



# EXINAC NEWS

## Newsletter of the Edmonton Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee

*"Toward an equal and positive partnership between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal citizens of Edmonton."*

**In** August 2001, sports history will be made in Edmonton, Alberta. For the first time ever, the 8th IAAF World Championships in Athletics will be held in North America. Edmonton is the first North American city to host the IAAF World Championships in Athletics, which consists of 22 women's and 24 men's sport competitions. It is



"It's an opportunity for people of Aboriginal ancestry to let the international community experience traditional and contemporary cultural performances" explained Martha Campiou, the cultural coordinator of the Aboriginal Community Committee. Campiou adds that, "It's also an opportunity for Aboriginal people to demonstrate their pride and dignity through the

expected to attract more than 3,000 athletes, coaches and managers from more than 200 countries. This athletic event anticipates extensive media coverage and so the attention of the world will be clearly focused on Edmonton. The "Festival of The World's," produced by the Cultural Arts and Festival Society (CAFS), will coincide with the 8th IAAF World Championships in Athletics held in Edmonton from August 3-12, 2001. It will fulfill the arts and entertainment component of this major sporting event, and is designed to promote cross cultural awareness and understanding. The festival will be the defining cultural anchor of the Championships and

will provide a daily 'meeting place' to serve as the focal point of complementary activities. Staged primarily at outdoor celebration sites, a cornerstone of the event is that admission to the sites, and to all related Festival activities and programs, will be free of charge.

The Aboriginal Community Committee headed by Martha Campiou and Donna Bedard is involved in organizing the Aboriginal cultural component for the "Festival of The World's." The Aboriginal component of the "Festival of the Worlds" encompasses a tipi village with performances and cultural demonstrations at Churchill Square, and at Kinsmen Field House, an evening of Aboriginal entertainment.

talents that they will showcase through song, dance, storytelling, and demonstrations of arts and culture." \*



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# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

*Valerie Kaufman*

**G**reetings to everyone and best wishes as we quickly approach an exciting and busy time of year. With powwows, ceremonies, and other important cultural events, graduations, weddings, and let's not forget National Aboriginal Day on June 21, this can be a time when we are constantly active.

As members of the Edmonton Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee we are attending and providing input to a number of focus groups, consultations, and studies and more of these activities appear to be scheduled for the upcoming months. Sometimes these events seem rushed and our thoughts are required immediately. It seems as though we have "been there-done that," and ironically it is after we have given our recommendations on the subject matter that we are involved in the same process again.

Time is a commodity that helps us meet our responsibilities. It seems that many have to abide by the "hurry up and go" concept. This has prompted me to think about time and what it means in our lives. Recently I've reflected and discussed the subject with a number of friends including two Elders.

This message will focus on those thoughts and I truly hope share some insight into a sensitive subject.

## **INDIAN TIME - WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO ME?**

For centuries Indian people have lived as one with nature. The moon marked the passing of the seasons and signaled the time to plant, harvest, hunt, trap and hold ceremonies. Today, we still honour the wonders of nature - the trees, stars, wind, animals, the changing seasons, and more. A book entitled, "Dancing With A Ghost" by Rupert Ross contains passages for reflection on our ancestral concept of time. People who lived off the land obviously had to wait for the cycles of nature to come around. No one went out to collect blueberries or wild rice or other edibles until they were ready.

Nor did they trap until the time of year when the pelts were the fullest. People had to wait patiently until the time was right. While waiting, they had to prepare their tools and develop their strategies. Each person, and the group as a whole, had to resist acting until the best moment arrived.

This mental preparation was critical. The bush and the prairies were not like grocery stores where produce is available. Animals and plants that provide food and clothing were available in peak conditions only at certain times. Each year, each season, and each week showed widely different combinations of conditions.

With these teachings in mind the concept of "the time being right" is not something thought up by Aboriginal people to justify what they were doing but a practical, down to earth, survival tactic. Furthermore this teaching demonstrates the necessity of individual preparation, of improving one's self holistically - that is mind, body, spirit, and emotions. As I listen to the commitment of our Elders who share their thoughts and prayers with us, whether it is in a meeting or in private, I am reminded of the blessings we have received. That is, we are fortunate to live on mother earth and that we all struggle to find ways to work toward common goals. Those who come to a meeting focussed only on obtaining input or gathering information will consciously or not often prevent the group from moving onward through defensiveness and antagonism. Minds preoccupied with other issues or full of negative feelings carried over from other meetings will contaminate the proceedings. Therefore we should follow our hearts and use our minds to process the day's activities, as our ancestors did, for the good of all. When we practice these good teachings and allow things to happen in their own time, sound decisions are made.

We often hear the phrases: "if it is meant to be it will happen" or "it will happen in its own time." I am just beginning to understand what it takes

# EXCHANGE

**SPRING/SUMMER 2001**

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 THE CITY OF  
**Edmonton** COMMUNITY  
SERVICES

for, "the time to be right," and to appreciate and believe in patience. So, the next time we are asked to share in a consultation perhaps this is one question we need to consider. Is it happening in the right time?

"Indian Time" is often stated in a derogatory manner if one is late for a meeting or not meeting a deadline. It is often considered a negative phrase that perhaps should be reconsidered as a positive aspect of Aboriginal culture. By turning a negative into a positive we are stating that, "Yes, I am proud to be on 'Indian Time' for it is the time that things are meant to happen."

I wish all of you safe journeys over the summer months.

**Musi Cho**

**Respectfully submitted**

**Valerie Kaufman, Chairperson  
Edmonton Aboriginal Urban Affairs  
Committee**

# Alberta's Achievers

photo by Terry Lusty



**B**efore a sold out crowd at the Jubilee Auditorium the 2001 National Aboriginal Achievement Awards were presented during a fast paced evening featuring successful individuals from Alberta and across the country.

The glittering evening featured Canada's top Aboriginal performing artists interspersed between sensational video vignettes telling the story of the lives of this year's achievers.

This year's fourteen National Aboriginal Achievement Award recipients are an inspiring group who have committed to outstanding achievements in a variety of fields throughout Canada. Of that group, five Albertan's were recognized for their outstanding achievements and accomplishments.

Roman Bittman has made numerous impacts throughout his career in Media and Communications. A trapper's son born just south of the NWT/Alberta border, he started as an amateur in radio and went on to work at CBC and produce the Nature of Things. He is responsible for producing upwards of 100 films.

Dr. Lindsay Crowshoe a member of the Peigan First Nation is a medical doctor who is an expert advisor on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and provides clinical and emergency services in rural and remote places in Alberta. He is an author and is an scholarship winning athlete who won the Vanier Cup in 1988.

The rights of Canada's Metis are now constitutionally enshrined because Fred House spent his lifetime giving voice to a people who were formerly among Canada's most disenfranchised – non-status Indians. This tireless advocate for Metis rights took his people's case directly to every Prime Minister since John Diefenbaker.

At the top of his class, Lance Relland is studying medicine at the University of California. A dancer in the Royal Winnipeg Ballet at the age of 16 he was diagnosed with Leukemia and had to travel to the USA to receive treatment. Now

a healthy and exceptionally talented young person he created the Aboriginal Bone Marrow Registries Association that saves lives each year.

The prestigious Lifetime Achievement award was presented to Dr. Harold Cardinal (Hon.) who studied Law at Harvard, and who fired back at the Prime Minister in the 1960's with the "The Unjust Society" and "The Red Paper." He then engaged in a first-ever meeting held directly between a Canadian Cabinet and Aboriginal leaders. Dr. Cardinal has held numerous leadership posts as president, Chief, and negotiator, and is completing his doctorate in Law. His contributions to Aboriginal people and Canadian society have been outstanding.

**Congratulations to Alberta's Aboriginal Achievers from the Edmonton Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee! ✨**



**ROMAN BITTMAN**  
Métis  
Media & Communications

**DR. HAROLD CARDINAL (HON.)**  
Cree  
Lifetime Achievement

**DR. LINDSAY CROWSHOE**  
Peigan  
Medicine

**FRED HOUSE**  
Métis  
Community Development

**LANCE RELLAND**  
Métis  
National Youth Recipient

# New Opportunities for Aboriginal Health Research in Canada

Aboriginal peoples' health was the focus of attention at the University of Alberta in mid-March on the occasion of the visit of Dr. Jeff Reading, Associate Professor of Public Health Sciences at the University of Toronto. Dr. Reading, a Mohawk from Ontario, is the Scientific Director of the newly created Institute of Aboriginal Peoples' Health (IAPH) of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR). The CIHR was formed in June 2000 to continue the research excellence of the Medical Research Council and to translate health research knowledge for the benefit of all Canadians. The Institute's mandate covers all aspects of Aboriginal health, particularly areas where Aboriginal people are inordinately affected, from diabetes and cardiovascular disease to addictions and fetal alcohol syndrome. The initial focus of the IAPH is on capacity building in this emerging discipline, and on establishing priorities for targeted research funding, generally in collaboration with one or more of the other 12 CIHR institutes.

Dr. Reading's visit to the University began with a noontime presentation to the Public Health Sciences "Epidemiology Grand Rounds" on Wednesday, March 14. This well-attended lecture included a brief overview of the current status of the health of Aboriginal peoples in Canada, drawing on findings from the 1999 First Nations and Inuit Regional Health Survey, of which Dr. Reading was the principal research consultant. Later that afternoon, Dr. Reading gave a second lecture to the Faculty of Medicine's Equity, Respect and Well Being program, dealing with the problems of recruitment and retention

of Aboriginal students and faculty in the health sciences, and in particular in health research. The current lack of professional capacity in Aboriginal health research is a major agenda item for Dr. Reading's institute. Currently there are 13 Aboriginal MD students out of a total of more than 400 registered students; this represents about 3% of the student body and is the highest number in Canada, but still less than the university target of 5%. Other health professional programs are similarly underrepresented in the numbers of Aboriginal students. Dr. Reading pointed out how important it is to Aboriginal health to have community people who are trained in and understand research methodology if meaningful progress is to occur. The following day, Thursday, March 15th was devoted to an Aboriginal health research forum. The day began with a traditional blessing from Cree Elder, Fred White. Dean Lorne Tyrell of the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry gave a warm welcome to assembly on behalf of the University. Presentations by Dr. Malcolm King of the CIHR Governing Council and by Dr. Reading outlined the development of the CIHR Institute of Aboriginal Peoples' Health within the context of the rapidly changing landscape for health research in Canada. In his



photo by Brad Cardinal

**Josie Cardinal, EAUAC member and Malcolm King, PhD, University of Alberta Department of Medicine,**

presentation, Dr. Reading detailed the process for setting the Institute priorities for capacity building and research.

The well-attended afternoon session was devoted to a series of presentations on Aboriginal health research by a number of individuals and working groups in Alberta. The presenters were Dr. Brenda Cameron and her colleagues Ella Arcand and Linda Steinhauer of the Yellowhead Tribal Council, Dr. Noreen Willows, Dr. Don Sin, Dr. Ellen Toth, Dr. Lindsay Crowshoe, Dr. Margaret Clarke, and graduate students Vera Caine and Josie Cardinal.

Overall, these presentations served to illustrate the depth of interest in Aboriginal health research. Hopefully this sharing of information and ideas will open the doors to further collaboration between the members of this dynamic and growing research community. ✨

# LANDMARK DECISION

## Voting rights to off-reserve members

The recent decision of the Supreme Court of Canada, in *Corbiere vs. Canada* and known as the “Corbiere Decision,” is a landmark decision that will forever change First Nations political dynamics in Canada.

Effective November 20th, 2000, all First Nations elections held under the Indian Act will have to grant voting rights to off-reserve members and those voting rights will have to be more than, as the decision states, “minimal, insignificant, or merely token.”

Since last fall, many Edmonton residents have had or will have the opportunity to vote in their First Nations elections. It is a possibility that the ability to retain voting rights, at least in a limited form, may encourage more people to leave over crowded reserves and make their homes in Edmonton or other urban centres across Canada.

The Corbiere Decision centred on the Batchewana Band in Ontario, of which 70% of the Band Membership lived off-reserve. Section 77 of the Indian Act allowed voting rights in Indian Act elections only to those residing on the Reserve. Batchewana off-reserve members challenged their inability to vote under the equality provisions of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, arguing that they were unfairly discriminated against by virtue of the fact that they lived off-reserve.

Although the Federal Court of

Appeal had restricted any effect of its ruling to the Batchewana Band alone, a majority of the Supreme Court Justices struck down the portion of the section that prevented off-reserve members from voting. The implementation of the decision however, was held for 18 months in which to allow Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and Parliament to make any necessary legislative changes, and to give sufficient time for all interested parties and stakeholders to enter into “consultations.” This was necessary, in part, because the decision did not stipulate that off-reserve members would have equal voting rights just that they could not have all voting rights denied. Lesser or partial voting rights could be fair, and different bands might reach different decisions.

The majority felt that an infringement of voting rights was partially justified, as off-reserve members would have different interests and concerns from those that lived in First Nations communities. A member of the Blood band, for example, living in Edmonton for the past 15 years would not have the same, or the same level of concerns, as someone living on-reserve who would feel a direct impact of any decisions of Chief and Council. The Honourable Madame Justice L’Heureaux-Dube described how respect for the

interest of off and on-reserve could be demonstrated:

It is possible to think of many ways this might be done, while recognizing, respecting, and valuing the different positions, needs, and interests of on-reserve and off-reserve band members. One might be to divide the “local” functions which relate purely to residents from those that affect all band members and have different voting regimes for these functions. There might be special seats on a band council for non-residents, which give them meaningful, but not identical, rights of participation. The solution may be found in the customary practices of Aboriginal bands. There may be a separate solution for each band. Many other possibilities can be imagined, which would respect non-residents’ rights to meaningful and effective participation in the voting regime of the community.

First Nations members living in Edmonton should be aware of all their current voting rights - federally, provincially, municipally, and on their home reserve. All Aboriginal “status” individuals should inform themselves of the current status on their home Band, and ensure that the Corbiere decision has been implemented, and that their voting rights are respected. Every vote counts, and now Edmonton Urban Aboriginals can have input for the “Chief and Council” of their First Nation. ✨

# Upcoming Events

## **Esquao 2001 Awards Gala**

Contact: (780) 479-8195  
May 24, 2001  
Westin Hotel,  
Edmonton

## **Ben Calf Robe Society**

Aboriginal Cultural Training Series  
Contact: Laura Vinson  
(780) 477-6648

## **Nechi Training and Research Health Promotions Institute**

Summer Workshops 2001 –  
July 2 - August 3  
Contact: (780) 459-1884

## **Vision Speakers Toastmaster Club**

Contact: Jeri Melting Tallow –  
Healy (780) 423-2492 ext. 5739  
"The Only Aboriginal Toastmasters  
Club in Edmonton!"

## **Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society**

Contact: 481-3451  
-Four Arrows Adult Employment Program  
-Coyote Kids and Children's Culture Camp  
-Health for Two drop in for pregnant moms  
-Soup and Bannock last Friday of the  
month  
-Rites of Passage Cultural youth program  
-Healthy Families

## **Ben Calf Robe Society**

Contact: 477-6648  
-Healthy Safe Baby  
-In Home Family Support Program  
-The Mother Earth and Me Head Start  
-Youth Intervention  
-Cultural Resource Library

## **Canadian Native Friendship Centre**

Contact: 479-1999  
-Arts and Crafts Classes  
-Ball Hockey  
-Kids Recreation and Sports  
-Cree Language and Instruction

# National Aboriginal Day Celebrations 2001

## Watch for more activities in your community!

### **City Hall Celebration and Media Conference**

June 19, 2001 – 12:00-1:00 p.m.  
Hosted by: Edmonton Aboriginal  
Urban Affairs Committee, Gov. of  
Canada, NADEA

### **Provincial Museum of Alberta**

June 19, 2001  
Traditional activities for everyone!

### **Millennium Bound, Aboriginal Achievers**

June 21, 2001 – Opening  
Ceremonies, Canada Place  
Events all day  
9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

### **Canadian Native Friendship Centre**

June 22, 2001 – Feast and Round  
Dance 5:00 p.m.

### **National Aboriginal Day Edmonton Association Celebration**

June 24, 2001 – 12:00 pm  
Borden Park 112 Ave & 73 St.

Outdoor family event with a tipi  
village, round dance, storytelling,  
music, and traditional dancing for  
everyone to enjoy!

*If you would like to include your community event or program please fax the information to (780) 496-4929 or call (780) 496-4936.*

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