

5MEMBER'S STATEMENT – GREAT SLAVE – MARCH 5, 2009

**TREE OF PEACE FRIENDSHIP CENTRE**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

This afternoon I'd like to highlight the contributions the Tree of Peace Friendship Centre makes to Yellowknife and the Northwest Territories.

Since its incorporation in 1970, the Tree of Peace has worked to improve the quality of life for aboriginal peoples in Yellowknife, and facilitate self-determined social, health, educational, recreational and cultural programs.

The Tree of Peace Friendship Centre is a non-profit, charitable organization. Its 13 full-time employees are committed to developing and delivering programs in response to community needs. The Community Wellness Program focuses on addictions, providing awareness and preventative functions as well as assessments, counselling, referrals and aftercare. 5 Community Wellness workers conduct support groups, and home, hospital and street visits on a daily basis. They provide an adult education program which gives adult learners the opportunity to complete academic upgrading and prepare for GED exams.

The Tree of Peace posts job opportunities in their office, and the Outreach Employment Program assists clients with resume writing, career counselling, and offers information on education and apprenticeship opportunities. Through its year-round Community Assistance program, the Tree of Peace helps elders fill out application forms for fuel subsidies or pension plans offers interpreting and letter writing services. Between

February and April, clients can get assistance filing their personal income tax returns.

Mr. Speaker, the Tree of Peace makes a special effort to reach out to youth. Its Urban Multipurpose Aboriginal Youth Committee offers addictions counselling and an elders-youth healing circle. This assists youth with employment and education needs. Every year the Tree of Peace offers 4-6 youth the opportunity to attend the Dreamcatcher's Conference in Edmonton, Alberta, and awards two \$500.00 Linda Grey Memorial scholarships to aboriginal students entering a post-secondary institution.

Mr. Speaker, the Tree of Peace Friendship Centre has been a meeting place in our community for nearly 40 years. Mr Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to encourage Members of this Assembly and the public to applaud the Tree of Peace for their hard work and dedication. Their services make a difference and help empower the next generation.

Thank you Mr. Speaker.