



**PUBLISHER:**  
Dr. Donald M. Julien O.N.S.

**EDITOR:**  
Tim Bernard

**MANAGER:**  
Carol Busby

**ADMIN. SUPPORT:**  
Kelsey Gloade

**MARKETING:**  
Tim Bernard

**PREPRESS TECHNICIAN:**  
Mise'l John Prosper

**GRAPHIC ARTISTS:**  
Stephen Logan  
Evangeline Dedam

**CONTRIBUTING WRITERS**

- & PHOTOGRAPHERS:**
- George Paul
  - Atlantic Policy Congress
  - Clifford Paul
  - Assembly of First Nations
  - KMKNO
  - Eskasoni First Nation

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P.O. Box 1590,  
Truro, NS B2N 5V3  
Phone: (902) 895-2038  
Fax: (902) 895-3030  
Email: news@easternwoodland.ca

# Paqtnkek Honours Sisters In Spirit & Revitalizes Matriarchal Traditions

**Paqtnkek** – About 80 Paqtnkek community members and friends gathered on Sunday, October 4, 2015 to march in honour of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and to share matriarchal traditions with one another. “In memory of our missing and murdered women, the revitalization of our culture – of our matriarchal traditions – is essential”, Paqtnkek Health Centre Director Juliana Julian noted.

Andrea Currie and We'koqma'qwiska, Women of Waycobah, led the march with their powerful singing and drumming. Elder Robert “Bobby” Pictou opened with a prayer. Elder Wilma Simon facilitated a candle lighting ceremony for the missing and murdered Aboriginal women and men local to the area. Nova Scotia Native Women's Association Representative Molly Peters spoke about



**A potluck feast was held and food and conversation were shared.**

the importance of community in addressing violence and commented on the innovative Responding to and Preventing Sexual Violence Project in Paqtnkek.

Community members

were asked: “What matriarchal traditions do you honour and want to revitalize?” They noted: Women's roles as storytellers; as knowledge keepers; as teachers of respect to all living beings and things; as decision makers; as caregivers and mothers.

Chief PJ Prosper remarked on the importance of women in First Nation communities: “Women are

like the roots of a tree. They nourish us, protect us, and provide us with never-ending love. They have the right to feel safe in all our communities. They are the very backbone of our nation.” ☺