

Akwesasne Elders 1992: Ray Fadden by Heritage Canada



Begun in July of 1983, the Indian Times is a news journal dedicated to reporting on what is happening in Akwesasne and our Sister Iroquois communities. The news policy at Indian Time insists we try to give our readers as truthful reporting as we can. We encourage and invite opinions different than ours. We are committed to a free and open press at Akwesasne. We believe in the unrestricted flow of information to our people. By this means, we have the ability to make intelligent, informed decisions about our collective future.

Indian Time is a product of the people of Akwesasne. It is your newspaper printing stories about you. Please feel free to contact our Kanatakon offices in the Akwesasne Communications Society Building if you have concerns, compliments or plain old curiosity about the material printed in Indian Time. Niawenkowa, Akwesasne for your support.

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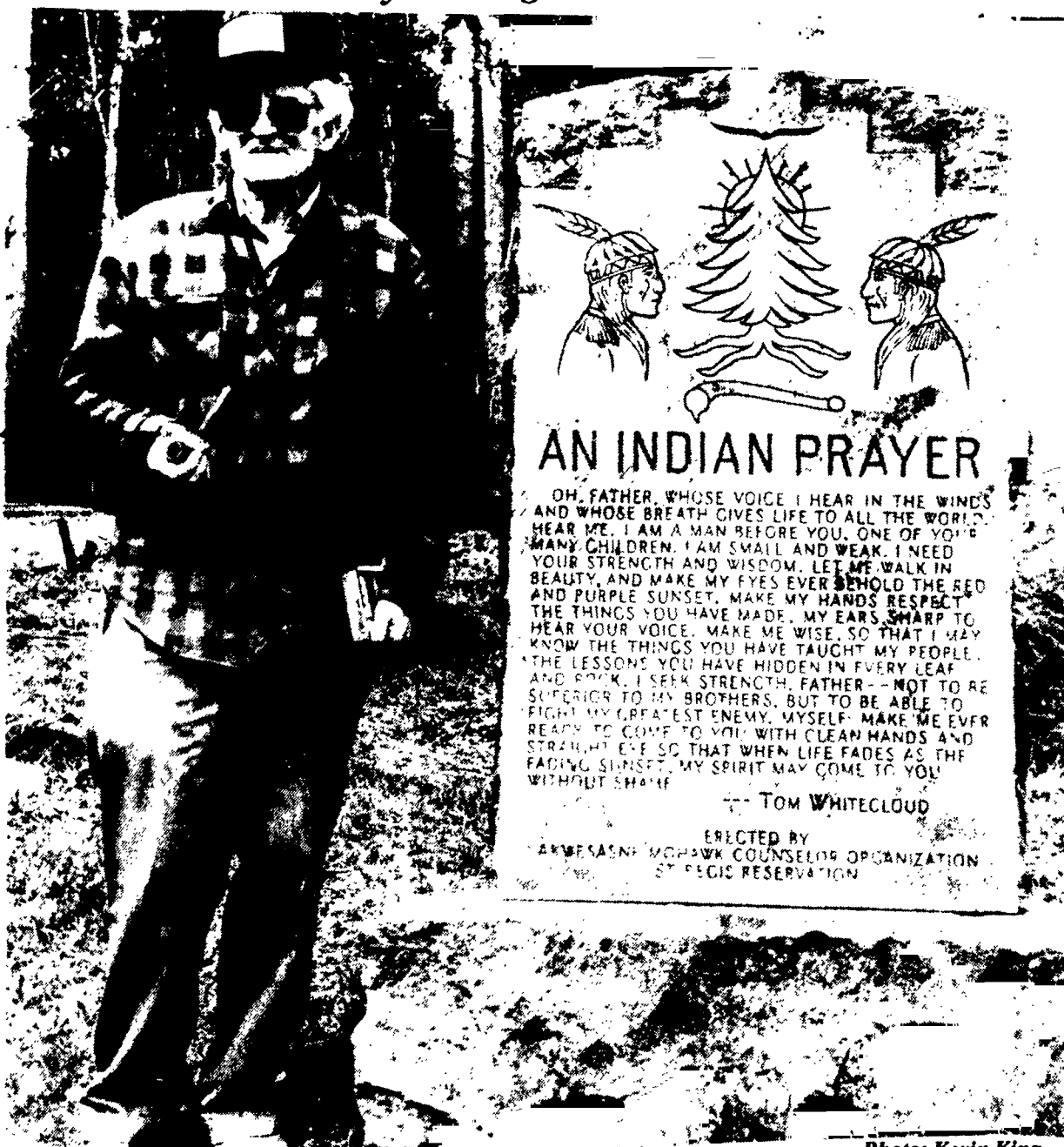


Photo: Kevin King.

Ray Fadden's house is nestled in the Adirondack mountains, blending in with the natural surroundings. Standing outside his house we are overwhelmed by the sounds of hundreds of birds, large and small, singing all around his home. He welcomes us in his home, he is so full of information, there is little need to ask him any questions.

Ray has over 300 places where he leaves sunflower seeds and cracked corn. He feeds many animals, including black bears, which often come right in his backyard. He laughs, "Once I left the back porch unlatched, and a bear came right in the porch, he was in the middle of the porch by the garbage can when I came out. Boy was he surprised! Don't let anyone tell you animals don't have facial expressions, this bear had the same look of surprise that I had. Well, there we were, face to face, each waiting for the other to move. I moved first, I was going to open the porch door and back away to let him leave. But as soon as I moved so did the bear. He dove right through the screen, taking half the screen from the porch with him. He was gone, but I'll never forget the look on his face. He looked just like a kid caught with his hand in the cookie jar."

Ray has a museum that has been visited by many children from Akwesasne. He tells them of their culture, and of their history. At the age of 12, I myself, visited his museum along with the rest of my Mohawk class. What was impressed on me most was his lecture on the environment, which I had taken for granted. I wasn't aware at that age that there were any problems. I listened as he talked about our history, and remember thinking, "I don't remember hearing any of this in school". Eleven years later, he still looks the same, and still talks with much enthusiasm about Indian history.

Ray Fadden, is not a Native American, but has contributed to Akwesasne's history. A story he told... "When I was a young boy I had a teacher named Mrs. Galespy, she called down Indians. I remember vividly what she said... "She said, the only good Indian is a dead Indian." "Indians are inferior to white people both physically and mentally." "Indians are like children, they live day to day without a thought of what's going to happen tomorrow." His grandfather told him differently, he told him what his teacher was telling him was not true. He said to his teacher, "You lie about Indians", and was hit with a ruler, and pulled by the ear down to the principals office. The principal insisted that he apologize to his teacher, he refused and said, "She lies about Indians". For punishment, he was ordered to stay after school and help the janitor, until he apologized. He

stayed after for 90 days, but never apologized to old Mrs. Galespy.

When he was older he decided he would teach the children about their culture. he said "As long as you're ashamed, you can be controlled." "When you have pride and know your own history and culture, you're not gonna end up like that drunk in the gutter that knows nothing of his culture."

He started a boy scout troop here in Akwesasne, which was later called the Akwesasne Camp Counselor Organization. Instead of merit badges they earned feathers (coup). They had many ways of earning feathers, they could make moccasins, make a Kastowa, run so many miles, read so many authentic Indian books, visit another reservation, and many other things. He was also trying to unconsciously train them to be Indian Camp Counselors. There were jobs out there for people who could talk about Indian History, but these jobs were being taken by white people, because most Indian children did not know their own history.

He raised money on his own, and loaded these kids in his car. They went on many trips, visiting places like Wounded Knee, the Black Hills, Pine Ridge; they visited actual places where history was made: where Sitting Bull was murdered, where Chief Crazy Horse was burned, where Abe Lincoln was born, and many other places. Often they couldn't afford admission into some of these historical sites, so they would sneak in, he laughs, thinking of some of their adventures. "I wore out eight cars carting those kids around", he says shaking his head and smiling.

His plan worked great, the children learned their culture and history, and many of them got jobs as camp counselors. The sad thing he says is "Along came the World War II and took a lot of those kids". He looks fondly through a book their group had put together. His last copy, filled with pictures of the kids he taught, of places they visited. "I looked at those kids like they were my own..." "When they did something good I was proud, when they did something bad I was sad." "I look at these pictures and I get lonesome."

Ray is still appalled by the history that is taught in both American and Canadian schools. "...they leave a complete blank on the gifts of the North American Indians to the world and the gifts from other races as well." "...it is hammered in their heads from kindergarten that everything good, all the foods that we eat, all the advancement, all the inventions came out of Europe." "No other race contributed anything..."

"What does the average school book say about Indians? They hunted, fished and killed people.

For some reason they love to stress killing when it comes to Indians. It's gotta be a war party, war dance, war whoop, war club, war paint, war path, war this a war that. I'll ask you a question. Who invented germ warfare, chemical war fare, poison gas, bombs, guns, battle ships, dynamite, torpedoes, insecticides, biological ware fare? Who invented all these things to kill other human beings? Indians?"

"The American Indians developed over 200 different kinds of corn.

Corn, beans, pumpkins, squash, celery, buckwheat maple sugar, maple syrup, vanilla, chocolate, peppers, tapioca, Irish potatoes (didn't come from Ireland like everyone thinks....) sweet potatoes, peanuts, popcorn, chewing gum, pepper, pineapples, tomatoes - all gifts of the American Indians, never put in school books... Thanks to what the American Indian has given to the world in the line of medicines, food plants, ideas of sanitation and health, people today are as healthy and strong as they are." "It will always be a racist country, and it will never be that big melting pot they brag about, until they teach children in school that all people contribute to our present day civilization."

"What right does any European country have to send somebody 3000 miles across the ocean, put their foot on the Atlantic coast and claim the whole continent for his King 3000 miles away?... Do you know what Columbus had to say about Indians? These were Columbus' own words: "What they the Indians have they do not refuse to those who ask. With deep love they prefer others to themselves. They give much for little and bear with small or no return. When we landed, women and men, children and adults, youth and old, forgot their fear that they had felt for us and pursued to see us, and great crowds filled the road. Some offering food, some drink, and all were affected by the sweetest love and almost unbelievable good will." Columbus later sold two thousand of these people who he spoke so kindly of, to slavery in Europe.

Ray is very saddened and disgusted by the present day condition of the environment. There is less and less food to feed all the animals and birds, because of the acid rain. A mother animal: loves her little ones just as much as a woman loves a human baby. He points out the window towards the trees, "I'm no better than that chipmunk out there who has just as much right to live on this earth as I have..." He says that people are brought up with this attitude that "We have the right to take and kill anything, because the world was put here for selfish me."

See Ray
Cont'd on pg. 8

Ransom Calls for Mohawk Spokesperson

James W. Ransom, candidate for Tribal Chief, stated that the Tribal Council spokesperson should be a Mohawk.

"It isn't an issue of whether Joe Grey can do the job, but that Mohawks should be in Mohawk jobs," Ransom stated referring to the fact that the Tribal Council has employed a non-native spokesperson for the past two years.

"When this community consistently has a high unemployment rate, why isn't the recruitment of Mohawk for Tribal jobs a priority for this Council," Ransom asked referring to the fact that approximately 1 out of every 4 persons employed by the St. Regis Mohawk Education and Community Fund and the Tribe are non-native.

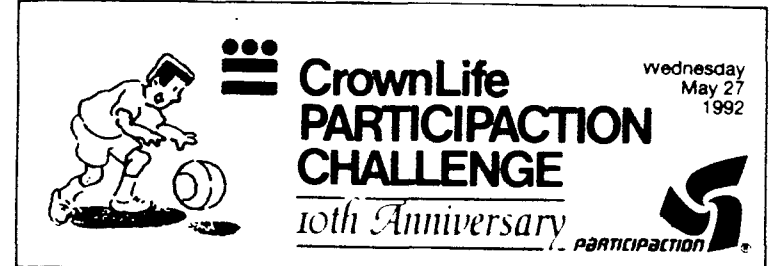
"If our people aren't qualified for these positions, then education

needs to be a priority," Ransom added referring to the absence of an education policy by the Tribal Council.

"The Bureau of Indian Affairs provides less than \$50,000 for Mohawk students to attend college," Ransom continued. "The Tribal Council should use the revenue received from Akwesasne businesses and create an education scholarship fund of \$200,000 to supplement the BIA funding," he added.

"The absenteeism and tardiness rate for Mohawk students in grades 7-12 at Salmon River is twice the non-native population rate," Ransom stated. Given the low priority education receives from the Tribal Council, it is not surprising."

"If I am elected Tribal Chief, you can be assured that education will be a priority," he concluded.



Slate of Candidates Chosen for June 6 Tribal Election

Members of the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe met on Saturday, May 16 in caucus to choose candidates for the upcoming Tribal Election.

Two seats on the Tribal Council - one Chief and one Sub-Chief - are up for grabs in the June 6 election. Each officer will serve a three-year term, beginning July 1, 1992.

Chosen as candidates for Chief were Russell Lazore, John Loran and James Ransom.

Lazore, who served as a Chief on the Council from 1973 until 1976 was nominated by Melvin White. The nomination was seconded by Bernard White.

Loran, who is currently serving as a Sub-Chief, was nominated by Ben Kelly. The nomination was seconded by Basil "Buddy" Cook. Loran must resign as Sub-Chief to run for Chief.

Ransom, who served as a Sub-Chief from 1989 to 1991, was nominated by Hilda Smoke. The nomination was seconded by

Mae Bigree.

Sub-Chief candidates are: Jerry Laughing, Doug Smoke and Bernard White. Laughing was nominated by Harry Benedict, with a second by Ben Kelly. Smoke was nominated by Saka Pembleton, with a second by Selena Smoke. White was nominated by Russell Lazore, with a second by Melvin White.

Eligible voters in the Tribal Election must be enrolled members of the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe who are at least eighteen years of age and live on the American side of line dividing the United States and Canada.

Tribal Council Head Chief Lincoln C. White did not seek re-election. His term of office will expire June 30. Chief White, on behalf of the Tribal Council, wished the candidates well and urged eligible Mohawk voters to get out and vote on June 6. Polls will be open from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m.

SCHOOL

Cont'd from front pg.

If the Special Act District is established the certified teachers who would be lost will be employed in Akwesasne.

The Education Committee is also looking ahead up to the Post-secondary level. They have always tried to encourage more students to attend college and this is indicated by the number of kids and adults returning to Post-secondary education institutions. It was also noted that on more than one occasion a family will have two generations in a post-secondary program.

The State University of New York (SUNY) is utilized by many local Mohawks because of the location to home but mainly because there is an ever increasing tuition hike at private schools.

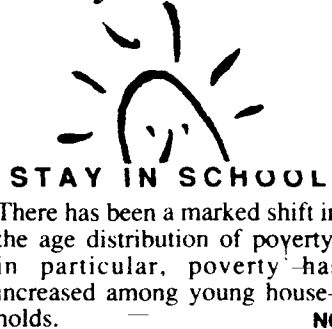
The Committee maintains that the local students are staying longer in school, up to five years.

To do this the student needs aid and to get this aid, the students are being asked to really apply themselves.

The report of the committee indicates: *Mohawk Students are also staying in college for longer periods of time. The majority of students are enrolled as full-time students in a four year program.*

We also have students entering in very technological fields which require a five year stint. Due to limited funding, a grade point average of 2.0 has been required of each student since 1989. We see nothing wrong with imposing the criterium. Our students faced this challenge with determination and success as they thought this to be an incentive measure. Also, during to limited funding, since the 1990/91 academic year, aid for summer session has been dropped. These depletions cannot continue if Mohawk students are to be successful in a post-secondary program.

Did you know...?



There has been a marked shift in the age distribution of poverty; in particular, poverty has increased among young households. NC

Obituary

Sarah Lazore

Sarah Lazore, 74, died at the Cornwall General Hospital on Friday, May 15, 1992.

The former Cecelia Sarah Cook of Iakihisohtha Home for the Elderly formerly of River Road, Snye, Quebec.

Beloved wife of the late Leo Lazore.

Dear mother of Frank Cook of Hogansburg, New York, Gordon Lazore, of Oka, Quebec, Julia (Mrs. Michael Thompson) of R.R. #3 Cornwall Island, Doris Lazore of Ottawa and Diane Lazore at home. Dear daughter of the late John Cook and of the late Josephine Curry. Dear sister of David Curry of Snye, Quebec, Mary (Mrs. James Herne) of Route #37 Bombay, New York and Mrs. Florence Cook of Hogansburg, New York.

Also survived by 14 grandchildren and 10 great grandchildren.

Mrs. Lazore rested at the residence of her daughter Diane Lazore, River Rd, Snye Quebec from 7 p.m. Saturday.

Funeral was held Monday, May 18, 1992 for Mass of Christian Burial in the St. Regis Church, St. Regis, Quebec at 3 p.m. Interment Parish Cemetery.

Funeral arrangements were under the care and direction of the Cornwall Funeral Homes, East Branch, 614 First Street East, Cornwall.