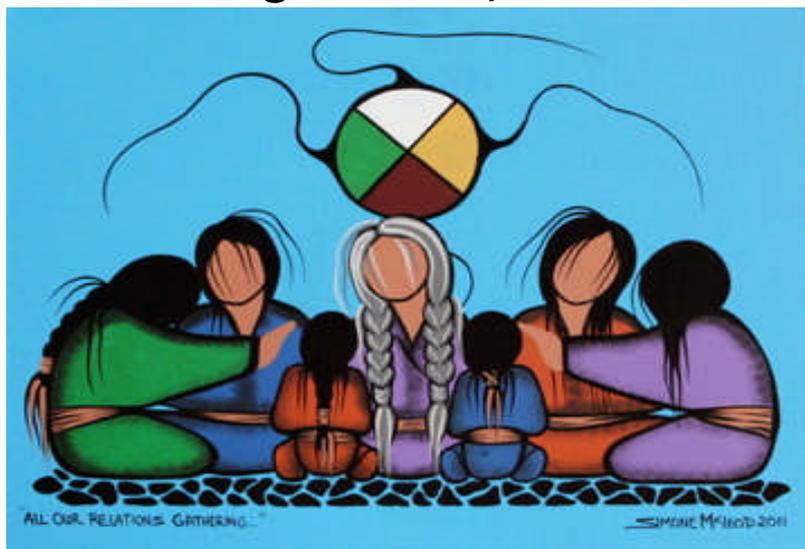


... a report for the community ...
October 31, 2011



All Our Relations Gathering
kahkīyaw kiwāhkōmākanawak māmawipayiwin
Horelyu nuhelot'ine ʔeteghédel
August 20-23, 2011



Project Overview

About 600 people attended an event held over four-days in August 2011 at Blue Quills First Nations College. This report contains a brief summary of the event and a copy of the program for the four days. The **All Our Relations Gathering** provided the following activities:

- survivors of residential schools could meet with statement-takers with the Truth & Reconciliation Commission and access residential school health support workers and other healing activities;
- participants could access traditional and alternative healers;
- attendees could participate in circles and workshops;
- they could celebrate the gifts of individuals in a jamboree and a talent show;
- participants could visit the photo gallery of IRS pictures, yearbooks, and newsletters and *special thanks to the Calgary volunteers who brought photos from the Shingwauk project*;
- they could access displays, vendor tables and food booths;
- and reunite with fellow students who attended BQ from 1931 to 2011
- there were supervised activities for children 7-12, options for teens in cultural crafts
- all visitors could celebrate with the College their 40 years of program delivery and leadership in local control (1971-2011)
- there was an open forum on father involvement in parenting which offered a panel of men connecting across three generations along with the launch of a film titled *With Dad: Strengthening the Circle of Care* (available free from National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health www.nccah-ccnsa.ca) A participant said *"the father's panel was very powerful. It was a privilege to listen to their stories. It gave me hope for the future."*

Participants had this to say...

Holly said: "I wanted to send you my heartfelt thanks for your help, your gracious hospitality and your wonderful support during the Blue Quills anniversary. It was simply a magic couple of days, to be part of the events in even such a small way, and to feel so welcomed – amongst the warm and open people I met on the school grounds; in our host's home; with the pipe man at the sunrise ceremony, and throughout all the events. Congratulations for such a beautiful and healing gathering."

Michelle said: "All across the grounds of the school to the teepees and sweat grounds were elders, families there for a purpose to let go of pain and sorrow; and at the same time to rejoice the love and happiness they felt when they ran into an old school 'chum'. The jamboree, the talent show, the ghost dance were places of joy for me - people were laughing, dancing and their spirits were smiling!

The last day of the gathering while I was there was the hardest, my anger built up, not sure why but it was there, no one could touch me, I was unreachable. I know this was because I was a survivor myself in my parents and kokum and mosums shoes and I was there to let it go and move forward. My healing journey is one of love, caring, and painful, happy, and joyful times. (after my session with the traditional healer)... The exit from Blue

Quills was a good exit because I know that I left my pain there for the spirits to care for. I will always remember this past weekend, as it helped greatly with my grieving therapy along with my inner-child therapy, which is going to strengthen my loving caring spirit and the ones following me will learn that healing is more than words can say. Open your heart, let the sun shine in!!”

Martha said: “This was amazing – informative, supportive, awe inspiring and inspirational. Thank you for creating such a safe and loving environment for learning, sharing, and healing. We got much more than we expected by coming here.”

Sharon said: “It is clear that having the music events (the jamboree, talent show and jigging) helped lift the spirits of those who were dealing with such heavy issues. We are all at different places in our healing journeys and we just need to create safe spaces for each of us to be who we are in the moment. There is a time to cry, a time to grieve, a time to play and a time to sing. This event held all those options for participants from the very young to the very old. We helped lift each other up.”

“Laughter – that is something very sacred, especially for us Indians.”

*John (Fired) Lame Deer, Rosebud Lakota
www.whitebison.org, October 2, 2011*

Laughter is mental, laughter is emotional, laughter is physical, and laughter is spiritual. Laughter helps us find balance. If we get too angry, laughter will turn that emotion in a balanced direction. If we have a mental picture of someone who is too strong, laughter will help ease the tension. If the body is stressed, laughter will release natural relaxants into our muscles and our nervous system. Laughter often changes our attitude. We need to lighten up and laugh more.

Great Spirit, teach me to laugh.

Helpers and Healers had this to say:

Healers said: “We all enjoyed our experience over the last few days. It was deeply moving at times, with lots of laughter and crying, and stories - even in all the HEAT. We were honored to be here at this gathering to participate and volunteer our gifts. (Our group) treated over 122 participants and staff and handed out \$1500 in natural medicine (herbs, essential oils, benedryl, band aides and bandages). In addition there was a lot of first aide administered: from bee and insect bites, allergy and panic attacks to sprains, slivers, cuts, infections, ingrown toe nails, indigestion, headaches and a snake bite! We are all happy, blessed and of course exhausted!”

Additionally, another three traditional healers in tipis provided healing sessions far into the night by working with individuals as well as groups. They expressed their enthusiasm and appreciation for the opportunity to contribute to this healing work.

The TRC statement gathering team said: ...”we just want to say how honored we were to be part of such a historical healing event. The former IRS students of Blue Quills were held up and supported as they each embarked on their journey towards



health and wellness and peace together. We bore witness to many shared experiences and we will be forever impacted by the words, the tears and the laughter that was entrusted in our hands. These shared experiences will now be passed forward to our



future generations through the TRC national research centre, for ever to be archived and utilized for future research and education. These shared experiences are a tell tale sign of the truth of Indian Residential Schools in Canada. Thank you to all the former IRS students who took up the same courage as that of our forefathers, who fought for our future, so that we may know and experience truth and reconciliation, to create a true historical map of the Indian Residential School Era.

The gathering was extremely well organized, all teams worked together with grace and kindness, generously supporting all former IRS students.”

Evaluations had this to offer:

What could we have done better?

- I think that this gathering was successful and that those that participated really benefitted, however, at future gatherings, I would suggest promoting it a bit more or assisting people to travel from other communities so that attendance is bigger and the word of healing is wider spread
- Better venue, I think a lot of old students didn't come due to where it was at.
- Everything was excellent. I don't know. I've never seen anything as wonderful as this event.
- Get rid of the snakes; some people didn't want to come here because they heard of them.

What is your hope for the future of Blue Quills?

- Keep the circle strong, believe in ourselves, and continue to incorporate culture, language, traditional knowledge in the curriculum. Instill a sense of pride in our young people, believe in themselves and be proud of who they are.
- To have a residential school museum to show the world what we as aboriginal people went through. Show them exactly what happened like what the Jews are doing. The world can never forget what happened to our children.
- To continue the culture and language of our 'old ones', the ones who suffered the early learning. Don't stop, don't look back, keep walking toward our Creator's love. Decolonize. Wake up. Stand up.



"Don't be afraid to cry. It will free your mind of sorrowful thoughts." Don Talayesva, HOPI

Human beings function from choice. We can choose to stuff things, or we can choose to let go of things.

If we choose to stuff things, then we will feel a heaviness, or sorrow, self pity or fear.

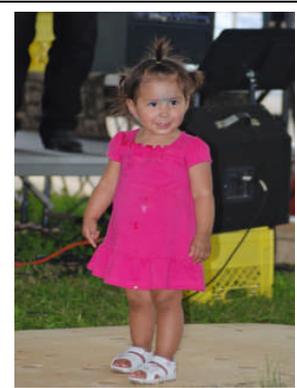
Sometimes we feel the need to cry. Sometimes we are taught it is not okay to cry.

The creator designed the human being to cry. Crying is a release. This release allows us to let go of thoughts that are not helping us so we can open to new thoughts that will help. Crying is natural for women and men.

Grandfather, if I need to cry, let me realize it's a natural process and help me to let go.

What was your most significant experience?

- Seeing all the people together talking and telling stories, just listening even though I didn't attend residential school
- Of seeing all the elders and people from all over the reserves, attending to this gathering and talking about the pain they went through while in residential schools. Meeting old and new people from other reserves.
- My favorite part was meeting all the special people that made this gathering possible and seeing the pride within this community. I am thankful for this experience!
- Hearing, talking, laughter, cooperation, music, TRC being welcomed, pictures were magnificent, yearbooks, generosity, inclusion of all ages, children's area was great.











Financial Summary (Oct 31, 2011)

REVENUE	
Charitable Donation Gift-in-kind	2,000
Charitable and General cash donations	8,171
Includes but not limited to the following:	
Community Connections Program, Saddle Lake	
Esso Imperial Oil	
Future Travel	
Grey Nuns	
John & Jennifer Bocock	
Native Counseling Services of Alberta	
Tribal Chiefs Ventures - RHS Legacy Project	
United Church of Canada	
William Bocock	
Facility Rentals (Accommodations)	7,592
Fundraising - General	4,148
National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health	20,000
Saddle Lake Residential Health Supports Program (Health Canada)	<u>20,000</u>
TOTAL REVENUE	<u>61,911</u>
EXPENSES	
Administration - Duplicating/fax/facilities/bookkeeping/planners	5,744
Equipment rental/purchase - Tents, lights, sound system, stage	10,776
Food supplies & bottled water	2,075
Garbage cans and disposal	834
Giveaway (Round Dance)	1,433
Honoraria - Ceremony/Helpers	7,850
Honoraria - Cooks	1,895
Honoraria - Healers	700
Honoraria - Horse & Wagon	400
Honoraria - Workshops	500
Part-time staff (Security/maintenance) salaries and source deductions	6,819
Photography & Video-taping	3,000
Promotions/advertising/gifts	7,225
Repairs and maintenance	1,849
Signage	2,094
Supplies - cultural protocol needs	1,046
Supplies - stationery, name tags, volunteer needs, medical)	6,076
Travel - includes Elder and Oskapios	1,596
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>61,911</u>

Contributions (paid directly by sponsors)

➤ Catholic Diocese of St. Paul (meal)	unknown cost
➤ Health Canada Residential Health Supports Program, Saddle Lake Cree Nation (talent show, jamboree, security, etc)	9,000
➤ Residential Health Supports/Health Canada – workers from Siksika/Wabasca/Grande Prairie/Metis Settlements/ Native Counselling Services of Alberta/Alexander First Nation/ Piikani First Nation/Blood Tribe/Tribal Chiefs of Alberta/Fort McMurray/ Western Cree Tribal Council/Edmonton/Calgary/Saddle Lake Cree Nation	unknown cost
➤ Truth & Reconciliation Commission – statement takers	unknown cost
➤ Tribal Chiefs Ventures – RHS Legacy Project (meal)	approx 500
➤ Canada Camps North-Primco Dene Companies (meal)	unknown cost
➤ Saddle Lake Community Connections Program (signage)	1,500

Contributions (food donations)

Sobeys Foods (Richard Kelly), St. Paul
Wayne & Don Groot of Groot Farms, Gibbons
Sundog Organic Farms, Edmonton
Riverbend Gardens, Edmonton

DONATED SERVICES

➤ Early Childhood Development (ECD) workers 16 X 8 hrs each X 2 days X \$18/hour	4,600
➤ Healers (massage, acupuncture, other healing arts) 6 X 8 hrs each X 2 days X 70/hr	6,720
➤ Traditional Healers (individual & group sessions) 3 at average cost per day of \$500 X 3 days	4,500
➤ Volunteers (Mannawanis Friendship Centre & other non BQ staff) 35 at average 20 hrs X \$10 per hour	7,000



All Our Relations GATHERING 2011 – ‘Schedule at a Glance’

Rev Aug 9	AUGUST 20 Saturday	AUGUST 21 Sunday	AUGUST 22 Monday	AUGUST 23 Tuesday
	CAMPING DAY	RECONNECTING OUR PAST	RESTORING OUR FUTURE	GOING HOME DAY
6:30	Sunrise Ceremony	Sunrise Ceremony	Sunrise Ceremony	Sunrise Ceremony
8:00	Registration opens 	Breakfast Cafeteria & vendors	Breakfast Cafeteria & vendors	8-10 the BIG BREAKFAST (sponsored by Tribal Chiefs Association)
9:00		9:00 Drum Song Announcements OPENING CEREMONY Greetings Keynote Speaker Honouring our survivors	9:00 Drum Song <i>announcements</i> Restoring ohpikinawasowin 9:15 Men’s Panel Father Involvement in Parenting 10:45 Film Premiere <i>With Dad: Strengthening the Circle of Care</i>	
Noon		LUNCH (cafeteria and food booths)	11:45 Grand Opening: Camp & Catering Program 12:30 LUNCH: <i>Sponsored by: Canada North Camps - Primco Dene</i>	
1:00	1:00 MAIN TENT - <i>Intergenerational Trauma: the Painful Legacy of Residential Schools</i>   	1:30 – 4:30 Sessions 1:30 MAIN TENT – Talking Circles on Father Involvement 2:30 TALENT SHOW   		
5:00	SUPPER (Sponsored)	SUPPER (at food vendors if not attending feast at Ceremony)	SUPPER <i>Cafeteria & food vendors</i>	
	Meet & Greet Class Reunions Finding Friends Jamboree	Feast & Ghost Dance at Cultural Grounds   	 	



SOCIAL ACTIVITIES:

Cultural Arts Schedule
Circle Schedule
Tours Schedule
Kid Zone Schedule
Workshops Schedule
Jamboree Social (Sat)
Amateur Talent Show (Sun)
Films & Videos Schedule
Photo Shop

CEREMONIES:

Sweat Schedule
Feast & Ghost Dance
Round Dance & Give-away



Residential School ACTIVITIES:

Statement Taking
Sharing Circles
Honoring Circles
United Church Display
Residential School Photos
Health Support Workers



...Program Schedules/detail available on site each day...

All Our Relations Gathering

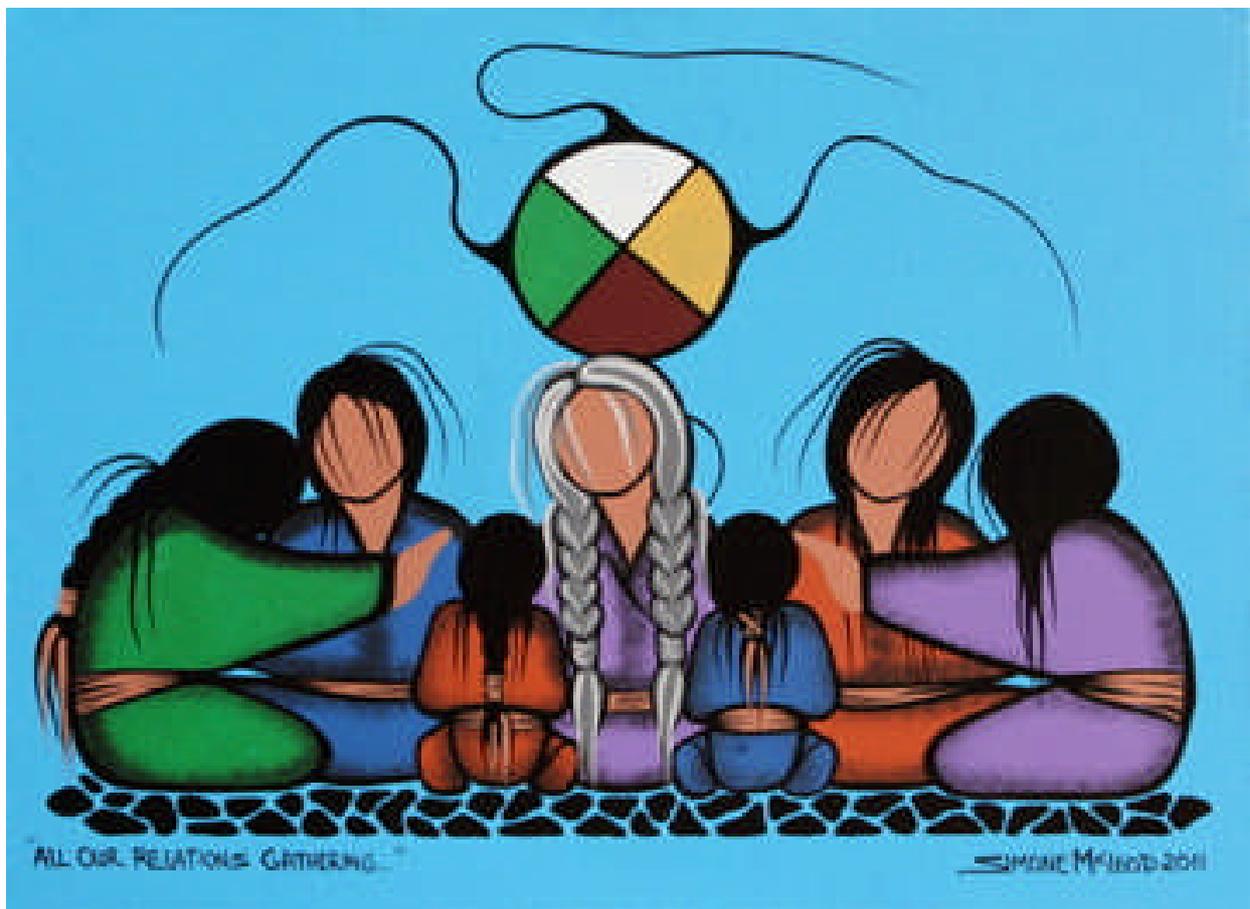
kahkīyaw kiwāhkōmākanawak māmawipayiwin

Horelyu nuhelot'ine ʔeteghédel

August 20-23, 2011

Blue Quills First Nations College

P R O G R A M



All Our Relations Gathering is an opportunity for another step into healing and change. Many generations are suffering from the effects of residential school, even those who didn't attend them. We now have seven generations of grief resulting in intergenerational trauma. Unresolved grief can interfere with our ability to love freely and fully.

The wisdom for healing lies within each of us. This is a time to share our stories and our hopes for the future that will emerge when we acknowledge our pain and do the work that is necessary to resolve it. We can't ignore the trauma that happened in our lives because it emerges in ways that cause harm in our relationships such as violence and addictions. We seek courage to move through the pain so our children and grandchildren can be free from the burden of carrying this pain for us.

"We are medicine; our relationships are medicine for each other." (L Aitken, Chippewa, 1990). Our original hurt has led to further hurts against each other and we can be toxic in our relationships. How do we learn together? How do we work together? How do we help each other heal in ways that don't blame and judge each other? How can we lift each other up? Forgiveness and reconciliation is the doorway to freedom from grief. We can all be medicine people.
mâmawoh kamâtowin ekwa miyoteh wīcihtāsowin

This gathering is also a time to celebrate. This College stands as a symbol of the courage and determination that lies within Indigenous people. In spite of unrelenting oppression and actions that forced Native people to be silent, banned ceremonies and spiritual ways, and discouraged pride in cultural identity, there remained the knowledge that this time would pass and people would come into their strength again. That resiliency emerges in many ways and Blue Quill continues to walk the path of leadership envisioned by the First Nations peoples who took over this school. It is now 40 years to celebrate and many more to come.

INFO Centre

- Registrations and program schedules (workshops, healers, cultural arts)
- Vehicle passes for Camping or Cultural Grounds
- Message Board
- Tours of BQ School (scheduled for Sunday, Aug 21 & Monday, Aug 22 or as requested)

Gym

- Residential school photos, yearbooks, displays
- BQFNC program resources, merchandise, donations, & data gathering on alumni

Elder Lounges

- Four Directions Room (between gymnasium & cafeteria)
- Hospitality House (log house on west side of main building, wheelchair accessible, Displays art and mural produced by students in the BQ Indigenous Artist Program)

Residential School Survivors (daily Aug 20-23)

- Statement taking (deadline is September 19, 2012)
- Helpers and listeners
- Sharing Circles (open to everyone) 10:30am & 1:30pm
- Video Lounge & Discussion
- info on TRC national activities
- CEP applications (deadline is September 19, 2011)

Cultural Grounds (daily Aug 20-23)

- **Sunrise Ceremony** about 6:30 am
- **Camping Area**
- **Hospitality Cabin** refreshments for campers & tipi sessions

Sunday, August 21 AND Monday, August 22

- **Cultural Crafts** drop in to make mini drums or rattles, and other crafts
- **Sweats** 11:00am and 4:00pm
- **Feast & Ghost Dance on August 21** (around 6:00pm)
- **Workshops & Tipi Seminars** *Schedule at INFO CENTRE*
- **Kid Zone** activities for 5-12 yr olds from 9am - 4pm
- **Wagon Rides (Cree shuttle)**

Healers & Cultural Helpers

- **First Aid Station** (and Healing Lodge) just west of main building
- **Healing Sessions** at Healing Lodge from 9 - 4 (Sunday & Monday only)
- For a **FREE** healing session, sign up each morning at the Healing Lodge or with the Healer directly if located in a tipi
- Healer & Helper list available at INFO Centre

Food Options

- **Food sales** in the Diner from 7am – 7pm, the BQ Cafeteria or at the Food Booths
- Sponsored **FREE MEALS** are Saturday supper, Sunday ceremony, Monday lunch, Tuesday breakfast

Vendors

- Cultural Artisans
- Food booths
 - Mannawanis Native Friendship Centre, St. Paul
 - Kihew Asiniy Jr/Sr High School, Saddle Lake Cree Nation

Saturday, August 20 – Camping Day

MAIN TENT

- pm Finding friends, Reunions
Visit the Photo Gallery in the Gym
Jamboree in the evening
- 6:00 Supper provided by Catholic Diocese of St. Paul

Sunday, August 21 – Reconnecting Our Past

MAIN TENT

- 9:00 Drum Song & Announcements
OPENING CEREMONY
Master of Ceremony Charles Wood
Greetings
Keynote Speaker: Maggie Hodgson
Honoring Our Survivors

LUNCH options: cash selections at the Diner, Cafeteria or Food Booths

1:30 - 4:30

MAIN TENT

Presentation: Intergenerational Trauma - the Legacy of Residential Schools
CLASSROOMS & TIPIS
Workshops & Cultural Crafts (schedule at INFO Centre)

- 6:00 Feast & Ghost Dance at the Cultural Grounds
Or cash selections at the Diner, Cafeteria or Food Booths

- 6:30 Socializing in main tent or visiting the Photo Gallery in the Gym
Workshops (check the daily schedule)

Monday, August 22 – Restoring Our Future

MAIN TENT

- 9:00 Drum Song & Announcements
Restoring ohpikinawasowin (Parenting Roles and Responsibilities)
Men's Panel: Father Involvement in Parenting
- 10:30 everyone invited to *Gym* for launch of film produced by the National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health
- 10:45 **FILM PREMIERE** (26 min) *With Dad: Strengthening the Circle of Care*

12:00 **GRAND OPENING:** BQ Camp & Catering Program
LUNCH sponsored by: Canada Camps North & Primco-Dene Group of Companies

1:30 – 4:30

CLASSROOMS & TIPIS

Workshops & Cultural Crafts (schedule at INFO Centre)

MAIN TENT

1:30 – 2:30 Circle Discussions on film *With Dad: Strengthening the Circle of Care*

2:30 Amateur Talent Show begins

SUPPER options: cash selections at the Diner, Cafeteria or Food Booths

6:30 Talent Show continues into the evening, or visit the Photo Gallery in the Gym

Tuesday, August 23 – Going Home Day

8:00 – 10:00 the Big Breakfast

Provided by Tribal Chiefs Ventures Inc, RHS Program IRS Legacy Project

10:00 Drum Song

Closing Ceremony

Mini Round-dance

Give-Away

Have a safe journey home!

Thank you to our supporters & allies

(as of August 16th)

Truth & Reconciliation Commission

Health Canada (First Nations Indian Health Branch)

National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health

Saddle Lake Residential School Health Supports Program

Tribal Chiefs Ventures Inc, RHS Program Legacy Project

Native Counseling Services of Alberta

Catholic Diocese of St. Paul

United Church of Canada

Sobeys Foods (Richard Kelly)

Grey Nuns

Esso Imperial Oil

William Bocoock

John & Jennifer Bocoock

Wayne & Don Groot, Groot Farms, Gibbons

Sundog Organic Farms, Edmonton

Riverbend Gardens, Edmonton

Sacred Heart Parish, Edmonton Inner City

Mannawanis Native Friendship Centre, St Paul



We thank these companies for their support of the BQ Camp & Catering Program



Join the Blue Quills Circle

We take great pride in ourselves as an Indigenous institution whose collective leadership style and academic programs are grounded in traditional indigenous knowledge and ancient sacred wisdom that has been transmitted orally over several generations through ceremony, language and land based teaching.

Every gift changes the future

The decision to attend College is often a turning point in an individual's life. For some, it is also the decision to move away from home, or start a new career, or pursue something that they have always been passionate about.

At Blue Quills First Nations College students receive not only an education and skills to build sustainable futures, they are also encouraged to grow personally and to cultivate a greater understanding of First Nations culture and the world. This is the true knowledge that stays with a Blue Quills student throughout their lifetime. It makes the Blue Quills First Nations College a unique place where Indigenous wisdom and western research come together for a transformational educational experience.

But students can't undergo this transformation on their own.

Alumni, donors and friends of Blue Quills provide the support that students need to be successful: rewarding excellence, fostering growth, and allowing the College to respond to changing needs. By making a gift to Blue Quills First Nations College, you allow our students the opportunity to experience a lifetime of success, of discovery, and learning.

Choose how your gift will make the difference

- ❖ Build a sustainability fund of all donations)
- ❖ Contribute to New Campus building designed by Douglas Cardinal
- ❖ Provide Scholarships and bursaries
- ❖ Purchase specific items that are needed by the College
- ❖ Support a Specific Program or Project which is important to you.

"Let us put our minds together as one."

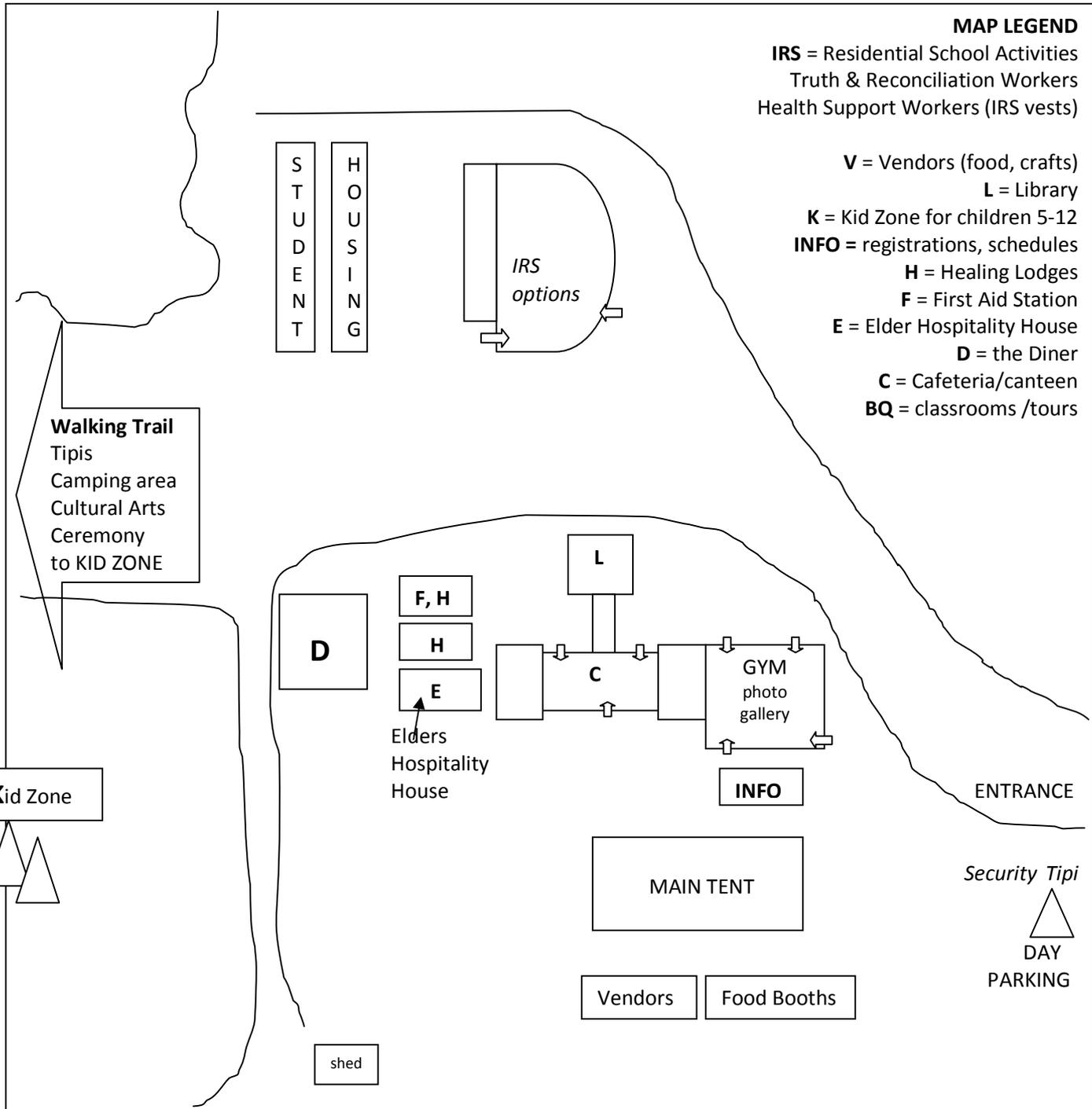
Irving Powless, Sr., Onondaga Nation

If we sat in a circle and put an object in the center of the circle and we all described what we saw, everyone would see different points of view from each other. Some would even see opposites because they would be sitting on opposite sides of the circle. In other words, you don't have to see what I see for you to be right. In fact, everyone in the circle is right based on their own point of view. If we are willing to listen to everyone's point of view, then we can get a more accurate description of the object in the center. This is one way to put our minds together. When we get the clarity from each other, we should give thanks and be grateful to each other.

visit the Blue Quills DONATIONS table in the gym



Blue Quills First Nations College



**sīihtakanep miyawātamowin
newomitanawaskiy tipiskamowin
Blue Quills First Nations College
Celebrates 40th Anniversary
1971 – 2011**

Celebrating 40 Years of Leadership in Education



1971— Some of the original Blue Quills Board Members. Left to Right: Lawrence Quinney, Isabelle

Steinhauer, Horace Jackson, Margaret Quinney, Theresa Gadwa, Edith Memnook, Louie McGilvery, Paul Memnook, Alice Makokis, and Stanley Redcrow. Members of those inaugural boards not pictured here were: Charlie Blackman, Lillian Pruden, Emma Steinhauer and Mike Steinhauer who later became the first Administrator.

People of the Saddle Lake/Athabasca District fought for the right to own and operate Blue Quills, and the seven communities that operate the College now were part of a larger group including Fort Chip & Cree Bands, Fort McKay, Fort McMurray, Janvier and Anzac Bands. Their struggle was nationally recognized and supported by Native people across Canada.

A sit-in at the school led to establishment of the first locally controlled Native institution in Canada and forever influenced government policy regarding Native education for First Nations peoples. Blue Quills maintains its leadership position by utilizing Indigenous wisdom and ceremonial protocols to restore Indigenous governance and relational accountability as the foundation for true 'Indian control of Indian education.'

Beaver Lake Cree Nation
PO Box 960,
LAC LA BICHE, AB T0A 2C0
Phone: 780-623-4549
Fax: 780-623-4523
www.beaverlakecreenation.ca

Cold Lake First Nation
PO Box 1769,
COLD LAKE, AB T9M 1P4
Toll-free: 1-888-222-7183
Phone: 780-594-7183
Fax: 780-594-3577
Website: www.clfns.com

Frog Lake First Nation
GD, FROG LAKE, AB T0A 1M0
Toll-free: 1-800-816-8732
Phone: 780-943-3737
Fax: 780-943-3966
Website: www.froglake.ca

Heart Lake First Nation
PO Box 447,
LAC LA BICHE, AB T0A 2C0
Phone: 780-623-2130
Fax: 780-623-3505

Kehewin Cree Nation
PO Box 220,
KEHEWIN, AB T0A 1C0
Phone: 780-826-3333
Fax: 780-826-2355

Saddle Lake Cree Nation
PO Box 100,
SADDLE LAKE, AB T0A 3T0
Toll-free: 1-800-396-2167
Phone: 780-726-3829
Fax: 780-726-3788
Website: www.saddlelake.ca

Whitefish Lake First Nation #128
PO Box 271,
GOODFISH LAKE, AB T0A 1R0
Phone: 780-636-7000
Fax: 780-636-3534
Website: www.wfl128.ca