

Editorial Page

The Mohawk Council chiefs are firing blanks

STEVE BONSPIEL
THE EASTERN DOOR

(Editor's note: Although we rarely do this, this editorial is best written in the first person, because it is something that was addressed directly to me. But make no mistake, it affects you and your rights. After all, I do my job to inform you, the people at large, first and foremost.)

The Mohawk Council of Kahnawake is at it again.

I received a registered letter dated March 19, 2015 "revoking" my "privileges" to attend community meetings in Kahnawake.

As of that date I'm no longer allowed to report on community meetings, and in what I will show you is flawed logic by the Mohawk Council, they never even asked my side of the story, seemingly relying on others who don't want me at the meeting.

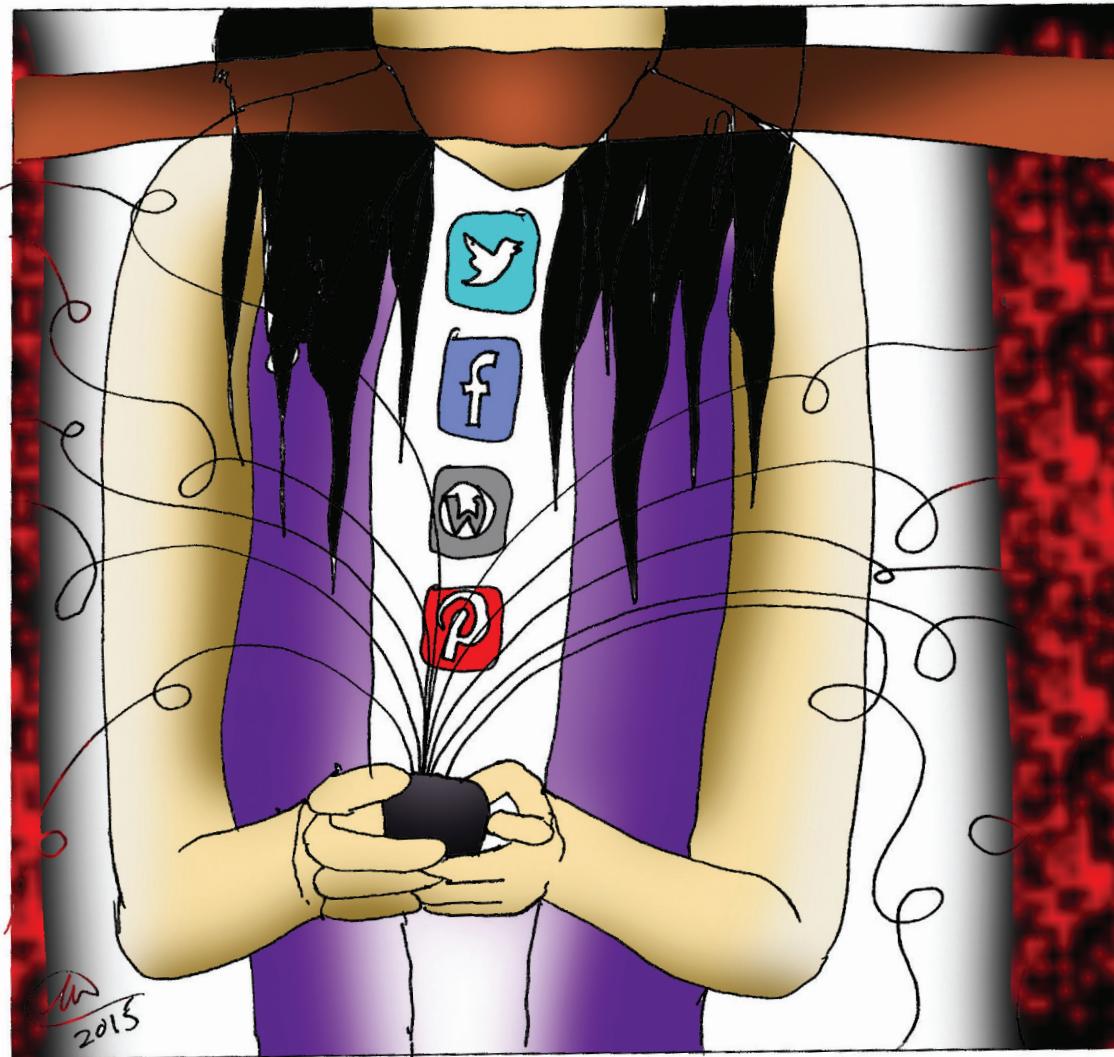
How else did they come up with the conclusions reached below? They certainly did not do their due diligence and find out the truth, because if they did they would not have targeted me - once again.

Maybe it's because they just don't want me there and are looking for ways to shut me down? If it is merely because I'm "not from here," that excuse is really old - I'm a journalist representing plenty of Kahnawa'kehró:non who want to know what's going on at these meetings - so this exclusionary tactic makes no sense.

Especially after I've been covering meetings for seven years and only within the last few months have I been shut out - once in September and apparently from now on.

At least try to hide your bias, MCK.

Apparently my ability to attend future meetings was revoked unanimously by all 12 chiefs in a meeting on March 16, 2015. I wonder if they double-checked my Twitter feed to see if their accusa-



tions were correct - or if they were just going along with hearsay.

The reason? The letter reads, in part:

"We became aware that you posted the entire March 10th, 2015, Winter Community Meeting via "Twitter". You have many followers on your Twitter feed, including numerous external contacts. While the Kahnawà:ke Community Meeting is for the purposes of updating the community of Kahnawà:ke, you have failed to respect the guidelines for media coverage regarding the consultations. For this reason, your attendance at Kahnawà:ke Community Meetings is no longer permitted."

I'm a fair person and I take things for what they are worth, but there are a few big mistakes

in this letter that you, the reader, should know about.

First, thanks, MCK, for thinking I was fast enough to tweet the "entire" community meeting. That's just not possible on an iPhone 4S. Maybe one of the chiefs can type that fast, but I highly doubt it.

Second, the things I tweeted, which were supposedly "confidential" were not, in fact....well....confidential at all.

If the Council wants to have confidential talks, and they rely on those present, who also tweet, Facebook, talk to people - including outsiders - about "confidential public meetings," then either they don't know what confidential means or they are living in a dream world.

What if, say, 10 others tweet-

ed about the PUBLIC reveal of Seigneury issues? Would they also be banned from future meetings? I highly doubt it. Those people would not take that lightly and it would turn into a much bigger fiasco than this shortsighted issue.

What it boils down to is they needed to find a way to shut me down. Bottom line. Probably because I'm one of the only media people who call them out when they make mistakes.

Like good leaders, they wanted to "make me pay" for speaking the truth and standing up for those who, at times, have opposing views.

The MCK released the following "guidelines" for media on December 4, 2014, as if the entire negotiation process will implode if certain content were leaked:

"Regarding information on SSSL Consultations, the MCK requests that media:

- Limit their reporting to the general activities and status of SSSL Consultations; and,

- Refrain from reporting on any details of SSSL Consultations content (i.e: Negotiations updates, content, community positions, etc.)"

That's a pretty broad interpretation that infringes on the freedom of speech and freedom of the press. The MCK can't just say, "don't do anything" and then try to stick it to whoever does. It makes no sense and if it effects negotiations, take a stronger stance against Canada and don't simply kowtow to them at the expense of your own people.

Let's take a look at what I tweeted, specifically related to the Seigneury file, and how none of these tweets breaches any confidentiality.

There were six tweets total, which I had independent people read and give feedback on - none of whom found anything "wrong" with what I tweeted.

This is what I tweeted that night, March 10, 2015, about the SSSL, starting from first to last tweet:

"Seigneury of Sault St. Louis update: not quite ready, says MCK GC Mike Delisle."

Okay, that tweet couldn't be the reason for barring me, could it? Read on.

Another: "Community member says Seigneury negotiations are bogus, MCK are incorporated Indians, not Onkwehonwe. * #kahnpoli"

Hmmm, so far nothing "confidential" there. Unless the chiefs were pissed a community member they just don't like called them out - who obviously has no love for them.

Another tweet: "Survival School students asked excellent questions about the Seigneury

Continued on page 3

THE EASTERN DOOR

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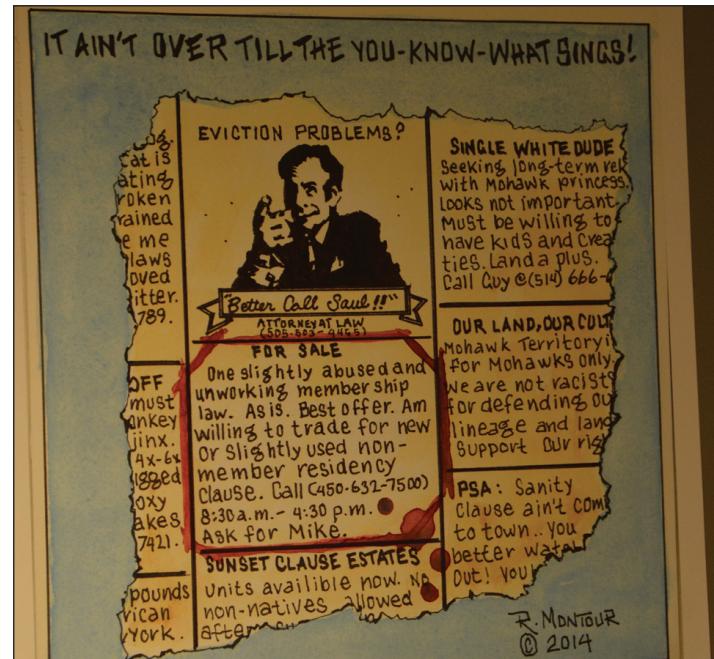
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Comic book art takes centre stage in fresh new showcase of talent



The quirky, comedic, irreverent, sardonic, and all-out brilliant work of some of Kahnawake's top comic book artists is on display at the cultural centre until May. Enter and enjoy.

DANIEL J. ROWE
THE EASTERN DOOR

A last supper featuring the cast of Transformers, a university semester chronicled in four frames, a couple images mocking Stephen Harper and/or Shawn Atleo, and the fabulous Wendy are just a few of the pieces featured in the new exhibit featured at the Kanienkehá:ka Onkwawén:na Raotitióhkwa Language and Cultural Center's main gallery in the Kahnawake Comic/Cartoon Art Exhibition, running until May 2.

The work of Konwennéhon Marion Delaronde, Teiowi:sonte Tommy Deer, Suzie McGregor, Darian Jacobs, Walter Scott, Ross Montour and Kanerahtenhá:wa Whyte ranges from cheeky to cheerful on the walls of the KOR, and exemplify the

vibrant and growing collection of comic book artists in the community.

Eastern Door cartoonist Darian Jacobs is one such artist and draws inspiration from daily life comics, such as Zits, Archie and FoxTrot.

"I love those comics (FoxTrot). I have three books of the compilation of the work," she said at the show's opening night Wednesday.

Jacobs admitted that she does her work in private, sends it into the paper and then is done with it.

"I don't even look at my work in the paper," she said with a charming smile. "I get very self-conscious. Coming here tonight, I was really nervous. I try not to think about the fact that people are looking at it."

She was excited to be part of the com-

munity of comic book savants in Kahnawake.

"Being here and seeing the other people that do this stuff or their work or for fun, it's really interesting. It's cool to know that there are other people in town that are doing this," said Jacobs.

Delaronde said she was happy to be one of the artists featured, and was impressed that the exhibit showcased four female artists each with their own quirky style.

"I'm a big supporter of the quirk," said puppet master, filmmaker and artist. "Everybody's tuned into something. Some people are more political, some are really zoning in on certain aspects of society, and some are just sort of having an easy-going humour about them. It's nice."

The exhibit includes comic book strips (Jacobs, Delaronde, McGregor

and Scott), editorial cartoons (Whyte and Montour) and art from the Transformers comic books (Deer).

While some like Ross and Whyte focus on political issues of the day for the newspapers *Iori:wase* and *The Eastern Door* respectfully, Delaronde and Jacobs tend to chose subject matter based on one central theme: will it make me laugh?

"It has always been mainly to entertain myself," said Delaronde. "I just think a lot of things are really funny."

"Mostly my ideas come from cheesy jokes and puns I really like, and a lot of every day life stuff that happens," said Jacobs. "You just exaggerate stuff and leave out details."

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Contest searches for keen beaders as part of Cultural Awareness

JESSICA DEER
THE EASTERN DOOR

The craft of making Iroquois-style moccasins is something that requires a pattern, leather, beads, thread, and a lot of patience.

Kahnawake's beaders will have the opportunity to showcase their hard work and patience for the craft by entering a contest sponsored by Tewatohnhi:saktha for Kanien'kehá:ka Onkwawén:na Raotitióhkwa Language and Cultural Center's Cultural Awareness Month.

"I thought that would be something the community would be interested in because there are so many people who are talented and they make such beautiful work," said Lisa Lahache, PR/communications officer at Tewatohnhi:saktha.

"There's really no way that they can get recognized or get recognized for how wonderful their work is. This will allow people to see, in one place, all the entrants' work."

This is the first time the local organization is participating in Cultural Awareness Month. "In the past, we never really participated because we always tried to make a link between economic develop-



Kanien'kehá:ka Onkwawén:na Raotitióhkwa Language and Cultural Center held an exhibition featuring Iroquois-style moccasins made by students of Merit Cross last year.

ment and cultural awareness and I guess it was too much of a stretch," said Lahache.

Pictures of all the moccasins entered in the contest will be featured on Tewatohnhi:saktha's website and Facebook page. "I'm sure there's more people who don't show their work on social media or

that they've been working on, but haven't had a chance to finish, for this contest, they have a couple of weeks to do it," said Lahache.

Registration costs \$25 per entry. "Anything beyond the cost of prizes and promotion is going to be donated to the cultural centre. We're not going to be making anything off of it, even though there's a \$25 registration fee - that's purely for the cultural centre," said Lahache.

Three of the best moccasins will be selected by a panel of judges at the end of the month. "The first prize is \$200. The second is \$150 and the third is \$100. We have a youth category for people ages 17 and under and that's \$100. People aged 17 and under can register in the youth category or they can register in the adult category, it is up to them," said Lahache.

Kahnawake'kehá:ka Onkwawén:na Raotitióhkwa Language and Cultural Center held an exhibition featuring Iroquois-style moccasins made by students of Merit Cross last year.

wherever. There's bound to be talent out there that we haven't even seen yet," said Lahache.

The contest opened on Wednesday and runs until April 22. "I have the registration for two weeks just to allow people, like me, who start a project and then put it aside. If anybody wants to pull out a proj-

fighting. Keep going.

Third to last tweet: "On a scale of one to ten of how far Seigneur negotiations are, Mike Delisle says 6 or 7. #kahnpoli."

Oh wait a minute, that tweet revealed quite a bit of...no it didn't.

Second to last tweet: "What will happen with Kahnawake land if Seigneur goes though? Nothing, says Mike Delisle. #kahnpoli."

Nothing is right, Mike. That's what that tweet was. Nothing.

Last tweet on the Seigneur:

"Can Cote Ste. Catherine beach be part of Seigneur - Mike Delisle says yes, including free access to water. #kahnpoli."

That tweet wasn't even part of official negotiations and was just, in fact, a community member asking a question.

Limiting free speech much?

The truth is nothing "sensitive" was revealed in ANY of those tweets, but the 12 MCK chiefs chose to ban me.

With a council so hell-bent on con-

trolling my right as a journalist to report to you, the community, it will be interesting to see how the people vote come July.

There are definitely some MCK chiefs who are on their way out, who maybe, just maybe, if they had the ability to see the larger picture would not be looking for a job after the next election.

But that's a lot to ask from a council who has once again failed to do its due diligence and chooses instead to base serious assumptions and actions on rumour.

Editorial

Continued from page 2

over five separate meetings, says MCK chief Zachary-Deom. #kahnpoli"

Still nothing secretive.

Another tweet: "Any type of physical action to push Seigneur claim means negotiations will stop, says grand chief. #kahnpoli."

That seems pretty straightforward. No