IIPT news
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International Institute for Peace through Tourism – Travel Promotes Peace – iipt.org –

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR, BEA BRODA

As we bid adieu to 2025, I hope that many of us are poised to usher in 2026 with a renewed sense of hope and optimism for the world. In a time when the imperative for peace and sustainability has never been more pressing, our planet's distress signals – exacerbated by climate change – demand our collective attention. The ravages of Hurricane Melissa, which ravaged Jamaica and impacted our own Diana McIntyre-Pike, Caribbean Chapter President, underscore the urgent need for global solidarity.

In this final newsletter of the year, we'll be sharing a link to updates on the devastating effects of the hurricane and forthcoming initiatives to support the resilient Jamaican communities. We'll also be celebrating the appointment of Chief Frank Antoine as the new Chair of WINTA (World Indigenous Tourism Alliance), following the passing of the esteemed Ben Sherman. I had the pleasure of speaking with Chief Antoine, and I'm delighted to report that he's eager to continue Ben's legacy and foster a strong partnership with IIPT.

As we reflect on the memories and milestones of 2025, I'm reminded of the indelible mark Ben left on our organization and the global community. I'm confident that Chief Frank will carry the torch forward with distinction. As we embark on this journey into the new year, I extend my warmest wishes to all, and I look forward to continuing our collective efforts to create a brighter future for all.

In this issue, you'll also find inspiring stories, insightful words from our resident experts, and a roundup of the latest news and developments. May the coming year bring us closer to a more harmonious and sustainable world.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT, AJAY PRAKASH

Dear IIPT Family and Friends,

2026 will mark 40 years since the inception of IIPT and the birth of Louis D’Amore’s remarkable dream: that tourism can be a genuine force for global peace. For four decades, the International Institute for Peace through Tourism has championed a simple yet transformative belief — that every journey carries the potential to foster understanding, compassion and Peace.

Since 1986, IIPT has inspired a worldwide community of visionaries, leaders who view travel not as escape, but as connection; not as consumption, but as contribution. Together, we have shown that tourism can serve as a bridge - linking cultures, nurturing empathy and helping to heal our planet.

As the world stands at a critical crossroads, it is time for us to come together once again - to honour our shared legacy and to reimagine the future of travel. In the second half of 2026, we will convene a Global Summit to celebrate Lou's enduring legacy and to build boldly upon it, acknowledging both the challenges ahead and the immense promise that tourism holds.

We anticipate the participation of leaders from governments, international tourism organizations, global corporations, academia, civil society, and all who believe in the power of tourism as a force for Good. This landmark Summit will aim to:

• Reignite the founding vision of tourism as a bridge between cultures, nations, and peoples

• Celebrate 40 years of IIPT's contributions and define a bold, forward-looking roadmap for the next 40

• Foster dialogue among global leaders on how tourism can meaningfully advance the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the 2030 Agenda.

More details will follow soon. We deeply value your presence at this milestone gathering, and we warmly welcome any support you can offer in helping us bring this Summit to life.

As we enter the Holiday Season, I hope and pray that the New Year brings empathy, understanding, and acceptance - the essential foundations of Peace.

Best regards, Ajay Prakash President: IIPT



INTRODUCING CHIEF FRANK ANTOINE - Chief Bonaparte First Nation
CHAIR OF WINTA

The minute I started speaking with Chief Frank Antoine, I could tell why he had been hand-picked by Ben Sherman to serve as the Chair of WINTA. One thing I recall about

Ben was his approachability and his directness, and this friendly man seems to embody much of Ben's beautiful spirit.

Here are some of the highlights of our conversation, serving to better acquaint you with someone who loves the ideals of IIPT and can communicate them through the filter of his indigenous heritage. We spoke for over an hour, and the following only represents around ten minutes of that conversation! I will work on transcribing the rest of it and making it available in a future newsletter. In the meantime, some excerpts from the introductory conversation:



"It was in 2016, I think, when I met Ben. Ben was speaking after me at a conference and I got up and all of these teachers were sitting in the front like all the instructors, like all the adults were sitting, in the front row, and all the youth were sitting in the back and I kind of sat there. I said, I didn't come here to speak to older people. I come here to speak to students. So I turned around, looked at all of the older people, said, "You know, you guys are adults, can you guys move back to the back row and let the youth move forward?" Ben thought that was the most impressive thing he's ever seen. Really? All the students gathered in front. And they're all like university students, but they were in awe of what I was talking about. And I still have really deep relationships with some of them because they have graduated now and are doing their thing.

After I was done, Ben came up to me and looked right at me and says, "I would like you to be on the winter board." And I looked at him, "What is that?" He says, "I'll be doing

my presentation here in about half an hour." I am just to listen. So I listened to him and I was so intrigued at what he was doing. I'm like, "Wow." you know, I hate to say it, but a lot of people who saw me and saw Ben, there's a video that I had done with Ben. I got up and talked and Ben talked and John Barrett talked, but that was one of my first opportunities. I got to go speak with Ben around the world.

Something that stuck in my mind the last time I had Ben come and speak at my convention, which was less than a year before he passed away. You know there's always this controversy of what do you call indigenous people - are they first nations, are they Indian, are they, you know, what are we supposed to call them and the first thing he said is “well ask them what tribe they're from that's who they are.”

I am from the Shuswap nation. Oh, okay. So, be look down at your feet right now. Cross your foot over. Put your one foot and cross it over. Are you doing that? Yeah. We're from the shoe swap nation. I'll never forget that. You'll never forget. You cross your foot over your shoe. So, that was a corny joke that these two New York people were sharing with me one day when I was doing tours way back when. Well, Ben was a little annoyed because he thought that, you know, why lump everyone? Ask them where they're from, what they're from, and then that's who they are. So I thought that was kind of clever.

I asked Chief Antoine what his thoughts were on the international institute for peace through tourism, telling him jokingly that he kind of inherited us with the job since replacing Ben. I wondered what similar goals he might have that way, like Ben’s objectives or his own?

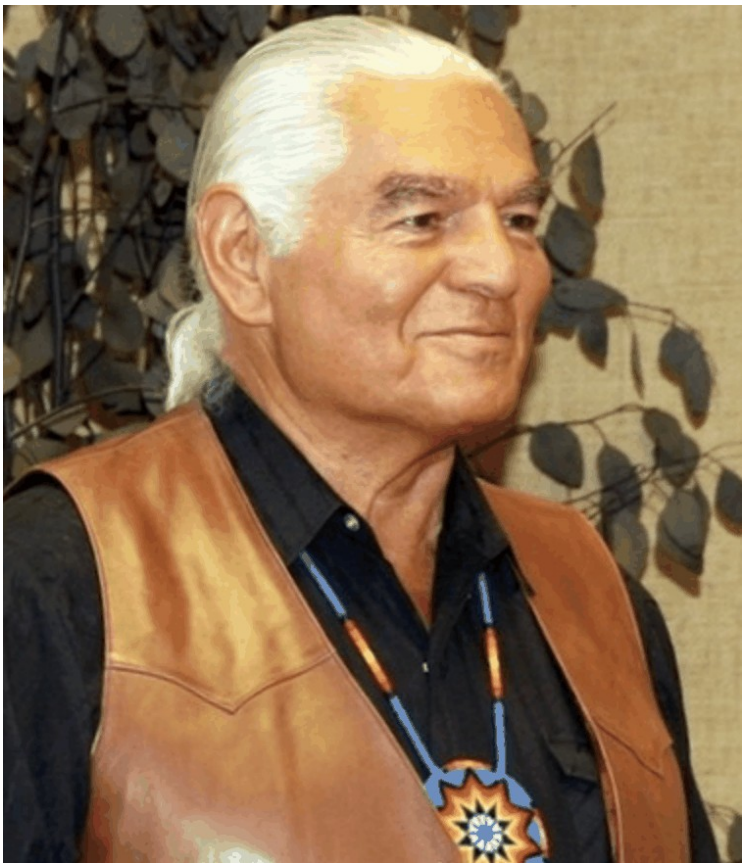
I guess for me it's self-awareness that we all kind of go after growing into this earth, right? Like walking this earth. Self-awareness is paying attention to what you want to learn and where you want to go. Sometimes you stumble across things. Sometimes you want to go find things and it's never what you expected, right? And for me, I never expected this to be. It was just that I had something to offer and Ben saw that and I wouldn't say he sought me out, but I kind of stumbled on his lap, and he just one day actually made me the vice chair. He said he saw himself in me, is what he told me. Same demeanor, same joke, laughter, seriousness. It had a place. Like our culture has a place and it always was. We call it Turtle Island. You know, in North America and, so like you say, we all are related, but we all come from different homes. And that's something like what Ben's sharing is, we all have to identify ourselves because our land of origin is where we come from and is how we identify ourselves.

We’re either by the lakes, by the mountains, by the sea, wherever you live is your DNA basically. And that's something Ben and I always chatted about. And you know, he saw the world and he gave me the opportunity to see the world. And it was sad the day you know when I found out he left, but I knew he was sick. And you know what he once told me - Frank, just keep doing what you're doing. Don't change who you are and don't follow other systems. Create your own with the people you are in with. And he said I’ve got good people in there. and he says just listen to them because a lot a lot of them are

60 - 65 plus. He says whatever you do don't lose that, but also I told Ben that the difference is that the world evolves with the next generation – they come in with different ideals, different ways of doing things yeah and that's what's happening now because he's kept that board together, but I don't want to lose that board because it has a purpose you know, but the work itself is too much now for some of them because they're out of touch of what's going on because they're just living in their simple life, not caring what's going on around them.

But when the world hits them, they're like, "Wow, I didn't expect that." So again, we all have our place and time to do things. And I guess for me now is when he left last year, last April when we had our world indigenous tourism summit , that's when the board decided to move me into the chair position because I was the vice chair but they also said it wasn't just because of the board system that we were following. He says they said that I was ready to take over. And I did, you know, I did right away in June when Ben passed away last spring. I went to Vanuatu. It was my first real time I was out there as the chair and I was in Vanuatu doing the Asia-Pacific regenerative tourism symposium.

When I stood in Ben's shoes, it was like everybody smiled because I wore, as you see, a vest, an indigenous vest. I have long hair. I braid my hair. It was like I was like a protege to him, I guess, at a young age. Ben didn't look like he aged at all. No. No. He stayed the same forever. That's true. Yeah. Yeah. And I'm the same way. I'm kind of preserved, too. I tell them I'm 60, but I don't look 60. Black hair. I don't have gray hair in my hair yet. And that's excellent. So that's a reflection of your lifestyle, right?



I could talk about the bees. I can talk about the deer. I can talk about anything you want at the end of the day. We have inter-Tribals and pow wows and it's probably the most powerful for our area because we have a lot of communities that come to partake. I really want it to be a place where people gather. At the end of the day, I look at it as a Gathering of the Nations because that's kind of where it sits with us. I said that's three nations coming together here and it's gathering our nations. It has direct origin and I can talk about that and you guys have got to be proud of where we come from because then we're collective. Don't worry about what goes on in another piece of this world when we have work in our own world to do.

It's all thanks to Ben for allowing me to be in a circle where I can share these stories with the local people and make them understand that no, you're not different. No, you're not. You don't have to have the biggest and brightest lights or biggest building to show who you are. You just have to be you at the end of the day. And we're hoping to share all that with you, too.

Chief Frank’s recommended link to “listening to the wind”
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7fIhnhIO91c

OF INTEREST

Timothy Marshall sent along a link from Business Insider Africa, which is filled with positive news about Africa's impressive numbers in tourism growth:

https://africa.businessinsider.com/local/lifestyle/africa-records-fastest-tourism-growth-globally-in-2025/t4xqy6x



Also from Timothy, a report on hotels that are doing things the right way:

These High-End Hotels Are Going Green Without Losing The Glamour
These luxury hotels prove that sustainability can becoming a core part of property development and operations and that comfort and responsibility can evolve together.

Read in Forbes: https://apple.news/AKTl9k1fMShm3k1poFJwV2Q



HURRICANE MELISSA BATTERS JAMAICA

The next report link comes from Diana McIntyre Pike regarding the devastating effects of Hurricane Melissa. Diana will send us more details soon on how we can help.

Rise Jamaica Rise After Melissa and Scenes of Destruction

https://eturbonews.com/rise-jamaica-rise-after-melissa-and-scenes-of-destruction/

COUNTRYSTYLE COMMUNITY TOURISM NETWORK (CCTN)

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NEWS FROM AUSTRALIA

Gail Parsonage, President of the Australian Chapter, sent word of a successful meeting with the UNAA:

The UNAA - United Nations Australia Association Conference, celebrated their 80 Anniversary at a conference which featured a great lineup of speakers, including Ms Penny Wong, Foreign Affairs Minister, and acting Prime Minister of Australia, as well as Ambassadors, and high-level people from many disciplines.

Attached are photos of one of the keynote speakers, Steve Killelea, Founder & Executive Chairman of IEP - Institute for Economics & Peace and Dr Donnell Davis, National President of UNAA - United Nations Australia Association.





From everyone at IIPT, here’s wishing you much joy in the holiday season, with safe and happy, peace-generating travels in 2026 and beyond!



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