

Katimavik kids work on native village project

par Gregg Chamberlain

Work on a life-sized replica of a traditional native village in Bourget will get a cross-Canada helping hand from the young people of Katimavik.

The Cultural Foundation Native Expressions (CFNE) has been laying the groundwork for a combined education, social recreation, and tourism project that highlights the native heritage of the Prescott-Russell area.

Katimavik has offered an assist on some of the preliminary construction work as part of its current mission to the Prescott-Russell region.

“We will be assisting in the construction of a nine-sided building,” said Lindsay Kane, Katimavik project leader. “The four days of construction will begin with us participating in a spiritual group offering to Mother Earth.”

Katimavik is a Canadian government program that focuses on providing youth with a chance to explore their own country, foster cross-cultural friendships, and also provide assistance on a variety of community projects and programs.

CFNE General Director Yvan St. Jean said that part of the Katimavik work for the CFNE will include helping in setting a traditional council ring, which is critical for the official start of the heritage village project.

“We need it (council ring) to do the blessing ceremony,” St-Jean said. “This ring will symbolize our aboriginal cultures for the next year.”

The Katimavik volunteers, local dignitaries and representatives for the provincial and federal governments, and the general public are invited to observe the blessing ceremony and take part in a picnic celebration of the heritage project, which is scheduled for Sunday afternoon, July 30.

St-Jean is contacting elders from various First Nations groups within Ontario and Québec to attend to conduct the blessing ceremony.