



Grand Chief Henderson  
"February Reading Month"



Grand Chief Henderson reading to the Grade 1 students of River Elm School.

Since February is "I Love to Read Month" I received an invitation from Principal Tom Chan of River Elm School to come and read a book for the students of the Grade 1 and Grade 5. The occasion was quite the insightful experience, as I had a memorable time talking and listening to the children.

If you can read this, Thank a teacher —  
Anonymous Teacher

# South Wind

"The official newspaper of the Manitoba Southern Chiefs' Organization, Inc."

## Framework Agreement Initiative (FAI) Child and Family Matters Table

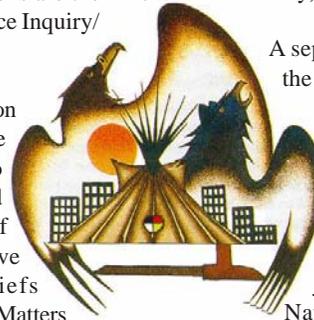
First Nations people have always been concerned about maintaining healthy children, families and communities. Two initiatives currently taking place that will impact First Nations are the FAI/Child & Family and the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry/Child Welfare Initiative (AJI/CWI).

The FAI was created to achieve recognition of First Nation governments, to restore jurisdiction to those governments and to dismantle the department of Indian and Northern Affairs. The FAI consists of three negotiating tables: Comprehensive (AMC); Education (Southern Chiefs Organization-SCO); and Child & Family Matters (Manitoba Keewatinook Inew Okimowin-MKIO). Representatives from MKIO, SCO, AMC and First Nation Child and Family Services (FNCFS) Directors comprise the FAI/Child & Family Table. The SCO has been involved in a variety of activities to determine the positions of the Southern First Nations.

Negotiations began January 2000 on the development of an Agreement-In-Principle (AIP). The latest draft, (conceptually agreed to by the parties) was completed in June 2004. *The AIP is not legally binding; rather it is a negotiating tool that sets out the framework for the development of a final agreement.* The AIP covers areas

related to governance, jurisdiction (the ability to pass laws), and fiscal relations. One of the objectives of the FAI on Child and Family Matters, is to restore full jurisdiction (Law Making Authority) to First Nations over their children and families.

A separate initiative occurring is the AJI/CWI in which the CFS Authorities Act created the new Authorities (FNCFS Northern, FNCFS Southern, Métis, and the General Authority). The FNCFS Agencies now have administrative authority to provide services to children and families on and off reserve but continue to remain under Provincial Legislation (Laws). The objective of the FAI is to restore full jurisdiction (Law Making Authority) to First Nations.



The FAI/Child & Family Table asserts the rebuilding of First Nation Governments must reflect and reaffirm First Nation beliefs, customs, and traditions and that Treaty and Inherent Rights must be paramount throughout.

From January to March 2005, representatives from all three FAI Tables will be providing Information Sessions to First Nations. Feedback received from these sessions will be used in the development of a Final Agreement.

For information re: FAI Child and Family Matters, contact Lisa Medd or Rhonda Monkman @ SCO Sub Office at 946-1869.

## Message from Southern Grand Chief Chris Henderson



**B**ooshoo!Wahste!Tansi! Greetings to our Elders, Veterans, Southern Chiefs, Council Members, and First Nations citizens. I hope this message finds you all well.

I want to take this opportunity to thank those Southern Chiefs and Council Members who attended and participated in our Environment Strategy meeting in Winnipeg on

Friday, February 18, 2005. This strategy was developed and drafted in response to **Resolution #16**, Subject: Environmental Stewardship Strategy, adopted by the SCO Chiefs-in-Summit at the Waywayseecappo First Nation last September.

A key focus of this proposed environmental strategy is on water quality and the protection of water for our

Southern First Nations. As First Nations, *we have a historical and spiritual connection to the land.* This connection also applies to the water and the various waterway systems within our traditional territories. Equally important is not only our Inherent and Treaty rights to the land, but also to the waters. Based on these rights, we have developed an environmental strategy that calls for the formation of a First Nations Water Protection



Council for our Member First Nations. This Water Protection Council will work to ensure that our First Nation's rights and interests are maintained, respected and protected when it comes to any proposed remedial plans to deal with water quality by the provincial and federal governments. This council will ideally work with the Lake Winnipeg and Lake Manitoba Water Stewardship Boards, but will ultimately

be an independent First Nations initiative composed of our leaders and our technicians.

The formation of this Water Protection Council was deferred to our upcoming SCO Chiefs-in-Summit meeting on March 8, 9 and 10, 2005, on the Dakota Tipi First Nation. I look forward to visiting Chief Cornell Pashe, the Council Members and the people of Dakota Tipi at this time.

In closing, I wish to restate our commitment to helping and assisting the family of Matthew Dumas in their search of the truth and justice. Please keep in mind that the Winnipeg Police officer who shot and killed Matthew has the full backing and support of his police union, the Winnipeg Police Service and the Winnipeg City Council. Unfortunately, Matthew's family does not have this much formal organizational support, despite their tragic loss. We have made a commitment to Matthew's family, and we intend on honouring this commitment in the memory of Matthew and the Report of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry of Manitoba.

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