

Eagle Feather NEWS

FREE

Favel still fighting for fair treatment

Veteran Philip Favel is Saskatchewan's oldest Indigenous WWII veteran and, at age 97, is still fighting with Veterans Affairs for justice.



INSIDE



JUSTIC FOR METIS VETS
It has taken far too many years but there has been justice for vets. - Page 4



THREE DECADES
This veteran served for more than 30 years and endured sexism and discrimination over the years. - Page 7



FAMILY TRADITION
As is the case with many Indigenous families, this veteran was following a glorious family tradition. - Page 11



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Sen. Nora Cummings can add another prestigious honour to her long list of accomplishments. - Page 15



WELL DESERVED!
Former EFN writer Kevin Roberts is making a huge difference in his community and was recently honoured for his work. - Page 19

Veterans Edition

Coming In December - Newsmaker of the Year Issue

CPMA #40027204



By Morning Star
For Eagle Feather News

Philip Favel, a 97-year-old veteran from the Sweet Grass First Nation, enlisted in the Canadian Armed Forces in 1941 at the age of 19.

While overseas, Pte. Favel served in France, Belgium and Holland and before returning home to North Battleford in July of 1945.

According to Veterans Affairs Canada, at least 3,000 First Nations members enlisted in the Second World War. Of those who enlisted, Favel is the

oldest surviving member.

In his lifetime, Favel was an activist who fought for compensation to Indigenous Veterans who were excluded from the benefits that non-First Nations veterans received. His efforts resulted in compensation to First Nations veterans by the government. Now his advocacy extends both to himself and his reserve. Favel explains that he was given land on the Sweet Grass First Nation Reserve.

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Favel hopes for resolution of his court challenge for his reserve and family while he is still living

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"That land was given to me by the government and the Department of Veterans Affairs," he said. "They didn't explain things right about the land off-reserve."

There is an issue with the process the government used to allocate land for First Nations veterans.

"The land that the government awarded to Veteran Philip Favel cheated both the First Nation band and the veteran Philip Favel," said Chief Laurence Paskemin of Sweet Grass First Nation.

The band is currently suing the government for compensation from Loss of Use. According to the Senate of Canada "Non-First Nations veterans could purchase land from Canada with a small loan from the federal government, but First Nations veterans who applied for loans were told they were limited to Certificates for Possession in the purchasing of reserve land."

"There is evidence that many Indian Agents did not tell First Nations Veterans of all their available options, but only what the agent thought they should receive," stated Matthew Coon-Come at the Proceedings of the Subcommittee on Veterans Affairs in 2001.

"In particular, the federal government provided benefits to non-First Nations veterans that were not made available to or not made easily accessible to First Nations veterans, such as land grants, education, retraining and loans. In some cases, First Nations lands were expropriated to compensate non-First Nations veterans."

Veteran Favel arranges the files in his briefcase as he ponders the outcome of the court case. He hopes to see the reserve and his family compensated while he is living.

"Who knows how much longer I will be here," he said.

Philip Favel received a medal from LG Vaughn Solomon Schofield in 2014. (Photo by John Lagimodiere). Below: Philip Favel in his house with files relating to his veteran's land settlement. (Photo by Morning Star)



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Mahekan Ahenakew following in grandfather's inspiring footsteps with Canadian Armed Forces

**By Jeanelle Mandes
Of Eagle Feather News**

A 30-year-old man from the Ahtahkakoop Cree Nation who joined the military in 2006 and served in various countries was given the Order of St. George for his service and commitment.

Master Corporal Mahekan Awasis Ahenakew attended a powwow in Regina and was intrigued at the veterans during a grand entry ceremony. The curiosity of the military lifestyle sparked right then and there.

"It was something I wanted to learn more about," he said. "After the grand entry was over, (I walked around) and seen a recruiting booth. I went over to inquire about it. That's when I had gained contact on where to go to join the military."

Not long after, Ahenakew was contacted and went through testing to see if he was fit to join the Armed Forces. Following the testing, he decided to join the Bold Eagle Program which kickstarted his career in the military.

"I carried on from there (going) forward and I've done a lot of courses," he said.

Ahenakew's late grandfather was in the military as well. The thought of one of his relations who served for his country always stood at the back of Ahenakew's mind which kept him going down this career path.

"I'm carrying on his footsteps ... to carry on that legacy of warriors within our nations," he said.

Ahenakew said this career came easy and natural to him but that doesn't mean he didn't face any challenges along the way. Being so far from his family is

one the hardships he faces. But despite the challenges that come with the job, he is grateful for the hardships especially when he goes back home.

"I never get tired seeing my family. Every time I see them, it's a wholesome experience and I'm sure grateful for them every day of my life," he said.

His sister Sekwun Ahenakew describes her brother as someone who has repeatedly shown a level of genius through his creativity and functioning.

"I see my brother as a person who appreciates his mode of inner genius that involves trusting those inner flashes of insight that are worthy of expression," she stated in an email interview.

"He banishes doubt by setting his mind to it – whatever it may be."

She added that he trusts in the wisdom and stays connected to Creator, appreciates the genius in others, practices radical humility and doesn't like to take credit for his talents, intellectual abilities, aptitudes, or proficiencies.

"He gives credit everywhere except his ego. He tends to pay attention to the greatness he observes in others. He tells others of their own greatness," she stated.

"It took much convincing for him to accept this investiture into the Order of St. George. He remains humble while staying in a state of gratitude."

Ahenakew said he doesn't see himself in another job where he would be able to affect diverse and vast population in a positive manner through his own blood, sweat and tears.



Master Corporal Mahekan Ahenakew and Lord Robbie Sprules on his special day where he was Knighted in October 5, 2019.

(Photo supplied by Sekwun Ahenakew)

"The greatest capacity that I ever had to help people that I personally do not know on the grandest of spectrums has been made available to me through the Canadian Armed Forces," he said.

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Justice for Métis veterans

At long last, 2019 finally saw the Government of Canada apologize to Métis veterans of the Second World War for their poor treatment when they returned to their communities after battling overseas for Queen and country.

Programs, services, training and other benefits were often not delivered in remote or northern Métis communities and often veterans weren't even told of the opportunities available to them.

The impacts were widespread. At the apology in September, The Minister of National Defence described the outcomes well.

"Looking back, it is clear that the pre-and post-Second World War experiences some Métis veterans faced may have negatively affected their successful re-establishment in civilian life following the Second World War," said The Honourable Lawrence MacAulay, Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence.

"Many experienced poverty, and a relative lack of pre-war education, vocational skills, and work experiences. We apologize that the benefits offered to veterans after the war were not well designed to meet Métis veterans' specific needs."

"For example, many Métis veterans did not possess the required prerequisites to access education and training."

The apology came along with a \$30 million compensation fund in the settlement called the Canada-Métis Nation Métis Veterans Recognition Payment Agreement. Each living veteran and the families of veterans who have died in the last three years will receive \$20,000.

The remainder of the money will go to a trust for scholarships and initiatives to commemorate Métis veterans.

So far, the Métis National-Council has identified less than a dozen surviving veterans. Often at enrollment,

Métis enlistees just listed French or anything other than Métis to escape racism. Many surviving veterans are in Saskatchewan.

Recently, Métis Nation-Saskatchewan President Glen McCallum presented compensation cheques and beaded poppies to Métis War Veterans Lucien "Jim" Boucher and Alice Marie Victoria Samuel in ceremonies in Saskatoon and Duck Lake. The apology and compensation are long over-

It must also be noted that the Department of Veterans Affairs in Canada, doesn't do a very good job for any of our soldiers that serve us. There always seems to be a fight for medical care and benefits for all.

What does that say about our country and what we can do for our citizens. Pretty disappointing.

Make sure you hug a vet and do your best to support them in their civilian lives. They have done much for us.



Métis veterans Lucien Jim Boucher and Alice Marie Victoria Samuel both received compensation for the injustice they endured after WWII. On the day of the presentations in Saskatoon and Duck Lake, MN-S President Glen McCallum and other dignitaries presented the veterans with beaded poppies and special sashes.

(Photos courtesy Glen McCallum)

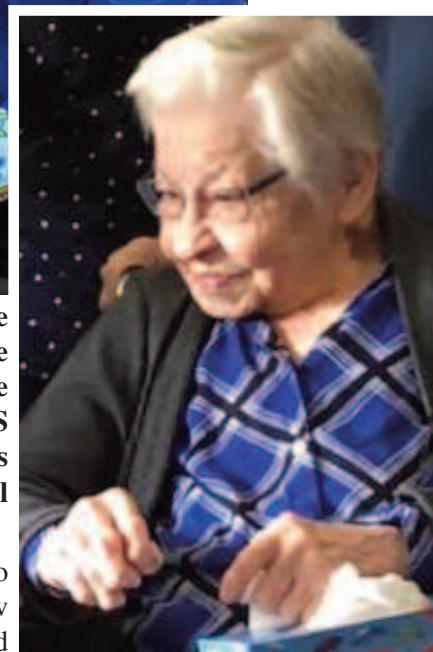
due and very much welcomed by the community.

It is unfortunate that the Indigenous men and women in Canada who volunteered for our country were given such short shrift on their return. They sacrificed their lives, bodies and souls over there only to be treated so very poorly upon their return.

Least we can do for them is show them support and respect. The apology and compensation are a start.

New face

I want to take some space to thank Darla Read for her many years of awesome work with Eagle Feather News.



From freelance writer to web editor, Darla worked with us over a span of 15 years. That's a lot. Awesome web editor.

She has now moved on and is working on her own business helping new mothers during the ups and downs of having a baby, a calling close to her heart. We thank her for all she has done for us.

We also now want to welcome Errol Sutherland on board as our web dude. He hasn't picked an official title yet, but pretty sure it will be better than web dude.

Errol comes to us with a diverse social media and marketing background including working at SIIT and Creative Fire as well as freelancing his own business.

He is also a heck of a photographer, so get used to seeing Errol swinging his camera at community and news events covering stories and capturing images for our website and paper.

While we are talking website, did you know we average 30,000 visitors a month? There are new stories on the web every day, most of which you won't see in this paper. Totally unique stories about you, your friends, family and our communities. All doing awesome things.

Make sure you check it out. Also go to our Facebook and vote for newsmaker of the year. Lots of big news this year. Who is your biggest newsmaker? Cast your vote!



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Publisher's Notes

John Lagimodiere



Maybe old Barkley helped the medium

I went to a séance last week in Las Vegas. Not a real séance – rather, a re-creation of a séance but they spelled it: “recreation séance” so that sort of gave it a different vibe.

Like we would be sitting around on a basketball court in shorts and sneakers while trying to summon spirits.

For the uninitiated, a séance is run by a medium. There is a difference between psychics and mediums – I have learned this from my siblings who visit both with the same regularity as people check in with their dentists.

Psychics apparently draw their information from the spirits. But mediums get their messages from people or animals who have passed on before. I guess it boils down to who you would rather hear your news from: some random spirit or your former Shih Tzu, Mr. Wiggles.

The séance took place at “Binions” which is a hotel located in Fremont Street. When you walk in you are greeted with the smell of cigars, booze and carpet soaked in clamato juice. It had personality, is what I am saying.

We checked in at the front desk next to a cigar shop where a man stood and chuffed on a cigar as though cancer or fresh air had never existed.

A young woman – Rae – greeted our party of three warmly. She had had some acting lessons and at various times during the night her face would go blank and she would stare off into space. I do this at times as well, especially when I’m low on sleep or lying.

She explained the history of the hotel; it had

been the cornerstone of the general lawlessness of old Vegas. Considering that an entire family had budded in front of me at Starbucks that very morning – the lawlessness persists.



That's What She Said

Dawn Dumont



She asked us to write down a question on a piece of paper and then burned the paper in front of us. I enjoyed this immensely – fire always adds a little pizazz to an evening. The paper exploded into ash when she hit it – “exploding paper,” she explained. I had a feeling that if she put a flame to the cigar store owner, the same thing would happen to him.

It is pretty hard to fleece people if they can't follow simple directions.

She took us to a small room that she explained did not exist on the building plans. (She did not

really let me review the building plans long enough to confirm this.) We walked up a flight of stairs and then were asked to turn over our phones.

So far this was the scariest part of the adventure. Take my phone! Why not just ask for my soul? But we were good sports and handed them over.

Rae left us in a side room – sans cellphones – and explained that the medium was on his way. His name was Frank and when he appeared, he had a slightly rumpled look – like he had just emerged from a suitcase after a long flight.

During the séance the medium brought up our three questions individually (the ones we had burned!). At first the medium thought my question was another person’s so I had to pipe up: “No, that was me. The spirits have misled you.”

So, then the medium went through my answer — and guess what?

Despite the clumsiness, the medium’s answer was pretty darn perfect. Maybe it was basic common sense, maybe it was the spirits lingering in the space or maybe it was my old dog Barkley but the answer resolved a lot of things.

Later my friend and I were debriefing and he told me that you were supposed to write your NAME before you wrote your QUESTION which was why the medium had confused my and the third person’s question. It is pretty hard to fleece people if they can’t follow simple directions.

Despite the campiness, it was a nice off-the-strip adventure – with some unexpected wisdom thrown in for good measure.

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Plan and prepare meals with leftovers to save.	Pack and bring your lunch for one week.	No eating out/ordering in for one week.	Set a family financial goal (eg: a trip, a pet, donate to charity, etc.).	Learn the difference between good and bad credit.
Start an RESP for your child, or make an extra contribution.	Open a bank account for your child, or make an extra deposit.	Walk, bike, or transit to work and school for a week.	Start a 52 week challenge: put 25¢ each week into savings, and raise that amount by 25¢ per week.	
Plan a no cost family entertainment night.	Talk to your kids about what they want to be when they grow up.	Read some stories together about money.	Have a family savings mantra: “Is that treat better than our family trip goal next year?”	Start a rainy-day fund.
Visit a library.	Discuss the difference between wants and needs.	Shop with cash for a week.	No online shopping or ordering for a week.	Create a “future dreams” family time capsule.

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Ron "Rocky" Redwood, a Vietnam veteran and a member of the SFNVA executive.

(Photo courtesy of the SFNVA)

Vet continues to fight for comrades

**By Julia Peterson
For Eagle Feather News**

The Saskatchewan First Nations Veterans Association (SFNVA) has been supporting Indigenous veterans in Saskatchewan since the 1960s. The association currently serves approximately 125 registered veterans.

Grand Chief Steven Ross says that one of the most critical services the association provides is to help navigating the benefits system.

"There are many benefits (First Nations veterans) are entitled to from Canada, but there's a lot of red tape that you have to cut through, and that's where it gets very discouraging," said Ross.

"But we will continue to fight for our people, for our veterans."

The SFNVA also participates in ceremonies, commemorations, educational events and powwows, as well as organizing military funerals and grave markers for veterans who have passed away. In recent years, the association has shifted towards participating in specifically Indigenous-centered ceremonies on Remembrance Day.

"Before, we used to participate with the Legions – and that's OK, that's good, nothing wrong with that," said Ross. "But we were always put in the back; the back of the parade, the back of the line."

"And some of our politicians saw that, so they decided to change things, and we started

having our own ceremonies at the reserve and the Grand Council level."

For Prince Albert SFNVA president Emile Highway, raising the profile of the association, its work and its legacy can have an impact across generations.

"We try to give our young people a sense of pride in their dads and grandfathers and uncles and so on," he said.

"A significant number of Aboriginal people joined the military and served in all three branches, and I think it's important for our young people to know."

"I also think in particular, for older people who went to residential school – always being told that we were inferior to other races, that we would never amount to anything ... it's important to raise the profile of Aboriginal veterans and to let people know that Aboriginal people are intelligent and can make contributions to the betterment of society."

Ron "Rocky" Redwood, a member of the SFNVA executive, says that it is important for him to continue the association's work.

"After I came out of the military, I got involved with (the SFNVA) because I was searching out, to see what they could do for me," he said.

"And one of the old veterans told me 'Rocky, you don't know how what you have to say might help somebody else'. That got me started doing what I'm doing, and I just continue. Somebody's got to be here."

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veterans for your sacrifice
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GameSense





Kim Van Mourik's military service exposed her to gender stereotyping.

Native veteran with 32 years in uniform says Canadian Armed Forces is making progress on gender related issues

**By NC Raine
For Eagle Feather News**

Despite being underrepresented, females have historically played a key role in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF).

Canada had one of the first military forces to open all military occupations to women. According to 2019 statistics, women account for around 15 per cent of the CAF's regular force.

Indigenous people's representation is significantly lower, at only 2.5 per cent, making military veteran Kim Van Mourik's service in the CAF that much more exceptional.

Van Mourik, who was born in Saskatoon and raised in Weyburn, enlisted for the military directly out of high school in 1980. She spent over 32 years in the armed forces, retiring in 2012.

"My brother was in the military, and my grandfather on my mom's side. I joined because there was a recruitment drive at career day in high school," Van Mourik told Eagle Feather News. "(Serving) felt like the right thing to do."

For those 32 years, Van Mourik served primarily as a supply technician, in which she ensured that all supplies and services necessary for the CAF (such as food, fuel, heavy machinery, spare parts, stationery, clothing, etc.) are available where and when they are required. Her service took her across Canada, from the Nova Scotia to Alberta, as well as overseas in Croatia and Israel.

"The thing I miss most about the military is the comradery. I enjoyed one-

on-one teaching or passing on information of my trade. It made me feel good when I could see someone understanding or working together as a group in the field," she said.

But the military wasn't without its challenges. Van Mourik said there were very few fellow Indigenous females she served with, but was proud to share and talk about her ethnicity. It was gender stereotypes that sometimes presented a problem.

"For me, my tribulations had nothing to do with being native, but more-so had to do with being female. More often than not, the issues had to do with attitudes people had towards women in the military," said Van Mourik.

Women in combat roles was, and continues to be, one of the divisive issues, said Van Mourik. But she also acknowledges the CAF for the progress she had seen them make over her three decades of service, even in gaining recognition for Indigenous people in military roles.

"The military now makes sure they take part in Aboriginal Day, in International Women's Day. They've definitely made progress," she said. "If you're strong and happy with who you are, then people can't beat you down anyways."

And although she's been retired for a few years, she says the spirit of serving her country will always be with her.

"Nowadays, whenever I hear the national anthem, it brings a tear to my eye," said Van Mourik. "I'm proud of my service. And so proud of all those people who sacrificed so much for us in wars."



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Indigenous veterans look back on their military service

**By Errol Sutherland
Of Eagle Feather News**

Steven Frost

Where were you stationed?

I was stationed in Calgary for three years, I then got posted in Cyprus for six months.

What memory comes to mind when you think back at your time?

Mostly the heat, being out in the hot sun, but that was part of being a peacekeeper for the (Canadian) Armed Forces.

How old were you when you enlisted?

Eighteen.

Was your family supportive in your decision to sign-up?

Very supportive, I was the first one in the family to join the Canadian Armed Forces.

Did you receive any Awards or metals during your time?

No, but we all got a medal being with the United Nations, The Cyprus Medal.

Did the experience change you in any way when you got home?

I was more aware of what was going on in the world. I also thought about what was I going to do now, since I was no longer a soldier. Sometimes, I wondered if it would have been better if I stayed enlisted ... but this all the past now. There were many things I learned. One of them was finance, I didn't know anything about that, my mother was a trapper, so there was no need for finance, but now, I was well prepared for a world I didn't know before.



Steven Frost was a peacekeeper with the Canadian Armed Forces.



Captain - Jesse C. K. Quewezance

Where were you stationed?

2nd Battalion Royal Canadian Regiment. After four years, I was demobilized down to the reserves, spent time with North Saskatchewan Regiment.

How old were you when you enlisted?

Didn't enlist, I volunteered, went in as direct entry officer, in order to become part of that you have to have a degree and a few tests just to qualify for basic training, in which I later became and retire as captain.

Was your family supportive in your decision to sign up?

Oh, for sure. I mean they didn't like the idea. I was in university (and) I thought it was important to contribute. After I finished school, I volunteered right away, the process took about six months.

What memory comes to mind when you think back at your time?

It's the guys beside you, I was a captain and responsibilities were vast and plenty.

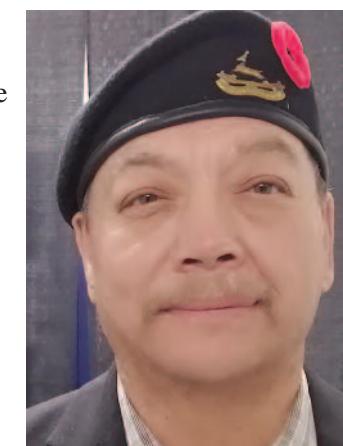
Captain Jesse C. K. Quewezance was stationed to the 2nd Battalion Royal Canadian Regiment and also spent time with North SK Regiment.

Did you receive any awards or medals during your time?

Yeah, we done the overseas thing, done the North Pole sovereignty piece, worked with Inuit, and an 80-year-old guide helped us.

Did the experience change you in any way when you got home?

I met with (FSIN) Vice-Chief Dutch Lerat, he was a very great conduit to working for and veterans of the Saskatchewan nations.



Corporal Darrel Paintednose kept the family legacy going by joining the Canadian Armed Forces.

Corporal - Darrel Paintednose

Where were you stationed?

CP Petawawa for five years.

How old were you when you enlisted?

I was 21 and my brother joined when he was 17.

Was your family supportive in your decision to sign-up?

My dad made us join. My dad was in the Korean War as a medic, my brothers joined first then I joined later.

What memory comes to mind when you think back at your time?

I liked the exercise. Where I was stationed was the only base in Canada that was very focused on being in shape, lots of physical activity.

Did you receive any awards or medals during your time?

No, I was supposed to go to Germany in '88, and Cyprus in '89. I would have received medals if I had gone.

Did the experience change you in any way when you got home?

I drank lots and drank when I got home. At first, I thought joining the army would help change that, but people drank there, too.

Victor Sanderson Combat Engineer, Corporal, Retired

Where were you stationed?

Chilliwack, B.C.

How old were you when you enlisted?

I was 22 years old.

Was your family supportive in your decision to sign-up?

Mixed reviews.

What memory comes to mind when you think back at your time?

You mean "The Blur?" No, the friends I served with, all the men and the women.

Did you receive any awards or medals during your time?

Yeah, when I was peacekeeping duty as a field engineer.

Did the experience change you in any way when you got home?

Not for awhile ... first the PTSD came, then nightmares came later. The discipline and the friends were gone, things started rolling downhill. I felt disenfranchised because I (was no longer) a civilian and no longer a warrior. When elders come by, they tell us who to pray for and who's being forgotten, so we help spread the word to get people to pray for the forgotten. There used to be over a 100 million people on Turtle Island now there is only less than two million. So, let's not forget to pray for our ancestral warrior society.



Corporal Victor Sanderson was a Combat Engineer was stationed in Chilliwack, British Columbia.



THE ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS HONOURS ALL FIRST NATIONS VETERANS.

Throughout history, First Nations men and women have served with great distinction in the armed forces protecting the values we all hold dear. They fought for freedom in the First and Second World Wars, the Korean War and Vietnam War, and First Nations citizens continue to serve in military and peacekeeping missions around the world.

The Assembly of First Nations continues to work with First Nations veterans to ensure they are appropriately and justly respected, supported and acknowledged for their contributions to Canada and the freedom of all Canadians.

On Remembrance Day, we pay tribute to our veterans and honour the memory of those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

The Assembly of First Nations is the national body representing First Nations in Canada.

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The Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations Annual Powwow was a spectacle of over 600 dancers and hundreds of elders, veterans and dignitaries and thousands of visitors. There was a Red Dress special to honour MMIWG and Elilah Napachit was crowned Miss FSIN Princess.

(Photos by Errol Sutherland)



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Arcand, John B. ~ Arcand, John Malasyppe ~ Arcand, Louis
Arcand, Louis O.S. ~ Flamend, John ~ Greyeyes, Louis ~ Ledoux, Isadore
Sanderson, William B. ~ Tawpisim, Alexander

Canadian Forces:

MWO Greyeyes, Grant - PPCLI
(Afghanistan and currently serving)
Cpl Wolfe, Kelly, PPCLI
(Afghanistan)
Capt. Pryor, Walker, 1 Royal
Canadian Horse Artillery
(Afghanistan and currently serving)

MUSKEG LAKE CREE NATION
also acknowledges those who have
served during times of peace.

Cayen, Pat
Greyeyes, David W.
Greyeyes, George
Greyeyes, Marcel
Greyeyes, Richard
Greyeyes, Robert
Lafond, Roderick
Lafond, Frederick "Sonny"
Longneck, Darian
Shaw, Donna
Wolfe, James



World War II: (1939 – 1945)

Arcand, Albert
Arcand, Clement
Arcand, Collin
Arcand, Francis X.
Arcand, George
Arcand, Joseph
Arcand, Joseph Thomas (J.T.)
Arcand, Louis O.S.
Arcand, Patrick Maurice
Greyeyes (Steele), David Georges
Greyeyes, Esther (Mowat)

Greyeyes (Steele), Flora J.
Greyeyes, Gertrude (Lloyd)
Greyeyes, Joseph
Greyeyes, Josephine
Greyeyes, Mary (Reid)
Greyeyes, Stanley
Greyeyes, Thomas
Greyeyes, William C.
Greyeyes, William R.
Lafond, Albert
Lafond, Beatrice
Ledoux, Vincent

Longneck, Felix
Sanderson, Francis X.
Sanderson, William
Tawpisim, Alexander
Venne, Beatrice (Lucier)
Venne, Emile
Venne, Harry
Pte. Okemasis, Joseph: 1 Canadian Infantry
Division, (MG) Bn (KIA) - Italy died
December 07, 1943 Buried at Moro River
Canadian War Cemetery - Italy

Korean Conflict: (1950 – 1953)

Arcand, Arthur "Gabby"
Arcand, Clement
Arcand, Patrick Maurice
Lafond, Albert

Vietnam Conflict (1959 – 1975)

Lafond, Stanley

U.S. – Afghanistan & Iraq Wars

Sgt. Ledoux, Aaron - 173rd Airborne,
US Army, Vincenza, Italy. OIF I-OEF V

Markers honour Indigenous vets

**By NC Raine
For Eagle Feather News**

A new initiative is ensuring that deceased Indigenous veterans across Canada are honoured with a proper funeral and appropriate grave markings.

For over a century, The Last Post Fund, a non-profit organization, has administered the Veterans Affairs Canada funeral and burial program for Canadian and Allied veterans who may not have sufficient funds at the time of death. The Fund also provides military grave markers for veterans lying in unmarked graves.

A new initiative is now working to add an Indigenous veteran's traditional name to existing military markers, in addition to providing a marker if none exists. They also offer to inscribe a symbol culturally relevant to the veteran.

"The families we work with are forever grateful," said Edouard Pahud, executive director of the Last Post Fund.

One of the beneficiaries is a family from White Bear First Nation, in southeast Saskatchewan, who will be receiving a tombstone for their veteran father, who served in the Second World War. The family declined to comment for this story but were reportedly very grateful for the Fund's support.



Veterans from Fire Hills, Sask. (Saskatchewan Provincial Archives Collection)

One of the complications in the process is identifying the Indigenous veterans, said Pahud, noting some may have been forced to adopt a name different from their birth name due to factors like residential schools or enlisting restrictions.

"Would you want the marker, maintained in perpetuity, in the name you adopted or were forced to adopt, rather than your traditional name?" said Pahud.

"Especially when you look at the people in World War I, they served their country even when they weren't allowed, so they adopted these Anglophone or French names. So, it's correcting a past wrong."

The catalyst of this initiative came by way of Yann Castelnau, an amateur historian who received a Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers in 2018 for compiling a database of more than 150,000 Indigenous soldiers who fought for Canada and the United States, including 18,830 who were born in Canada.



Veterans grave markers at the Woodlawn Cemetery in Saskatoon

Maria Trujillo, Indigenous Program Co-ordinator for the Last Post Fund and an Indigenous scholar, is tasked with reaching out to communities and First Nations across Canada to inform them about the initiative and its benefits.

"What makes this unique is that we work together with local researchers from each community," said Trujillo, who said she hopes to raise awareness to the program.



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Hometown: Regina, SK
Band: Gordon First Nation
Program: Steamfitter/Pipefitter apprenticeship training

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Despite knowing of prejudice, Jesse McGhee chose to follow McGhee relatives into Service

**By Judith Iron
For Eagle Feather News**

It's 11:00 a.m. November 11. The country goes quiet. Men and women in uniform stand side by side for this moment of silence. Their thoughts turn to the heroes who so selflessly served our country during war and conflict. These brave warriors put their lives on the line for our freedom and peace.

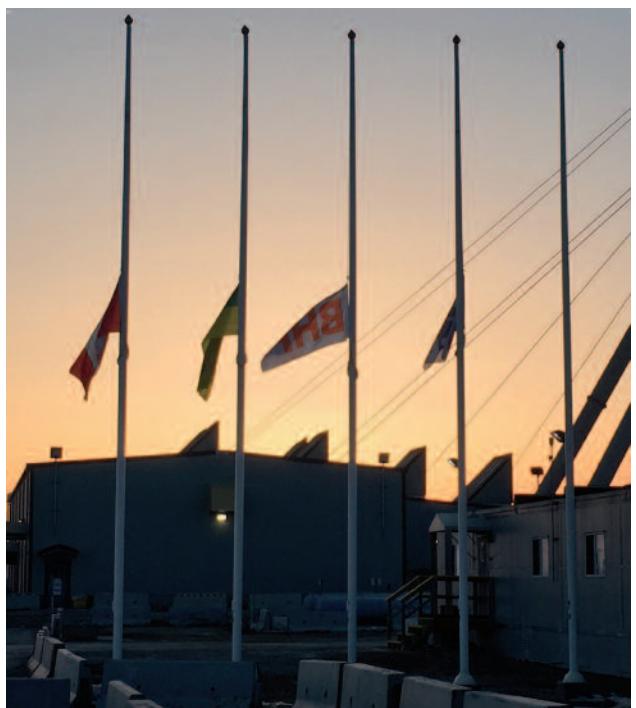
Every year on Remembrance Day, enlisted men and women, veterans, family members, civilians, soldiers, schools, cities, and towns pay homage to these brave men and women who fought in the war.

Many of them will recall bittersweet memories of those they have loved and lost, but they will also remember the sacrifices that needed to be made.

In that moment of silence let's think of the First Nations men and women who fought in the war. Think of the fallen soldiers we proudly consider war heroes and ask yourself, 'Why would someone willingly put



Jesse McGhee with a veteran in Terrace, B.C.



Lest we forget.



BHP

themselves in the line of fire?"

"I guess the only thing that can be said is that First Nations people were promised in the treaties that we would never be conscripted unlike any other ethnicity, so First Nations veterans have always volunteered," said Jesse McGhee, from the George Gordon First Nation.

For McGhee, Nov. 11 isn't just about the poppies and showing his support. For the McGhee men, being a soldier is a family tradition. As a child, McGhee always knew he was going to carry on that tradition. The men in his family chose to fight bravely and with honor and he would do the same.

The McGhee men wore their uniforms with pride. War did not discriminate. McGhee recalls his Uncle Dan Bird who spoke about his experience.

"Over in Europe a soldier was not defined by his race, color, or creed. (He/She) ...was free to go wherever liberating prisoners of war camps, but when he returned in 1945 Indian soldiers were told to get back on the reserve where we belonged ... take off that uniform. You see reserves had made the Indian political prisoners of war," he said.

This did not thwart McGhee's desire to become a soldier. Like many Canadians, he is a peacekeeper at heart, but his grandfather, his father, and his uncles' legacies are ingrained in him. He enlisted in the army at the young age of 19, serving from 1984 to 1991 in the Princess Patricia Canadian Light Infantry.

McGhee's legacy had begun with his grandfather Alexander Pelletier, First World War, who enlisted in the first battalion of the Princess Patricia Canadian Light Infantry (PPCLI). His dad, Andrew McGhee, enlisted in 1942, also becoming a soldier of the PPCLI.

The list goes on to include McGhee's paternal uncles, Wes McGhee, Melvin McGhee and Emerson 'Emit' McGhee, PPCLI; and, maternal uncles Dan Bird, Sydney Gordon, and Daniel Pelletier, PPCLI.

McGhee comes from a long line of brothers in arms and he is very proud of his family's accomplish-



Jesse McGhee with his children Jacob and Jaylene.

ments and efforts. Although he is now retired, he proudly and excitedly said if he had to do it again, he would do it in a heartbeat.

Well, he just may get to "do it again" vicariously through his two children, Jacob and Jaylene. With his support and guidance, Jacob and Jaylene are enrolled in scouts and cadets.

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Sen. Cummings enters Hall of Fame

**By Jeanelle Mandes
Of Eagle Feather News**

Senator Nora Cummings was inducted into the Women's Hall of Fame for her continuous and lifetime contributions. She was nominated based on her leadership, mentorship and citizenship.

Cummings was shocked to hear that she was given this incredible honour.

"I was very honoured that (someone) nominated me," she said.

"I never would have dreamed that I would have been nominated for something like that. I'm very honoured to see (those) who nominated have that respect for me."

The induction event held on Oct. 8 was a luncheon held at the Hilton Gardens Inn in Saskatoon.

"The day (of the event), it was the first time I ever felt nervous," she said. "Just realizing that I had many awards and when I walked in, there was so many people there. The mayor was there and the Chief of Police and people in our community. I was quite humbled to see so many people there supporting me and my family."

Cummings was born in 1938 and is from Saskatoon where she was raised. She attended St. Joseph School and was married at a young age. She raised nine children and presently has 28 grandchildren and 34 great grandchildren.

Her list of lifetime achievements is long but goes unnoticed by many. According to the Métis Family and Community Justice Services Saskatchewan Inc. web-

site, Cummings became a founding member of the Saskatoon Métis Society Local #11 in 1969, followed by being a field worker for the Métis Society Local #11 until 1971. That same year, she became founder of the Saskatchewan Native Women's Association and a year later, she was appointed Provincial Coordinator of the Association where she later was elected Provincial President.

Cummings sat on many boards such as the board of directors of the Native Women's Association of Canada and the Saskatoon Indian and Métis Friendship Center and was later elected chairperson.

From 1977 to 1983, she was employed by the Native Employment Services, then worked as a family worker for the Saskatoon Métis Society Local #11. In 1987, she was elected President of the Saskatoon Métis Society Local #11.

In 1993, Cummings took the Oath of Office, as a Senator for the Métis Nation Saskatchewan Senate, where she still remains. She has received an outstanding number of awards, medals and recognitions throughout her lifestyle and still lives a busy lifestyle to this day.

"Whatever comes up and I'm asked, I just do it," she said. "After raising my kids, I never thought I would do the things that I have done."

Cummings shares advice with other Indigenous



Sen. Nora Cummings with Saskatoon Police Chief Troy Cooper and Mayor Charlie Clark.

women throughout the province.

"Continue to work for our people and your people and for other generations to come," Cummings said.

"Become great leaders and always respect your elders. Always remember your culture and be proud."

City, Saskatoon Tribal Council working toward Reconciliation

**By John Lagimodiere
Of Eagle Feather News**

The Saskatoon Tribal Council and the City of Saskatoon hope a new agreement will help bring more focused resources to First Nation people living in Saskatoon.

The Sharing Prosperity Through Reconciliation Agreement between the STC and the City sets out meeting protocols and a framework to make progress over the next five years on the shared goals of the Saskatoon Tribal Council and the City of Saskatoon.

Both Mayor Charlie Clark and Tribal Chief Mark Arcand know working together is imperative at this time.

"We have a history of working together, but as we understand this era of reconciliation, the Tribal Council provides many services in the City to their members who are also citizens of the city," said Clark.

"There are many ways where we overlap in recreational services, the Sharing Prosperity Through Reconciliation Agreement. Front from left are Councillor Serina Gersher, Councillor Hillary Gough, Mayor Charlie Clark and Councillor Bev Dubois. Back row from left Whitecap Dakota, Mistawasis Nehiyawak Chief Darryl Watson, Saskatoon Tribal Council Chief Mark Arcand, Muskoday First Nation Chief Herman Crain, Kinistin Saulteaux Nation Chief Greg Scott, Yellow Quill First Nation Chief Kelly Wolfe. Missing One Arrow Chief can work together to can have the right point Tricia Sutherland."

people in the City and Tribal Council helps to make the relationship stronger, and clearer and smoother.

"We have a lot of work to do to close the gap in outcomes between Indigenous kids and non-Indigenous kids. Everyone should have the chance to be successful in this city."

Chief Arcand thinks the agreement is a big step.

"This is what Treaty was all about.

To work together with people so we can all have a good quality of life. This is tremendous. I would like to see other cities do the same thing with other First Nation organizations."

The relationship between the city and STC is often looked to as a best model for those looking to work together.

"The City and our people have a long history of working together in Saskatoon. From Chief Whitecap being one of the

founders of Saskatoon. The urban reserves with Muskeg Lake, Yellow Quill and One Arrow. That's about partnerships and relationships. I'm really proud of our Chiefs. They have taken the step to work together."

There have already been discussions on energy development, education partnerships are in place as are transit agreements and the phenomenon of Reconciliation Saskatoon. But one of the main challenges acknowledged by both

leaders was the current crystal meth crisis and access to rehabilitation and the creation of a drug treatment court.

"I'm very happy for Mayor Clark and the Council to take this initiative with the Tribal Council. It will set a standard for the rest of the country. There are a lot of negative things happening across this country to First Nations people."

"It is opportunities like this that build relationships. We have too many people in jails and kids incarcerated and in the child welfare system. We can work together to end those issues."



Dignitaries posed for the official ceremony after the City of Saskatoon and the Saskatoon Tribal Council signed the Sharing Prosperity Through Reconciliation Agreement. Front from left are Councillor Serina Gersher, Councillor Hillary Gough, Mayor Charlie Clark and Councillor Bev Dubois. Back row from left Whitecap Dakota, Mistawasis Nehiyawak Chief Darryl Watson, Saskatoon Tribal Council Chief Mark Arcand, Muskoday First Nation Chief Herman Crain, Kinistin Saulteaux Nation Chief Greg Scott, Yellow Quill First Nation Chief Kelly Wolfe. Missing One Arrow Chief can work together to can have the right point Tricia Sutherland.

(Photo by Willow Lagimodiere)

Failure to recognize Dakota needs correcting

Indigenous veterans who voluntarily fought for Canada in the World Wars were not treated with the respect and recognition they deserve(d).

The effects of this negative treatment permeated other facets within Indigenous communities, such as Indigenous women, children and elders.

One such example involves my great grandfather George Badger, who fought and died during his service in Hong Kong, leaving my great grandmother Sarah at home to raise my grandfather and, later, my mother and auntie on her own.

The sacrifices of non-Indigenous veterans are generally well-documented and honoured through commemorations and remembrance. As I have discussed previously, non-Indigenous veterans received soldier settlements, where they were given 160 acres of land when they returned home. This was not the same for Indigenous veterans which is another historical violation that still needs correcting.

The legacies of warfare on our Indigenous communities continue to be felt today. One battle which often goes unmentioned is the War of 1812.

This war was won with Indigenous allies that led to the establishment of Canada. Sadly, as is the case of the World Wars, the role and importance of Indigenous veterans

in the War of 1812 has been trivialized over the centuries.

A way to start properly recognizing Indigenous veterans is to honor the Indigenous allies who fought in this war, whose participation was fundamental to the creation of Canada.

Since I can remember, the acknowledgments of

the Dakota peoples' relationship with lands situated in Canada, and in particular Treaty 6 territory, have gone unrecognized. For the Dakota, this compounds the harmful legacies of colonialism and continues to deny the importance of their contributions to Canadian society, one such example being my ancestor's participation as an ally in the War of 1812.

One of those allies was the Dakota people, who finally received acknowledgement from Canada through medals in 2012 at the bicentennial commemoration for the War of 1812. Therefore, the Dakota peoples' alliance and presence within Canada is evident through participation in the War of 1812 forming Canada.

As a Dakota-Winyan it is offensive to

not be acknowledged within Canada. The Dakota have been labeled as U.S. refugees, which is politically incorrect. This misrepresentation continues to deny our existence within Canadian borders. What good are medals if we are not acknowledged on our own territory?

While I applaud the fact that land acknowledgments have been woven into prairie presentations and protocols, many, if not all of these land acknowledgments are premised on the notion that the signatories to Treaty 6 were the initial inhabitants of this land. The Dakota presence at Treaty 6 signing was denied and therefore is still not acknowledged when all other First Nations who were signatories are acknowledged.

As treaty negotiations with my Dakota nation are ongoing, we are undertaking the daunting task of reintegrating our Dakota societies into Treaty 6 territory and within Canada itself.

When we discuss these issues of recognition and respect of veterans who have come before us, we show respect and

honour those who have fought for this country.

I think it is vital we remember all the allies and do not overlook the dedication Indigenous allies have done for this country. In a more specific context for myself, it is the remembrances of the Dakotas which prevents leaving them out of the fabric of this country.

There is a statue front and centre in Saskatoon in front of the Victoria bridge of the founders of Saskatoon. In this statue, Chief Whitecap is showing John Lake where to settle Saskatoon.

Many partnerships have been built with the Whitecap Dakota community, yet are denied in land acknowledgments as a clear indicator of the history where Dakotas were denied Treaty.

The acknowledgement of these wrongs has still not been corrected nor shared and known with the wider Canadian society.

There is archeological evidence and oral stories which show Dakota used and occupied land in Canada and it seems as though there is a hard time accepting Dakotas were traditionally in this territory. This misrepresentation and bias have been internalized in our minds and that stems from governmental policy authorities who denied Dakotas presence.



Comment

Alyson Bear



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Staff at Regina's City Hall take steps towards Reconciliation

**By Jeanelle Mandes
Of Eagle Feather News**

An installation aimed to educate visitors and staff at Regina's City Hall on the commitment and journey towards Truth and Reconciliation was recently unveiled.

In October, the City of Regina hosted an unveiling event featuring Cree/Métis artist Krystle Pederson singing the Métis National Anthem, as well as Teddy Bison, a Nakoda/Cheyenne singer and drummer from Ocean Man First Nation.

The Truth and Reconciliation project is located on the main floor of City Hall, next to the Courtyard Café.

City of Regina's Diversity & Inclusion Consultant Debbie Brotheridge came up with the concept of the installation after reading the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's final summary report.

"I found that to be a quite hard read," she said. "I would read a little bit (every few days) and absorb it."

At one of the first Reconciliation Regina meetings where all its members gathered, the late Elder Noel Starblanket said something that resonated with Brotheridge.

"He said 'once you seen and once you heard, you can't unseen and you can't unhear,'" she said. "It really hit me and made me think that's exactly how I felt after reading (the TRC report). I can't just forget about it and I can't let it go. If there's anything that I can do about it, I needed to do something. I need to feel that I contributed somehow to work towards reconciliation."

Shortly after, Brotheridge printed some Office of the Treaty Commission forms on 'What Their Call to Action is.' She went around the City of Regina organization asking people to fill out the forms on what reconciliation meant to them and received a lot of positive responses. She later placed the forms on the wall of the human resources room where it continued to grow.

At the next Reconciliation Regina meetings, Brotheridge sat with a few executives and she asked how they felt if she moved the forms to another area of the building. Her idea was approved and they were moved into the cafeteria that was recently renovated.

"What a perfect place to display this and have people ask questions. I think the more curious you are, the more likely you'll be working towards reconciliation," she said.

Brotheridge and other staff formed a committee where they consulted with Elders and had an agency to do artwork at the centre of the wall. There are 14 panels that stretch 43 feet which is centred by a medicine wheel and star. The content of the panels integrates historical information on treaties and residential schools along with employee photos and written commitments to reconciliation. "The support for Reconciliation Regina from organizations throughout the city shows us that our residents are keen to make progress on the TRC calls to action," said Mayor Michael Fougere in a media release.

"This installation will remind us of the good work that the City of Regina has been a part of, and inspire us every day to continue to make progress."

"The unveiling event had over one hundred people in attendance."



There are 14 panels that stretch 43 feet which is centred by a medicine wheel and star. Each panel integrates historical information on treaties and residential schools.

(Photos by Debbie Brotheridge)

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Roberts honoured with Facility Operations Award

**By NC Raine
For Eagle Feather News**

The award may have his name on it, but Kevin Roberts wants to ensure that it's his community's leadership that receives the credit.

"We were pretty elated, but I didn't want to make this about myself. Awards are nice but really, at the end of the day, it's a reflection on your community and the leadership that makes things happen."

In late October, Roberts was the recipient of the 2019 Facility Operations Award, presented by the Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association (SPRA). The award recognizes Roberts' achievement in the operation of the Jonas Roberts Memorial Community Centre (JRMCC) – a sport and recreation facility at Lac La Ronge Indian Reserve.

The JRMCC is the first facility on a First Nation to receive the award.

"I think we're pretty privileged in our organization to do what we do. To know that when we build things, there's going to be positive impacts for the youth, community members, and elders," said Roberts. "The award is a good reflection on our entire organization and leadership."

Roberts, who has been the director of sports and recreation at JRMCC for nearly eight years, says the facility is a wholly inclusive community, open to both band and non-band members. The facility has about 150 memberships and provides financial support for those otherwise unable to cover the fees.

"We realize sometimes finances can be a struggle, so we try to alleviate some of those burdens so every kid has an opportunity," he said. "I just want to give back. A lot of these kids come from situations that I came from. So, when you're in a position to make an impact, that's what we're here to do."

The ice rink and fitness centre at the JRMCC underwent a \$3.6 million renovation in 2016, adding increased space for the fitness centre, new seating, a running track, boardroom, and bus garage. The exterior of the facility has also seen an expanded entertainment park, featuring a canteen and washroom, 18 hole mini-golf course, snookball, beach volleyball, batting cage, and ball diamonds.

It's all about providing youth with something that can make a significant impact in their lives, said Roberts.

"It has impacts in so many areas: leadership, teamwork, improved self-esteem, improved health and wellness," he said.

"We look forward to trying to help them realize the benefits of sports and recreation."

"It has such an effect on an individual, or community, you want to keep that going for your community to grow and develop in a good way."

Kevin Roberts accepting the Facility Operations Award at the Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association awards gala.



Students have a voice on Provincial Youth Council

**By Jeanelle Mandes
Of Eagle Feather News**

A group of 12 high school students from different school divisions were picked to sit on the 2019-2020 Provincial Youth Council.



Peyton Chandler is a northern student from Pinehouse Lake is using the opportunity as a youth council member to bring forward the concerns and ideas of the students within his school division.

Last month, Education Minister Gordon Wyant announced the members of the youth council who are committed to improving their communities and empowering other young people in the province.

"Students have a critical voice in education and an important role to play in improving the future of our province, and I am looking forward to hearing their valuable feedback," Wyant said.

The students will voice issues directly with the Minister of Education and other government members, while figuring out ways of addressing the concerns brought forward.

There were 51 nominations received by the Ministry of Education and only 12 students were selected. Each council member from different school divisions will bring their own unique perspective, skills and background.

"I was really surprised. I got an email that I was accepted," said Olivia Maurice, a Grade 12 student from E.D. Feehan High School in the Greater Saskatoon Catholic School Division.

"I learned the stats and I think I was picked out of 60 people to represent my school board. I think it's really amazing considering how many different schools are within my school board."

Maurice resides in Saskatoon but is originally from English River First Nation. She is a leader within her community and her school. She's the president of her school's Student Leadership Committee, a three-time nominee for the SaskTel Indigenous Youth Awards of Excellence and has worked with Canadian Roots Exchange working towards reconciliation within her community.

Being on the Provincial Youth Council, Maurice wants to use the opportunity to voice concerns and ideas from the schools she represents and hopes her role can be the start of changes.

"Classroom sizes is a huge concern. It's not easy to get that one on one first-hand experience that (a student) needs," she said.

"I want to bring forward land-based and cultural learning within the school system."

When she completes high school, Maurice hopes to attend university to study either engineering or to become a teacher.

Peyton Chandler is a Grade 11 student from the Minahik Waskahigan High School in Pinehouse Lake within the Northern Lights School Division. He is eager to bring forward ideas on how to improve the education system within his school district.

"This is a big opportunity to get my voice out and the voice of the northern students," said Chandler.

"It's a big chance for us to be heard (on) what our problems are and how we can fix those problems."

Chandler stands out as a young leader in his community and school. He is involved in many clubs and has earned the Northern Achievement Award several times. He will be receiving the Lieutenant Governor Award for Academic Achievement. Chandler also received Jr. and Sr. Student of the Year awards in Minahik Waskahigan High School.

He is passionate about social issues in his community and tries to find solutions to help people struggling with drug issues. Chandler enjoys hunting with his

father and he wants to attend university to become a math teacher.

The first inaugural meeting was held on Oct. 19, and members sat down with the Minister of Education and began discussions around topics of importance to them and their peers.



Olivia Maurice originally from the English River First Nation has outstanding leadership skills and was picked among others to sit on the Provincial School Council.

(Photos submitted)

Special celebrations, ceremonies mark 175th anniversary of Riel's birth

By Julia Peterson
For Eagle Feather News

This year marks the 175th anniversary of the birth of Louis Riel, and events designed to commemorate, celebrate, and educate about his legacy will be taking place throughout the province on Nov. 16, the date of his execution.

In Saskatoon, the Métis Addictions Council of Saskatchewan will be hosting the first annual Louis Riel Cultural Festival at City Centre Church. This two-day event, taking place over the 15th and the 16th, will feature musical and dance performances, cultural presentations, and communal meals.

"We're hoping to share Métis, but also Indigenous in general, First Nations performances, as well as performances from newcomers to Canada," said Shayne Lazarowich, communications manager for the Métis Addictions Council of Saskatchewan.

"The idea is, in the spirit of reconciliation, to reach out to all kinds of cultural groups and folks in our community to present something that really respects and honours the tradition and the history of Louis Riel."

Performers at the Louis Riel Cultural Festival will include singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist Donny Parenteau, the Andino Sons, who describe their musical style as 'South American Mountain Folk Rock,' and the



Qu'appelle Valley Square dancers.

Another commemoration will be taking place at the Batoche National Historic Site. Though the site is normally closed at this time of year, Parks Canada and the Gabriel Dumont Institute will host Louis Riel Day at Batoche on the

Nov. 16.

On that day, there will also be a Project Bookmark plaque unveiling at the site. Project Bookmark's mission is to place excerpts from literary texts at their real locations throughout the country, and the plaques at Batoche will feature

French and English translations of "The Sewing Circle," a poem by Métis writer Gregory Scofield.

"This year, Gregory (Scofield) was chosen because of Louis Riel's 175th anniversary," said Jacqueline Gaudet, events coordinator.

"His poem 'The Sewing Circle' takes place here at Batoche during the 1885 resistance. And we'll also be having our memorial walk to the cemetery, honouring all those who have fallen, and a light lunch and traditional entertainment that day."

Saskatchewan Polytechnic will also be honouring Riel by hosting speakers and performances and raising the Métis flag on its campuses located in Moose Jaw, Prince Albert, Regina, and Saskatoon.

"These events are to create awareness about Louis Riel himself and the challenges and contributions this historical figure gave to this province of Saskatchewan and to Canada," said Saskatchewan Polytechnic Indigenous strategy coordinator Deanna Speidel.

"It brings about an awareness of the Indigenous history throughout Canada."

"It's for everybody to share and celebrate and walk away and learn something about the contributions Louis Riel has made. All the very important information that was not in our history books, that information is shared on this day."



ÂNSKOHK ABORIGINAL LITERATURE FESTIVAL

November 21 - 23, 2019

Locations: Saskatoon - Roxy Theatre, Saskatoon Farmer's Market, and Station 20 West



All Welcome! No registration cost - Donations welcome at the door

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