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Saskatchewan's Big River First Nation To Receive Tiny House For Homeless Man

CP | By Bryn Levy, CKOM

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**THE CANADIAN PRESS**

BIG RIVER, Sask. — A tiny house carrying big expectations is headed to the Big River First Nation in Saskatchewan.

The 16-foot by eight-foot home will provide shelter for a previously homeless man living in the community. It was built in Winnipeg by [Mini Homes of Manitoba](#).

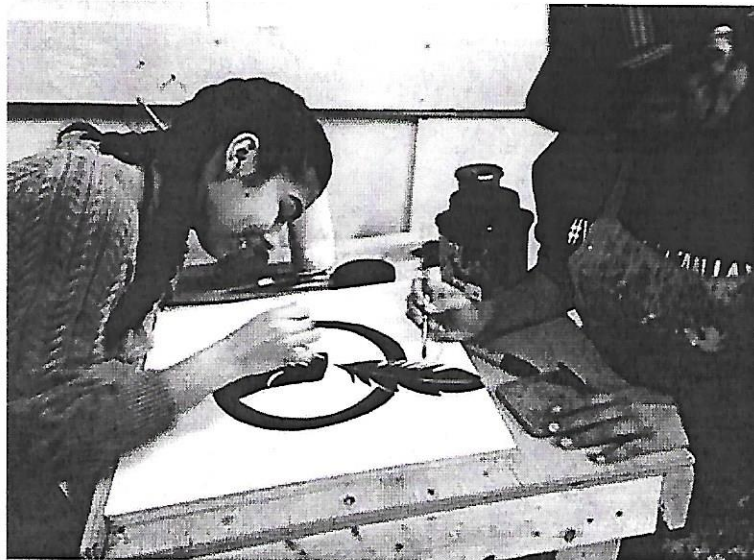
Raven Sinclair, an associate professor of Social Work at the University of Regina, explained that [the driving force](#) behind the project came from Idle No More co-founder Sylvia McAdam.



One House Many Nations Campaign

about 2 months ago

Indigenous Chilean artist Wanda Luna works on an Idle No More logo with a young artist McKenzie Anderson from Winnipeg. The family requested that an INM logo be painted on the house!



Sylvia McAdam Saysewahum

University of Saskatchewan · 20 December 2015 ·

Indigenous young artist being mentored by an amazing artist Wanda Luna to paint an Idle No More logo that will be on the mini-home.

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Sinclair explained that McAdam hails from the Big River First Nation. Seeing some of the poor housing conditions in her community, she began the One House, Many Nations campaign.

The group was able to cover the \$22,000 cost of the build, with Sinclair saying a large portion of the money came in small contributions between \$5 and \$25.

Darrell Manuliak with Mini Homes of Manitoba said he and partner Anita Munn donated their time on the project, which took a little over three weeks of 10-hour days.

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"I wanted to make sure it was really warm and safe; safe was really important."

He said a lot of thought went into designing the house for northern Saskatchewan, without having to hook up a lot of services.

To that end, he said the home includes a composting toilet, solar panels and a fireplace that also generates electricity. Although a fraction of the size of an average house, the micro-home still includes nine windows, allowing natural light to flood in during the day and reducing the need for electricity.

"I wanted to make sure it was cozy," he said. "I wanted to make sure it was really warm and safe; safe was really important. You hear a lot about fires on reserves with houses and I wanted to make sure this house had the proper electrical done by a professional red-seal electrician."

Manuliak added that while the home was largely made of reclaimed pine, he took care to keep flammable materials and plastics out of building the interior.

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"The idea is to raise awareness of the situation."

In the long run, he said he's hoping to join with band councils to begin teaching communities how to build their own mini-homes.

Sinclair said that while the project will provide for the immediate needs of a homeless individual, it's also a way to call attention to the deplorable housing conditions on reserves across Canada.

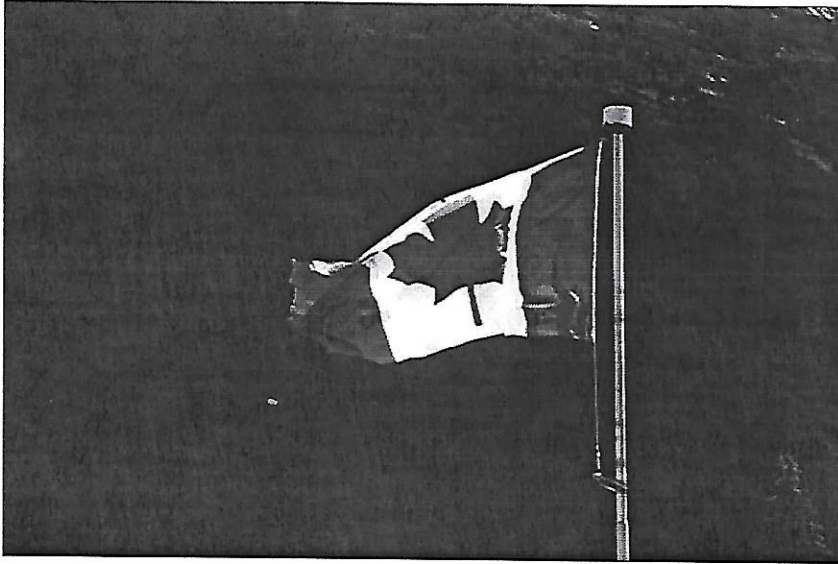
"The idea is to raise awareness of the situation," she said. "We signed treaties and so we have rights to equitable funding for housing in our communities. I mean, if the same housing conditions existed in the cities, there would be a huge uproar, right?"

(CKOM)

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