

# eaglefeathernews

Newspapers will not transmit the Coronavirus

CPMA #40027204



## A First for the USSU

"The type of leader Autumn is, she is very student focused and student centered. She really tries to go out of her way ... " - Regan Ratt-Misponas

Photo credit: John Lagimodiere

**By Jeanelle Mandes  
of Eagle Feather News**

The University of Saskatchewan will see it's first female Indigenous University of Saskatchewan Students' Union (USSU) President.

Autumn LaRose-Smith began her new role as president on May 1, and is the fifth Indigenous person to hold this position. She previously served as USSU Vice-President Student Affairs.

She was encouraged by many of her peers to run for president and she contemplated it for awhile.

"I originally wasn't planning on [running] but I looked at the wall of the past executives and noticed that there hasn't been a female president in over 10 years," she said. Josie Steves was elected president in 2009, she said.

LaRose-Smith, a fourth-year SUNTEP student,

said the rest of the student union leaders are having to recreate what their positions mean, now that their work has moved online because of the pandemic, she said.

"It definitely is a lot of hard work but we're figuring out how we can best organize ourselves as a students' union so we can work best for the students," she said.

When asked about students' main concerns about how the pandemic will effect their education, LaRose-Smith said, "There are a lot of concerns in regards to access and affordability as well as quality of education when going online."

Her team will continue the strategic direction implemented by the last executive, she said.

*continued page 2*



## Symbol of Hope

"It's a lot of excitement. These are the first calves to be born on this land in over 150 years." - Craig Thoms

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## Skirt of Honour

Lafleur wanted to honour other women whose educational and life paths were not easy ones.

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## Boost to Métis Research

Stevenson is excited to embark on a new journey and is eager to work with the folks at GDI.

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June 2020 is ...  
**NATIONAL INDIGENOUS HISTORY MONTH**  
NEXT MONTH...  
Graduation and Photo Contest

## LaRose-Smith first female Indigenous USSU president

*continued from page 1 ...*

"We have four major goals that we are working towards. They are promoting education, revitalizing community, facilitating leadership and decolonizing systems."

Past president Regan Ratt-Misponas helped her transition into the leadership position and passed down knowledge and tips to fulfill her duties as president.

*"There are a lot of concerns in regards to access and affordability as well as quality of education when going online."*

Ratt-Misponas has known LaRose-Smith since the beginning of his university career.

"The type of leader Autumn is, she is very student focused and student centered. She really tries to go out of her way listening to the issues that students are facing and trying to find some way to ensure that students get the best results. I think the USSU and the University of Saskatchewan are in good hands [under] her leadership."



**Autumn LaRose-Smith is the fifth Indigenous person to serve as the USSU president. Photo by John Lagimodiere.**

## Recognizing National Indigenous Peoples Day



Situated on Treaty 4 and Treaty 6 territories, and Homeland of the Métis people, Sask Polytech is committed to the renewal of relationships — **miyo wahkohtowin** — with our Indigenous communities. To ensure everyone's health and safety during the COVID-19 pandemic, Sask Polytech is celebrating the heritage, cultures and outstanding achievements of our Indigenous students, faculty and staff virtually on June 19, 2020.








[saskpolytech.ca/indigenous](https://saskpolytech.ca/indigenous)

## Re-Open Saskatchewan Plan

The province is continuing to gradually re-open businesses and services.

To support our ability to progress through the plan's five phases, we need to keep the curve flat. It's important that Saskatchewan residents continue practising the following:

-  Physical distancing of 2 metres.
-  10 or fewer in an indoor gathering.  
20 or fewer in an outdoor gathering.  
(Gathering directives differ in communities entering Phase Three of Re-Open Sask)
-  Frequent handwashing and cleaning of surfaces.
-  Stay home if you're sick and call 811 if you have COVID-19 symptoms.
-  Keep household contacts to a consistent group of family or friends.

**Phase 3**  
June 8, 2020

- Restaurants and licensed establishments
- Gyms and fitness facilities
- Places of worship
- Child care facilities
- Remaining personal services

Full details at  
[saskatchewan.ca/COVID19](https://saskatchewan.ca/COVID19)

Saskatchewan 

# Elder John Lafond celebrates 100 years

By Jeanelle Mandes  
of Eagle Feather News

A man with many accomplishments from the Muskeg Lake Cree Nation celebrated his 100th birthday this year. Elder and residential school survivor John Basil Lafond turned a century old on March 20, 2020.

He married Matilda Elizabeth Manitoken and together they had eight children, numerous grand children, great grandchildren and great-great grandchildren. Matilda died 23 years ago from cancer.

As a young man, Lafond worked as a logger and worked in the bush a lot. In his mid-20s, he built his own cabin at Crystal Lake in Manitoba. He worked as a driving instructor, a Cree interpreter, a court worker where he had good relationships with the circuit judges.

He hunted and fished to provide for his family and also travelled by dog sleds while residing in Pelican Narrows. Lafond and his family lived amongst the Catholics and Protestants in separate villages.

"That was kind of a culture shock for us because as kids we [didn't] know what separation and colonization was," said Lafond's youngest daughter, Grace Lafond-Barr. "But my dad associated with all people."

During his years in residential school, Lafond was beaten with a horse harness by one of the caretakers, which resulted in a brain injury. That injury



**John Basil Lafond, of Muskeg Lake Cree Nation celebrated his 100th birthday March 20, 2020. Photos submitted by Ace Lafond.**

still effected him decades later.

"They operated on him in 1969 because I remember I was 10 years old when I remember my dad going into RUH," recalled Lafond-Barr. "They

drilled holes into his skull to relieve the pressure."

Lafond overcame hardships and worked to help First Nations people. He was one of the people who started the Native Alcohol Centre, which is now known as the Metis Addictions Council of Saskatchewan located in Saskatoon.

"I never [saw] my dad touch alcohol. He told me the year I was born, he quit drinking," said Lafond-Barr. "When he was telling me this, I was already around 30 years old. He had multiple jobs to help First Nations people...he stood up for the rights for First Nations people."

"He's an awesome dad. I'm very proud of my dad of everything he's accomplished," she said.

"He [once told] me 'I'm not ready to go yet, I'm not sure when I'm ready to go.' Every week, when we have our phone call, it's a blessing for me," she said. "He's still very aware of himself and has a clear mind. He can talk to you about the history of Muskeg Lake, who married who, etc."

The Lafond family and the Muskeg Lake Cree Nation had planned a community celebration for his birthday with a big supper and old time music and jigging but the plans were cancelled because of the Coronavirus. The family celebrated with a small gathering in March.

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# Welcome to National Indigenous History Month

This is not your typical National Indigenous Peoples History Month and NIP Day kind of June. This is the first under a pandemic order that has shut down gatherings and the economy for that matter. It is also the first time it is happening under the toxic cloud of the racism and unrest affecting our southern neighbours. There will be no powwows this year. No Johnny Arcand Fiddle Fest. No 50th anniversary celebration at Batoche. No Rock Your Roots Walk down by the river with 5000 people loving each other and walking for reconciliation. Unprecedented times indeed.

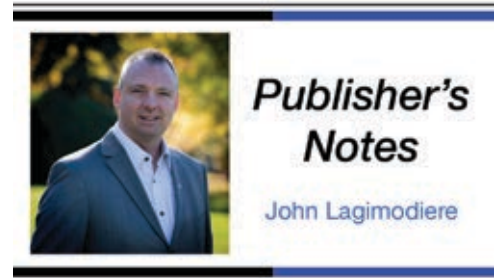
But from such hardship and the unknown, there are some beautiful things happening. After the public execution of George Floyd, the marches and protests in the States have led to a myriad of jurisdictions actually defunding the police, firing bad police officers, changing policies and committing to doing better. The protests also

spread around the world. There has been a shift in people's consciousness and there is an awakening to the impact of race and racism globally. A new reality is emerging. Black Lives Matter and those that always want to say "All Lives Matter" are starting to get it, or get heck on Facebook.

The pandemic has also given us reason to unite. Not sure if everyone noticed, but all of a sudden, the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan and the First Nations in the northwest are communicating and cooperating. In the past, this wasn't the case. Split by government and jurisdiction, there used to be friction and each going separate ways. But the spirit of community and helping that was sparked by the pandemic will leave us with many new relationships to nurture.

The Pasqua First Nation, under the leadership of Chief Matthew Peigan and Council were more prepared for the pandemic than most countries in the world. Chief Peigan and his team stocked up on groceries and cleaning supplies for their whole community before the lock down was called provincially. Now they are working with the FSIN and they have come up with a plan to provide PPE for all 74 First Nations in the province.

And individuals are stepping up. Angela Bishop and the Masked Makers have taken it upon themselves to make masks available to elders, people at risk and communities. These intrepid seamstresses have produced over 5000 masks and given them away free! I even have one. It is Métis themed and I feel cool wearing it. People are volunteering. Donating. Giving



food to others.

Sadly, no powwows festivals or gatherings this summer interrupts economy for some, culture and community for others. But the amazing amount of on-line presentations is heartwarming and instead of walking by the river on June 21, I will be on-line watching entertainers and cultural practitioners do their thing for us as Friendship Centres and groups around the province still help us celebrate National Indigenous Peoples Day the virtual way.

And, lastly with the lockdown we have been given the gift of time. I have never been so blessed as to have these past few months with my partner and our two children. The hecticness of work and travel was replaced with family lunches, something that went away when the kids became teens and hockey and other activities made us run around. Once we got over the fear of the world ending, we finally had time to reconnect and just be together. And that made me realize that is what it is about. Family.

So, my brothers and sisters, hug your kids and your parents this month. Do good things for your neighbours. Stand up to racism and tune in to your favourite source on June 21 and marvel in culture and celebrate our day. We are all in this together and so far, we have done really well. Be proud. Be strong. Wash your hands.



**In this Eagle Feather News archive photo, students from St. Frances Cree bilingual school participate in the Rock Your Roots Walk in Saskatoon. Unfortunately, there will be no organized walk this year, but on-line options will be flourishing come National Indigenous Peoples Day as we move our celebrations to the virtual world. (EFN file photo)**



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### Check out these stories



#### Sixties Scoop class members approved for payments

Eligible Sixties Scoop Class members are approved for interim payments of \$21,000 as part of a national settlement between the Government of Canada and plaintiffs.



#### \$640 million in additional funding to support Indigenous communities

Various Indigenous leadership is happy with the recent federal government funding announcement for health, economic, and social support for Indigenous peoples and communities.



#### Masked Makers get boost from MN-S

"It goes to show the spirit of our people, to get people motivated making masks," said Glen McCallum, president of MN-S. "To have good stories out there, to see people working together as we address this pandemic together."

## The Absurdities of Racism

Even in a pandemic, racists still gonna racist. In New York City, a Canadian transplant named Amy Cooper called the police on a person of colour because he told her to leash her dog. Overnight she became a household name, proving once again that if you can make it in the Big Apple, you can make it anywhere.

Let's get into how grotesque this all was. Cooper had her dog off-leash in an area that is for bird watching. It's also a protected area because it has all these fancy plants in it. It's not my sort of place, being the kind of person that prefers messy dog parks. So while Amy Cooper had her dog running through the bird-zone, she came upon Christian Cooper. Christian Cooper is an avid birdwatcher, along with being an Harvard educated writer and editor for Marvel Comics. He also possesses the sexiest set of trap muscles since The Rock. If this man asked me to leash my dog, I'd have that dog hogtied at rodeo-speed.

They had words about her dog which escalated when Christian said he would throw some dog treats. He noted that when he did this in the past, people generally leashed their dogs. This would not work on me. If you throw dog treats at my always ravenous pup, I would applaud you for days. Also after you gave him treats, he would follow you to your grave so its your funeral.

Joking aside, the female dog owner was pissed. Christian pulled out his phone and she approached him, telling him to stop filming her. I don't understand her logic here. He is filming you because you are doing a shitty thing. If you want him to stop, stop doing the shitty thing. But she had this idea that if she ordered him to do something – then he should do it. Now where, I wonder would that attitude come from? Maybe because she's an entitled white lady who thinks that when she gives an order, then people of colour should hop to it. Well, Christian of the nice pecs, did not.

She then says to him, "I'm going to call the police and tell them that an African American man is threatening me." That's when it got really ugly. Because that was a lie. She approached him. He asked her to stay away from him. At any moment, she could have packed up her cute little dog and walked away. She could have given him the finger and then called her friends and told them all about what an ass (a handsome ass) that she had just run into in the park.

But she didn't do that. She decided that this black man had no right giving her orders and just as awful, he wasn't following her orders. She calls 911 and repeats her threat into the phone. "An African American man, with a bike helmet, is threatening me and my dog."

A bike helmet? Indeed. As we all know bike helmets are the instruments of choice for assassins everywhere.

While on the call, she started out half-normal and then suddenly escalates into this hysterical tone, "there's a man and he's threatening me, please send the police now!" The whole time she is doing this, Christian is at least ten feet away from her, calmly filming her with his phone. He never says a word. When she gets off the phone, she puts her dog on the leash and he thanks her and leaves.

She called the police because she was mad. She called the police because she wanted revenge for being told off for doing something she shouldn't have been doing. She called the police because she knew that as a white woman, the police would believe her, not the black man. She called the police because that was her privilege. I first became aware of the video when a New York City prosecutor retweeted it, adding a comment to the effect that her hysterical tone would have worked in a court. Gross.

Fortunately Christian had video which he



**That's What She Said**

Dawn Dumont

posted on social media. Within 24 hours, Amy Cooper, the faux distraught white lady had lost her job and her dog.

The official story is that she surrendered the dog but its not likely that she would have gotten to keep him. In the video, her dog struggles to breath as she clumsily pulls him off the ground by his collar with one hand, while calling the police with her other.

Within the same week, George Floyd was killed by a police officer in broad daylight. The officer was kneeling on his neck while he struggled to breathe.

It seems that Floyd was not as lucky as Amy Cooper's dog.

Racism claims victims every day. For every Christian Cooper who manages to film one of these racist acts and who has through his connections, education and let's just say it, undeniable physical beauty – an incredibly powerful social platform, there are many more who have died without any attention or social media justice. Because although social media helps with short term fixes like firing a racist lady, it doesn't change the systemic racism that led to the death of late Colten Boushie and the subsequent acquittal of the man who shot him.

At least, not yet.

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# Story skirt honours persevering women

By *Andréa Ledding*  
for *Eagle Feather News*

Nancy Lafleur did not have much growing up. Living in poverty in a single income home, her grandmother worked as a janitor at the local school. Money was not always spent on food or clothes, so Lafleur learned to find other means to survive. Home was often where parties hung out until alcohol ran out, and domestic violence would often be the end result. When Lafleur was 15, her grandmother quit drinking, and things changed in the home.

After high school, Lafleur attended both the Northern Teacher Education Program (NORTEP), and the Indigenous Teacher Education Program (ITEP) graduating with a Bachelor of Education Degree and a Bachelor of Arts and Science degree. Besides help from family, she drew on her own inner strength and perseverance to finish.

Now a story skirt designer, and author of two books, Lafleur wanted to honour other women whose educational and life paths were not easy ones. After conducting a storytelling workshop with a group of student teachers, she had the idea to design a skirt honouring a woman each year, portraying two women connected with a tree. In her interpretation of the skirt, the women symbolize strength and perseverance. The tree in the middle is everything that pulls to the side of resilience. Lafleur found her strength through her grandmother, and the teaching of other women in

her community who led by good example. It is the strength she finds when she prays, and the strength she continues to find in family.

Each year the design will be replicated, and another woman will be honoured with the skirt and a small scholarship provided by Nancy and Glenn Lafleur.

This is the first year for the honouring, and it did not happen the way it was supposed to under these pandemic circumstances. Instead, Chantelle McLeod of Stanley Mission, the first recipient of the Strength and Perseverance Honouring skirt, received a surprise package in the mail on the day she was to graduate with her Bachelor of Education degree from Northlands College.

"I phoned her and I think I was more emotional than she was," said Lafleur, who said McLeod was honoured to have the skirt, saying she would wear it with pride. "I've known Chantelle since she was a little girl."

McLeod said the news surprised her. "When I wear the skirt I feel very empowered. It just feels like everything that I went through is worth it. Because I've been through some very dark times and I got knocked down more than once and I've always managed to pick myself back up."

McLeod credits the many teachers in her life both in and out of school, especially her grandmother and her mother.

"They know the dark times that I went through but they don't see me as that person, they see me as who I am today, someone that they told me



**Author and skirt designer Nancy Lafleur had the idea to design a skirt honouring a woman each year, portraying two women connected with a tree to symbolize strength and perseverance. Photos submitted.**

would make a difference in this world and inspire other people who have been through things such as I have been through."

McLeod has just finished her Bachelor of Education and is looking for jobs around Saskatchewan but hopes to stay close to home for a year or so to see where her journey takes her next.

## You've graduated, congrats!

### Next big step: voting!



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for October's  
provincial election at  
[elections.sk.ca](https://elections.sk.ca).



# Buffalo calves “symbol of hope and resilience” at Wanuskewin

By NC Raine  
for Eagle Feather News

New life was welcomed in one of Saskatchewan’s most culturally significant spots when four baby bison were born this spring at Wanuskewin Heritage Park in Saskatoon.

The births mark the first time since 1876 that a generation of buffalo, as the hoofed beasts are commonly called by Indigenous people, were born here.

The calves appear to have a knack for timing as well, with the first calf arriving on Earth Day (April 22), the third arriving on Red Dress Day (May 5), and the latest arriving on Mother’s Day (May 10). This new generation of bison is comprised of three females and one male.



**The four new bison calves at Wanuskewin Heritage Park, all born between April 22 and May 10, 2020**

“It’s a lot of excitement. These are the first calves to be born on this land in over 150 years. So it’s a big event, and interesting how three of the four calves came on quite significant days,” Craig Thoms, bison manager at Wanuskewin, told Eagle Feather News.

The bison herd at Wanuskewin was sourced from Grasslands National Park in Saskatchewan, and has ancestral ties back to Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming and Elk Island National Park in Alberta.

After consultation with elders, it was decided that the calves would not



**Weeks old baby bison calves at Wanuskewin Heritage Park. Marks the first time bison have been born on the land in over 150 years.**

be named, as buffalo are considered to be kin of many Indigenous people across the land, said Chief Executive Officer Darlene Brander. Tobacco was laid down on the land to give thanks for their arrival.

“It is an honour for our park to welcome these magnificent creatures back to their natural territory,” Brander said.

“They have become a powerful symbol of hope and resilience during these trying times of isolation.”

The North American Great Plains were once home to 30 million bison. Today, in Canada, only 1,500 wild, genetically-pure bison survive, all of which are from around 50 bison identified in the 1900s. But Wanuskewin has undertaken a \$40 million revitalizing project, called Thundering Ahead, to help reintroduce bison to the grasslands ecosystem and establish the park as a UNESCO World Heritage site.

“By introducing bison back to the land, we will be adding that essential element needed for balance in both a cultural and scientific sense,” said Felix Thomas, Wanuskewin Board Chair and Thundering Ahead Co-Chair.

“We aim to grow the park to act as a natural oasis within the city limits that will offer a place for families to come and connect with the land once again,” he said.

Over time, the herd is expected to grow to about 50 bison.

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# Words of Wisdom to be aired on MBC

By INCA Staff  
for Eagle Feather News

On June 21 at 1 pm, MBC will broadcast Words of Wisdom (WOW), a one-hour radio special produced by INCA Summer Institute students for National Indigenous Peoples' Day. Missinipi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) is proud to partner with the INCA program, said CEO Deborah Charles. "Indigenous listeners across Saskatchewan will hear their stories, their aspirations, their worldviews and their cultures."

The INCA Institute is a seven-week journalism crash course. It is required for the Indigenous Communication Arts diploma, at the First Nations University of Canada. This summer it was offered online for the first time, because of the COVID pandemic.

"It was challenging to convert the curriculum for online delivery," said INCA program coordinator Shannon Avison. "But we were able to invite instructors from across the country."

INCA alumnus Connie Walker joined students from her back yard in southern Ontario. Walker was a CBC producer for 20 years and won multiple awards for her podcast series Missing and Murdered: Finding Cleo.

Walker talked about "subverting the true crime genre" to talk about colonialism, trauma, residential school impacts and the '60's Scoop, and the

important role of journalists to change the conversation in Canada.

"It's exciting for students to hear to their radio stories broadcast and streamed live online," said



APTN reporter Tamara Pimentel is teaching in the last two weeks of the Summer Institute. Photo submitted by Shannon Avison.

Avison. "Everyone can do journalism and storytelling. It's a matter of learning the concepts, ethics, formats and technical tools."

Words of Wisdom will also be available as a podcast at [www.incasummer.ca](http://www.incasummer.ca)

CBC North trainer Peter Skinner is teaching his second Institute, this time from his kitchen in Yellowknife, NWT.

Teaching radio writing and performance to uni-

versity students is challenging, said Skinner. "In radio, there's just one thought per sentence and the writing is sharp, clear, direct and conversational."

For Skinner, the most important concept is the focus statement: somebody is doing something for a reason. "Every question has to relate directly to the focus statement for the story to come together."

Student Lori Deets was excited to learn the technical side of radio storytelling. "Using Audacity was a huge accomplishment. It's a tool I can use for so many things."

Words of Wisdom profiles 15 Indigenous people, most from Saskatchewan—Elders, teachers, chiefs, activists and leaders.

Kerry Benjoe profiled Carol Lavallee, a student and later employee at the Lebret Indian Residential School. "Radio provided an outlet for Carol to speak for herself using her own unique voice," says Benjoe, who was a reporter at the Regina Leader-Post for over 15 years. "I don't have to interpret her feelings or thoughts as I would in print."

Chef Kane-Ryan Thomas registered in INCA after being laid off from Elk Ridge Golf Resort. He profiled culinary arts instructor and ice carver Thomas Pitt. "I wanted to pick a chef that taught me and I'm fascinated with ice carving," said Thomas.

Destiny Thomas profiled her Cree professor Solomon Ratt. "My profile allowed me to share his insights. I hope to be like him when I teach Cree."

## COVID-19 Relief Funding for Métis Entrepreneurs



The Clarence Campeau Development Fund is helping Métis entrepreneurs during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Photo: Dean Gauthier, Meadow Lake Truck & Trailer

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## National Indigenous Peoples Day & Systemic Oppression

Indigenous Peoples day is every day. Every day we are working towards taking back our land, space and power and praying for healing. There is fire and passion that burns from deep inside that is in our spirits from our blood memory and from the injustices we have experienced. We want better, we want to give our children better and, as we discover who we are, we reclaim our power. The power is and always has been within us. It is not handed to us by someone else.

Taking back our power means addressing the abuse of power being used against us to keep us from healing. We have become so used to the imbalance of powers, we need to break this cycle so we can truly celebrate National Indigenous Peoples Day and restore that balance. The reality is that Indigenous peoples are the fastest growing population in Canada. We need to be organized how we traditionally were, but in a modern context. So, we can assert our jurisdiction and we can create solutions that come from within and not from someone else reaching in. The Indian Act has done its toll on dismantling Indigenous nations and families.

This colonial system does not define us, yet they take it upon themselves to do so and keep us in a legal quagmire between federal and provincial powers and this does not recognize the nations that straddle the international border of Canada and the United States. We define us and our actions define us. We are self-determining and we need to take back that power collectively. So let's celebrate Indigenous peoples without ignoring the serious injustices that this system imposes on our lives and healing.

The system we are born into has not been cre-

ated by people of color ("POC") for POC. This is demonstrated through the ongoing state violence against POC. The police violence, the missing and murdered, the over representation of POC incarcerated, and within child welfare systems is evident. When will enough be enough? Systemic oppression is a common theme throughout the lives of POC. We are coming to a point where we are acknowledging systemic oppression and how it continues to be a obstruction to healing. This is not about comparing historical and ongoing oppression: there are similarities POC face and holding space and showing up for one another is vital.

George Floyd is one of the most recent victims of police brutality. George is an African American man who was killed by a white police officer in Minnesota. He was not resisting arrest: there is a recording which confirms this and that there were three other officers present, who were helping hold George down while officer Derek Chauvin put his knee into George's neck until he was dead. His pleas for help were ignored and he was treated as if his life did not matter.

Protests initiated in the United States have started a movement that is bringing to light all the ongoing injustices. We need to harness that energy to stop the systemic oppression so that hopefully our children won't have to. The first step is acknowledging the issue and no longer denying that systemic oppression and police violence is not only confined to the United States. This is an issue all over the world and in our own backyard in Canada and Saskatchewan.

This April 2020 three Indigenous people were shot and killed within a 10-day span by Winnipeg



### Comment

Alyson Bear

Police officers: Eishia Hudson, who was only 16 years old, 36-year-old Jason Collins and 22-year-old Stewart Andrews. The starlight tours are notorious in Saskatoon. This cannot be denied any longer. As much as some people have a hard time believing racism and state violence exists and is still happening, the fact is that it has never stopped happening. Now that these atrocities are able to be recorded, people are seeing the system for what it truly is and how it continues to oppress and murder POC.

We are mad, we are sad, we are sick, we are tired, we are healing, we are resilient, we are so much more than we can even imagine. We cannot forget we are emotional beings and our health holistically matters. I celebrate National Indigenous people's day every day as a Dakota winyan, but I cannot forget about the ongoing gross amounts of injustice POC continue to face.

As Indigenous peoples we stand in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement and their liberation. We need to be healthy, organized and have a strategy as to how to rebuild these systems together, where all voices are heard, and healing is permitted.

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# Kokum delivers own grandchild

By *Judith Iron*  
for *Eagle Feather News*

Canoe Lake Cree First Nation - On a reserve, access to 24-hour medical services is impossible. The everyday reality is that if anything happens after 4 p.m., you have to call the clinic to arrange to see a nurse. Imagine it's in the middle of the night and your daughter goes into labor with contractions that are fast and furious. What would you do?

Mandy Laliberte went through just such an experience recently. Laliberte's pregnant 24-year-old daughter, Alyshia Laliberte, has been staying with her at the First Nation, 137 kilometres north of Meadow Lake, during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Laliberte woke up in the middle of the night to find that Alyshia was in labor. She called the clinic to let them know what was happening and to tell them they were on their way, but the unexpected happened. In her driveway, during the wee hours of April 26, Laliberte delivered her own granddaughter in the backseat of her SUV.

After calling the clinic around 3:30 a.m., Laliberte had helped Alyshia into her vehicle. Before they could move, Alyshia screamed that the baby was coming and she could feel it. Laliberte jumped back out of the driver's seat, opened the back door of the SUV, and found that the baby had already crowned.

"I was really freaking out. I started crying and kept saying 'Oh my God!' I didn't know what to do," said Laliberte, "I somehow managed to help her

deliver the baby and made sure it was crying before I wrapped it in my jacket. I put the baby on Alyshia's chest and I slammed the door shut then drove as fast as I could to the clinic. It was surreal."

The trio arrived at the clinic around 3:58 a.m. Laliberte laughs as she recalls Alyshia asking her, "Mom, did you even see what the baby was?" Laliberte had been running on pure adrenaline and her focus was on getting them to safety so she didn't even think to check the sex of the baby. They both peeked over the nurse and were happy to find a beautiful 4-pound baby girl who would soon be named Ellie Faith Laliberte.

Alyshia is thankful for Laliberte's quick thinking and actions, "It was the scariest moment of my life. I never expected that to happen. I'm glad my mom was there to help me," she said.

Mom and baby are both happy and healthy. As for Laliberte, this heart pounding, eye-opening experience has her considering a career as a mid-wife.



*Mandy Laliberte (left) holding baby, Ellie Faith Laliberte, Alyshia Laliberte (Right). Photo by Judith Iron*



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### The Challenge

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"With the move to the new Chief Sabitawasis School we would double in size, in terms of students and staff, it was important for us to transition smoothly into the new school Complete Technologies provided the right technological support we needed."

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- Eugene McKay



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# Volunteers stitch up face protection to send far and wide

By **Andrea Ledding**  
for **Eagle Feather News**

Métis lawyer Angela Bishop from Green Lake decided to take action when COVID-19 shut down the court houses and so many other buildings and activities. Being from a small vulnerable northern community, she knew how important masks might be in helping to prevent spread and increase awareness, so she began sewing them. But taking half an hour to make a mask, she realized she might have a bigger impact if she reached out to more adept seamstresses. Fifteen women were enlisted, and together they have created close to 5,000 masks distributed in Saskatchewan.

More than half of them were using very old machines, some using elementary-school craft and paper scissors to cut the fabric and elastics. Métis Nation - Saskatchewan (MN-S) took an interest in the project, and after donating considerable fabric and other tools, has procured 15 brand new state-of-the-art Janome machines for the seamstresses to continue their work.

*"So, thank you to all of our seamstresses, absolutely amazing, I've never worked with a team as great as this."*

"It goes to show the spirit of our people, to get people motivated making masks," said Glen McCallum, president of MN-S. "To have good stories

out there, to see people working together as we address this pandemic together."

While carefully maintaining social distancing, each seamstress was individually recognized and presented with a new machine and carrying case for it at a recognition event in downtown Saska-



**Pictured is Angela Bishop, founder of the Masked Makers. She thanked the 15 members for their contributions, and MN-S for the new sewing machines to help them continue their mission to create masks for the population.**

toon.

"These masks have been made for all our staff, the citizens of MN-S, and other public citizens across our province, so I want to thank the seamstresses," said Marg Friesen, MN-S Health Minister.

"They had worked under adverse conditions I must say, with old equipment and old tools, using paper scissors sometimes to cut fabric, so we want to thank them and Angela Bishop for putting the team together, to make sure our Elders and our veterans and our citizens are covered."

"When we started to hear news about COVID and how it was affecting our community, I began to sew masks myself and soon it became obvious we were going to need more masks and more seamstresses," explained Bishop, adding that they made the 5000 masks in a period of 8 weeks, and over half of those masks have gone to the northern communities on lockdown. "So we're quite proud of the work...a lot of our seamstresses were working with older equipment but notwithstanding these challenges they were there for all of our communities, because an individual at risk, is a family at risk, is a community at risk, is our nation at risk. So, thank you to all of our seamstresses, absolutely amazing, I've never worked with a team as great as this."

And Bishop is now down to six minutes a mask, which with a new machine may get even faster. Members of the "Masked Makers" include Bishop, Gwen King, Gaylene Wetzels, Joan Umpherville, Berna Seesequasis, Virginia Umpherville, April Olsen, Josephine Bishop, Gina Gamble, Tracie King, Dakota Gamble Morin, Amanda Ulriksen, Heather Pocock, Sherry Eyahpaize, Rita Arnault, and Rose Richardson.

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Regina Provincial Correctional Centre is looking for a motivated, energetic and flexible individual who can facilitate Cultural/Spiritual Counseling/ Programming to adult offenders within the Centre.

Cultural Advisors/Elders selected will have a working knowledge and/or expertise in the delivery of the following areas: teaching in the area of traditional ceremonies including, but not limited to the sweat lodge and pipe ceremonies, understanding the cultural practices of First Nation and Metis people, provide individual counseling and sharing circles to offenders. You will act as a resource to the Cultural/Community Co-ordinator and centre staff to increase understanding and sensitivity of the First Nation culture, traditions, spirituality, practices and beliefs.

One (1) applicant will be selected to provide the services at a rate of \$33.00 per hour.

Advisors/Elders must obtain a Criminal Record Check (Vulnerable Sector) prior to being awarded this contract and adhere to all rules and regulations while at the centre.

Individuals who are interested in submitting an application for this opportunity can find more information on the SaskTenders website ([sasktenders.ca](http://sasktenders.ca)) by searching for Request for Application (RFA) #7691 - Cultural Advisor/Elder Services for the Regina Provincial Correctional Centre. For assistance using the SaskTenders website, please call: 1-306-787-6871.

The deadline for applications is: July 3, 2020, 2:00 p.m. local Saskatchewan time.

PLEASE NOTE: The application must be received on time.

[saskatchewan.ca](http://saskatchewan.ca)

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# National Indigenous Peoples Day History and Trivia Quiz

*Eagle Feather News*

## Welcome to the National Indigenous Peoples Day History and Trivia Quiz of 2020.

Below you will find 25 questions to tickle your memory and challenge your historical knowledge. Grab a friend, get a pencil and settle in for a bit of a think. We hope you enjoy the journey.

Happy National Indigenous Peoples Day and History Month!

### 1. What year was APTN created?

1997, 1999, 2005, 2009

### 2. When was the first edition of Eagle Feather News published?

March 1996, March 2000, March 1998, March 2005

### 3. This Anishinaabe artist created the Woodland School of Art.

Darren Gowan, Norval Morriseau, Bob the Painter, Picasso

### 4. What First Nation has the largest population in Canada with over 21,000 citizens?

Six Nations of The Grand River, Lac La Ronge Indian Band, Maskwacis, West Bank First Nation

### 5. What First Nation has the largest population in Saskatchewan with over 10,000 citizens?

Lac La Ronge Indian Band, Montreal Lake Cree Nation, Cowessess First Nation, Little Black Bear First Nation

### 6. How many Indigenous people do they estimate lived in what is now known as Canada in the year 1200?

100,000, 1 million, 4 million, 10-15 million

### 7. Henry Kelsey is rumoured to be the first European to see Saskatchewan. What year was it?

1494, 1690, 1725, 1753

### 8. What is the anniversary date of First Nations receiving the right to vote?

May 31, 1948; May 31, 1960; May 31, 1982; May 31, 1945

### 9. What Métis academic and activist wrote *We are the New Nation: The Metis and National Native Policy and The Forgotten People: Metis and Non-Status Indian Land Claims*.

Wayne McKenzie, Howard Adams, Harry Daniels, Clement Chartier

### 10. From 1895-1927, what percentage of land was removed from reserve status by the Government of Canada?

half, one-quarter, one-third, two-thirds

### 11. This Métis warrior first fought at the Battle of Grand Coteau, defending a Métis encampment against a large Dakota war party. He was 13.

Isadore Dumont, Gabriel Dumont, Cuthbert Grant, John Lagimodiere

### 12. "This is our land, it isn't a piece of pemmican to be cut off and given in little pieces back to us. It is ours and we will take what we want." What

### Cree leader said this at Treaty 6 when the concept of reserves was brought forth.

Chief Big Bear, Chief Beardy, Chief Mistawasis, Chief Poundmaker

### 13. On 31 March 1958, the Department of Indian Affairs enfranchised this entire First Nation, meaning that they lost their legal rights as status Indians in exchange for other rights, such as voting. The band was to serve as a model for group Indigenous enfranchisement. Over 750 members got their status back with amendments to the Indian Act in 1985.

The Michel Callihoo Band, Running River First Nation, Far Mountain First Nation, The Dave Smith Band

### 14. If a 6.2 Status person and a non-status person have a baby together, what is the legal status of that baby?

Métis, Non-status Indian, Status Indian, Inuit

### 15. This woman helped found the Aboriginal Nurses Association of Canada and the Native Access to Nursing Program at the U of S. A Canadian Coast Guard ice breaker ship is now named after her.

Anita Desjarlais, Sandy Renaud, Betty-May Callingbird, Jean Cuthand-Goodwill

### 16. This Piapot pitcher and super athlete received the Tom Longboat Medal for the best Indian Athlete in Saskatchewan in 1951 and in 1960 for the best Indian Athlete in Canada.

Wavell Star, Art Obey, Allan Decoteau, Brian Sparrow

### 17. This organization, pride of the Métis community, officially opened on Monday October 27, 1980.

MACSI, METSI, GDI, CCDF

### 18. Due to increased number of Euro-Canadians in the area in the early 1870's, this Chief once blockaded the Carlton Trail and charged a toll for the right to pass Duck Lake on to Fort Carlton, Pitt and Edmonton.

Chief Beardy, Chief One Arrow, Chief John Smith, Chief Okemasis

### 19. This Métis treaty commissioner and interpreter was reported to be short and nearly three hundred pounds but was strong and an excellent horseman.

David Chartier, Franklin Dumont, James McKay, Claude Desjardins

### 20. This esteemed playwright penned "Café Daughter" and "In Care".

Drew Hayden-Taylor, Kenneth T. Williams, Curtis Peeteetuce, Tomson Highway

### 21. Who was the Chief of the Cowessess First Nation at the time of treaty?

Chief Little Child, Chief Delorme, Chief Lerat, Chief Desjarlais

### 22. Treaty 4 covers almost this many square kilometers.

150,000, 25,000, 130,000, 200,000

### 23. In Treaty 4, each reserve was guaranteed up to \$750 annually to buy what?

horses, ammunition and twine, Hudson's Bay blankets, lard and flour

### 24. This Treaty, following the Battle of Seven Oaks where modern day Winnipeg is, was signed in 1817 and saw the settlers assigned to a reserve, with the Indigenous community controlling the rest of the area.

The Red River Treaty, The Winnipeg Agreement, Selkirk Treaty, Bombers stink

### 25. This gentleman led the Métis at the Battle of Seven Oaks.

Cuthbert Grant, Marcel Petit, David Morin, Dave McKenzie

### Thanks for taking the quiz (answers on page 15)

If those questions tickled your history bone and you want more tickling, check out your local library. They have a reading for reconciliation section and tons of info.

### We also want to thank our sources for this quiz.

- Treaty Promises: Indian Reality, Life on a Reserve by Harold Lerat with Linda Ungar.
- An Institute of Our Own: A History of the Gabriel Dumont Institute by Lisa Bird-Wilson.
- Bounty and Benevolence: A History of Saskatchewan Treaties by J. Ray, Jim Miller and Frank Tough.
- No Surrender: The Land Remains Indigenous by Sheldon Krasowski.
- Also the websites of the Office of the Treaty Commissioner, the Canadian Encyclopedia, and the Encyclopedia of Saskatchewan.



## COVID cancels National Indigenous Peoples' Day events, Treaty payments postponed

By Michelle Lerat  
of Eagle Feather News

The ongoing health ban on large gatherings means the RCMP won't be handing out five-dollar bills this year and there won't be a Rock Your Roots walk or other public gatherings on June 21.

Treaty First Nations people who don't want to wait until next year for their Treaty money, can fill out a form on the Indigenous Services Canada website and have a cheque mailed to them.

This year the Saskatoon Indian and Metis Friendship Center (SIMFC) had to think outside the box for its National Indigenous People's Day



**Due to COVID-19, festivities for NIP Day across the province have moved to virtual celebrations this year where viewers can watch entertainment from home. Stock Photo.**

(NIPD) celebration. The event will be recorded and posted to its website [www.simfc.ca](http://www.simfc.ca) on June 21.

Sanford Strongarm Sr. will host the event with performances from Terri-Anne Strongarm, Krystal Pederson and Phil, Dallas and Mya Boyer, among

others.

"Every year SIMFC has been proud to host NIPD celebrations," said Robert Doucette Executive Director Saskatoon Indian Metis Friendship Center. "The last couple years we've been working with (the Office of the Treaty Commissioner's) Rock Your Roots (walk) but this year is different because of the pandemic. We didn't want to give up on NIPD."

The event will also feature Indigenous facts throughout the two-hour event.

"People will realize that we've made great contributions to this country," said Doucette. "Our people are now physicists, nurses, doctors, lawyers and teachers and we have played a significant role in the development of this country and we're going to showcase that."

Like many communities the City of Regina is postponing its NIPD celebrations. The event has been moved to September; the exact date is yet to be picked.

"We still felt it was very important to be able to provide some programming that would allow individuals to understand the importance that Indigenous people in Canada have contributed over the years," said Brad Bellegarde, Cultural diversity and Indigenous relations advisor for the City.

The City and Regina Public Library have partnered to provide Indigenous based events online for National Indigenous History month. You can find the content on Regina Public Library website in the Reconciliation tab. Content will be available for the month of June.

The online content includes a video on making bannock with Sioux chef Dickie Yuzicapi, Metis jigging, video screenings and talks with Indigenous Authors, including Waubgeshig Rice, author of Moon of the Crusted Snow.

"It's a new way of providing co-learning for the Regina public Library and the City of Regina," said Bellegarde. "We hope Regina residents will join in and help us celebrate by participating in these virtual programs."

## National Indigenous Peoples Day History and Trivia Quiz

(previous page)

1. 1999
2. March 1998
3. Norval Morrisseau
4. Six Nations of The Grand River
5. Lac La Ronge Indian Band
6. 10-15 Million!
7. 1690. Long time ago!
8. May 31, 1960 thanks to P.M Diefenbaker
9. Harry Daniels
10. One-third of reserve land was lost
11. Gabriel Dumont
12. Chief Poundmaker
13. The Michel Callihoo Band
14. Non-Status Indian
15. Jean Cuthand-Goodwill
16. Art Obey
17. GDI Gabriel Dumont Institute
18. Chief Beardy
19. James McKay
20. Kenneth T. Williams
21. Chief Little Child
22. 130,000 square kilometres
23. Ammunition and Twine
24. Selkirk Treaty
25. Cuthbert Grant

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# First Nations role models calendar spotlights inspiring leaders

By NC Raine  
for Eagle Feather News

Eighteen of the province's most influential and groundbreaking leaders are being honoured in the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations' (FSIN) Role Model calendar.

The two-year calendar, which features photos, quotes, and bios of the eighteen Indigenous influencers, will be distributed to the 74 First Nations in Saskatchewan. FSIN Vice-Chief David Pratt said he hopes the calendar provides direct motivation for young people to chase after their dreams.

"This is something we decided to do because we see far too often negative stories of First Nations people. We wanted to start to showcase the success stories of people who have overcome tremendous barriers," Pratt said.

"We wanted to give our young people hope. If they see that someone else can break those barriers and go forward to be successful, they can do it too."

The calendar features: Provincial Court Judge Judge Gerald Morin (Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation); Teacher and World Champion Barrel Racer Sonya Taypotat-Dodginghorse and World Champion Junior Barrel Racer Cayda Dodginghorse (Kahkewistahaw First Nation); Educator Rodney Soonias (Red Pheasant First Nation); Miss FSIN Eliliah Napachit

(Little Pine First Nation); Wanuskewin Board Chair Felix Thomas (Kinistin Saulteaux Nation); Entrepreneur Alicia Hrbachek (Peepeekisis First Nation); Endodontist Shannon Davis (Little Pine First Nation); NHL Player Ethan Bear (Ochapowace First Nation); Olympic Hockey Player Brigette Lacquette (Cote First Nation); Lieutenant Governor of Saskatch-



ewan Russ Mirasty (Lac La Ronge Indian Band); Vice-Principal Kirsten Catarat (Buffalo River Dene Nation); BHP Community Engagement Specialist Courage Bear (Ochapowace First Nation); Filmmaker Tasha Hubbard (Peepeekisis First Nation); Dentist Ron Martin (Fond du Lac Denesuline First Nation); Dr. Janet Tootosis (Poundmaker Cree Na-

tion); Federal Court Justice Paul Favel (Poundmaker Cree Nation); U of S Faculty Bonita Beatty (Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation); and Entrepreneur Destinee Peter (Carry the Kettle First Nation).

"One of the underlying messages is that not one of these people did it alone. Every single person that is successful did so because someone encouraged them, someone believed in them, someone pushed them," said Pratt.

Athletes Ethan Bear and Brigette Lacquette were selected because of the determination and sacrifice it took them to reach the highest level of athletics, while academics and professionals like Shannon Davis and Bonita Beatty were chosen to illustrate the wealth of possibilities that education gives young people.

Pratt also highlighted Judge Morin, calling him a trailblazer in the justice system.

During an online launch of the calendar, Judge Morin spoke about how he always wanted to hold himself accountable to his community.

"I always tried to live my life from the point of view that it wasn't only me who I'd hurt if I did something wrong in terms of what I wanted to achieve," said Morin. "That's always been a guiding light for me, understanding that I'm not important as a person, but what I do as a person is important because it affects many lives."

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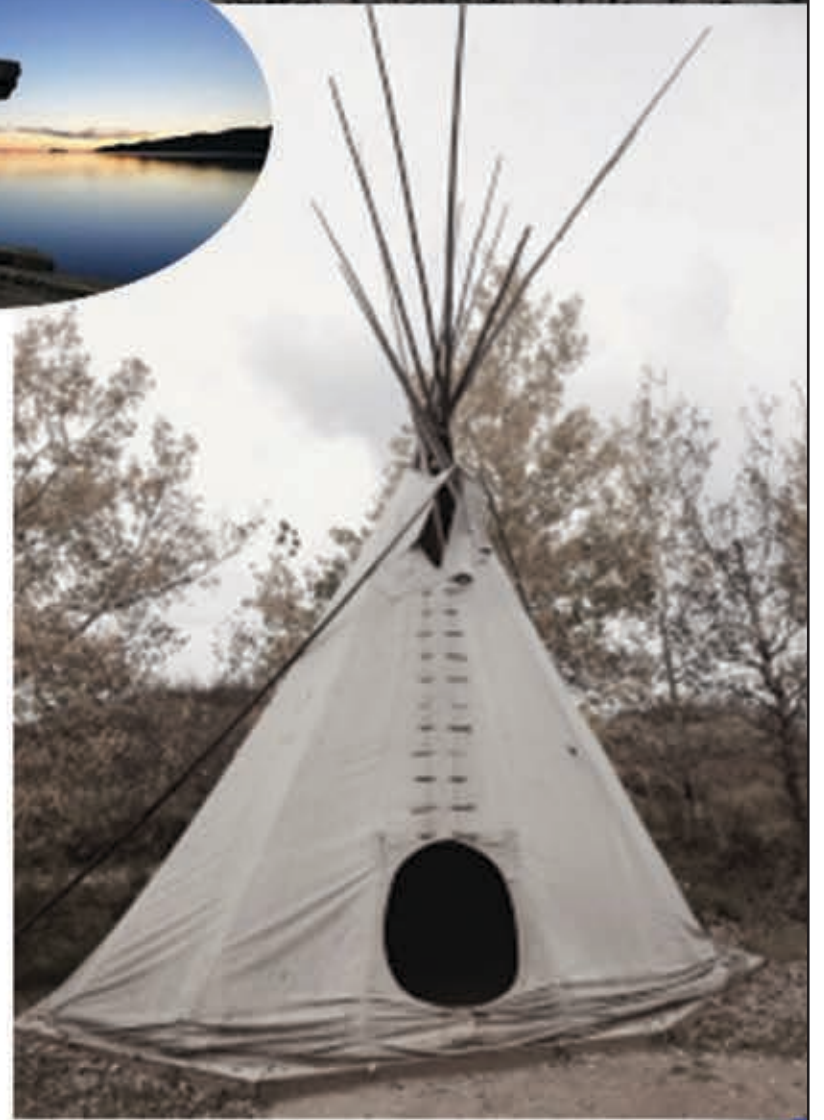




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# Allyson Stevenson to lead Métis Research at U of S

By Jeanelle Mandes  
of Eagle Feather News

Métis researcher Allyson Stevenson will be the new Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) Chair of Métis Research at the University of Saskatchewan.

"I was thrilled, it was like a dream come true. I'm really looking forward to devoting my attention to Métis research," Stevenson said. "I've focused on the Sixties Scoop for my past projects, looking at the impact of child welfare on Métis and First Nation communities. With this new chair position, I'm really going to be focusing on Métis histories in the 20th Century in Saskatchewan...and the re-emergence of the Métis people."

The role of the chair is to increase the profile of Métis research at the University of Saskatchewan. Stevenson will be conducting Métis research from a Métis perspective.

"I proposed a program of research to mentor Métis students at the university and to bring that higher profile of Métis research," she said.

Stevenson will be starting the five-year position on July 1. Until then, she will finish her role as the Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Peoples and Global Social Justice at the University of Regina, where she's also an assistant professor in the Department of Politics in International Studies.

Looking at her career so far, Stevenson is grateful for the mentorship of Jim Miller who was her Master's degree supervisor.

"He's an award-winning scholar and really

supported me and saw the potential in me before I really recognized that myself," she said. "He was instrumental in me becoming a scholar and pursuing history as a major and a focus of my research."

Stevenson also attributes Maria Campbell's book *Halfbreed* as another source of inspiration, stating that she was moved by Campbell's struggle and her work in revitalizing Métis culture and stories.

*"I was thrilled, it was like a dream come true. I'm really looking forward to devoting my attention to Métis research,"*

Stevenson is excited to embark on a new journey and is eager to work with the folks at GDI.

"To be recognized by my peers in the Department of Indigenous Studies and to be supported by GDI, it's a real honour for me," said Stevenson. "My goal... is that [when] people think of the University of Saskatchewan, they think of it as a Métis Centre of Excellence."



Allyson Stevenson has been appointed GDI Chair of Métis Research at the University of Saskatchewan beginning July 1, 2020. Photo submitted.

## Message from Premier Scott Moe

"The efforts of Saskatchewan people to control the spread of COVID-19 are what give us confidence to cautiously proceed with re-opening businesses and services in most of the province. We don't have to choose between our economy and fighting this pandemic. I believe we can do both. We can continue to keep our friends and family safe while gradually re-opening our economy. And together, we will.

Thank you, Saskatchewan"

### Re-Open Saskatchewan

Each phase will continuously be assessed based on transmission patterns and other factors.

**Phase 1:** previously restricted medical services, golf courses, parks and campgrounds.

**Phase 2:** retail and select personal care services

**Phase 3:** restaurants and food services, gyms and fitness centres, licensed establishments and child care facilities, remaining personal care services; increase size of gatherings to 15 people

**Phase 4:** indoor and outdoor recreation facilities; increase size of gatherings to 30 people

**Phase 5:** consider lifting long-term restrictions



### Building a Strong Saskatchewan

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# Stonechild book examines loss of Indigenous spirituality

By Michelle Lerat  
of Eagle Feather News

Conversations with elders about spiritual abuse experienced in Indian residential schools inspired Blair Stonechild's new book *Loss of Indigenous Eden and the Fall of Spirituality*.



**Blair Stonechild**  
Professor of Indigenous Studies at First Nations University of Canada and Author of *Loss of Indigenous Eden and the Fall of Spirituality*.  
Photo by Blair Stonechild

"I did quite a bit of talking and listening to [elders] and they encouraged me to write about this whole business of Indigenous Spirituality and what happened to it," said Stonechild, a Professor of Indigenous Studies at the First Nations University of Canada.

He recalled Elder Ernest Tootoosis saying, "We First Nations people used to live in the Garden of Eden,"

"He would say 'we never abused the gifts of the Creator.' It stuck in the back of my head for a long time."

Although the pandemic prevented the book launch in March, Stonechild says it

is relevant to the world's current situation and is probably more important than ever.

"I think we need to rediscover our relationship, not only with spirituality, but also our relationship with the natural world," he said.

The new book, which is a sequel to 2016's *The Knowledge Seeker: Embracing Indigenous Spirituality*, is for those who want a serious, in-depth knowledge about the loss of Indigenous spirituality.

The new volume looks at first contact between First Nations and Europeans and goes all the way back to the rise of civilization. He takes a deep look at world history from an Indigenous perspective while incorporating research done with elders.

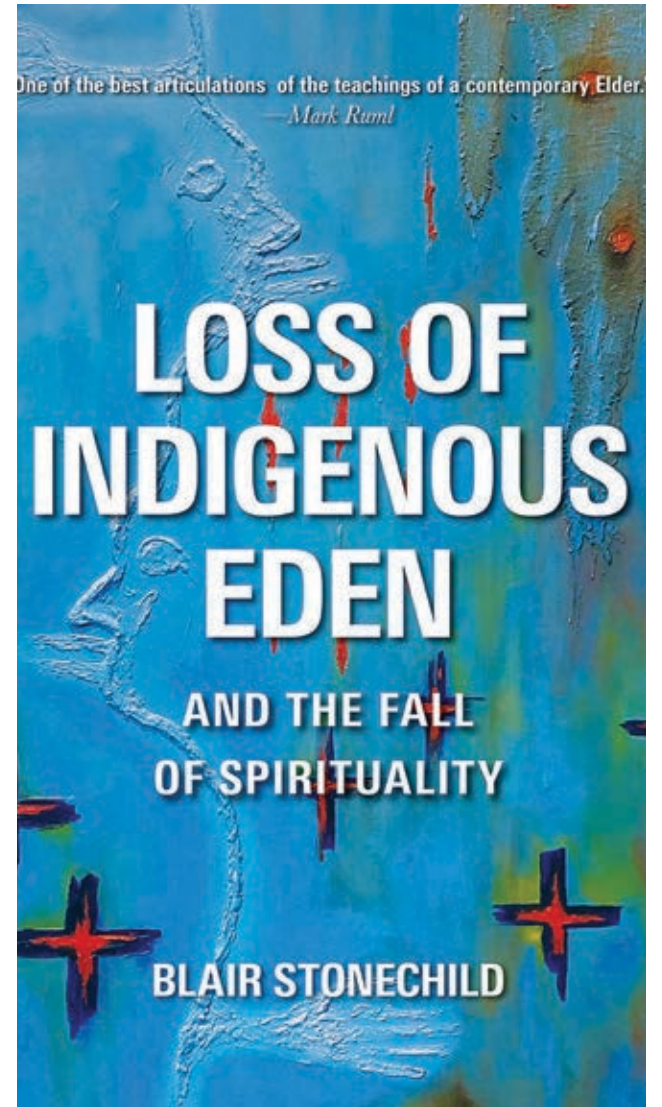
He says writing the book was like piecing together a puzzle. It incorporates ten years of research and a lot of reading and reflecting to find the big picture.

*Stonechild says it is relevant to the world's current situation and is probably more important than ever.*

It also relates to National Indigenous Peoples Day, he said.

"Indigenous Peoples Day is to restore pride in our culture," said Stonechild. "I think our spirituality is one of the most valuable and precious parts of our culture which has really been lost."

"This whole area of spirituality is something that we really started to talk about in Indigenous studies because the Elders realize that this is something that is badly needed," said Stonechild. "Not just for our own people and our own youth but generally also so that the world can learn more about it."



# Métis concerts posted weekly on GDI Facebook page and YouTube channel

By Michelle Lerat  
of Eagle Feather News

Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) showcases Métis artists and uses music to uplift people during the pandemic.

Virtual concerts are held on GDI's Facebook page and YouTube channel featuring music from Métis artists including John Arcand, Donny Parenteau, Tristen Durocher and Lucas Welsh.

Welsh is a music teacher from Blaine Lake who plays the fiddle, guitar and mandolin.

"I really appreciate what GDI is doing for Métis artists," he said. "It's really nice that they're being supportive of the artists in their communities."

In his solo performance, Welsh plays each of his instruments and sings his own compositions.

"There's definitely aspects of my music and my playing that I think relate with the Métis and with that style of music," he said. "I really enjoy getting my music out there and making people aware of more traditional styles of music."

"It's just nice that there's some institutes like the GDI that are stepping up that are making some wide spread platforms for artists [so] they can keep representing themselves and get their name out there."

New concerts are uploaded on Mondays.

They began one month ago and will continue throughout the summer. GDI has a lot of exciting events coming up including a virtual concert for National Indigenous People's Day which will be available June 19th.

The events were created as a way to decrease the isolation many people are experiencing and



Lucas Welsh playing guitar. Welsh is a Métis artist from Saskatchewan. He was a performer for Gabriel Dumont Institutes virtual concerts. Photo by Lucas Welsh website gallery

provide people with a fun, interactive and educational experience.

"It's kind of an emotional trauma on everybody," said Karon Shmon Director of Métis culture and history. "People are missing out on seeing friends and family. It's something that can lift the spirits of people and keep their mind off the things we have to do to exist under the pandemic"

The concerts teach Métis culture through music and provide a platform for Métis artist during the pandemic. The concerts are shot by the artist using their cell phones and include dialogue from the artist about themselves and their music.

"The artists talk about what motivated them, how did they get into it, why they compose or create the things that they do," said Shmon. "Métis are very diverse when you look at the different experiences of Métis people and how that impacts what they create. It supports the diversity that we have but, what is similar also."

Shmon says the concerts are uploaded Mondays except, when it is a holiday or there's another event happening on that day.

*Virtual concerts are held on GDI's Facebook page and YouTube channel featuring music from Métis artists including John Arcand, Donny Parenteau, Tristen Durocher and Lucas Welsh.*

"The institute has a dual mission to educate and train Métis people from across Saskatchewan and to preserve and promote Métis culture and history, [the concerts] are part of both of those ends of the mission."

## CALLING ALL ARTISTS



Do you want to grow as an artist? Or do you have skills to offer as a mentor? Apply to CARFAC SASK's 2020-21 Mentorship Program! Traditional and craft art forms are welcome.

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JUNE 15



Music teacher Lucas Welsh played the fiddle and other instruments for Gabriel Dumont Institute's virtual concerts. Photo by Lucas Welsh website gallery.

# Congratulations to Our Graduates

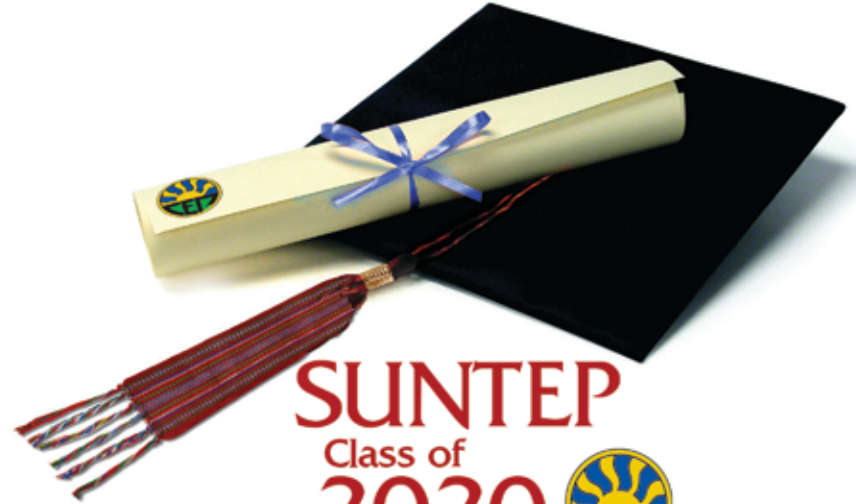


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Beauval, Buffalo Narrows, Île-à-la-Crosse, La Loche, Lloydminster, Meadow Lake, Melfort, Patuanak, Pinehouse Lake, Prince Albert, Regina, Saskatoon

Dumont Technical Institute celebrates our 2019-2020 graduates! All the best in your future endeavours!



## SUNTEP Class of 2020



### REGINA

Logan Boyer  
Courtney Brown  
Sentilla Bubb  
Alexis Johnson  
Conner Kezema  
Danielle Pelletier  
Garrick Schmidt  
Laura Thomson  
Jenny Veilleux  
Kayla Ward

### SASKATOON

Dakota Adams-Beavereye  
Dora Corrigan  
Matthew Delorme  
Nathan Gaudet  
Aaron Gosselin  
Connor Guillet  
Shaina Hounsell  
Kaela Kohnke  
Tawnie Kotyk  
Dean Legare  
Brittany Macnab  
Breana Piche  
Daulton Sinoski

### PRINCE ALBERT

Shelby Constant  
Susan Cox  
Leah Drabot  
Jennifer Durocher  
Tia Ewashko  
Amanda Hoey  
Fayth Kaiswatum  
Brett Little  
Nicole Magnin  
Ryan Munshaw  
Jolene Peters  
Kelsey Petit  
Kelly Scriven  
Ashley Smith  
Brandi Soles  
Tiffany Waugh-Beaulieu  
Cylie Williams

## We're proud of you!

### NATIONAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY

JUNE 21, 2020

Join us for a virtual celebration of this important day starting at 9 am on Friday, June 19th. (so teachers, parents, and students can enjoy it too)

<https://www.facebook.com/gabriel Dumont Institute/>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCynvuqUsjqxgyQ6Lrh6TUg>

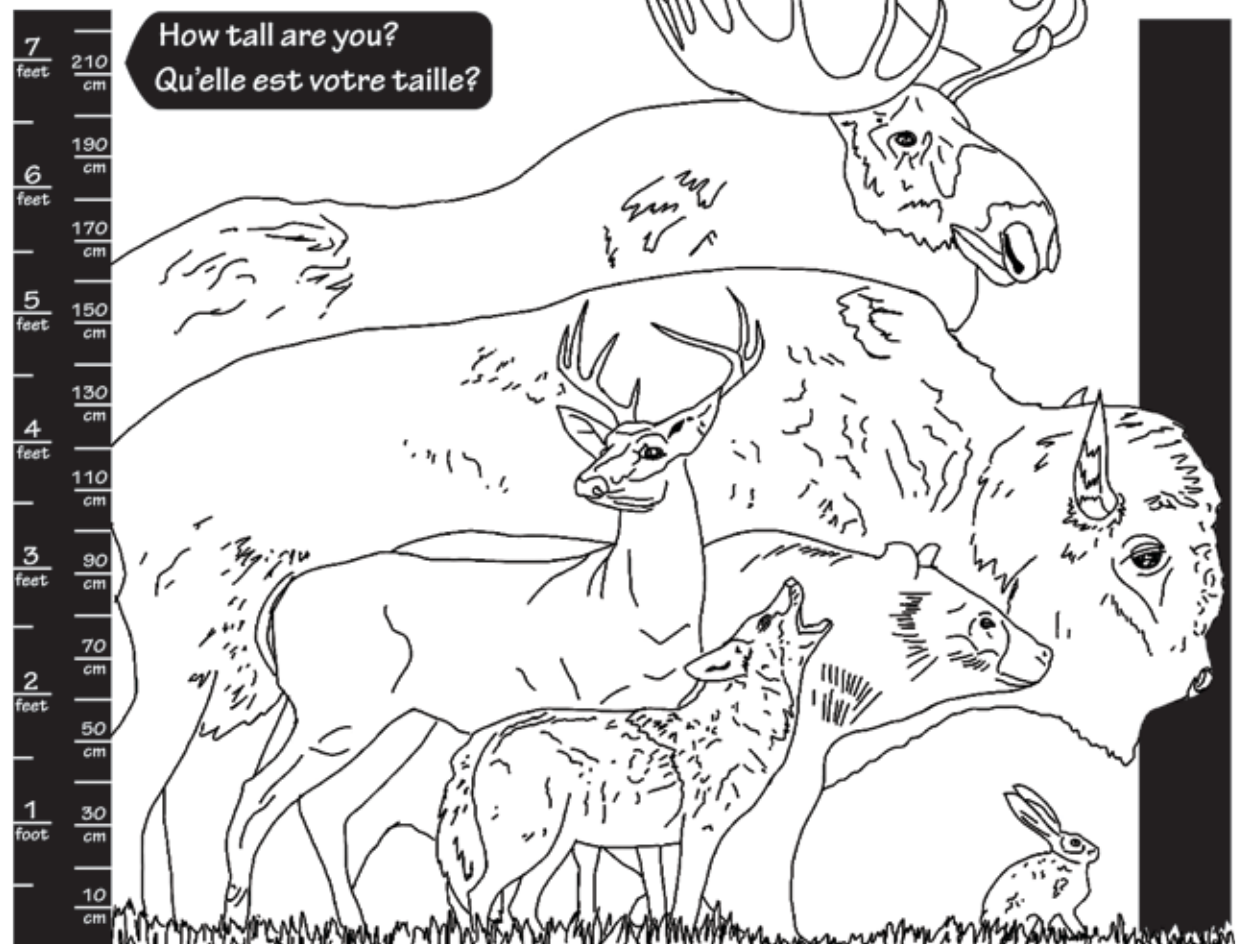
**STUDENTS! SEND US YOUR WORK AND BE ELIGIBLE FOR A PRIZE DRAW!**

Colour the image at right. On a separate piece of paper, draw an image of yourself that corresponds to your current height. Cut it out and paste it on your colouring page near the ruler.

Take a photo and email it to: [info@gdins.org](mailto:info@gdins.org)

Do you know the names of the animals that may be seen on the nature trail at the Batoche National Historic Site?

See the answers on page 25 (but don't peek before you try)



## Book of joyful Indigenous images draws book award nominations

By Michelle Lerat  
of Eagle Feather News

A comment by Paul Seesequasis' mother inspired him to undertake a project that has led to a popular photography book that's been nominated for four Saskatchewan Book Awards.

His mother, Mary Seesequasis, who is a resi-

ing him their own pictures.

As the project gained followers, readers identified individuals in the photos and shared their stories.

He has posted more than 1000 photos and most of the people and communities in them have been identified.

For the book, he selected stories from the on-

residential school, the pass system and all the difficulties of that time but kept culture, language and kinship together. If it wasn't for that we wouldn't have the resurgence of language and culture that we have today," he said.

The book awards were supposed to be announced online on May 28 but were postponed because of technical difficulties, he said.

"I'm grateful for the people who read the book and thankful, especially, to the people who shared their stories with me. It's a humbling thing and hopefully it does justice to their stories," he said.

Seesequasis plans to continue his cross-country photo exhibition when travel restrictions are lifted.



Photo from Paul Seesequasis book *Blanket Toss Under Midnight Sun*. As photos were seen people and places in the photos began to be identified. *George Johnston's Taxi Service: Angela Tom, unnamed person and Fanny Tom (Tlingit), Teslin, Yukon, 1944* © George Johnston Collection / Yukon Archives - Department of Tourism and Culture. Photo credit [granta.com](http://granta.com)



*Blanket Toss Under Midnight Sun* is nominated for four Saskatchewan Book Awards. Paul Seesequasis' book showcases positive photos of Indigenous people in Canada between 1925-1970. *Children (Dene), Déljine, Northwest Territories, 1968* © Henry Busse / Northwest Territories Archives. Photo credit [granta.com](http://granta.com).

dential school survivor, once told him there were not enough positive stories of the resilience and strength that has held Indigenous families together through difficult times.

"That inspired me to look for the photographic evidence," said Seesequasis.

The result was *Blanket Toss Under Midnight Sun: Portraits of Everyday Life in Eight Indigenous Communities*, published by Penguin Random House Canada.

"I'm looking for those positive images," he said, "images of strength, of people at work, of children playing, of people having fun. Something that's outside of what we read so much in mainstream media of the tragic and negative stuff."

In 2015, he began posting museum and archive images on social media under the title Indigenous Archival Photo Project. Soon people started send-

line project for further research and interviews with the individuals and photographers to develop their stories further.

"Part of it is also ensuring that those photos come home to the community and to the families," he said.

The book weaves a narrative and contributes to the history of families and communities.

"The photos paid tribute to the generation that went through



### COMMUNITY NOTICE Annual Vegetation Management Program

Every year, CN is required to clear its right-of-way from any vegetation that may pose a safety hazard. Vegetation on railway right-of-way, if left uncontrolled, can contribute to trackside fires and impair proper inspection of track infrastructure.

As such, for safe railway operations, the annual vegetation control program will be carried out on CN rail lines in the province of Saskatchewan. A certified applicator will be applying herbicides on and around the railway tracks (primarily along the 16-foot gravelled area). All product requirements for setbacks in the vicinity of dwellings, aquatic environments and municipal water supplies will be fulfilled.

At this time, we expect that the program will take place from May to October 2020.

Visit [cn.ca/vegetation](http://cn.ca/vegetation) to consult the list of cities as well as the updated schedule.

Safety is a core value at CN and in the actual context of the COVID-19 pandemic, our employees and contractors are taking all measures to stay healthy and to protect the communities in which we operate. For more information, please visit [cn.ca/covid-19-update](http://cn.ca/covid-19-update).

For more information, please contact the CN Public Inquiry Line at [contact@cn.ca](mailto:contact@cn.ca) or 1-888-888-5909.

[cn.ca](http://cn.ca)



MBC Radio and APTN celebrate

NATIONAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY



### Summer Solstice Concert 2020

MBC and APTN present a special radio and television broadcast celebration with Indigenous artists from across Turtle Island performing from the comfort of their homes to celebrate this important day.

Sunday, June 21 from 8:30pm to 10:30pm



SUMMER SOLSTICE  
INDIGENOUS CONCERT

Celebrate with us on your local station or online at: [www.mbcradio.com](http://www.mbcradio.com)

## Métis Elder receives Saskatchewan Book Award nomination for first book

By **Bryana Couture**  
for *Eagle Feather News*

In 2019, at 84 years, respected Métis Elder Cecile Blanke published her first book, *Lac Pelletier: My Métis Home*, which is nominated for a Saskatchewan Book Award (SBA).

Born as Cecile LaRocque at Lac Pelletier, 50 kilometres south of Swift Current, she married Walter Blanke at 16. Then, a farmer's wife, she would go on to raise six children.

Today, at 85, Blanke recalls a time when the Métis played a vital role in Canada's history, a role she said has been largely forgotten.

"I wrote the book so people would understand who we are, where we came from, and where we are today," said Blanke.

What started as a collection of hand-written stories is now a published book, filled with accounts and photographs of Blanke's early-life surroundings.

A prominent public speaker, Blanke was encouraged by many to share her writing, including her daughter, Clare McNab, who helped digitize her stories. Blanke also credits her cousin and fellow author, Louise (Trottier) Moine, for inspiring her foray in print.

"My cousin that wrote two books was older, too. Not as old as me with her first book, but her last book, she was older than me," Blanke said of Moine fondly.

The book was released in 2019 by Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) Press, who entered Blanke's



**Métis Elder Cecile Blanke celebrating at her book launch in July 2019. Photo by Ev Bowman.**

book into contention for the awards, garnering a nomination for the Publishing in Education Award. "I was so honoured when I heard (GDI) did that

for me, and then when I was chosen ... that was very exciting news," said Blanke of the nomination.

"(Blanke) is an Elder, she's a story-teller. The only distinction is that instead of doing it as oral history, as she has done for years as an elder, she's put it into writing," said Kam Teo, Executive Director of the SBA.

*"I wrote the book so people would understand who we are, where we came from, and where we are today,"*

Jesse Archibald-Barber, a professor of Indigenous Languages with First Nations University of Canada, has built his career on the historic importance of stories like Blanke's.

"Great literature is often a reflection of identity, history ... social and political struggles," said Archibald-Barber.

"The (importance of) the awards is that it brings so much more attention to the great writing and quality work that's being done by Indigenous writers and knowledge-keepers," he said.

Winners for the 27th annual Saskatchewan Book Awards will be announced online at a date yet to be determined.



Saskatchewan Indian Equity Foundation

### SUPPORT FOR INDIGENOUS BUSINESSES

In response to the COVID-19 crisis, **SASKATCHEWAN INDIAN EQUITY FOUNDATION INC.** through assistance provided by the Government of Canada, is taking action to ensure that Indigenous business owners impacted by Covid-19 have access to support. The emergency loan program is a component of the Indigenous Business Stabilization program.

The Emergency Loan Program (ELP) is designed as an emergency measure to support small business owners in meeting their immediate operating cash flow needs. These funds are not intended to replace or duplicate government or other bank/lender emergency financing/funds that are available to businesses in Canada.

**Maximum assistance is \$40,000 comprised of a 75% loan and 25% non-repayable contribution.**

**If you are an Indigenous-owned business and have been impacted by the COVID-19 crisis,** contact SIEF for more information by phone 306-955-4550 or email [info@sief.sk.ca](mailto:info@sief.sk.ca).

Visit our website for the emergency loan program application at [www.sief.sk.ca](http://www.sief.sk.ca)

# Jingle dress and hoop dancing meaningful to dancers

By NC Raine  
for Eagle Feather News

Summertime festivities in the prairies typically mean powwows, jigs, competitions, and cultural celebrations.

But with communal gatherings on hold, Eagle Feather News decided to get insight from some of Saskatchewan's most prominent dancers on what makes dance and cultural events so important to them.



**Randi Lynn Nanemahoo-Candline**  
Jingle-Dress Dancer, Saskatoon

On why she loves sharing dance with others: "Our culture is so beautiful. For me, sharing my dancing is my way of sharing that beauty with others because it's a language anyone can speak."

On what dance has done for her: "Dancing gives me purpose in life... It's my passion. I have ADHD so it helps me focus. I have so many physical, emotional, and spiritual benefits from dancing."

On following your passion: "The message I try to send people regardless of their age or background is don't be scared to try new things. Don't be scared to put in the work. Everything you put into your passion will come back to you in opportunities tenfold."



**Lawrence Roy Jr.**  
Hoop Dancer, Saskatoon

On his start in dancing: "As just little kids, my mom would take us to powwows, dress us in beaded clothing, and we'd go dancing. She'd point to me and say, 'that guy is going to be a good dancer.'"

On what dance means to him: "For

me, dancing is all about health. I have a good connection with Mother Nature. When I dance, I try to feel the sky, the wind, the sun. I try to talk with everything around me."

On connecting with his kids and community through dance: "I really love making those connections through dance. It doesn't matter what nation you're from, people are so intrigued by the dance... Everyone can make that rhythm, even inside their heart."



**Chasity Delorme**  
Old-Style Jingle-Dress Dancer, Regina

On why she started dancing: "As an urban Indigenous person, I've always had a desire to be more connected to my own Indigeneity. There's always been a discon-

nect growing up in the city with (culture). Dancing is what started me becoming more connected and allowed me to express my Indigenous culture."

On old-style jingle-dress dancing: "It's a healing dance. We wear many heavy cones on our regalia, so when we dance, we are taught to pray, and the sounds of the cones take our prayers up to the Creator."

On dancing with her daughters: "Dancing with my daughters is so unbelievably special because it was something I didn't have growing up. This part of our Indigeneity is connected and part of our everyday lives."



**Terrance Littleent**  
Hoop Dancer/co-creator of Hip Hop Hoop Dance, Regina

On why dance is important to him: "Hoop dancing to me is not a dance, it's a way of life. When we dance, it's for everyone. Hoop dancing is the same thing because it's a healing dance. Those teachings are what I try to live by. My uncle Kirby taught me that if I live by those five basic teachings (listen, watch, learn, respect, and love) I can be successful in anything I do."

On getting his start: "I really didn't know much about First Nations culture because I was in and out of foster care... my late uncle Kirby took me to my first powwow and showed me the powwow life. In my very first time dancing I took first place in the junior boys grass dance."

On Hip Hop Hoop Dance: "A lot of people tell me they've seen hoop dance before, but they haven't heard the significance of what the hoops mean... We speak about racism, reconciliation, and the two cultures coming together and sharing a beautiful story. It's a powerful production with two males coming together showing people our love of dance."

**Helping Build Brighter Futures**  
Aen ooshintaahk mitooni kayway poor li taan kaa payaamakuhk

## Office Administration

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*Program start dates and delivery methods may be modified or adjusted to ensure that DTI programs and services follow the direction, advice and guidance of the federal and provincial governments and Saskatchewan's Chief Medical Health Officer during this period of uncertainty resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.*

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## Pinehouse Photography Club



**Elder Gabe Natomagan** kneels beside a skiff in progress. The skiff boats used in Pinehouse are legendary for their stability and longevity and you can see many pulled up on shore ready to go to work. Founded in 2017, the Pinehouse Photography Club (PPC), part of the Canadian PhotoHealth Authority (CPHA), uses therapeutic photography with youth in the community of Pinehouse Lake, Saskatchewan. Therapeutic photography is the name for photo-based activities that are self-initiated and conducted by the photography club under the direction of nursing and social work, but where no formal therapy is taking place and no therapist or counselor needs to be involved. Photography has been proven to help youth with self esteem, self worth, and focus. The PPC uses photography to provide a tool for youth to channel their emotions and feelings without even saying a word. Many youth and adults have provided positive feedback that therapeutic photography helps them with depression, anxiety, thoughts of suicide and even addictions. Check out our website for monthly photographs from these inspiring young people.

### La Prairie Ronde/Round Prairie and Willowfield Métis Descendants

We have the opportunity to showcase the history of our Métis communities in a documentary. We are not able to have an in-person descendant meeting at this time due to Covid 19 but we thought now would give people the opportunity to look through old pictures and paperwork that could contribute to the documentary. We will be forming descendant committees to oversee the scope of the projects and to hire a researcher and videographer.

**What do you think will be an important part of a documentary to honour your family?  
Is there anyone in your family that was born at Round Prairie and still with us?**

Please email Evelyn Jonston at [evejo@sasktel.net](mailto:evejo@sasktel.net)  
We sincerely thank MNS WR11A for financial support and leadership.

**CUMFI**

# During these unusual times, we are still here to listen to you.

Here in Saskatchewan, COVID-19 has affected us in many ways. While provincial and municipal governments are busy rolling out new services and continuing existing ones, they still have a duty to deliver these services fairly. That's why it's important to know that we are available too. We are impartial and independent from government. We can help to informally resolve problems or investigate when appropriate.

#### What sort of problem? One that fits all three of these:

1. It's administrative. That is, it happened when a provincial or municipal government organization was carrying out a program or service. For example:
  - a decision that seems unfair
  - a gap in services or programs
  - a delay in service
2. It affects you personally.
3. You have not been able to resolve it with the government organization.

We also take complaints about municipal council members violating their code of ethics (including conflicts of interest). In these cases, we would only get involved after the municipality has had an opportunity to address the complaint first.

Not sure whether we can take your complaint? Contact us. We'll tell you whether we can get involved and if not, will do our best to refer you appropriately.

Thank you to everyone in the province for your efforts to make our curve flat and keep the province going. **Stay safe.**

**How to Reach Us  
1-800-667-9787**

**Make a complaint online at [www.ombudsman.sk.ca](http://www.ombudsman.sk.ca)**

As the Office of the Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner, we also remain available to provincial public sector employees who want to seek advice or make a disclosure of wrongdoing or complaint of reprisal at [www.ombudsman.sk.ca/pidc](http://www.ombudsman.sk.ca/pidc).



#### ANSWERS FROM PAGE 17

#### Animals on the nature trail at Batoche National Historic Site

moose	∞	l'aariyaanl
bison	∞	lii bufloo
deer	∞	aen shoovreu
coyote	∞	aen pchi loo
bear	∞	aen noor
rabbit	∞	aen lyayv

# Battling Addictions: A Success Story

By Michelle Lerat  
of Eagle Feather News

Tarrant Cross Child overcame alcohol addiction to enrich communities with training, employment and recreation.

Cross Child and business partner Christian Braid created Prairie Flooring Ltd. in 2018. It is located in Saskatoon.

"It is a First Nation majority owned business geared towards excellence in the [flooring] trade," said Cross Child. "We wanted to create meaningful training and career opportunities for Indigenous communities in Saskatchewan."

An established runner and marathon winner Cross Child incorporates running clinics into their business model. Prairie Run Crew Outreach Program Inc. Formerly called Child of the Cross Running Clinics brings motivational talks and running

Braid and his employees began a cash collection amongst the group to help Cross Child and his family cover the cost of his treatment. Braid's business also donated material to renovate the center. Cross Child and Braid had a conversation about him returning to work after his treatment.

"He would have to prove it first," said Braid. "That he was really committed to the path that he was on and he was going to be reliable and a quality trades person again to be part of our team."

After his 12-month treatment stay Cross Child returned home and regained his sole proprietor business and began working for Braid.

"I started hearing about the suicide crisis in Northern communities and First Nations communities," said Cross Child. "I needed to do something and one thing that helped me was running, during rehab I started running a lot. I thought well I want to provide running

then had the idea to expand on his running clinics.

"Imagine if we could [also] provide them jobs and opportunities," said Cross Child. "I went back to Christian and I said 'I found our workers, I found who we're going to employ, who we're going to educate, who we're going to train'. That's when we developed Prairie Flooring."

The company has gone to communities such as Big River Cree Nation to renovate and install flooring on their elementary school while hiring and training members of the community. They also hire people for on the job training and offer entrepreneurship.

"The long-term plan," said Braid. "Is to continue to build the company to be a large self-sustaining business that employ's First Nations people in everything from trades to accounting to marketing and finance."



**Tarrant Cross Child (left) with Christian Braid (right) business partners and co-founders of Prairie Flooring Ltd during a walk/run event to raise funds for mental health.**

events to communities. The events are sponsored by Prairie Flooring, New Balance Canada and Brainsport.

"That's our social responsibility giving back to the communities where we do business," said Cross Child. "We'll go back to the community and do a school presentation with our run clinics."

Cross Child and Braid have a long history. During Cross Child's 10-year-long battle with alcohol addiction Braid continued to employ him.

"We parted ways three times because of my addiction," said Cross Child "He always [said] when you get help come back, he knew I needed help."

Christian Braid Co-founder of Prairie Flooring and president of Braid Flooring and Window Fashions said Cross Child is passionate and skilled at flooring but, as his addiction progressed his performance on the job site decreased and Braid had no choice but to let him go as an employee.

"I still remember having to tell our team that they could no longer use Tarrant," said Braid. "It was honestly one of the hardest business decisions I've had to make in my career."

In 2014 Cross Child's addiction would lead to a suicide attempt.

"I was on the verge of losing my home, losing my family, I had lost my sole proprietor business, my health was deteriorating. I had nothing."

He awoke in the hospital and decided to seek help. He went to a 12-month long rehab facility where Cross Child's passion for running was reignited.

programs for our communities."

He used running clinics to promote health and fitness in communities. That's when Braid approached him about an Indigenous work strategy.

"There's been this long history in Canada of this tension between First Nations and non-First Nations," said Braid. "And here's Tarrant and I. We're good friends, we have a personal relationship and a working relationship."

Braid saw how Cross Child became his best self while helping others. They wanted to use this angle and create a business plan that entailed supporting communities with meaningful career and training opportunities. They spent the next year consulting different communities and stakeholders. Cross Child



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## Métis women's secretariat distributes food amid ongoing pandemic

*By Brendan Mayer  
for Eagle Feather News*

Métis women have stepped forward to deliver food in all the 12 regions of the Metis Nation-Saskatchewan (MN-S) during the pandemic.

Les Filles de Madeleine Secretariat, (Les Filles) received \$135,000 from MN-S to purchase the food and about 100 women volunteers are delivering hampers, said Tammy Mah, president of group which has a seat on the Provincial Métis Council.

"We have participated 100 per cent with the MN-S," Mah said. "They have really helped our citizens across Saskatchewan. The MN-S gave us our funding and the volunteering came from the women. We have had a lot of people who have wanted to volunteer. We were able to get money to all these regions to do food hampers. Your food bill can jump up."

Prince Albert, Saskatoon and Regina chapters each received \$18,000, while the nine rural chapters received \$9,000 each, Mah said.

Volunteers are delivering the hampers so recipients can stay safely at home. The first hampers were given mainly to seniors and those who were recently laid off.

"We focused on our Métis citizens who needed it," she said. "Each region really reached out to help some of the seniors. They really didn't get much funding during this COVID-19 crisis. We tried to get hampers to the unemployed right away. Everybody was grateful for what they got. I didn't get any negative feedback."

The chapter in Prince Albert received a deal from Wes Erlendson, the owner of the Safeway in the city.

"We approached Safeway because we know that they will work with our Aboriginal community very well," Mah said. "Wes really helped us."

The 135 hampers delivered in Prince Albert included 29 items.

"We put potatoes, rice, macaroni, apple juice, cookies, meat, tomatoes and eggs in our hampers," she added. "We put in everything but the kitchen



*April Crain, treasurer of the Les Filles de Madeleine chapter in Prince Albert, delivering a food hamper to Yvonne Gyoerick. Photo submitted.*

sink. You name it. We keep everything refrigerated that has to be until it's going out. Those hampers were really nice. This is needed and we're willing to do it."

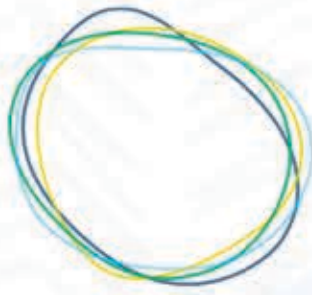
Mah estimates about 1000 hampers have been delivered across the province as of the end of May.

"It's hard to find cleaning supplies in Prince Albert," Mah said. "We are taking names because there are people that still need this. We're not shutting the door on anybody. We still have a bit of money left over. We are doing the best we can. That's the only thing we can do until this crisis is over."

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