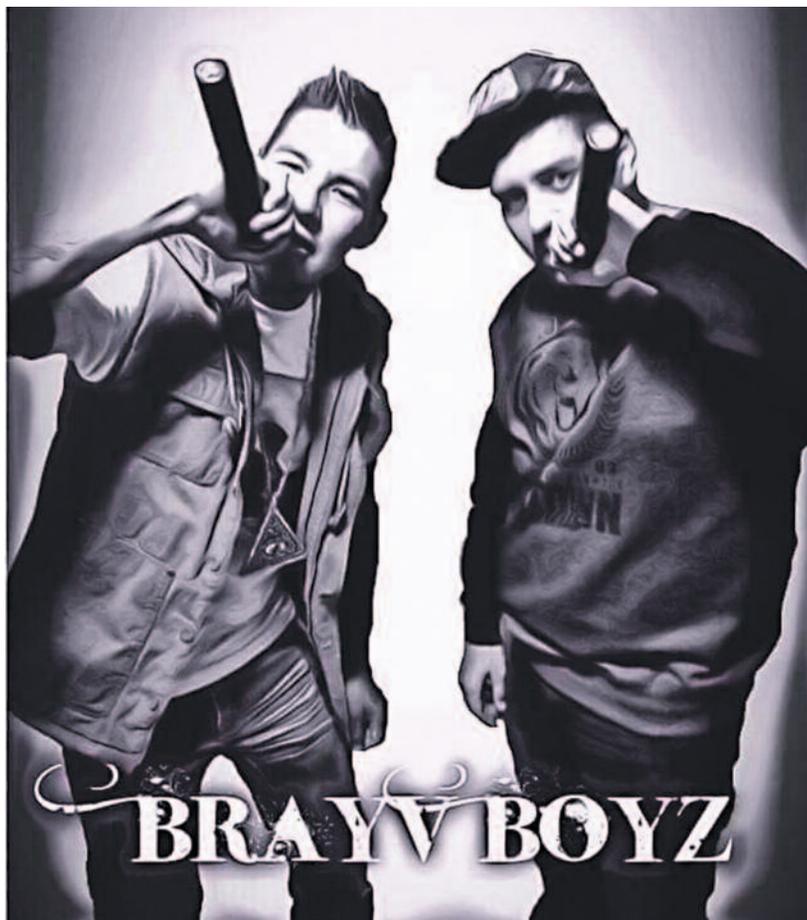
"Before this music happened, I was pretty much a hermit, I stayed home, went to work, come home," he said.

Writing about a song every other day, he said his lyrics draw from experiences in his own life. A recent song he wrote called "I Am Brayv" deals with topics like his mother's recent cancer diagnosis. While he said his childhood wasn't tough, he faced discrimination, and that channels into his music as well.

Vandale's boxes full of binders of old music he wrote years ago are clearly cherished.

"I can go back and read a page and I remember where I was when I wrote it. What I was doing that day. It's like a nostalgic feeling," he said.

Now that he has kids, he said it's something he can hang onto for them as well.



Michael Vandale, aka Gucci Brady, on the right with his rap partner Sask Savage. (Photo submitted)

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Award nomination a dream come true

**By Jeanelle Mandes
Of Eagle Feather News**

A music artist is up for a nomination at this year's Indigenous Music Awards on May 18 in Winnipeg – a dream long awaited.

Yellowsky, a reggae and hip-hop artist, will be competing with four other artists for the 2018 Best New Artist.

Roberto Andres Pooyak is a member of the Sweetgrass First Nation but resides in Saskatoon. But when he's on stage, he goes by Yellowsky – a name that he got at a sweat lodge ceremony.

"I wanted (a name) that would set me apart and also that would be accepted worldwide," said Yellowsky.

"Before I did that, I had to get permission and I asked for permission to (use my actual ceremonial name) by elders. It was good to go."

The reggae and hip-hop artist began recording his first album in 2015. He gets his inspiration to create music from his Indigenous culture and his people.

"Our people are number one inspiration because they used music as an outlet to help our allies understand us and portray a message," he said.

Yellowsky had a hard life growing up. He was raised by a single mother who was a residential school survivor and together they lived in poverty. He faced racism most of his life and found himself struggling with his identity as he is also half Chilean.

"I dealt with a lot of racism and at first I had to prove myself to my own people that I'm (Indigenous)," he said.

"I was bullied a lot, too, so I had to go and prove myself to be accepted and I did. I started going to every ceremony and started sundancing at the age of 11. I try to attain my identity and I'm in a constant identity crisis because of that."

But the artist persevered and is now climbing his way up. The award nomination followed his album release in December 2017. Being nominated came as a surprise to Yellowsky and he knew he was on the right path.

"For my name being up there amongst other artists is incredible. I'm going out for 2018 Best New Artist. Just for me being mentioned and recognized, that's good enough," he said.

"I been through a lot and I had a pretty crazy life and up until a few years ago. After everything I've been through, it's worth it. Everything is worth it."

Yellowsky not only hopes to win the Best New Artist category but hopes to gain recognition from the music he puts out there to inspire others that if he can do it, so can they.

"I'm here to remind people of their own power and to help people wake up and realize there's a lot of things that is right and wrong in this world," he said.

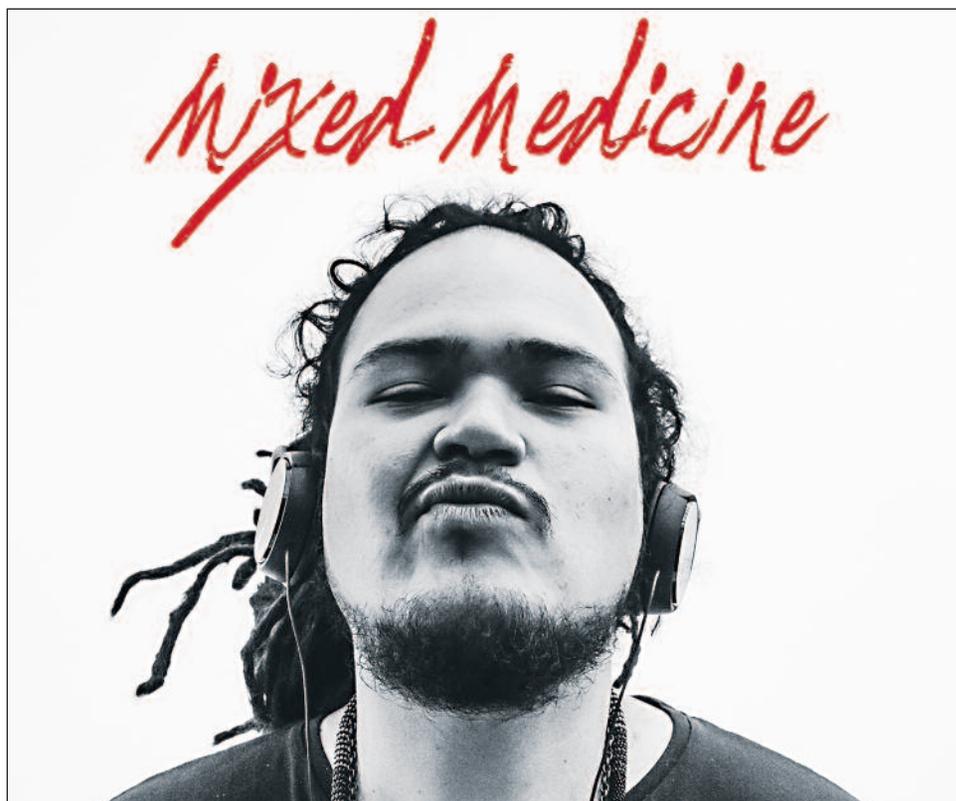
"It's up to the creators on earth, and by creators, I mean artists on earth. I believe it's our responsibility to project that into whatever chosen field of art, we do it and mine happens to be music."

Right after the Indigenous Music Awards next month, the first-time nominee will be playing in Victoria at a reggae festival.



Roberto Andres Pooyak, also known to his fans as Yellowsky, fought against all the odds to make it as an Indigenous/Chilean reggae and hip-hop artist.

(Photo by Axis Imagery)



Yellowsky is nominated for the 2018 Best New Artist in the Indigenous Music Awards which will held in Winnipeg on May 18. (Photo by Axis Imagery)

Saskatoon light sculpture honours Cree people

By NC Raine
For Eagle Feather News

The City of Saskatoon has unveiled a new contemporary urban light sculpture on the north facing wall of the Saskatchewan Craft Council on Broadway Avenue.

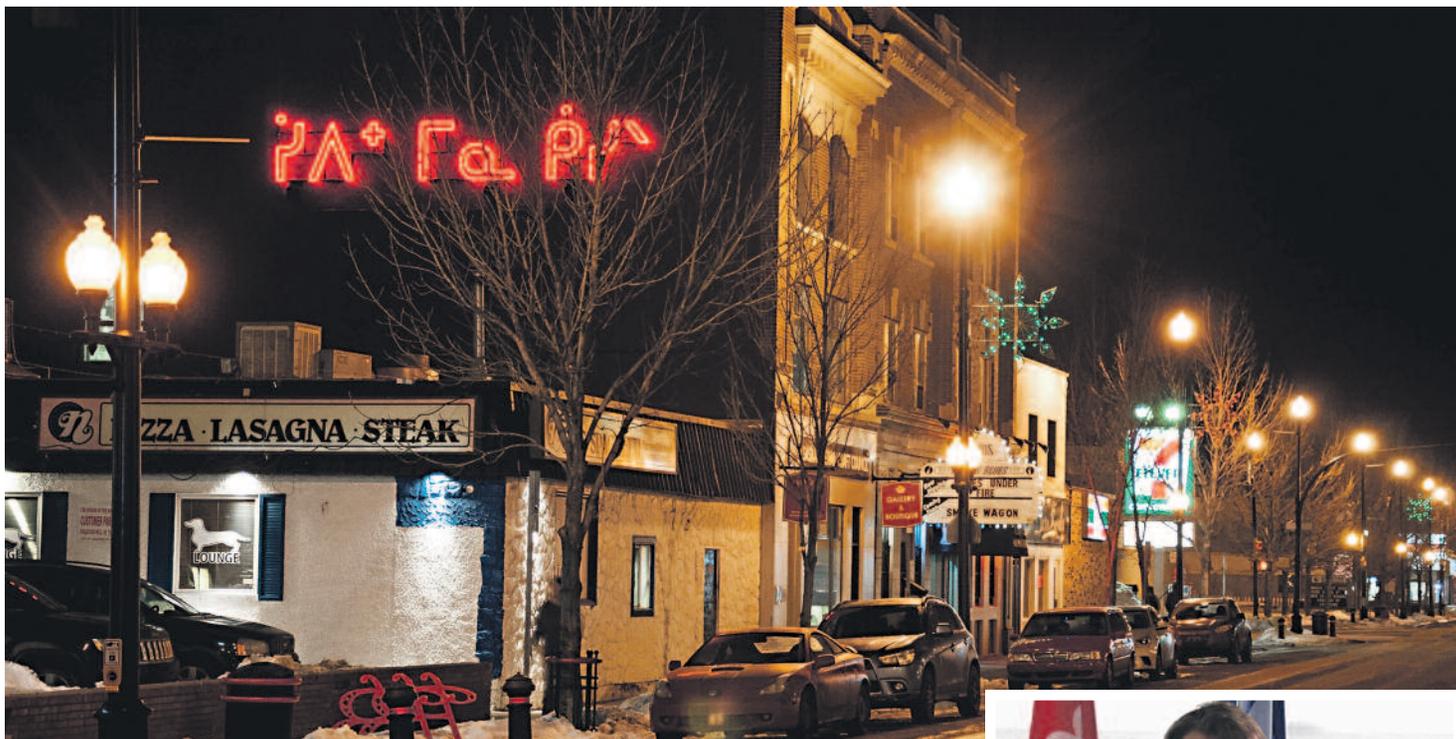
The light sculpture, named River and Sky, is inscribed in Cree syllabics, 'nipiy mina sipiy' – a very Saskatoon-evocative script, which literally translates to 'river and sky'.

The temporary public artwork is by artist Tony Stallard, and developed in collaboration with Cree artists Joseph Naytowhow and Kenneth T. Williams.

“I feel like there's an opportunity by opening our hearts and minds to the language of the Cree people,” said Saskatoon Mayor Charlie Clark during the March 15 artwork unveiling at the Saskatchewan Craft Council.

“Part of my job is to reach out to the non-Indigenous community and have people realize that this is a huge opportunity ... as we figure out a different relationship from a colonial mindset to a people walking together. I hear from elders, it's a doorway into understanding a different worldview,” said Clark.

“I hope the whole community can see this as that window to a better future.”



The artwork is intended to reflect the “sacred and ritualistic space” of Treaty 6, referencing the treaty's message, “as long as the river flows, the grass grows, and the sun shines.” The sculpture also salutes the historic Elders' meeting place near the river, and as a contemporary location to gather, meet, and socialize.

“The art that we see going up is a very powerful statement of creating beauty in this city,” said Harry Lafond, Executive Director at the Office of the Treaty Commissioner.

“That's what this city is about, building relationships through every pos-

sible opportunity that presents itself. And art is a powerful speaker of relationships.”

River and Sky is part of the city's Placemaker Program, which aims to add significance to civic spaces through temporary public art and engage audiences with contemporary art practices. A sister artwork, 'Land of Berries', is currently installed on the north facing wall of the Persephone Theatre.

“The reflection of 'River and Sky' in Cree syllabics through public art helps to create a sense of inclusion and understanding in our community,” added Mary Culbertson, Treaty Commissioner of



Saskatoon Mayor Charlie Clark speaks during the River and Sky art unveiling. (Photo by NC Raine)

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“This is especially important as we journey together towards reconciliation.”

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There is one position available. The position is to provide services to a maximum of 40 hours per week at a set rate of \$30.00 per hour.

Service agreements can be picked up at the Saskatoon Provincial Correctional Centre.

Advisors/Elders must obtain a Criminal Record Check (for vulnerable sector) prior to being awarded this contract and obey all rules and regulations while at the Centre.

Send resumes to:

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Saskatoon Provincial Correctional Centre
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Resumes will be opened in public at the above address at 1:00 p.m., April 26, 2018.

Parties wishing to view the facility or requiring further clarification to assist in their submission can contact the Deputy Director of Programs at 306-956-8803.

saskatchewan.ca





Grade 8 student Neveah Bear and Saskatoon Police Service Chief Troy Cooper spoke at the official presentation of a starblanket mural at Bishop Klein School.

Starblanket mural stresses truth and reconciliation

**By Andréa Ledding
For Eagle Feather News**

Students at Bishop Klein Elementary School in Saskatoon have created a painted starblanket as an act of reconciliation, and to comfort other children.

Twelve classes from pre-kindergarten to Grade 8 contributed stars for the wall-sized starblanket mural which will be installed in the Saskatoon Police Service's Centre for Children's Justice.

Aboriginal Student Achievement Coordinator Jamie Arcand was inspired by her artistic colleague Jordan Raymond's other stars, which he'd created at Bethlehem High School.

"I started thinking, what can we do in Bishop Klein to teach kids about truth and reconciliation, and decided we're going to build a blanket for them and for the Residential School survivors."

Arcand got the canvases, traced out the stars, and went to each classroom to talk to the kids about the Residential Schools, truth and reconciliation, and the 94 calls to action. With the younger children, she read a children's story about residential schools so that they could relate to the experience.

Meanwhile, the Center for Children's Justice had requested artwork, and when Sgt. Joanne Smallbones heard about the idea of the starblanket, she loved it. The design of the starblanket not only represents the support and comfort of community, but the eternal protection, support, love and comfort of the eye of Creator upon us.

Grade 8 student Neveah Bear, who spoke Cree at the official presentation at

the school, explained that they were all thinking of the children when they created the piece.

"It was very humbling that we get to help the children feel safe and good," said Bear. "We all made a piece of the blanket, and I just hope they feel safe when they see the starblanket we have given them."

Arcand says the students independently completely organized the presentation to the police at their school, which was observed by the Ministry's Child's Advocate Corey O'Soup as well.

"He said it was a wonderful idea and he really enjoyed the presentation. It was 100 per cent our kids. They did the Powerpoint, the speaking, the MC'ing, they sang the Treaty 6 anthem, they did the seven sacred teachings prayer. They deserve so much credit for what they did."

Chief of Police Troy Cooper was there as well, commenting that they were honoured to have the students at Bishop Klein recognize the work done by the Children's Justice Centre.

"They are now our partners in healing, and their contribution will help build a safe, healthy, and respectful community," said Cooper.

Arcand shared that Sgt. Smallbones was so visibly touched throughout the program that she was moved to tears, and the partnership was a true success thanks to the effort of the students.

"It's very important to teach our students about truth and reconciliation because they are such a big part of the healing process," said Arcand.

"These little guys are going to be the ones that make the difference."

She describes the mural as not only

an act of remembrance, but an act of continuing to teach and heal from history, do the right thing, and give comfort.

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\$40 million expansion, renovation program will revitalize Wanuskewin ... construction has begun to fix the roof!



Wanuskewin Heritage Park's ambitious expansion is underway.

By NC Raine
For Eagle Feather News

Grand plans and initiatives advance forward as Wanuskewin Heritage Park continues its climb to being one of the most important cultural centres in the Prairies.

In early 2017, a \$40-million campaign dubbed Thundering Ahead was announced, which would fund a major building expansion and renovation of Wanuskewin's facilities. Several corporations were eager to show their support, with Federated Co-op, SIGA, RBC, Deloitte, and many others gifting sizeable donations to the campaign.

Recently, donations from Scotiabank and The Mosiac Company of \$600,000 and \$500,000, respectively, have brought Wanuskewin close to achieving their fundraising goal.

Planning for the expansions started as early as 2005 with elder and community-based consultations. Part of the plans include grassland restoration, the re-introduction of exhibit galleries, and the establishment of a bison herd. Wanuskewin says their role as an interpretive centre and educational space was informed by consultations with Indigenous and non-Indigenous stakeholders, and ceremonies with Elders and knowledge-keepers.

"The (bison) have gone too long from this place. The bison are a vibrant symbol of strength and spiritual renewal," said Candace Wasacase-Lafferty, Chair of Wanuskewin Board of Directors.

"We are looking forward to their return and the positive effect on this generation and the next."

Further expansions include a north-side educational space, black box exhibit gallery, and spiritual teaching classroom. On the south side, a 350-person multi-use gathering space is planned. Wanuskewin also aspires to become Saskatchewan's first site to obtain UNESCO World Heritage status. Parks Canada shortlisted Wanuskewin in December on a tentative list of world heritage sites.

The park is also committed to supporting Indigenous art and artists from around Canada and contains the only gallery space devoted entirely to Indigenous art in the province.

"I've really positioned us as showcasing Indigenous art. It allows our contemporary world views to complement narratives that are sometimes relegated to the past," said Felicia Gay, Wanuskewin Gallery Curator.

In order to encourage and stimulate Indigenous art nationwide, Wanuskewin supports artists at all stages of their careers with initiatives that include artist residencies, professional development, and community-based art programs.

"Wanuskewin has been seen for a long time as a museum site. We need to build up that visibility that there's an amazing contemporary gallery here for Indigenous artists of all stages in their careers," said Gay.

"Visual culture is always how our people have talked about things. We still do that through art, and the gallery is a great space to talk about things that are important to us."

Wanuskewin aims to complete all expansions plans for 2020.

"They pushed me to pursue the best possible marks I could achieve. They helped me through the rough times I encountered but also pushed me when I felt like giving up."

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This little rez girl loves going home

You can take the kid off the rez but you can't take the rez out of the kid.

I am what you would call an urban native. My first home, as a baby, was the reserve and I ended up living on the reserve as a teenager. But I grew up in Saskatoon.

We always went to the reserve for different family gatherings and sports days. The feasts are the times I remember the most as a child.

Every November, we would have a feast to honor and feed our relatives who have passed on. We had to wear long skirts, no exceptions, and we came with one bowl, a spoon and a lot of Tupperware. The grandmothers and young women of the community would make over 20 huge pots of different soups and other food.

The elders represented certain heads of families in the community who have passed on, and were honored and given gifts. Another woman elder prayed while they all took a seat and ate first and everyone, including all the kids, listened. No one talked and we all stood and prayed in our own way and dropped our heads in respect.

Then the young men would serve everyone in the entire community who came and sat in a circle around the

school gym. I remember my uncles not eating until the very end and serving everyone, carrying big heavy hot pots of soup and I realize now this would be teaching and instilling patience and respect for the elders, children and women in the community.

The food would come one right after the other you could not even finish the first one before the next one came and you could not say no to anything because that is rude and disrespectful.

We were there in honor of the ones who have been called home to the spirit world and to feed them in the afterlife. When the feast was done you knew what you would be eating for the next few days.

There are so many values, rules, laws instilled into one ceremony and the feast was one that we carried on. It was sad that once I became older and colonized I did not want to go anymore.

Society made you ashamed to be Native. I started not caring anymore, started hanging out with my city friends more, started drinking because drinking

was all around me. I started to get into trouble and rebel against my parents, school, the system, the world, and had a chip on my shoulder because of the dysfunction in my family. I blamed my parents because we had no true knowledge of our own history taught to us.

I remember going to Whitecap all the time and for the sports days on the on the rez – it was a lot of adults playing ball and getting drunk and the kids running loose.

My grandma ran the cook shack and we would work and help her and also get free food. She had her own business, she was a cook and entrepreneur.

She kept our family and the community as close as she could through her cooking.

I danced powwow when I was four to six years old, a few times, and my auntie Loraine made my jingle dress for me. I remember being bullied in Grade 1 at a culture day where some wasichu boys in the class started hitting their hands on their lips and making

that yell noise pretending to be native, saying Indians are savages. It was stuff they clearly learned from their parents. I wish I didn't quit dancing, but I did.

I recently started dancing again about three years ago after being sober for one year. I don't go as much as I would like to but I try to take my daughters as much as I can, so they can connect to who they are. I can try to show them and have a sense of identity.

I was not raised traditional and I am just discovering who I am now, unlearning colonial ways, and relearning my own traditional ways and the truth of what my people had to go through so that the rest us of could be here today!

My grandparents are all residential school survivors and suffered through having their language, culture, identity, being beaten out of them and taken away.

Culture is what saved me and is healing me and is teaching my daughters about who they are, so they can grow up proud. No matter where I go and how much I learn I will always be that little rez girl at heart.

I find myself always coming back home to family and to the land where I grew up. Only now I am more eager to learn and go back to our roots.



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Persephone's youth tour inspires Northern youth

By **Andréa Ledding**
For **Eagle Feather News**

Persephone Theatre's annual youth tour is bringing a northern story to Northern youth with a play called "Beneath the Ice."

Students in Cumberland House, Sandy Bay, Wollaston Lake, Fond Du Lac, and Black Lake will be treated to a professional tour of the show.

The theatre's Lisa Bayliss explained that Persephone does a youth tour every year, usually in March, with the set and actors packed up in a van travelling to various communities in different parts of the province, especially rural and remote areas where students don't get the chance to see a lot of professional theatre.

"We've been on the road since the beginning of March with "Beneath the Ice" which is geared towards younger students, a play about a young boy who's gone up to an Inuit community with his mother who's a researcher and becomes friends with a girl named Paasap and her grandmother — and he ignores local rules to his peril," explains Bayliss.

"It's about him learning about northern and Indigenous values as opposed to his city experience. This year we're doing a fly-in tour to really remote northern communities in the first week of April."

Bayliss says these communities almost never get to see shows come right into their communities and following the production they will offer a workshop to older students and their educators. It will include theatre exercises and games they can use for the rest of the year.

"Three companies, Athabasca Basin Development, Orano Canada, and West Wind Aviation, partnered to provide the airfare and accommodations and act as a liaison for the schools, so we're really appreciative."

Director Curtis Peeteetuce said he had a great time working with the cast.

"The play includes elements of the Inuk culture and Inuit way of life portrayed and shared through the character of Aanak the elderly woman and her granddaughter Paasap. What we learn and what David learns is throat-singing, the language, some of the customs like oyster gathering, mitt making, preparing seal hide for clothing, but most importantly he learns a lesson through the story of Sedna the sea goddess of the Inuit people."

Peeteetuce says in many ways the Sedna story is very foundational to the Inuk way of life and leads to the most important lesson of the play: do not take more than you need.

"The ladies tell David that and share it through the language, it is a recurring theme throughout the play – taking from the land only what you really need – food shelter and clothing," said Peeteetuce, contrasting that with David's urban and more consumer-driven experiences growing up.

"People get it and the children really enjoy it with the lights, sound, costuming and some creative expression. Frank Engel did some mime choreography with the actors."

The cast and crew also Skyped with playwright Eva Colmers in Edmonton, who based the play on time spent in Kangiqsujuaq where the Sedna story was shared with her, and she provided puppetry classes with the students in reciprocity.

Peeteetuce is happy to see major theatres including more Indigenous programming and hopes all theatres seriously seek and employ Indigenous content.



The Persephone youth tour hit communities including Cumberland House, Sandy Bay, Wollaston lake, Fond Du Lac and Black Lake. Sponsors including Orano, Athabasca Basin Development and West Wind Aviation made it possible. (Photo supplied)



The Persephone Theatres annual youth tour showcases "Beneath the Ice," a play based on a girl named Paasap who visits an Inuit community. (Photo supplied)

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Babies, books and bonding

By Angela Hill
For Eagle Feather News

The Northern Heathy Communities Partnership launched an Indigenous language board book for children in March.

“It was a direct response from feedback from families about the kinds of books they would like to see,” said Amanda Frain, who coordinates the partnership.

The network of organizations offers a program called Babies, Books and Bonding that sees children receive books from birth until they are four years old, through their immunization visits.

Parents were really interested in books available in Indigenous languages, and while there are many great options for older kids, there wasn't a board book for 18-months-old, said Frain. So, the collective set about creating one.

The process has taken years.

Calyn Stange (Burnouf), is a dietician who has been involved with the Babies, Books and Bonding team for more than five years. She said she has always loved children's books and was the creative mind behind the story, *Are You Hungry?*

“It is so special to be able to share the story of a northern family gathering and preparing foods to enjoy as a meal together,” she said.

“It has been a really exciting project and I feel so fortunate to see my story turned into a book.”

Crystal Seegerts, a young artist from Black Lake, submitted art and an application to become the illustrator.

Then the book was translated. Three versions exist and each is bilingual: Cree/English, Dene/English and Michif/English.

Then the partnership needed funding. The \$20,000 – enough to ensure every 18-month-old in the North would receive one of the books for the next three years – came from James Irvine and Trudy Connor. The pair raised their family in the North and have seen the importance of language and culture firsthand.

“When (there were) challenges with funding, we felt that it would be a real honour for us to help move this forward, so we offered our support for it financially,” said Irvine, who has sat as chair of the partnership and is a retired northern medical health officer.

“Trudy and I have always valued



Jacqueline Lim, Chair of the Babies, Books and Bonding team, introducing *Are You Hungry?*, with Tom Roberts (left), Allan Adam (centre) and Vicky Marinuk. (Photo submitted)

early childhood development and importance of early childhood development in the North for literacy and for bonding, connecting infants with their parents and grandparents.”

Irvine and Connor attended the launch at the La Ronge public library. They had three readers at the library's children's story hour. Tom Roberts read Cree, Allan Adam read Dene (and was a translator of the book), and Vicky Marinuk read Michif.

Connor said the event was very moving.

“(Roberts) started by talking about how he was forced to learn English at residential school and there he was at the public library and he was reading a story about life on the land in both Cree and English,” she said.

“He talked about just how touching it really was for him and really it was very touching for us all.”

So far all of the feedback has been positive, said Frain.

“It's certainly been a goal for a while, so it's wonderful to see it come to fruition.”

Eight Book Awards nominations for Indigenous writers

By Angela Hill
For Eagle Feather News

Some of the names are first-time authors, others have a couple of books under their belts, but eight books by Indigenous storytellers are being recognized at the 2018 Saskatchewan Book Awards.

“For so long Canadian Lit would just pick one or two people that they thought could represent all indigenous writers,” said author Dawn Dumont, who's most recent book *Glass Beads* has been shortlisted in four categories.

“I think now because of social media and having savvy more knowledgeable librarians, who are just a godsend ... they are more willing to take chances on different voices and I think that is really important.”

Glass Beads tells the story of four people navigating life off the reserve.

“I think I was trying to work through what it was to be an Indigenous person in the '90s and what that felt like.”

One of the newcomers to the Saskatchewan Book Awards scene is #IndianLovePoems author, Tenille Campbell, who was shortlisted in two categories, including sharing the category of Indigenous People's Writing with Dumont. Well-known Cree-playwright, Kenneth Williams is the third in that category. His book, *In Care*, tells the story of a woman whose children are apprehended and she fights to get them back.

“I was surprised just because I know the quality of the books that were coming out and good people, great writing,” said Campbell of her nominations.

Being nominated has taken her work to a new level, Campbell said, it takes people past the initial



Tenille Campbell, the author of #IndianLovePoems is one of several Indigenous authors up for Saskatchewan Book Awards this year. The gala event takes place April 28 in Regina. (Photo supplied)

light-hearted read.

“I think people are looking into a little deeper and picking apart the layers, which is great.”

Another first-time author is Mika Lafond. *nipê wânîn: my way back* is a book of poems Lafond wrote from her grandmother's stories of life as a Cree woman. It started as a bilingual project for her master's degree.

“While doing my thesis, I started learning more and more about the language,” she said. Writing the book became a journey of her culture.

Another journey is Lynn Gehl's *Claiming Anishinaabe*. Gehl shares the importance of heart knowledge, talks about her experience being denied her Indigenous status, and takes on issues of today, including the destruction of sacred places.

“It's an honour to be included,” said Gehl, from her home in Ontario.

In the Indigenous Publishing category with Ghel is *Aaniih/Gros Ventre*, a book of stories edited by Terry Brockie and Andrew Cowell. Their collection is the first to be published in the Aaniih/Gros Ventre language. Saskatchewan artist Leah Dorion was also in this category with the children's book she wrote and illustrated, *Métis Christmas Mittens*.

Another Indigenous children's book is *When the Trees Crackle with Cold*, co-authored by Bernice Johnson-Laxdal and Miriam Körner.

The awards ceremony will bring these authors together in an event held Apr. 28 in Regina.

“The awards give you a chance to all come together and see each other and recognize one another and appreciate what we do. It helps you feel like you have a community,” Dumont said.

Molloy brings appreciation for Indigenous culture to role as lieutenant-governor

By NC Raine
For Eagle Feather News

Building Indigenous relationships with the Crown is among the foremost priorities for new Lt.-Gov. Thomas Molloy.

A lawyer, negotiator and author, the 77-year-old Molloy was sworn in on March 21 as Saskatchewan's 22nd lieutenant-governor. A Saskatoon native, Molloy has rich history of working with First Nations and Indigenous people across Canada on agreements and treaty settlements. Molloy was the chief negotiator for the Government of Canada in the Nunavut Land Claim Agreement, leading to the creation of Nunavut in 1999.

As lieutenant-governor of Saskatchewan, Molloy is the vice-regal representative in Saskatchewan of the Canadian monarch Queen Elizabeth II, and is responsible for carrying out the monarch's ceremonial and constitutional duties, as well as offer advice to government when needed.

Molloy was appointed by the Governor General on the recommendation of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who in a release said Molloy "helped to reshape this country."

"There has always been a special relationship between the crown and Indigenous people in Canada, going back to when the first treaties were signed," Molloy told Eagle Feather News.

"I think that the relationship (between the Crown and Indigenous people) is important because through relationships you can build trust, understanding, and help each other move forward."

Molloy said he will spend his first few months listening and learning from communities around Saskatchewan. His background, he said, has provided him with a deeper appreciation of Indigenous culture and the potential that exists within their communities.

"That's something I've been doing my entire career; meeting with First Nations and trying to understand their culture, the importance of the environment, the importance of the resources on the land, and how development and culture go hand in hand," said Molloy.

On his first day, he sought counsel from National Chief of First Nations Perry Bellegarde, who agrees that the relationships between First Nations and the Crown need to be strong.

"We're all treaty people, we always talk about peaceful coexistence, and mutual respect, and mutually benefiting from sharing the land and resource wealth of not only Saskatchewan and all of Canada," Bellegarde told reporters following his meeting with Molloy.

As developing relationships with Indigenous people is an important consideration for Molloy, he and his team have discussed, as part of their strategic planning, the possibility of forming an advisory committee to the lieutenant-governor.

"I'd be interested in meeting with a variety of communities throughout the province, whether it be education, youth, athletes, or whomever. I'm interested in hearing from them and what I may be able to do to assist them," said Molloy.

He has also said that he would also like to draw more attention to environmental concerns, as well as working to eliminate racism; issues which require inclusive discussion.

"I've always believed that you'll that never find a solution to any problem unless there is discussion between the parties – and in (the role of lieutenant-governor), I might be able to contribute to that (solution)," he said.

Premier Scott Moe has also endorsed Molloy's appointment, saying in a statement: "Looking at the impact of Thomas' life work to our province, our nation, and more specifically, to Indigenous Peoples across our country, I am confident he will continue with that tradition."

Molloy replaces Vaughn Solomon Schofield, and will serve as lieutenant-governor for a minimum of five years.



Saskatoon lawyer Tom Molloy is Saskatchewan's new lieutenant-governor.

Two Métis lawyers appointed to bench

By Chelsea Laskowski
For Eagle Feather News

Saskatchewan is tripling its number of self-identified Métis and First Nations judges.

Natasha Crooks and Mary McAuley, both Métis lawyers, will start training to be provincial court judges in April. McAuley will be stationed in La Ronge and Crooks in Saskatoon.



Mary McAuley was raised in Cumberland House. (Photo courtesy McAuley Law Firm/Facebook)

Prior to their appointments, Gerald Morin of Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation

was the only self-identified Métis or First Nations judge. He runs Cree court in the North.

McAuley, raised in Cumberland House, said she applied for the post because she felt her knowledge of life in the North gave her something to contribute as a judge. As a lawyer who speaks Cree, she has been able to help interpret court proceedings for other Cree speakers.

"You see a lot of miscommunication, misunderstanding in the court system with Aboriginal accused," she said. "They'll say, 'Yes, yup, yes,' to things that are asked of them, but do they really understand it? So when I spoke Cree to them, they suddenly opened up."

As a judge, she said her Cree language "might be able to prove a little bit more direction in terms of Aboriginal clients."

McAuley's path to law has not been a direct one. She attended hair-dressing school after graduating high school and then studied business administration, which took her to work with mines up north and with SaskPower. McAuley went back to law school in her 30s and worked as a crown prosecutor and legal aid lawyer before opening her own law firm with locations in Prince Albert and Flin Flon.

Her advice to others considering pursuing education as mature students is to not doubt their abilities, because they have life skills and a drive that will help them succeed.

"It is a bit of a sacrifice, you're

leaving a full-time job, work, to go back to school but you're really investing in your career," she said. "You're not going to take that lightly."

McAuley said she believes the current non-Aboriginal judges in the province "go out of their way to try to understand Gladue factors," which are the unique factors Aboriginal people face that must be taken into account during sentencing.

While the number of First Nations and Métis judges in the province is disproportionately low when compared with the province's population, McAuley said she thinks the province is striving to remedy that with its appointments with all minority populations.

"I think just the fact that there's minorities on the bench, I think it does help a lot especially in the public's perception of justice," she said.

Crooks comes to the judge post after working with the federal government doing litigation and being appointed to the Parole Board of Canada in 2013. On the executive committee her role includes shaping policy, interpreting legislative change and providing leadership, "particularly on Aboriginal issues," according to a provincial news release.

She holds a number of roles with the Parole Board. As the chairperson of the Aboriginal Circle with the board, she works with the committee to give advice on issues that impact Aboriginal offenders, victims and communities.

Arcand book tells story of Métis culture

By NC Raine
For Eagle Feather News

Every library in three school divisions in Saskatchewan is receiving a book on master fiddler John Arcand and his contributions to Métis fiddle and Canadian culture.

Master of the Métis Fiddle, John Arcand: The Man, The Music, The Festival is a brief account of Arcand's life as a prolific musician, having composed over 390 original songs on the fiddle, and as an ambassador of Métis fiddle, culture, and dance.

The book is being donated to schools by Affinity Credit Union (ACU), in partnership with Gabriel Dumont Publishing, to help create education for reconciliation.

"We were very happy when Gabriel Dumont (Institute) approached us about creating a book on our founder, and namesake, Mr. John Arcand", said Angie Caron, board member of the John Arcand Fiddle Fest and principal of Westmount Community School.

"The creation of this resource and the opportunity to have it in all our schools is a great and invaluable resource. Here at Westmount, we're honoured," she said.

ACU will donate a total of 157 copies of Master of the Métis Fiddle to Saskatoon Public Schools, Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools and Prairie Spirit School Divisions.

"John Arcand has been a role model for so many," said Lise deMoissac, ACU Chief Financial Officer.

"Having this book as a resource for our teachers is a great way to educate students about Métis culture while recognizing the contributions



Co-Author Wilfred Burton is with John Arcand and Vicki Arcand and Co-Author Cheryl Troupe at the release of the book Master of the Metis Fiddle in the summer of 2017. 157 copies of that book have been donated to school libraries in three school districts across Saskatchewan by Affinity Credit Union. (Photo by John Lagimodiere)

that John has made."

The donation of the book is another demonstration of ACU's commitment to reconciliation and their support of the preservation and sharing Metis and First Nations culture.

"The Truth and Reconciliation Call to Action 63-3 speaks to building capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect. It also speaks to promote the growth of First languages and First cultures," said Brad Nichol, Superintendent Prairie Spirit School Division.

"At Prairie Spirit, we believe in building relationships with all students, and the additions of this book each of our 47 schools will support relationship building and cultural understanding. These are important

values in our schools."

The Gabriel Dumont Institute and ACU are also supporters of the John Ar-

cand Fiddle Fest, which takes place at Arcand's acreage on the second weekend of August.



John Arcand with students from Westmount Community School. (Photo by Nathan Raine)



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ABOUT US

Established in 2007, Saskatchewan Aboriginal Track & Field (SaskATF) is a registered non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion and development of athletics in First Nation and Métis communities. SaskATF works collaboratively with Saskatchewan Athletics, the provincial sport governing body, to bridge barriers to participation for many remote, rural, and core neighborhood communities.

100% of our merchandise and annual track meet profit are re-invested back into SaskATF events, developmental clinics and student-athlete scholarships.

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Experienced SaskATF instructors travel to communities/schools to deliver track & field skills across requested event areas. Participants will gain knowledge, learn and practice new skills & techniques, and receive helpful feedback. Communities & schools can book clinics anytime throughout the year



Track Club

In May, SaskATF will launch, Running Wild Track Club, a registered track & field club with Saskatchewan Athletics. The club is able to provide training and coaching development for athletes and potential coaches to prepare them for indoor and outdoor competitions. Athletes from across the province are able to become a part of the club and train with experienced coaches



The "Sole-stice Classic"

Is a FUN series of grass root track & field meets, designed for aspiring athletes ages 8-13yrs. Athletes participate in the spirit of sportsmanship and friendly competition & SaskATF is proud to partner with SaskAthletics on this great initiative!! If your school or community would like to host a Sole-stice mini-meet this May or June, please contact SaskATF or visit www.solesticeclassic.com for more information



Indoor Championships

SaskATF hosts an annual indoor track and field meet that takes place in February/March. Hundreds of athletes from across the province gather to compete in a sanctioned track & field indoor meet. The meet welcomes athletes from all skill levels and age ranges to compete in a friendly environment. Join our Facebook page for up to date information: Saskatchewan Aboriginal Track and Field.