



Office of the Treaty Commissioner

NEWSLETTER

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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.



Upcoming Events

- May 21 & 22 - Dakota Language Gathering
- May 22 - Red Earth Cree Nation Memorial Walk
- May 23 - Exoneration of Chief Poundmaker
- June 3 - Closing Ceremony for MMIWG Inquiry, Gatineau Quebec
- June 21 - National Indigenous Peoples Day
- July 21 - Fort Walsh, Lucky Man and Little Pine Treaty Adhesion Commemoration
- Aug. 15 to 18 - Walking with our Sisters: Batoche 2019
- Aug. 28 - Treaty 6 Adhesion of the Woodland Cree 130th Commemoration
- Sep. 30 - Orange Shirt Day

OTC Celebrates
30 Years
1989-2019



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Treaty Commissioner of Saskatchewan

Mary Culbertson

It's the Office of the Treaty Commissioner's 30th Anniversary and we are gearing up to celebrate the work of the office and of our Treaty partners. The understanding of Treaties, not just historically, but what it means today, remains central to my work and to the work of the office. Access to Treaty information and education is key to this understanding, and with it we can work towards Reconciliation.

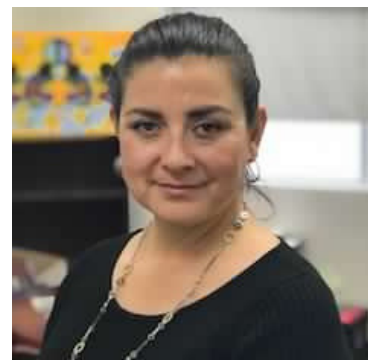


Over the past six months I have traveled to communities across Saskatchewan to learn about successes and hear about plans for the future. We were in Pelican Narrows to celebrate the retirement of Judge Gerald Morin, the creator of the Cree Courts. In Yorkton, OTC staff and I went to the local high school to talk Treaties with the students. At the end of February, I attended the Jordan's Principle Forum in Saskatoon, which is of great importance to me; all children have the right to care. The OTC's work in education was featured during the Assembly for First Nations National Treaty Education Forum, where our education director Brenda Ahenakew and myself spoke on a panel about Treaty education. I know the road ahead of us to Reconciliation is long, but as I see people coming together to learn, I am hopeful for the future.

OTC Executive Director

Trish Greyeyes

Tansi. I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Trish Greyeyes. I am from Muskeg Lake Cree Nation. On Nov. 1, 2018, I became the Executive Operating Director here at Office of the Treaty Commissioner. These first few months have passed quickly as I am settling into my new role and meeting all the people and organizations that work with the OTC. I have had the privilege to be able to attend several Reconciliation meetings and I look forward to working with the different Reconciliation groups throughout the province. In these early months, I was fortunately to be able to participate in the Kairos Blanket Exercise, which was an incredible and eye-opening experience.



Since coming on board as EOD, our office has started working on some new and exciting projects. We look forward to beginning Treaty Talk, where the OTC will be going out to communities to talk to Elders and leadership about Treaty issues. Our first stop is set to be Beardsley's & Okemasis Cree Nation, where the discussion will be broadcast live on their local radio and later uploaded on our website. Our goal is to have Treaty Talks go to communities in all Treaty territories.



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OTC Director of Speakers Bureau

Amy Seesequasis



Spring has arrived and with it the first anniversary of my role as the Director of the Speakers Bureau. The Speakers Bureau continues to provide essential Treaty information to the public by way of information sharing sessions facilitated by Knowledge Keepers and Elders. Request for support from the bureau can be found at otc.ca, in the Education section, under Book a Speaker.

The Bureau has been busy this year, reaching about 2,400 members of the public since April 2018. Some of those events include the Saskatchewan Student Leadership conference and the Rural Reconciliation: An Educational Gathering. The Rural Reconciliation gathering was a partnership between the bureau and the Rural Reconciliation committee and was a huge success. In October, the Office of the Treaty Commissioner signed a strategic alliance with the Provincial Library Systems. This formalized a partnership between the OTC and PLS to incorporate Indigenous and Treaty content into library services and programs, and provide library services to the Indigenous communities that do not have access to libraries.

We are looking forward to an upcoming event where the speakers bureau has partnered with the Saskatchewan Cooperatives Association to host a one-day information session on Treaty History, Roles and Responsibilities as Treaty partners, Truth and Reconciliation, and the Calls to Action. These types of conversations and information sessions are essential to Reconciliation becoming a movement that results in a province that provides opportunities that benefit all Treaty partners.



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Treaty Commissioner

*"as long as sun shines
the grass grows and
the river flows"*

LOGO DESIGN CONTEST

HELP US OUT BY
DESIGNING A NEW
LOGO FOR OTC

The Office of the Treaty Commissioner is looking for a new logo and we are looking for students in Saskatchewan to help us design it!

The Logo Design Contest is for students from Kindergarten to Grade 12. Artwork needs to be submitted with a written piece outlining why the drawing and the significance of the art in relation to Treaties. The contest closes June 30. Send entries to Office of the Treaty Commissioner c/o Trish Greyeyes at #215-2553 Grasswood Road East, Saskatoon, SK, S7T 1C8

The winner will be announced at the OTC 30th anniversary celebration this fall.



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OTC Director of Education

Brenda Ahenakew



The Office of the Treaty Commissioner is pleased to continue enhancing the Teaching Treaties in the Classroom program. In November, to mark the 10-year of the Treaty Resource Kit, a new resource was launched for Kindergarten to Grade 9 classrooms across Saskatchewan. The Treaty Resource Kit is comprised of grade-by-grade teacher activities, support videos and books. The Treaties in the Classroom Workshop is a professional development activity aimed at raising the awareness of non-aboriginal and aboriginal teachers and administrators about Treaties. The theme is "We are all Treaty People." Requests for these workshops and the teacher resource materials continue at a pace which challenges the OTC's capacity to meet the demand.

University of Regina and University of Saskatchewan education students continue to receive a two-day Treaty-awareness training facilitated by the OTC prior to their practicum experience. Each year the OTC trains about 500 university students, as well as training for school divisions and tribal councils, bringing the totals to about 1,000 trained teachers every year.

The "We Are All Treaty People" message takes many forms, otc.ca has a wealth of information where teachers can find resources and activities for use in the classroom. The OTC's Treaty Resource Kit is also displayed at several local, regional and national conferences every year.



"Creating this resource supports all students in learning the true story of Canada's history with Indigenous Peoples and share the important perspectives that surround the making of the Treaties," said Mary Culbertson, Treaty Commissioner of Saskatchewan

"We are proud to have worked with our First Nations Elders and educators with the assistance of the Ministry of Education to make these additional Treaty resources a reality for use in the classroom."

Teachers can access these resources through the otc.ca at OTC Teacher Resources



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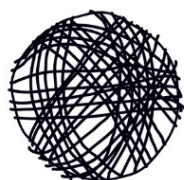
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OTC Director, Reconciliation and Community Partnerships Rhett Sangster



The interest in improving the Treaty relationship and exploring Truth and Reconciliation has really started growing this winter in municipalities and Indigenous communities across the province. In each of the Battlefords and Yorkton, the OTC has facilitated three meetings bringing together Indigenous and non-Indigenous champions to explore ways to improve the Treaty relationship in those communities. Roughly 50 community leaders on average have come together to develop joint objectives, shared principles for working together, and explore what Reconciliation activities are underway in their communities. Most importantly perhaps, relationships are being developed and trust is being built.

These two coalitions are in addition to the six Reconciliation coalitions the OTC is also partnering. We've also recently met with a group meeting to discuss reconciliation in Nipawin. With these groups we are taking the time to look at what the groups have accomplished so far, discuss where they think they are now, and make plans for the future. By having an idea of what success looks like and where we are, we can continue the journey for Reconciliation. There is much work to be done, but in developing diverse "coalitions of champions" in communities across the province, in creating spaces where diverse leaders can learn, dream and act together, we think that much can be accomplished.



Reconcile.
Everyday Conversations

The conversations happened over the dinner table. Nine people with different life experiences joined Heather Peters and Joel Kroeker for a meal. The result is the Saskatchewan Mennonite Central Committee's podcast Reconcile. Everyday Conversations.

"The whole idea with the podcast is that it's really invitational and so people would feel invited into doing Reconciliation within their lives at the point that they were at," said Peters, project coordinator and the peacebuilding coordinator for MCC Saskatchewan.

"We tried to interview people who are at a variety of different life places and have a variety of different life perspectives."

Through nine episodes people share experiences with starting their Reconciliation journey, their projects and their hopes for the future.



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OTC News



Learning about Treaty Songs

After Treaty 4 was signed on Sept. 15, 1874, Chief Piapot composed a flag song to mark the Treaty's creation.

It can only be sung by people who have the rites to sing it. Aaron Tootoosis learned the words, protocols and meaning during a healing gathering with his family in 2005. The rites to sing this song were passed on to the Tootoosis family by the Kaiswatum Singers in July 1982 at the World Assembly of First Nations International Celebration that was held at Regina Beach.

The Treaty 4 song's words in Cree reflect the meaning of what people at that time saw with the signing. The words refer to the Queen (the great white mother) presenting her colours, like a sacred exchange, and how those colours will fly here forever as they were presented by the Queen

On the other hand, the Treaty 6 song was designed as a universal song. The Treaty 6 song is similar to the Treaty 4 song in meaning, but has fewer words. It can be used everywhere, recorded, and be sung by everyone. Please stand while it is being sung.

While the two songs are named for different Treaty territories, they do not refer to particular Treaties, but rather for the region where the composer lived.

Treaty Literacy Fun Night

The first ever Beardys and Okemasis Cree Nation Treaty Literacy Fun Night with the Office of the Treaty Commissioner was a fun, family event held Mar. 7, 2019.

"I am from the community of Beardys and attended CBMES, so it was very nostalgic to be back there at the elementary," said Amy Seesequasis, OTC speaker's bureau director and one of the staff facilitating the event.

About 75 staff, students and family members played games and did crafts at the Chief Beardys Memorial Elementary School.

"The Treaty Trivia games were a huge hit with all the students and it was busy all through the event," Seesequasis said. "They loved the opportunity to win prizes based on their Treaty knowledge."

Along with rounds of Treaty jeopardy, kids learned about the Treaty medal, dreamcatchers, and mini-tips through crafts.

"Parents enjoyed the opportunities to interact and learn as well; we encouraged their participation and also had fact sheets available," Seesequasis said.

"It was an excellent opportunity to engage the parents and grandparents through activities geared towards their children/grandchildren."

Seesequasis is excited to partner with other schools to host Treaty Literacy Fun Nights.





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Regina school hosts Treaty Fair

Treaty Commissioner of Saskatchewan Mary Culbertson spoke at Thomson Community School in Regina on April 17, at a Treaty Fair that was dedicated to Noel Starblanket.

Mary talked to students, teachers and members of the public about the importance of the responsibility to learn about Treaties and to share the that knowledge because We are All Treaty People.

The Treaty Fair initiative included classroom displays with examples of how they learned about Treaties by connecting to the Saskatchewan Treaty Outcomes for their grade level. There were interactive stations with art, PowerPoint presentation, videos and a re-enactment of the annuity payment ceremony at Treaty Days.

There was also a hands-on display on traditional uses of buffalo, how symbols honour Treaty long ago and today, language loss and language revitalization efforts, oral history and the residential school experience. This helped participants gain an understanding of historical and contemporary components of treaty and helped everyone connect to reconciliation through Treaty Education.

Thank you to Jackie Taypotat and Calvin Racette for the information and images





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OTC Photo Gallery



Treaty Commissioner Culbertson with lawyer and Speakers Bureau member Eleanore Sunchild at the event in January when Eleanore received her Queen's Counsel designation



Treaty Commissioner Culbertson and Brenda Ahenakew on the Treaty Education Panel at the Assembly of First Nations National Treaty Education Forum in Halifax this winter



Clockwise from top:

The strategic alliance signing with the Office of the Treaty Commissioner and Saskatchewan public libraries.

Some of our Elders who lent their thoughts to ayisInowak: A Communications Guide at the Office of the Treaty Commissioner in March

Amy Seesequasis at a Jan. 21, speakers bureau session with the International Women's Association's Links to Employment program

