

VICE CHIEF CHRIS JOBB



It has been another successful year within the Prince Albert Grand Council. This annual report demonstrates how strongly connected the organization is with our 12 First Nations from Treaties 4, 6, 8, and 10. PAGC Executive take the guidance of PAGC Senators and Chiefs very seriously. We listen to the voices of people in communities from the programs, projects, gatherings, events, and activities as outlined in this report. We hear the concerns and are able to make informed decisions. We see the outcomes of our work. We experience the changes, because we live within the midst of reconciliation.

Spirituality is the foundation of First Nations communities. I have learned from our Trappers, Hunters, Fish Harvesters, and Gatherers about the importance of respect, sharing, caring, honesty, and truth. Our Conservation philosophies and protocols go far beyond provincial and federal thinking and understandings. There are values and teachings in the Cree, Denesuline and Dakota cultures that guide how we think, behave, and interact with one another and within our families, communities, and nations. Our elderly people still remember the stories of Treaty signing and the importance of living 'side by side' with the newcomers. We understood there would be no encroachments from 'either side' and that our societal institutions would remain intact. The witness of these legally binding sacred treaty documents was the Great Spirit, the giver of life of all people regardless of race.

Today we live with the fallout of Treaty violations. The impacts of Colonization and Residential schools are multi-dimensional and multi-layered. Many people are scarred, hurting, impoverished, and struggling to survive. I still see massive cultural confusion. There is no easy fix. The solutions lie within communities to mend the 'broken hoop'. We must focus on our strengths and the way we think about the world and our place in it. The First Nations concept of 'community' extends to the natural world of which we are a part. We are connected to thousands and billions of other living entities that we consider our 'relatives'. Therefore we can no longer think of ourselves as a 'minority'. We are rich and we will continue to share the beauty of our cultures and the wealth of the land and resources with all Canadians. However, we will also strongly believe that 'what you take, you must give back and share equally' in a humble way. This is what the Elders have taught us.

Prince Albert Grand Council is a special place. It has history. It has stories. It is a 'living being' that is vibrant and nourishing. It was built with vision and we have a mission to serve and advocate for the Inherent rights and Treaty rights of our people. It has a strong governance structure. The passing of the new PAGC Senator's Act in the fall of 2019 provides the foundation for the organization because it is rooted at the grassroots level within our First Nations. As Vice Chief of PAGC, this guides my political commitment on a daily basis to fight for what is rightfully ours. Our programs, services, and projects in this annual report are in line with raising the quality of life that we deserve as First Nations people. At a personal level, I want to leave something behind for my children, grandchildren, and those yet unborn. It starts with having compassion for ourselves and others. Our hearts and minds must be connected so that we can act with compassion.

Prince Albert Grand Council is an inviting and inclusive place. It is within our First Nations Cultures to treat each other with dignity and equality. The final report of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls is shocking to the world. The entire planet is watching what we do to ensure our women are protected and feel safe so they can fulfill their Creator given roles and responsibilities. The PAGC executive and staff are taking proactive measures by working alongside First Nations, municipal, provincial, and federal governments and organizations on addressing the CALLS TO JUSTICE. Community investment is needed. Basic human needs can only be addressed by implementing of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Last but not least, let us all support our Youth who are the next generation of 'Nation Builders'. We need to celebrate their successes. We need to participate in the Victory Dance of Life through song and prayer.

Ekosi!