

# From Spark to Spade

By Myken McDowell

*When the Alberta constituency voted in the fall of 2012 to expand Mamawi Atosketan Native School, the Alberta Conference embarked on its most ambitious building project ever. On May 25, 2016, that vision started to become a reality at the ground breaking for a high school that will change countless lives.*



MANS student participates in the powwow feature wearing traditional Cree regalia. (photo by Crux Phiri)

Some thought the brief interlude of brilliant sunshine in what was otherwise a grey and rainy week a sign from Heaven. There was an air of excitement and “Mamawi Atosketn” (“Working Together”) as donors, Conference leaders, dignitaries, students, and teachers past and present picked up shovels to break ground for an Adventist high school that is a beacon of hope for aboriginal young people and their families.

“I’m so grateful for what this school has done for my children,” says Levi Nepoose, whose children wouldn’t think of going anywhere else. Nepoose worked tirelessly to organize the powwow feature for the day, using his personal connections as a well-known powwow dancer to bring in an internationally-known aboriginal drum group, Northern Cree. “I don’t have much money,”

continues Nepoose, who earns his livelihood as a traditional craftsman, “but this is something I can do to give back.”

Special music by MANS parent and gospel singer Ruby Cutknife and prayers in English (MANS chaplain Dan Guiboche) and Cree (former Samson Band counselor and elder Rose Saddleback) invoked the presence of the Creator before spades went into the ground. Michael Willing, vice principal for the high school, acknowledged special guests and dignitaries from the County of Ponoka, the Association of Independent Schools and Colleges of Alberta, and the mayor of St. Albert who also spoke about the importance of the event. Campaign manager Lynn McDowell introduced Andrew Bartlett of the Canadian Welding Association Foundation, which is donating the equipment



for the welding component of the Industrial Arts Centre.

“We’ve looked forward to this day for a long time,” said President Ken Wiebe. “This is God’s project. It’s humbling to watch how He has led.”

See video from the Ground Breaking at Mamawi Atosketan’s Facebook page.

Samuel Minde, MANS parent and President and CEO of Neyaskweyahk Group of Companies for the Ermineskin Band shares his perspective. During his speech he expressed his gratitude toward the school for providing a safe and effective Christian learning environment for his children.



# News from Fort Saskatchewan Church Plant

Architect Zayda Steinke shares insight into her design for the new high school and Industrial Arts Centre that incorporates nature and aboriginal elements. Of her design process she says, "Before everything, I say a prayer." Zayda's architectural drawings can be viewed at [www.mans1.ca](http://www.mans1.ca).



Levi Nepoose, the MANS parent who organized the powwow feature, dances in traditional Cree regalia he made himself.



The Fort Saskatchewan Church Plant group just completed their 3rd Depression Recovery program. There was a wonderful graduation meal prepared for the 30 people in attendance. "It's great to hear the

**It's great to hear the testimonies and praises from our attendees who have experienced such dramatic benefits from applying God's simple biblical health principles.**

testimonies and praises from our attendees who have experienced such dramatic benefits from applying God's simple Biblical health principles," says Darrell Beaudoin, pastor of the group. The next Depression Recovery program is scheduled to begin on September 19, 2016. Also, the Fort Saskatchewan Church just completed their 3rd trade show where they had a booth setup to display information about the church and its

programs. During the trade show, 250 individuals filled out information cards for a free draw. The most exciting part is that 108 of those who filled out the card requested more information about the Fort Saskatchewan Church programs. These requests will be followed up in the near future.

Lise Beaudoin holding 250 information cards collected from the recent trade show in Fort Saskatchewan.



Alberta Conference Secretary Larry Hall (left) and President Ken Wiebe (right) break ground for the new high school and Industrial Arts Centre.

Founding donor and honorary campaign chair Larry Wilkins breaks ground for the new high school and Industrial Arts Centre alongside fellow founding donor Danny Chase (Chase Interiors, Vancouver).