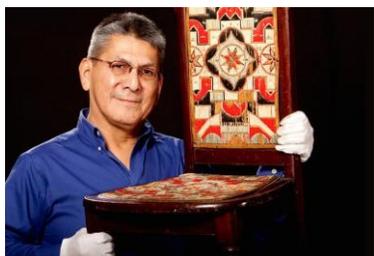




Four Circles of Life: Earth, Air, Water and Fire
Learning Mi'kmaq Perspectives
to Protect our Environment for Future Generations

The Nova Scotia Environmental Network, the Peace and Friendship Alliance and the Halifax Central Library present four talking circle sessions led by four esteemed Mi'kmaq teachers to build right relationships. The traditional Native American non-hierarchical way to solve problems is to allow people to express honestly from the heart. In turn, holding a special object, each may speak on the topic introduced, in this context, by the Mi'kmaq teacher, or pass without speaking. When everyone has spoken as many times as they wish, the teacher ends the circle.



Earth Element October 3rd

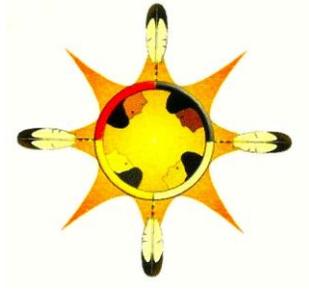
Roger J. Lewis, the Nova Scotia Museum's Curator of Ethnology received his B.A. (Anthropology) from Saint Mary's University and his M.A. from Memorial University (in Pre-contact Mi'kmaq Cultural Landscape and Resource Use). For the past number of years he has been working closely with Mi'kmaq communities to record important ethnographic information and stories.

Ta'n Weji-sqalia'teik, the Mi'kmaq exclusive form, "from where we sprouted" (from this land much like a plant does) expresses the dynamic relationship between Mi'kmaq and their ancestral landscape." Prior to European contact, the long tenure of human occupation activity, from 13,500 years (*Sagiwe'kL'nuk* - Ancient Ones) to (*Kiskukewe'k L'nuk* - Today's People), the Mi'kmaq, living along all 42 principal rivers (and boundary landscapes) in this province comprises the vehicle through which Mi'kmaq culture and history was and continues to be transmitted.



Air Element October 26th

A member of the Millbrook Mi'kmaq Community in Truro, Nova Scotia, Catherine Martin, B.A., Theatre Arts, Dalhousie University, M. Ed., focus on Media Literacy, Mount Saint Vincent University, is an independent producer, director, writer, facilitator, communications consultant, drummer and the first woman Mi'kmaq filmmaker from the Atlantic Region. Martin will speak on the significance, in Mi'kmaq teachings, of elements in air—the sky, the stars, the moon, the ocean tides and the wind—, and share traditional stories and knowledge learned from others along her journey. As well, the importance of protecting the air we breathe in order to ensure we continue to survive on this planet and how interconnected we all are will be central to the teachings featured.



Water Element November 28

Dorene Bernard, MSW, is a grassroots grandmother and survivor of the residential school, water walker and water protector. She works to promote her culture and Treaty Rights to protect the water and our Mother Earth and address environmental racism in Mi'kmaqi. She is currently the Coady Chair on Social Justice 2017.

Water is Sacred! Water is Life! You are made of water and you cannot live without water. We will speak about our connection to the water and see the water as our Nokomaq (relation) and how we are all connected. We will learn about our relationship with water, speak to the water, sing to the water, heal the water, and protect the water, so that our next 7 generations can live.



Fire (Sun) Element (Date to be announced)

In 1971, Joe Michael began learning the traditional knowledge of the Fire keeper teaching and many other Mi'kmaq ritual and ceremonial teachings of his late Elder, Noel Knockwood, Grand Captain of the Grand Council. The power of the lineage of Mi'kmaq teachings' Michael relates Knockwood and another elder's ceremonially lifting of the curse on the Angus L. Macdonald Bridge, the third erected across Halifax Harbour "Narrows" following the fall of the previous two. A metal coin in a basket, given to him long ago was made when Christ was only ten years old, a true testimony the person came from Asia. He will hold the eagle feather, to make this statement again in person in the circle

The fire is an important element of life, not only for warmth to survive in the cold, but to survive in our daily life, keeping the fire alive within ourselves, not destroying the pathways, using it only for the betterment of life--for our people and for the youth—our leaders of tomorrow. My elder's teaching was to show respect for the sun during each day's beginning, when the sun is about to give light, by performing our "Sun Rise Ceremony."