

## Letters to the editor

Posted 3 hours ago **JULY 14/09**

Only elected council can speak for Six Nations

There has been much confusion of late as to who represents Six Nations and justly so, given every week a different group of people springs up claiming to speak on behalf of Six Nations. So this letter is to help clear up the confusion.

According to the federal and provincial governments, the elected council is the legal government of Six Nations, although historically it was the Confederacy council. Now some might say the low turnout of voters speaks loudly, but the fact is the majority of people don't involve themselves in the politics. I do believe if push came to shove, the majority would support the elected council.

As for who represents Six Nations let me put it this way: The Mohawk Workers, Women of the Mohawk Nation, the Men's Fire or individuals like Steven "Boots" Powless or Ruby and Floyd Montour were not elected, appointed or authorized by the people of Six Nations to be their representatives or to speak on their behalf. Nor is the Haudenosaunee Development Institute (HDI) supported by the elected council or the community at large. However, it was authorized by the Confederacy council.

Fact of the matter is, it's the media who give recognition and empowers these people by putting them on the front page of the newspapers and headliners of the evening news. Frankly speaking, I believe the protests are more about the media attention than about the land.

We've all noticed of late the absence of protests on development sites. I believe the protests have stopped for two reasons: The people don't want to be arrested and they know they don't have the support of the Six Nations community anymore.

Truth is today the majority of Six Nations people who I've spoken with are fed up with the protests, fed up with these groups of people and individuals claiming to speak for them and fed up with the smoke shops on Highway 6. So people who fear another Caledonia can put their fears to rest.

As for the land negotiations, most people don't know this but on Easter Sunday in 2006 in a meeting with the elected council, the Confederacy council, and the federal and provincial governments, seven elected councillors including myself signed a letter officially mandating the Confederacy council to handle the Douglas Creek barricades and land reclamation.

Later, the elected council expanded the mandate to include the Plank Road claims. That's why the elected council has to date played a minimal role in the land talks.

But after three years of little to no progress at the lands table and confusion and frustration from developers, the elected council opted to develop and distribute a Consultation and Accommodation document. The elected council also opted to reinstate the 1995 court case for an accounting of Six Nations Trust Fund and lands, believing there is no legitimate reason why Six Nations cannot litigate and negotiate at the same time.

Six Nations Coun. Helen Miller Ohsweken

Trails video can help promote tourism here

It was entirely coincidental but very appropriate that on the same day that Tourism Brantford launched its new video, featuring local trails and our river, that the federal and provincial governments announced an infrastructure grant of over \$1 million to Brant Waterways Foundation. This, when combined with Waterways' \$510,000, will construct a missing important 10-kilometre link through Brant County.

A year ago the directors of Brant Waterways Foundation were pleased to contribute \$6,000 to the production of the new video that features the river and trails. Those involved with the foundation and its supporters had realized many years ago how important the Grand River and a trail system built around it could be to this area.