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Bowden's Ghost Courier

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SOCIAL GROUP NEWS

Native Brotherhood: The Native Brotherhood was founded in the early 'sixties to help their members solve their problems by dialogue with other agencies and organizations of like interest. The Brotherhood has set up many programs which will help members better themselves, and offers suggestions for self-improvement.

The Native Brotherhood was taken in to the Saskatchewan Penitentiary at Prince Albert in the early 'sixties; and, is in many provincial jails throughout the province as well as in the penitentiaries. The Native Brotherhood came to Bowden Institution in 1976. It was initiated by four concerned brothers who saw a great need for Native programming within the institution. Like many others, they wanted to determine the reasons for the high incarceration rate among the Native Peoples in Alberta. The Brotherhood is still looking at those kinds of problems; trying to determine the whys.

The Native Brotherhood aims to promote understanding between Indian, Metis, and Inuit; to alleviate the high incarceration rate of Indian and Metis; to help the Native during and after incarceration; to serve as spokesman and mediator when or where possible and permissible for the Indian and Metis who are not capable of speaking for themselves; and, to improve the social status of Indian and Metis.

Our main concern, in the Brotherhood, is an understanding of and the participation in the Native Cultural and Ancestral way of life. Our Cultural Night takes place on the last Friday of each month. In this way we celebrate the month's end in the Indian way; the brothers get together and invite outside resource people to pow-wow with us; there are brother and sister awards for the most outstanding supporters of the month.

All meetings, and Cultural Night, begin with a ritual: the burning of sweetgrass, which is used for purification of the body before prayer. The night is closed with an Indian prayer by one of the elders.

The executive body consists of: President, Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer, Public Relations Officer, Sergeant At Arms, and Co-ordinators for programs and counselling. General membership is open to all persons of native ancestry: Indian, Metis, and Inuit.

General meetings are held in the Chapel at 6:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M. every Wednesday. Cultural Night is held on the last Friday of each month at 7:00 P.M. to 9:30 P.M. in the Chapel.

Social Group News (cont'd)

Native Brotherhood:

The Native Brotherhood holds an annual Indian y on the Chapel Grounds, and has two workshops through the year; the first one is to be held, tentatively, on 25 May 1983, and will deal with alcohol and drug abuse.

We also have a new program called 'Native American Self Awareness' the meeting for this particular program are held in the V. & C. area from 6:00 P.M. to (9:00 P.M. every Monday.

We try to encourage our brothers to speak during all our meetings with the hope that it will help the brothers to communicate effectively and that it will teach them to speak for themselves in public.

All interested peoples are invited to attend these meetings.

Alvin StGermain,
Grand Chief

Greetings Brothers:

As you all are aware, we have a general meeting for the Native Brotherhood, held between 6:00 P.M. to 9:30 P.M. on Wednesdays. In order for our group to be successful we need your support. In order to attend you have to be of Native Ancestry. The Native Brotherhood is an Incorporated Society that helps Native and Metis offenders help themselves. Our Group tries to invite outside organizations to help us understand the Native Culture or any other aspects of our Native Heritage.

So, fellas I take this time to stress the point in attending OUR meetings. Coffee is always on, and once again: every Wednesday at 6:00 P.M. See ya there.

May the Great Spirit bring you all the true faith and wisdom once carried by us all.

Cheif Chekotah
Bronson

Social Group News (cont'd)

A. A. : My life was unmanageable.

You can be free for this 24 hours, if you can say, I admit I am powerless over alcohol and 'YES' my life had become unmanageable! This wonderful freedom is a gift of life, in meetings and in all things we do, and trust God, as we do our steps, and read our Big Book we are now using the A.A. tools; our steps are a road map to a good life and Serenity!

Let us look at ourselves, our unmanageable life and our defects, and most of all: How we hurt our Loved ones, and how we must now get the garbage out of our lives by working on our defects in step 4 and in the big step 5 -sure it is hard- but we must do it and clean out every little bit for if we do not we are only fooling ourselves and letting our lives out of control again. We are only one drink away from that life of Hell that will lead to so much hurt for our families and then we die alone, drunk and sick. No! not for me, I want to live and be well and I know that the only way that that can be is by Trusting my Higher Power, 'GOD', to manage my life, and walk the A.A. walk hand in hand with my Sisters and Brothers in A.A. for we are truly a family who share and care for each other. At meetings you can see it in the faces of our family, the eyes understand, and in the hand that is offered form a bond that Keeps us together.

I know that I care very deeply for each and every member of my A.A. family and I look forward to each meeting, so that, I can feel the group love and understanding. There is, also, the morning hello and as we see members of our group in our daily passings we are reminded of our Step 12, and of our need to help others find A.A., for our steps are for life, and our only admends to our Loved ones, our working the steps and being honest in the programme and in doing our step 10 each and every day; each night we must do a personal inventory and when we are wrong promptly admit it.

We must humbly live our lives, and having turned them over to God, let God manage us.

I owe my life to God and A.A. and all of our A.A. family, for now I am free and happy for the pain and hurting have ended, and understanding and warmth has filled my life, and I do not need anything to lean on that is artificial.

Thank You, My A.A. Family

A Grateful Member of A.A.

Social Group News (cont'd)

Duplicate Bridge Club:

The Bridge Club is closing out the first season of play. The final night of doubles play for the cumulative total was played on April 19th.

On the 24th of April the Red Deer Club will be coming in to play us. This should be a good experience for our players because the Red Deer Club is well established and has excellent players.

In doubles play Bill Lonsdale and Tiny Myhowich are still leading with Jerry Larose and Terry Jackman a close second. The singles totals show that Peter Petrasuk is ahead and Jerry Larose is in second place. The final evening for this session will be May 1st when we will review the season.

Everyone has been pleased with this first session. We will keep the club active during the summer by running Bridge evenings. If you are interested in getting to play Bridge contact the Recreation Dept. or any of the Club members.

If anyone is interested, Bruce Simeon will be leaving his position as Barber - effective, I believe, Friday 22 April 1983. If there is a Barber in the institution who is presently unemployed and interested in this position see George Patnoe, Inmate Employment Co-ordinator.

SLAVE TO THE BOTTLE

One night as I sat drowning my sorrows
Two old friends of mine dropped in.
One had a bottle of booze,
Which he gave to me with a grin.
"This Al is sure a hard drinker."
He said to the one called Stan.
"I know!" was the grunted reply,
"That Al, he's a hard living man."

My drink went unnoticed, as
Tears of bitterness filled my eyes.
Slowly I began pouring another
Storms of bitterness filled my skies!
When I looked up, in the mirror I saw
A face with bitterness, was haggard and torn.
The bottle of booze fell from my hand, as
Through the corridor of time I remembered the morn.

Now broken, slave to the bottle, self-pity
Written all over that face.
Busted by the bottle, ravaged
By sin and disgrace!
Slowly I put the drink down
And hung my head in shame.
For the years of my youth were wasted
And I had only myself to blame.

Alvin St. Germain

SPORTS CORNER

The big exercise yard opened April 18th. It will be open during the day and will stay open in the evenings until the perimeter lights begin to come on.

Fastball- A lot of people have asked about the fastball season. There appears to be some uncertainty related to the construction programme and its' effect on the Rec. Dept. plans. There will be, however, a fastball programme. Interested inmates should sign up in the Units. If there are a few fellows who want to organize their own team, here are the guidelines:

- each team can only protect 5 players, and one of these five must be a pitcher. These five players will form the nucleus of your team. The balance of the team will be selected through the draft process.
- contact Recreation Staff for further information.

Now that the spring finally has arrived, spend some time out in the exercise yard jogging, or just walking around. Register at the Recreation Office for the 'Jogging Club'.

T.A. Programmes:

Golf Programme- This programme will begin May 25th. Each session will involve 4 Temporary Absence Passes; contact Recreation Staff for more information. Remember - Recreation Staff will not enrol any inmate in any programme until a written memo is received from Living Unit team expressing support for each particular inmate.

Tennis Programme-

Tennis will begin May 30th. Each course will also involve 4 Temporary Absence Passes.

Inmates involved in the Golf and Tennis T.A. Programmes will be involved in a number of clinics prior to their first T.A. Clinics will involve video tape instruction, verbal instruction, as well as some practical experience. Dates and times for the clinics will be posted on the bulletin boards in the Units. The clinics will be open to all interested inmates, but those involved in the T.A. Programmes will be expected to attend these instructional clinics.

*Sports Corner (cont'd)

Bowling Programme- The Bowling programme will end on June 26th. There are still some open spots for the Bowling Programme in June. This programme will begin again in September and run through next winter.

Racquetball/Squash Programme-

This programme has been put on the back burner for awhile. There are not enough serious racquetball or squash players playing at B.I. with Living Unit support. Only inmates who play a lot of racquetball or squash would be considered for this programme.

Winners of the Easter Week-end Tournaments:

Gin: Max Cottle

Bridge: Peter Petrasuk & E. Rousell

Crib: Bruce Simeon

Snooker: Bruce Simeon

8 Ball: Dennis Pratt

THE EDITOR'S PAGE

Once again the inmates of this institution have been attacked in the local newspapers, under the guise of a letter to the editor from a citizen concerned about the proposed population increase in the near future. As one reads the letter it seems to have been sent by someone who knows a little about what goes on here; but, as one re-reads the letter it is obvious that the information is dated, patently incorrect, and in places wrapped up in the writer's bias. The writer, a Mr. W. Trimble, seems concerned with the security of the institution and the security of the local communities which are so obviously threatened by the presence of this institution, but he fails to cite any incident, minor or major, that supports his paranoid insecurities.

When I started to dig a little I found out that Mr. Trimble is an ex-security guard from this institution. He was a hold-over from the time when Bowden Inst. was a provincial jail, and one who, apparently, did not make the transition well. Is this the reason he wrote: "... what we have had at the Bowden Institution since the first federal inmate was admitted has been, in my opinion, a dangerous situation." Was it, I wonder, a dangerous situation, in his opinion, because he found it no longer possible to harass or bully young, frightened first offenders? Or was it, in his opinion, a dangerous situation because federal prisoners know that they have some rights and are willing to demand that those rights, to some extent, are observed? Or was it dangerous, in Mr. Trimble's opinion, because we weren't being punished enough, or to an extent that he judges appropriate, for our social transgressions? Whatever the reason, or however the opinion was formulated, Mr. Trimble cites no valid reasons for his fears. We may, I assume in the absence of reason, speculate and form our own opinions concerning Mr. Trimble's inane sense of insecurity.

Mr. Trimble finished his letter with this exhortation to the local population: "So I say to all people living near a federal prison: When you leave home, lock up. Better still, lock up when you are home." And, so I say there we have a simple explanation of Mr. Trimble's state of mind: Once a jailor he cannot help but try to keep people locked up, even if it is in their own homes.

Cyd Huard