



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**NOMINEES ANNOUNCED FOR THE
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES CHOICE MUSIC AWARDS**

Manitoba Lotteries Returns as Presenting Sponsor

Winnipeg MB (August 20, 2009) -- **Manito Ahbee: A Festival For All Nations** held a press conference today to announce the nominees for the 4th annual Aboriginal Peoples Choice Music Awards.

The **Aboriginal Peoples Choice Music Awards (APCMA's)** are given out in Winnipeg over two nights. APTN First Night Awards take place **Thursday, November 5th** at McPhillips Station Casino, with the Awards gala happening **Friday, November 6th** at MTS Centre. These two spectacular evenings will feature performances by today's best Aboriginal recording artists. Friday night's awards will be broadcast live on the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN).

Manitoba Lotteries again returns as presenting sponsor of the Manito Ahbee Festival, which takes place November 4th to 8th in Winnipeg.

THE NOMINATION PROCESS

Online voting to select nominees took place from July 10th to August 16th. More than 34,800 votes were cast to select nominees in 24 categories, with results tabulated by Meyers Norris Penny. Submissions for voting consideration were received from 134 artists representing Alberta, British Columbia, New Brunswick, Ontario, Quebec, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Nunavut, NWT, the US, and as far away as Australia.

This year's first round voting (34,859 votes) reflects 119% increase in votes (29,176) from 2008; 189% increase in votes (18,434) from 2007; and 358% increase of votes (9,729) from 2006, the inaugural year of the awards. The online voting system, which utilizes the most innovative technology, was developed by Function Four. Voters must register in order to make their selections, and 8,618 new registrations in 2009 increased the total membership to more than 21,622.

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"Once again, we received an increase in registration and voting, which shows that interest in Aboriginal music continues to grow," said Derek McCorrister, Manager of Operations for the APCMA's. "The future potential for the Aboriginal Peoples Choice Music Awards is very bright, and we couldn't be happier."

SELECTING THE WINNERS

The final round of voting to select the winners for 2009 **begins today at 11:00am CST** and ends October 1st at 11:59pm CST. Results will once again be tabulated by Meyers Norris Penny, and the winners announced November 5th and 6th. Award winners are chosen by music fans and industry stakeholders who register online. Registration for the APCMA's is free, with an easy sign-up process available on the website. www.aboriginalpeopleschoice.com

PRESENTING SPONSORS

Winston Hodgins, Manitoba Lotteries President and CEO, is pleased to announce that Manitoba Lotteries will once again be the festival's major partner. "Manitoba Lotteries is proud to return for the fourth year as Presenting Sponsor of the Manito Ahbee Festival," said Mr. Hodgins. "This festival has established itself as one of Canada's top Aboriginal tourism attractions and a world class, signature event for showcasing Aboriginal culture, music and arts."

The Honourable Andrew Swan, Minister responsible for the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation, was on hand at today's press conference to present a cheque in the amount of \$150,000 to Alan Greyeyes, Vice-Chair of Manito Ahbee Festival Incorporated. www.mlc.mb.ca

ABOUT MANITOBA LOTTERIES



Manitoba Lotteries has been actively engaged in partnering with the Aboriginal community for a number of years. An Eagle Sponsor of the 2002 North American Indigenous Games in Winnipeg, Manitoba Lotteries was recognized for their commitment to sustainable Aboriginal employment and business development in 2003, when they reached the Bronze Level in the Progressive Aboriginal Relations Program. After being recognized at the Silver Level in 2006, Manitoba Lotteries earned the distinction in 2008, of being the first Crown Corporation in Canada to achieve the Gold Level in the program. As an employment equity employer, Manitoba Lotteries is committed to the value of diversity in the workplace. Approximately 11% of Manitoba Lotteries' employees are Aboriginal.

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ABOUT MANITO AHBEE



Now in its fourth year, Manito Ahbee: A Festival For All Nations, celebrates and showcases Aboriginal music, art and culture. Manito Ahbee – which means ‘where the Creator sits’ – honours a sacred site in Manitoba’s Whiteshell Provincial Park where Aboriginal people have gathered for hundreds of years to share teachings and wisdom. There are several petroforms at this site including one shaped like a turtle that represents Turtle Island, which is another name for North America. Manito Ahbee was recognized in 2008 with Travel Manitoba’s Tourism Award in the category of Aboriginal Tourism. The Board of Governors, staff and organizers of Manito Ahbee express deep gratitude for all participants, supporters and communities who have come together to make the festival what it is today.

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2009 Manito Ahbee Festival & Aboriginal Peoples Choice Music Awards

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