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**DRAFT REPORT** of the Cree Justice Symposium that was held in Mistissini (Eeyou Istchee) on January 27, 28, and 29, 2009.

Each of the 10 Cree communities were asked to send a delegation of six (6) individuals each, ideally individuals who had knowledge of and participation in the criminal justice system, the prevention of crime or in issues related to the impact of crime and victimization in their communities.

The key objectives of the **Cree Justice Symposium** include:

- Including representation from the **GCC/CRA**, key CRA departments and each community (6 delegates each), achieve attendance goal of 80+ delegates.
- To gather input from communities on matters of crime, victimization, policing and justice.
- To discuss and achieve consensus on scope and direction of integrated **GCC/CRA** crime prevention program.
- To receive updates in regards to police force regionalization, justice system developments and related matters.
- To build working group to assist in implementation of integrated crime prevention and crime reduction program.

## **OPENING PRAYER**

The opening Prayer was recited by an Elder from Waskaganish. Upon completion of the opening prayer, Ashley Iserhoff, Deputy Grand Chief, made the opening remarks.

## **OPENING SYMPOSIUM REMARKS**

Deputy Grand Chief Ashley Iserhoff provided the Symposium remarks to the delegates to the Cree Justice Symposium. Deputy Grand Chief Iserhoff stressed the fact that meeting is not a General Assembly. He said that various guests were invited to make presentations for the symposium. Plans have under way since last Fall 2008 to hold such a symposium. The purpose of this meeting is to find solutions to the criminal activity that's been plaguing our Cree communities. In order to find these solutions, guests with expertise on justice issues have been invited for assistance.

## **OVERVIEW OF CREE JUSTICE**

Donald Nicholls, Acting Director of Justice and Corrections, provided an overview of Cree Justice. Mr. Nicholls said that when the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement* was signed in 1975. Section 18 on Administration of Justice provided a mechanism for a Cree Justice system. However, after 33 years, this section was never implemented.

In 2007, the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) signed a new \$13 million Agreement over a twenty-year (20) period. This Agreement is an opportunity to implement an alternative justice system for the Cree Nation.

This Agreement will create justice facilities in each Cree community. There will be some large justice facilities in some communities and smaller facilities in certain communities.

In addition, there will be a coordination office in Amos for corrections. Other faculties that will be available later will be a healing centre, drug treatment centre. There will also one justice officer and one re-integration officer in Cree community. All current postings for justice and corrections will be re-posted in each community.

Once the justice system has been set up, traditional foods will be served to the inmates in Amos.

## **WELCOME ADDRESS BY GRAND CHIEF MATTHEW MUKASH**

Wachiya/Hello friends, honoured delegates and those that are listening to us now by radio throughout the Cree Nation, it is with great pride and pleasure that I welcome you today to the Cree Justice Symposium, an event I believe with your leadership, will help shape the health and safety of our great Nation for decades to come.

Issues of justice are fundamental for our growing communities. To succeed, prosper as a people, and ensure future generations of Cree children the society they deserve tomorrow, we must always be mindful of ensuring an intelligent and balanced approach to equity, fairness, law, ethics and morality – all aspects of justice – today.

Martin Luther King Jr., perhaps one of the world's leading minds on issues of justice, wrote over 40 years ago that "True peace is not merely the absence of tension: it is the presence of justice". He also wrote that "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly". Mr. King's ideas are universal, and apply to us today in the Cree Nation as they did in the United States in the tumultuous 1960s. Justice is not something we invoke, something we cause to be done to another as if we are somehow not party to its effects. Rather, justice defines us as a people; justice is something that is embedded in the very fabric of our society, and therefore affects us all even when we may not perceive that it affects us at all. So, we all have a stake in this discussion and therefore must all be engaged which, indeed, is a defining characteristic of those democratic societies that have assured their people the

greatest justice outcomes. Properly harnessed, justice will ensure our peace; will ensure that all Cree people are treated with respect and consideration, irrespective of the things they have done; and will produce for our children the greatest public “goods” that they can bestow, too, on their children.

As Cree people, we have much to be thankful for and have many assets at our disposal to achieve a framework of justice that can stand as a model for other First Nations communities from coast to coast to coast. We have incredible natural resources, a rich Cree cultural heritage, wonderfully skilled and engaging people, a young and vibrant population, passionate leadership, wise Elders, vibrant political will, federal and provincial agreements in place that will begin to help us make good on our destiny, and many more. Notwithstanding our many gifts, we are also presented daily with the challenges that face any growing society. Crime and victimization are unacceptably high; drug and alcohol abuse continue to takes its toll on our people; gangs and predatory organized crime syndicates increasingly influence our young people; and, families and the family structures are under attack because of media influences, the pressures of modern society and the haunting legacy of residential schools.

These challenges are real and they are ever present, but they are decidedly not insurmountable. One of our greatest traits as Cree people is our resilience, our ability to confront challenges, take stock, plan our approach and prevail. Addressing the justice issues that affect all of us will be no different, and will require our very best thinking and commitment. That's why we are here together at this symposium, a most important

opportunity for us to set upon a productive course of justice reform. As I noted earlier, the communities that have assured their people the most advantageous justice outcomes are those that are engaged and inclusive; those where all sectors of society own the justice process and contribute to its constant shaping. Communities that have also produced the best justice outcomes are those that have employed a balanced approach, recognizing that justice problems will often fail when an “arrest our way out of the problem” mentality is adopted and where ever-increasing police departments are asked to take the lead and deal with societal ills. Justice - criminal, social or otherwise -

cannot be crafted in a vacuum only within our formal institutions. Justice, by its very nature as a product of human interaction, must spring from our people, for our people. It is therefore your responsibility, our responsibility, to carefully guide it. Justice begins with you.

This is perhaps the guiding principle for this Symposium: to bring our communities together to discuss challenges and debate solutions. Over the next three days, we want to hear your views about key justice system issues. Among other thing this include issues related to primary prevention, youth intervention and diversion, domestic violence, policing and the courts, restorative justice approaches, how we address the scourge of drugs, alcohol and gangs, and how we engage our youth with pro-social sports, recreation and other activities. We are hopeful that the tenor of this symposium is positive; dwelling too long on problems will not move us forward and will only stall us from making the justice changes we need to make for our people. Rather, we seek solutions, backed by your energy, vision and commitment, so that we can make things right for all of our people and for future generations to come.

Meegwetch/thank you for your time and contributions, and I look forward to continuing on the path of justice with every one of you.

## **COMMUNITY PRESENTATIONS**

## **EASTMAIN**

Eastmain has a low crime rate (Stats)

### **Criminal Model**

- Breaking & Entering (Crime of opportunity) (100%)

### **Not Reported**

- Trafficking

### **Key Justice Issues**

- Court happens three to four times a year
- Leniency of system is not a deterrent
- Underlying factors that may have contributed to the criminal activity may not be getting addressed
- Parental supervision and/or involvement
- Lack of community involvement
- By-law enforcement

### **Community Suggestions**

- More organised and varied activities geared towards the population
- Disbursement of the Community Centre Animation Funds by CRA to assist the community with resources to have monitors for all activities that we organize
- More community involvement through volunteers (incentives for those who volunteer)
- Have the Justice and Corrections positions act as resource people for the local restorative justice committees

## **Current Sports and Recreation Program**

- Hockey Leagues
- Eastmain has no restorative justice program
- Eastmain has no alternative measures program

# **MISTISSINI**

## **Issues faced by Mistissini**

### **1. Violence**

- Conjugal/domestic
- Bullying
- Knife incidences
- Gun incidences
- Assaults
- Suicide
- Sexual abuse

### **2. Drug and alcohol abuse**

- Trafficking
- Bootlegging
- Drinking in public
- Underage drinking

### **3. Vandalism**

- Breaking and entry
- Breaking windows in public place (ex: Schools, band office)
- Graffiti
- Damages to personal properties (ex: Vehicles and ski-dos)
- Arson

#### **4. Thefts**

- Houses are vandalized and personal property stolen and sold
- Cabins along the road are broken into
- Ski-doos are stolen, parts are stolen and sold
- Target areas for break-ins are: Bank, store and band office

#### **5. Parenting issues**

- Lack of parenting skills
- Lack of supervision of child (ren) by parents
- Lack of discipline for our children
- Parents are too defensive and protect their children from retribution
- Parents do not believe that their children has done wrong
- Parents do not teach moral responsibilities to their children
- Parents do not teach their children to respect people or anybody

#### **6. Safety issues**

- Under age children on ski-doos and on four wheelers
- lack of enforcement local/traffic by laws
- Gangs/gang related activities
- No respect for curfews by-law by children and parents

#### **7. Big big issues**

- Inability to prosecute bootleggers and drug dealers
- Backlog of court cases
- Court unable to process as soon as possible

- Sometimes cases are prescribed therefore many cases are not tried and offender gets away with the crime
- Unreported crimes

## **Suggestions**

### **1. Violence**

- Prosecute all serious violent offences immediately
- All youth should take a gun safety course before using a gun
- Lock up all guns
- All person who are implicated in violent behaviour should be obligated to take anger management workshops

### **2. Drug and Alcohol Abuse**

- Encourage community members to report trafficking and bootlegging crime
- Drugs and alcohol awareness, prevention and education (ex: Workshops)
- Enforce public drinking by-law
- Number one address trafficking and boot legging issues

### **3. Vandalism**

- Prosecuting offenders over 18 years of age
- Parents are to held responsible for under age offenders
- We are too lenient with our offenders, no wonder they become repeat offenders
- Install security measures in public facilities
- More police patrols on bicycle and on foot

#### **4. Theft**

- Prosecute offenders over 18 years of age
- Parents are to be held responsible for under age offenders
- We are too lenient with our offenders, no wonder they become repeat offender.
- Install security measure in public facilities
- More police patrols on bicycle and on foot

#### **5. Parenting issues: Workshops... workshops**

- Provide support and assistance to parents
- Utilize the wisdom of the elders to teach values of respect, love caring and sharing
- Justice system to find a way that support services and obligated attendance of certain workshops for parents of high risk children
- Court ordered participation

#### **6. Safety issues:**

- Enforce all trafficking bylaws for all kinds of motor vehicles
- Parents to take full responsibility to assure that bylaws are respected by their children
- Police to enforce bylaws and community to provide assistance and support
- Gangs/gang related activities
  - Inform and educate our children about the consequences of gangs and related activities
- Prevention/awareness/education

#### **7. Big big issues**

- Trafficking and bootlegging
- Throw the book at them

- Do everything and anything
- Exhaust all avenues to prosecute them
- Court system needs improvement in the process of cases in a timely fashion
- Develop a witness protection program so that our people are not scared to report and ensure absolute confidentiality of informant

### **General suggestions**

- Develop culturally appropriate community based programs and services
- Develop training programs for Cree members who will work in the justice system
- Incorporate traditional ways/methods of justice
- Ensure ongoing consistent community consultation regarding the justice system

### **Support from the Cree Regional Authority**

- Funding for community initiatives
- Encourage community to develop their own programs/services
- To provide professional support if needed
- To provide the means for the communities to train local people to ensure that the justice system functions to the fullest potential
- To organize regional training/awareness on justice system

### **What will we contribute?**

- Cree Nation of Mistissini's contribution
- Intelligence and creativity of our local people
- Commitment to improve system

- To continue with the local youth and adult justice panel
- Continue to address social issues in collaboration with Cree justice system

## **Mediation**

- Conflict is when two people fight. It could be any body at any age. Conflict start from an argument, shouting at each other, punching and kicking
- People can choose to talk. You can choose mediation rather than courts, by using a mediator (Counsellor) conflicts can be resolved.
- After mediation people forgive each other and continue with their lives. Instead of having guilt inside you for what happened or just ignoring conflicts it creates frustration.
- Justice panel offers mediation for our community.

## **NEMASKA**

Justice is the concept of moral rightness based on ethics, nationality, law, natural law, fairness, and equity. A conception of justice is one of the key features of society.

### **Key Criminal Justice issues affecting our community.**

#### **LEGAL SYSTEM**

- Disorganized legal assistance
- Leniency on aboriginal offenders
- Lack of parental involvement in youth cases

#### **LAW ENFORCEMENT**

- Lack of Police patrol at nights
- Reaction time of Police is too slow.
- Lack of parental involvement in youth cases

#### **SOCIAL ISSUES**

- Social isolation
- Gang related offences
- Drug and alcohol abuse and addictions
- Dependency
- Social Services on-call personnel are unreachable at times
- Inadequate parental involvement in lives of youth
- No accountability or real consequences

#### **OUTSIDE INFLUENCES**

- Youth desensitized by violence on television
- Glamorization of crime in media

**Our community's suggestions as to what can be done to reduce crime and victimization.**

**LEGAL SYSTEM**

- Local parole officers
- Harsher sentences for domestic crimes

**EDUCATION**

- Reports from youth based entities such as schools, youth centers, etc. on troubled youths
- Teaching of 7 Natural Laws in the schools (Honesty, Love, Respect, Truth, Courage, Wisdom, Humility)
- Disciplinary actions. The youth must be shown to take responsibility for their actions by accepting the consequences. However, it must start with the adults. Adults also need to be disciplined just as the youth are. Youth are at the rebellious stage in their life, so when they see adults getting away with wrong doings, while they (youth) get punished, it gives them more reason to rebel.

**LAW ENFORCEMENT**

- Enforcement of Community By-laws such as the Alcohol By-law and the Curfew by-law

**SOCIAL ISSUES**

- A mentorship program in the community to assist alcoholics on their road to recovery
- Aftercare programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous meetings. The problem lies not only with the alcoholics but also with the recovering alcoholics.
- Recovering alcoholics coming back from treatment centers require continued support from the community

- Family support groups. A healthy family relationship between the parent and the child is very important because the parents are the child's first educators. It is imperative to maintain the lines of communication open throughout the childhood.
- Residential School Generation needs to come to terms with their traumatic experiences, which seem to have negative effects on the younger generations.
- Workshops regarding the understanding of youth behaviour. People need to see that when the youth act out, it is a language. It is the youth's way of telling the adults that they do not feel loved, understood, trusted, and respected. The high crime rate is a reaction to the negligence and a cry for help.
- Teach community members to be more independent. The members must learn to assume responsibility for themselves. While accepting assistance from others they need to help themselves as well in order to solve their problems.
- Workshops regarding the understanding of youth behaviour. People need to see that when the youth act out, it is a language. It is the youth's way of telling the adults that they do not feel loved, understood, trusted, and respected. The high crime rate is a reaction to the negligence and a cry for help.
- What assets (people, money, programs, etc.) can your community invest into this crime preventions/reduction process for the benefit of all Cree people.
- Youth Protection Awareness .Cooperation between schools, parents, youth centers, and other similar youth based institutions.
- Street worker program on an annual basis rather than seasonal. (Frontline workers more in tune with the goings on, on the street.)
- Block Parenting Program
- Local Vocational Programs
- Recognition Programs
- Need more social workers
- .Anonymous call centers to provide information to the Police
- More youth programs
- Traditional Programs
- Healthy lifestyle workshops
- Proper disciplinary actions to students, employees, etc.

- Need proper role models
- Big Brother/Big Sister Programs
- A rehabilitation program where aboriginal criminals are not locked inside but taken out onto the land where they would practice our traditional lifestyles with supervision where they would be taught the old ways and this would instil the purpose of the individual. As provider, caretaker, teacher, and role model the program would give purpose back to the individual to rebuild the pride of being Native.
- Alternate sentences for summary convictions (volunteer work, therapy, mandatory participation in programs, etc.)
- A pre-integration program for newly released criminals.

### **Nemaska Statistics Nemaska Statistics**

- In conclusion we feel that we need to address these situations head on using the legal system, law enforcement, education system and societal structure to our advantage to make the necessary changes to ensure that our community will be safe for our people.

## **WASWANIPI**

### **Key Justice Issues Affecting the Community of Waswanipi**

- This past year our main crimes affecting our community were break –ins and vandalism. Our community has been growing fast in the past year with the construction of the elementary school, pre-construction of our new administration office and new housing. We have seen a lot of youth breaking into these buildings and committing the above-mentioned crimes. We had various break-ins, that's when we met as a community to resolve this issue. Like every community we have our share of issues involving drugs and alcohol, with these two issues come crimes of mischief, assault, suicide attempts and DUI. From past experience as a police officer, our police officers from the Cree Nation are constantly harassed verbally by the culprits they arrest, they are also faced with awkward situations when family members are involved. I acknowledge our officers for the courage and dedication they show every day, they are the people who work the hardest to keep our communities safe and peaceful.

### **What we have done to reduce crime and victimization**

- After all the break-ins and vandalism the band council supported the idea of having security watchmen throughout the, these security would patrol the community at night and keep an eye on the public buildings and certain homes that needed to be watched. Since we introduced this to the community we have seen the rate of break-ins and vandalism decrease immensely.
- As for the alcohol and drugs, the community members adopted a resolution to have zero tolerance when we host special events. We have had numerous roadblocks to impose the zero tolerance. When we do these roadblocks we have received numerous favourable responses from outside guests.

- Our police have been more active in schools doing presentations on bullying and consequences in being charged with various crimes. We have also imposed curfews to our children at 9 P.M. on weekdays and 10:30 P.M. on weekends. We control this by having our police patrol the community with their sirens on, at these specific times. When weather permits in the spring and summer months we have we have our police officers foot patrol, this initiative is to have our officers interact with the general population. This is to keep the good relationship with the community members.
- Our community has invested in building two new rinks for our youth. Since we have built the rinks we have seen youth spending their energy playing outdoors instead of vandalizing buildings.

### **What would our community seek from GCC/CRA?**

- We would to see them play a vital role in helping out with the prevention programs; one recommendation would be to start a project with our elders to find out how to we used to deal with these issues when there was no justice system back in their days.
- To have our elders play a more significant role in handling cases involving youth in our community. With their knowledge and wisdom our elders can play an important role in the sentencing, question the youth in questions and offer aftercare to each individual.

### **What Assets can our community invest into crime prevention/reduction process?**

- Our community has invested and established a Local Justice Panel. It's the same procedure as attending court, instead of lawyers and judges; we use our local resources from elders, youth protection officers and a Senior Community Justice Panellist that acted as a judge. We have shared information with other communities; Mistissini has a similar system in place.

- We could use this system in our communities; we could all enforce our local by-laws to this system. The Panel oversees every case and would assess the sentencing with fines, counselling, community hours and other alternatives that the Panel comes up with.
- With all these fines issued, we could use this money and reinvested in prevention and promotion, support local entities that offer youth programs in education, recreation and culture.

## **OUJE-BOUGOUMOU**

### **Criminal Justice Challenges**

1. Alcohol & Drugs ( 50% )
2. Vandalism ( 10% )
3. Break & Entry ( 10% )
4. Theft (5%)
5. Gangs ( 10% )
6. Assaults (conjugal) (Sexual) ( 10% )
7. Impaired Driving ( 5% )

### **Criminal Issues**

- 95% of Police calls are Alcohol & drug related
- Gang members have no family belonging
- Youth gathering in vacant house
- Family Violence -cases not reported
- Sexual Abuse -unreported

### **Suggestions for Crime Reduction**

- Work with Families to promote Parental Involvement / Responsibility and Prevent Crime.
- Have more Social Programs available for all community members.
- Police need to be more involved in promoting Crime

Prevention with local entities (School, Band, Arena)

- Local Community Security Workers
- 24 hr Shelter for Youth in Distress
- Have a Cree Nation Help Line 1-800-HELP

### **Crime Prevention**

- Stable Youth Activities
- Weekly on-Going recreation activities/ available for different age groups.
- Monthly Special Guest Speakers ( Local / Outside )
- Parent & Child/Youth Activities

### **What our Community would like to see from the GCC / CRA?**

- More Funding for Youth Department, a need for more employees and programs ( New Youth Center, with new equipment ).
- Alcohol & Drug Prevention and other Prevention programs (Speak up Program)
- Confidential therapeutic and Healing services available in the community on a consistent and ongoing basis.
- More support for families and children between the ages of 1 & 5 years of age (Brighter Futures, Positive Parenting, home visits to new mothers)

## **What our Community would like to see from the GCC / CRA?**

### **Restorative Justice**

- Healing Circles: resolving a problem within the two parties (victim & offender)
- Support: (family, friends, workers, community)
- Mediation, Local members are trained mediators
- Resolution Agreements: between victim & offender
- Alternative options: bush camp healing, programs from Cree Health Board
- Follow-up: on resolution agreements

### **Current Programs for Sports & Recreation**

- Summer Activities >
- Winter Activities >
- Cultural Events >

### **Sports & Recreation Facilities**

- Sports Complex-Fitness Center, swimming pool, canteen, ice rink
- Sports Lodge-Moto & Sno-cross track
- Children's Park
- Baseball field
- Outdoor-Basketball court, Tennis court
- Hiking Trails, Grated Ski-doo trail, track & field
- football field

## **Youth Department - Current Programs / Activities**

- Youth Council
- Radio / Local Programs
- Summer Student Programs (students enrolled in Secondary or College level / Work Experience)
- Workshops
- Monthly Youth Activities:
  - Nerf attack –Dance –Prom Night
  - Movie Night –Skiing –Bowling
  - Gym Night –Music lesson (created by local youth)

## **Ouje-Bougoumou Crime Prevention/Assets**

- Cree Values from Elders
- Existing programs in the community : Alcohol Anonymous, Brighter Futures
- Access to Treatment Centers
- Local members trained in Mediation/Facilitation

## **WASHAW SIBI**

### **Our Mission**

- To educate youth, parents, social workers and all members of your community of being involved in gang related issues.
- To prevent youth from becoming involved with a gang.
- To create healthy relationships with youth and other entities that are working with youth in our communities.
- Teach our youth about the risks and consequences.

### **Key youth criminal justice issues affecting our Community**

- Racism –aboriginal and non-aboriginal (urban),groups between nations
- Alcohol and drugs –underage, accessibility, increased addictions
- Domestic violence –affects loved ones
- Loitering in public offices due to homelessness
- Overcrowding of homes leads to stress related issues so the family members go to other groups or gangs
- Theft in stores, vandalism on property, selling stolen items to pawn shops
- School bullying in elementary and high schools
- Lack of care support services to rehabilitate individuals e.g. counselling, group therapy, treatment centres
- Life encounters of peer pressure
- Abuse –sexual, emotional, physical
- Broken marriages –paves a negative direction for the children
- Unsupervised children tend to have mishaps and commit mischievous acts

### **Crime Prevention**

- Talk to your children
- Neighbourhood watch
- Keep them physically and mentally active by providing recreational activities
- Encourage and mentor your children as well as others
- Get members involved in all activities
- Listen to our elders advice and do not take it for granted
- Teach them the ways of life (Cultural Educational and lifestyles)

## **Suggestions**

- Have mentors come to your community and speak to the parents and children
- More community involvement from our members for our children's needs and resources
- Sports and recreation programs
- Cultural Education programs
- Have workshops for family values e.g. motivational speakers, mentors, role models etc.

## **What your community would like to see from the CRA?**

- Create more employment for the youth
- Have the youth involved in political affairs with the local bands and also at the regional level
- Allocate additional funds for all youth activities and programs
- Administration costs should be increased for the Cree Nation Youth Council's (CNYC) both local and regional
- Invest in more programs related to the issues regarding the needs and concerns

## **Investment Assets**

- Facilities -Healing Lodges
- Rehabilitation Centres

- Therapy Groups (at homes or centres)
- Family committees

## **Conclusion**

In closing, we look forward to keep working together to find solutions that will help our communities as a whole nation. We are aware of the issues we face in the justice system and what our youth face as they journey in life.

## **WASKAGANISH**

### **Issues Faced by Waskaganish**

- Thefts –bicycles, Ski-doos, many other items
- Break-ins –To steal food to eat or wild meat to sell for cash
- Poverty –Root of many issues we face, resentment and anger in relation to different levels of wealth
- Too much exposure to violence
- Bullying, harassment among younger kids
- Repeat offenders, relates to backlog of cases, feeling of rejection among offenders
- Drug use
- Alcohol Use
- Solvent abuse
- Witnessing people using drugs and alcohol –imitation
- Loss of values
- Lack of reporting crimes, don't want to be involved, it's not my problem, fear of reprisal
- Lack of enforcement of certain laws and by-laws, also lack of consistency
- Lack of responsibility, blaming everyone
- Lack of knowledge of laws
- Lack of resources focused on reintegration
- Lack of parenting skills

### **Suggestions**

- Early intervention –teach values to kids
- Training for parents on parenting
- Support programs for young and single parents
- Prevention and information campaign directed toward kids

- Provide assistance and support to police
- More activities and more variety of activities for kids
- More traditional activities/more time on the land
- More sustained and consistent application of laws and by-laws
- Need of Family Oriented Healing programs
- Let the Youth Centres be Youth Centres
- Speed up the process so that cases can be heard sooner

**What would your community like to see from the CRA?**

- Research into various programs and funding we have not utilized
- Mobilizing communities to take action
- Development of a program to be taught in schools relating to crimes and policing.
- Regional awareness strategy

## **WEMINDJI**

### **Introduction**

WEMINDJI will celebrate 50 years in 2009. The community was relocated from the Old Factory River in 1958 but the official move took place in the summer 1959 of all the people. The population is at 1200 and is dominate by approximately 57% of the youth population are under 30 years with the female gender being the higher number.

The population has more than doubled since 1959 and is a young population. Wemindji has always maintained, practised and valued its traditional life style to the present day. Wemindji Iiyuuch continue to instil and pass on Cree oral traditions, ceremonies and history to the younger generations.

### **CHANGES AND PROGRESS**

Changes came soon with the Hydro development projects in 1974 to the community. Within ten (10) years the community began to develop and prosper as new water supply, sanitation infrastructure, new housing, health, social services, band administration office, new school, recreation facilities and airport became available.

By early 1980 to present day the community began to control the delivery and administration in housing, water/sewer infrastructure, road maintenance, garage gas station, a fleet of heavy equipment as they began to perform their own construction of their community infrastructure i.e. police station and fire hall etc.

### **THE PRESENT DILEMMA**

Much change has come in 50 years to The elders are still the backbone of the community but the younger generation is not in sync with the elders teachings. We need to make that connection, the communication between our elders and our youth. The present education the youth gain are foreign to the elders and they are unable help them in the western dominate society of materialistic ideas such as computers, videos

games, TV and modern influences of today's youth movement and dominance in fashion, music and ghetto (gang) culture.

Although we have the latest in modern facilities as indoor arenas, sportsplex, swimming pools there are those youths who still fall through the cracks and are involved with drugs, alcohol and substance abuse.

The illegal sell of drugs, alcohol and other substances is on the rise in the community and is causing the social problems and crime rate.

## **COMMUNITY CRIME RATE**

The crime rate in the community has risen drastically in the last 15 years and is getting more serious. All the infractions all relate to drugs and alcohol in some way or another. Most crimes committed are related to assault on police officer, drinking in public place, BnBs, theft, vandalism, assaults causing bodily harm, violence against women, sexual assault, illegal sales of alcohol, drug trafficking and firearms etc.

## **THE CREE TRADITIONAL APPROACH**

So what do we do? Do we turn a blind eye and do nothing and continue to let western influences rule us? Do we let outside cultures take over? Do we go back to our traditional ways of governing our nation with the help of our elders and learn to walk in balance in the two worlds of the western philosophy and our traditional and spiritual philosophies?

YES, we will go back to our original Cree traditional teachings and embrace our elders, community people and began reconnect to our roots and bring our people back on the right path before it is lost.

## **THE PRESENT JUSTICE SYSTEM**

Present Justice system is not compatible to the Cree philosophy, treatments and judgement.

- No rehabilitations facilities and program delivery at the grassroots level.
- No community Elders involvement, recognition and representation.
- Present system regarding the Cree families, youth and women protection is not compatible to Cree philosophy.
- Policing is not effective in the community because they are not seen as authoritative figures.
- No role models in the police force relating to community interaction and rapport with the youth population

## **GRAND COUNCIL OF THE CREE OF QUEBEC/CREE REGIONAL AUTHORITY**

The GCCQE/CRA support the initiatives and implementation of the Cree Justice in the Eeyou Istchee. The Regional Elders Council is to be recognized as the traditional voice and knowledge keepers of the nation.

The Elders Council must be involved in the implementation and deliverance of the Cree Justice System in Eeyou Istchee.

## **THE CREE APPROACH TO JUSTICE**

The Cree Nation of Wemindji foresees the development of a community based participatory mediation approach to the delivery of Cree Justice utilizing all sectors of the community population.

## **CONCLUSION**

It will be a long and difficult road but the road will become easy because the traditional approach is our way and only we as Crees can find the solutions to solve our problems spiritually. When we look at the issues that plaque our youth we first have to look ourselves as individuals, as parents.

## **Presentation by Dennis Georgekish, Deputy Chief, Wemindji**

- During the past year, the Cree Nation of Wemindji Police Services have implemented an intense drug, alcohol and organized crime task force that has created a number of open files and subsequent arrests. These activities are considered major crimes and will require court attention.
- With increased transience in the community and the real possibility of additional sources of money being available for crime, these policing actions will continue for the unforeseen future.
- The result of this change in community activity is the reality that petty crimes are not being addressed by the courts in a manner that is consistent with the wishes of the community. With the circuit court schedule, petty crimes are often ‘put over’ to future dates and then they may be discharged due to the poor response time for the nature of the crime.
- Research and local knowledge has confirmed that if small crimes are not addressed in a timely and effective manner, the perpetrator understands that his/her behaviour is accepted by the community and considers it condoned. Many of the crimes are being committed by youth who are not seeing the consequences of their behaviour and may interpret this as permission to move onto serious and dangerous crimes.

## **The Cree Nation of Wemindji –Local Mediation Council: Objectives:**

- To enable the Wemindji community to re-assert their traditional practices with respect to the conduct of their people;
- To facilitate greater involvement of the Wemindji community in the administration of justice;

- To restore a greater degree of responsibility to the Wemindji community for the conduct of its people who come in conflict with the justice system;
- To provide an alternative to the mainstream court process which will encourage offenders to accept responsibility for their conduct, to be accountable for their conduct by becoming active in rectifying the wrong which they have caused and to address the underlying problems which may have contributed to their conflict with the justice system;
- To give an opportunity to the victims to present their point of view and to participate, if so desired, in a process which aims to achieve reparation and reconciliation; and
- To ensure that the parties to the proposed protocol understand their respective roles and responsibilities in the diversion process which will be followed.
- An adult who is a member of the Wemindji community and who is alleged to have committed an offense in his or her community is eligible for diversion instead of judicial proceedings in accordance with this proposal;
- The following criteria will apply to all cases referred to the Mediation Council:

This program will not apply unless the prosecutor is of the opinion that the person is not eligible to the non judicial treatment program\* of certain offenses committed by adults;

The person has been charged with an eligible offence set out in the following section and must be required to appear in court;

- The alleged offence(s) for which the accused person has been charged must have been committed in Wemindji;
- The Prosecutor has the responsibility to assess the case and decide if the charge(s) will be diverted to the Justice Council for disposition. The Prosecutor should take into consideration a number of factors, including but not limited to the following:

The type of offence;

The circumstances of the offence and the fact that there is sufficient evidence to proceed with the prosecution of the offence;

The criminal record of the applicant's history with the police and the court;

### **Eligibility and criteria for reference of cases to Mediation Council**

- The safety, needs and views of the victim;
- The views of the police officers; and
- The recommendation of the Responsible person
- After being referred to the Mediation Council by the Prosecutor, the accused person must, after being given the opportunity to obtain legal advice, admit in writing his or her responsibility for the act or omission given rise to the offence that he or she is alleged to have committed and must freely consent to participate in the Program. He or she must undertake to attend and fully participate at the hearing of the Justice Council and to comply with all the conditions of the Disposition Agreement, he or she will be brought back to court to have the charge(s) dealt with in the regular court system. However, upon successful completion of the program, the prosecutor shall send a copy for inclusion in the Court record so that the Court may arrive at a decision regarding proceedings against the person under the terms of section 717 (4) of the Criminal Code.
- The responsible person (Mediation Co-ordinator) has the responsibility, in collaboration with other (parties such as the Justice Council, to evaluate with the accused person, his or her interest in participating in a diversion process and, if applicable, the disposition that could be agreed upon. Program applicable to certain adult offenders who are not criminalized for certain criminal offences whereby no charges are laid for certain crimes. The person is notified by letter

about the application of the program and of the fact that further offences will be prosecuted.

## **Offences Eligible for diversion of cases to Mediation Council**

### **Class I**

All summary conviction offences and all offences that were hybrid at the time that the agreement came into force are eligible for diversion.

### **Class II**

Class II offences include all Criminal Code of Canada offences that are not included in either Class I or Class III. Class II offences are not normally eligible for diversion; however, Class I offences embrace a wide range of conduct and the Prosecutor will therefore carefully consider all of the circumstances of the offence, those of the accused person and the needs of the victim and the community before deciding whether the charge will be diverted to the Program.

- In cases where a person is charged with multiple counts on a single information, the request for diversion will be evaluated on the basis of the most serious offence on which the prosecutor has a reasonable prospect of conviction and intends to proceed. The prosecutor may choose to serve a more serious and non-divertible charge from the charge(s) that is divertible.

### **Class III (not eligible for diversion)**

- Except for offences specified at sections 250 and 335 of the *Criminal Code of Canada*, all offences involving the operation of a motor vehicle;
- Offences involving abuse of children;
- Any sexual offence whether against adults or children;
- Any offence committed in a spousal or dating context;
- Any offence involving the abduction of a person under fourteen;
- Offences involving child pornography;

- Any offence involving the abduction of a person under fourteen;
- Offences involving child pornography;
- Any offence implying organized crime or gang;
- Any offence concerning drugs or other controlled substances.
- All firearms and all offences where a firearm was used;
- All offences concerning prostitution, disorderly houses, gaming and betting (part VII of the Criminal Code of Canada);
- Offences against the administration of Law & Justice (Part IV of the Criminal Code of Canada);
- Offences involving the death of a person;
- Offences that have a minimum penalty.
- All hybrid offences against the person that are punishable by ten years of imprisonment will be Class 3 offences unless no important damage or loss has been caused.

The Prosecutor decides if the accused person is suitable for the program and refers the case to the Local Mediation Co-ordinator (LMC) to evaluate for suitability.

The decision to refer the case shall be made within a maximum delay of days to be established with the Prosecutor.

If the Mediation Council agrees to accept the case, it shall provide the individual with a preliminary explanation of the Program. If the person wishes to participate in the program, the Co-ordinator shall have the individual complete the agreement form.

The Co-ordinator may also make inquiries as to whether there are extended family members and friends of the individual or the victim who may wish to participate in the hearing of the Mediation Council or eventually provide support for the individual or the victim.

Unless it is inappropriate and unfeasible, the Co-ordinator must contact the victim of the offence to ascertain if he or she would be interested in participating in the process.

Victim participation in the Program is vital and will be encouraged. However, the Co-ordinator will respect the wishes of the victim and the case will proceed with or without their input.

Diversion of charge(s) does not prevent the victim from initiating civil proceedings.

### **Procedures for the Mediation Council**

- In certain cases, the Co-ordinator may be asked to provide additional information to the Prosecutor to assist in the decision for possible diversion.
- The Co-ordinator will research, design and reserve possible alternative community service sentences as well as traditional or historic alternative measures to deal with the offences that are diverted to the Council. This information will be shared with the sitting members of the Council for consideration at the time of sentencing.
- Once the accused person agrees to participate, the Co-ordinator will begin the process of arranging a date for the individual to meet with the Mediation Council.
- An accused person may at any time terminate the diversion process and exercise his or her option to have the charge(s) heard by the court.
- Once the accused has agreed to diversion, the prosecutor shall ask the Court, if necessary, to adjourn the case in order for the individual to appear before the Mediation Council and to complete the terms of the Disposition Agreement between the individual and the Mediation Council.
- Where the person attends meetings of the Mediation Council and satisfies the requirements set forth in the Agreement, the Co-ordinator shall provide the Prosecutor with a report of this.

If the Court requires the author of this report to be present in court to discuss the Agreement, then the Co-ordinator shall be present and prepared. If, in the opinion of the Medication Council, the diverted individual does not attend the hearing with the Medication Council, does not fully complete the Disposition Agreement or does not fully comply with the terms of the Disposition Agreement, the Mediation Council shall immediately inform the Prosecutor of these facts in writing, and the charge(s) in court will proceed on its normal course.

## **Disposition Agreements**

- A Disposition Agreement between the diverted individual and the Justice Council may include the following provisions:
- Community Service
- Restitution to the victim
- A letter of apology to the victim
- Treatment
- Counselling and
- Any other disposition which the Council considers appropriate, except that it may impose incarceration.

The Council will be composed of seven members of the community who are in good standing. The term for the appointed positions is five (5) years. This will allow adequate time for training and skill development. Following that initial period, should a member wish to be replaced on the Council, this will be done on a rotation basis –thus ensuring that a minimum of five (5) members will always be trained and prepared to sit at duly called hearings.

- Members will be required to attend appropriate training and ongoing workshops for local justice groups.
- Members will be required to submit annual CPIC reports and such reports will be free from criminal activity.

- Members will be required to provide counsel and direction for diversionary discipline in cases that are referred to the Council for administration and monitoring.
- Any three members shall sit on cases. Members will be required to state any conflict of interest prior to sitting on any such hearings. They will then be replaced by a member who does not have a conflict.
- Members may be required to confer with legal counsel or the judiciary from time to time.

This is a full time permanent position that reports to the Local Mediation Council. For personnel standards, the position will be administered by the Cree Nation of Wemindji and will receive supervision from the Wellness Supervisor.

**Duties:**

- Will attend appropriate training when required;
- Will attend all court hearings and will provide resourcing to legal counsel and the court as required;
- Will review all referred cases with the court;
- Will interview the perpetrator and ensure that he or she understands the process of the Local Mediation Council;

**Position Description of Local Mediation Co-ordinator**

- Shall support the victim and encourage their participation in the Local Mediation Council process;
- Shall arrange for all appropriate presenters to attend the Local Mediation Council hearing.
- Shall provide information concerning alternative approaches to the members of the Local Mediation Council as requested.
- Shall ensure all documentation required by the court is completed in a timely manner;

- Shall research and maintain a list of possible community service projects for consideration by the Local Mediation Council.

## **Qualifications**

- Must have good communication skills in English, French and Cree;
- Must have a clear CPIC and be willing to live a role model positive lifestyle (without alcohol or drugs)

## **Accomplishments to Date**

- Community presentation and consultation of community issues and concerns (2007)
- Community presentation of research alternative approaches –Mediation supported by Community Resolution (2008)
- Discussions with the Circuit Court Officers (2006, 2007 & 2008)
- Intensification of police action in respect to local illegal activity
- Police presence in school
- Policing strategies for drug and alcohol surveillance intensified
- Presentation of plan to the Cree Regional Justice Committee (2008)
- Appointment of Deputy Chief Dennis Georgekish to the Justice file
- Hiring of Lyn St. Louis (Taiga Vision) to present community training and specialized training for the Mediation Council
- Posting of position of Mediation Co-ordinator
- Advertisement of program and the need for community people to be trained.

## **WHAPMAGOOSTUI**

### **Presentation to the Cree Justice Symposium - Presented by Robert Auclair, Justice Coordinator**

This process has been long overdue and we as a nation, as communities and as individuals have the opportunity to take control of our own destiny.

In our community, we have become tired of our youth being shipped out to be processed in a foreign justice system that does not offer sustainable healing and wellness to them. To the contrary, our youth come back more confused and angry every time they come back. What they learn in prisons, detention facilities is how to become better criminals. Make no mistake; drugs are readily available in detention facilities and even in youth reception centres.

Furthermore, years of inaction have hindered our community development and ultimately our social and economic empowerment as a people, as a nation. A report recently stated that even with our so called modern day treaty, the James Bay agreement, we are no better off than most other aboriginal nations in Canada under the Indian Act.

We need to take a firmer hold of our destiny. Let's not put our children in the position of sitting down at some gathering 30 years from now to report that nothing has changed and that we who are responsible today did nothing to change it.

In our community of Whapmagoostui, we live in a community of lack. We lack many of the basic and adequate community resources, programs and services that many other communities have access to already. The community cannot provide for all its members alternatives social housing, therefore creating an even greater housing backlog.

At the root of many of our social problems is the lack of addressing basic shelter needs. There aren't enough jobs for community members partially because there aren't any

economic development opportunities and in our case no regional entity dares look at Whapmagoostui as a location for its headquarters because of the high cost of living.

Whapmagoostui always gets the short end of the stick, the smallest piece of the pie because the governments fail to realize the uniqueness of our community, the remoteness of our community and the high cost of living.

Our cost of doing business can 100 times higher than that of most other communities. The cost to transfer a detainee for a bail hearing off the bat is 3000 dollars for plane tickets and the police force is left to bear the cost for that from their budget. We transfer on average 15-20 detainees a year, you do the math. This eats up the police budget and the police are left to do their basic service, that is to patrol and process criminal files.

If the community had its own local restorative justice, such as a justice of the peace and a sentencing circle in place for minor offences then we could help treat and heal our troubled community members incorporating our traditional values and beliefs. We should be given that opportunity because what exists now does not work, we all know that.

There should be no bureaucratic and political barriers in our way from preventing us to help our own people. It is only when we have true and total control over our own lives, our own destiny will we see our people living the lives they are capable of.

Now, today we have an opportunity in the Cree justice file to right the wrongs of the past 30 years, to force action in place of bureaucratic inaction, to take hold of and run with the missed opportunities of our past. We have the opportunity in this time to exercise our inalienable right to self governance, to take a firm hold of our autonomy as a Cree Nation in the realm of Cree justice. The first thing step we must undertake is to redefine Cree justice as a path to healing and not as a punitive word for law breaking.

We have the opportunity to help those in our Nation to manoeuvre their way out of their present social stresses and problems and into the clarity of taking responsibility and ownership of the future for themselves and for our future generations.

How do we go about doing this? We have to be given the opportunity to create, develop, and sustain our own holistically based healing and wellness programs and services. Let us not be blind to the fact that in order to find our way in the present and prepare for our future, we must know first where we came from.

We came from strong and powerful ancestors who against all odds, against moments of starvation, against the unrelenting harshness of the northern environment, it was and is from the land and animals that sustained our grandmothers and grandfathers, it is why we are still here today.

We have not transferred nor continued the life teachings of our nomadic forefathers. We have not fostered or adapted these life teachings to the encroachment of western contemporary society. Ultimately we have not adapted to sedentary community life and thought.

We have not taken a close look at ourselves today and where we see ourselves in present day terms.

I say this as an observer and having been of a police officer since 1995, a justice coordinator since 2007 and as a participant in a suicide prevention conference, a special needs conference and others. I say this as an observer of who is working and taking the lead at the daycares, at the schools, at MSDC's and social services sectors. The majority of the people in these positions are women. The women in our Nation are taking the lead.

The majority of the people in our Nation being charged, detained, transferred and sentenced in the current travelling court system are men. The number must be at 90% or more. We must ask ourselves why this is so. Didn't we come from a patriarchal, nomadic, traditional, holistic, spiritual Eeyou/Eenou society?

As men we must ask ourselves the difficult questions. What is my role now in the family? How do I help my partner and children so that their day to day lives can be less stressful and happier? Where do I gather and grow my sense of importance, usefulness, confidence and strength as a man whether I am working or not?

This is a call to all men to find your purpose in your life, your family and your community. Free your hands from that bottle, free yourself from the clutches of drugs and give your significant other (wife/girlfriend), your children, your friends and your loved ones a helping hand, a leg up and become a role model to yourself, your family and community. Find your way out of the justice system and learn to empower yourself, only you are the maker of your destiny.

Where do we go from here? Our elders have to teach us about our history; about the way things were back then, those things that teach love and respect for everything. We have an opportunity to do this in the formation of sustainable healing and wellness camps in the bush setting where counselling and healing is readily available.

Our youth must not be left to their own devices in creating false senses of identity that they find in non-native society. They must be taught their language and where did the language come from? It came from the land; the elders say you will find everything that you need out on the land.

Do most people know what the elders really mean when they say that? If you look hard enough, you will find your true Cree identity, respect for all things, your purpose in life and ultimately to become a productive member of your family, your community, your Cree Nation.

We have met our elders and in their infinite wisdom, the elders expressed their dire anticipation that one day soon they can contribute to the wellness of our people. Our community has already in the past built facilities out on the land to help people with the struggles in their lives.

They have done this by offering traditional counselling through wisdom of the values and beliefs our people believed in before the arrival of outside influences. These values and beliefs still exist today just as we sit here and exist today.

We have the facilities, we have the human resources, what was missing in the past in order to sustain these programs and services is the external program dollars that need to be redirected towards these healing and wellness programs being offered out on the land.

We need to give our youth the life skills to manoeuvre in the non-aboriginal world. For that to be achieved, we need easier access to treatment, education/training and jobs. Our people have to do at least one of those three things. And if you do all three things in succession, then you become a productive member of your community, your Nation. But it is unacceptable to do none of those things.

We as Cree people have to heal from within, to heal our spirits and we have to provide an avenue for an individual to do so in a swift and timely manner, let us not wait another 30 years. We need to work together from the governments to the Cree Nation, from one community to another, from one organization to another, from family to extended family, from individual to friend.

The sooner we realize we are all connected in one way or another, the sooner we will start to discuss solutions to our problems and not just to identify our problems and let bureaucracy run its snail's course.

Do we need crime prevention programs, fully functioning youth centres, sports complexes, etc... Yes we need all of these good things that the southern world can offer us, any community is entitled to these things.

But let's not kid of ourselves, we must prioritize in getting to the roots of our social problems.

This entails providing a continuous means to heal one's spirit. In order for this healing to be successful we must provide our people with the basic needs any human being requires such as food, shelter and water.

Aren't we failing our people by not providing adequate access to shelter that most Canadians take for granted? We must get away from becoming a dependent people, a dependent Nation and move towards a Nation full of strong, confident, independent and productive people, we must become totally self reliant.

This should be the vision for all our people. The access to housing, education and jobs must be easier to access and not harder. Only then will we dare to have bigger dreams, to make improbabilities into sustainable opportunities and create a life of purpose without limitations.

Leadership in all its forms has to adopt the attitude to leave no elder, no child, no man and no woman behind, everyone in our Nation has the ability to become a productive member of society in general.

We must not only leave education in the hands of the CSB, we must not only leave our social problems just in the hands of the CHB, we must not only leave our wrong doings just in the hands of the Police and a punitive justice system and we must not only leave our band councils to be responsible for providing and doing everything for us.

All of these things are my responsibility, your responsibility, our responsibility. In order for this to work, all of us have to be on the same page, we have to agree on a common purpose and work towards a common goal, that is to heal our people one person and family at a time.

We can do this by developing Inter-agency groups as we have done in our community where we have explored and started offering "wrap-around" services to individuals and their families on a case by case basis. The time has come for each community, for each entity, for each family and for each individual to take responsibility and ownership of their problems and to find ways to heal their spirits.

It is important to think outside the box, to work together as organizations in the most effective manner. We must be careful not to easily and readily adopt mechanisms that are marginally successful in western society and think that they will work for us. We must go further than that, to look into our past to find our strength in our identity and to create our own programs and services for healing our people.

In closing, I would like to thank the GCCQ/CRA for giving our community to present our vision for Cree justice.

## **CHISASIBI**

### **Key Criminal Justice Issues Affecting Chisasibi:**

1. Lack of follow-up on files;
2. No current Alternative Measures Program/Restorative Justice Program exists;
3. Backlog on files (police, court, etc.);
4. By-laws not adequately enforced due to lack of resources, manpower
  - Traffic, alcohol, animal control, etc.
5. Current legislation (e.g. justice, etc.) not adapted to Cree way of life and systems;
6. Imprisonment of offenders not a solution (sometimes), no change or may become worse;
7. Repeat offenders (recidivism);
8. Apathy and complacency (“I don’t care” attitude);
9. Community members’ lack or reluctance in being involved;
10. Inconsistency between reality and actions taken thereof;
11. Escalating crime and number of cases (both minor and major);
12. Intimidated by “the system”;
13. Repercussions to doing so from offenders;
14. Reluctance to report crime, or to even testify;
15. Family relationships;
16. Lack of translations/language barriers/legal terminology;
17. Lack of consistency and ongoing programs;
18. Lack of mentorship, role models, recognition for achievement programs;
19. Negativity;
20. Breach of conditions (e.g. house arrests);
21. No local probation officers;
22. Need for ombudsman to deal with various issues;
23. No link between justice system and entities (CSB, CHB, etc.);
24. Court decisions when families are concerned – who makes sure they are carried out and are they carried out? “Shady area.”

## **Chisasibi's suggestions to reduce crime and victimization**

- 1. To have more education and prevention and awareness programs:**
  - a. Radio (talk shows, testimonies, information – varied);
  - b. Posters;
  - c. Pamphlets;
  - d. Community newsletter;
  - e. Public announcements;
  - f. Community meetings;
  - g. Family gatherings;
2. Police/justice committee;
3. Local website;
4. Cable TV programming;
5. Teaching of moral and religious instruction/values
6. Use of Elders as resource persons;
7. Workshops & training geared towards youth, young people (e.g. start at young age) and families on:
  - a. Healthy relationships;
  - b. Children and families, etc.;
  - c. Communications, etc.;
  - d. Bullying gangs;
  - e. Patenting;
  - f. Wilderness training;
  - g. Mentorship;
  - h. Addictions
    - Gambling
    - Alcohol
    - Tobacco
    - Drugs and substance abuse, etc.
  - i. Counselling

- Personal
  - Financial
  - Family, marriage
- j. Family Violence
- Suicide
  - Family breakups
  - Children who witness violence
8. Identify and utilize local resources;
9. Entities and organizations work together;
10. Local and regional conferences to combat core issues;
11. Networking and co-operation among committees;
12. Immediate follow-up upon incidents (via support systems);

**What Chisasibi would like to see from GCC/CRA to a comprehensive crime prevention and reduction strategy**

1. MORE OF ALL OF THE ABOVE;
2. More funding and support (technical, etc.) to the communities;
3. Accredited training programs (facilitators, court workers, etc.) locally;
4. Promotion and hiring of local and/or regional Cree officers and personnel;
5. Support in the establishment of CN tribal court/justice circles, etc.;
6. Invite other First Nations (who already have justice programs) to visit communities;
7. Negotiate the governments to change the justice system.

**What assets (people, money, programs, etc...) can Chisasibi invest into this crime prevention/reduction process for the benefit of all Cree people**

1. Current sports and recreation programs (by age and category) in Chisasibi:
  - a. Hockey/broomball;
  - b. A.C.T.I.O.N. Programs – Provided seasonally
  - c. Snowshoe-making (involving Elders recounting old stories);

- d. Summer camps;
- e. Traditional summer camp;
- f. Sports camps;
- g. Mamoweedow Minstukch (summer);
- h. Traditional Pow-wows;
- i. Music program;
- j. Football Program;
- k. Snow-cross/Moto-cross;
- l. Swimming;
- m. After school Program;
- n. Head Start Program;
- o. Brighter Futures;
- p. Softball Program;
- q. Local and regional tournaments;
- r. Cree Arts Festival (e.g. dance competition);
- s. Internet Cafe (services);
- t. Sports Leagues;
- u. Winter traditional gatherings;
- v. Canadian Rangers and Junior Rangers;
- w. Organized school leagues;
- x. Student Recognition Outings (organized by Minor Sports Committee);
- y. School trips/student and cultural exchange trips;
- z. Katimivik Volunteers (hosted by Chisasibi);
- aa.** Biggest Loser (weight loss) Challenge;
- bb.** Movies nights;
- cc.** Talent shows;
- dd. Canoe brigade (e.g. “Paddling For Life”);
- ee. Fishing Derby;
- ff. Blueberry Festival;
- gg. Aboriginal Day Festivities;
- hh. Chisasibi’s Birthday Festivities;

- ii. Christmas and New Year's Festivities;
- jj. Bicycle rodeo;
- kk. Elders' Camp (Feast & activities);

**2. Chisasibi's current restorative justice programs that can be used as a model:**

- a. Parental interventions and involvement
- b. Community work program
- c. Traditional work program
- d. Cultural teachings & workshops
- e. Mentoring programs

**3. Alternative measures program that have worked well in Chisasibi that may be a model for other communities (discuss best practices with other communities):**

- a. Land-based (traditional) program for youth, couples and families;
- b. Aftercare Programs; *Alcoholics Anonymous (AA; Narcotics Anonymous (NA) meetings, Support groups, Care-taker support system);*
- c. Police spot checks;
- d. Counselling by local Elders and resources (voluntary basis);
- e. Organizations (e.g. school, youth protection, etc.) working together for clientele.

## **CREE ENTITY PRESENTATIONS**

# **CREE BOARD OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES OF JAMES BAY**

## **(CBHSSJB)**

### **SOCIAL AND HEALTH ISSUES AND JUSTICE**

James Bobbish, Chairman, Cree Health Board A presentation about the links between social and health challenges and the achievement of a just and safe Cree Nation for all.

#### **Progress from the past**

Mr. Bobbish said that the RCAP report (1993) states that the current Canadian justice system has failed Aboriginal people because of a different world view between the dominant culture and Aboriginal people and differences in the substantive content of justice and the process for achieving justice.

Mr. Bobbish provided the following alternative models:

- .resolution through peacemaking
- Talking Circle (mediation) & other Circles
- Combination of “regular” laws and Cree peacemaking values
- Joint project between Crees & Quebec Justice Department could be instituted
- A way of deciding the best way to handle criminal cases
- Punishment with attempts at fairness/ rehabilitation –controller vs. controlled type of relationship
- Separation of Church and State is constitutionalized so spirituality is not part of dispute resolution

## **Aboriginal view**

- Deviant behaviour as something that requires healing for all involved including the community as a whole
- Emphasis should be on the criminal action and the consequences rather than blaming individuals
- Primary goal is to restore health of the community with the aim of social and spiritual harmony

## **Law vs. Mediation**

- traditional medicine can be compared to western medicine
- law can be compared to mediation

## **Medicine**

- In cases of psychological or spiritual hurts, western medicine tends to treat symptoms with prescription drugs
- Traditional medicine seeks to heal the pain using spiritual knowledge to deal with the root cause
- “Medicine” in the traditional Aboriginal sense means anything that will help to promote healing

## **Justice**

- The justice system based on laws with a European history locks away the offenders and does little to rehabilitate them
- Restorative justice is another way to deal with a crime whose aim is to “restore” the relationships of all affected, to fix the damage that has been done, and to prevent a reoccurrence of the crime

## **Differences**

- Just as there are times when western medicine is needed

- and times when traditional medicine is more appropriate,
- there are times when we need the court system and,
- there are times when restorative justice can be more effective.

### **Restorative justice is an option**

- when the offender has been tried in a court of law and has been found guilty of the offence as charged
- If the offender and other parties agree to participate voluntarily in the process
- Trained facilitators and an established program are available

Restorative justice is a voluntary participation of the offender and other parties in restorative process, which involves:

- Healing and forgiveness
- Active involvement of all concerned to restore relationships for the good of the community
- Acknowledgement of responsibility for the crime by the offender

### **Hallmarks of Restorative Justice**

- Offender admits responsibility of the crime
- Parties agree to participate
- Restitution reached by consensus

### **Processes**

- Can be several different ways such as victim/offender mediation, sentencing circles, and/or family group conferencing
- Facilitated by knowledgeable people who focus on the process and not the content
- Involves all affected parties to eventually come to a consensual solution

## **Benefits of a restorative justice process**

- Less likelihood of repeat offences
- Every voice that needs to be heard is heard
- Communities can deal with cases faster than what the circuit court allows
- It will help us to learn and reinforce our values
- Aligned with the Cree values of respect and concern for community cohesion.

# CREE SCHOOL BOARD (CSB)

## SAFE SCHOOLS AND JUSTICE

Gordon Blackned, Chairman of the Cree School Board described the work and challenges of the CSB in terms of ensuring safety and positive education outcomes.

Mr. Blackned believes that criminal justice is not an end in and of itself, but a means, a means to a healthy community, happy families and a prosperous Nation. Mr. Blackned said that as Chairman of the Cree School Board, he approaches the issue of justice from the perspective of the needs and reality of the youth.

The following is Mr. Blackned's statement to the Justice Symposium: "From this perspective, I ask myself and all of you: How can we expect our children to value education and stay in school, if their schools are not safe? If they do not feel respected? If they are unsure of the rules or the rules are not consistently upheld? How can we ask our children to grow up as healthy and productive members of our society if they do not see the law working diligently and fairly to respond to the injustices they see happening around them?

To do well and prosper, children need the security of knowing they are safe, that there is a system of policing and justice that upholds the values of the Cree Nation fairly and uniformly. Without such security, our students too often turn away from structured education after losing faith in our schools and the benefits an education can bring.

Indeed, providing safety for our children creates a positive cycle. The more students feel safe, secure and respected at schools, the less likely they are to drop out. The more youth are educated, the more likely they are to have successful outcomes as an adult – thus helping to create an even more safe prosperous community as well as a just society for the new generation of students.

Although the Cree School Board has accomplished a lot to be proud over its 30 years of operation, the number of students graduating high school is not as high as it should be, and violence and abuse is still present in our schools. Of course, violence is not just a problem in Cree communities but across Canada and North America. We have all turned on the radio or picked up a newspaper over the past few years and seen the tragedy of another school shooting. In 2008 alone, there were at least 8 school shootings across Canada and the United States. And of course, in 2006 there was the shooting by an angry student at Dawson College in Montreal.

Gang violence and bullying in schools is also becoming more common place throughout North America, and the Cree communities are not immune. A year ago, we sat here to discuss the crime and justice issues in our communities. Computer uses of bullying through the internet and emails have becoming more and more common in our communities.

There is still a lot to do. Indeed, these horrific tales should not have happened for nothing. They should serve as reminders of the disastrous results when a school and community does not adequately protect its students, when it allows bullying to take place and does not properly respond to the warning signs of troubled children. These tales should propel us to action.

It is because of this urgent need to act for the sake of our children that I am so excited to take part of this Cree Justice Symposium. It is an important moment in history when all the parts that make up our great Nation come together to respond to these important challenges. And today I am here with you all today, not only to talk about all the difficult challenges that lie ahead – although they are plenty – but also to share with you what the Cree School Board is *already* doing to address issues of safety in our schools and to discuss ideas we have to build on what we already have to improve safety in our schools and communities in the years to come.

Perhaps the clearest example of our efforts to make our schools safe is the *Policy and Procedure on Safe Schools of the Cree School Board*. This policy is an overarching guideline that applies to the Board as a whole. It acts a framework to help individual

schools develop local, school-based codes of conduct. To be sure, although there needs to be general principles guiding all Cree schools, each community and school has specific issues, weaknesses and strengths. Therefore, the most effective approach is an individualized approach guided by larger principles. Some of these larger principles and goals of the policy are to:

- Ensure all members of the school community are treated with respect and dignity;
- Create an environment where conflict can be addressed respectfully
- Encourage non-violent methods of conflict resolution;
- Promote safety in the schools;
- Promote positive attitudes and behaviours;
- Practice fair, consistent and age appropriate disciplinary practices; and
- Proper communication and consultation between all schools, family and community actors.

The policy also ensures that any searches and disciplinary practices are in-line with the Quebec and Canadian Charter of rights and freedoms as well as the law surrounding crime, youth delinquency and youth protection.

In trying to ensure safety in schools, the policy targets several unacceptable behaviours, including:

- Bullying
- Theft
- Possession of any type of weapons;
- Possession or use of drugs or alcohol;
- Vandalism,
- Other harmful activities determined by each school.

Building upon these principles, the individual schools have developed codes of conduct providing clear expectations with regards to acceptable and non-acceptable behaviour

for all members of the elementary and secondary school community which are in-line with the law and the principles of the Board's safe schools policy.

Other policies which the School Board already has in place deal with issues of harassment, youth protection and the safety of students residing in boarding homes during the school year.

These policies are a step in the right directions, but there is much more that needs to be done to clarify and implement these principles.

The approach which the Cree nation must take to crime, violence and victimization in the schools must be developed with an appreciation of the school context, and the vulnerable and impressionable ages of children – including the perpetrator, victim and bystanders. The proper roles of the teachers, principals and other school staff must be clarified and properly communicated, and training on the proper protocol when violence or a crime occurs must be given when necessary. Moreover, the relationship that the school has with the police, parents, youth protection, elders and the rest of the community also needs to be well established to ensure that the appropriate actors are involved at the correct time.

Proper resources need to be available at respond timely to the needs of young perpetrators, victims and other students – all while ensuring that the stability of the day-to-day life of the schools is maintained. We must be able to respond to crime and violence, while maintaining the reliability of schools and other activities. The acts of a few should not detract from the quality of education of the whole.

Realizing these important goals will take a lot of coordination between all parties involved – particularly between the School Board, the Youth Protection Services, the Justice Committee and the new Regional Police. Together I am confident we can create a communal and effective approach to creating safe schools – to the benefit of our youth and the entire Nation.

As with the creation of safe schools, so much is possible. Indeed, Safe schools will breed a sense of justice in our youth which, in turn, will hopefully inspire some of our students to take up the challenge and pursue training and education to work themselves in the field of justice – whether it be through the law, policing or otherwise.

Although this meeting has only just begun, I am already encouraged by the energy and enthusiasm of everyone here and the coordination of ideas and resources that this meeting will facilitate”.

## **CREE REGIONAL AUTHORITY – CRA SPORTS AND RECREATION**

This presentation was delivered by John Henry Wapachee, CRA Sports and Recreation Coordinator, and Andrew Neeposh, Director of the Youth Department (CRA).

### **Leisure, Sports & Recreation in Eeyou Istchee**

- There are significant changes taking place within the Cree Nation. These changes impact the society and culture of Cree people and specifically, Cree youth;
- In light of these changes, it is critical for the Cree communities and entities to redefine their vision and strategic directions, as a first steps to developing a roadmap in order to enhance programs and provide quality services to the Cree population.

### **BACKGROUND**

- In November 2006, the conceptual plan to in order to enhance and develop sports and recreation in the Cree Nation was submitted to the GCCEI/CRA Executive/Executive Committee;
- GCCEI/CRA Executive/Executive Committee then recommended the establishment of a department charged with the organization and implementation of recreational programs;
- In June 2007, the GCCEI/CRA Executive/Executive Committee approved the hiring of the CRA regional recreation coordinator.

### **Structure -CRA Leisure, Sports & Recreation Department**

- In collaboration with Director, Coordinator, and Recreation Consultant preliminary structure of the CRA Leisure, Sports & Recreation Department was submitted to the office of the CRA Director General for the CRA restructuring implementation committee;

- The drawing of structural concepts have helped us forecast on how the department will look like as well as services and programs required for such department;
- Also the Consolidated CRA By-law aligning with the restructuring has been prepared by the implementation committee for the political leadership's review;
- The structure for CRA Leisure, Sports & Recreation has been approved by the Council/Board on June 11.

### **The Benefits of Healthy Lifestyle- Why Sports & Recreation in Cree communities**

- The recreation and sports in the Cree communities has proven to contribute in the personal enrichment and well-being of a person and it has demonstrated to have a positive effect on the person's self-esteem;
- Practicing of recreational and sporting activities is also an excellent means of dealing with stress and to prevent and treat certain health problems;
- Recreation and sports provide positive environment to motivate youth and reduces feeling of isolation;
- The feeling of isolation can lead to negative social behaviour, but it is not always the ultimate reason why social issues exist in our communities.

### **History on Cree Healthy Lifestyle**

- Crees lived a healthy lifestyle before the drastic changes that affected our culture;
- Crees used to travel by canoe and portage in the summer, and by snowshoes in the winter as a way of life as form of daily physical activity;
- Other physical activities;
- Proper nutrition.

### **History on Athletic Programs & Student Activities – Residential School Days**

- Track & Field at the end of the school year for both genders;
- Hockey program for boys with limited development on program;

- The Crees were very dominant in sports like hockey, they had to separate the Cree players from Cree because of their competitiveness or skill level;
- Crees were recognized as professionals in archery and canoeing;
- No organized or limited athletic programs for girls;
- Other fun games like soccer (not organized or training involved);

### **Recreation Activities & Facilities in 1970's in Eeyou Istchee**

- As few communities had elementary schools, there was a slight improvement in recreation & sports activities for the students;
- Outdoor rinks were constructed in some communities for the use of the students during school hours and for the public after school hours;
- Few schools had indoor gymnasiums like Mistissini elementary school & Fort George secondary-elementary school;
- Fort George now known as "Chisasibi" after the relocation from Fort George Island – Sand Park High School.

### **Introductory on Sports to Cree Students –south 1970'.**

- The Cree students who attended schools in the south like La Tuque, Hull, and in Ontario were introduced to little more variety of sports programs and therefore brought certain sports and recreation activities to their communities along with their skills that they had developed in certain sport;
- At the same time, students who attended school in Cree community were introduced to sports during phys. Ed classes;
- Ultimately, hockey became a leading sport in the Cree communities as demonstrated by the Cree students who were attending school in the south;
- Softball also became popular in the coastal communities;
- Volleyball and basketball became noticeable in the Cree communities while the sport of hockey was growing as a pioneer sport in the Cree Nation (Lafleur, Dryden, and Orr generation);
- Activities were organized by the communities were very limited during the 70's;

- In the late seventies, schools began organizing activities and programs for the students during school year;
- The Cree youth who attended school outside (south) the Cree community had certain advantages in taking part of the sports programs that were offered by the school.

### **Cree Tournaments & Special Events during 70's.**

- Hockey tournaments or exhibition games were organized by Cree communities like Waskaganish, Mistissini, Fort George (Chisasibi);
- The sport of broomball for women & men eventually came into existence in the Cree communities and later became the winter sport for women;
- Regional Traditional Summer Games (Pow-Wow) were organized in certain communities like Mistissini and other coastal Cree communities— mainly for adults;
- Softball tournaments, mainly on Fast pitch for men became the leading summer sport in the coastal Cree communities during the 70's (Wrangler Days).

### **Initial Youth Programs – 70's to early 80's.**

- Certain sports programs were developed and carried out by the Cree communities like hockey in the inland coast as well as hockey & fast pitch in the coastal region;
- The elements that were incorporated in the sports programs for the youth were discipline and curfew;
- Coaching was already in existence during the 70's and the individuals involved were very dedicated to the sports development programs for the youth;
- The programs carried out for the youth were quite successful due to active community support and committed coaches involved;
- Unfortunately, lack of funding for youth sports programs was a major obstacle for ongoing programs.

## **First CRA Recreation Office – late 70's.**

- With the advent of the signing of the JBNQA and opening the CRA & CSB offices in Val d'Or in 1975, certain Crees were employed in these offices along with Non-natives and Algonquins;
- The first Regional Recreation Director was Lloyd Stackhouse;
- In the late 70's, the Crees started shinny hockey & eventually putting a hockey team together known as CRA Drummers to play in the Labatt Circuit League (Recreational Hockey);
- The CRA Drummers hockey team eventually took part at the hockey tournament held in Amos and the team won;
- Mr. Allan Bush was one of the key organizers of the CRA Drummers hockey team.

## **Cree Hockey Tournament of the Century**

- After when the CRA Drummers won the hockey tournament in Amos, the idea of organizing the hockey tournament for the Crees officially initiated;
- Grand Chief Billy Diamond appointed Mr. Allan Bush to the regional recreation director position;
- Mr. Bush was with the Cree School Board as the Student Affairs technician at the time;
- The initial mandate of the appointment was to initiate logistical planning with respect to the organizing of the first Cree Hockey Tournament in Val d'Or.
- In 1980, the first Cree Hockey Tournament was organized for the Crees;
- The number of teams invited from Quebec and Ontario to the tournament had to be limited in order to launch out the first Cree hockey tournament;
- The intent of the tournament was to raise funds for the CRA drummers hockey team with the plan to bring the Crees in one place and give them the chance to do their Christmas shopping for their families;
- The core group to organize the tournament were members like Allan Bush, Eddie Diamond, Abel Bosum, Sidney Ottereyes, Andy Bourdrias, and others:

- Since the tournament had no operating budget, the work carried out for the tournament had to be done strictly on volunteer basis;
- There were no cash prizes awarded to the champions, just medals and trophies as the intent was to organize the tournament in the spirit of brotherhood and sportsmanship;
- Part of the reason for not granting cash prizes was to keep the operating costs to a minimum in order to generate revenue for CRA Drummers hockey team;
- The inscription fee for Class A was in the neighbourhood of \$600.00 in the early years.

### **Founder of the Hockey & Broomball Tournaments**

- Since Mr. Allan Bush was the initial coordinator of the Cree Nation Invitational Hockey & Broomball tournament, he became the founder of the annual event;
- Mr. Bush is also the founder of the Annual Neoskveskau Memorial Hockey & Broomball tournament in Mistissini;
- Also a founder of the Albert Mianscum Memorial Annual Hockey & Broomball tournament in Ouje Bougoumou.

### **Purpose of the Val d'Or Annual Hockey & Broomball tournament**

- The original intent of the annual tournament was to raise funds for the CRA drummers;
- The efforts eventually shifted to disbursing the revenues generated from the tournament to charitable reserved funds for Cree children and youth;
- The mission and vision of the ongoing fundraising drive from the tournament proceeds led to the creation of Cree Children's Charitable organization

### **“Tommy James Wapachee Foundation”.**

- Tommy James Wapachee (from Nemaska) was the first Cree baby who was deceased from contaminated water in the Cree territory;

- Since the Cree Health Board (CHB) had no funding for specialized care program in cases like this, the tournament organizing committee began transferring the proceeds from the tournament to the foundation account – which was reserved as “finding the cure fund”;
- The CHB was later set up to specialized programs for Cree patients, but the revenues generated from the tournament were still geared to children & youth projects or programs;

### **Recap on Leaders of C.N.I.T./C.R.E.E.**

- Allan Bush – Ouje-Bougoumou (early 80's)
- John Kitchen – Waswanipi (mid 80's)
- Walter Hester JR – Waskaganish (late 80's to early 90's)
- Ernie Moses – Waskaganish (1990's)
- John Henry Wapachee – Nemaska (late 90's)
- Jean-Baptist Loon – Mistissini (early years of 2000)
- Charles J. Hester – Waskaganish;
- Paul Shecapio – Ouje-Bougoumou - (present).

### **Recreation Activities & Facilities in 1980'.**

- While Schools were built in the Cree communities along with gyms, the James Bay Eeyou School in Chisasibi was completed with new gymnasium for students of the Cree Nation;
- More activities and programs were carried out for the youth within the schools and in certain Cree communities;
- The Cree communities began recruiting the initial stages of community recreation based programs for their community members by engaging the services of recreation specialists.

## **Community Recreation in the Cree communities in 1980's.**

- In the early 80's, even with limited recreation facilities and funding, more Cree Nation Bands recruited the concept of having an ongoing recreation program in their communities;
- As a result of the JBNQA, the Crees including the youth became very politically oriented Nation pursuing their studies in fields like business administration etc..
- On the other hand, while many youth were studying business administration or vocational programs in college institutions, few Cree students started pursuing their studies in community recreation;
- Generally, the main influence that has impacted on the Cree youth in the 80's was LEADERSHIP.

## **Original CRA Recreation Office – 2ND PHASE**

- At the time when Simeon Pash took over, certain programs were initiated namely training for community recreation program;
- Certain Cree communities began recruiting additional department (recreation & sports) within their administrative budgets and began hiring full-time recreation directors & technicians;
- The core responsibility of the regional office was to continue on the coordination of the hockey & broomball tournament in collaboration with the local recreation personnel;
- The other mandate of the regional office was to set up the department in series of developing a regional recreation strategic plan through consultations and compilation of Cree community profile on facilities, services, and programs;
- The progress in setting up the department was eventually dissolved due to the decentralization;
- Since most communities had recreation departments and local personnel, it served no further purpose in having a regional office.

## **Recap on CRA Regional Recreation Coordinators**

- Since the signing of the James Bay & Northern Quebec Agreement and the opening of the Cree Regional Authority administration offices, the following persons have served in the office regional recreation:
- Lloyd Stackhouse;
- Allan Bush;
- Simeon Pash;
- Jeff Spencer;
- John Henry Wapachee – August 2007 to present.

## **Recreation in Cree Communities in 1980's & 1990's.**

- The recreation directors had mandates to assume full responsibility on the program development and coordination of activities, projects, and programs for their communities;
- At the same time, the recreation directors were given the challenge to assume responsibility of the annual Val d'Or tournament (C.N.I.T.);
- The recreation directors began holding their meetings in order to exchange information, and more specifically to the planning & coordination of the Cree Nation Invitational Tournament;
- The coordination C.N.I.T. a major regional responsibility for the recreation directors that it led to spending less time with their paid roles and responsibilities.
- As part of the objective of meeting the needs of the community members, each local administration began expanding its local recreation department by recruiting additional personnel;
- The expansion of each department allowed the recreation director to take part on the regional recreation directors meetings and Cree Nation Invitational Tournament, but still part of the job description regarding each recreation director;

- The local programming, coordination of activities, and leadership began to suffer at the local level due to the absence of the recreation director “the leader”;
- In essence, more recreation directors were spending more time at the regional level than at the local level.
- The Cree leadership was also very occupied with community development namely toward construction of housing, community infrastructure, and public buildings;
- As a result, the focus on program development and services were not the center of attention at the time;
- Communities eventually shifted their plans toward programs and services as a result of slight increased financial resources.

### **Works Carried Out to Enhance Regional Recreation – Late 90’s.**

- Jeff Spencer was hired on contractual basis as the Regional Recreation Coordinator under the CRA Community Services;
- The role of the coordinator to the local recreation department was to provide the necessary support in terms of filtering information and assist in program development & management when necessary;
- At the regional sector, the coordinator was in charge of the regional recreation strategic planning, coordination of the recreation training plan, and provide administrative support on the Cree Nation Invitational Tournament organizing committee.

### **Action Plan for Regional Recreation – Late 90’s.**

- With advent of hiring the regional recreation coordinator, plans were set to redesign the concept and role of regional recreation;
- To develop working relations with the CRA;
- To implement plans that evolved from the recreation strategic planning and needs assessment such as training for the recreation directors;

- To develop plans in order provide ongoing training for the local recreation personnel including recreation facility managers;
- To develop the necessary structure for the regional recreation suitable for the recreation directors and regional recreation sub-committees, namely Cree Nation Invitational Tournament.

### **Challenges and Obstacles on Regional Recreation – Late 1990's.**

- Enhance support;
- To design proper structure respecting the regional recreation with its mission and objectives;
- To secure the required funding for projects, programs, and training plan at the regional level.

### **Accomplishments on Regional Recreation during 1995 -2000**

- Developing working relations with the Cree leadership, clearing uncertainties, and gaining support;
- Completion and Implementation on certain components on the needs assessment and planning process for support and funding;
- Implementation of the regional recreation office and engagement of coordinator;
- Development of better communication network amongst the recreation directors through series of meetings and exchange of information;
- Better program development and leadership at the local recreation departments.
- Implementation of community recreation training plan and securing of training funds;
- Expansion of local recreation personnel and diversity of local programs stemming from the exchange of information, regional recreation strategic plan, and training for the recreation practitioners;
- CREE NATION BEARS Bantam CC hockey franchise;
- Re-establishing relations with the town of Val d'Or regarding C.N.I.T. topic;

- Completion on the designing the proper structure for regional recreation for approval – Eeyou Istchee Sports & Recreation Association.

## **Expansion & Launching of Recreation Programs and Services**

- As more Cree communities were expanding their recreation personnel, the recreation departments were set to develop and implement more diversified activities and programs for all ages;
- More time was spent in the local program development without having to contribute more time to the Cree Nation Invitational Tournament that is normally organized by the recreation directors;
- With the expansion of recreation personnel and programs, the leadership of the recreation directors became much more in demand and it required their constant presence in their offices.

## **Funding for Crees & Recreation Programs & Facilities**

- Funding related to MOU agreement and other funding agreements with the governments had helped the Cree bands to increase funding toward their local recreation programs and services;
- At the same time, the local recreation departments were able to secure funding from different funding sources for their departmental activities and programs for the benefit of their community members;
- Cree communities began to commit themselves millions of dollars to construct facilities will house sports & recreation activities for their communities.

## **Overview of Recreation in the New Millennium**

- Continuation of the annual hockey & broomball tournament in Val d'Or;
- More coaching development programs in the Cree communities;
- More funding from provincial and federal governments toward community needs, programs and services for the Cree communities as a result from the Cree-Quebec New Relations Agreement;

- Cree communities started to recruit more specialized sports and physical activities and programs for their communities;
- Cree communities continued to build sports & recreation facilities for their community residents.

### **Accomplishments in Recreation in the New Millennium**

- Midget AA Franchise – Eenouch now renamed as Cree Nation Bears;
- James Bay Minor Hockey League;
- Completion on the construction of the Sports and recreation facilities;
- Implementation of more sports and recreation programs for the children, youth, and adults in the Cree communities;
- The creation and incorporation of Eeyou Istchee Sports and Recreation Association under the Canada Corporations Act of Industry Canada

### **Cree Youth Hockey Development Program - Management**

- Cree Nation Bears Midget AA – Charles J. Hester as General Manager & Steve Cheechoo as head coach;
- Cree Nation Bears Bantam AA – John Gosset as Interim General Manager & Charly Wash as head coach;
- James Minor Hockey League – Raymond Shanoush as President, Gordon Brien as Vice-President for Inland, Pauline Lameboy as Vice-President for Coastal;
- Cree Nation Bears Pee-Wee – Paul Shecapio as General Manager.

### **Investing Our Financial Resources**

- Major portion of the revenues generated from the event have now been invested toward local and regional activities as well as programs (Cree Youth Hockey Development Program, Cree Nation Fitness Challenge..);
- Implementation of C.R.E.E. funding program for the Cree children and youth related to sports, physical health activities or programs;

## **Challenges in the Cree Nation**

- Fight against alcohol & drugs within the Cree Nation;
- Student attendance and student success rate;
- To combat social issues in the communities;
- To develop as well as implement activities and programs to decrease vandalism and other social issues within the communities;
- Fight against Diabetes epidemic and other health issues within the Cree Nation;
- Allocating funding for programs related to physical health activities, leisure, sports development and recreation programs;
- Organizational Assessments of Cree entities.

## **Challenges in Education**

- Education reform and organizational assessment;
- Social Issues within the student population at local schools;
- Student attendance and student success rate;
- Upcoming Negotiations for renewed funding agreement on education;
- Enhancing sports development programs within the education system.

## **Challenges in Cree Youth Hockey Development Program**

- To develop & implement operations and fiscal management plan Cree Nation Bears hockey development program and James Bay Minor Hockey League;
- To strengthen hockey program
- To conduct formal needs assessment on AA hockey development programs & JBMHL;
- To develop and initiate training needs in operations & management for the team management personnel and leadership involved in the hockey development program;
- To solicit and secure the required funding related to hockey development programs, administration, and capital costs;

- To provide funding for ongoing coaching and officiating certification training programs;
- To set up proper structures and register by-laws with Corporations Canada for legal status;
- To address needs & issues related to players and develop the essential programs for the players (social, education, discipline..).

### **Summary of Accomplishments in Cree Recreation**

- Increased funding on services and programs in local recreation as a result from recent agreements;
- Construction of proper recreation and sports facilities in the Cree communities;
- Access to better recreation and sports facilities to carry out sports and recreation activities and programs;
- Cree Youth Hockey Development Programs in Cree Nation Bears Hockey (Bantam & Midget AA, James Bay Minor Hockey League).
- Good management personnel in the JBMHL and Cree Nation Bears Hockey Development Program;
- Development and implementation of innovative sports & recreation programs and activities at the local level;
- Secured funding from URLs for administration of the CRA Regional Recreation office and funding for local summer camps;
- Establishing links with First Peoples' Aboriginal Sport.
- Circle and other Cree entities through joint efforts/committee (external influences).

### **The Road Ahead in Leisure, Sports and Recreation**

- As the Cree communities have committed themselves to millions dollars to construct sports and recreation facilities, the next challenge for the Cree leaders (both regional & local) is deciding where to classify the programs related to physical health activities, leisure, sports, and recreation;

- Allocation of funds to sports & recreation programs;
- Allocation of funds toward developing Cree athletes;
- Support joint efforts/committees in order to strengthen working relations toward program development and implementation for the benefit of the Cree Nation.

## **The Roadmap**

- To secure the required funding for regional recreation initiatives has always been a challenge for the recreation directors;
- Strategic Planning on diversity of programs and activities;
- To revive the Cree Traditional Summer Games commonly known as “Pow-Wow”;
- Planning of Symposium on Leisure, Sports and Recreation.
- Develop global Animation Plan in Leisure, Sports & Recreation in Cree communities;
- To plan and initiate ongoing training for the recreation program and facility managers in order to have trained recreation personnel in the Cree communities.
- Structure for regional recreation “governing board”
- To create Cree Regional Recreation website;
- To enhance support and increase recognition of the sports and recreation within the political arena;
- To increase support on the Cree Youth Hockey Development Program (JBMHL & Cree Nation Bears AA Franchise);

## **External Influences – CRA Regional Recreation**

- First Peoples Sport & Recreation Circle of the Eastern Door & North;
- Cree Regional Entities (CSB-CHB...)
- Cree Nation Recreation Directors’ Committee;
- Ministère de l’Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport - Secrétariat au Loisir et au Sport (MELS);
- Unité Régionale de Loisirs et de Sports (URLS);
- Ontario Recreation Facilities Association Inc. (ORFA);

- Commission Loisir et Sport de la Baie-James (CLSBJ).

### **Creating the CRA Leisure, Sports & Recreation Department**

- This exercise is required for funding purposes, as a result of the recent Canada-Cree agreement and the potential renewing of the sports and recreation funding agreement with URLs of MELS;
- The focal point within the CRA Regional Recreation office is to ensure the creation of the department with its services and programs that will align with its vision and mission;
- The relationship with other key partners or external influences is essential at this point such as Cree School, Cree Health Board, MELS, CRA/GCCEI, Commission Loisir et Sport de la Baie-James.

# **CREE WOMEN OF EEYOU ISTCHEE ASSOCIATION (CWEI)**

**CREE WOMEN OF EEYOU ISTCHEE ASSOCIATION (CWEIA)/  
ASSOCIATION DES FEMMES CRIS DE EEYOU ISTCHEE (AFCEI)  
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND FAMILY ISSUES**

**The impact of domestic violence will be discussed along with the need to develop supportive programs for victims and families.**

**Doris A. Bobbish, Director CWEIA**

**January 28, 2009**

## **BACKGROUND ON WOMEN'S HISTORY:**

Person's Day celebrated October 18<sup>TH</sup> a landmark decision changed the face of Canadian politics.

1929 person's case; "famous five" Alberta women who fought and won the right for Canadian women to be officially deemed "persons" under the law.

80 years ago this year, our founding mothers paved our way to justice no matter what race you came from.

Women in the lead: Emily Murphy-judge (was still not considered a person), Louise McKinney, Nellie Mc clung, Irene Parlby and Henriette Muir Edwards

## **For an equality and just society**

Before the 1929 person's case women were not "persons" in the eyes of the law.

Then the "bread & roses" became the symbol for the women to join the workforce and equality (salaries).

International Women's Day was declared on March 8<sup>th</sup> women's efforts to achieve equality.

We would like to see our leadership encourage & support the efforts towards these kinds of events.

## **Family violence;**

Has devastating consequences on families and communities throughout Eeyou Istchee. In order to end this cycle of abusive behavior THE EEYOU GOVERNMENT AND SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS HAVE TO MAKE PREVENTING FAMILY VIOLENCE ONE OF IT'S TOP PRIORITIES. WE NEED TO PROTECT EVEN MORE PEOPLE FROM FAMILY VIOLENCE TODAY.

IT STATES: FIFTY-SEVEN (57%) OF THE ABORIGINAL WOMEN WHO EXPERIENCED ABUSE INDICATED THAT CHILDREN WITNESSED THE VIOLENCE (CANADIAN CENTRE FOR JUSTICE STATISTICS, 2001B)

And Aboriginal women are significantly more likely to experience spousal assault (24%) and more severe forms of violence (Canadian centre for justice statistics, 2005).

Example: sisters in spirit campaign (national-NWAC) for lost, missing, and murdered aboriginal women of Canada.

Of course it is also a reality that our Cree men are victims of violence too. It is not reported and recorded. This is also becoming a statistical knowledge (national) and has to be researched and addressed. Abused men often have separate and distinct service needs from those of women.

Let's forget our children that witness violence, those who are exposed to the violence on a regular basis, at home, community, school, TV. Media, sports, games, video, toys, movies and of course bullying and gangs.

Impacts/effects of violence on the lives of our children, the damage it can have for future generations.

Who will speak up for those who are silenced?

Who will speak up for these children who suffer, senselessly?

We must teach our children very young about speaking out against violence and telling someone about it if it affects their lives and/or witnessing violence.

And ..... also teaching slogans such as: hands are not for hitting/words are not for hurting.

Provide awareness campaigns for children and on the topic what is family violence?

Family violence can disgrace a family unity and one of the highest emotional distresses that can destroy our units is when hurt and anger grows within us, communication

breaks down then silence becomes the motivator which takes away our power to make a choice to help us to move ahead or get out of our distress mode.

Let's put an end to the silence; and stop the violence in Eeyou Istchee for peace & harmony; justice & order!

The hurt of one .....Is the hurt of all.....!

### **How to fight crime:**

Our goal: to restore and return back 100% peace and harmony in our communities.

Target: police forces/policy makers

To reduce violent crimes by a certain % without spending or requiring more money or making police more aggressive in their interventions (to set a target date).

To curb crime to analyze policies

Prosecuting family violence cases: domestic violence is punishable by law, stalking/criminal harassment

Provide safety tips in the communities

To have more information on the MORE serious /violent offenders and adequate information on them as well

Police to have tools needed to address the offenders- example: how to be managed and monitored in the community upon release.

TO create a multi-disciplinary training team, for the communities regarding these offenders

Further on to this police officers need to break out of their isolation and get out of their patrol trucks and out onto the community streets (use and find others means/measures of being in the community).

To create a protection against family violence act

TO PROVIDE Family violence emergency shelters (eventually to build a women's shelters in Eeyou Istchee coastal/inland) with developed programming TO answer to the needs of the victim/offender (abuser)

An emergency protection ordering:

Direct police to remove the person who is committing an act of family violence (disturbing the peace and harmony within that family)

Give the victim sole use of the home and or other property.

Not allow communication between the people involved until proper measures have been applied and taken (EX: referrals to proper services needed to serve the situation in crisis).

Direct THE police SERVICES to assist with the removal of personal belongings

Protect property in which the victim has an interest

Require the seizure of weapons or firearms by the police until all interventions have been successfully intervened.

Protection orders should be made available to the victims as soon as THE intervention has been done by police may also be assisted by the social services. May also contain provisions as an emergency PROTECTION order, May also include financial compensation and counseling orders (CAN ALSO include to order BOTH the victim and the person committing an act of family violence).

Emergency protection orders can be done through the courts of the law or justice of the peace (locally) or police order (undertaking)/justice panels/committees

### **Restorative justice system**

#### **Challenges:**

Western and cultural cultures

Clashes/gaps within communities, leadership, youth/elders, services etc....

Conventional wisdom  
Traditional wisdom  
Promoting cultural policies and practices  
Safety and security for all living persons in Eeyou Istchee  
In supporting our young people and young leaders  
Family violence and bullying  
Drugs and alcohol  
Rights of marriage  
The power of being a girl/woman  
Developmental needs of at risk girls (13-17 yrs.)  
Women shelters/emergency shelters

**Questions:**

We need to ask ourselves

Are we going to let crime and/or inappropriate behaviors reach the levels it has reached today?

Results- hurt, pain and anger

Some examples we feel now are murders, trafficking even for sex, damages to property and individuals.

We have paid a high price in some instantaneous/communities

Is this what we want for Eeyou Istchee?

Do we have answers to this question!!!

Where can I go to find information about family violence prevention?

**Recommendations:**

1. TO reduce crime INCREASE prevention (our focus)
2. TO teach our children very young of the rules to live by and living together peacefully
3. TO DECLARE A proclamation: family violence prevention month

4. TO WORK TOWARDS A women shelter/emergency shelters: needed in Eeyou Istchee
5. TO ESTABLISH protection against family violence act (this is in existence already-west)
6. TO SUPPORT Cree women of Eeyou Istchee resolution on non-violence resolution NO. 2008-003, Val d'Or

**EXAMPLES:**

Protection against family violence act

(A model program in existence for reference-aboriginal-WEST)

**FIVE (5) YEAR STRATEGY ON FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION**

**FUNDING/PROGRAMS AVAILABLE (SERVICES/LOCAL BANDS/MINISTRY)**

PLAN: TO FORM A REGIONAL COMMITTEE WITH CHAIRPERSON REPRESENTATIONS FROM ALL THE TEN (10) COMMUNITIES AND CREE GOVERNMENTS.

THIS COMMITTEE CAN WORK CLOSELY WITH POLICE, COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS, YOUTH GROUPS, JUSTICE SYSTEMS/PANELS/COMMITTEES, TO BEGIN TO ADDRESS A VARIETY OF ISSUES RELATED TO VIOLENCE WITHIN FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES INCLUDING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, CHILD ABUSE AND ELDER ABUSE.

IT WOULD PROVIDE SUPPORT TO THE SERVICES WHO DIRECTLY DEAL WITH THESE ISSUES, SOCIAL SERVICES, POLICE COURTS, ETC.

IT CAN ALSO SPONSOR WORKSHOPS AND TRAINING SESSIONS, OFFER PUBLIC EDUCATION AND WOULD BE INVOLVED IN DEVELOPING POLICY/PROTOCOLS RELATED TO SERVICES TO VICTIMS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE AND NOT TO SINGLE OUT THE OFFENDERS (ABUSERS) WHO COMMITT THESE ACTS OF VIOLENCE WHICH IS HURTING OUR COMMUNITIES.

**CREE WOMEN OF EEYOU ISTCHEE ASSOCIATION**

**RECOMMENDATION: PROCLAMATION TO BE ADOPTED BY EVERY  
COMMUNITY FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION MONTH: NOVEMBER 2009**

**WHEREAS THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE IN EEYOU ISTCHEE WHO EXPERIENCE  
THE IMPACTS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE; AND**

**WHEREAS THE IMPACT MAY BE CARRIED ON FROM GENERATION TO  
GENERATION**

**WHEREAS ALL PERSON'S IN EEYOU ISTCHEE HAVE A ROLE IN THE  
PREVENTION OF FAMILY VIOLENCE**

**NOW, THEREFORE**

WE THE EEYOU OF EEYOU ISTCHEE DO HEREBY PROCLAIM THE MONTH OF  
NOVEMBER 2009 AND THEREON TO BE FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION  
MONTH.

WE CALL UPON ALL EEYOU ISTCHEE TO SPEAK OUT AGAINST FAMILY  
VIOLENCE. WE CALL UPON YOU TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE BY CREATING A  
CULTURE OF SUPPORT FOR THOSE IMPACTED BY FAMILY VIOLENCE. AND WE  
CALL UPON YOU TO ENCOURAGE ALL EEYOU OF EEYOU ISTCHEE TO HELP  
MAKE OUR COMMUNITIES VIOLENCE FREE IN 2009 AND BEYOND. YOU CAN  
END THE SILENCE AND STOP THE VIOLENCE NOW.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF

DAY OF.....2009

NAME/TITLE OF COMMUNITY.....

LOGO OF COMMUNITY.....

## CREE TRAPPERS ASSOCIATION (CTA)

### THOMAS COON, VICE-PRESIDENT, CREE TRAPPERS ASSOCIATION

Since Isaac Masty, who is the current President of the Cree Trappers Association (CTA), could not attend the Justice Symposium due to bad weather, Thomas Coon made a brief presentation on behalf of CTA.

Thomas Coon said that the CTA was created under s. 28.5 of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA) in 1975. At that time Cree way of life of hunting and trapping was very strong. Section 30 of the JBNQA was meant to preserve and protect the Cree way of life under the ***Income Security Program (ISP)***.

He said that when Cree people make mistakes in their lives, CTA offers land-based programs. CTA has access to traditional programs for all seasons. These land-based programs are designed for rehabilitation. These programs are used as pilot programs and must still go through an evaluation process to determine their success. For severe crimes, the criminal justice system must prevail.

## **OTHER PRESENTATIONS**

## Lunch and Keynote Speaker

### A True Story of Redemption, Rick Osborne, Director, Truth for Teens, Toronto

Mr. Osborne shared his compelling story of his journey from good kid from a good family into the dangerous world of drugs, violence, gangs and prison. A former full patch member with the Outlaws motorcycle club and drug addict, Rick spent 24 years in federal penitentiaries across the country. He describes how he was able to turn his life around and dedicate the rest of his years to helping youth stay off the path he followed through his charity, [Truth for Teens](#).

Mr. Osborne attended High School in Niagara Falls, Ontario, in the 1970's. By the age of 14, he started smoking pot. By the age of 15, he had his first experience with heroin. He got mixed up with drug addicts and motorcycle gangs at an early age. At the age 16, he attempted suicide. He mostly hid from his dad during these years. His father later found him and took him home to get cleaned up.

He later hitchhiked to Florida one winter where he was adopted by a motorcycle gang member, who he later found out that he was a rapist and a killer. He was attacked by him one day. By the age of 21, he was headed for a federal penitentiary where would spend the next twenty years. During his time in the penitentiary, he took university of courses. Later he life he earned enough credits to get a university degree.

Rick has since authored a book entitled: “***White Noise: A Journey Through Addiction, Crime and Prison.***

*These days, Rick Osborne speaks and connects with his audience about his life as a former gang member and his 23 years in the prison system. **Truth For Teens** evolved from Rick's desire to speak the truth about drugs, crime, and the gang life. **Truth For Teens** was established to facilitate getting this message to as many teens as possible. Rarely does someone survive Rick's past with both the ability and the motivation to make a difference in so many young lives<sup>1</sup>.*

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<sup>1</sup> From the website of Truth for Teens.

## **ASHLEY ISERHOFF, COMMISSIONER FOR THE CREE NATION POLICE**

Ashley Iserhoff provided a brief update on the work of the new Cree Nation Police Commission. Mr. Iserhoff is the Chief Commissioner of the Police Commission.

Iserhoff provided the following names of the Cree Police Commissioners:

- George Masty – Whapmagoostui
- Clarence Tomatuk – Wemindji
- Simeon Trapper – Waskaganish
- Henry Miantscum – Mistissini
- Fred Tomatuk – Eastmain
- Ronnie Ottereyes – Waswanipi
- Matthew Wapachee – Nemaska
- Kenny Miantscum – Ouje-Bougoumou
- Violet Pachanos – Chisasibi

The new Police Commissions will have its head office in Chisasibi. The Regional Police initiative was realized through the *Paix des Braves Agreement*.

The Commission is currently in the process of drafting new office policies and procedures and other related by-laws.

Ashley informed the delegates that there is Human Resources Committee in place to recruit new Cree Police Officers.

## **PAUL DIXON, WASWANIPI FIRST NATION**

Paul said that justice is like a drug. We are looking for the right to deal with criminal behaviour. He said that more males are imprisoned than women. Women do not get into trouble as much as men.

Elders in the past protected the Cree way of life and Cree culture. He thanked the efforts of the GCCEI/CRA, Cree School Board, Cree Health Board, police services.

He said that the Cree Nation has a very big opportunity, through this symposium, to fix the wrong done to us for the last 30 years. He believes that the Crees must define Cree justice as a form of healing and not as punitive word for law breaking. Detention facilities (prisons) are how to become better criminals.

Sentencing of Cree offenders is too lenient. He wants the leaders to look for changes to improve the current system. He recommended banishment by-laws in the new Cree Justice System.

He said we need to find our way in the present and prepare for our future. We must know, first, where we came from. He said that we must enact laws that set us free and ones that enslaves us.

## **MATTHEW WAPACHEE, NEMASKA FIRST NATION**

Mr. Wapachee spoke about the similar issues that affect his community of Nemaska. He spoke of the suicides that have occurred in Nemaska. He raised concerns about the explosion that occurred in Nemaska in 2008. He said details about the explosion have never been revealed to the community. Although, no one was hurt in this explosion, it nevertheless left a huge impact on the community.

He also raised concerns on the alcohol and drug problem in Nemaska. This problem affects everybody of all ages. He wants everyone to find solutions to combat this serious problem.

He also encouraged the leadership not to be shy in fighting these problems. He said our leaders do not talk about alcohol and drug issues because they are afraid of the political backlash. He asked “Why has the unacceptable become acceptable?”

### **ALFRED COONISHISH, COUNCIL OF THE CREE NATION OF MISTISSINI**

Alfred spoke about the importance of ***Dabwetamun Academy*** of Mistissini, which is an alternative school specializing in moral and religious teaching. At this Academy, children are taught to develop good moral characters. Graduates from this Academy have had success in College and University.

He said the solution for criminal activity is to raise our children to have good moral character. This Academy can provide that, he said. She encouraged everyone to support Churches, schools, communities, parents.

Alfred suggested that punishment should be done by using traditional practices. He asked we are so lenient with Cree offenders. He blamed s. 718.2(e) of ***the Criminal Code*** for this leniency.

He encouraged all the Cree to support the goals and objectives of the ***Dabwetamun Academy*** so that we can develop strong leaders for the future.

### **MINNIE AWASHISH, ELDER, MISTISSINI**

She said today, times are different and more difficult than in the past. It was much easier to raise children the past she said.

As an Elder now, she continues to pass on her knowledge on parenting to her children. She believes that neglecting our children is one the major causes of our children's deviant behaviour.

She said children were all raised in the bush. Today, there are drugs and too much alcohol consumption and abuse.

She encouraged all families to get together to support one another and to share love with each other. She encouraged everyone to talk to their children and grandchildren and to love them, and to help them with their problems.

### **DANIEL MARK-STEWART'S SYMPOSIUM STATEMENT**

I know my message; my tone will be slightly different from most of you attending this Cree Justice Symposium, some might say that I am being cynical for the words I am about to speak. Most came here to ensure that criminals in our Nation are put behind bars; I understand your concerns and objective.

However, I feel compelled to share some of my thoughts with you. I often wonder why leaders, institutions and society continue to do things in reverse; the justice system is perhaps an example of us doing things in reverse. We spend so much money on law enforcement, lawyers, prosecuting people, putting people behind bars then we do in trying to prevent crimes before they happen. Our communities would be safer if we challenged ourselves to find ways to prevent crimes. Too often; we are a Nation which reacts to yesterday's news and events, instead we should be a Nation proactive to meet the challenges of tomorrow and the future.

A huge majority of the crimes committed in our communities are committed by people who fell into the cracks; many commit these crimes because every day is a struggle for them. Many come from very poor homes; a majority of them are probably unemployed. For many; the only real family they have is their gang members. Many times; even after they have served time for the crimes they committed; we cannot look beyond their troubled past, so we deny them opportunities.

I believe that we as a Nation, we have the opportunity to form a different kind of law enforcement and judicial process. We also have the unique opportunity to bring hope to many whose lives are full of violence and despair. I do not believe we should necessarily model our law enforcement and justice system like the rest of the World.

Here are a few reasons why I do not believe we should necessarily model our law enforcement and justice system like the rest of the World; most especially the United States.

According to the United Nations, in 2008, the total military spending worldwide was \$1.473 trillion dollars; \$ 711 billion (48%) came from the United States. I believe we spend way too much to try and police the World.

In 2007, the United States spent 51.8% of their budget on National Defence, National Security, Law Enforcement, Department of Justice and funding the Wars.

- 6.3% went into Education;
- 5.6% went into Health Care;
- 2.9% went into Social Programs;
- 2.6% went into Science, Energy & Environment.

Yet, we wonder why there is an ongoing Global Economic Crises.

- Yet, an estimated 1.1 billion people (1/5) of the World population are living on less than \$1 a day;
- 1/6 of the world population is living in extreme poverty;
- .800 million people go hungry each day;
- Over 100 million primary age kids cannot go to school;
- Each year, more than 8 million people around the world die because they are too poor to stay alive.

But, who are we holding accountable for this injustice? How come no one is being put behind bars for these crimes on humanity?

How can we bring Social Justice and Equality to millions of people living in poverty? Based on definitions established by the World Bank, nearly 3 billion people—half of the world's populations—are considered poor.

Programming is another serious discussion we need to have; too many times we allow the television, the internet and others to program even our own children; our children and our youth often catch us off guard with how much hatred they have for others and how much they hate even their own lives. This happens when we allow others to opportunity to program and instil values in our children. We cannot expect our leaders to turn off our children's televisions set and computers; this is our responsibility.

Too often we use fear mongering tactics to program even our own children, we even teach them to be afraid of the police. Even a black police uniform can send chills down the spine for some; perhaps because we were programmed to think that black is the color of darkness. We have to learn to be honest about the realities and the challenges we face.

When people are living in fear; it hinders their development. Fear limits their mind-set and awareness, perhaps this is a reason why so many never come close to reaching their full potential. When we live with fear in our lives; we often allow others the opportunity to take control of us and take control of our fate. We have to learn to always encourage each other, we have to learn to be proud in who we are. We have the opportunity to change our frequency; re-program ourselves to use the power of positive thinking.

Here is what our leaders can do; they need to me more conscious and be aware of the decisions that they make. Even the simplest decision can sometimes cause great harm on the people they serve. But, we as the people; we also have a responsibility in this; we have the great responsibility of holding them accountable.

But our most important responsibility is “becoming the change we want to see”. Every new day; we are given a new opportunity to create the World as it should be. Now is the time to awaken a young Nation, our Nation; especially our young people hold so much promise and Hope. Our Nation’s greatest chapter still awaits us. Together, Let us begin writing what will be our greatest chapter.

In conclusion, these past few months; the word “CHANGE” is a word we often heard. I believe in change; but I also believe in values and principles; Cree values and principles like Respect, Trust, Courage, Gratitude, Pride, Culture, Language, Education, Humility, Love and Hope. The World will continue to forever change around us; but we must ensure our Nation’s future will be written based on these values and principles.

### **NANCY AND EARL DANYLUK, ELDERS FROM WEMINDJI**

Nancy and Earl Danyluk are members of the Cree Regional Elders Council.

Nancy said that that love is the first most important gift that we can give to our children. Our Elders never stop loving everyone, that's way everybody loves the Elders. She said sharing love is part of Cree culture.

She said that we should include Elders at our meetings since their teachings are very important and educational. She said that the Cree Health Board brings Elders to their Board meetings.

She told the youth “We love you and we want to help you.”

Earl encouraged everyone to follow the great traditions of the Cree Nation. He said it is a great honour to include Elders in our meetings. He said Elders never say no.

Elders have many roles to play at our meetings. They can teach you, they can support you; they can comfort you and they can advise you. He believes that the role of the Elders is directly connected to Creator, blessed by Spirits that help them. All things are connected and created by the Creator.

**LIST OF COMMUNITY DELEGATES**

*Cree Justice Symposium*

*January 27, 28 & 29, 2009 ~ Mistissini, Eeyou Istchee*

<b>Waskaganish</b>		<b>Chisasibi</b>	
1	Chief Steve Diamond	1	Samuel House
2	William T. Hester	2	Charles House
3	Ernest Blueboy	3	Doris A. Bobbish
4	Robert Weistche	4	
5	Shirley Diamond	5	
6		6	
<b>Ouje-Bougoumou</b>		<b>Eastmain</b>	
1	Paul Shecapio	1	Johnny Tomatuk
2	Harry Sharl	2	Kenneth Gilpin
3	Benjamin Capassisit	3	Daniel Mark-Stewart
4	Rachel Bush	4	Jean Marie Allard
5	Harry Bosum	5	Jamie Moses
6	Darlene S.-Blacksmith	6	
*	Alice Wapachee		
		<b>Whapmagoostui</b>	
<b>Nemaska</b>		1	Martha Wynne
1	Chief Josie Jimiken	2	Brenda Grant
2	Kelly Marchand	3	Sarah Sheshamush
3	Stella Wapachee	4	Linda Masty
4	Simeon Wapachee	5	Lucy Petagumskum
5	Caroline Jolly	6	Andrew Kawapit Sr.
6	Kathleen Neeposh		

			<b>Mistissini</b>
<b>Wemindji</b>		1	Chief John Longchap
1	Dennis Georgekish	2	Alfred Coonishish
2	Shannon Atsynia	3	Tammy Petawabano-Coon
3	Earl Danyluk	4	Jane Blacksmith
4	Nancy Danyluk	5	Sam Petawabano
5	David Ratt	6	Stacy Neeposh
6			
<b>Waswanipi</b>			<b>Washaw Sibi</b>
1	Michael Neeposh	1	Chief Billy Kataputuk
2	Shannon Nakogee	2	Marianne Kataputuk
3	Paul Dixon	3	Freda Small
4	Michael Grant	4	Maurice Kistabish
5	Jackie Gull	5	Mary Mapachee
6	Jane Gull	6	Billy Kataputuk Jr