

WIGWAM TO WIGWAM

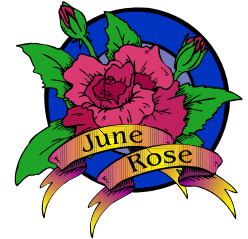
YOUR HOUSE TO HOUSE NEWS

JUNE 2010



Happy Father's Day!

Sunday, June 20th



National Aboriginal Day/
First Nations Day

June 21st

See pages 6 & 7



First day of Summer!

June 21st



Please be advised that our
office will be closed on:

Friday, June 4th

AND

Monday, June 21st

Inside this issue:

In the News	2—3
Native Women's Resource Centre—Life Skills	4
Fire Safety for Children	5
National Aboriginal Day	6—7
Get Involved!	8

IN THE NEWS

Workshop keeps aboriginal youth in demand Inclusion Works connects Corporate Canada and natives, with many offered jobs on the spot

By Emily Mathieu; April 30, 2010; The Toronto Star;

For a young woman with serious ambition there are far worse situations to face than being gently but persistently pressed by Charlie Coffey to join the ranks of his former employer, the Royal Bank of Canada.

"I have been asking her repeatedly, to the level of being annoying, has she accepted the Royal Bank offer?" said Coffey, gesturing to Gabrielle Scrimshaw, a recent graduate of the Edwards School of Business at the University of Saskatchewan.

But Scrimshaw, who is being pursued by three companies, plays it cool. "We are in talks next week," she said.

Coffey and Scrimshaw were at Inclusion Works on Thursday, an annual networking and career event organized by the Aboriginal Human Resource Council (AHRC).

The AHRC is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to ensuring a level playing field for aboriginals entering the labour market. This year, more than 85 youth were connected with employers and many were offered jobs "on the spot," said Coffey.

Coffey, a founding member of the AHRC, is retired from an executive position after more than four decades with RBC. But he is still recruiting and feels Corporate Canada needs to thoroughly engage in events supporting aboriginal youth and businesses. "(The AHRC) is Canada coming together," he said.

For Scrimshaw, who produces business cards with the speed of a magician and offers to write a pointed list of biographical details for the reporter interviewing her, the event is more of a boost to an already established trajectory.

She grew up in Duck Lake, Sask., and is a member of the Hatchet Lake First Nation. She was raised by her father, an artist, but was encouraged to follow her passion - business. She is the first in her family with a university degree.

"Growing up where I grew up, I was quite aggressive about pursuing opportunities I was given. Sometimes it was as simple as not ignoring an email that was sent my way," she said.

There are disparities for students studying on reserves compared with better funded schools in the surrounding areas, she said.

As someone who independently researched her university scholarship, she is an advocate of personal responsibility. But, she said, those funding issues do mean some young students are not aware of what is available to them.

"Being proactive and thinking long-term with events like this is part of the solution," she said.

Coffey intends to continue his work as an advocate "until every single Canadian of aboriginal descent takes their rightful place in Canadian society" and particularly people such as Scrimshaw are in "the board rooms of public companies and other organizations."

IN THE NEWS

Reconnecting with lost traditions Oral history project targets next generation of aboriginals

By Nicholas Keung, May 3, 2010; The Toronto Star

In 1965, a teenaged Rene Meshake was plucked away from his Aroland reserve in northern Ontario and placed in a residential school. For years, the Ojibway man suppressed his childhood memories of love, care and indulgence because of the abuse and abandonment he experienced at the McIntosh and Fort Frances Indian schools.

"I remember the first rabbit I snared and skinned. Everybody just feasted on it. I was raised by the whole community," Meshake, now 62, recalls of his early years. "But after the residential school, I was angry and depressed. I tried to block out all my memories by drinking," he said.

"I was afraid to trust again." Meshake later spent years being homeless in Toronto and often contemplated suicide.

Kim Anderson, a research associate with St. Michael's Hospital's Centre for Research on Inner City Health, said the residential school era not only disrupted the community's ability to build healthy relationships, it also robbed a generation of the opportunity to learn traditional parenting skills to raise their own healthy families, and ultimately contributed to the social ills faced by the community today. "Parenting skills were not passed on because there was no role modelling in these schools. We learn parenting by being parented. To top it all off, there was sexual and physical abuse."

That is why Anderson has teamed up with colleague and family physician Dr. Janet Smylie - both are Metis - to establish the Indigenous Knowledge Network for Infant, Child and Family Health to uncover the lost traditions and develop culturally relevant health promotion strategies through aboriginal oral history. "Nobody is going to get better from a knowledge system that is very different from their own unless there is some kind of bridging. You have to work with people in a language and conceptual framework that fits," said Smylie.

The five-year project involves 10 community partners in Ontario and Saskatchewan, where front-line health workers collect information from elders about lost skills and rituals in traditional parenting, pregnancy, labour and birth. They will then incorporate the knowledge in community health programming and practices.

Meshake was brought up by his grandparents and uncles, who taught him how to fish and hunt. When he left the school, Meshake never had a steady job or stable relationship and was rarely sober until he had an awakening in 1991. "A friend of mine died. I went and buried him. I put the sand on his coffin and said to him, 'I'm burying my past with you,'" said Meshake, who has a graphic design diploma from Sheridan College and is now a published author and graphic artist. "And I've told myself I would never pass on my negative experience to my (now 15-year-old) son."

Pauline Shirt, a Cree great-grandmother in Toronto, was more fortunate growing up on the Saddle Lake Reserve in Alberta. She too attended a residential school but remained close to her parents and nine siblings.

"I was raised on my father's farm to take care of Mother Earth and the animals," said Shirt, 66.

Shirt also founded the First Nations School of Toronto in 1977, which was then called Wandering Spirit Survival School.

The indigenous knowledge project is funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centre's.

Life Skills Program

What does Life Skills program provide?

The overall object of the Life Skills Program is to provide the learning opportunity for people to develop the skill and attitude to function successfully in six areas in life:

1. Self
2. Family
3. Leisure
4. Community
5. Employment
6. School



Life Skills delivers the presentations on various topics to the learners in group setting using an experiential format which include interactive exercise in the following areas:

- Self-Awareness explores relationship, community skills, developing assertiveness, decision-making, and problem solving.
- Back to school preparations includes time management, study skills, goal setting. Presentations and guest speakers from various academic and community institutions.
- Job readiness covers goal setting, career planning and research, resume and cover letters, job search and interviewing skills.
- Self-Care includes stress management, self-esteem building.

Life Skills:

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Self-Awareness | Motivation Skills |
| Study Skills | Traditional Teachings |
| Empowerment | Interviewing Skills |
| Personal Growth Skills | Building Healthy Relationships |
| Computer Skills | Moving Toward Self-Sufficiency |
| | Conflict Resolution Skills |



For more information, please contact:

Darlene King

(416) 963-9963 ext. 228

Fire Safety for Children

In North America, hundreds of children die or are seriously injured in fires each year. Children are much more likely than adults to be injured in a fire. Teach your children the importance of fire safety at an early age.

Tell your children to get out



When children see smoke or fire they often respond by trying to hide, for example, in a closet or under a bed. Tell children not to hide from fire but to escape immediately.

- ▼ Prepare and practice a fire escape plan with your children. Plan two ways to get out of every room.
- ▼ Practice fire drills at least twice a year.
- ▼ In an apartment fire, children need to know which stairways will get them out of the building.
- ▼ Tell your children never to use an elevator during a fire.
- ▼ Decide on a planned meeting area outside the home as part of your home fire escape plan.



- ▼ Tell your children never to go back into a burning building.
- ▼ Teach your children how to call 9-1-1 from a neighbour's phone.



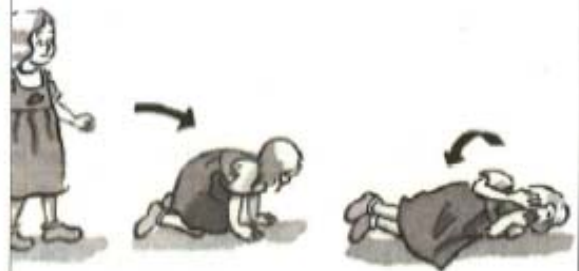
Teach your children

- ▼ Fire can hurt them and destroy things and once a fire is started it is difficult to control.
- ▼ Matches and lighters are not toys. They are dangerous and should be used only by adults.



Teach your children how to:

Stop, drop and roll when their clothes catch on fire



Tell them to:

- ▼ Stop where they are, and stop what they are doing. Don't run.
- ▼ Drop to the ground.
- ▼ Cover their face with their hands and then roll over and over until the flames are out.

Crawl low under smoke

Teach your children to get down on their hands and knees and crawl low under the smoke to the nearest exit. Tell them smoke is dangerous and that they need to stay close to the ground where the air is cooler and cleaner.

React to smoke alarms

Tell your children to get out of the house immediately when they hear the sound of the smoke alarm. Teach your child how important smoke alarms are by testing them once a month.



National Aboriginal Day/First Nations Day

June 21 - Share in the Celebration!



On June 21st, Canadians from all walks of life are invited to participate in the many National Aboriginal Day events that will be taking place from coast to coast to coast.

June 21st kick starts the 11 days of Celebrate Canada! which includes National Aboriginal Day (June 21), Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day (June 24), Multiculturalism Day (June 27) and concluding with Canada Day (July 1)!

First proclaimed by the Governor General of Canada on June 13, 1996, June 21st of every year has become a day in the Canadian calendar that presents Aboriginal peoples with a great opportunity to express great pride for their rich diverse cultures with their families, neighbours, friends and visitors.

First Nations, Métis and Inuit people will gather to celebrate and share with spectacular dance, song and theatrical performances both contemporary and traditional that will bring you to your feet!

National Aboriginal Day is a fun filled day for the whole family to enjoy together. National Aboriginal Day is an opportunity to learn more about Aboriginal people and their contribution to make Canada the great nation that it is! Share in the Celebration!

Here is a brief history of the origins of National Aboriginal Day:

1982

National Indian Brotherhood (now the Assembly of First Nations) calls for the creation of June 21 as National Aboriginal Solidarity Day;

1995

Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples recommends the designation of a National First Peoples Day;



National Aboriginal Day/First Nations Day

A brief history continued:

The Sacred Assembly, a national conference of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people chaired by Elijah Harper, calls for a national holiday to celebrate the contributions of Aboriginal peoples;

1996

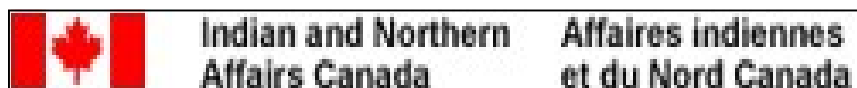
June 13 – Former Governor General Roméo LeBlanc, declares June 21 as National Aboriginal Day after consultations with various Aboriginal groups;

June 21 – National Aboriginal Day is first celebrated with events from coast to coast to coast.

2006

Canadians from all walks of life participated in the many events that took place from coast to coast to coast highlighting the 10th anniversary of National Aboriginal Day.

Today, National Aboriginal Day is part of the annual nation-wide Celebrate Canada! festivities held from June 21 to July 1. They begin with National Aboriginal Day, are followed by St-Jean Baptiste Day, Canadian Multiculturalism Day and concludes with Canada Day. June 21 was chosen because of the cultural significance of the summer solstice (first day of summer and longest day of the year) and because many Aboriginal groups mark this day as a time to celebrate their heritage. Setting aside a day for Aboriginal Peoples is part of the wider recognition of Aboriginal Peoples' important place within the fabric of Canada and their ongoing contributions as First Peoples.



Calling all young artists...

Each month we would like to include a piece of artwork or writing (including poems, short stories, etc.) in our newsletter to highlight talent amongst our youngest tenants!

If you are between the ages 5 and 13 and would like to contribute your work to our monthly newsletter please contact Danielle Powell at (416) 481-4451.

PLEASE NOTE: Submissions must be no bigger than 5 1/4" x 4 1/4" (approximately half a piece of paper) and should include your name, address and age on the back of your work.



We look forward to seeing all of your wonderful submissions!

Check back each month to see if your artwork or writing is printed in the newsletter!



YOUR "HOUSE TO HOUSE" NEWS

Wigwamen Incorporated

#310 - 25 Imperial St.

Toronto, Ontario

M5P 1B9

www.wigwamen.com

Phone: 416-481-4451

Fax: 416-481-5002

If you have submissions for the "Wigwam to Wigwam" newsletter, please contact:

Danielle Powell

(416) 481-4451

dpowell@wigwamen.com