

Band-HDI-Farmers clash causing community divisions

(Continued from page 4)
lease was critical," he said. "When this farming group advised that they were going to refuse to sign a lease, we were advised by other farmers that the Burtch lands could receive up to \$175 per acre. We did not put any range to the (SNFA). If the farmers told us that \$50 was what they thought was reasonable, we would make the recommendation to the council to proceed."
Jesse Porter also claimed Hazel Hill contacted SNFA secretary Ruby Jacobs to

discuss a lease. "She (Hill) gave her a pretty rough conversation on the phone about the urgency for us to sign this lease," said Porter. "Ruby stated to her that we're not in a position to sign a lease and we didn't recognize HDI. I guess it escalated a little further until she (Hill) finally hung up."
As the conversation heated up Elected chief Bill Montour called for order. "I think it's time we quit talking about the other side as the enemy," he said. "We're all people here. We're all Hau-

denosaunee."
Montour said council needs to work with the community to determine how the Burtch lands are going to come back. "It's got to be the people that make a decision on how to do this," he said.
Montour said taking Burtch back under the ATR (additions to reserve) process is not the best solution and wants to push for the land to come back under the Haldimand Treaty. "My concern is, putting it as ATR - the Minister of Indian Affairs has complete au-

thority to decide how that land can be used. You have to go back and ask permission how to use your own land. If we're going to get beyond this Indian Act, we have to look at different ways of land holdings."
Montour planned to contact Infrastructure Ontario and the Ontario Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs Monday to determine the future of the Burtch lands and to order Elliott's crew back to work. He did not provide an update on those conversations by press time.
Meanwhile, Caroline

Knight, a spokesperson for Infrastructure Ontario (IO), said no safety issues were reported to them.
"All work conducted on the site has been to Work Place Health and Safety and Construction Standards," said Knight. "No health and safety concerns have been reported to IO or its service providers to date."
She said the HDI requested everyone, including IO, leave the site until a community issue on the farming is resolved.
She said IO will continue to work with Six Nations and

the provincial Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs to complete the remediation of the property.
"The transfer of the property to Six Nations will be carried out by (the province) once the environmental remediation work is completed and necessary arrangements are in place," said Knight.
Band Council suggested hiring its own Burtch environmental monitors and holding district meetings to determine how the Burtch lands will be returned to Six Nations.