



Assembly of First Nations Special Chiefs Assembly

December 5-7, 2023
Shaw Centre – Ottawa, Ontario

Ottawa is located on the unceded unsundered Territory of the Algonquin People.



THE COUNCIL FLYER

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE AFN VETERANS' AND KNOWLEDGE KEEPERS' COUNCILS



About the AFN Knowledge Keepers Council

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Knowledge Keepers Council, with a long history stretching back to the beginning of the National Indian Brotherhood (NIB), continues to play a significant role within the AFN today.

As key advisors and active participants in policy work, the Knowledge Keepers Council provides thoughtful, perceptive, and valuable contributions across all AFN Sectors.

The current co-chairs are Dr. Gwendolyn Point, representing British Columbia, and Chuck Hume, representing Yukon. Overall, the Council ensures that each AFN portfolio is supported by a Knowledge Keeper, who provides guidance in their respective areas of work.

The AFN Knowledge Keepers Council includes:

- Yukon – Chuck Hume, Co-Chair, and Lorraine Netro
- Northwest Territories – John Bekale and Grace Blake
- British Columbia – Dr. Gwendolyn Point, Co-Chair, Robert Joseph, and Sempulyan Gonzales
- Alberta – Ivy Raine and Lawrence Couroreille
- Saskatchewan – Joe Quewezance
- Manitoba – Mike Muswagon
- Ontario – Teri Fiddler, Ma-Nee Chacaby and Barney Batise
- Quebec and Labrador – Bill Sunday
- New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island – Eldon Bernard
- Prince Edward Island – Judy Clark
- Nova Scotia and Newfoundland – Vacant



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Latest News from the AFN Knowledge Keepers Council

Honouring Elders and Knowledge Keepers

Earlier this year, we mourned the loss of Knowledge Keeper Phyllis Googoo and Veteran James Eagle. The AFN honoured their valuable contributions during the Annual General Assembly in July 2023.

A Star Blanket Ceremony was conducted, during which the star blankets were displayed in honour of both Phyllis and James. These blankets were later presented to their respective families in remembrance.



AFN First Nations Veterans Council Members

The AFN First Nations Veterans Council (FNVC), under the leadership and guidance of Portfolio Holder Regional Chief and Dene National Chief Gerald Antoine, promotes the recognition and contributions of First Nations Veterans. Their efforts focus on education, preserving historical records, and collaboration with Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC). These initiatives are guided by AFN Resolution 02/2020, AFN First Nations Veterans Council, and a Letter of Understanding with Veterans Affairs Canada.

The AFN Veterans Council includes:

- British Columbia – Grand Chief Percy Joe, Chair
- Yukon – Carl Sidney
- Northwest Territories – Tim O'Loan
- Alberta – Henry Raine
- Saskatchewan – Emile Highway
- Manitoba – Lawrence Letandre
- Ontario – Wendy Jocko and Gerald (Gerry) McGregor
- Quebec and Labrador – Vacant
- New Brunswick – Eldon Bernard and Terry Richardson
- Prince Edward Island – Vacant
- Nova Scotia and Newfoundland – Alan Knockwood



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Latest News from the AFN First Nations Veterans Council

AFN First Nations Veterans Council Meeting in Calgary 2023

In November 2023, the AFN First Nations Veterans Council met in Calgary, Alberta to discuss and provide updates on the progress of the Letter of Understanding (LOU) signed in May 2023.

Attendees included Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC), the Canadian Peacekeeping Veterans Association (CPVA), members of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF), and representatives from the True Patriot Love Foundation. The VAC and FNVC are in the process of co-developing a work plan to advance the four pillars of the LOU.



AFN First Nations Veterans Council attends meeting in Calgary, Alberta, in November 2023.

Celebrating Indigenous Leadership Opportunity Year Program (ILOY) Graduates

The FNVC proudly congratulates the nine recent graduates of the Indigenous Leadership Opportunity Year Program (ILOY) from the Royal Military College (RMC) in June 2023. We are proud of your hard work, dedication, and perseverance. You inspire us all, and we can't wait to see what amazing things you will accomplish in the future!



Graduates of the Indigenous Leadership Opportunity Year Program (ILOY) from the Royal Military College (RMC)



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Grand Chief Percy Joe: Highlighting His Military Journey

Grand Chief Percy Joe was featured earlier this year in an interview by the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada Regimental Museum and Archive. He shared insights about his life and his military experiences, including when he first enlisted in the Rocky Mountain Rangers at age 16. His story can be viewed and listened to on the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada website:

<https://qormuseum.org/soldiers-of-the-queens-own/joe-percy/>.



Grand Chief Percy Joe attends AFN Annual General Assembly in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in July 2023.

Remembrance Day 2023

Interim AFN National Chief Joanna Bernard, as an Honorary Colonel in the Canadian Armed Forces, participated in the Remembrance Day ceremonies at the National War Memorial in Ottawa, Ontario, on November 11, 2023. She was joined by Veteran Tim O'Loan, the AFN Veteran Council representative for the Northwest Territories.

In an Act of Remembrance, the AFN laid a wreath at the National War Memorial, honouring First Nations Veterans.



Interim AFN National Chief Joanna Bernard attends Remembrance Day ceremonies alongside Veteran Tim O'Loan, AFN Veteran Council representative for Northwest Territories, in Ottawa, Ontario, on November 11, 2023.

AFN First Nations Veterans Councils Contribution to Peacekeeping Veterans Anthology

The AFN's article "A Shared History, A Shared Responsibility" has been included in the Canadian Peacekeeping Veterans Association anthology, "PK75: Stories of Canadian Peacekeepers." The anthology celebrates 75 years of peacekeeping missions and includes a recollection of personal experiences of Canadian peacekeepers who have contributed significantly to peacekeeping efforts over the years.

The article is available on page 20 of the anthology, accessible here: <https://pk75.ca/en/pk75-anthology/anthology>.

