

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

“Ki8etan” Going back to our Roots

Val-d'Or, November 10, 2014_ Throughout the years, various and original means were experimented to address the specific health and wellness needs of Aboriginal people. In its last edition, the Val-d'Or Native Friendship Centre made a shift towards an approach based on culture and traditional teachings. The **11th Promotion of Life Week** to be held next November 11 to 13 will offer an exciting program in line with the aspirations of the urban Aboriginal community members who clearly wish to reconnect with their identity. It will also be an opportunity for the general public to learn more about First Peoples by attending the different workshops on the program.

A culturally relevant program

“Ki8etan” Going back to our Roots, which also means refocusing on our heart, going back to the trail we used in the past and going back to our roots, will be the workshops' central themes. The spiritual dimension will include Anicinape traditional activities and teachings with **Dominique (T8aminik) Rankin**, a spiritual leader and medicine man, and **Kokom Marie-Josée Tardif**. The week will open with a ceremonial welcoming of children on the sacred land and teachings on birth and revival. The following days, teachings will focus on sacred objects, animals and their meaning, and the Seven Fire Prophecy. Sharing circles, a sacred Pipe ceremony, making a medicine pouch and its purification in nature will follow these teachings.

Diomède Niyonzima, president of the *Kira Burundi* organisation, reporter, writer and poet, is a survivor of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. In his documentary *“Une lueur d'espoir”*, (a glimmer of hope), he presents his story, followed by a testimony in the form of a plea for peace and a source of motivation. Students, youth and community members will have the opportunity to hear him. The program includes many other activities: community supper followed by a *“Family Feud”* game, Meals on Wheels, Miskwâ Sinibân game (a prevention game on infections and how to prevent HIV /AIDS and other STBBIs), a lunchtime workshop for women and youth, as well as the **Night of the Homeless**. This activity's main objective is to develop public awareness on homelessness. For the complete program, please visit our website at www.caavd.ca/spv or our Facebook page.

A central gathering place and public forum, the Val-d'Or Native Friendship Centre advocates for the individual and collective rights, interests and well-being of the Aboriginal people faced with the reality of an urban environment. Its services cover different development sectors addressing education, culture, community health, recreation, economy and social issues. It is recognised by the community as a bridge builder between peoples.

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