



## Students gather at the steps of the Manitoba Legislature after anti-racism march

Hundreds of rain soaked students walked 12 kilometers, from Maples Collegiate to the Legislature, promoting multiculturalism and anti-racism awareness. It was the ninth annual anti-racism march organized by the school's Unity Group

The adverse weather condition did not dampen the spirits of the students. Student Bojan Dulabic told the crowd that he was proud of them for continuing the 12 kilometer march despite the downpour.

MP's Judy Wasylycia-Leis and Ray Pagtakhan congratulated the students for their perseverance in demonstrating their commitment to peace and harmony.



*Enthusiastic students brave the pouring rain on May 19th.*

Student leaders and grade 11 twin sisters Melissa and Miranda Bittern said that there was never any talk of calling off the peaceful demonstration, saying that the rain could not dampen the enthusiasm of the students.

Maples Collegiate Unity Group was recognized in 2003 with the YMCA International Peace Award for their many anti-racism activities. Teacher Chuck Duboff said that the Unity Group has expanded over the years and now has between fifty and sixty members.

### The Rights Connection

By Janet Baldwin - Chairperson

### Supporting Human Rights Education

Recently, Dianna Scarth, our Executive Director, and I attended a community consultation meeting with respect to The Canadian Museum for Human Rights. We received an update on plans and funding for the Museum. There was an opportunity to discuss the structure of the Museum and our expectations of the project.

Ralph Appelbaum, a consultant to major museums and cultural institutions, including the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, spoke on the planning and design of the Museum. He talked about how the Holocaust Memorial Museum told the story of not only the victims and perpetrators, but also the bystanders. He stressed that modern museums are about ideas, not objects, and trigger ethical and moral discourse, for social good.

One year ago, the late Dr. Israel Asper spoke about this vision for the Museum to myself and other Chairpersons and officials of human rights commissions, then meeting in Winnipeg at the annual Canadian Association of Statutory Human Rights Agencies conference. His dream, as described in the Museum proposal, was "to create a distinctive, architecturally exceptional museum that will inspire and project the Canadian commitment to human rights, freedom, democracy and diversity to the world." We welcomed that opportunity to express our support, and we looked forward to working together to achieve our common goals.

We hope to establish a cooperative partnership with the Museum with respect to human rights education, focusing particularly on youth. The Manitoba Human Rights Commission has a triple mandate of enforcement of the anti-discrimination provisions of *The Manitoba Human Rights Code*, education and promotion of human rights. While our annual budget for educational programs is a mere \$13,000.00, we bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to the table. We have developed seminars, an interactive web-site and an annual youth conference, which this year was expanded to the North. We hope to explore ways in which we might augment and support each other's work.



## Making connections important for good mental health

The Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) launched the 53rd Mental Health Week, under the banner of Making Connections on May 3, 2004. This national awareness week provided Canadians with many opportunities to find out more about the importance of mental health, and how to achieve it in our daily lives.

“Our message for this year’s Mental Health Week was to achieve good mental health, we must all strive for balance in our lives,” said Penny Marrett, CEO, CMHA. “The theme ‘Making Connections’ reinforced the importance of reaching out to those who can help us find that balance.”

Approximately one in five Canadians, or 20 per cent of the adult population, will be affected by a mental illness during their lifetime. This makes the work of the CMHA vital to millions of Canadians. For people living with a mental illness, their families, friends and colleagues, connecting with the CMHA puts them in touch with specialized services, information, support groups, health care providers, and many other helpful resources that are available in their community.

The Manitoba Human Rights Commission has noted that complaints filed on the ground of mental disability have increased over the years. This is a trend evident with other commissions across the country. In 2003, 16 per cent of the complaints filed with the Manitoba Commission were based on mental disability.

“Good mental health has never been more important to successfully coping with the many stressful events taking place internationally, here in Canada, and even right in our own communities,” said Karen McGrath, President, CMHA National Board of Directors. “Good mental health is essential to everyone’s well-being and the sign of a healthy society,” she continued.

The Canadian Mental Health Association is a national, voluntary organization that exists to promote the mental health of all people and to serve mental health consumers, their families and friends through education, public awareness, research, advocacy and direct services in more than 135 communities across the country.

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## Coming Events

### 2004 National Aboriginal Day

June 21 was chosen as National Aboriginal Day because of the cultural significance of the summer solstice, which is the first day of summer and the longest day of the year. Many Aboriginal groups mark this day as a time to celebrate their heritage.



It was back in 1982 that the National Indian Brotherhood, now known as the Assembly of First Nations, called for the creation of June 21 as National Aboriginal Solidarity Day. In 1990, Quebec was the first province to recognize this day and celebrate Aboriginal culture.

In 1995 a Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples recommended the designation of a National First Peoples Day. That same year, the Sacred Assembly, a national conference of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people chaired by Elijah Harper, called for a national holiday to celebrate the contributions of Aboriginal peoples.

The following year, former Governor General Romeo Le Blanc declared June 21 as National Aboriginal Day. Today it is part of the annual nation-wide Celebrate Canada! Festivals held between June 21 and July 1. National Aboriginal Day is followed by St. Jean Baptiste Day on June 24, Canadian Multicultural Day on June 27 and concludes with Canada Day, July 1.

#### Winnipeg - Thunderbird House, downtown and The Forks

6:00 AM - events include a sunrise ceremony, and showcases Aboriginal and Metis entertainment and activities, a pow wow and traditional Aboriginal games.

#### Indian and Metis Friendship Centre of Winnipeg

8:00 AM - events include a parade, a pancake breakfast, music, dancing and a fireworks display.

#### Flin Flon - Indian Metis Friendship Association

4:00 PM - events include a prayer, tipi building, and award presentation for “Why I Love Canada” poster contest, games, hoop troupe dancers, Metis fiddlers, and a BBQ with bison meat, bannock and cake.

#### Turtle Mountain Metis Inc. - Dromore Lake

9:00AM - events include a parade, children’s games, elder storytelling, weiner roast, fireworks, breakfast, fiddle playing, sack weaving, teen dance and supper.