



Office of the Treaty Commissioner

NEWSLETTER

The Office of the Treaty Commissioner (OTC) is mandated to advance the Treaty goal of establishing good relations among all people of Saskatchewan. The OTC continues to work with First Nations, provincial school systems, other educational institutions and the rest of Saskatchewan to raise the awareness and understanding of Treaties in Saskatchewan.

A Quarterly Newsletter

also available on our website: www.otc.ca

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Cliff Wright: 1927-2014



Roland Crowe and Cliff Wright
Photo Courtesy: Cindy Moleski Photography

On December 9, 2014, Saskatchewan lost one of its builders during the latter half of the 20th century. Former Treaty Commissioner Cliff Wright will be remembered for his direct style in governing the city of Saskatoon. He brought that style into the Saskatchewan Treaty Commissioner's Office and won him the trust and respect of all who were involved in the sensitive field of treaties and outstanding land issues.

It began with the signing in of the first urban commercial reserve with the Muskeg Lake Cree Nation on October, 1st, 1988. This was quickly followed by his appointment as Treaty Commissioner and by September, 1992, Treaty Commissioner Wright had laid the ground work and brought the Federal Government, First Nations Governments, Saskatchewan Government and Municipal Governments to agreement.

The Treaty Land Entitlement Agreement (1992) has been the trigger to a new age in the relationships between the two Treaty Parties of Saskatchewan. To date, 1 million acres of land has been purchased by First Nations under the authority of this agreement.



Prince Edward visits Saskatoon and Montreal Lake Cree Nation Celebrates Adhesion Documents...



Prince Edward, the Earl of Wessex and Treaty Commissioner George E. Lafond

History Comes Alive: 126th Anniversary Adhesion to Treaty 6 – February 11th, 1889 - 2015!
Office of the Treaty Commissioner congratulates the Montreal Lake Cree Nation on the return of the Treaty 6 Adhesion Documents signed on February 11th, 1889 at Montreal Lake to the terms of Western Treaty No 6 (1876) between the Queen and the Plain and Wood Cree Indians.

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Gold Award was presented by His Royal Highness Prince Edward, The Earl of Wessex to 25 youth from across Saskatchewan at a private event on Thurs., Sept. 18 2014, located at the RCMP 'Depot' Division in Regina.

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is an international youth award for participants between the ages of 14-24. It is a fully-inclusive program, without academic requirements for participation. .

The Award Programme is comprised of three levels: Bronze, Silver & Gold. In each level, there are four sections that need to be completed: volunteer service, a skill, physical recreation, an adventurous journey, and a residential project (for gold level only).

Currently, there are 8 million participants in more than 140 countries worldwide, with over 1,250 participants in the Saskatchewan Division. More than 44,000 Canadian youth are currently participating in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award program.

The Award is not an academic achievement, but rather an opportunity to develop or be recognized for extra-curricular activities and interests. A strong point to the Duke of Edinburgh's Award is our ability to work in a variety of settings, with community-based youth groups, schools as well as independent participants. In Saskatchewan, young adults can get a high school special credit for each level: bronze – 10, silver – 11 and gold – 12. These credits are recognized by the Ministry of Education on the participants' high school transcripts.



Montreal Lake First Nation Adhesion Signing Photo Courtesy: Rhonda Gordon

This celebration took place on October 22nd, 2014 in the community of Montreal Lake First Nation. We concur with Chief Henderson's words ".....to honor and preserve our sacred Treaties..." The signing ceremony between the community of Montreal Lake Cree Nation and the Archives and Special Collections department at the U of S has attested to the preservation of precious Treaties. OTC commends Chief Henderson and the leadership for such preservation. Montreal Lake Cree Nation has permanently loaned these precious documents to the Archives and Special Collections department at the U of S. A signing ceremony was held on October 22nd, 2014 in the community of Montreal Lake.



Joseph Boyden and Yann Martel Discuss Reconciliation in celebration of the OTC's 25th Anniversary

It's not often you get a chance to listen in on a conversation between two of Canada's best novelists. But that's exactly the treat shared on October 14 by a sold-out audience at the Remai Arts Centre.

Joseph Boyden and Yann Martel kept the roughly 400 in attendance hanging on every word as the two discussed their respective (and very different) writing styles, Boyden's personal battles with depression, and their thoughts on reconciliation and Indigenous issues in Canada.



Joseph Boyden and Yann Martel



OTC 25th Anniversary Ice Sculpture at the Remai Arts Centre – October 14th
All Photos on this page Courtesy: Word on the Street

On reconciliation, Boyden emphasized the change he sees coming in the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Canada. He noted the importance of places like Saskatchewan, from which has emerged vital civil society voices such as Idle No More. Martel expressed the importance of cross-cultural understanding and of individual relationships, stating that "you must know someone to love or hate them".

The event was co-hosted with The Word On The Street Saskatoon, in conjunction with the 25th anniversary of the Office of the Treaty Commissioner, and with the support of PotashCorp, Tourism Saskatoon, the Saskatchewan Regional Economic Development Authority, and the University of Saskatchewan.

Treaty Commissioner George E. Lafond thanked Boyden and Martel with gifts of tobacco, a traditional star blanket and a painting, all of which were presented to the authors by students from FNUC, the U of S and Oskayak High School. The Saskatoon Women's Drum Group concluded the evening by presenting the two authors with an honour song.

Boyden's latest novel, The Orenda, is a story set in the early 17th century in what is now southern Ontario, told through the eyes of a young Iroquois girl, a great Huron warrior, and a Jesuit missionary. It was named the winner of the 2014 edition of CBC's Canada Reads. Yann Martel is the author of the prize acclaimed novel Life of Pi.



Planning Key for Rebuilding: the Westbank First Nation Story

Lloydminster, Treaty Six – The second annual Indigenous Economic Partnership Summit (iSummit) in Lloydminster featured keynote Chief Robert Louie of the Westbank First Nation (WFN), BC. The story of the First Nations turn around since the 50's, from poverty and virtually no development to today where the WFN is home to hundreds of businesses, a tax collection system and leasing revenue on reserve lands is unprecedented.

WFN is a good example of effective leadership with a vision, but as importantly it is about effective governance and planning. In order to get ready for the responsibility of governing itself, WFN had to prepare and build its infrastructure in order to attract investors. Secondly, it had to install a mechanism to collect taxes in order to support itself. Thirdly, it had to redesign and strengthen its overall governance in order to provide a real sense of certainty to its investors, provide a stable government and leadership and land title insurance. Lastly, WFN established a goal to revitalize and respect its own Indigenous culture and heritage after a century of assimilation policy that has been counterproductive.

A key process on the path to self-government is the necessity to have a comprehensive community plan (CCP). The CCP guides the nation's growth, development,

resource management and community planning for reserve lands and traditional territory of WFN. The nation's citizens have ongoing input and fully participate in the CCP, which is a holistic process driven by the community.

"We must take charge as leaders and accept the responsibility that goes along with leadership" -Chief Robert Louie

The outcomes to date include: a large residential and commercial development; more land and lease transactions; between 2006 and 2012 WFN issued \$335M in building permits; almost 4,000 residences on reserve; over 400 businesses on WFN lands; over 1.3M sq ft of shopping centre development; over \$1.3B in assessed property taxes and over \$12M in property tax revenues collected on an annual basis. GDP has grown from \$100 M to \$500M in the past decade. WFN has contributed \$80M in annual fiscal revenue through sales tax, personal income tax and corporate tax on WFN lands. In terms of revenues on WFN lands, the nation collects 38% through taxation, 22% from government transfers and 40% is own source revenue (fees, charges and investment).

Aside from the obvious improved cash flow and infrastructure, WFN now has the financial resources to invest in cultural awareness and cultural programming. "If I could offer advice to First Nation leaders

across the country, it would be that we must all step up immediately to fine tune our collective vision about our peoples future whatever that might be and we must act now to implement that vision" said Chief Robert Louie. "We must take charge as leaders and accept the responsibility that goes along with leadership" he added.



Chief Robert Louie

WFN may not be the perfect model for other Nations but the common aspects that can be duplicated include the vision to change, the intestinal fortitude to take full responsibility, and the willingness to establish and implement a Comprehensive Community Plan that links all of the other vehicles such as a Self-Government Agreement, a Self-Government Implementation Plan, a Constitution, a Land Use Plan and a Government Strategic Plan.

The WFN rebuilding story was designed through a lot of hard work, financial resources and commitment to follow through. WFN is indeed a leader in the twenty-first century and has raised the bar world-wide.



**The Canadian Race Relations Foundation
2014 Awards of Excellence**

In 2008, Saskatchewan Premier Brad Wall announced that teaching Treaties in the Classroom will be mandatory, a first for any province in Canada. The Saskatchewan Ministry of Education and the Office of the Treaty Commissioner teamed up in a project that supplies curriculum and training for teachers. The "We Are All Treaty People" project incorporates the teaching of Treaties into every grade from K-12 in all Provincial and First Nations schools in Saskatchewan. The goal of this initiative is that all citizens of Saskatchewan will recognize that "We Are All Treaty People".

The Office of the Treaty Commissioner is proud to announce that the Canadian Race Relations Foundation chose the OTC Treaty Curriculum Renewal project, "We Are All Treaty People" as the recipient of the Award of Excellence in the Aboriginal category.

The award recognizes the role the curriculum has played in building positive race relations and building awareness and understanding of Canadian values and identity that are reflective of the Canadian diversity.



Susan Beaudin, Curriculum Renewal Project Coordinator, accepts Award on behalf of OTC.
Photo Courtesy: Canadian Race Relations Foundation, Symposium & Awards of Excellence 2014

Treaty Learning Network

The OTC continues to deliver Treaty Education Workshops to First Nations, Public Schools, Universities and the French School Boards. There are now several Treaty Catalyst Teachers in the Province who are OTC certified to deliver training. The Treaty Catalyst Teacher training will remain with the Office of the Treaty Commissioner. The Saskatchewan Teacher's Federation also include a four day Teaching Treaties in the Classroom as part of the annual Teacher Summer Short Course sessions in August.

Website – utilization continues to increase. The OTC website has had 35,714 visits to date. There are 2889 people who subscribe to the Wiki Space.

Teacher Treaty Resource Kit

There are continuous requests for the K-12 Treaty Resource Kit, which is sold on a cost recovery basis at \$330 per kit. Available by ordering online at www.otc.ca





The Treaty Education Resource Project is in full swing and projected to be complete by the end of March 2015!! The Ministry of Education and OTC are planning to have a celebration and release of the renewed Kindergarten to Grade 9 Treaty Education Resources in May 2015.

There are so many people to acknowledge, who were instrumental in the development and completion of this work. They are:

1. The Elders who represented every First Nation language group in the province who provided guidance and the oral content and perspectives according to their oral traditions,
2. The OTC Treaty Curriculum Renewal Team (TCRT) comprised of directors, superintendents, subject area consultants, and First Nations, Metis, and Inuit consultants and coordinators, from both the First Nations education and provincial school systems who came together periodically to review the content and process,
3. The Treaty Catalyst teachers who assisted in the development of the K – 9 treaty resources,
4. The pilot teachers who took the time and effort to try the new resources in their classrooms and provided their feedback to the writer,
5. The Ministry of Education staff who reviewed the content,
6. The Director of Education, Brenda Ahenakew, the K – 9 Treaty Education Renewal Coordinator/Writer/ Researcher, Susan Beaudin and the very important administrative staff at the OTC.



Speakers Bureau – Speakers Bureau had a total of 38 requests for presentations throughout this quarter of which we presented for 38 of the total requests. The total audience we presented to was 1933 people. Some of the presentations were to: Numerous elementary and high schools, the University of Saskatchewan, Polytech, Saskatchewan School Boards and the RCMP. We presented for our first time to the Saskatoon Health Region and facilitated Treaty workshops for the Ministry of Justice – Corrections and Policing and to the Provincial Libraries under the Ministry of Education. These 38 events took place across Saskatchewan in: Saskatoon, Regina, Prince Albert, North Battleford, Leask, Marshall and Warman. OTC also supported and took part in the Shared History, Shared Hope event hosted by Living Sky School Division held in October in North Battleford.

Partnerships and Strategic Alliances

NEW! Ministry of Justice – OTC has been working in partnership with the Ministry of Justice to train staff of corrections and policing throughout Saskatchewan. The training will focus on the Treaties, First Nations people and the treaty relationship today. The Ministry understands the importance in working together for reconciliation in and among their institutions.

NEW! Provincial Libraries under the Ministry of Education – OTC has been working on another new partnership with the provincial libraries to train staff and incorporate more Aboriginal literature into the libraries. The libraries will also obtain treaty awareness training and will work towards inviting more Aboriginal storytellers, academics and knowledge keepers into the libraries for events aimed at the general public and education.