

Idle No More waters are still stirring

BY ROBERT HORTON

FIRST and foremost, I would like to extend a heartfelt and sincere "miigwech" and "thank you" to all those here in Anemkii-Wiikwedong and all areas of the Thunder Bay region who have been so supportive of Idle No More.

Community (and the community heartbeat defined by engagement, awareness, and understanding across any line) truly is the life-spark when our shared dreams and common ground become shared efforts and a common purpose for the well-being of generations to come and generations we may not meet in our day.

We, Idle No More, remain committed and dedicated to cultivating awareness and knowledge about the myriad legislation such as Bills C-45, C-428, S-2, S-6, S-8, S-212, C-27, and the First Nation Education Act which seek to dismantle indigenous connection to treaty, inherent rights, and sovereignty as a means to open the door to massive resource exploitation and degradation in Canada.

We are also committed to re-establishing and honouring the nation-to-nation, co-operative relationship envisioned by those who negotiated treaties and relationships forged so long ago with us (and those to come) in mind. Eko-Zaagateg. Eko-Nitaawigig Mashkosi. Eko-Bimijiwangin Ziibiin. (As long as the sun shines. As long as the grass grows. As long as the rivers flow.)

We still stand firm to help ensure positive



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ONE CITY
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Thunder Bay's Anti-Racism Advisory Committee produces this monthly column to promote greater understanding of race relations in Northwestern Ontario.

and healthy futures for each of our children and grandchildren collectively and for the lands we share and which provide us life.

To me, it sheds a new, vibrant light on the importance of community when we begin to reclaim the humanity endemic within partnerships.

To me, it was the same partnership and relationship that pulsed in the hearts of a number of those present at the signing of treaty when land and space was shared, just as it exists in those of us today who seek positive, co-operative relationships between our families and communities within the towns and cities we share, as well as between our nations. (And to be sure, the Idle No More waters are still stirring across Canada — as strong currents rather than still waters.)

To me, it is alive and well when we listen with open minds, open hearts, and work with one another to dispel common, overstated, popular myths that maintain poisoned relationships that have existed for far too long.

Since December, I have no words for what I've witnessed since sacred fires were lit all across Canada and right here in Thunder Bay. I've witnessed indigenous people and Canadians come together collectively in support of common ground.

Together it's clear we understand the importance of the land we share, placing shared significance on the well-being of our coming generations that will share this space and place long after we are gone.

Together, we remain committed to inherent rights and well-being, re-establishing our nation-to-nation co-operative relationships, and working for a better tomorrow which we all can envision but sometimes wonder how to arrive there.

Since December, I've seen a number of our young people find their voices, walk taller, and walk in purpose and pride with connection to ceremony, their clans, knowledge and connection of who they are as well as a passion to become involved in matters that affect their lives

and our lives collectively.

And since December, I've witnessed many open hearts come together to dispel common myths, challenge matters that disempower relationships we've inherited (and responsibilities kept alongside the benefits which we've all inherited) and to honour matters which empower such relationships (and outcomes)

which we see too few and far between these days.

We remain committed to re-establishing co-operative relationships and working for a better tomorrow which we all can envision but sometimes wonder how to arrive there.

In the end, it is the unity in community that sparks the awareness (either small or significant), that offers clarity, enhances support, and cultivates hearts and minds to seek change in a world which yields most painfully to change.

And for that support and involvement, I extend my hand with kindness to

all those who have been so supportive here in Anemkii-Wiikwedong. Gichi Miigwech. From nation to nation, in sincerity and solidarity. In the spirit of sovereignty and in the spirit of kindness.

Robert Animikii Horton is from Rainy River First Nation and is a sociologist, university instructor, writer, activist and speaker. He is from the Anishinaabe Nation, Marten Clan, and an Idle No More organizer in Ontario.