

S A S K A T C H E W A N



Fall 2001

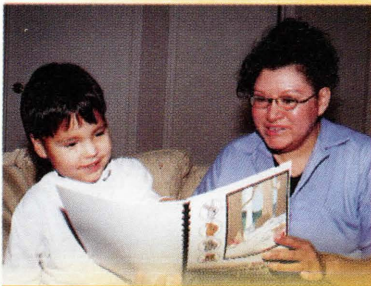


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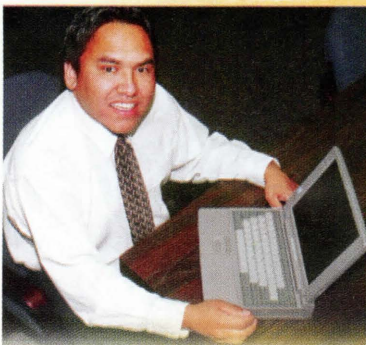
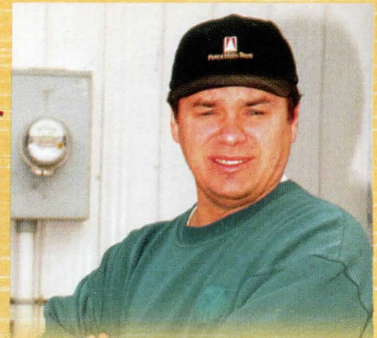


Joy is the author and illustrator of the *Rhonda Rabbit Adventure Series*. The books come with a fresh pack of crayons, text in both English and Cree, and an assortment of other goodies. Joy is also the individual shareholder in Eagle Publishing and an internet website - www.mikisiw.com

Joy Desjarlais

Gerald Durocher

Gerald earns his living one quarter at a time. He's cleaning up with his coin-operated car wash and laundromat. A former First Nations chief, Durocher found the skills he acquired as chief transfer well from politics to business. "The rewards at the end of the day beat punching a time clock, hands down!"



Jeff is president of T-P Technologies Inc., the only aboriginally owned computer company of its kind in the province. They provide a host of consulting services, technical support, web page and software development, network management and much more.

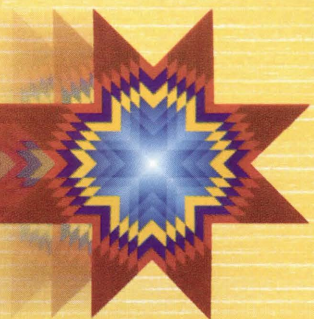
Jeff Cappel

Tasha Hubbard

Tasha's passion for producing documentaries and exploring her aboriginal roots were the motivation behind Thursday Night Productions, a film company which she started on the Muskeg Lake First Nation. Documentary film making will take her many places but her aboriginal roots remain here in Saskatchewan.



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Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations

Saskatchewan Indian is the official publication of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and is intended to serve as an effective communication vehicle for First Nations in the province of Saskatchewan.

The tradition of the Saskatchewan Indian magazine was to provide coverage of people, issues and events both entertaining and informative throughout First Nation communities. In order to keep with the tradition of the magazine we invite submissions. There is such an overwhelming number of First Nations community events and happenings that we will be unable to cover as much as we would like to. Therefore, we are inviting stories, photographs, artwork and letters from our readers.

Saskatchewan Indian will also provide an opportunity for advertisers to reach the First Nation consumer. The magazine will be distributed to all First Nation communities in Saskatchewan and to all First Nation groups, organizations and institutions. For more information contact:

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The views and opinions expressed by contributors to Saskatchewan Indian are their own and do not necessarily reflect those of Saskatchewan Indian or the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations



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S A S K A T C H E W A N



Vol. 30 #3

Fall 2001

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Oct. 1 & 2, 2001

Big River Indoor Competition Powwow
Big River, SK
Clifford Rabbitskin
(306) 724-4700

Oct. 3, 2001

Moving into the 21st Century
Sharing the Knowledge
Manitoba Keewatinowi
Okimakanak
Best Western Victoria Inn,
Winnipeg, MB
Natalie Ballentyne
(204) 927 - 7500

Oct. 3, 2001

FSIN Corporate Circle Job Fair
Regina Inn Regina, SK
Debbie Delorme (306) 956 - 6921
Milton Tootosis (306) 956 - 1019

Oct. 11-13, 2001

Crime Prevention Conference "Strength in
Partnerships"
Mayfield Inn & Suites, Edmonton, Alta
Deanne Campbell or Colette Arcand (780) 483 - 9404

Oct. 15-17, 2001

2nd Annual National Aboriginal Women in Leadership
Conference
Delta Toronto East, Toronto, ON
First Nation Training & Consulting Services (250) 652 -
7097

Oct. 20, 2001

7th Annual First Nations Awards
Queensbury Centre, Regina, SK
Ivy Kennedy (306) 791 - 6503

Oct 22 & 23, 2001

Business Expo 2001
PrairieLand Park Trade Centre, Saskatoon, Sask.
Christine Joseph (306) 343-3544

Oct. 23 -25, 2001

FSIN Legislative Assembly
Centennial Auditorium
Saskatoon, Sask
Carol Burns (306) 956-6912

Oct. 25 - 28, 2001

Aboriginal Healing Foundation
Survivors and Descendents of the
Residential School - Regional
Gathering
Landmark Inn, Regina, Sask.
Grant Severight (306) 956 - 1011

Oct. 26, 2001

Indian National Finals Rodeo
Metra Park - Billings, Montana
Sonya Taypotat (306) 721 - 3600

Oct. 26, 2001

SaskTel Aboriginal Youth Awards of
Excellence
Centennial Auditorium, Saskatoon, SK
Colleen Cameron 1-888-830-2803

November 8, 2001

FSIN Corporate Circle Gathering
Regina Inn, Regina, Sask
Debbie Delorme (306) 956 - 6921

November 14 -15, 2001

Leadership Training for Aboriginal and First Nations
Communities
Wanuskewin Heritage Park, Saskatoon, Sask.
To Register (306) 966-5539

Dec. 8 - 9, 2001

Interprovincial Conference on Problem Gambling
Prince Albert, SK
Cheryl Maurice (306) 953 - 7200

TBA

Saskatchewan First Nations 4th Annual Circle of
Honour Awards
Saskatoon, Sask.
FSIN (306) 665-1215

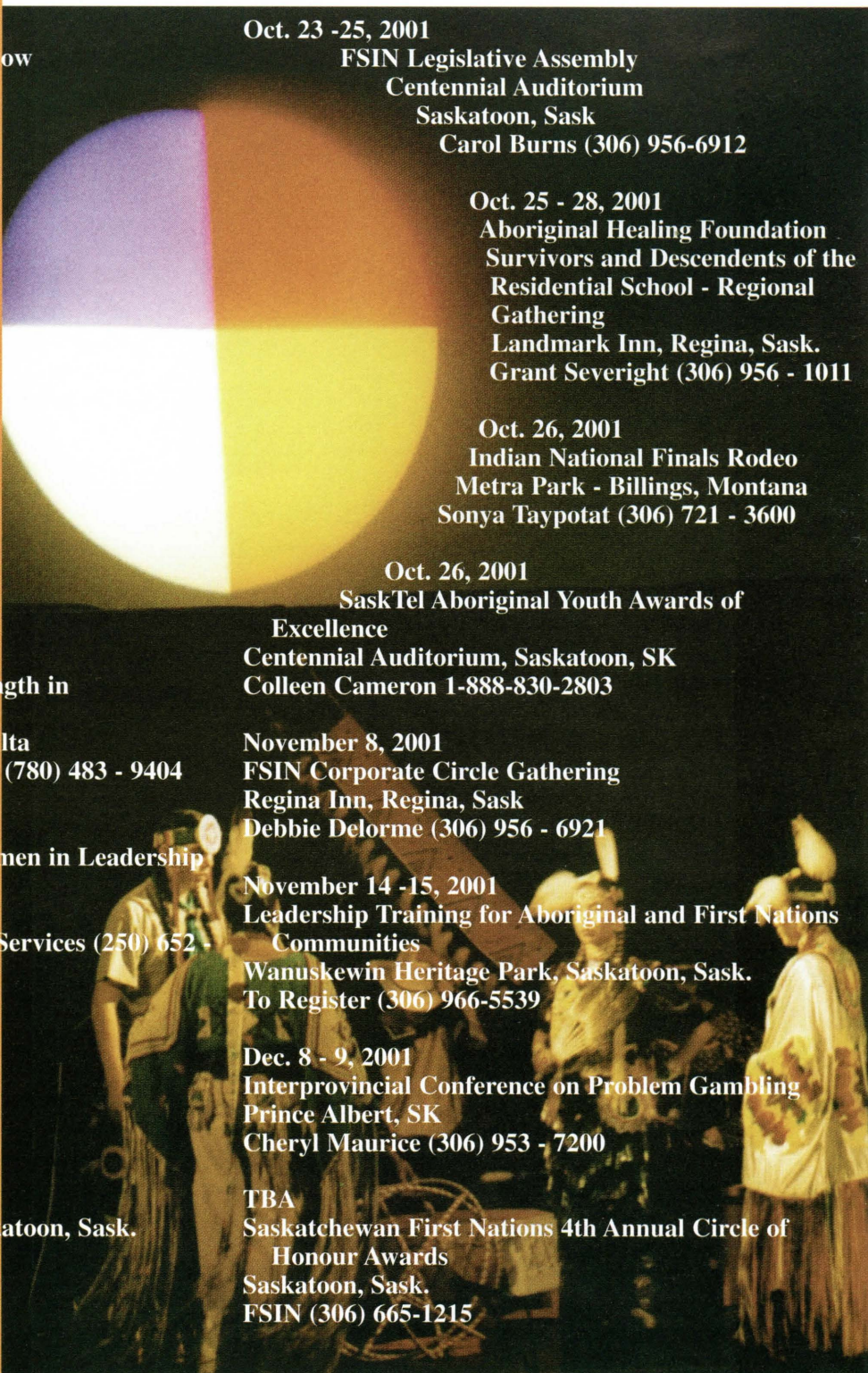


Photo: Wanuskewin International Dance Troupe Showcase,
Broadway Theatre, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan



Bottom Row Left to Right: Chief Marie Anne Day Walker-Pelletier, Okanases, Chief Harry Cook, Lac La Ronge, His Royal Highness, Prince of Wales, Chief Perry Bellegarde, FSIN, Elder Gordon Oakes, Nekanee, Chief Austin Bear, Muskoday, Chief Henry Lewis, Onion Lake, **Middle Row Left to Right:** Chief Pierre Settee, Cumberland House, Chief Richard Poorman, Kawacatoose, --, Chief Rod King, Lucky Man, Fourth Vice Chief Lawrence Joseph, FSIN, Chief Clifford Starr, Starblanket, Chief Gary Littlepine, Beardy's Okemasis, Tribal Representative Tony Cote, Yorkton Tribal Council, Chief Gilbert Paniekeesick, Sakimay, Chief Ben Weenie, YellowQuill, **Top Row Left to Right:** Chief Denton Geogre, Ochapowace, Tribal Chief George Lafond Saskatoon Tribal Council, Senator David Ahenakew, Chief Larry Oakes, Nekanee, First Vice Chief Greg Ahenakew, FSIN, Chief Terrance Pelletier, Cowessess, Chief Louis Taypotat, Kahkewistahaw, Chief Barry Ahenakew, Ahthakakoop.

SIGNIFICANCE OF TREATIES REAFFIRMED THROUGH HISTORIC ROYAL VISIT



On a sunny and warm afternoon, many Saskatchewan First Nation people, Chiefs and dignitaries had a rare and prestigious opportunity to meet with His Royal Highness, The Prince of Wales, during a private reception held at Wanuskewin Heritage Park April 28, 2001.

Although there was lot of concern and speculation about what would be discussed during the reception, the atmosphere was that of respect and honour by the Chiefs and His Royal Highness.

Chief Perry Bellegarde, Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations was first to greet His Royal Highness. Chief Bellegarde introduced The Prince of Wales to various dignitaries and First Nation representatives and then the entourage of Chiefs, Elders, dignitaries, drummers and dancers escorted His Royal Highness into the Wanuskewin Gallery.

For the Chiefs of Saskatchewan this was a historical visit. It would be the first time The Prince of Wales met with First Nation dignitaries. His Royal Highness made it a priority to meet with Saskatchewan Chiefs during his time in Saskatchewan. Chief Perry Bellegarde commented "Saskatchewan First Nations are truly honoured at the significance of this meeting with His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales."

This meeting reaffirms the recognition of Treaties and Treaty Rights of First Nation's peoples. "This is an important and highly symbolic gathering at Wanuskewin. It demonstrates to His Royal Highness not only the historical significance of the Treaties, but the fact that even today First Nation people remain loyal to the Treaties and the nation to nation relationship with the Monarchy," Chief Bellegarde said.

(continued on page 17)

SIIT CELEBRATES QUARTER CENTURY OF GROWTH

1976 - 2001

The Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies (SIIT) has come along ways in the last 25 years. In honour of its quarter century of growth, SIIT's Anniversary Committee hosted a variety of events including a gala dinner, alumni luncheon, and trade show on Thursday, June 14 and culminated with a province wide convocation for the 2001 graduating class on Friday, June 15, 2001.

Indian Education is a constant celebration of jurisdictional reality for Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies. SIIT continues to experience tremendous growth in all its programs and services. The amount of diverse certificate and diploma programs have evolved into positive outcomes for both the Indian controlled institution and First Nation students.

Establishing partnerships with the corporate community and various government agencies are key components in fostering distinct and advanced opportunities to ensure SIIT's future in the post-secondary, vocational/technology, community programs, employee development courses, applied programming, academic preparation, RCMP preparation program and satellite college based education systems.

"Partnerships between SIIT business and industry have become increasingly necessary. SIIT presently has partnerships with SaskTel, the RCMP, Cisco Systems, the Saskatchewan Construction Association, the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship Branch, and many other organizations across Canada," explains SIIT President, Joan

Greyeyes. "Maintaining and establishing new partnerships is crucial in the development of existing or new programs and also the employment of SIIT graduates." Greyeyes adds.

"SIIT's approximate enrollment at this time is 1700 students and growing, this number makes SIIT the largest Aboriginal post-secondary institution in Canada" says Greyeyes. Greyeyes believes that student

enrollment is increasing as a result of quality administration and SIIT's diverse program availability.

Having lived on Muskeg Lake Reserve as a youth, Joan Greyeyes knows the significance of achieving academic studies, "the role that Saskatchewan First Nations youth will be playing in the years to come is very important to SIIT, as these are both our present and future students. These are



*Celebrating Our Past
Connecting Our Future*

the individuals that SIIT is hoping to attract into our programs, and eventually, employees that SIIT will be marketing to both business and industry."

Today, in terms of Saskatchewan's job market, SIIT has been able to contribute to the overall provincial employment base and statistics, as a positive First Nation academic institution. The number of graduates finding secure employment opportunities is approximately 80 percent, which is considered a remarkable achievement by government agencies, private/public labour sectors and First Nation governments

SIIT's head office is located on the Asimakaniseekan Askiy Reserve, 100-103A Packham Avenue, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. SIIT is now considered a leading institution in Saskatchewan with campuses throughout the province, "the location of the SIIT campuses enables the



(continued on page 17)

CORPORATE CIRCLE ENCOURAGES PARTNERSHIPS WITH MEMBERS

The Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations Corporate Circle initiative is entering its third year of operations following the formal launch on April 18, 1999. Robert Merasty, Executive Director of the Corporate Circle points out that the initiative has had to endure the growing pains synonymous with most new organizations.

"Initially, our technical advisory committee was overwhelmed with the abundance of great ideas presented to us" Merasty states. "The first year to eighteen months for the Corporate Circle was a period of struggle in terms of accessing resources, establishing administrative offices, developing a corporate identity, and implementing an operational plan to provide direction for the initiative."



Merasty explains that the CEO's and presidents of our member companies have exhibited a tremendous amount of patience and support through this process. "I appreciate the understanding and continued commitment they have provided."

In September of 2000, the technical committee started to focus on implementing specific projects. Merasty says "we started to use a rifle approach as opposed to the shotgun approach because we had to start showing some initial successes and concrete results."

Since September, the Corporate Circle have been able to point to a number of successes such as the In the Circle newsletter. Additional ads on RAWLCO's nine radio stations in Saskatchewan, The Corporate Circle Web-site will soon feature the first On-line Aboriginal Job Site and internal human resources report. Other successful tools are the Labor Market Intelligence (geared towards education, training institutions) and the First Annual Job Fair, which had 1100 students and 60 corporate participants.

The immediate focus for the Corporate Circle will be to utilize the excellent corporate response to this initiative by encouraging partnership Agreements-in-Principle with each of the respective 43 members. The intent of the agreements is not to legally bind parties but to encourage members to

identify the specific ways they can contribute.

New Co-chair of the FSIN Corporate Circle Marc Olson, RAWLCO Communications, confirms the direction by stating "The membership has to graduate to defining and differentiating the commitment of each of our members."

"Our members are at various stages of progress with respect to the development of First Nations initiatives. A number of organizations such as SaskTel, SaskEnergy, and Cameco are at fairly advanced stages and others have only recently begun to explore possibilities." Merasty explains.

The Corporate Circle intends to showcase the front runners as role models and use them as a template for others who may require assistance. The Corporate Circle has put together a best practices checklist. This refers to development in the areas of building organizational commitment and capacity, enhancing employment, education and training opportunities, facilitating First Nations business development and establishing First Nations community relations. As an incentive for corporate members to achieve a partnership with the Corporate Circle, an annual membership recognition program will be implemented in 2001. The recognition awards will honour those members who have achieved specific levels of excellence in developing First Nation training and job initiatives.



Left Top: In search of a career at Saskatoon Job Fair. Left Bottom: A successful match. Bottom: FSIN Corporate Circle Co-Chairs, Mark Olson, Rawlco Communications and Chief Perry Bellegarde, FSIN.



Itep Leads Way in Teacher Training

By Erin Taman

The leading Indian Teacher Education Program (ITEP) long housed at the University of Saskatchewan is now helping a northern college develop a program of its own. As part of an agreement with ITEP, approximately 20 students per year from a college in the Northwest Territories attend their third and fourth years of Education at the U of S campus.

"We have an agreement with Aurora College in N.W.T., which covers the central and Western Arctic," explains ITEP Director Orest Murawsky. "This broadens the scope of the University of Saskatchewan to the western Arctic Ocean - and we have done this for the last 17 years," Murawsky says.

"ITEP has been here (at the U of S) since 1973," says Murawsky. "We are a foundational program for First Nations/Aboriginal students," he adds. The ITEP program is four years in length and is run out of the College of Education.

With graduates receiving a Bachelor of Education degree, "ITEP has become a flagship program for Aboriginal Education in this country," said Dean of Education Ken Jacknicke. "It is arguably one of the most successful Aboriginal Teacher Education Programs in Canada". "Not only do the students from Aurora come down for their third and fourth years, but we are also helping (their Administrators) to develop a program which will be similar to ITEP," says Jacknicke.

"The Aurora College program is not large," Jacknicke said. "But one of the advantages is that most of the graduates return to teach in the North." They usually remain in the community for quite some time.

Murawsky says, "We are funded year by year, for the last 28 years. There is not an other program like this. We are an anomaly."

The ITEP program runs on a budget granted annually by the federal government. There is no direct funding from the provincial government, the U of S or the First Nations community.

"For the last 15 years, we have received the same amount. There hasn't been an increase and we still have enough money to operate a good program - we pride ourselves on that" Murawsky says.

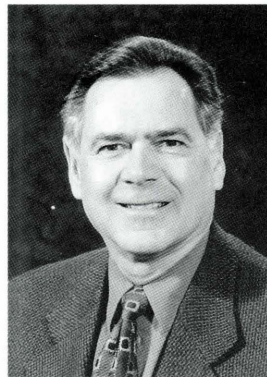
ITEP has a staff of eight, and the program took in 75 students this year. To date, there have been 700 Bachelor of Education degrees conferred upon ITEP graduates and "most have stayed in the province and moved to First Nation controlled institutions" adds Murawsky.

The four-year teacher education program has seen its graduates take on a variety of jobs. "Most will return to a band to teach," states Murawsky. It's not only for

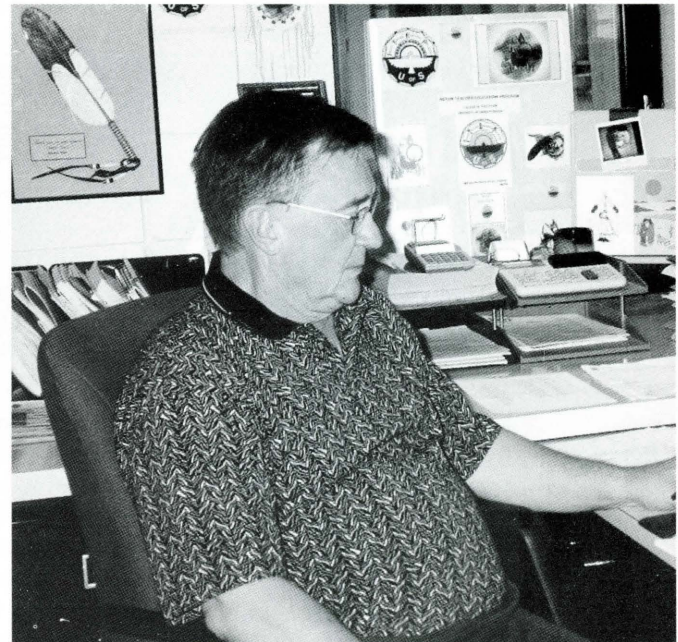
Aboriginal teachers throughout the province continues to grow," adds Jacknicke.

"ITEP began with a director and councilors who were all Aboriginal and this trend has continued today, as six of the eight staff are Aboriginal.

"We are a low key, low profile program," emphasizes Murawsky. "We are not political, we don't get involved in University, provincial or First Nations poli-



Top: Dean of Education,
University of Saskatchewan,
Ken Jacknicke
Right: Orest Murawsky



the tax break. "We have students that have given up prominent positions to come to school here. Some were directors or high-level executives, but they have made a commitment to their own people - I'm convinced of that," says Murawsky.

So how has the success of a program that is annually funded measured? Murawsky is proud to declare that it is "based on our graduates. If our grads are successful that means that we have been successful in training and educating them" he surmises. The number of (band) chiefs that are graduates of the program is phenomenal and education is always their emphasis. We feel that we have been very supportive of that," says Murawsky. "We don't measure our success in research dollars attained but in successful graduates."

"The graduates are in great demand because as the demographics of the province are changing, the need for

tics or research, because our focus is on teacher education and preparation. We follow a triangle model - the program, the teacher, and the child - that is all."

Some of ITEP's goals include tripling the intake of students, expanding the secondary program, having a stronger elder-in-residence program and building onto the Native Resource Center.

College of Education and ITEP staff will continue to assist Aurora College in setting up a program and will also lend a hand to the University of Alberta as it too looks towards the U of S as a role model for the future.

Visit the ITEP website at <http://www.usask.ca/education/itep/i/index.htm>



FIRST NATIONS LAWYER CREATES LEGAL VENTURE

By Joel Young

Entrepreneurship is about people. People who behave and think differently. Individuals who choose to take action toward creativity and innovation in regards to a perceived personal opportunity and who importantly, strive to make a difference.

Leanne Bellegarde-Daniels, a young First Nations lawyer has done just that. Entering the world of legal professionals and amassing the vast skills and legal experience over a relatively short time from law school graduation, Leanne has translated this into her own law practice providing a wonderful example to all First Nations young men and women. That example being that the professional community is an avenue for career development and progress for all ethnic origins.

Born in the Battlefords and identifying her First Nations band as the Kawacatoose through marriage, Leanne spent her early childhood in Meadow Lake. She completed her first 3 years of high school at Holy Cross in Saskatoon and graduated in Fort Qu'Appelle.

She entered a Sociology program at the University of Saskatchewan in 1985 and after spending a couple of years within this academic environment, realized that perhaps another academic choice might be more fruitful. A friend encouraged Leanne to explore the law school program and that the Native Summer School Law Program, a pre-law national program held at U of S might be the avenue to seek.

After completion of this program, pondering the legal world, Leanne worked toward the completion of her Arts Sociology degree whereupon her grandfather, as a mentor, prompted Leanne to complete her law degree and take up the challenge to become a model in the legal profession for First Nations people.

Leanne graduated in 1991 and accepted a research position with the Federal government in the Treaty Land Entitlement area. As she was completing her law degree, a lawyer with a leading provincial firm, McPherson Leslie Tyreman, Jim Kerby extended an invitation to Leanne to do her required articling at the MLT firm. This experience proved to be extremely beneficial and senior lawyers as Harold Mackay and Tom Molloy, who have extensive experience working with and on behalf of First Nations people also acted as mentors and advisers and added support for Leanne's professional career.

Working again with the Treaty Land environment, Leanne gained additional experience working closely with Federal Justice as an outside counsel. Then a move to the City of Saskatoon in 1993-94 as a City Solicitor provided municipal legal knowledge. Armed with these new skills, Leanne then entered the corporate world and acted as an Industrial Relations and Corporate Counsel for SaskTel in Regina for approximately three years. In this capacity, Leanne was able to participate in significant First Nations relationship building with the provincial Crown.

The time was now right for this First Nations lawyer and the destiny that she has so admirably embraced. She arrived at a decision with her Federal, provincial and corporate experience and the support from the legal community and the First Nations community - to enter private legal practice and establish her own venture.

Perry Bellegarde, Chief, Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, approached Leanne to become an assistant legal counsel

for the FSIN in the important area of Treaty Governance, where she ultimately was appointed Executive Director. She also added responsibility for employment matters as well as participating in the guidance of the First Nations Trust Fund.

Then a move to become Legal Counsel to the FSIN for a period of time until Leanne became a mother. During her maternity leave, she concluded that her legal venture awaited and she made the decision to open her legal venture in August, 2000 at the urban reserve location in Sutherland. The move has proven to be timely for Leanne. She has established herself as an important professional leader for the First Nations people. Coupled with the experience she has accumulated since her journey into the legal world, offers her expertise to both aboriginal and non-aboriginal clients across the prairies.

A recent achievement of note is that Leanne conducted a presentation on behalf of her people to the National Energy Board in Calgary of which she is very proud. Leanne is hopeful that other First Nations particularly young women will choose to follow her lead in the legal profession and create their own venture.



Leanne Bellegarde-Daniels



VOLUNTEER TAKES TRAINING TO THE NEXT LEVEL

Clint Ledoux is a 27-year-old certified fighter for the City of Saskatoon Fire and Protective Services based at the # 1 Fire Station on 125 Idylwyld Drive South. Clint is a father to Kyra Lynn Ledoux and common law partner to Jamie Greyeyes. Ledoux is a band member of the Muskeg Lake First Nation and his parents are Gil and Debbie Ledoux. His day-offs are spent mostly with his young family and enjoys participating in sporting activities like hockey, fastball slo-pitch and golf.

Why did you decide to become a certified firefighter? "With my dad being in the R.C.M.P., I thought of doing the same thing maybe following in his footsteps. But because of the constant moving around involved in being an R.C.M.P. member I decided not to.

Darcy Bear, Chief of Whitecap First Nation called me and said they were holding a special course affiliated within their volunteer firefighter squad. He mentioned this special project would provide me with firefighting experience and that it might interest me. So, I decided to give it a try.

Clint never looked back and took full advantage of what the Saskatoon Fire Services and Protective Services were offering during that week of special training in Whitecap First Nation. They gave me a lot of insight in the life of a firefighter. I guess the combination of me wanting to be in protection services and getting the opportunity to learn a little about firefighting as a career, I knew from that point I wanted to be a firefighter. Today, I'm registered at the number one station on Idylwyld Drive."

What was the training program like? "To get hired with the Saskatoon Fire Department you have to graduate from a recognized firefighting college. I attended the Emergency Services College in Brandon, Manitoba for 8 1/2 months. The course is broken into 2 sections, the firefighting training and the emergency medical technician (EMT) program."

What do you feel was most demanding? "The firefighting section although it involved a lot of studying, it was more of a physically challenging area. For example, just about everyday included dragging hose and carrying air tanks on your back. The EMT part had some physical aspect to it like patient carries, but the majority of it included concentration in learning medical knowledge of body parts, how they function and how to treat the patient problem which is very critical in this line of work."

How much does it differ from First Nations community volunteer departments? "This program requires more in-depth training throughout the firefighting section and in regards to the EMT area, most First Nation departments are considered first responders or first aid volunteers."

You recently rescued a 16 year old girl from a house fire. How do you feel about being considered a hero? "I don't consider myself a hero. Rescue is part of the job. It could have been anyone else on

the job that rescued the girl. We just happened to be the first truck in. This being said, knowing that you helped to give a 16-year-old girl a chance at a longer life, it definitely is a great feeling. I just hope she is doing better."

"I don't consider myself a hero. Rescue is part of the job."

- Clint Ledoux



What is your shift schedule like and how do you live around it? More importantly, what kind of response have you received from your family and peers?

What would you tell the younger generations about this fascinating career? "All I can say is that being a firefighter is a great career. It is exciting, demanding and you get to meet a lot of great people. If you have any dreams of one-day maybe being a firefighter, go for it! Follow your dreams. Don't let anyone try convincing you otherwise. If you have any questions about this career just drop into any fire hall and I'm sure the guys will be more than happy to answer any questions you may have."

It appears that Clint Ledoux is on his way to carving out a positive path for the First Nation peoples. He has displayed a strong interest in such a demanding, but rewarding career option he made in the summer of 2000 at Whitecap First Nation. Finally, there is a lot of spirit in what he does and the future holds great possibilities for this Muskeg Lake Band Member. Good luck Clint!



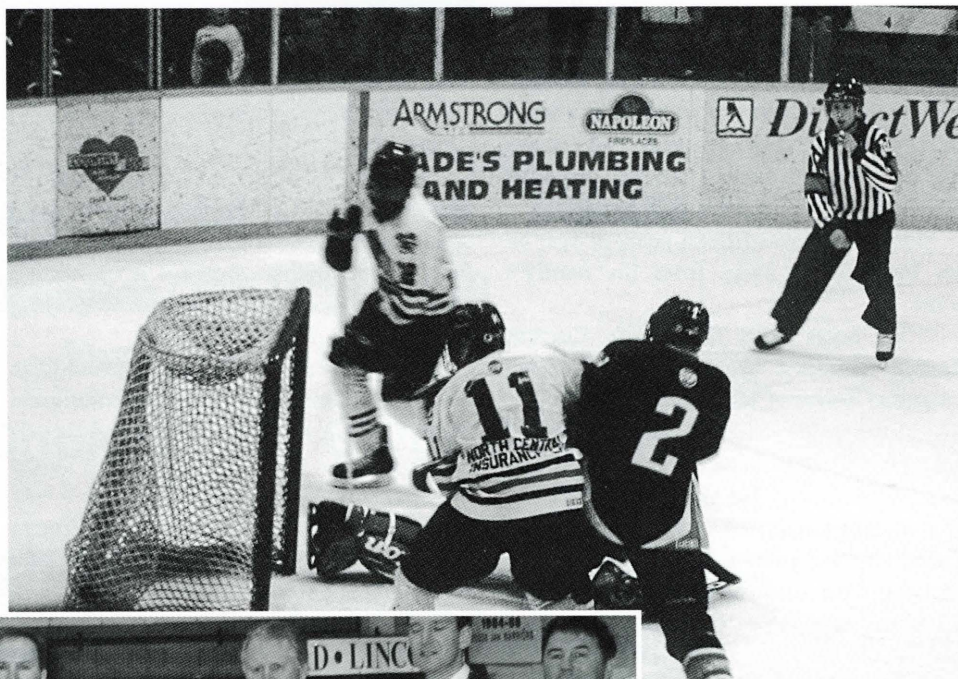
Photo Credit: Imagery Photography and Saskatoon Fire and Protective Services

BEARDY'S BLACKHAWKS' CHAMPIONSHIP YEAR

Beardys Blackhawks Midget AAA

In their 6th season, the Beardys Blackhawks Midget AAA managed to clinch the 2001 Saskatchewan Provincial Midget AAA Hockey and Air Canada Cup Western Regional Championships. As a relatively new organization, the Blackhawks appear to be heading in the right direction as the only First Nation based triple 'A' minor franchise team in the province.

The long team meetings and additional hard training have paid off for the Blackhawks organization. "There has been so much support from the Beardy's & Okemasis First Nation, they have stood



Top Photo: Beardy's Blackhawk at the Air Canada Cup Western Regional Championship, Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan

The Board of Directors of the Blackhawks have a strong desire to be consistent and well organized prior to any major decision-making regarding the team's mandate and overall objectives. It is during these times when young future NHL stars must continue following the footsteps of previous First Nation NHL legends. Inspirational ex-NHL players like Fred Sasakamoose and retired Philadelphia Flyers enforcer Scott Daniels of Mistawasis

behind their community pride and joy from the beginning," said Mel Parenteau.

As first-year General Manager, Mel Parenteau has taken the Beardys Blackhawks from 4th in the division last year to league champions this spring. This is accredited to excellent scouting, coaching staff and community support.

Having Dale Grayston as head coach and Jim McComas, Brad Toporowski and Travis Laycock as assistant coaches provided the chemistry to ignite the team performance. Without these structural mecha-

nisms in place, the team championship might have been won by another franchise.

Immediately after Mel Parenteau was hired as G.M. of the Blackhawks, he states, "I wanted to pursue new fundraising activities and incorporate those opportunities to our public relations strategies. Providing it was beneficial to existing/future partnerships with private/public, corporate communities and First Nation Governments in respect to fostering long-term sponsorships for the franchise."

First Nation.

Present NHL players like Chicago Blackhawks Blair Atcheynum, New York Islanders Rick Pilon and Ottawa Senators Wade Redden are role models for today's emerging players. With the likes of rising WHL stars John Merasty and Arron Star, who strive to be in the NHL in the forthcoming years. They appear to know their place in junior hockey and what they must do to be successful and at the top of their game.

(continued on page 11)

JAMES HIEBERT: SOPHOMORE BRONCO

By Marjorie Roden

For many of the young men who get the chance to play in the Western Hockey League, moving away from home is a bit of an adjustment. For 18 year old James Hiebert, moving away from his home of Hay River, NWT, came much earlier.

Since James was fifteen years of age, he has been living away from his family's home.

"I've been with the Swift Current Bantam Raiders. We won the Western Canadian Bantam Championships for under 17. There's the Swift Current [Midget AAA] Legionnaires, we went to the Mac's Cup tournament, and we lost out in the Provincial finals to the Regina Pat Canadians the year they went to the Air Canada Cup and now I play for the Broncos," says James of his hockey career thus far.

"I stayed with my uncle for the first two years, and billets for the last two [years]."

Now in his second year with the Western Hockey League's Swift Current Broncos, James, the second eldest child of Jim and Kathy Hiebert (his mother is a treaty Mohawk from Six Nations in Ontario still keeps in contact with his family.

"I usually talk to them on the phone," says James.

"I like to try and call them as much as I can. A lot of times, they're busy, or I'm busy, so you know, we do talk quite a bit."

And there are certainly enough people in the Hiebert household to talk to, as James is the second oldest out of a family of eight.

"My older brother is Terrence," says James.

"The younger ones are Chrissy, Aaron, Joseph, Daniel, Ester, and Kelly."

So far, what have James' impressions been of the WHL?

"It's great," he says, "I really like it. It's a great experience, the guys are all really good. The hockey is amazing. There's always lots of fans, and it's good to play in front of a lot of people and there's a lot of bonuses to playing in the Western League."

Was it everything he expected?

"I think it is. I think I expected more out of myself in my first year, but other than that. I think it's been pretty good."

When asked about making it into the league, James replied, "I think any type of person can do it, so long as they have the

drive to do it. You've got to want to play. If you don't want to play, like if you don't want to have rules and limitations set on you can't play in the Western [Hockey] League, because there's too many rules.

"You've got to have a good image. If you don't want to do that, if you don't always want to be a role model to the kids in your community, then I don't think it's the type of league you should be playing in."

Many First Nation hockey players have been asked about playing for the Aboriginal Team Canada hockey team, and James is amongst those that head coach Ted Nolan has sought out.

"We were talking about going to Europe next summer for a Native team Canada kind of thing. I'm not sure if that's going to work out or what-not," says James.

"I should probably get back to him. I had shoulder surgery last summer, so I couldn't really make it, but that's how I met [Ted Nolan]."

"I also met him at the Canada Winter Games as well," adds James.

"He came in and talked to our team about working and stuff like that, what our common goal was on the team. He came into the dressing room and had a little meeting with the team."

Although James can see the positive side to the formation of the team, he also has enough foresight to see what some critics of the program might say.

"I think it's kind of a good idea, but I think whenever you separate a

group of people like that, it makes a reason for people to stereotype, or single people out. I think it's a good opportunity for all of us, I think it will work out well as well.

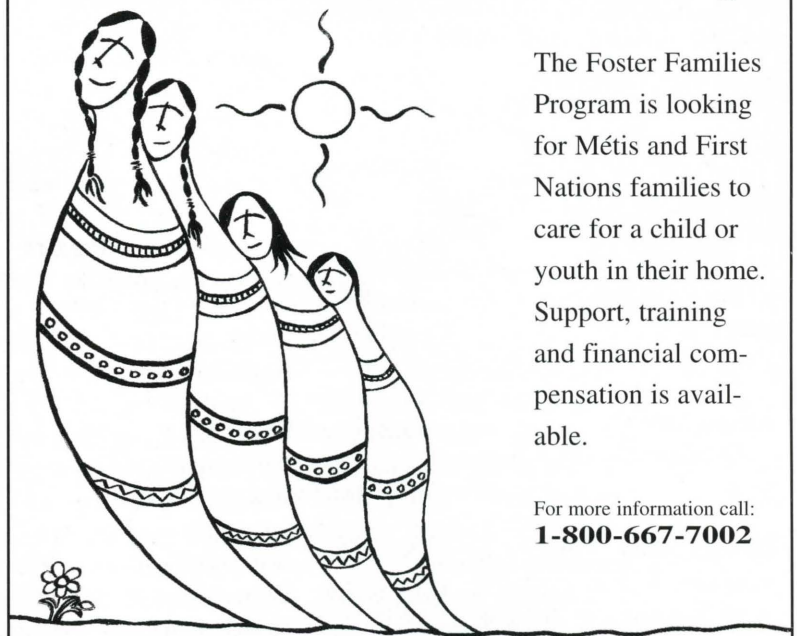
"I think there's a lot of good First Nations players that maybe don't get the credit for the amount of skill they have, and end up taking on a different type of role on the team they don't need to take up, but I think it's a good thing. I think it will create some room for people to say "why do they get funding for that?" but that's the way it works sometimes, and you just got to deal with it."

Personally, James has set a few goals for himself concerning his on-ice performance.

"I just want to get noticed, and I want people to realize that I am a player too. I don't want to be just remembered as a guy who went through the Western League, and I want to be remembered. I want to score, I want to do everything, I want to help my team, and I want to win, just like any other team.

(continued on next page)

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"We've got a really good team this year, and we have a really good chance of going a long ways. I think, if we all work at it, we can accomplish what we really want."

And how would James describe himself on the ice?

"Probably as a grittier player. I work in the corners a lot, I'm physical. Maybe not as physical as Jordan Tootoo [of the Brandon Wheat Kings], but I'm a physical player. I like to muck it up. I think I have offensive ability as well. I can play my position well, I can play defense well."

James adds, "I think my work ethic is probably the best thing about my entire game. I think the better my work ethic is the better the player I am. I've got to work on things. I think I can be more of a player than I have been, but I think that's coming along now and I'm starting to show that."

Outside of hockey, what kinds of things interest James?

"Athletic therapy," James immediately says.

"I'm interested in anything that has to do with sports. I really enjoy sports. "This semester, I was upgrading my biology mark because I'm going to be going into massage therapy when I'm done school."



Beardy's Blackhawks' Championship Year (continued from page 9)

So, do the NHL prospects for the Beardys Blackhawks. Their dream is to play in the National Hockey League as well. In the meantime, it means rigorous training camps, long bus trips and a lot of scheduled stops in hockey communities in rural and urban Saskatchewan.

Mel Parenteau always realized the amount of skilled First Nation minor hockey talent in Saskatchewan. He wants to do more than share his expertise as a former SJHL player himself with the 1970-72 Prince Albert Raiders. Mr. Parenteau's immediate goals are to establish a productive and highly skilled roster to repeat as Provincial Midget AAA Champs, in the upcoming 2001/2002 season.

Back in April of this year, the Beardy's Blackhawks represented Saskatchewan at The Western Region and Air Canada AAA National Championship in Prince George, British Columbia. "The team fell short of their expectations in Prince George, but the experience of competing at the highest level of 'A' hockey tournament in the world -

made it that much rewarding to try it again," says Parenteau.

The Beardys Blackhawks Training Camp begins September 7-9, 2001 with exhibition games going until Sept.22. The first League Game will open against the Tisdale Trojans at Beardys Arena on October 03rd. "The majority of last years winning squad will be returning and various WHL teams have already drafted them," explains Mel. This should be a positive outlook to another banner season, for this First Nation based franchise.

He further adds, "come out and see some exciting triple AAA hockey action and support your future First Nation NHL prospects this season." Best of luck to the Beardys Blackhawks organization in their 7th season!



MIKE WIRLL

By Marjorie Roden

Finesse players often have the toughest role on a hockey team. Their coaches encourage them to play the game, and let the enforcers take care of the goons on the other team. Unfortunately, more often than not, it is the finesse players that wind up being lined up - and subsequently sidelined - by the opposing goons.

Such has been the case with Mike Wirll, an 18-year-old hockey player now in his third season in the Western Hockey League. He is a member of the Redwood First Nation, and his birth parents are Shawn Lemaire and Cheryl Taylor. Joe Wirll adopted him later as a young child, but has kept in contact with his birth family. He has six siblings, 13 year old J.J., 9 year old Shay, 8 year old Patrick, 3 year old Justice, and 6 month old Mikayla.

His hockey career began in his hometown of Strasbourgh, Saskatchewan.

"I started in Strasbourgh with Nick and Jessie [Schultz], and I played one year of bantam with the Vibank Avalanche. That led to [playing for] the Yorkton Parkland Mallers, Midget AAA.

I was playing in Brandon the following year, and then the year after that, and then a year later, was traded to the Prince Albert Raiders"

Mike had little trouble summing up his previous season in the WHL, which saw him play in 37 games where he scored 9 goals and 18 assists.

"I started off with a broken wrist [last season], that set me out for two months at the start of the year, and then I got a second-grade concussion, but it wasn't all that bad. I only sat out for a week for that. A couple of weeks later, that's when the big [concussion] happened."

Thanks to that final concussion, he was forced to sit out the first half of the current 2000-2001 hockey season. He was traded to the Prince Albert Raiders as soon as he received a clean bill of health. However, that meant that any chances of playing for the Aboriginal National Team that is being formed by Ted Nolan were gone, due to the fact he had to take the time out to recover.

"I think it's pretty good, as well as the tournament, and players, and that it's kind of like the Canadian National team. It's just a little different, but still, it's pretty competitive."

When asked to reflect on his time spent in the Western Hockey League, Mike pauses for a moment before answering.

"It's kind of weird," says Mike, "because I haven't really been able to sit down and look back at it because I was injured so much. I think [the WHL is] a little bit more rougher and more dirtier than in the NHL, because in the NHL, they've got more respect and more maturity out on the ice."

One possible explanation for this difference in behavior is the fact that a vast majority of the players in the WHL are trying to get noticed by NHL scouts, and in the process, some of the players competing to get noticed as enforcers often wind up hurting some of the more skilled players. When this point was brought up, Mike reply's, "The big guys and tough guys are going out there and hurting people just to show what they can do, and that's how people like me get injured."

With the move to the Raiders, Mike is feeling optimistic about the up-coming season, and not just because of the hockey.

"I think it's really good. It's fun, because I'm back with a couple of guys I grew up with [Nick and Jesse Schultz]. I feel more relaxed here. In Brandon, I was always uptight, and nervous around the coaching staff, and here, I just feel comfortable."

When Mike Wirll is playing at the top of his game, he can be a threat to the other team around the net.

"I can hit when I have to, but I'm not out there, like [former Wheatie teammate] Jordan Tootoo is. When I get my hands back and my legs back, I'll be out there to help the team win some games."

When asked about his personal goals, Mike says "Well, hopefully, I'll get in the 20, 30 goal range, because I've got 30 games, but it's going to be a slow start because I haven't played in a year, but I just hope I can get my wheels going here and help get into the plan here."

Outside of hockey, some things that interest Mike are "just anything to do with astronomy. I'm really into that, I like that kind of stuff.

"I like watching all the stuff on the pyramids and the mummies and the tombstones and all that stuff, so that just kind of interests me, you know, how they built that one perfect pyramid they built. They say that humans built it, but...it just gives you something to think about. I like stuff like that."

One piece of advice that Mike would give to younger people, whether or not they are involved in hockey, is "just to stay focussed, and to keep driving for their goals because it will eventually come."



AARON STARR: SHARPENING BLADE.

By Marjorie Roden

A vast majority of the hockey players fortunate enough to make it to the WHL must move away from home in their first season, which only adds to any possible rookie anxiety that player might have. For Aaron Starr of the Star Blanket First Nation near Saskatoon, making the jump from the Midget AAA ranks up to the

Western Hockey League has been comparatively easy.

The youngest son of Ernestine and Doug Starr, and brother to Jonathan and Cheryl, Aaron, 18, plays for the Saskatoon Blades.

Before coming to the Blades, Starr says, "I played hockey with the Saskatoon AAA Midget Blazers last year and before that with the Saskatoon Knights in the Saskatoon Minor Hockey system."

In addition to this experience, Aaron has also had the chance to play at the International level, thanks to the initiative started by Ted Nolan. This initiative has

started with the creation of an alternate Team Canada that is made up of First Nations and Metis hockey players. The team that Aaron played for this past summer traveled to Europe.

According to Aaron, the experience of playing overseas "was a great experience, being able to play European elite hockey teams was a great opportunity for me and all the guys on my club."

"I think it was very good for First Nations athletes to be able to compete at such a high level."

As far as Aaron's present task goes, he says, "It has been an up and down year for

JON MIRASTY: FLYING DUST BAND MEMBER FLIES SOUTH

by Marjorie Roden

Jon Mirasty is the type of hockey player that you love if he's your teammate, but hate if you're playing against him.

Jon is the eldest child of Gary Mirasty and Catherine Gilbert. He and his 14-year-old sister, Jennifer, reside with his father on the Flying Dust reserve near Meadow Lake.

Jon is an 18-year-old rookie in the Western Hockey League. Before starting off the season in Prince Albert with the Raiders, Mirasty says, "I played minor hockey in Meadow Lake until I was 16. When I was 17, I moved away from home and played with the Kindersley Klippers in the SJHL.

"This year, I started off with the Prince Albert Raiders, and then I got traded to the Tri City Americans."

So far, what are Jon's impressions about the league?

"It's a good league," said Jon. "It's faster than what I played in last year. A lot bigger guys, and a lot more talent too."

When asked about the plans for the All-Aboriginal Canadian Junior National program, Jon says, "Yes, I heard about it. We kind of talked about it, but I was gone all summer."

Jon adds, "I'd learn a lot, it would be a good experience to play hockey all summer and stay in shape for the next season."

How does Jon spend his off-season? "I'm a boxer, too, so I've boxed for the last three years. The last two years in a row I won the Provincial champions and the Silver Gloves. That's what kind of keeps me busy in the summer."

Jon continues, "I liked keeping busy. It keeps me out of trouble. And it put my mind on something that I had to train for, and boxing helps me out on the physical side to stay in shape. Having to maintain

the weight that you have to have to go into the matches with, so it just helped me out a lot like staying in shape and getting a positive attitude as well."

Does Jon think these summer activities have helped him on the ice? "I feel it helped me a lot. A lot of people can see my [fighting] techniques kind of like a boxer on the ice, too, so that's what everyone notices when I fight, they say "That kid's a boxer."

In the few short months that Jon has been in the WHL, he has already made a name for himself as one of the top fighters in the league. He began his WHL career in Prince Albert by making the cut at the Raiders' rookie camp, and was quickly put into the role of the main enforcer with the team.

In December, Jon was then traded to the Tri-City Americans. Very quickly, he had moved away from a team that was geographically close to his family's home to a team that is closer to his career goals.

"Actually, it's a better move for me, because when I was in P.A., [Raider head coach Don Clark] didn't really use me. I was there more just to fight, so I didn't get much ice time. Where at Tri Cities, I'm on the second line. I'm getting a lot more playing time. I'm not just having to fight."

However, there were positive points to his time in Prince Albert as well. "I'm happier playing in Tri Cities and all but I liked the town of P.A., and it was nice that a lot of people were friendly. I miss things about that, but hockey-wise, in terms of my chances of playing hockey, I like it a lot better in Tri Cities. Tri-Cities, for me, is a lot better opportunity for me for hockey, so I'll probably be able to go a lot further playing in Tri-Cities.

"I'm happy with the trade, other than it's a lot further than P.A. is from home, so my dad can't really come out. My dad was coming to most of the home games [in P.A.], where now, he's maybe going to make it to two or three."

Jon adds, "I like the environment a lot in Tri City. The team is closer. I'm closer to the coach. I can talk to him easier. It's a lot

bigger city, and it's a lot different environment."

Jon then laughs and adds, "It's a lot warmer, that's one of the main things, and they're doing a lot better than P.A. is. I like their record, so it feels nice to be on a half-decent, winning team."

With the change in the environment, can Jon see himself improving his game and perhaps even becoming more of a finesse-type player? "Yeah, actually I can, with time and just getting more game experience, and getting more confidence [with] carrying the puck and stuff, I could see myself improving a lot."

Adds Jon, "I want to stay up there in the penalty minutes and make an impression, but I also want to try and get some points and play a little bit more hockey . . . but I had a bout in my first game [in Tri-Cities]."

What was Jon's first fight in his first game as a Tri-City American like? The fight itself was good, but in a way, it was slightly disorienting. "I didn't feel like I was at home. My first fight there, it was kind of weird because I was used to being a visitor in that building, so after the fight was over, I skated into the wrong penalty box, so that was kind of a little kick.

"People kind of laughed at that one because I wasn't used to being a Tri-City American player. I was used to being in the visitor box, because I had fought previously playing in Tri-Cities a couple of days before. I had fought Mike Lee, and then five days later, I was on his team!

"I get along with [Mike Lee] probably the best on the team," continues Jon. "He's twenty years old, a little bit older than me, and he's a great guy. They're all good guys, actually, there's no one that I really wouldn't have second thoughts about it."

In the off-season, in addition to boxing, Jon says, "I like camping a lot, and doing stuff with my dad on the farm. We raise horses, so I do a lot of work with the horses, and have fun pretty much all-summer, and work out. I just keep in good physical shape."



me thus far. But you have to remember that this is my first year in the league."

What are Aaron's impressions of the team he is with now? According to him, "life with the Blades has been great. The vets are a great group of guys as are the rookies. The coaching is really good as I have learned so much, and our trainer is

probably one of the best guys that I have ever met."

What would a person see while Aaron is on the ice? Aaron says, "I would describe myself as a very physical player who reads the ice very well."

His hopes for the remainder of the season are "to work harder to improve my

game so next year and for years to come I can become the best player possible."

When asked if he had any interests outside of hockey, Aaron responded, "golf is my only other hobby."



VISIONING A BANKING ENTITY

Established in 1997, the First Nations Bank of Canada became part of the Canadian banking industry in partnership with the Toronto-Dominion Bank (TD Bank). The realization of achieving this dream was a challenging task for the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and the Saskatchewan Indian Equity Foundation Inc.

Now in existence for 3 years, as a scheduled II chartered bank, the transformation of excellent and efficient investment and corporate structures in place has provided new long-term planning in management, operating and expansion.

As a new competitor, the First Nations Bank of Canada will be focused on attracting increased cliental and shareholding both from the First Nation and non-First Nation market. The globalization of aboriginal based economies is changing rapidly and improving the relationships between First Nation business ventures and opportunities with private, corporate and government interests.

Keith Martell was part of the initial planning and development stages of FN Bank. What role has the Toronto-Dominion Bank (TD) provided and invested in their 10-year partnership with FN Bank? "The TD not only invested equity into the Bank but they committed to ensuring that we continue to move toward being a self-sufficient financial institution. Like all partnerships, things do not always go as planned, but I do believe our strategic alliance with the TD was the right decision," says Martell.

The present Board of Directors is made up of a unique team who maintain significant roles in Indian Government and the corporate banking community:

Keith Martell, Chairman of the Board Directors and Senior Official Fiscal Relations FSIN

Matthew Coon Come, Director/

National Chief AFN
Duncan Gibson, Director/TD Vice-Chairman Commercial Banking
Urban Joseph, Director/Executive
Christopher Dyrda, Senior Vice President, Commercial Banking
David Ross, President and Chief Operating Officer
Mary Tiller, Director/President & CEO/Tribal Council Investments Group of Manitoba
Mark Wedge, Consultant

*Self-sufficiency of
Aboriginal people is a
goal that the First
Nation Bank was
established to serve."*

*- Keith Martell, Chariman of the
Board of Directors
and Senior Official Fiscal
Relations*

The existing Board of Directors are from diverse professional and geographical areas of Canada; do you consider these appointments as significant undertakings and if so, what are the benefits? "The quality of the governance and guidance of a Board of Directors is critical to any institution. The First Nation Bank of Canada needed directors to meet the requirements of financial service regulators, to ensure the Bank performed the controls and management practices to protect the assets of our customers.

We also displayed the guidance to assure our customer's needs were met, primarily Aboriginal Canadians," said Keith Martell.

Today, there are currently three branches operating at a national scale based in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Walpole Island, Ontario and Chisasibi, Quebec along with two offices located in Vancouver and Toronto. The impact of economic benefits reach beyond the corporate sector of banking in terms of employment, business volume and financial services projected on a yearly basis.

Having stable stakeholders by Canada's First Nation communities contribute to the successful and maximized spin-offs, generated by FN Bank professional business practices and programs. As a result of these viable networks and global trends, the cap-

(continued on page 18)



Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations corporate circle

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LOVE SONGS FROM A WAR DRUM

Up an old and gloomy warehouse staircase, an eager audience found the Saskatchewan Native Theatre Company's production of the play - Love Songs from a War Drum. On Opening Night, March 23, spectators such as; Chief Perry Bellegarde of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, The Honourable Robert Nault Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs, and many other dignitaries had no problems making the trek up the old warehouse. To the audiences' delight, Love Songs from a War Drum turned out to be a surprisingly entertaining performance.

Well-known Saskatchewan playwright Mark Dieter wrote the play. Dieter pooled together scenes that were actual experiences of theatre group. The play - Dieter's rendition of Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" - tell a story of a couple who, of course, comes from opposing backgrounds.

The families of the couple, Rathan (Mitchell Poundmaker) and Tanis (Cheryl Lynn Arcand) were politically at odds. Tanis is the daughter of a former Chief who was ousted by the current Chief who happens to be Rathan's father. Socially, the couple find themselves sucked into a world that is quickly spinning out of control. Their peers, for some reason or another, have pitted themselves against each other, causing the formation of two revival gangs. The perfect scenario for an Indian version of "Romeo and Juliet" - love and catastrophe. Keeping with the spiritually of First Nations culture, Dieter adds an element of the four directions in the form of four Councilors who would intermit profound truths and spiritual teachings throughout the play.

Yet! beside the storyline, what makes this play powerful was the energy, intensity, and skills of the young performers. The cast of Love Songs from a War Drum consisted of approximately 24 aboriginal youth. The youth were recruited from the Circle of Voices (COV). COV is an aboriginal youth theatre program that is workshop based. This training program

that provides role models from the performing arts industry to share their skills, knowledge, and expertise to these up and coming performers.

Each performer portrayed their character so well such as the perform of Samantha Whitecalf who plays Jenna, ex-girlfriend of Rathan and Cheperyn Makokis who plays Gabriel ex-boyfriend of Tanis and Gang Leader. Together, they make for a dual to be reckoned with. And in the middle is the character Neil play by Curtis Peeteetuce who is ex-gang member and brother to Tanis, makes the decision to break away from the violence and destructive lifestyle to pursue his own destiny.


There were scenes that made the audience realize the amount of energy put into the play by all involved. Scene with 10 performers on stage rumbling with sticks was played out with such intensity and precise choreograph. It was hard to believe that these kids weren't seasoned actors with years of experience tucked under their belts.

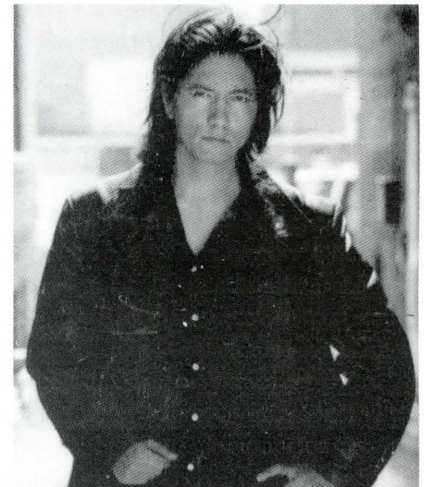
Saskatchewan Native Theatre Company's long term goal is to obtain a permanent venue to house the performances. Working hard towards this goal is the company's General Manager and Producer Donna Heimbecker and Kenneth Charlette, Artistic Director. "We like to have a venue that is in tune with who we are as performers, something that is inner city and a strong base of Aboriginal support," says Heimbecker.

Top Right: Mark Dieter, below the Cast on Opening Night

With the growing demand for aboriginal community based performing arts productions, programs, and youth initiatives the demand for a permanent venue is imperative to keep up with the company's expansion. SNTC is also currently seeking volunteers to assist with the rapid growth.

As for some of the crew, Love Songs from a War Drum headed out on road

for a short tour throughout Saskatchewan during April and May 2001. And, If you weren't fortunate enough to catch the play - you will have to wait to see what is in store in the up and coming productions by the Saskatchewan Native Theatre Company and hopefully it will be in it's new permanent venue, maybe even as soon as in the new year! Keep your fingers crossed and for the cast, break a leg! 



YOUTH DAY: TELLING OUR STORIES

By Sharidy Starr

"Youth Day: Telling our Stories" was a one day conference held at Balcarres High School on March 19th, 2001. There were various sessions concerning many issues ranging from alcohol and drug abuse, racism, and Treaties. The main goal however, was to foster a greater intercultural understanding. The Youth Day consisted of over 400 students from the surrounding Scenic Valley School District, as well as numerous staff members, organizers, sponsors and visitors.

The gathering kicked off with a multicultural Grand Entry. Emerging in traditional dress were First Nation dancers, Metis descendants, and early settlers from the Motherwill Homestead. The Red-Dog drum group brought in the Grand Entry and sang the honour song. We all stood together for O' Canada, the national anthem. Master of Ceremonies for the day was John and Josh, representatives for "Building Community Bridges," who were also sponsors of the Youth Day.

The Youth Day begin its day with keynote speaker was Don Burnstick, a First Nation humorist and entertainer. In addition to Don's humorists anecdotes and witty remarks, he also demonstrated his ability as an educator. He covered topics such as the booming stage in adolescence, to the concept of being cool, and the importance of peer acceptance among teens. He concluded that teens seem to maintain coolness on account of peer acceptance. Don left us with a message, "it is very important that the youth are successful because they are tomorrow's leaders."

The conference broke out into sessions, which address various issues. One of the breakout sessions dealt with Racism, a problem that is very real, everywhere. Our

facilitator was Vera Desnomie who grew up in the nearby community. We listened to her stories and how she survived racism. We also learned about the wall that separates us, and that racism is something that is learned or taught, we are not just born with it. Saskatchewan is considered as having the highest level of racism between First Nations and Caucasians. Vera told us that "we need to break down those walls and rise above the weak to make a difference", regarding racism.

Another breakout session was Treaties-Different Perspectives. Presenting were Monica Goulet and Constable Craig Nyirfa, both member of the Speakers Bureau,



Office of the Treaty Commissioner (OTC). The OTC on January 30th, 2000 launched the bureau. Through the provision of information it is anticipated that historical and contemporary misunderstandings be clarified so all Canadians are able to enjoy an improved socio-political environment. The Treaties made in Saskatchewan were intended to benefit everyone living in the province. The objective of the session was to comprehend the Treaty, who compensates from them and the basis why we have Treaties.

Other issues discussed at other breakout sessions were; personal stories from three generations of student who attended residential schools and the concepts behind provincial and band controlled schools.

The entire conference was organized to enlighten the public, and to essentially get the message out that the youth should work in partnership to build communities bridges. The forum was gratifying and motivating and left us with the tools to embark upon a journey of improving community interaction.



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Significance of Treaties Reaffirmed Through Historic Royal Visit
(continued from page 3)

During the reception each Chief and various First Nation representative had an opportunity to personally meet the Prince of Wales. Once everyone had their moment with the Prince of Wales, presentations were made to His Royal Highness on behalf of various territories.

Beginning the short agenda was Chief Bellegarde, who presented to His Royal Highness a star blanket and Treaty booklet. The Treaty booklet was specially made to commemorate his visit.

Representing the Saskatoon Tribal Council and district was Tribal Chief George Lafond, and Chief Austin Bear, Muskoday First Nation. Melvina Eagle a Dakota/Sioux Elder and Judge Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond presented to the Prince a painting on behalf of First Nations Women.

Chief Barry Ahenakew of Ahtahkakoop First Nation made quite an impression on His Royal Highness during his presentation. Chief Ahenakew was presenting Athakakoop's newly published book "Ahtahkakoop - the epic account of a Cree Head Chief, His People and Their Struggle for Survival 1816 - 1896" that document the history of their reserve. The Prince noticed the outfit that Chief Ahenakew wore. It was an original Treaty issued suit that was given to Chiefs on Treaty Day as part of the customary annuity payments. Along with the very rare suit, Chief Ahenakew was

complete with a Treaty #6 medallion. The Prince acknowledged the medallion as a significant part of the Crown's heritage and tells that there are many Indigenous nations throughout the world that still honour and respect the significance of these medallions.



Elder Ben Weenie, Chief Young Chippewayan First Nation with His Royal Highness, Wanuskewin Heritage Park, Saskatchewan.

After the private reception the Prince of Wales was again escorted out to the Amphitheatre where Elder Gordon Oakes was schedule to give the Prince a special name. The name given "Kisikawpimis Kamiyowahpahmikott" translated from the Cree language means "the sun looks at him

in a good way". This name was offered to the Prince as a gift. A name giving ceremony was performed the previous night at a special sweatlodge ceremony.

At the Amphitheatre, the Wanuskewin International Dance Toupee performed for the Prince of Wales before leaving for a private walk with Elder Ben Weenie. Ben Weenie is also Chief of Young Chippewayan First Nations. Along the walk, the pair talked about many things, the Treaties, First Nations customs, and traditions. The Prince even acknowledged some of his beliefs related to First Nation's connection to the land.

As First Nation people, 125 years after the first Treaty signing in this territory, has guided years of growth not only in Indian country, but also helped to shape the province of Saskatchewan. There were Treaties that were signed before there was a province of Saskatchewan and the visit from The Prince of Wales, His Royal Highness was an event that proves that First Nation's people have always had and maintain self-determinations through their own forms of governance.



SIIT Celebrates Quarter Century of Growth 1976 - 2001
(continued from page 4)

institution to meet the training needs for different areas of the province. The locations also assist SIIT in our visibility and encourage students to seek out program offerings in those specific communities."

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- North Battleford Campus (306) 445-9400
- Prince Albert Campus (306) 953-7225
- Meadow Lake Campus (306) 236-7620
- Yorkton Campus (306) 782-3644
- Fort Qu'Appelle Campus (306) 332-8240
- Onion Lake Campus (306) 344-2525
- Regina Campus (306) 546-2945
- La Ronge Campus (306) 425-5758

Greyeyes' vision of incorporating new dialogue to existing Indian education autonomy has just been empowered by the

application of the SIIT Act on July 01, 2000. "The Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies Act which was legislated by the Province of Saskatchewan in July, 2000, is unique not only in the Province of Saskatchewan, but in Canada" she says. "In Saskatchewan, there are only four institutions that are legislated by the province - the University of Saskatchewan, the University of Regina, the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAT) and now SIIT."

This new legislation will allow SIIT, to be more independent from restricted government funding guidelines. This shift in Indian education policy is a great accom-

plishment that was developed through strategic SIIT negotiating and planning.

By providing this form of holistic and developmental approach to each specific program, SIIT is ensuring healthier and vibrant First Nation communities. These communities will be able to prosper and better serve the future generations of tomorrow. For the future of the SIIT it is sure to be another cornerstone for Indian controlled education as a proficient and accountable institution that will continue to provide remarkable innovation to its mandate and program delivery into the 21st century.



ital shareholding investments are being reallocated back to the grassroots economy in a productive and meaningful process.

How does the First Nation Bank Executive, view Saskatchewan First Nation grassroots and urban youth as tomorrow's public and private entrepreneurs? "Self-sufficiency of Aboriginal people is a goal that the First Nation Bank was established to serve. First Nation youth will be a significant force in Canada. They will represent larger and larger percentages of the work force and they will have more influence over political, business and social developments," emphasized Keith Martell.

The First Nation Bank of Canada is dedicated and committed to enrich the changes of long-term economic growth for First Nation Government and business venture partnerships. Has the First Nation Bank received any awards in terms of national and provincial business growth and achievement?

"The First Nations Bank of Canada received a 2001 SABEX Award from the Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce for Growth and Expansion. We achieved more major shareholders from First Nations in Manitoba, Quebec and the Yukon in the last year. They assessed the existing operations and future potential of the institution and invested significant resources to the First Nations Bank," expressed Chairman Martell.

Introducing alternative banking was a concept that was non-existent to First Nation people not long ago, but with self-determination and spirit of corporate vision, allowed the First Nation Bank to become a new leader in the Canadian banking industry.

Keith was honored to address, "others are sharing this same vision created by the First Nations of Saskatchewan." First Nation Bank has come along way since 1997. We look forward to their future success and accomplishments in Canada's competitive banking industry.



GATHERING AT OKIMAW OCHI

The Second Annual First Nation International Healing & Medicines Gathering was held on August 24-27, 2001 at the Nekaneet First Nation Okimaw Ochi(thunder hills). It was an interesting four days of sharing and exchanging of sacred medicines and ceremonies. The interpretative tents, family circles and the annual pow-wow had a smaller attendance this year, but everyone had a great experience.

Chief Larry Oakes was instrumental in hosting this year's event and his father Elder Gordon Oakes provided the people the sacred balance of listening, respecting and honouring the ceremonies, sweats and daily youth activities.

Every day was filled with powerful messages with different speakers, delegates and Elders who traveled from all over North America. Each speaker had a specific message to offer to the gathering. Certain cultural protocols were followed to ensure the respect and sacredness of the ceremonies was recognized in their original customs.

Each day began with a pipe ceremony at sunrise then breakfast followed and shortly after a sweat was held. The medicine and youth venues were interesting to all who participated. The special highlight of the schedule included a Ghost Dance, Rattle Dance, Chicken Dance and Horse Dance. After each dance was performed, a feast was provided for all the Elders, guests, and visitors. It was a special time to share stories and meet new and old friends from other First Nation communities.

The gathering was a joint effort between FSIN Vice-Chief Lindsay Cyr's office and the Nekaneet First Nation community. The Nekaneet First Nation people volunteered many long hours of hard work into the preparation and planning in hosting this year's event. It was unanimously decided that Nekaneet would host the 2002 gathering.

It is important to First Nations that the spirit and intent of regaining the ancestral teachings of Oral Tradition. By incorporating these value systems and ceremonial procedures in the interpretative tents and personal healing sessions. It provided the people the understanding and recognition to pass this spiritual knowledge onto the next generations.

The First Nation healers have held onto their herbal medicines in a holistic way. They have protected the sacredness of their traditional medicines and these Elders and practioners are the source of our healing for the future. This healing for the Indigenous people across the world seems to have a common bond-spirituality. They drive many of their traditional medicines from Mother Earth. Doctoring for the Indigenous people is a combination of ceremonies and use of these natural medicines.

The natural laws of life, the meaning of the pipe ceremony and the purpose of the sweat lodges are the connection to the Creator and spirit world. It is here where we can communicate with our ancestors," says Elder Gordon Oakes.

The children and youth will be our future leaders and parenting is a important issue at the First Nation community level. This cycle of life must be enriched with cultural protocols and the interpretative tents addressed these specific concerns in a meaningful way.

The Nekaneet First Nation also supports their traditional practices by agreeing as a community. That there will be no other prevalent religion practiced on their reserve other than First Nation's traditional ceremonies. This belief of protecting their spiritual and cultural ways from outside influences has kept their First Nations identity traditions and customs alive for the next generation.

As Nekaneet First Nation plans for next year, the emphasis will be targeting increased venue attendance...this year was smaller, but efficient enough. The community had spiritual promises to finish their ceremonies with the infrastructure that was in place. In the end, the gathering fulfilled its mandate and I thank everyone for attending and participating as volunteers and visitors at the same time," said Chief Larry Oakes.

Chief Perry Bellegarde spoke at the pow-wow and said, "Nekaneet will be provided with sufficient resources to host another gathering next year." This will allow Nekaneet First Nation to utilize specific funding to coordinate and outline their 2002 planning with more increased programming and venue options.



PRIDE OF THE NORTH SHINES THROUGH



This year's Saskatchewan Indian Summer Games was held in the beautiful northern setting of La Ronge, Saskatchewan. The Lac La Ronge Indian Band and its games committee brought together 6000 athletes, coaches, chaperones and sport fans during the week of August 12th to the 16th. The Lac La Ronge Indian Band incorporates communities such as La Ronge, Stanley Mission, Sucker River, Grandmother's Bay, Hall Lake and Little Red.

On Monday night the Opening Ceremonies began with the traditional "Parade of Athletes". Chief Harry Cook commented that this would be a day to remember. Approximately 1500 First Nation athletes march down La Ronge Avenue - the town's main street. It was the first time the town of La Ronge seen such display of sportsmanship. It caused the town to come to a halt and paid their tribute to Saskatchewan's finest First Nations athletes.

Something new to the games was the arrival of the lance. "The games committee wanted to incorporate some of our Woodland Cree culture and decided that the lance should arrive to the game-site by canoe," said Kevin Roberts, site manager for the games.

Ten days prior to the games the Scared Lance run started at Little Pine First Nation, last year's summer games host. The lance runners ran most of the way but in its final stretch at the base of the Montreal River, it was transported by canoe.

Together the two communities delivered the Scared Lance after a 10-day journey.

The runners are youths from the host communities who volunteer to participate. They also have to be willing to abstain from drug and alcohol for the duration.

The running of the Scared Lance was initiated in 1996. Introduced by Chief Barry Ahenakew during the Ahtahkakoop's summer games the Scared Lance is symbolic of the "Olympic Torch" that is passed on from past host to present host.


There were many events during the games for everyone to take in. Evening activities included fireworks, concerts, dances, and BBQ's. During the day the games committee had scheduled a tradeshow and wellness program to coincide with the games.

This years demonstration sports were beach volleyball, golfing, canoeing, and archery. Demonstration sports were included because the games committee felt that there are many athletes who do not get to compete at the games because they don't play the standard sports, softball, soccer, and track & field. "We not only wanted to include more athletes, we also felt that many of these sports are already competition sports at the North American Indigenous Games and it was sort of an introduction to many of the athletes, especially canoeing," says Roberts.

Because of the games there were many positive relationships enhanced between the Lac La Ronge Indian Band and the town. Robert says, "We had to partner with the Town Council and it was a good opportunity to build further on our previous relationships."



According to Roberts, the band improved the town's Elks Fair Grounds by adding shale to the ball diamonds. In turn for the band's improvement to the grounds, the Town Council has agreed that the Lac La Ronge band will coordinate the La Ronge Elks Fair Ball Tournament for the next 10 years. The tournament is an annual event and usually has about 12 teams entered. The band will keep all the proceeds for their own youth and recreational programs.

The games carried a strong pride of north theme. The outdoor concert featuring the talented Voices of the North singers attracted a huge crowd that enjoyed the music under the fireworks and the northern lights. Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management (SERM) also played a part in providing the northern experience. During the Opening Ceremonies there were two SERM water bomber planes that reloaded just off the beach. Also if you were fortunate to visit the cultural village you may have had the opportunity to sample some moose meat or the fish fry. The games committee did a wonderful job of providing the northern experiences for their guests and should be commended for all their hard work. 






BIOGRAPHY DARREN R. MCKENZIE

A Cree artist, raised in the inner city of Regina Saskatchewan. Darren graduated from O'Neill High School 1979 where he studied Art under his mentor Wilf Perreault. He attended Medicine Hat College on an athletic scholarship, majoring in Commercial art from 1980-1982. Following his schooling at Medicine Hat College, Darren attended the University of

Regina majoring in Indian Art History from 1983-1984. Moving on to Toronto, Darren studied at the Ontario College of Art focusing on illustration and sculpture from 1985-1986. Most recently Darren has graduated from the intensive and culturally engrossing, four year apprenticeship at the Kitanmaax School of North West Coast Indian Art, at K'San Hazelton British Columbia.

Exploring the various contemporary possibilities of the mythic forms, legends and creatures of the Natural world are Darren's primary artistic goals. Being an Indian artist with knowledge of advanced design, ceremonial rituals, ethnology and master technical applications, Darren has a strong desire to enlighten and educate, creating new opportunities for other First Nation and seeking an artistic direction.

Currently, Darren is working out of two studios in Vancouver where Darren enjoys a reputation among gallery owners as an innovator. Expansion of public awareness, as well as creative, educational and business possibilities made a move to Regina a

progressive step in the mandate of the artist. Mainly concerned with developing the skills, which these art forms demand, the years of intense production have given Darren the tools to push the envelope of the traditional, into the contemporary. 



Your Voice in

SASKATCHEWAN INDIAN

Readers Submissions

THUNDERING HEARTS

Distant drums that beats like my heart
Awakens my spirit another powwow start
A time for celebration another time to dance
A time to snag that Indian Romance

I put on my moccasins and let down my hair
I grab your hand in mine for this dance we'll share
Thundering hearts beating like a drum
I found you Indian Lover - I knew you'd come.

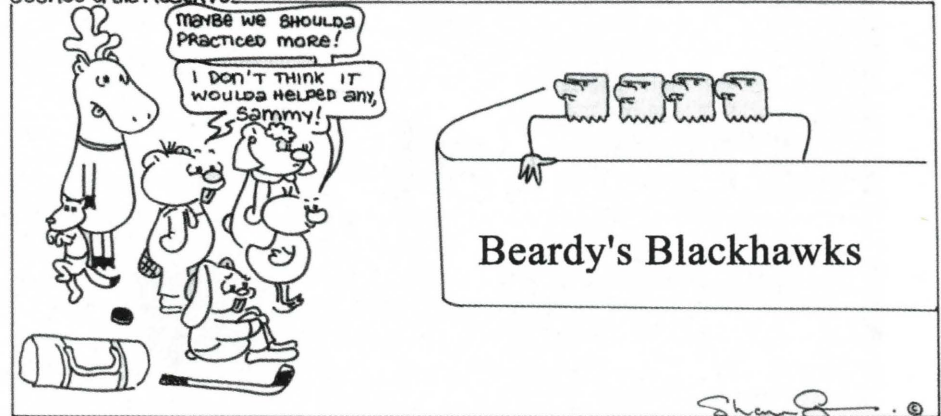
by
Francis Eyahpaise
Saskatoon

REBELLION

In 1885 there was a Rebellion very much alive
About discrimination and all sorts of political jive
They had a right to fight and fought with all their
might
But could not defeat the government on their lonely
plight
Many men were killed and a lot of blood was spilled
Over the right to live on this land that God has willed

by
Francis Eyahpaise
Saskatoon

GEORGE of the RESERVE



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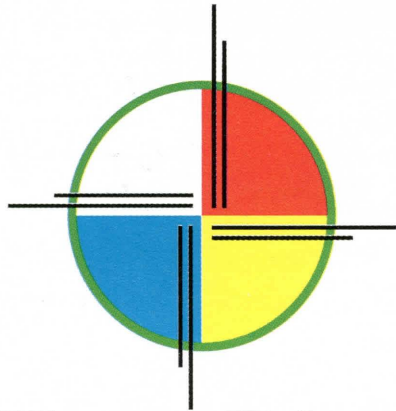
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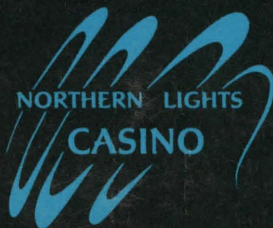
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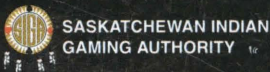
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