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R3E 0S2 www.winnipegharvest.org

The Turtle Lodge Sagkeeng First Nation  
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## Turtle Lodge celebrates giving to Winnipeg Harvest

Aboriginal torchrunners, dancers and musicians will help lead the Celebration of Giving – A Benefit for Winnipeg Harvest at The Forks this Saturday. They will be joined by drummers from the Aboriginal, Japanese, African and Celtic traditions.

First Nations Elder Dave Courchene, founder of The Turtle Lodge, is asking everyone to give to Winnipeg Harvest.

“On Oct. 10, we are encouraging Manitobans to fast for one day to experience hunger and donate the monetary value of what their daily food would have cost to Winnipeg Harvest. If they are unable to fast, they can support the cause by making a non-perishable food donation to Winnipeg Harvest,” Mr. Courchene says.

David Northcott, Executive Coordinator of Winnipeg Harvest, welcomes the support from Manitoba’s First Nations and Aboriginal communities.

“Winnipeg Harvest has partnered with the Turtle Lodge to add an Aboriginal spiritual dimension to our journey. Dave Courchene is helping young people to understand the meaning of hunger and poverty for all too many people, including children. Nearly half the 40,000 individuals in Manitoba served every month by Winnipeg Harvest are children,” Mr. Northcott says.

A Celebration of Giving is part of Winnipeg Harvest’s annual Share Your Thanks campaign, which takes place every Thanksgiving weekend.

The public and the media are invited to join in, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Oodena Circle at The Forks, immediately east of the Johnson Terminal.

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For more information, please contact:

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<http://www.theturtlelodge.org/celebrationOfGiving.html>



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## Backgrounder for Celebration of Giving – A Benefit for Winnipeg Harvest

“We need to come together as a community to put an end to child hunger. We need to become more giving as a community. We need to teach our children how to give. There is truth in the old saying: **the more we give the more we receive**. This has already been a year of giving for Winnipeg and Manitoba. We have seen volunteers come out to sandbag when the rivers threatened to overflow. Let the city and province located in the Heart of the continent to show themselves to be the city and province with a Heart.

“The Earth also needs our help and respect. By not taking from the Earth for one day, we are giving her our respect and gratitude, by allowing her that time to rest. As much as we need to give to each other in the human family, we must extend that giving to the Earth which provides the food, the water, the medicine and the teachings that are given to all of us unconditionally from the love of the Earth. We must find a way to understand our relationship to all life. What we are proposing in celebrating life is participating in the act of giving. If we achieve that level of understanding – that the more we give the more we receive – we can eradicate poverty and child hunger.”

– Dave Courchene (Neeghani Aki Innini), Turtle Lodge Elder, 2009

Also joining the Celebration of Giving will be the highly acclaimed Aboriginal Music Tour, the group of healthy lifestyle Aboriginal singers and songwriters that includes Shy-Anne Hovorka, Missy Knott, Nylin White, and Shibastik.

The Aboriginal Music Tour has been touring schools and communities in Northwestern Ontario, performing hip hop, contemporary, folk and inspirational music while sharing the Celebration of Giving’s message of fasting for Mother Earth, peace, harmony and giving.

A youth talent search was part of every concert they did, and the winners were just selected at a concert in Thunder Bay last Saturday, which was supported by renowned folk singer Rodney Brown. The Aboriginal Music Tour will be bringing these youth to perform at The Forks October 10.

The Celebration of Giving Benefit will include the following performers and will highlight the Youth Talent from the communities.

- Event MCs Troy Westwood and Ray "Co-co" Stevenson
- Torchrunners (including Regional Championship winners from the Sagkeeng First Nation High School Cross Country Running Team) running through



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Winnipeg from the 4 directions, arriving at the Oodena Circle at The Forks at 11 a.m.

- Lighting of the Sacred Fire by torchrunners at the Oodena Circle at 11 a.m., Accompanied by a Drum Performance by Red Shadow Singers (Aboriginal), Japanese Taiko Drum, Traditional African Drum and Celtic Drum performing together in the spirit of unity
- Explanation of the Celebration of Giving by Aboriginal Elder Dave Courchene
- Message from David Northcott, Executive Director of Winnipeg Harvest and Minister of Healthy Living Kerri Irvin-Ross
- Performances by Various Artists including the Aboriginal Music Tour with Shy-Anne Hovorka, Missy Knott, Nylin White, Shibastik; Adrien Sala, Lawrence Mulhall (Spatch), and 17 talented youth performers from across Northwestern Ontario and Manitoba
- A reading of the Seven Teachings (Niishwaasho Mishoomisak) by young artist Mary Black
- Introduction of Kaitlyn Lashley, child star of the upcoming feature film "The Sacred Seven" by Winnipeg Metis Director Jordan Molaro
- Performance by World Champion youth jiggers from Sagkeeng First Nation -- Sagkeeng Elders of the Past Memorial Dancers
- Youth performances including Morning Star, Cheynna Gardner & Dakota Lands (*Eagle Lake First Nation*), Ali Fontaine, Billy Bruyere & Adam Courchene (*Sagkeeng First Nation*), Amy Michano (*The Ojibwe of the Pic River First Nation*), Kaitlyn Shortreed (*Fort Frances*), Dean Mapeso & Graeme Doyle (*Thunder Bay*).

A number of communities outside Manitoba have also joined the Celebration of Giving. The Muslim community from the Greater Toronto Area is joining in solidarity to fast on October 12, 2009, and will be donating the proceeds to the Native Child and Family Services of Toronto Community Kitchen.