

On Reconciliation

by ALLAN THOMPSON

What does reconciliation mean and what role can local government play in healing our nation?

The Town of Caledon is located on the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nations.

In 2018 I presented Chief Stacey Laforme with a Wampum Belt, commissioned to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the treaty of 1818 and as a symbol of our renewed friendship and relationship as co-stewards of our beautiful natural resources.

With news of the recent discoveries of unmarked graves in BC and last week with the enormity of the graves found in Saskatchewan, my first instinct was to reach out and connect with Chief Laforme.

I shared our shock and sadness and asked the Chief what we can do here in Caledon to help heal our communities and the country we care so much about.

As a first step forward, we are going to have a joint virtual, public meeting between the Town of Caledon Council and the Mississaugas of the Credit Council. It is my hope that this meeting will provide us with a better understanding and awareness of the history of our First Peoples and the challenges they continue to face.

We are also looking at how we can raise our collective voice with the Provincial and Federal governments to take more aggressive action on the recommendations of the truth and reconciliation report. That includes investigating the missing children of the residential school system many of whom are in unmarked graves.

Chief Laforme shared with me a YouTube video of him reciting one of his own powerful and moving poems about reconciliation and what it means to him. I have posted a link to it on my website: caledonmayor.ca I encourage you to take time to listen and reflect on his words.