

# Jay Treaty lives on: Border Crossing is the biggest in years

By Lynda Powless  
Editor

NIAGARA FALLS N.Y.-For the first time in more than 70-years the annual Border Crossing celebrations with more than 100 marchers made its way across the Rainbow Bridge Saturday.

Indian Defense League of America president Joe Rickard, said he was more than happy with the turnout. "It's the biggest we've had in recent years."

moved from the Lower Rapids Whirlpool Bridge to the Rainbow because of the high profile the Rainbow Bridge has for tourist

Rickard said the parade was

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*Bandishing signs and posters more than 100 people took part in the annual Border Crossing Celebrations organized by the Indian Defence League. But this year the march was across the Rainbow Bridge for the first time in more than 70-years. See page 12 for more photos. (Photo by Lynda Powless)*

# 71st Border Crossing

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traffic.  
 "We've sort of been pushed to the Lower Rapids Bridge over the years and our committee decided we needed to be back at the Rainbow Bridge."

Rickard said the committee had been meeting for at least six months with Canadian and American agencies to arrange the change in parade route.

Saturday's soaring hot temperatures didn't deter marchers.

They walked, pushed baby carriages and pulled wagons with children riding in them across the bridge while brandishing signs celebrating the Jay Treaty and aboriginal rights.

The parade wound through the tourist area of Niagara Falls N.Y., in front of the now closed Native American Centre for the Living Arts more commonly referred to as the "Turtle" and to a statue of Clinton Rickard, Tuscarora, Beaver clan, who launched the first border crossing event and was founder of the IDLA.

Joe Rickard, his grandson said the

bridge crossing was significant. "It continues to keep alive our belief and rights to live in either Canada or the U.S.,. That there is no border for us."

The bridge crossing was launched by his grandfather, in memory of his friend Deskah, Levi General. General became famous for his speeches and pleas to the United Nations to recognize Six Nations rights and later was banned from Canada for his protests over Canada's treatment of the Six Nations.

General lived out his life on the Tuscarora Territory at Lewiston, N.Y., and was staying in Clinton Rickard's home when he died.

"He needed medicine, but the authorities wouldn't let his medicine man cross the border. My grandfather never forgot that and said it was important that we reminded them that for us there is no border."

The event continued at Hyde Park on Pine Avenue with speeches, a vendors ally and snowsnake demonstrations, contests and a performance by the Aztec Dancers from Mexico City.



Indigenous people from both the U.S. and Canada turned out in force Saturday to take a walk across a bridge that divides the two countries, but not their lands.



Lena and Ely Rickard, Joe Rickard, Jay Claus, Keith Printup and Kurtis Printup take a moment in the sun Saturday in front of the statue of the founder of the IDLA Clinton Rickard.



Aztec Dancers, David Cervantes (left) and Daniel Guerrava, performed at the annual border crossing Saturday and thrilled a large audience with the dance. The dancers are from Mexico City and are staying in Tuscarora.



Snowsnakes in summer!



Elder Jiggy Hill got a ride at this year's Border Crossing event on the only float in the march.