

Culture Days in September

# Spotlight on the First Nations

By Sabrina Kraft

The Native American Village on South Hill in Weyburn will come alive with activities for Culture Days. First Nations programs from the Stakoza Community Development will shine a spotlight on their culture through programs and workshops.

Culture Days celebrates all the different cultures in the community. There will be lots of cultural events to enjoy, during Culture Days events in Weyburn on Friday, Sept. 27 to Sunday, Sept. 29, through partnerships with the Weyburn Public Library, Tommy Douglas Performing Arts Centre, Crocus 80 Theatre, Sun Country Kids Club and the Weyburn Multicultural Council.

Things start on Friday, Sept. 27

with special First Nations workshops for children in Grades 2 and 3. The workshops will be held at the Weyburn Public Library. Parents can register their child by e-mailing shannon.seitz@cornerstonesd.ca.

Then on Friday night, there will be a School Mosaic at Souris School. There, the Sun Country Kids will reveal an art piece for their upcoming gala, "A Century of Creation."

There are two big events on Saturday, Sept. 28, with a number of First Nations programs offered at the Tommy Douglas Performing Arts Centre and a craft and trade show at the Weyburn Curling Rink.

"My vision is to see this event grow, so that we have a big powwow here in Weyburn," said Shan-

non Seitz, executive director of Sun Country Kids Club.

Some of the events planned include a tipi raising, traditional ceremonies, tipi talks and a dance troupe from the Ocean Man First Nations. "All the programs will be offered free, with a silver collection to raise funds for next year's Culture Days activities," said Seitz.

Also at the Tommy Douglas Centre there will be First Nations vendors, offering arts, crafts and baking. "There will be hot meals served as well," said Seitz.

The People Mover will leave from the Tommy Douglas Centre every hour, starting at 10 a.m. and running until 4 p.m., transporting people to the craft and trade show

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## Culture

at the Weyburn Curling Rink.

"There be lots of local home-based business owners at the craft and trade show, both inside vendors and outdoor flea market vendors," said Lisa Vick, organizer of the craft and trade show.

"This will be a one-stop shopping experience. Tables can be rented by crafters, tradespersons, or cultural groups that want to display their wares," added Vick. Tables are available for rent for \$75 indoors, or for \$35 for the flea market spots. All proceeds will go back into the community.

Interested home-based businesses who want to rent a table can contact Lisa Vick by e-mailing her at [lisavick@sasktel.net](mailto:lisavick@sasktel.net).

The craft and trade show will be a truly family event, since there will be a Family Fun Zone with bouncy houses. There will also be First Nations food sold by Sun Country Kids Club from the canteen at the Curling Rink.

Crocus 80 Theatre is planning for a few theatre workshops on Sunday, Sept. 29. All the workshops will be offered at the Tommy Douglas Performing Arts Centre.

Then later that evening, a

powerful one-act play called "Collateral Bodies" will be staged at the Tommy Douglas Performing Arts Centre. The emotional play explores the human rights violations that happen specifically to women, also known as femicide.

"When I first read this play, I was really excited about it. It interested me because it provides entertainment in a different way; it tells a story that is relevant to what is going on in our world, and in our community," said Charline Doney, director.

Crocus 80 Theatre has partnered with Envision Counselling and Support to produce the play. In addition to being staged in Weyburn, there will be performance dates scheduled for both Estevan and Carlyle.

"Envision is proud to be a part of this endeavour put on by Crocus 80 Theatre," said Sheena Wock, outreach coordinator with Envision. "Collateral Bodies gives insights to the human rights violations that happen against women worldwide every day. The experiences these women portray on stage are relatable to everyone who has faced oppression and been marginalized for just being themselves."

"The staff at Envision deal with violence against women on a daily basis. With their guidance, we can make our production very real

and true," said Doney. "They have agreed to be on hand during our performances, so they can provide additional information to anyone wanting to learn more about their programs or services."

There are seven characters in "Collateral Bodies" that are all female roles. There is a Woman in White, portrayed by Chelsea Edwards, who brings the other six cast to life so that they can share their experiences.

The other six cast are Hope, Rajeev, Omid, Esperanza, Nadiya and Asha, women from six specific cultures: American, Mexican, Indian, Iranian, Somali and Eastern European — whose lives were ended in various ways simply for being female.

These roles are portrayed by Cara Schultz (Hope), Anne Marie Martineau (Rajeev), Sabrina Kraft (Omid), Connie Nightingale (Esperanza), Emera Megenbir (Nadiya) and Wendy Sidloski (Asha).

In addition to working with Envision Counselling and Support Centre, Crocus 80 Theatre is also receiving support from local pastors, and the newly established Weyburn Newcomers Advocacy Committee.

"We are very pleased that our committee can work with Crocus 80 Theatre to offer opinions and advice on the play," said Kam Teo, representing the Weyburn New-

comers Advocacy Committee. "Hopefully some newcomers will volunteer to act in the play, or offer advice to the theatre group about their country of origin."

The stories told in "Collateral Bodies" are fictional yet based in truth from research, interviews, documentaries and historical texts. The goal of the one-act is to enlighten spectators about the state of women in the "modern" world and give an impetus for action against the atrocities presented in the play, so that the next generation of women have a better chance at life.

These women in "Collateral Bodies" are motivators, meant to empower others to stand up, act, make their voices heard.

In addition to performing in Weyburn, Estevan and Carlyle, Crocus 80 will stage "Collateral Bodies" during the TheatreOne competition in Regina. The one-act festival is organized by Theatre Saskatchewan and will be held Thursday, Oct. 31; Friday, Nov. 1 and Saturday, Nov. 2.