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Newspapers will not transmit the Coronavirus

CPMA #40027204

Stand Proud & Fearless

Bella Kulak believes in the power of ribbon skirts. Her collection includes some sent to her, many made for them by her aunt Farrah, and a couple purchased by the family.
(Photo by Gerri Leigh Kulak)



*By Andréa Ledding
for Eagle Feather News*

On January 4, 10-year-old Isabella (Bella) Kulak entered her school wearing a ribbon skirt accompanied by ribbon skirt-wearing aunties and kookums, three hand-drummers, the chief of her First Nation and a couple dozen other supporters, including the principal and vice-principal.

The celebratory event marked the first ever Ribbon Skirt Day at Kamsack Comprehensive Institute, the grade 5 to 12 school in the town located 82 kilometres north-east of Yorkton.

It was the outcome of a Canada-wide social media outpouring of support for Kulak, who had worn a ribbon skirt to the school's formal dress up day on December 18, only to be criticized by a staff member.

Bella's mother, Lana Kulak, recalled the day.

Bella, who is more comfortable in sweatpants and t-shirts, donned her ribbon skirt, changing shirts three times before she was satisfied.

"She left with a big smile, but when she got home after school she was pretty quiet and wasn't wearing her ribbon skirt. I asked her what was wrong. Finally, when we were getting ready for bed, she told me what had happened at school.

"The EA (Education Assistant) in her classroom had told her it wasn't formal wear and didn't even match, pointing out another girl (who wasn't wearing a ribbon skirt) and saying, 'Maybe next formal day you should dress more like her.'"

Bella felt singled out and shamed, Lana said.

"It broke my heart. The next day I told her dad and we phoned the teacher and after that it kind of just has been a wild couple of weeks."

continued page 2



FSIN Chief - Bobby Cameron Political Leadership 2021

Elections this year are expected for the Metis Nation-Saskatchewan (MN-S), Metis National Council (MNC), Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN) and the Assembly of First Nations (AFN).

- page 10



Muskoday First Nation Chief Herman Crain A Cleaner, Brighter Future

"The most important thing about this is, from our First Nation perspective, to care for the environment and Mother Earth. We all know the impacts of climate change and the detriment of greenhouse gas emissions,"

- page 12



Reconciliation Ally - Carrie Catherine Committed to Development

"So we tried a number of different things, but it wasn't until I sat around this Reconciliation Saskatoon table that I was able to work with Elders and learn from Elders."

- page 8

January 2021 is our
Looking Ahead Issue
NEXT ISSUE:
Health & Wellness

Ribbon skirt pride celebrated after disappointing comment

... continued from page 1

Lana, who is not on social media, had also told family members about the incident and some of them posted about it on various social media sites.

The next day Lana learned the story had gone viral. Hundreds of people shared, retweeted and commented on the post. A facebook group supporting Bella sprung up and hundreds of women posted pictures of themselves, relations and friends wearing ribbon skirts. Some photos and encouraging remarks came from Puerto Rico. By the first week of January the group had more than 4,500 members. The story became the subject of memes, Tiktok videos, Instagram, Twitter and Reddit. News stories were broadcast on television and shared on websites.

"It caught us off guard and it's been a whirlwind, but overwhelming with the positive posts and people reaching out to us," Lana said. "People are sending messages, skirts, pictures and paintings, some letters, and we're just overjoyed with the positive feedback with everybody standing up for our little girl."

Amidst the flurry of attention, people sent Bella ribbon skirts and an RCMP officer in Germany sent her \$100.

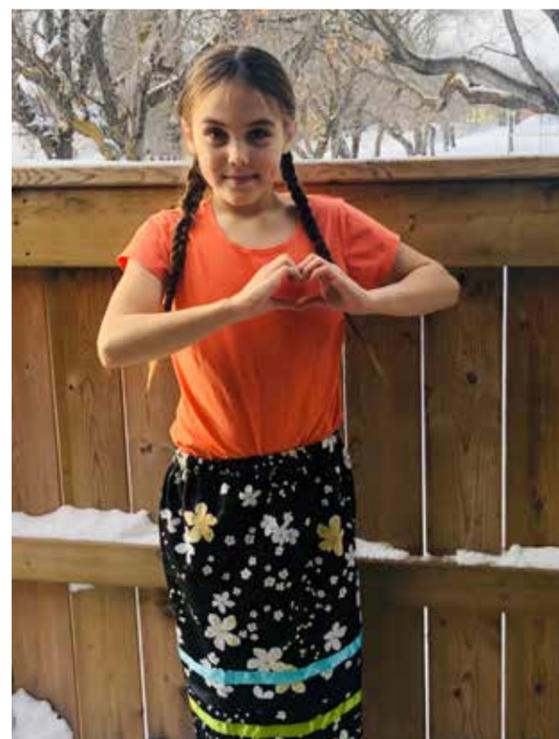
Lana is a member of Cote First Nation but she and her family live in Kam-sack.

She and husband Chris Kulak contacted the school division, as did Cote Chief George Cote and Elder Judy Pelly.

Director of Education Quintin Robertson worked with them to address the problem and it was agreed the school would establish a Ribbon Skirt Day to be held in January to celebrate empowerment, rather than on the negative anniversary in December.

Robertson says it was an "incredibly unfortunate" incident.

"I have apologized to Bella, her father, and Cote First Nation that we were not further along in reconciliation... and that this incident happened, and that this wonderful young lady was meant to feel shame for



Bella Kulak wears her ribbon skirt proudly and encourages others to do the same. (Photo by Gerri Leigh Kulak)

wearing a symbol of pride. She should have been allowed to feel pride and it sickens me. But it's going to give us an opportunity to be better," he said.

Robertson called the entire process, "one more step to reconciliation."

"I just wish it wasn't our ignorance that led to this, but we're meeting with the Cote First Nation on the 11th [of January] on what more we can do and



The family wears ribbon skirts together. L-R Shania, Christina, Salena and Malena, Isabella, Gerri Leigh, Lana, and Chris Kulak (missing, daughter Kennedy) (Photo by Farrah Sanderson)

how we can learn from this," he said.

He said the love being poured out to Bella is a silver lining: she is being described by many as a hero and is getting support from high-profile and ordinary citizens from across the country and the globe.

On January 9, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau cited, "standing with courageous young people like Isabella Kulak of Cote First Nation who wore her ribbon skirt to school to celebrate her culture last month," as a way of being a caring Canadian.

Bella said she felt very nervous ahead of the January 4 event but she has happy memories of the day.

"Some people in my class were talking about it, and we had a walk and there was a drum group there, and I got a picture with the Chief of Cote First Nation," she said.

Lana said many Indigenous women can relate to Bella's experience.

"We started talking as to what happened to us as little girls, and I wasn't brave enough to speak up then, but we were all those little girls. So I'm very proud of her for telling me because it took lots of courage for her to even open up about what had happened."

All they ask for is acceptance and understanding, she said.

"We are a spiritual people that honour our ways, and are told by our Elders to respect all races and honour everyone," said Lana.

She remembers her grandmother, Pauline Pelly, saying she would never be ashamed of who she was as an Anishnaabe kwe, and to always be proud of who she is.

"When I wear my ribbon skirt, I feel proud and confident to be an Indigenous girl. And I'm not alone," said Bella.

"Stand proud, and don't be afraid to wear your ribbon skirt and your traditional wear."

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Agreement opens way for greater MN-S role, land ownership at Batoche

By John Lagimodiere
of Eagle Feather News

Batoche is a special place but has always been an area of conflict between the Métis and Canada.

From the violent birth of our country to disputes over land, the historic site, and how the shared history has been portrayed, it has been hard to find peace.

Now, building on many steps over the last several years, Métis Nation-Saskatchewan President Glen McCallum is excited about a new agreement between the MN-S and Parks Canada that could lead to peace in the valley.

“We have the right people. The right structures and governance right now. This stems from the MOU with the Federal Government after the Daniels Case came down,” said President McCallum in an interview.

The 2016 Supreme Court of Canada Daniels Decision deemed Métis people Indians under the Constitution and opened the door for negotiation of land claims and undetermined rights.

“(The new agreement) has strengthened all of our Ministries. We are moving in the right direction and developing those true partnerships. With Parks Canada we will work toward ensuring we play an integral role in the future of Batoche National Historic Site and that we bring this land home to the Métis Nation.”

A virtual agreement-signing with Parks Canada in late December sealed the deal. The partners have agreed to discuss a full range of options relat-

ed to the future management of Batoche National Historic Site.

The agreement also opens the way to address the key question of land ownership or some sort of control of the land near Batoche.

There is precedent for that as noted by Ron Hallman, President and Chief Executive Officer, Parks Canada during the December Zoom broadcast.

“Today, we are taking another important step forward in an evolving collaborative relationship. I take great pride in joining with the Métis Nation – Saskatchewan to sign the Terms of Reference that will guide our joint exploration of a full range of options for the future management of Batoche National Historic Site, building upon past milestones, such as the transfer of the Back to Batoche Festival grounds in 1996, and the signing of the Batoche Management Agreement in 1998,” said Hallman.

President McCallum has his eye on land around Batoche.

“We are at this point now where we can discuss signing over some lands. There are 600 acres right across from the Historic Site. We have had a footprint at Batoche since well before 1885,” said McCallum. “There’s a lot of scenarios that could happen with real negotiation and partnership. Find a way for us to be owners and at the same time, sharing responsibility. We can’t do it alone. Let’s work together. We have a shared interest, and we want to play a role.”

President McCallum harkens back to the days in the 70s when Back to Batoche was about army



Métis Nation-Saskatchewan President Glen McCallum at the church at Batoche National Historic Site the day of the agreement signing. (Photo by Julia Burns)

tents, rations, elders and Métis politics. “All you had to bring was blankets. They took care of everyone. That is why now we don’t charge elders or veterans to enter Batoche now,” said McCallum who is holding out hope that the Covid-delayed Back to Batoche 50th anniversary celebrations can happen this July.

“The Historic Site is a big part of those gatherings. Adriana Bacheschi, the Superintendent for Parks and I have become good friends and we have an open door with them. We respect the people, the staff members, and the important work they do. Being at Batoche to sign the agreement and the partnership we have; it is a beautiful thing to see.”



Jacelyn Lerat-Nighttraveller, Cowessess First Nation
Indigenous Internship Program 2017-2019

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Publishers notes January 2021

I would like to more than welcome the year 2021. I figure the year 2021 will be better than 2020 right? It has to. How can it get worse? Then, not even in week into 2021 America implodes. And Covid explodes and most of Canada is in some sort of lockdown.....greeaaaaat.

Rough start. So rough. But not to fear. Not going to talk about that negative stuff at all. Nope. Tired of it. And if I see one more news story of someone getting a needle in their arm, I am going to scream. My sympathies to all the squeamish that watch the news. The camera people cannot help themselves.

But I digress. The time now is to focus on some things we can look forward to in 2021. So without further ado, here are some observations and predictions for what we have coming down the pipe in 2021.

A new role model has emerged. Bella Kulak and her family and the response to her ribbon skirt incident has set a precedent on how to deal with difficult racism incidents in a classy way. Communication, learning and partnering. The family has been so open and accessible and understanding. The overwhelming response of women around the world wearing and posting ribbon skirts is uplifting. This ribbon skirt movement will be a strong voice for a long time. Women are powerful.

Vaccinations! Having Elders in the northern communities get vaccinated first has been a grand gesture. Of course, they are most vulnerable and deserve to be first, but those that have hesitations can be reassured by their leadership and now follow suit. If you want to understand the importance of vaccines to First Nation people read the article on page 6.

Predictions:

Because of vaccinations and people actually obeying the social distancing and mask rules, we

get back to the new normal at school and work in September.

The Métis Nation-Saskatchewan has an election planned for May 29. I predict it will be hotly contested with at least eight candidates for president. The MN-S has never been so flush with funds and programs and that looks great on President



Publisher's Notes

John Lagimodiere

McCallum's resume. Always hard to knock off an incumbent, especially if there are many candidates.

The Métis National Council will not have an election this year...and if it does, the organization will not be the same. There will be a new president since Clement Chartier has said he is not running and technically, since Saskatchewan, Alberta and Ontario have formed a tri-council and pulled out of the MN-C, there really is no MN-C. You follow that?

The Assembly of First Nations will finally elect a woman as Chief.

Sports break

The Super Bowl will be won by the Kansas City Chiefs.

The NBA champions will be the Philadelphia

76'ers. (Sorry all Raptor folks. I figure I was the only Canadian cheering for the 76'ers to beat the Raptors two years ago).

The World Series will be won by.....who really cares. Honestly. Have you ever watched a full baseball game on TV? Yawnville.

The Grey Cup will be won by Cody Fajardo. Take it to the bank.

The Stanley Cup will be awarded to the Philadelphia Flyers.

Three members of the Conservative Party of Canada will have to resign after right-wing ding-dong stuff surfaces on their renegade social media accounts.

A non-confidence vote will force a federal election in the fall. Trudeau will win another minority government and the Conservative Party of Canada will fail to "Take back Canada" and eventually will oust Erin O'Toole.

There will be a record number of candidates for the Chief and Vice Chief positions at the FSIN. The pay is good, and the work is interesting and important. Hard work though.

Lots of reasons to run and lots of worthy candidates out there.

There will be a new President named at the First Nations University of Canada and it will be someone remarkably familiar to the community and academia in Saskatchewan.

The emergence of Indigenous influence on TikTok, Twitter, Facebook, podcasts and other venues is amazing to see and scary for old newspaper publishers.

TikTok gets named the number one way to lose 25 minutes of your day in the blink of an eye.

Saskatchewan breaks the world record for hugs in a day on August 31 when we tame Covid and the government lifts all sanctions.

Here is hoping. Wash your hands. Stay home. Wear your mask. We are getting there.



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CHECK OUT OUR LATEST TOP STOREIS



Canada must renew "sense of urgency" around Calls to Action: Commissioners

The need for reconciliation and healing is more urgent now than ever, members of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) said on the fifth anniversary of the release of their final report with its 94 Calls to Action.



Kohkoms take to YouTube to share stories

"Kohkoms" are coming to a screen near you! Playwright Curtis Peeteetuce, long known for writing about the Kohkoms of Kihwetinook for his Rez Christmas plays, has created a weekly YouTube feature with three real Kohkoms.



Muskoday firefighter blazes trail for women

A woman from the Muskoday First Nation has become the first female president of the Aboriginal Firefighters Association of Canada (AFAC).

Prison Law and Human Rights

Canada has the second highest incarceration rates in the world next to the United States. This is according to the Federal, Provincial, Territorial Ministers Responsible for Justice, Corrections Population Growth Report. The boundaries between prisons and the community have become blurred and the truth is kept out of sight, out of mind.

This does not allow the public to be informed about the harsh realities within correctional facilities. The public has a right to know, but they know little about what is going on behind the walls.

It is well known that Indigenous people are highly overrepresented in jails but it is not so well known that many incarcerated people are not dangerous. However, cruel lockups, isolation, the injustices and harassment deliberately inflicted on prisoners unable to fight back can make any individual violent. In a colonial context, early forms of punishment were based on torture and directed at the physical body in comparison to transformation of modern forms of punishment, which is directed at the mind and soul. The mental, emotional, spiritual and physical wellbeing of those incarcerated is at risk every day.

Just because you are convicted of a charge and incarcerated does not mean all your human rights are revoked. The right to health care while in prison should be as good as the healthcare available to non-prisoners. Experiencing the pandemic in custody may be considered a "collateral consequence" currently, as the Ontario Court of Appeal found in a May, 2020 decision in the case of Brandon Morgan. This means that experiencing

a particular consequence, such as the pandemic, makes the impact of the sentence on an offender more strenuous.

Covid-19 is not being addressed appropriately in jails and penitentiaries. This is demonstrated through the action taken on January 4, where just over 90 inmates at provincial jails in Saskatoon



Comment

Alyson Bear

and Prince Albert staged a hunger strike to protest how the province has handled COVID-19 behind bars. The inaction is both a failure of the health care system and the corrections systems.

There is a need for evolution of how inmates are treated. The majority of the incarcerated population are imprisoned due to living a life where they have experienced trauma and are expressing that through their actions. I personally believe the work begins with decolonization and understanding ourselves and the history that has led to the way inmates are treated and dehumanized.

I want to end this column with a poem by Nicholas

Dinardo. Nicholas wrote this poem while in segregation and dedicated it to his friend who took his own life in the cell next to him in the Regina penitentiary. This poem speaks to the many issues, specifically in regard to mental health, that continue to not be addressed in correctional facilities.

It is time to address the areas in our society where we are failing our people and create solutions to make a better society for everyone. My hopes for 2021 is for humanity and decency to become a trend. We are in this together whether you think so or not.

Process of depression
Some of us don't want to
talk about depression
for systemic oppression.
For, if we do, we're stripped
of intention,
thrown in a dress, then left
with the tension.
Not to mention, the other
dimension of the lens:
when two of their
henchmen come
and search the hems of the dress
then tell me to undress
so they can examine what's
What's left is a soul in
distress, a man depressed, a
body in stress, and the spirit oppressed.



Everything is Connected
a Dialogue Between MMIWG and Sixties Scoop

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Smallpox vaccines saved many Indigenous people

By Betty Ann Adam
of Eagle Feather News

Who would have thought that inoculation with smallpox scabs was once used to provide protection against dying from that horrible disease?

James Daschuk, the Regina-based historian who wrote the 2013 multiple award-winning book, *Clearing the Plains: disease, politics of starvation and the loss of Aboriginal life*, told the story in a recent interview with Eagle Feather News, of a Hudson's Bay Company fur trader in 1837 in what is now Manitoba.

When word of a terrible disease reached William Todd, who was also a doctor, he vaccinated Cree and Saulteaux people in the vicinity.

He also taught them how to inoculate others out in the forests and plains where there were no doctors or medicine.

"Inoculation is a primitive form of vaccination where you cut somebody with a lancet, like a scalpel... and you put a smallpox scab in the wound, and it makes you super sick. I think there's a two per cent chance of dying, but you'll probably survive," Daschuk said.

"During the fur trade days, you could protect a community literally with a mason jar, if you had a mason jar in those days, full of small-pox scabs."

A vaccine for the deadly and disfiguring disease had been developed in England around 1800 and was being used in many parts of the world.

The disease had come to the continent with the first Europeans, causing catastrophic epidemics among populations of Indigenous people who had no immunity. Entire populations could be infected in a phenomenon known as "virgin soil epidemic."

Daschuk said it is estimated that up to 70 to 90 per cent of the population in a smallpox virgin soil epidemic could die within three weeks.

Smallpox had devastated Indigenous peoples in Quebec and Ontario long before it made its way to the present-day Prairie provinces.

In 1869-70 an epidemic killed more than 3,500 Indigenous plains people.

In Saskatchewan, some missionaries had limited supplies of vaccine and some, such as the Anglican James Nisbet in Prince Albert, who advised the people to get away from the town and not to come back until the next spring, essentially recommending self-isolation 150 years ago, Daschuk said.

Sadly, not all missionaries had that foresight. Faced with the epidemic that was killing thousands of people, "the Catholics brought people into church to pray and they died in much higher numbers than the Anglicans."

Smallpox decimated the Assiniboine along the North Saskatchewan River, who had been the dominant group in the area, so that by the time of the Treaty Four negotiations in 1874, the Cree and Saulteaux had become the most populous groups.

During the 1876 negotiations for Treaty Six at Fort Carlton, the Crees insisted on inclusion of the medicine chest clause, Daschuk said.

"So, in negotiation, they're like, 'We just went through this terrible epidemic and we know the epidemic kind of came from you guys. We also know that your medicine works, so we would like that medicine,'" Daschuk said.

Eventually, the vaccine became available everywhere. The last time smallpox was seen in Canada was in an isolated case in the 1940s and by 1977 the disease was eradicated worldwide, he said.

Vaccines have also almost eliminated the deadly effects of measles and whooping cough, which also killed large numbers of Indigenous people.

"We've been so good at taking care of contagious diseases over the last 50, 60 years that a lot of us don't respect (vaccines) anymore," Daschuk said. That is unfortunate because they're the answer to the current pandemic.

As soon as the novel Corona virus was identified, money was made available, medical researchers around the world began building on established vaccine knowledge, people volunteered to participate in trials and regulators pored over the data.

Soon the vaccine will be available to everyone.

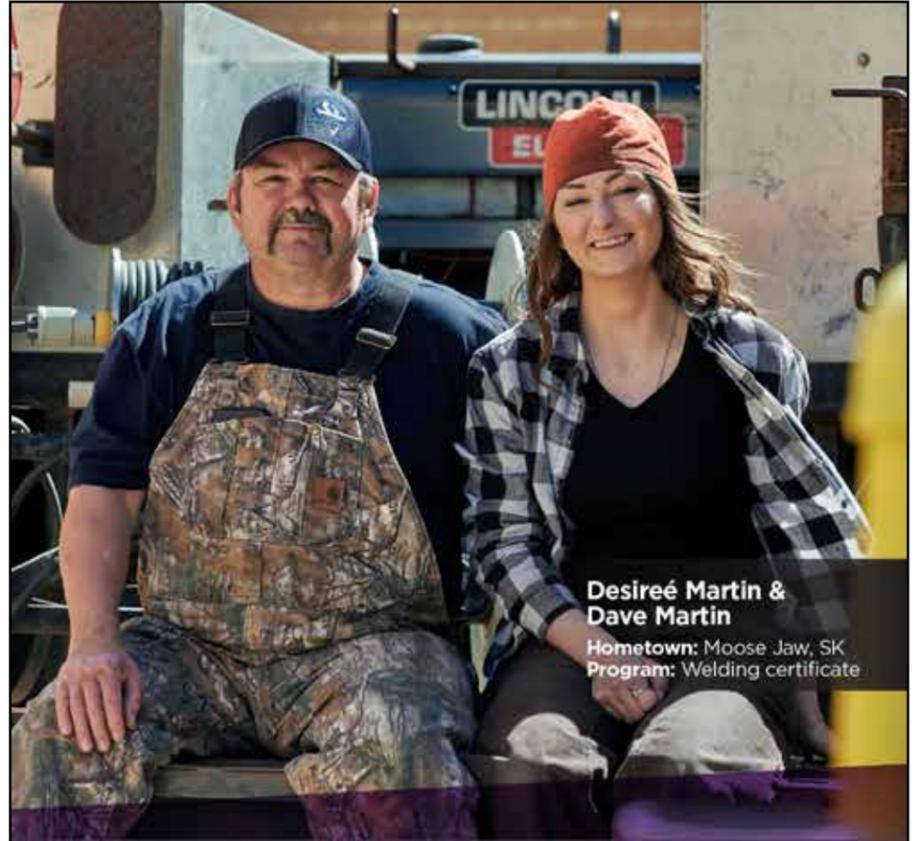
Daschuk acknowledged that many Indigenous people are wary of the healthcare system but observed that everyone, not just Indigenous people, should be vaccinated to quash the pandemic.

"I know there's a basis for mistrust and I think physicians and health care providers need to realize that, but we're faced with an ever-growing global crisis that we as individuals and as community members, even in small, isolated communities, can do something about. We can help by getting vaccinated.

"We're not powerless."



Historian James Daschuk says that smallpox could wipe out 70-90% of a community within 3 weeks. He adds that Indigenous people were early proponents of vaccines. (Photo supplied)



Desiree Martin & Dave Martin
Hometown: Moose Jaw, SK
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Caribou meat important amid COVID planning at Hatchet Lake

*By Brendan Mayer
for Eagle Feather News*

Food security has been a challenge for the Hatchet Lake Denesuline First Nation during the COVID-19 pandemic, but hunting has helped, says Chief Bart Tsannie.

The First Nation recently hired 10 people to participate in the caribou hunt.

“Our tradition is very strong in the north,” Tsannie said. “Our community relies on caribou meat. We do have a lot of respect for them because that’s our main source of food. Our people go north and hunt. If you hunt, you don’t slaughter, and you just bring back whatever you need. You get meat for the family. Not everybody has snowmobiles so that’s the challenge. Our culture is still very strong.”

The First Nation, located on the southeast shore of Wollaston Lake, 700 km



Hatchet Lake Denesuline First Nation Chief Bart Tsannie says a challenge is not everyone can afford snowmobiles so they hire hunters to supply meat for the community. (Photo by Tina Pelletier)

northeast of Prince Albert, is about 200 km south of the border with Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

Hunters from Hatchet Lake recently traveled to Nunavut because of changes in caribou migration patterns and declining herd numbers in Saskatchewan and areas in the Northwest Territory, where they also previously hunted.

Tsannie says they are still planning to leave for their big annual hunt in March. The First Nation has also ordered packages of meat from outside the community for each household.

“We make sure we have enough food for our members,” Tsannie said. “It’s very important. We are flying in groceries and we only have one store. The groceries are so expensive. It’s very tough because we are in a remote area, but we manage. I have to lobby for more funding for our people. That’s our job as leaders.”

Hatchet Lake has been assisted during the pandemic by members of the Canadian Rangers, which are a part of the Armed Forces reserves that work in remote, isolated and coastal regions.

They have prepared and distributed food and care packages and helped disseminate health information at Hatchet Lake, Île à la Crosse and Fond du Lac.

“We utilize about 17 of them for our members,” Tsannie said. “They are doing a wonderful job.”

Tsannie said January 7 that Hatchet Lake had one active case of COVID-19. The community also formed a team to help with the response to the Coronavirus.

“These people are very active and are doing what they can during this pandemic,” Tsannie added. “It’s not over yet.”

Community leaders and key staff members have met weekly with helping agencies since March, he said.

“The communication has been very good. We just help each other. We do what’s best for the people and figure out how we can get food to our community.”



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Preference for qualified residents of Saskatchewan's north is given for northern site positions. Cigar Lake and Rabbit Lake positions are designated for Athabasca residents under the Ya'Thi Néné collaboration agreement.



Reconciliation Ally: Carrie Catherine



*By Julia Peterson
for Eagle Feather News*

As Carrie Catherine describes it, her commitment to reconciliation is rooted in her love for her community. This has led her to bring her skills as a creative producer, event coordinator and educator to work with Reconciliation Saskatoon.

Working with the community development-focused company she and her husband founded, Catherine remembers thinking about how the principles of justice and reconciliation would affect their role in the neighbourhood.

"We were really committed to developing something that would give back to the community and not displace people, especially Indigenous people," she said. "In Riversdale, there is real inequality. So how can we help foster change?"

But at the time, Catherine said she wasn't sure how to achieve those goals. So she kept looking for ways to learn and get involved.

"I didn't know how to foster that kind of change - we didn't have the right connections or mentors," she said. "So we tried a number of different things, but it wasn't until I sat around this Reconciliation Saskatoon table that I was able to work with Elders and learn from Elders."

"And that started me down the path of doing some training that made me more aware of my own white privilege, and what I need to do to dismantle that privilege. It's a constant, lifelong journey."

Since then, Catherine has volunteered for a variety of Reconciliation Saskatoon projects, including serving on the communications committee for the "Rock Your Roots" Walk for Reconciliation.

Rhett Sangster, director of reconciliation and community partnerships at the Office of the Treaty Commissioner, admires Catherine's positivity and commitment to relationship building.

"I've watched her make a lot of effort into connecting with Elders and survivors and building those relationships; talking to them, bringing tobacco to them, asking for advice and trying to learn from them," he said. "I've seen how much value she puts into those relationships and the wisdom of our old people."

Catherine was also the project manager for ConnectR, a website that helps people find calls to action and ideas for things they can do to move towards reconciliation.

This summer, ConnectR launched a "reconciliation challenge," inviting peo-

ple to find and respond to a call to action every week for eight weeks. Over three hundred people signed up.

"As the Black Lives Matter movement erupted down south, it brought people's attention to the need for better allyship, better training and change," said Catherine. "And, at the same time, everyone was at home."

"So both at Reconciliation Saskatoon and with ConnectR, we just saw an incredible growth of the community of people who wanted to be more committed to reconciliation."

And while Catherine is excited about these large-scale projects, for her, some of the most important work towards reconciliation happens on the personal level.

"I do think there's always tension when people with different backgrounds, different knowledge and different assumptions work together," she said. "And I think the most amazing thing is to feel that tension and work through it."

"When I feel we've had real success is when I've had a simple conversation and been able to work through tension, and come to - in a sense - a small, small form of reconciliation in the process of the work. That's when I have hope."



Carrie Catherine joined Reconciliation Saskatoon in 2016. Since then, she has been involved in a variety of community projects including ConnectR, an online tool to help people find and respond to calls to action. (Photo supplied)

Leah Dorion invites you to 'Paykiiwikay'

*By John Lagimodiere
of Eagle Feather News*

Leah Dorion is asking people to come and visit.

She is the host of Paykiiwikay ('come and visit' in Michif) Métis Culture Podcast, a new ten-part podcast focusing on Métis culture and the Michif Language. Dorion, an accomplished educator, artist and author joins with veteran producer David McGuffin to take the listeners on a journey through Saskatchewan Métis communities and along the way we get to meet some remarkably interesting Métis people.

"I learned so much from our guests about our many ways of being Métis. Their messages are uplifting, and I hope everyone enjoys listening to our conversations. I especially hope our youth get some inspiration from these wonderful cultural leaders in our Métis community," said Dorion.

There is a wide range of guests on the show. Dorion interviews Michif educators like Russell Fayant, Elder Norman Fleury and actress and musician Andrea Menard. Topics vary from the impact of the loss of the Michif language, to the arts, to Métis food and cooking.

The show is made possible by a partnership between Canadian Geographic and Métis Nation-Saskatchewan. 'Paykiiwikay', will address the very real need to preserve heritage, tradition, and Métis identity. "Everything Métis people do is tied to our value systems, beliefs, and respect," said MN-S Minister of Language, Culture & Heritage, Sherry

McLennan in a statement. "This podcast series will help teach others about the rich Métis history that is an integral part of the makeup of this province."

One of Dorion's favourite interviews was with Adam Daigneault. "I am such a fan of fiddle music that I have a special place for the fiddle talent of Adam," said Dorion in an interview. "I really support his artistic practice, as it is truly grounded in Métis culture and identity. I am pleased that Adam gave us permission to use his tune Buffalo Gals" to open our podcast series. He really does have an old time style and will keep our Métis style alive for future generations. I enjoyed every unique episode though. The community members are so interesting."

"I learned so much from our guests about our many ways of being Métis. Their messages are uplifting, and I hope everyone enjoys listening to our conversations."

She is also personally embracing the intent of the show. "Norman Fleury really encouraged me to keep learning and using the Michif language and I have already taken up his challenge in 2021 by listening to the GDI Michif to Go App on my cell phone almost every day."

'C' launched on Tuesday, January 12th, with new episodes released until May. They can be streamed on Google Play, Amazon Music, Spotify, SoundCloud, and at cangeo.ca/Paykiiwikay.



Leah Dorion is the host of Paykiiwikay ('come and visit' in Michif) Métis Culture Podcast, a ten-part series highlighting Métis people from across Saskatchewan. (Photo supplied)



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Leadership of Indigenous organizations on the agenda in 2021

By Nathan Raine
for Eagle Feather News

Changes to Indigenous political leadership at the provincial and national levels could be ahead for 2021.

Elections this year are expected for the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan (MN-S), Métis National Council (MNC), Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN) and the Assembly of First Nations (AFN).

Eagle Feather News spoke with two political experts to get their insight on what could be expected in this consequential year.

The MN-S is expected to set a date for its election during its February 20 and 21 Legislative Assembly. It will be only their second election in nine years, following an unstable period in which federal funding was temporarily cut in 2014.

The upcoming MN-S election has the potential to be its largest.

"Without the pandemic, I would've expected this election to have its largest turnout," said Dr. Kurtis Boyer, Lecturer at the Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy.

"There's been such publicity, awareness, and understanding of the importance of being registered... and when voters are registered, we have cleaner elections and more fluid election results."

Boyer said he believes the conduct of voters and candidates in this MN-S election will be "very different."

"It's an election where the citizens can vote for something in a positive way. Citizens can vote for a platform or a direction on the nation-building project that the MN-S is currently undertaking. With the self-government agreement with the federal government, the MN-S has been doing something no other Métis government has done before. There's a direction that people can vote for."

Candidates and voters should be less focused on personal politics and more on platforms, said Boyer, which is a positive change exemplified by incumbent President Glen McCallum.

"As a leader, I think he's shown resilience, and focused on actually building governance structures. This could be because the job is so big that it's kept him doing it, or it could speak to his leadership capacities. To me, it doesn't matter. He's had ample opportunity to get bogged down in these personal politics and he doesn't, to the extent of a lot of others."

Dr. Priscilla Settee, Professor of Indigenous Studies at the University of Saskatchewan, believes COVID-19 will trigger a more concerted focus on social safety nets in the MN-S election.

"I think these issues are more impending now. Social safety nets like health-care and education," she said. "In a time of neo-liberal expansion, we have seen drastic cuts to funding... and it's going to be more critical for those who rely on state funding."

On a national level, the Métis Nation continues to face internal division within their branches, with questions of leadership legitimacy and citizenship leading to a tri-council being formed between the Saskatchewan, Ontario, and Manitoba governments.

Clement Chartier, who was elected MNC President in 2003, turned over responsibilities to Manitoba Métis Federation President David Chartrand, who has been acting as MNC President

since November 2019.

"Unfortunately, there doesn't seem to be much change at the top, the same leader goes in year after year," said Settee.

Despite the in-fighting and division, Boyer said there's reason for optimism.

"There's always the opportunity for leadership to unite. The role of the MNC, its role should be to unite, not divide. We have a real opportunity for that next leadership

to be a voice that binds the nation together."

In the fall, the FSIN will hold its election for Chief. Bobby Cameron, who is currently serving his second term, has not yet announced his intentions on running for a third term.

The FSIN has received attention and praise for its response to COVID-19. But with COVID-19 being far from the only tragedy impacting Indigenous communities, Settee suggests more should be done.

"I would love to see more taking the bull by the horns and calling out some of the tragedies that exist on our communities. The Truth and Reconciliation (Commission) Report has still not been fulfilled. We still have the highest rate of child-theft in our communities. It's critical out there to take bold leadership. To call government out for their lack of servicing, lack of response to the land-claim situation, the selling off of huge tracts of land to foreign investment. If I were a leader, I would be jumping up and down," she said.

"But leaders are scared that if they go overboard, if they're too vocal, their funding will be cut," she said.

And in July, the AFN will choose a new National Chief, as Perry Bellegarde has announced he will not seek re-election.

Buzz has been growing about the possibility of a first female AFN National Chief, with names like Sheila North, former Chief of non-profit Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc; Pamela Palmater, Professor at Ryerson University; Michelle Audette, former commissioner with the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls National Inquiry; and RoseAnn Archibald, Ontario Regional Chief being mentioned as contenders.

"(The AFN) needs a person who puts women and children at the centre of development. What that means is complete social support networks for communities," said Settee.

Housing, food security and resource extraction that has led to the loss of traditional economies are major issues, she said.

"If (the AFN) get women who have been through the system, education and otherwise, they will have a good sense of what to focus their energy on," she said.



Dr. Kurtis Boyer, Lecturer at the Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy. (Photo courtesy Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy)



FSIN Chief Bobby Cameron at the opening of the Dakota Dunes Resort in October 2020. (Photo by NC Raine)



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Words from our Elders: Dexter Asapace Kawacatoose First Nation

These words of wisdom by Dexter Asapace are excerpts from the book Meskanawiyiniwak Volume II. The Elders were recorded and photographed and published by Ted Whitecalf and a team including Marilyn Poitras, Jacqueline Gabriel and the late Pamela Whitecalf, Sweetgrass Records. Check back monthly for words from our Elders.

Dexter Asapace: I was born in Kawacatoose, delivered by my grandmother. She called me, because of my eye colour, koh-koh-kohow (owl), July 21, 1947...

I was born on the Poorman's Reserve now known as Kawacatoose. Grew up pretty rough, had a rough life. My brothers and sisters, all 13 of us grew up rough. At that time my father was engaged in alcohol. I was in Residential School from the age of seven. Today seven of us are living.

As time went on I still maintained my language Cree and Saulteaux. I was lucky not to lose any of that in Residential School when I was there for three years, not long enough I guess. I didn't learn a lot in the White Man way.

I grew up and was raised by the old people. One of the uncles I learned a lot from was Stanley Asapace. Teachings came from him and my dad. One of the main things they taught me was kisewatitawin, love and caring. Today I don't see that.

Before everybody used to work together, took care of the sick on the reserve. They took care of their horses, livestock, cut wood or what ever he had that

had to done. I remember as well they took time as a group and mud houses and barns for people when they were constructing their buildings for the winter. To me those were the good old days, where people cared for one another, we learned from that...

I remember when I was about seven years old on Christmas Eve, 45 below, living in a tent. My dad had left us and we had nothing to eat, we were all hungry. Mom said, "Go out and see if you can kill a rabbit or something." So my brother and I went out on this cold morning. As we were walking in the deep snow, we saw a deer leg sticking out of the snow bank, here it was a deer that someone had wounded and died there. We ate that deer that was kind of spoiled. This is something I will never forget that day. But sometimes then we would not eat for four days. This was hard times. Trying ways to survive...

I'm saying that we should go back to the way of humbleness and kindness... Long ago there was a lot of love and respect for our people...

Another thing is relationship and kinship. Parents are suppose to educate their kids who they are relat-



Elder Dexter Asapace of the Kawacatoose First Nation shared his wisdom with Ted Whitecalf in this interview from 2012. (Photo by Ted Whitecalf)

ed to... Also, when someone is doing good, we talk about him, try to bring him down. We have to learn how to encourage people, tell them they are doing a great job. Gossip is not the way. The only time we should talk about the person is how we should help or encourage them.

(Ed. Note: This Elder's Story is an excerpt of a longer piece that will be available on the Eagle Feather News website as of January 19, 2021)

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Solar power coming to Muskoday

By Nathan Raine
for Eagle Feather News

Muskoday First Nation is looking toward a cleaner, brighter future.

Three community buildings at Muskoday First Nation will soon be furnished with 190 kilowatts of solar power. The panels will be installed on the community's school, band hall, and fire hall and shop.

Muskoday and Cowessess First Nation are both undertaking projects through the federal government's Low Carbon Economy Fund to support clean energy initiatives.

Muskoday will receive approximately \$315,000 to buy the hardware and get a \$210,000 loan to for installation and implementation of solar power. Cowessess received approximately \$633,000 in funding.

"The most important thing about this is, from our First Nation perspective, to care for the environment and Mother Earth. We all know the impacts of climate change and the detriment of greenhouse gas emissions," said Randy Bear, Councillor at Muskoday First Nation.

"First Nations are always fond of saying 'We're the stewards of the Earth'. But this gives us an opportunity to walk the walk," he said.

The new solar panels will supply about 40 percent of the power for each of the three buildings. Over the lifetime of the project, Muskoday will see a reduction of about 2,700 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions, equivalent to about 1.2 million litres of gasoline.

They hope to begin construction on the project by the end of this January.

"We are committed to the path of sustainable economic self sufficiency, and to carefully growing and managing our resources, balancing our choices on the best of what both modern knowledge and traditional ways have to offer," Muskoday First Nation Chief Herman Crain said in a statement.

The solar project will be tied into the existing SaskPower three-phase grid at Muskoday, and will sell power back to SaskPower, creating revenue and employment for the First Nation.

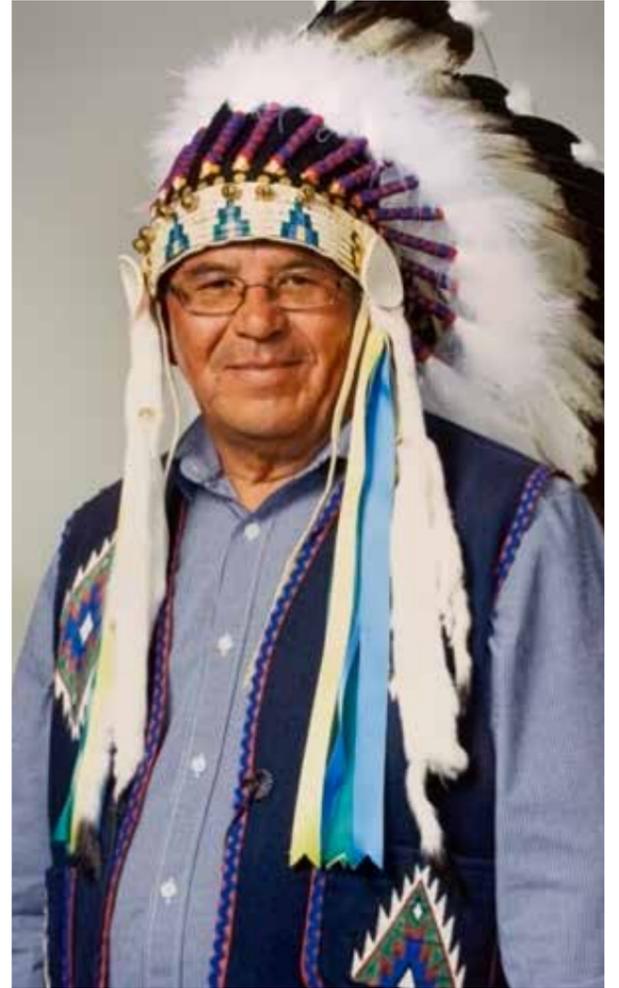
Bear said that the federal solar project will create several jobs during the construction phase, and one or two jobs in maintenance following the construction completion.

Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Environment and Climate Change said in a statement that many First Nations communities are facing major impacts of a changing climate.

"This is why our Government is taking action to reduce emissions while supporting communities to transition to renewable energy, knowing that future generations will benefit from the clean growth economy," he said.

This is just the beginning, said Bear, who hopes that now that Muskoday has their 'foot in the door', more clean energy projects will be in the First Nation's near future.

"Our ex-Chief, Austin Bear, who was Chief for 28 years, mentioned to me when he was getting ready for retirement: look into solar power. So, this is like continuing his vision," said Bear.



Muskoday First Nation Chief Herman Crain says that solar power in his community is a step on the path of economic self sufficiency. (Photo supplied)

Coalition of Aboriginal Peoples of Saskatchewan reaches back to past in choosing new name

By Fraser Needham
for Eagle Feather News

A Saskatchewan organization for non-status and off-reserve Indigenous peoples has reached back to its past as part of deciding on a new name.

At its annual general meeting in August, the Coalition of Aboriginal Peoples of Saskatchewan (CAPS) officially changed its name back to the Association of Métis and Non-Status Indians of Saskatchewan or AMNSIS.

It also elected Charlene Lavallee as president, Allan Morin as elected vice-president, Celina Epp secretary and Loretta Vandale treasurer. Lavallee is the first woman to head the organization.

AMNSIS was the name of the organization until the late 1980s, when a group from within broke off to form what is today called the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan.

"It's to pay homage to the history of where we come from," outgoing president John Hanikenne says. "Back in the old days, when Jim Sinclair and Clem Chartier – the Métis Nation - got in, they broke from AMNSIS to become the Métis Nation and left all these people with nothing. Left them out in the cold and they're still out in the cold."

Newly elected president Charlene Lavallee says the original organization was strong, unified and non-discriminatory.

"We went back to AMNSIS because AMNSIS was a really resilient, inclusive organization that was strong, came from very united leadership that

worked together and worked hard for the causes of all Indigenous people in Saskatchewan," she says. "We just wanted to bring the spirit of that back as well."

Lavallee says AMNSIS represents roughly 125,000 non-status and off-reserve Indigenous people in Saskatchewan.

She says the strength of the organization, in contrast to both the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations or MN-S, is that it is open to anyone who identifies as Indigenous.

"We're not distinction-based and that's the catch phrase right now. We believe that all Indigenous people are kin and that the government, since any colonial acts or legislation has been brought in place, it's all been used to divide Indigenous people... Whether they're First Nations, non-status, Métis," she said.

Hanikenne adds organizations like the MN-S may be more successful in leveraging federal and provincial dollars than AMNSIS, but this comes with its own price.

"We've got a system that doesn't belong to us. Basically, it's a product of the federal government and their policies that have done this to our people. Just in the sake of getting federal money."

Nevertheless, Lavallee says AMNSIS has been successful in getting about \$1 million in federal COVID-19 relief dollars through its national affiliate, the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples.

She says the organization also plans to hold



The newly elected executive of the Association of Métis and Non-Status Indians of Saskatchewan, left to right, President Charlene Lavallee, Secretary Celina Epp, Vice-President Allan Morin and Treasurer Loretta Vandale. (Photo courtesy AMNSIS Facebook page)

a series of online town hall meetings in coming weeks.

Lavallee has said AMNSIS intends to build the organization and work on issues facing Indigenous people, including health, housing, land and children being apprehended by social services.

With files from Morgan Esperance

Elizabeth Fry Acting Director warns of “frightening” situation at Pine Grove

By Nathan Raine
for Eagle Feather News

An advocate for female inmates is adding her voice to advocate for the better treatment of inmates at the province’s correctional facilities.

Patricia “Patti” Tait, acting executive director for Elizabeth Fry Saskatchewan, is concerned for the health and safety of the women currently on remand at the Pine Grove Correctional Centre in Prince Albert.

“The issues that we are facing here and what I believe are critical, is that we have a huge influx of people who are being held in custody on remand and those remand cases are not being heard in a timely way,” said Tait. “We actually have, in Saskatchewan, more than double per capita the number of individuals being held on remand.”

She said this is a concern at any point in time, but it has become a dire situation now given the stricter COVID-19 measures in place.

“It’s frightening,” said Tait.

She said the population is exploding at the institution and its temporary overflow unit is being utilized. Tait has also heard that COVID-19 is in the facility.

“There was an indication that there was a specific unit that the women who have either been diagnosed with COVID-19 or who have been tested and are asymptomatic are being held from the main part of the institution,” said Tait.

Marieka Andrew, spokesperson for the Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety said in an email statement there were no confirmed cases of COVID-19 at Pine Grove.

According to the province, new inmates are tested and screened for the disease and retested after 10 days.

Tait said there is also no programming for woman on remand and that is because they haven’t been found guilty of anything yet, so the institute doesn’t provide them with any healing programming, so the women sit in their cells doing nothing.

Trials have been postponed and court has been cancelled, which means many women on remand are stuck in limbo because without court, women are not being tried and not being released.

The province says corrections does not have the authority to release remanded inmates.

“There are no resources being expended to keep them healthy and sane,” said Tait. “The fact that we in Saskatchewan have double the number of women on remand in the country is outrageous.”

In addition to zero programming and being held in their cell 23 hours a day as a precautionary measure, all visits to correctional facilities have been suspended.

“As workers and as helpers, we are not even allowed into the institutions, so our phones have been ringing off the hook because it is the only service these women can access at this time,” said Tait.

Normally, workers from Elizabeth Fry Society would go into the institution twice a month and see the women on all the ranges and talk to them about any issues they are facing and listen to any complaints they may have.

“The only information we receive is by telephone and any oversight that we are able to provide is certainly minimized by virtue of that,” said Tait.

She said the women on remand are frustrated because they have no contact with family and friends, they have no programming and they often cannot connect with their legal counsel because they are only allowed out of their cells for one hour a day.

“These are women who have not been convicted of any crime,” said Tait.

Andrews stated in the email that the government’s main priority is the safety and security of Saskatchewan residents and the rules in place are for the health of those in the institution.

In terms of the number of individuals on remand:

“Prosecutors assess remanded individuals and bail

matters on a case-by-case basis. As required by the law, prosecutors consider the risk of the accused not attending court, the risk release would pose to public protection, and how remanding or not remanding someone stands to affect public confidence in the administration of justice. Release of offenders is favoured at the earliest opportunity on the least onerous grounds, but only if it is reasonable in the circumstances,” stated the email. “Public Prosecutions has directed prosecutors to consider the current level of COVID-19 infections with an emphasis on public safety when assessing cases.”

However, with court suspended the women are stuck behind bars until their case goes before a judge. She added that some of the charges are non-violent offences, but they are still being held on remand.

“I can attest to the fact that there have been many times when I have dealt with a woman, and in fact more than one, who spent well over a year in a remand situation awaiting trial, awaiting court and then being found not guilty of that crime and being released into the community having lost a whole year of their lives,” said Tait.

Tait said no matter how you look at it being locked up for 23 hours of the day is inhumane and it is segregation.

“COVID-19 has compounded the mental health stressors that are already prevalent in this kind of institution,” she said.



Patti Tait is the acting Executive Director of the Elizabeth Fry Society. (Photo supplied)



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Creeway Gas marks 20 year milestone

By Creeden Martell
for Eagle Feather News

It has been more than 20 years since Muskeg Lake Cree Nation (MLCN) opened the first ever gas station on an urban reserve.

"You could say in a lot of ways that it opened the door for other First Nations to develop and get their foot in the door," Barrett Greyeyes, chief operating officer of the MLCN Investment Management Corporation said in a recent interview.

"It is a great thing because now the model has been copied all over the province and it's starting in other places as well."

Greyeyes remembers the opening of the business in the Sutherland neighbourhood of Saskatoon, when he was there as a 12-year-old in the lineup of vehicles at the fuel pumps.

"The market has changed and competition has increased. There's a lot more bands with fuel stations in the city but we still keep on and run a good business," Greyeyes said, reflecting on the work put into the business.

The Sutherland location is on the oldest urban reserve in the city and it has grown over the years, as a second location opened up on the city's west side, at Whitney Avenue and 22nd Street.

The business employs about 40 people between the two locations but has employed about 60 or more people in the past.

Muskeg Lake's economic development wing, "wrote the book on urban development," for First Nation bands looking to expand their business interests into cities, Greyeyes said.

Tax exemption for treaty Indian status exists for certain goods and services, such as food, gasoline and tobacco, but the tax exemption is confined to First Nations land. Urban reserves grant status holders those savings in the city.

Muskeg Lake reached out to the City of Saskatoon to form an agreement in which the business would operate in the form of a treaty land entitlement, converting City land to reserve land and creating an urban reserve.

At the time of Treaty, Muskeg Lake received less land than they'd agreed to as a partner in the treaty. They were one of 25 bands that signed onto the 1992 Treaty Land Entitlement (TLE) framework agreement with the federal government and the Province of Saskatchewan, which compensated those First Nations for the land they had been shorted.

Muskeg Lake Cree Nation is part of Treaty Six and entered into the framework agreement with more than a dozen other bands in treaty 6 territory.

"Something that had never been done before, it took a lot of hard work and willing participants to get that done," Greyeyes said.

More bands have since opened fuel stations and businesses in Saskatoon and throughout the province as a result of economic growth from the treaty land entitlements.

"It's tough as a business. Everytime a new one pops up, it changes the way we do business and makes our margins tighter but ... we're well-run and well-managed," he added.

Greyeyes said the increased competition is good for Indigenous customers in the areas, on the other hand.

The Creeway business is what allowed Muskeg Lake to branch off into other areas of economic development, said Mike Icton, CEO of MLCN Investment Management.

"We set the tone for a level of service and professionalism," Icton said of the businesses' success and longevity.

COVID-19

The business' two locations were able to continue operation through the COVID-19 pandemic economic shutdown as they were declared essential, but the pandemic's sudden appearance made a significant and immediate impact.

The pandemic put a psychological strain on employees as well, Icton noted.

"The pandemic has been challenging," Icton said. "Personally things they're dealing with at home have been compounded."

Creeway was an early adopter of safety regulations to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 at both locations, Icton said. The quick response is one of the prouder business moments Icton said he can remember.

"One of the things I'm proud to say is we were one of the first ... for businesses to react; we were operating well-beyond Sask Health's recommendations long before anyone else," Icton said.

Patrons were limited indoors, distancing was mandated and Icton feels it spurred competitors like Petro Canada and Suncor to take similar precautions.

Greyeyes estimates business has dropped by 30 per cent since the pandemic began, due to lower sales and fewer clients from the surrounding offic-



Staff at both Creeway Gas locations in Saskatoon are very conscious of Covid-19 safety standards all the while maintaining a friendly and welcoming place for their customers. (Photo supplied)

es and businesses.

There were fewer fleet business vehicles fueling up as well. Another sales decrease occurred when schools closed down, which meant school buses were not fueling up.

Two decades is a milestone worth celebrating due to the people who dedicated their time and resources to get a business open and become an accomplished player in the local economy, Greyeyes said.

"It is an achievement that Muskeg Lake is pretty proud of as a whole, as a membership," he said.

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The sad faded memory of the buffalo bone trade

I'm sitting on a bench on First Ave South in downtown Saskatoon Saskatchewan. My mind is far away for a part of me lives in the distant past. It has always been so. First Ave is a place of hustle and bustle. Traffic is busy and people move quickly with a purpose to and from the main entrance to Midtown Plaza. I am alone, for I need to be when I go deep inside myself. The controlled chaos around me does not matter for the moment and such moments are precious.

There was a time when a railroad marshaling yard extended in a strip five city blocks back from the river, past where I sit now. In the latter 1800s, the bones of an estimated 1,500,000 buffalo passed through these yards, bound for manufacturing plants in Chicago, Detroit and St. Louis, where they were ground into fertilizer and charcoal. The lucrative bone trade began with the coming of the railroad, flourished for a time and then abruptly ended.

The northern plains were once littered with bones beyond number. The land between Dundurn and Blackstrap was so thickly covered it was impossible to walk without stepping on bone. West of Langham, Saskatchewan there is a place where the Yellowhead highway runs parallel to the North Saskatchewan river. Sometime in the 1860s a frontiersman witnessed a great herd of buffalo coming from the south, crossing the North Saskatchewan onto their wintering grounds in the

parkland. He said the prairie was black with buffalo, horizon to horizon. There are other accounts which tell the same story.

The great herds were slaughtered leaving very little evidence of their once-dominant presence upon the plains. The earth felt the bite of the plow



Breaking Trail

John Cuthand

and grain crops now extend to a far horizon. I am incredulous, unable to fully absorb the scale of what took place here nor the carnage that preceded it.

This history was not taught in schools nor is it now. It should be. Ironically it was the Americans who wrote of the northern bone trade. Canadians did not. It is from these American sources I now share this rediscovered history.

Some blocks from where I sit, there is also the

entrance into twentieth street west. The avenues proceed from A to W. It is a place the taxi drivers call Alphabet City and some locals call the Alphabeto Ghetto. For many First Nations people who have become strangers to themselves, it is a place of mountains of pain, despair and suffering. For a few, the introduction of First Nation spirituality has become a merciful lifeline to a better life. There is power in the echoes of a healthy past. I knew a mother and daughter who were both prostitutes. Their emotional pain was blunted by drug addiction. I asked them if there was a time when they didn't sell themselves or use drugs. They told me they stopped when they danced powwow. There are now many sweat lodges around the city. Thirty years ago there were but a few. They are healing places where relationships are made and support is found. Prayer is powerful.

In the First Nation culture respect means caring. On the street respect means fear.

There are many good strong people who live in Alphabet city. They are disgusted as much at anyone with the violence and high crime rate. Despite the violence, the degradation, pain and confusion the ancestors and the land still speak to us. Ancestral memory is real and keenly felt, if only in the barest of whispers.

With the hiss of a bus and the unloading of passengers I surface back to the here and now. My time here has ended and I must move on.

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AMNSIS recognizes and includes all members of the family, the kinship, supporting inherent Indigenous rights of the individual.



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Monday February 1: 7-9 pm

Senator Sol Sanderson presents *500 Years of Colonial Policies*

Tuesday February 9: 7-9 pm

Dr. Rebecca Major presents *HBC and the Fur Trade, Manitoba Act/Scrip*

Saturday February 13: 2-4 pm

Senator Sanderson presents *Inherent Rights, National Powers of Treaty Making*,
Dr. Major presents *Non-Status*

Wednesday February 17: 7-9pm

Senator Sanderson presents *Crown Indigenous Relations*,
Dr. Major presents *Daniels Case*

Sunday February 21: 2-4 pm

Allan Morin presents *History of AMNSIS/CAP*

Thursday February 25: 7-9 pm

AMNSIS President Charlene Lavalée presents *Occupying the Field*

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