

CULTURE



THE NATIVE CANADIAN CENTRE OF TORONTO

WEEKLY CULTURAL CALENDAR

FALL 2017

MONDAY

Mixed Hand
Drumming
6:00PM - 7:45PM

Mohawk Language
6:00PM - 7:45PM

Oneida Language
6:00PM - 7:45PM

TUESDAY

Hatha Yoga
6:00PM - 7:45PM

Beading Class
6:00PM - 7:45PM

WEDNESDAY

Regalia Class
6:00PM - 7:45PM

Okichitaw Martial
Arts
6:00PM - 7:45PM

THURSDAY

Men's Big Drum
5:30PM - 6:30PM

Big Drum Social
6:30PM - 8:45PM

SATURDAY

Mowhawk Language
10:00AM-2:00PM

Fit Nish
11:00AM -12:00PM

Okichitaw Martial
Arts
12:00PM - 1:30PM

Adult Pow Wow Dance
2:30PM - 3:30PM

Children's Pow Wow
Dance
1:30PM - 2:30PM

**FULL MOON CEREMONY - FALL 2017**

• Sep 6th • Oct 5th • Nov 6th | 6:00-8:00PM



Before attending an event call **416-964-9087** to ensure no scheduling changes have occurred.
NCCT Cultural Events and Workshops updated weekly on our web site: www.ncct.on.ca

THE NATIVE CANADIAN

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Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada in partnership with The Native Canadian Centre of Toronto DODEM KANONHSA'. The purpose of the Dodem Kanonhsa' is to promote sharing and understanding of Aboriginal culture and its philosophies. The Dodem Kanonhsa' is open to both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people with the hope that it will benefit intercultural relations, cross-cultural communication and understanding.

Please attend an Awareness 101 Education Session prior to registering for 1:1 appointments.

<http://dodemkanonhsa.ca>

Address: 55 St. Clair Ave East, 6th Floor
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CULTURE CORNER

Our Aboriginal Friends

A people of heart.

Truly have they become like little children of earth's maternal gravity.
Everywhere the sun follows the depth of the black braids of kindness.

Living in an honest affection.

Thought fixed on the echoes of The Great Ancestors words,
That shoot out of the minds of the elders.

How easy to watch the joy and devotions of the children,
While the dancers conceive of a glorious day,

And the drum joins the earth's love to The Creator's immeasurable loyalty.

The bright words that clothe the flow of colourful dance,
The smells bring back the deepest memories of the genius of childhood,
And the perfect hand clasps the warmth and shy mood of the stranger.

Why shatter the fragile crystal vision of a contented grandmother?
Why laugh at the humble beauty of the modest lover?
Why turn away the generous smiles of a favourite child?

It seems the others have been crying premeditated tears,
As they worshipped the nightmare of an ignorant movie,
And paid for the elaborate damnation with gold bullets.

All the children of mother earth stand strong in respect,
The Aboriginal spirit in covenant with the warrior's future,
We greet the morning sun with eternal words of encouragement.

jai stephen wax
feb 2008

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Ranking Structure of Okichitaw Indigenous Martial Arts

By Okimakahn George Lepine



Photo George Lepine

Unlike many other martial arts, Okichitaw does not include or use an extensive belt ranking system. In fact, the only colored belts we use are white, red, red/black and black. Each one of these belts actually represent a direction as well as the embracement of the teachings of a specific direction. Having said this, Okichitaw is truly based on the philosophy and physical attributes of the Four Directions of the "Plains Medicine Wheel", as well as the Seven Grandfather Teachings.

The Plains Medicine Wheel teaches us that we have four aspects to our nature: the physical, the mental, the emotional, and the spiritual. The Medicine Wheel is our way of looking at our individual differences and the impact of our actions in the world. The Medicine Wheel calls on elements of the natural world which also describes the four different styles of how we interact with others. The four directions of the Plains Medicine Wheel differentiate styles and also has an animal associated to it as well as a color including a season. It also teaches us that the four distinctive and powerful elements are all a part of the physical world and all must be respected equally for their gift of life. Here are the four main objectives of Okichitaw Indigenous Martial Arts as they are applied through the four directions where each specific direction, colour and animal represent an action with respect to it being practiced and initiated by an Okichitaw student.

So for example the East represents balance, confidence and creativity, whereas the South represents strength, focus and success. If we look to the North which is the direction of strength for the Warrior, we notice that it represents courage, energy and knowledge, where the West represents challenge, choice, and proof. All of these teachings take a significant amount of time to learn and to truly become instinctive within oneself. If we look at the four levels of Okichitaw the following applies to a student's experience as they move throughout the system.

Level 1 (EAST); This direction represents a student who is a new learner that has no previous knowledge or experience in the art of Okichitaw. A new student with a white belt is a very daunting experience; everything they do is brand new. They may feel clumsy and awkward as they try to perform the techniques as we consistently go through them. These students see the Senior Belts within the class who may look intimidating because they appear so confident, committed and quick. As a white belt, the student will learn all the basic fundamental movements in Okichitaw. Stances, basic attack and defense techniques are drilled out, all in preparation for the next phase of their training. As the student participates more frequently, they begin to feel more confident. They get to the point where they have been training for several months and the training is becoming a part of their weekly routine. They are learning more about Plains Indigenous culture, traditions as well as techniques of Okichitaw.

Level 2 (SOUTH); This is the point where Okichitaw and the development for the student starts to become intriguing and exciting. They are now developing strength, control and are also beginning to notice that they have started using their entire body while training in Okichitaw techniques. This is where we really see the student taking hold of their training and embracing all the teachings that we have to offer. They now become hungry to continuously participate in Okichitaw.

Level 3 (NORTH); When the student reaches this point, we notice that their progress begins to slow down slightly and their original reason for joining Okichitaw Martial Arts have been long since forgotten. It's also noted that Okichitaw has become much more than a hobby for them – it's now a way of life. The Red/Black belt signifies danger, cautioning the student to exercise self-control. The Red/Black Belt student now has the goal of becoming a Black Belt firmly in their sights. The goal of senior rank for the student can be a very humbling experience as the student will have to wait until one of our Solstice Land Tests for their own personal challenge to see if they qualify for advancement. Often the student who believes that they deserve their Black Belt is the one who is probably a long way from it. Many students see it as the end of their training, the highest achievement in their art. It is easy to understand this misconception because it is the last color belt the student will receive in Okichitaw.

Level 4 (WEST); We call this the New Beginning for the student. At this point the student has undertaken their grading, teachings and has also proven their worth. They have demonstrated maturity and a solid understanding of the Seven Grandfather Teachings. They may not actually feel different, but we know from their training for so long that in fact they have changed. These Black Belt students will look back on the time that has passed since they were that new white belt when they first started. They remember the faces of the training partners that have come and gone and the people that inspired them along the way. They remember the challenges that they faced and how these challenges don't seem that difficult anymore.

While reviewing their own journeys, every one of these students will see that the Black Belt itself is not as important as the lessons that they have learned along the way. Spiritually the martial art of Okichitaw continues to embrace historical teachings known as the Seven Grandfather Teachings. These teachings honour the traditional applications of our Grandfathers, which include Respect, Honesty, Love, Bravery, Truth, Humility and Wisdom. As participants of Okichitaw, we maintain the emphasis on the importance of spirituality. By doing this, we allow the spirit to motivate us and keep us in balance of our body, mind and spirit.

When a student ties that belt (rank) around their waist in preparation for their training class, another person may simply see a coloured belt, whereas the Okichitaw Student wearing it reflects on what they have acquired through their time of participation. During this time they continue to gain knowledge and follow the commitment to becoming a warrior of peace. As their belt gets darker in colour, this student will eventually come to know true success and personal victory in their own life. With these gifts they move forward in a positive way as a result of obtaining the nourishment of strength, passion as well as the indomitable spirit of their Ancestors.



Photo George Lepine

SAVE THE DATE

SEPTEMBER

- 04 NCCT Closed - Labour Day
- 06 Full Moon Ceremony
- 19 NCCT Annual General Meeting

OCTOBER

- 05 Full Moon Ceremony
- 09 NCCT Closed - Thanksgiving
- 16 NCCT Fall Craft Fair

NOVEMBER

- 05-11 Treaties Recognition Week
- 06 Full Moon Ceremony
- 10 NCCT Closed - Remembrance Day

8th Annual Aboriginal History Month Celebration

By Fred Martin



Photo Fred Martin

Aboriginal History Month (June) first proposed in 1995 by Elijah Harper and officially declared in Canada in 2009, provides an opportunity to recognize not only the historic contributions of Indigenous peoples to the development of Canada, but also the strength of present-day Indigenous communities and their promise for the future. The celebration of Aboriginal culture began in 1996, with June 21st being designated National Aboriginal Day (NAD). This day has significant meaning as Indigenous people would traditionally gather and celebrate Summer Solstice. In 2009, the month of June was officially declared National Aboriginal History month, with unanimous support in the House of Commons.

This year on June 28th, 2017 under a picturesque summer day, the 8th annual Aboriginal History Month Celebration was held at Yonge & Dundas Square and it did not disappoint. The event was masterfully MC'd

by Bob Goulais. There were electric performances, storytelling, children's arts and crafts and a fashion show. The attendance was amazing, and cultural pride was evident everywhere you looked. It was a day shared amongst all of us, as we are all treaty people. The market place had diverse mix of artisans displaying their works of art from dream catchers to eye catching beaded work. There were also a number of community service agencies who had information tables and were on hand to answer any questions. The jam packed program had everyone on their feet with stellar performances from Young Creek Singers; Powwow Dance Performers; Cliff Cardinal; Rosary Spence; First Fire Dancers; NativeTalent.Net; Toronto Métis Jiggers; Evan Pang and our headliner and special guest Amanda Rheume. We would like to acknowledge and thank all the volunteers, many of whom return year after year, for their generous contribution and tireless energy to make this a successful event. And to our community partners Miziwe Biik & Rogers Communications - miigwetch. A big Chi Miigwetch to Canadian Heritage who supports activities and events that celebrate the cultural diversities of Inuit, Métis and First Nations Peoples.

Celebration in Pictures



Photos: Fred Martin



ENAGB Youth Cedar Basket Social Enterprise Gets a Makeover

By Casey Douglas



Progress on the on the mural for the ENAGB Youth Cedar Basket Social Enterprise is well underway. Canadian Roots Exchange has been partnering with Art Reach, Toronto Arts Council, and Street Art for the Wall to Action Collective bringing together Indigenous and non Indigenous youth to reflect on the truth and reconciliation commissions 94 calls to action. With large dedication to help the youth with this project, mentors Aura, Chief Lady Bird, and Sameh Helmy have been collectively working together to help guide the youth to create a mural masterpiece that will showcase their understanding of the TRC's 94 Calls to Action. The unveiling will take place August 24th, 2017 at Native Canadian Centre outside at the ENAGB Youth Cedar Basket from 5:30PM-7:30PM.



**8th Annual Aboriginal History
Month Celebration Reporting**



**Ranking Structure - Okichitaw
Indigenous Martial Arts**



THE NATIVE CANADIAN

FALL 2017

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIVE CANADIAN CENTRE OF TORONTO

Youth In Policing Initiative (YIPI)



The Toronto Police Service's Aboriginal Peacekeeping has for the past 3 years been part of the Youth In Policing Initiative -- Y.I.P.I. The Youth in Policing Initiative is a unique employment opportunity with the Toronto Police Service, in partnership with the Toronto Police Services Board and the Ministry of Children and Youth Services. Established in recognition of the

importance of creating opportunities for youth, this year-round initiative focuses on hiring students to work in several areas of Toronto Police Service. This program gives youth the opportunity to develop job skills while enhancing partnerships between the Toronto Police Service and the communities we serve.

Youth have the opportunity to see the daily police operations from an internal perspective, interact with police officers on a personal level, gain hands on job experience (Administrative work, graffiti removal, helping at community events.) and familiarize themselves with the roles and responsibilities of a Toronto Police Service employee. This year's student is Summer Belleau (Pictured) who is 17 years old. She is Ojibwa from the Delaware Nation and Portuguese. Her aspiration is to be a police officer with the Toronto Police Service. Summer will be attending Humber College in the fall in their Police Foundations course.

During her placement with the Toronto Police Service - Aboriginal Peacekeeping Summer has been out and about within the community assisting with outreach, visiting The Native Canadian Centre/Council Fire/Native Women's Resource Centre and Native Child and Family Services. She has also participated in our Pro Action Cops and Kids Grundy "Keeping the Circle Strong" Camp. As well as attending this year's North American Indigenous Games – cultural market at York University.

Summer has also had the opportunity to tour the Toronto Police Service specialized units: ETF/Forensics/Mounted Unit/ K-9 Unit and even had an opportunity to ride in one of our Marine Units vessels. She also received training in First Aid at the Toronto Police College. If you are interested in learning more about the Y.I.P.I program please view the website: www.torontopolice.on.ca/yipi



In September 1992, the Toronto Police Services Board approved the establishment of the Aboriginal Peacekeeping Unit (APU). The Toronto Police Service became the first major urban police service in Canada to establish a unit to deal specifically with the issues faced by the Aboriginal community.

The Aboriginal Peacekeeping Unit can be contacted at any of the following:
Phone: 416-808-7046
Fax: 416-808-7269
E-mail: aboriginal.peacekeeping@torontopolice.on.ca

2017 Annual General Meeting



Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto will be held on:

September 19th, 2017
NCCT Auditorium,
16 Spadina Road, Toronto ON
Registration at 5:30PM Starts at 6:00PM

Please have your membership in good standing at least twenty days prior to meeting. If you are unsure about your standing, please contact Amasena Delormier at Amasena.Delormier@ncct.on.ca or 416-964-9087 X307 and she will be able to assist you.

Miigwech!