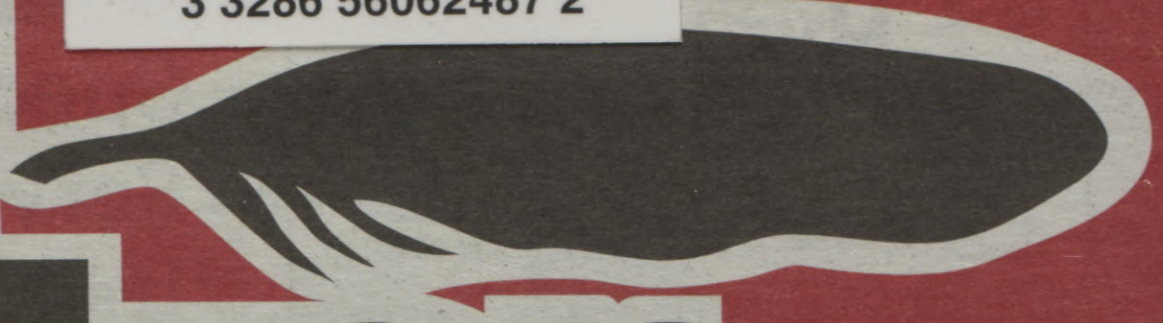




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**Idle No More is no more,
says John Kim Bell
founder of NAAF
Page 8**

**Decision changes
the legal landscape
nationwide
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**Windspeaker celebrates
30 years covering
Aboriginal news
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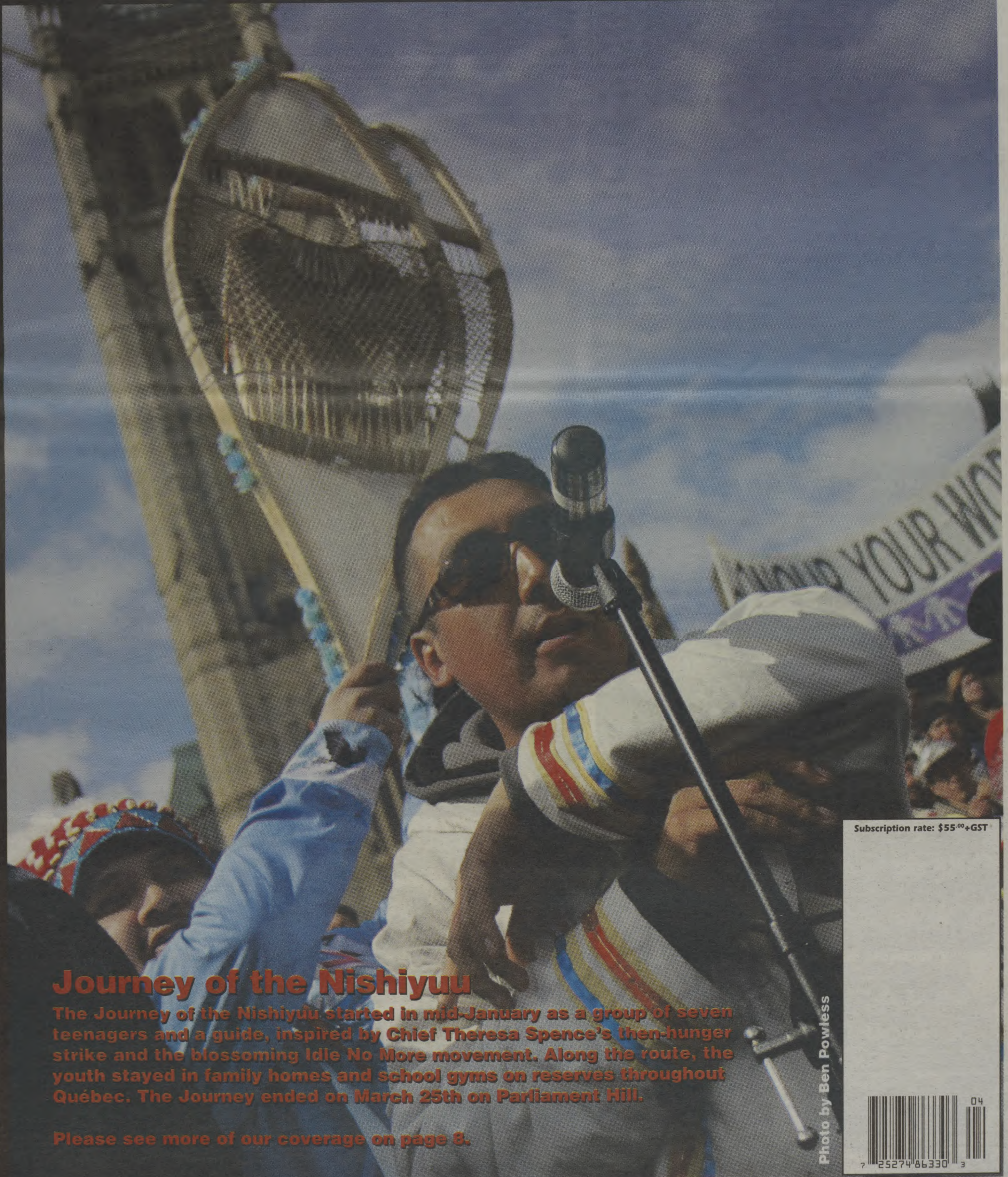
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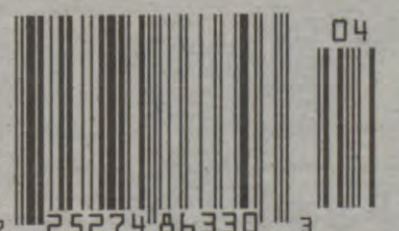
Journey of the Nishiyuu

The Journey of the Nishiyuu started in mid-January as a group of seven teenagers and a guide, inspired by Chief Theresa Spence's then-hunger strike and the blossoming Idle No More movement. Along the route, the youth stayed in family homes and school gyms on reserves throughout Québec. The Journey ended on March 25th on Parliament Hill.

Please see more of our coverage on page 8.

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Photo by Ben Powless



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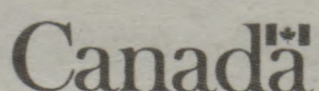


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Chiefs willing to give new minister a chance 7

Regional Chiefs for the Assembly of First Nations have expressed optimism with the appointment of the new federal minister for Aboriginal Affairs. "Anytime there's an experienced veteran Member of Parliament to be working on the national issues relative to Aboriginal issues I think it's good," said Alberta Regional Chief Cameron Alexis.

Journey of the Nishiyuu swells to hundreds after 1,600 km trek 8

From stinging minus-55C temperatures in the far-northern Cree wilderness beyond the reach of roads, to the melting woodland snows of temperate Algonquin territory, a remarkable youth journey has made its way by foot and snowshoe this past two months, 1,600 km from James Bay in Québec to Parliament Hill.

Idle No More is no more, says founder of NAAF 8

According to John Kim Bell, Idle No More is dead. He made this statement in his keynote speech at a dinner March 5 hosted by the I Do Business National Aboriginal Summit and Tradeshow at the Doubletree Hotel in Toronto.

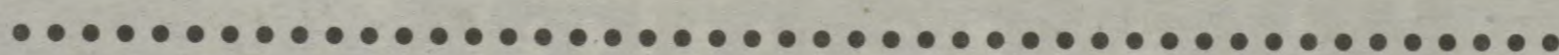
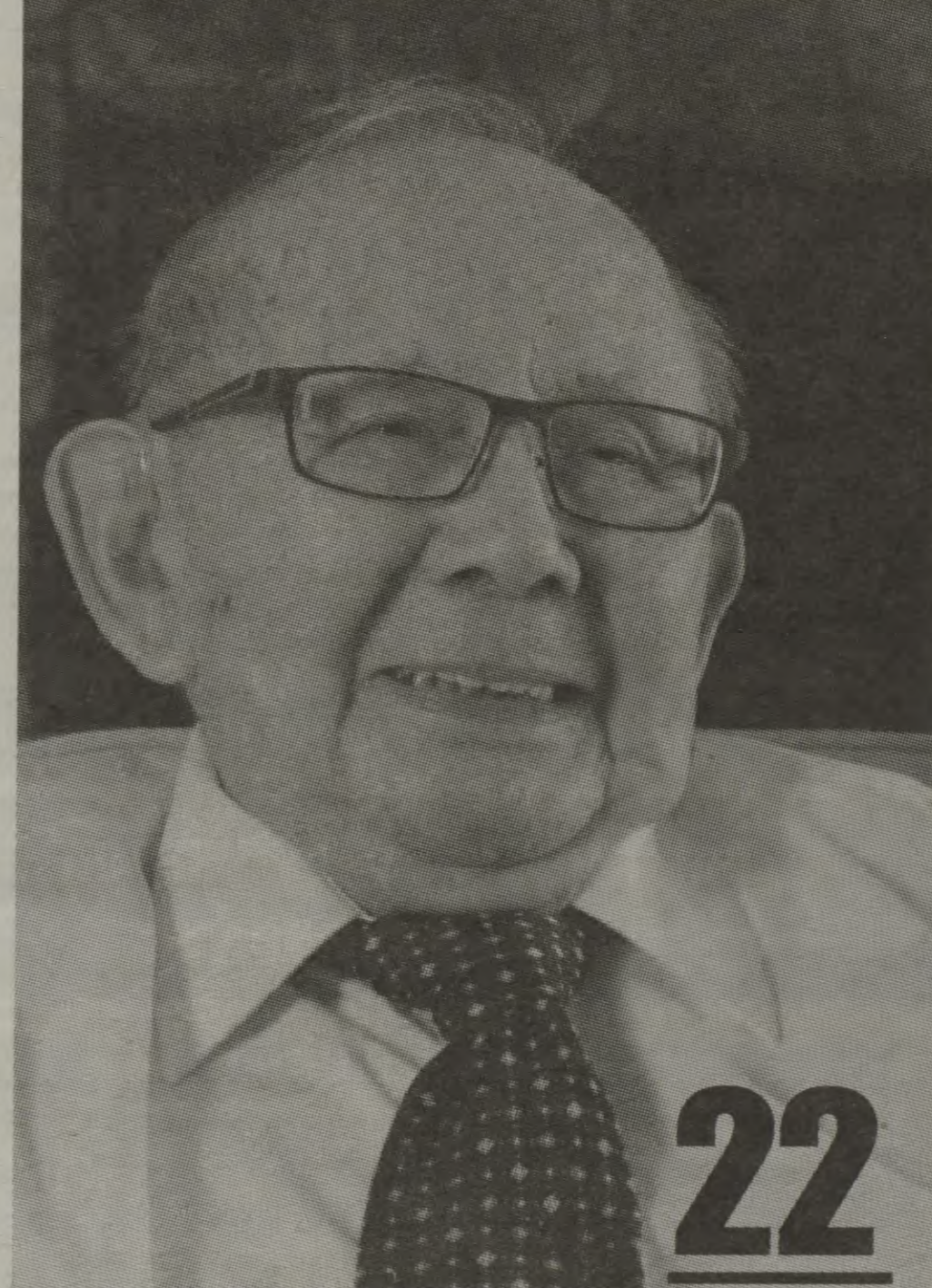
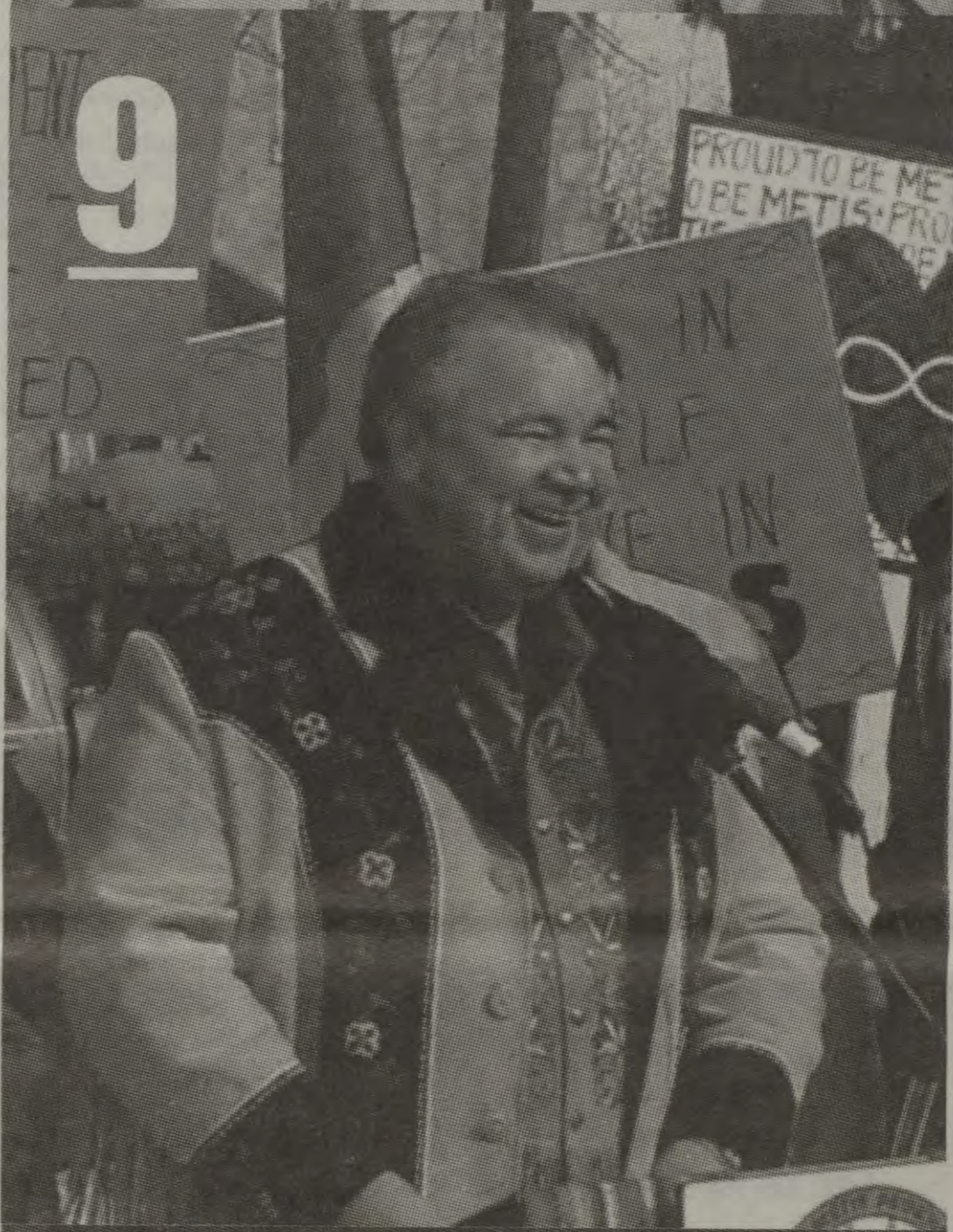
Decision changes the legal landscape nationwide 9

A meeting with the provincial and federal governments and getting adequate funding to carry out a referendum are the next steps on the agenda as the Manitoba Métis Federation moves forward on their recent Supreme Court of Canada victory.

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- [footprints] Alfred Scow 22

Alfred Scow, the first Aboriginal judge ever appointed to B.C. court, had much to celebrate. But he refused the "role model" moniker, taking more pleasure, it seemed, in the idea he may have played a part in reconciling the gap between Aboriginal and mainstream Canada.



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- Business Quarterly — Canada's Aboriginal Business Magazine



Idle No More will never die

There are some people who have been suckling at the teat of Corporate Canada for so long that they have forgotten who their real mother is; the milk so intoxicatingly potent that it blinds. We are seeing a lot of these Corporate guzzlers these days, so out of touch with Indigenous reality, so willing to dismiss the efforts and experience of their brothers and sisters for the taste of what their surrogates provide—money, prestige, the illusion of power, of belonging among Canada's elite.

Perhaps a long walk—perhaps 1,600 or so kilometres of a long walk—might clear their heads. Trade out the Italian leather loafers for some good old rawhide snowshoes and perhaps they too will come home to their real families, touch back to them, feel their energy again, re-acquaint themselves with their relatives, their dreams and their desires. It's there they will find their authentic selves, not swaddled in the arms of strangers.

It's this estrangement, perhaps, that has skewed their perspective. They've forgotten that life has a rhythm, an ebb and a flow. It's perhaps why the founder of the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation, John Kim Bell, was so quick to ring the death knell for the Idle No More movement.

Idle No More is dead, he told a crowd gathered for the I Do Business National Summit at the beginning of March. He said he had based this opinion on those highest of authorities on Indigenous peoples, Jeffrey Simpson and John Ibbitson, writers with the Globe and Mail. Polls, Bell asserted, have shown that Canadians have turned against the movement because it provided no real answers.

Idle No More is its own answer. Bell just doesn't hear the right question because he's listening to the wrong people.

We say the lot of them, Bell included, have entirely missed the point.

Idle No More is not dead. It lives as a genetic legacy in all who have taken part. It's in our nerve endings. It's coursing through our veins. It's in the memory of our muscles. It lives as a gift to the generations yet unborn, because it has changed us, our perspective, our pride and our confidence. And it will re-emerge in a thousand different ways, some subtle, some overt, because it's in us now.

If trauma suffered in one generation can be passed down to the next, and the next, like we have seen with the trauma of the residential school system, then Idle No More has been the antidote. Parents will teach their children that there is power within our languages, our culture, our traditions, within ourselves. They'll demonstrate that power as they go about their daily lives. They'll show it in small ways and large.

That could never be more effectively illustrated than through the remarkable accomplishment of the seven teenagers and their guide who trekked from James Bay in Northern Quebec to Parliament Hill, inspired by Idle No More and Chief Theresa Spence's hunger strike. We all saw the pictures of the Journey of the Nishiyuu on their Facebook page. The fact that they began such a journey is a marvel. That they finished speaks to such great resolve. We have all learned from that and we are changed.

Bell insists that Canada turned off Idle No More because there was no plan going forward. There doesn't need to be a "plan" laid out before Canada.

Idle No More is the plan. Idle No More is not about Canada. It's about us.

Windspeaker

Editor's Note: Last month in our editorial we commented on the arrest of a young woman in Edmonton who had been sexually assaulted and taken into custody for not completing her community service. At the time, claims were made by the woman's lawyer, her social worker, and in at least two interviews with the woman that she had been mistreated by the Edmonton police service. Her lawyer and social worker have since apologized to the service because the allegations that she reported the sexual assault to the police at the time of the arrest have not been substantiated. "I acknowledge that as a result Edmonton Police Service was caused embarrassment," wrote the social worker in his blog. We needed our readers to know this, because we made quite a stink about this issue ourselves and we think the EPS deserves to have this misinformation cleared up in our community of readers.

[rants and raves]

Page 5 Chatter

CBC HAS REPORTED THAT AN ELDERLY

woman from Roseau River First Nation in Manitoba was yelled at by security staff at Portage Place Shopping Centre and kicked out of the mall. Annie Henry, 79, is seeking an apology. She is diabetic and has a pacemaker and, when she was short of breath, needed to rest. She sat down on some marble planters and a security guard yelled at her, according to Henry's daughter, but her mother was not well enough to move. The guard then told her she was "officially kicked out of the mall, and then allegedly said "I don't care if she has a heart attack."

ON RESERVE? CHECK YOUR PHONE BILL.

If you're paying tax on it, you shouldn't be. Some Saskatchewan First Nations people living on reserve say they are being taxed. Amos Ratt of Lac La Ronge Indian Band has been paying tax on his phone for decades, and didn't know that, according to the Indian Act, he should be exempt. Advocate Ron Warner said he has called SaskTel a number of times to tell them that on-reserve status residents are tax-free. "They refuse to stop charging tax. They say that each person has to complain individually," said Warner. SaskTel said First Nations people need to provide a treaty card number to be exempt from federal GST and provincial PST. The company reimburses customers on a case-by-case basis. Canada Revenue said it will accept complaints if customers do not get reimbursed.

MUSICIAN PAUL SIMON HAS LOANED ONE

of his famous works to a new ad campaign that opposes the Northern Gateway project. The ad, which uses the song The Sound of Silence, made famous by the group Simon & Garfunkel, was launched on the 24th anniversary of one of the worst oil spills in history. The Exxon Valdez spill in Alaska in 1989 was catastrophic, said Art Sterritt with Coastal First Nations and provides a great argument for keeping massive oil tankers out of BC waters. The TV and social media ads are to air on networks along the proposed pipeline route. Enbridge has its own multi-million dollar ad campaign in support of the pipeline.

APTN REPORTS THAT HUMAN RIGHTS COMPLAINTS

filed by First Nations against band councils is on the rise, with 138 filed against band councils in 2011 as compared to 87 in 2010. Complaints against the federal government, the network says, has dropped to 34 from 55 in the same two-year period. The Indian Act prevented human rights complaints against bands until 2011. "The sheer volume of complaints tells us that Aboriginal people are beginning to use the Canadian Human Rights Act to improve their lives by holding their own governments, as well as the federal government, accountable for human rights," said David Langtry, acting chief commissioner of the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC) in a statement. "This is an encouraging and important outcome."

A RECONCILIATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN

British Columbia and the Snuneymuxw First Nation will bring economic benefits to the Snuneymuxw, while increasing certainty for business in the Nanaimo region, reads a press release issued March 27. The agreement creates economic opportunities for the Snuneymuxw on Vancouver Island through the transfer of three land parcels, totaling 877 hectares (2,100 acres), in the Mount Benson area. These will provide forestry-related opportunities that can be used to generate revenue and to create employment for Snuneymuxw members. The agreement also transfers to Snuneymuxw a culturally-significant property in Departure Bay. "This agreement will provide a foundation for much needed economic and employment opportunities for our members and nation," said Chief Douglas White III. "It builds on many years of effort by our Elders, leaders, and members who have stood in a strong and principled manner in trying to forge a better future for our children and youth. While there remains much hard work to be done, we are hopeful that we have now started on a path that will move all of us closer to that essential goal." The reconciliation agreement includes an engagement protocol that creates a forum to exchange information on the Douglas Treaty; to discuss requirements to establish an efficient framework for land-use referrals; and to start a dialogue on the future use and management of the Nanaimo River Estuary. The Snuneymuxw First Nation's current operating permit for Newcastle Island Marine Provincial Park will be extended by two years, allowing BC Parks and Snuneymuxw to discuss possible longer-term management arrangements. The agreement also will allow Snuneymuxw to maintain a presence on a culturally-significant island and to create economic opportunities for its members. Snuneymuxw First Nation is a large Hul'q'umi'num-speaking, Coast Salish Nation located in and around Nanaimo and Gabriola Island and has more than 1,700 members, one of the largest First Nations populations in B.C.

Rank Comix

by Adam Martin

...THINK OF THE
PANDAS!



[strictly speaking]

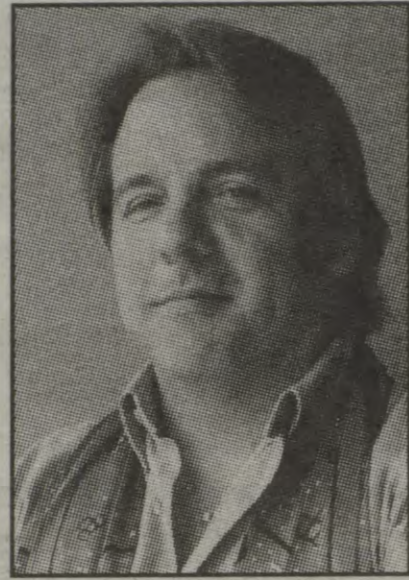
Having a flat (sa)tire can be a cruel business

I have been writing for a very long time. I have been writing this column for a very long time. And over the years I have received some very interesting responses. Some positive, some negative, and a few puzzling.

Frequently there is humour in what I write about because I find the world to be a very funny and humorous place. Because of this I am commonly thought of as a comedian, which I often go to pains to deny. That is a special talent all in itself.

Whether it's in the theatre, or novels or creative non-fiction, I always describe myself as either a humourist or a satirist. But of late, I have noticed a remarkable lack of understanding regarding the concept of satire. And it's kind of weird.

And when people misunderstand what you are writing, they can become ... cruel. They think you are serious. For instance, last July I wrote a piece for the Globe and Mail on the fourth anniversary of Harper and the federal government's Residential School apology. In my piece, I turned the tables and issued several apologies from Native people to the government and non-Native people of Canada in what I



THE URBANE INDIAN

Drew Hayden Taylor

consider a very satirical manner. I.E. WE APOLOGIZE for not understanding the subtle connection between God, education, and sexual abuse. Or WE APOLOGIZE for being so inconsiderate as to occupy land that one day your people would want... etc.

Well, on the Globe Web site the response was overwhelming. Within 24 hours there were over 1,200 postings to that article, about a thousand of them negative—from both Native and non-Native readers. I sure learned a lot about people's perceptions of me and my writing career. I submit for your approval an assessment of me and my article by "Creef":

If I were you, I would apologize to all native across

Canada for daring to speak on their behalf and offering up such tired, bland tripe that continues to dwell on the past and perpetuates the pathetic victim narrative.

I would also apologize as a native who has obviously made the best use of his opportunities but has not then turned his talents to holding to account the corrupt, vile, self-serving scum who are the chiefs of most reserves and soak up all the free cash while their people rot, and instead spends time writing this kind of BS.

I would also apologize to all the nice, young native women who would like a (probably) successful man like you for a partner. No doubt, as a native who has chosen to be a writer in

Canada, you have experienced a life of being feted by understanding, fawning, attractive young liberal-minded, white tarts who tell you what a sensitive, talented, hard-done-by genius you are. In return, you have probably driven your persecuted appendage into many of them and have since acquired a taste for young (and for sure middle-aged) white, female**.

This column will certainly result in you being the toast of all the cocktail parties you attend in the coming weeks, and a litany of loose, young liberal-minded women with guilty consciences lining up to offer up their wares to you to plunder.

Evidently my secret is out. But in all fairness, I did not attend one single cocktail party, and have not plundered any young liberal-minded white women with guilty consciences, regardless of my hard-done-by genius. My girlfriend...my Native girlfriend... might object. And comments like this went on for dozens and dozens of electronic pages, all seeming to misunderstand what I was trying to say and how.

I did not realize that satire was such a seldom understood concept. According to

Wikipedia, satire is "a genre of literature in which vices, follies, abuses and shortcomings are held up to ridicule ideally with the intent of shaming individuals, and society itself, into improvement. Although satire is usually meant to be funny, its greater purpose is often constructive social criticism, using wit as a weapon."

One of my last columns dealt with the end of the world according to the supposed Mayan calendar, and how they were getting blamed for the silliness. Just some fun about the end of the world nonsense. Again, I think I was alone on that one. One genius with the moniker RGBrook offered up this nugget of wisdom: "Who cares what Drew Hayden Taylor's credentials are. This is unworthy nonsense attempting to bring more unjustified attention to a people who would in many cases (not all... so don't pounce on me for this) rather put their energy into whining about the troubles of the past as opposed to doing something right about the future."

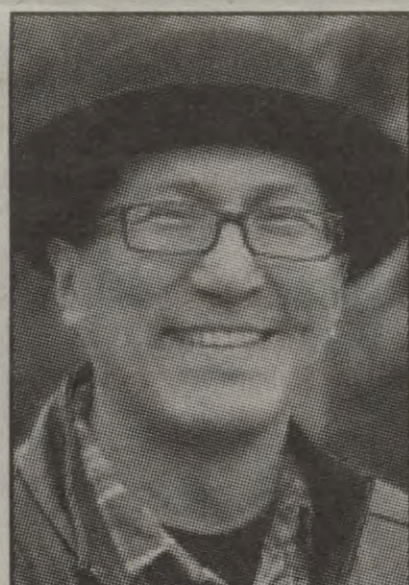
I think from now on, I'm just gonna write about starving children and sick kittens. It's probably a lot easier.

Even on the fringes, a rose can bloom

Our tenants want a rose bush. My wife runs a rooming house. It caters to the marginalized, impoverished, mentally challenged, disabled and the just plain lost. There are 13 of them. Their stories present a face of poverty few have seen, known or been touched by. But we have. In the last seven years we have been privileged to know a couple hundred of them.

Now they want a rose bush. They want to plant it in the spring as soon as the weather breaks. They want to call it Charlene's Rose. When they told us that it nearly broke us. Not in any bad way but rather in the symbol of the titanic spirit the invisible among us carry.

They want that rose bush to grow in memory of a friend. Charlene. She passed away last week and she was one of them; one of us. We know little of her story, where she came from, what her life was like before we met her or what her issues were. We do know that her sudden passing touched every one of us profoundly. In the short time that we knew her she became a presence everyone cherished.



WOLF SONGS & FIRE CHATS

Richard Wagamese

She came to us from the hospital. My wife met her there where she was wasted away to nearly nothing and being fed by a tube. She wasn't an addict. She wasn't a drunk. She was frightened more than anything. She was impoverished, frail, ill and in desperate need of a home. For my wife, that was all the information needed. She offered her a home as long as she promised to take care of her medical issues and feed herself.

She was grumpy at first. She didn't fit in well. She complained and irritated people. She refused to see her community health worker. She kept to herself and didn't make any overtures of friendship. She seemed

determined to fight whatever battles she was waging privately and in isolation. But one by one the other 12 tenants began to break through to her.

They did it in small ways. A short visit maybe, watching a video together or taking care of an errand for her. She was debilitated. She weighed 80 lbs. at the most. Her bones ached mercilessly and doctors refused to give her painkillers. They all knew that and they came together as a community and began to take care of her. As poor as they are, they gave her anything she needed. Eventually, she bloomed.

Finally, she became strong enough to walk and take care of

small errands herself. On one of those outings she was hit by a car and hospitalized. She was so weak the doctors put her in an induced coma for two weeks. We thought we'd seen the last of her. But she fought back. She came out of the coma, bright eyed, cheerful and resolute despite the chronic pain and difficulty walking.

The first thing she did was to thank my wife for her home.

"The reason I'm alive is because I have a home," she said. "Thank you for saving my life." She gave my wife a huge hug and it was perhaps, the greatest gift Debra has received in all the years she's kept the rooming house. It was a real moment. A heart to heart event and it changed both of them.

We'd go to the rooming house and Charlene's door would be open. She was engaging and cheerful. She spoke of her pain and how she felt. In her deep brown eyes there was a light and it gave her emaciated body an allure and a sheen that everyone could feel. She was a rose and everyone loved her and wanted to protect her.

But her game heart stopped. It just stopped. One of the other tenants performed CPR desperately until paramedics arrived and she rallied but died later in hospital. Each one of the tenants knew her struggle. They'd made it themselves. Her journey was their journey and they were cheering for her from day one. So they want a rose bush. Charlene's Rose. To remind them how she bloomed.

We are better for having known her. We are made bigger, more resolute and more determined to overcome the challenge's life throws our way. Charlene gave us that. She reminded us that the marginalized never marginalize themselves. We do that. We do that by our casual refusal to see them when we pass by; not knowing the incredible strength it takes to live their lives.

When you become privy to that strength, it changes you. You come to understand that there is poverty greater than one of lack. You come to understand that we all need each other. Every one of us. When Charlene's Rose blooms, that is what I'll see.

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Chiefs willing to give new minister a chance

By Shari Narine
Windspeaker Contributor

OTTAWA

Regional Chiefs for the Assembly of First Nations have expressed optimism with the appointment of the new federal minister for Aboriginal Affairs.

"Anytime there's an experienced veteran Member of Parliament to be working on the national issues relative to Aboriginal issues I think it's good," said Alberta Regional Chief Cameron Alexis.

A week after John Duncan's resignation, Prime Minister Stephen Harper appointed Bernard Valcourt to fill the position of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development minister.

Saskatchewan Regional Chief Perry Bellegarde and head of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations says he looks forward to working with Valcourt.

"He is very experienced and has held numerous Cabinet postings in the past," said Bellegarde in a news release.

Valcourt held the position of Minister of State (Indian Affairs and Northern Development) as one of six portfolios from 1984-1993. He was first elected in 1984. He was re-elected in 2011 as the MP for Madawaska-Restigouche. He was appointed Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development in February, moving from his

position as associate minister of National Defence.

AFN National Chief Shawn Atleo said Valcourt's appointment comes at a "unique time for First Nations and Canada, a true moment of reckoning where we have a commitment from the highest levels of the Government of Canada to achieve real progress and transformative change for First Nations citizens."

David Chartrand, president of the Manitoba Metis Federation, is confident Valcourt can rise to the challenge.

"I think he can step up to it... I think it fell right in his plate and the right person has been given the task," he said.

Chartrand says that in a recent meeting with Valcourt, he pointed out to the new minister how investments in capital corporations, such as the Louis Riel Capital Corp. owned by the Manitoba Métis, was the way to proceed. Similar corporations exist in other provinces. Chartrand says Valcourt pointed out to him that Valcourt was the minister, under Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, who made that happen.

"It shows that he had vision then; it shows that he has vision now," said Chartrand.

Alexis said this is a "heightened" time and how Valcourt proceeds will be telling with a number of bills that pertain to First Nations business in various stages of passage. As of now, he said, Valcourt hasn't

stopped any of those bills, brought about under Duncan, from proceeding. In fact, the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs boycotted the latest consultations held in Winnipeg for the First Nations Education Act. The AFN and other First Nations organizations are not in support of a national approach to First Nations education.

"It was very clear by the grassroots movement that enough's enough and that's one of the reasons... why we're here to try and work for all the people for the common good of the country," said Alexis.

"I think that it's an opportunity for Mr. Valcourt to do the right thing and I certainly hope that the government looks at it from that perspective and let's move on a process to deal and implement treaties," said Alexis.

In accepting his appointment, Valcourt said in a statement, "I am firmly of the view that working together is the best way to achieve our shared objective of healthier, more prosperous and self-sufficient Aboriginal communities.... Our government remains committed to working with those

Aboriginal leaders who want to work with the Government of Canada to create jobs and growth in their communities."

Jan O'Driscoll, press secretary for Valcourt, cited a "completely booked" schedule for Valcourt's inability to grant Windspeaker an interview.

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Journey of the Nishiyuu swells to hundreds after 1,600 km trek

By David P. Ball
Windspeaker Contributor

OTTAWA

From stinging minus-55C temperatures in the far-northern Cree wilderness beyond the reach of roads, to the melting woodland snows of temperate Algonquin territory, a remarkable youth journey has made its way by foot and snowshoe this past two months, 1,600 km from James Bay in Québec to Parliament Hill.

A convoy of several hundred walkers—accompanied by vanloads of supporters—arrived on Parliament Hill on March 25. Until its final week it is a quest that, aside from Aboriginal media, has gone largely unnoticed by Canadians, but has instead gained a massive following on Facebook.

The Journey of the Nishiyuu started in mid-January as a group of seven teenagers and a guide, inspired by Chief Theresa Spence's then-hunger strike and the blossoming Idle No More movement raging across the continent. Along the route, the youth stayed in family homes and school gyms on reserves throughout Québec.

"Well, it's been pretty tough," said 20-year-old Gordon Matthews from the Cree Nation of Wemindji on James Bay. "Since the day this journey began—from Hudsons Bay and James Bay—it's pretty much been tough. It's been minus-50 and minus-55.

"When we got down to Lac

Simon—the first Algonquin territory—everything changed: the climate, the weather. We're entering a new phase. We have to face the melting snow with our snowshoes. The problem we have now is the blisters—most of us have blisters on our feet, and we're still going. We're not stopping... We're trying to protect our lands—Mother Nature, Mother Earth—because our ancestors respected our Mother Earth."

Fellow trekker Nathalie Mathias joined the trek last week when the group—at least 100 walkers—strong at that point—reached the Anishinabe First Nation of Lac Simon. She told Windspeaker that the purpose of the walk is to celebrate and strengthen the unit of Indigenous peoples.

"I joined the walk to support the youth across all our nations, and to show that we are still walking like our ancestors did, like they used to do back then," Mathias explained. "We want to show the government that we are fighting to protect our lands.

"This is the time to unite, for us all to get together. Even if you're not First Nations, you're part of the reason why we're fighting for Mother Earth, to protect the Earth. Because she's being polluted and she's sick, and we want our future generations to live and practice the traditional ways that we lived in the woods. Soon, they're cutting across our land, they're making money, they're building dams. A lot of those territories are being wiped out by

certain mining, dams and so on."

The Journey of the Nishiyuu has garnered a staggering 30,000+ followers on Facebook, and yet until its final week, it had only received media coverage by a Cree-language CBC radio show and Indigenous news outlets.

While walkers could only speculate on what some have called a media blackout—"I don't know why we're not being publicized. Maybe Harper's controlling it somehow," Mathias chuckled—others emphasized that the gradual build-up of its numbers on the roads, and online, is a sign that Native people, at least, are paying close attention.

"They want to ignore it, the mainstream media especially," said Norman Matchewan, a Band Councillor of Barriere Lake Algonquin band, who hosted the walkers' social evening when they stayed in his community. "I guess they don't want to show the unity."

Matchewan, who has long been involved in his own community's struggle to fight the imposition of an Indian Act government, third party management, and resource corporations on its territory, described the excitement the marchers brought with their arrival in Barriere Lake, where they held a feast in their honour.

"Everybody in the community helped cook a meal," Matchewan told Windspeaker. "It was a lot of moose, partridge, wildlife.

"Then we danced the night away after. We had music,



PHOTO: BEN POWLESS

Nishiyuu Cree Walkers speak to the thousands of people gathered at Parliament Hill to show support for their tremendous accomplishment.

fiddling, the Cree nation showed their style of jigging. We played some games... It's bringing a lot of communities together. There's a lot of unity showing. They're not getting much media attention, but they're getting a lot of community attention. They're not only bringing unity amongst the nations, but within our communities."

For Matthews, the idea of a long journey is nothing new. His Cree community has a tradition of lengthy hunting expeditions and travels. In fact, when the Cree in northern Québec were fighting against hydro-electric dams in the 1980s, Chief Matthew Coon

Come paddled a canoe to New York to highlight their opposition.

Today, joining with hundreds of other youth, and being joined by other nations, has brought inspiration to the original walkers and the ones joining along the route.

"I'll always remember this journey," Matthews said. "I've been part of journeys back home; I'm one of the guides. I started my first journey when I was 11 years old, for snowshoe ceremonies... I've learned a lot walking long distances... We always go out on the land—to hunt, and learn our traditional ways. That's how our ancestors were brought up."

Idle No More is no more, says founder of NAAF

By Barb Nahwegahbow
Windspeaker Contributor

TORONTO

According to John Kim Bell, Idle No More is dead.

He made this statement in his keynote speech at a dinner March 5 hosted by the I Do Business National Aboriginal Summit and Tradeshow at the Doubletree Hotel in Toronto. Bell is Mohawk and is the founder of the National Aboriginal Achievement Awards.

At the end of his half-hour talk, Bell was challenged by 73-year-old Margaret Cozry, an Ojibway Toronto-based businesswoman of some 40 years standing.

"I would like to know, John," Cozry said, "why you are suggesting that Idle No More is dead."

Bell said the national media is no longer reporting on Idle No More as they were months ago and it's no longer a national issue "because it didn't have a focus".

He referenced Globe and Mail writers Jeffrey Simpson and John Ibbitson who said there were rallies, there was unrest, but no one was telling us what we should do exactly.

Bell said there may be "rallies and get-togethers and everything,

but what is missing is the plan." He went on to say that "polls have shown the government that some of the Canadian people turned against the Idle No More movement for various reasons. It was going on too long. There were no real answers."

Cozry said the movement is still going on and that in most of the meetings she'd attended "most of the people are non-Native that are going."

Chastising Bell for his remarks by saying, "we have to have our young people believe that it's going to come on strong again. This is a real big hope for our young people... and we just don't want to hear it said that Idle No More is dead."

One young person who had found Idle No More to be life-giving, strengthening and inspiring is Quinn Meawasige. He is a 19-year-old citizen of Serpent River First Nation in northern Ontario. He's also an elected band councillor and he was in Toronto to attend the Chiefs of Ontario Special Assembly on Treaties March 6 and March 7.

When asked if he agreed with Bell's assessment about Idle No More, he opened his jacket revealing his Idle No More T-shirt



PHOTOS: DAVID P. BALL

John Kim Bell speaking at I Do Business National Summit and Tradeshow dinner in Toronto, March 5, 2013.

and was quick to reply "It's not even close to being dead..."

"It's much more alive than it has ever been. And the impact it's made within our communities? It's been amazing and quite exciting to see and be a part of. So for him to say it's dead? I think he needs to go to one of these events and maybe he won't say it's dead anymore."

Meawasige was not familiar with John Kim Bell.

Meawasige said Idle No More is a grassroots movement and that it's actually gone deep into the roots of the communities.

"We see individual communities are starting to move and gather," he said, "and the youth are starting to work amongst each other as a result of Idle No More."

A group of youth from the community went to a rally on Parliament Hill, he said, and "just the result of them being there, they brought that spirit of Idle No More back to the community."

They were inspired to take action, preparing brochures to hand out at a traffic slow-down and printing T-shirts.

"It's really opening doors," he

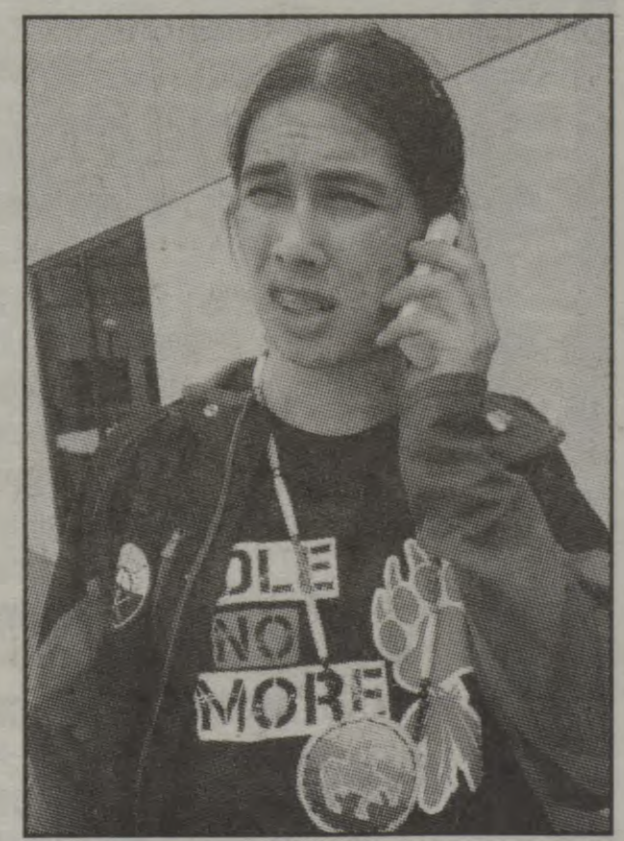


PHOTO: JASON JENKINS

Quinn Meawasige, band councillor from Ontario's Serpent River First Nation, in Toronto

said, "and the youth are thinking about the future, about the land. And they want their culture back and they're talking about language retention, and you know, they're gonna do whatever it takes."

The youth have also decided to do some fundraising so they can connect with the Elders of their community by hosting a free pancake breakfast for them.

"That's the spirit of Idle No More!" Meawasige said.

It's not dead.

Decision changes the legal landscape nationwide



PHOTO: MANITOBA MÉTIS FEDERATION

Manitoba Métis Federation President David Chartrand is joined by past president John Morriseau as they celebrate the Supreme Court victory.

By Shari Narine
Windspeaker Contributor

WINNIPEG

A meeting with the provincial and federal governments and getting adequate funding to carry out a referendum are the next steps on the agenda as the Manitoba Métis Federation moves forward on their recent Supreme Court of Canada victory.

On March 8, the Supreme Court ruled that "the Métis are entitled to a declaration that the federal Crown failed to act with diligence in implementing the land grant provision set out in s. 31 of the Manitoba Act, in accordance with the honour of the Crown."

"It means vindication without question," said David Chartrand, president of the Manitoba Métis Federation.

Court action by the MMF against the federal government began in 1981 with the MMF arguing that the Crown didn't live up to its obligation to provide land to Métis children when Manitoba joined Confederation in 1870. The MMF had lost its argument at both the lower court and court of appeal in Manitoba.

Chartrand became president of the MMF in 1996 and since that time the MMF expended \$5 million in litigation. It put the organization in a difficult position financially but the outcome has been worth it, he said.

"For us it's a very proud day as a people that we persisted and we never gave up," said Chartrand. "It goes to show it can be done if you believe in it hard enough and strong enough."

The decision sets the stage for land claims settlement negotiations between the MMF and Canada.

Chartrand said he has already

heard from Premier Greg Selinger and Minister of Justice and Attorney General Andrew Swan that they are willing to come to the negotiation table. He has also spoken to the office of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada and is expecting a phone call from Minister Bernard Valcourt for initial dialogue.

"I want an actual official commencement of negotiations," said Chartrand, referring to setting up a timetable, establishing a framework of how negotiations will take place, and an understanding of the rules and the intent of all parties.

Chartrand says he promised the Métis citizenship that if they won the court case he would conduct referendum to see how "we (can) best achieve what we want." A referendum carried out in the mid '90s indicated that Métis favoured financial compensation going into a trust fund to be used for future generations, to ensure education and training.

Chartrand said he also wants to see funding set aside to allow for a proper referendum to be conducted as well as MMF to have sufficient expertise available to conduct negotiations at the same level as both the federal and provincial governments.

He also wants Canadians to understand that any federal dollars used for the process is part of the millions of dollars that the government has collected from Métis taxpayers.

"It's not (to be) seen as a charity or Canada is giving us something of generosity. No, this is our tax dollars and I'm asking for it to be diverted back to us as a priority," said Chartrand.

Chartrand anticipates the Supreme Court's decision will have a nationwide impact and that provincial governments are now compelled to recognize the

standing of the Métis associations which exist not only in Manitoba but in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Ontario.

"Our rights from this day forward have greater recognition by the lower courts ... (and) governments have no choice but to recognize it. The law is on our side," said Chartrand.

"The MMF case signals that this ongoing Métis exclusion from meaningful negotiation processes cannot be sustained," wrote Jason Madden, posted March 18 in Canadian Lawyer Magazine. Madden, a Métis lawyer and partner in the law firm Pape SalterTeillet LLP, has been legal counsel for much of the litigation advanced on Métis rights over the last decade, including, acting for the Métis Nation of Alberta, an intervener in the MMF case.

"The Supreme Court has clearly set out the way forward," writes Madden. "Real negotiations with the Métis on issues such as land, self-government and their existing rights and interests must begin. Just and lasting settlements, whether they are called treaties, modern day land claim agreements or something else, must ultimately be reached with Canada's Métis. Anything less would not achieve reconciliation or the promise of Section 35 to 'the recognition of the Métis as a unique and distinct people.'"

Chartrand finds the timing of the Supreme Court's decision fitting. He said Prime Minister Stephen Harper, who hails from western Canada, has often recognized Métis leader Louis Riel for his passion in standing up for the minority.

"Now we have a Conservative government in Canada in place who can finish unfinished Confederation business (begun by a Conservative government). That's so powerful," said Chartrand.

Windspeaker News Briefs

THE ANISHINABEK NATION UNVEILED

a monument March 25 to honour citizens who have felt the impacts of Indian Residential Schools. The monument was part of the Honouring Our Children, Families and Communities project of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. "I really see this monument as a testament to the resilience of our people," said Anishinabek Nation Grand Council Chief Patrick Madahbee. "We should take that collective strength that the residential school survivors have exhibited, refuse to be treated as victims, and take control of our own destiny. We should look at the monument as a symbol of strength, not of victimhood." The Anishinabek Nation project includes a variety of educational resources that document the history of the residential schools, the children who attended them and the inter-generational trauma that resulted. Materials include a fictitious narrative picture book available in English, French, and Anishinaabemowin that tells the story of a girl who attended Indian residential school, four videos, including one in Anishinaabemowin, about the Indian Residential School system and its effects on the Anishinabek Nation, survivors and their families, and information booklets about inter-generational trauma, the history of the schools and educational resources on the Indian Residential School system. An educational Web site will be created to house all of these resources, plus information on Canada's apology, settlement agreement, compensation, and health resources.

EIGHT FIRST NATIONS HAVE FORMALLY

begun the process to remove 34 land-related sections of the Indian Act to gain greater control over reserve lands and resources by signing onto the First Nations Land Management (FNLM) regime. Kwantlen First Nation (British Columbia), Lil'wat First Nation - Mount Currie Indian Band (British Columbia), Neskonlith Indian Band (British Columbia), Shxw'ow'hamel First Nation (British Columbia), Brokenhead Ojibway Nation (Manitoba), Algonquins of Pikwakanagan (Ontario), Shawanaga First Nation (Ontario), and George Gordon First Nation (Saskatchewan) will begin to develop their own land codes. "The FNLM regime is a powerful tool for First Nations seeking greater control over not just their land and resources, but their economic futures," said Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Bernard Valcourt. "We will continue to work with interested First Nations across the country to help them realize the significant economic benefits, like jobs, investments and greater self-sufficiency, that come from participation in the FNLM regime." Chief Robert Louie, chairman of the First Nations Lands Advisory Board, said one out of every five First Nations in Canada is a signatory to the FNLM framework agreement. Canada is receiving a financial return 10 times the dollars that the federal government is investing in the process, he said. "What an incredible success story," Louie said. To fund the regime, Canada is committing \$3 million. The eight nations bring the total number of nations under the regime to 69.

INDSPIRE'S BUILDING BRIGHTER FUTURES

program is the recipient of \$10 million for Aboriginal students' education and skills training through the budget that Finance Minister Jim Flaherty announced in Parliament March 21. "Education, skills training and viable careers are of great concern to Indigenous youth. This new investment in Indspire makes it clear that the prosperity of the country is inextricably tied to change for Indigenous education," said Roberta L. Jamieson, president and CEO of Indspire. Indspire plans to match the funding with investment from the private sector, she said, bringing the total of new funding for students to \$20 million.

JOB-TRAINING MONEY IN THE

new federal budget is going to First Nations that force young people on social assistance to take part in skills development programs. Critics of the government initiative are calling it a workfare program. The budget provides \$109 million over five years for "personalized skills development." And there is an additional \$132 million over five years for First Nations to "ensure compliance" and job counselling. Finance Minister Jim Flaherty said Ottawa wants to "ensure young recipients have the incentives necessary to gain employment." Thomas Mulcair, leader of the Opposition NDP, said "At a time when First Nations are holding out a hand for reconciliation, he's giving them the back of his hand... It's insulting, it's paternalistic. It's a sop to [Prime Minister Stephen Harper's] Reform Party base and it plays to the worst prejudices against First Nations." The 2013 federal budget has no new funding earmarked for on-reserve housing, water and wastewater treatment or schools on reserve. "Budget 2013 makes reference to First Nations in almost every section, which suggests that the unprecedented attention and engagement of our peoples is beginning to be heard," said National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations Shawn Atleo. "But the investment just isn't there. We will continue to press for direct engagement of First Nations themselves on full implementation of commitments in an urgent manner." Grand Chief Derek Nepinak of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs. said "This status quo budget ensures the rich keep getting rich with tax credits and incentives that generally do not help First Nations individuals or communities... A status quo budget for First Nations people means a continuation of escalating poverty and a continuing failure to meet the basic needs of families in the communities."

A new line is drawn for the electorate

By Shari Narine
Windspeaker Contributor

LAC LA RONGE INDIAN BAND, Sask.

The Lac La Ronge Indian Band will be sending a letter to the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Saskatchewan in support of the new boundaries proposed for the northern riding of Desnethé-Missinippi-Churchill River.

"Moving the boundary north makes more sense. This is good for the north. It's not just First Nation and Metis. We have northerners who live in the north who are non-First Nation, non-Metis. We have similar issues. We have a community of interest as a northern community," said Chief Tammy Cook-Searson.

So agrees the mayor of Cumberland House.

Mayor Valerie Deschambeault joined with Cumberland House Cree Nation Chief Lorne Stewart to release a joint statement supporting the re-jigged boundaries, which see the

communities of Choiceland, Love, White Fox, and Smeaton join the Prince Albert riding.

"Our communities demographically fit in the Desnethé-Missinippi-Churchill riding and would be better represented along with the northern higher Aboriginal populated riding and our community representation based on similar community interests, and the principle of voter equality should take precedence," wrote Stewart and Deschambeault.

However, DMC riding MP Rob Clarke does not see it the same way.

In a letter sent to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, Clarke wrote, "While its mandate was to take into account population changes and ensure proper representation for the residents of Saskatchewan, the outcome indicates otherwise... I believe that even without my objections, the impartiality and fairness of the report is tainted."

Clarke suggested that Cumberland House along with

Shoal Lake and Red Earth be "subsumed by Yorkton-Melville as a natural extension of the riding to its north." He also stated that adding Choiceland, Love, White Fox, and Smeaton to the Prince Albert riding increased the riding by 1,000 constituents and the riding was already five per cent above the quota.

Clarke also expressed concern that changing the boundaries as proposed would give too much voice within the riding to First Nations.

"The proposed changes also make the riding population more homogenous and decrease the influence of communities of interest. The already large percentage of First Nations has increased and it diminishes the influence of the rest of the communities. Communities of interest must have their voices heard and are at risk of being muted by demographic changes," he concluded in his letter.

However, Cook-Searson said giving normally silenced minorities a louder voice is what the 1991 Supreme Court decision

on electoral boundaries was about.

In the Supreme Court's decision, Madame Justice Beverly McLachlin wrote, "Factors like geography, community history, community interests and minority representation may need to be taken into account to ensure that our legislative assemblies effectively represent the diversity of our social mosaic."

The new electoral division includes the majority of the 35,000 members of the Prince Albert Grand Council, says Cook-Searson.

"This is good for the north. The north will have a good, strong voice in Ottawa," she said.

Cook-Searson would not go as far as to say that Clarke, a Conservative MP, may be worried about losing his riding given the new boundaries and his push for amendments to the Indian Act. She noted that Clarke appeared at a Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations assembly to speak on the Private Members Bill he introduced last year to amend the Indian Act.

She said Clarke only presented his bill and entertained no questions or comments from the chiefs in attendance.

"There wasn't even an opportunity for dialogue," said Cook-Searson.

Many First Nations leaders across the country condemned Clarke, who is also a member of the Muskeg First Nation, for what they saw as his unilateral action to amend the Indian Act. Clarke held no consultations with First Nations prior to the bill's introduction.

Cook-Searson points out that the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Saskatchewan is non-partisan.

Of the three-member committee, there was one dissension. David Marit, who also serves as president of the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, disagreed with his colleagues on "so dramatically" changing the boundaries, noting that 75 per cent of submissions and letters received by the commission opposed the boundary changes.

Cobell settlement funds flow to Indian country

By David P. Ball
Windspeaker Contributor

Washington, D.C.

Elouise Cobell may not be alive to see the full fruits of her decade spearheading U.S. history's largest class action lawsuit—the Blackfoot activist died of cancer in 2011 at age 65—but as the payments from the \$3.4 billion settlement roll out across Indian country, those close to her are reminded of her determination.

On March 12, the Secretary of the Interior announced that the Native education component from the Cobell v. Salazar lawsuit—challenging the government's mismanagement of the trust funds of a half-million Native Americans—would be administered by the American Indian College Fund.

Meanwhile, lawyers from the case have taken a dispute over the division of nearly \$100 million in legal costs to court, with a Washington D.C. hearing held on March 18.

The new developments come in the wake of months of problems sending out cheques to class members—amounting to an average \$2,000 per claimant—because of difficulties tracking down their addresses.

"I'm sure that she was greatly anguished she couldn't live to see the moneys sent to the people she was fighting for all those years," said Cobell's friend and former publicist, Bill McAllister. "I'm sure she never had any idea when she filed her lawsuit that it would

go on for so long and be so complicated and controversial.

"She thought, when she filed it back in '96, that it might take two to three years, but the government wouldn't settle it right away. So many people in the Interior Department, over the years, had acknowledged what a mess the management of the Indian trust had been. There were reports after reports from the government about just how big a mess it was, and how much money hadn't been accounted for."

McAllister told Windspeaker that he met Cobell at her first press conference launching the lawsuit when he was a journalist at the Washington Post.

Her case revolved around the mishandling of a century of money held by the government in trust accounts for lands allotted to individual Indians. During the case, decades of concern over negligent bookkeeping turned out to be just the tip of the iceberg. In many cases the government had kept shoddy records, or none at all.

And as the number of inheritors of Indian trust lands multiplied with each passing generation over the last century, now the government is buying back many of those allotted parcels in order to consolidate them in tribal interests. But some activists say they are angry that, once again, the government is treating Natives with what they call "paternalism."

"There are conflicting opinions

about why they (government) are the ones behind this buy-back program," explained Sherry Salway Black with the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI)'s Protect Native Money program. "Tribes want actual control of these buy-back programs. There's also issues with tribal ownership versus individual ownership."

"Many generations later, people have only a tiny per cent interest in these original allotments. Much of the land can't be developed because you have to have 100 per cent of owners, which could be hundreds of people, and you can't find them. So you can't look at housing development or business development because of the status of the land. The theory is that if you used this money to buy back land for the tribes, the tribes could put it towards useful purposes... It would be better served to consolidate it — not necessarily all with the tribe, but for the land to stay in trust, to be protected — to have it be more useful."

Another problem arose when the first round of cheques were issued late last year. Thousands of people's addresses provided to the organization tasked with coordinating the payments turned out to be out of date, with many class members even unaware that they were entitled to being compensated. But Black said that through word of mouth, many of those "whereabouts unknown" individuals were eventually

located.

For her, Cobell's efforts set a powerful example of perseverance for Native rights, and she hopes that recipients of the money keep her struggle in mind, and understand the cause behind it.

"She kept this case moving forward, recognizing the past mismanagement of Native assets," Black told Windspeaker. "There has to be a reckoning."

"It's important that people know why the money is coming in: it was money managed in trust by the government, to account for properly, and they didn't do it... It's a settlement for a grievous wrong that been done over a 100-plus years."

But the sudden influx of money into Aboriginal communities across the U.S.—there are 500,000 recipients—has raised concerns about consumer scams and other fraud taking advantage of Indigenous people.

As a response to the Cobell settlement, as well as similar lawsuits launched by tribal governments over separately managed trust accounts, the NCAI launched its Protect Native Money campaign to educate and raise awareness both of the dangers of consumer scams and to promote smart money management.

"In the next few years, we're going to see basically \$3 billion hit Indian country," Black explained. "Some of the tribal trust settlements have been in the court system forever. When we realized there was potentially for it all hitting at the same time, we

thought, 'Oh gosh, we gotta get the word out to be prepared!'

"Not just Indian country and Indian people need financial information and protection. Everybody does... But American Indian people had highest rates of consumer fraud against them... We know that it's an issue from past (legal) settlements in Indian country... You have people who are scammers, out to take advantage of people who have that money coming in... There are people out there wanting to sell used cars, probably mostly lemons or ones that have been in accidents or floods: 'Here, you can have it for \$1,000' — which is exactly what the cheque was."

The NCAI hopes that tribal traditions of wise resource use can inform their investment decisions, not only with Cobell settlement money, but in all their savings.

McAllister said the historic lawsuit settlement—as well as the emphasis on Native education, an issue of great importance to Cobell herself—serves as a legacy of one woman's struggle for justice against many odds.

"I remember her determination and grit," McAllister told Windspeaker. "She was always very proud of being a Native."

"One of the tribes gave her eagle feathers... That was a great honour to her. The eagle feathers were given by that tribe only to warriors; it was rare, as a woman, even to get eagle feathers. She was very proud of that recognition."

If you would just go ahead and order a Windspeaker subscription then you could get Windspeaker delivered right to your office or home. For only \$55.00 +gst you would not only help support independent Aboriginal communications, but also keep your letter carrier from being bored.

Debbie Houle — [windspeaker confidential]

Windspeaker: What one quality do you most value in a friend?

Debbie Houle: Honesty

W: What is it that really makes you mad?

D.H: Greed.

W: When are you at your happiest?

D.H: I am most happiest when I am hanging out with my son, Darren.

W: What one word best describes you when you are at your worst?

D.H: Fugly!

W: What one person do you most admire and why?

D.H: My mom. She raised five kids on her own and we've all turned out pretty good. She takes care of my mosom, Albert, who just turned 99 years old this year. I admire her for her determination, selflessness and strength.

W: What is the most difficult thing you've ever had to do?

D.H: Say goodbye to my son's dad, Darren Pennington Sr. He passed away when Darren was six weeks old. I was super blessed to have a loving support system, my family and friends, who stuck pretty close to us. We're grateful for each and every day, for our health, our home and pretty much everything the Lord has blessed us with!

W: What is your greatest accomplishment?

D.H: Being a single mom and raising my son Darren. He's 15 years old and just got his learners. He started his first job at Burger King a couple months ago. But most of all, I'm proud of the person he is inside.

W: What one goal remains out of reach?

D.H: Getting a business degree. It's totally achievable. I just need to take it one course at a time!

W: If you couldn't do what you're doing today, what would you be doing?

D.H: I would be building a race track for my son so he could go dirt biking all year long. Still doable!

W: What is the best piece of advice you've ever received?

D.H: Face your fears.

W: Did you take it?

D.H: You bet! I've been skydiving, did public speaking, ran Mud Hero, rode on some crazy rides, travelled the world, jumped in the Mediterranean Sea, and now I'm on a path to health and fitness.

W: How do you hope to be remembered?

D.H: As a super fun and happy mom who loved her family, friends and community.

Debbie Houle started her life in Edmonton, but was raised on the Elizabeth Métis Settlement, just north of Cold Lake, Alta. and on the East Prairie Métis Settlement, southeast of High Prairie, Alta. "We had a farm and raised cattle, horses, pigs and chickens. We all had to pitch in to work in the fields hauling bales with my dad. My mom grew a garden and we helped her take care of the garden. My mom and dad divorced when I was nine. My mom worked really hard to put herself through school while raising five kids." Houle grew up in a musical household. "My mosom, Albert Collins, played the fiddle. My uncle Archie, August and my mom played in the band Halfbreed for several years. My brother Rory has been a musician all his life. Music has always been a part of Métis culture and I've always had a family I could learn from. I grew up singing, dancing the two-step and Red River Jig and I can still do some mean changes."

Houle formed a vocal ensemble of women called ASANI who sing a cappella. ASANI is taken from the Cree word "asiniy", which means "rock." The group went through numerous formations from their inception in 1997, but in 2001 they solidified ASANI as the trio of Houle, Sherryl

Sewepagaham, and Sarah Pocklington. Since then they have been performing near and far, including Carnegie Hall in New York and the Kennedy Centre in Washington, D.C. Their first CD was nominated for 11 music awards including a 2006 Juno nomination for Aboriginal Recording of the Year. They also received the Canadian Aboriginal Music Award for Best Female Traditional Cultural Roots Album in 2005. Their audiences have included the Dalai Lama and Queen Elizabeth II.

"I knew that if I was going to get anywhere, that I needed an education. Graduating high school was an expectation of my parents. Dropping out was never an option." With all that she does now, asked where she sees herself going from here, she says, "I have always had strong and determined women to look up to. My mom, Violet Collins, my auntie Irene Collins, and Lillian Parenteau. These women instilled a strong set of values about who I was meant to be and how hard I needed to work to get there. It is important for me as a Métis woman to keep my son connected to his roots and his family in Elizabeth. Elizabeth Métis Settlement will always be my home and I am grateful to have been raised there." As to the

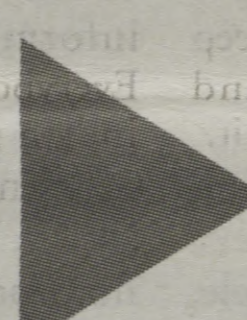


PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Debbie Houle

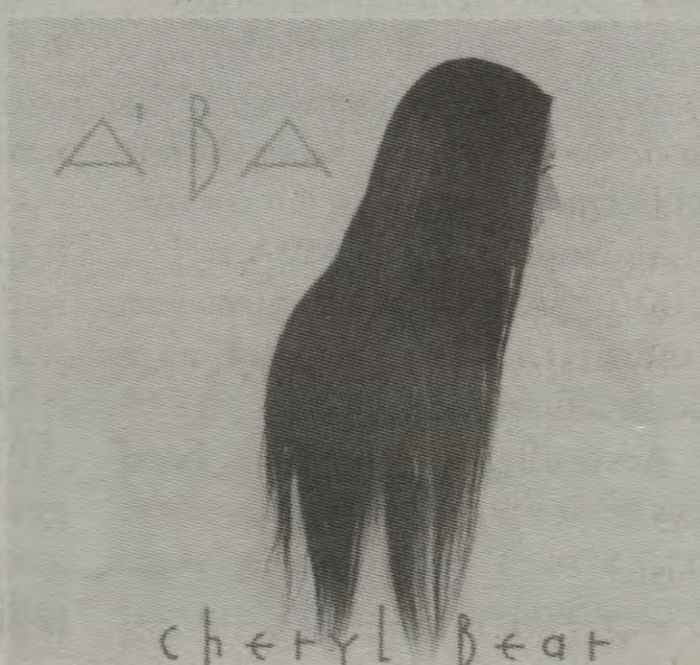
question of her career goals and further education, she says, "I graduated high school and will be working toward a degree in business. I am inspired to study business because I believe that is how we will be stronger in our community. I want to be part of building Aboriginal businesses in Edmonton and to do that it is important to know all of the different factors that work together in building a strong economic environment. I will work toward my degree in business and keep on singing!

OUR PICK



Artist— Cheryl Bear
Song— My Father
Album— A'BA
Year— 2012

Cheryl Bear's album release is a journey of Carrier/Dakelh Nation culture mixed with Christian and Indigenous spiritual perspectives shared through a hybrid of traditional and contemporary music styles. The rhythm of the majority of songs on this album follow traditional drums both powwow and round dance. The beginning starts with a Drum Prayer voiced with a traditional flute and percussion instruments that create the opening of your listening journey as moving as any orchestral overture. You are well prepared for the beautiful song My Father where Cheryl introduces the listener to the strength of a father, the father and savior to all who embrace him. Each song following the last is a shared experience relating to the saving grace of spiritual strength. Though many of these songs are done in a modern contemporary style, they all conform to the rhythm of the native drum. Cheryl's voice is soulful and beautiful emitting plenty of emotion that should illicit good response from the listener whether they are of faith or not. Musically all the songs stand on their own as well crafted and instrumentally supported musical selections of which several are folk or country genres. Cheryl tackles a couple serious topics that Aboriginal people have and still must persevere in a balanced music project. Lyrically Cheryl tells us of the journey by asking questions and answering them by showing how one's spirituality gives you the strength to move on. Whether Cheryl is singing about grief and loss, injustice or typical life tribulations, she does it with love, hope and encouragement drawn from the well-spring of her faith. On Cheryl's website, she states "A' BA means Father in a few Native languages" and Cheryl clearly benefits from a deep relationship with hers.



You may buy Cheryl's album or download songs from her website: www.cherylbear.com

Review by : K. Kantan

[radio's most active]

ABORIGINAL RADIO MOST ACTIVE LIST

| SONG | ARTIST | ALBUM |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Carry Me | George Leach | Surrender |
| You're Not Really Gone | Tim Cruly | Single |
| If This Is Love, I Hate It | Sherry St. Germain | Kick Out The Lights |
| I Don't Mind | Billy Grind | Billy Grind |
| Brand New | Jace Martin | Falling Stars |
| Can't Afford To Love You | Donny Parenteau | Bring It On |
| The Beat | Elisapie | Travelling Love |
| Take A Picture | Joey Stylez | Single |
| 60's Scoop | Brandon Solomon Ft. Kelly & Poj | Single |
| Nowhere Fast | Keith Secola | Life Is Grand |
| Can't Let Go | Vinnie Sixx | Single |
| Makin' My Way | Gary Farmer & The Trouble Makers | Under The Water Tower |
| Fight For You | Ali Fontaine | Diamond In The Rough |
| Mirror Me | She King | Single |
| Sweet Music | Janet Panic | Most Of What Follows Is True |
| How Can I | Mark Jacob | Single |
| Inside My Head | Davidica | Single |
| Chains | Crystal Shawanda | Just Like You |
| Hard Hearted Woman | Billy Joe Green | String Twister Hits & Misses |
| Red Winter | Drezus | Single |

CONTRIBUTING STATIONS:



[celebrating 30 years]
**Windspeaker celebrates its contribution to
 Aboriginal news coverage over 30 years**

By **Cara McKenna**
Windspeaker Contributor

EDMONTON

Windspeaker, a name synonymous with Aboriginal news, is celebrating its 30th anniversary of publishing this year. The magazine has a rich history.

Starting as a small Alberta publication, Windspeaker grew to a national magazine that many people rely on to this day.

Staff who have been with the publication from the beginning take pride in many things, including the consistent quality of work Windspeaker has produced over the decades, the guidance it has provided to young reporters, and the struggle to maintain an Aboriginal news publication through good times and bad.

Publisher and CEO Bert Crowfoot acknowledges that he has come a long way from when he began as a freelance sports reporter in the 1970s.

"I wanted to be a coach so I was taking education and sports [at university]," he said. "My friend offered me a job as a freelance sports writer and I covered a basketball tournament and a hockey tournament and took pictures. He liked what I did so he offered me a full-time job."

In the early 1980s, Crowfoot left his job and started a newspaper in his basement with a friend, which only lasted a couple of years.

When the federal government sent out a call for proposals for grants to publish in the Aboriginal market, Crowfoot jumped at the chance to apply.

He was approved in early March 1983, and the first issue of AMMSA was created in the boardroom of the Secretary of State and published on March 18, 1983.

AMMSA stands for Aboriginal Multi-Media Society of Alberta, the name of the organization that publishes Windspeaker. The



First issue of AMMSA publication in 1983.

paper's name was changed to Windspeaker from AMMSA in 1986 after a public naming contest. Windspeaker won out over other names, including "Spirit Voices."

"The first four years were tough," said Crowfoot, but an entrepreneurial spirit within him served the organization well.

"We started running our not-for-profit corporation like a business. Since 1990 we've been self-sufficient on the publishing side. Windspeaker has stuck around for the past 23 years (independent of any government grants)."

Director of publishing and marketing Paul Macedo also takes pride in Windspeaker's 30 years of staying power. Since 1990, he has guided the revenue side of the many-faceted AMMSA organization, which also includes a popular radio station, and he oversees all publishing operations now.

He said Windspeaker's government funding was completely cut just two months after he started in 1990.

"They announced that the funding was gone... that funding not only helped Windspeaker, but helped 11 other Aboriginal publishers across the country,"



First issue of the renamed Windspeaker in 1986.

said Macedo.

"In the period of two to three months following that announcement, only two publications survived, and survived to this day. And that's Windspeaker and Wawatay News."

Macedo also takes pride in the fact that Windspeaker, once a small Northern Alberta newspaper, has become national while keeping its local charm.

"As Windspeaker went national, and left a void locally, we then filled that void by producing Alberta Sweetgrass," he said.

"Over time we did the same thing for Saskatchewan with the launch of Saskatchewan Sage, and then in B.C. with the launch of Raven's Eye, and in Ontario with the launch of Ontario Birchbark. That was all done without any (government) funding, whatsoever, but through self-generated revenues. That was an amazing feat."

Macedo said he is also proud of the fact Windspeaker has helped to nurture young journalists.

"I'm proud of the quality of work that we've done, and I'm proud of the people that have worked and contributed to



Windspeaker's 10th anniversary issue in 1993.

Windspeaker," he said.

"So many people have come and then gone on to phenomenal careers... We like to think we played a small part in their development."

To Crowfoot, the thing that fills him with pride is that Windspeaker has been a consistently objective and relied-upon news source.

"To me the most important role that Windspeaker has played over the years is that it has provided unbiased, objective coverage of all news stories," he said.

"We've taken on Indian leaders, we've taken on non-Indian leaders, we've taken on ministers, we've taken on grassroots people. But all along, because of Debora (Steel)—I give her credit—we have always strived to maintain that objectivity in all our stories."

Steel began at AMMSA as a national news reporter in 1993, and was editor-in-chief of the five publications when she left the full-time employ of AMMSA in late 2006. She remains, however, linked to Windspeaker as a contributing editor.

According to Crowfoot, Steel has been the most vital part of the magazine's consistently high journalistic standards. To him, she



Bert Crowfoot, publisher of Windspeaker.

is the one who worked behind the scenes, providing sober second thought and encouragement to a talented crew of writers.

"I've learned many things working with Bert over 20 years," Steel said. "Surround yourself with good people and then get out of their way' is one piece of advice he likes to give. I surrounded myself with good solid reporters who were devoted to the work. My job, as I came to view it, was to provide a safe place where they could do that work in the knowledge that we had their backs."

"She did an awesome job of going through the news and figuring out what was newsworthy. And finding the news," Crowfoot said.

"There's a huge difference between journalists and activists, and unfortunately there's a huge number of activists who are journalists. (Deb) really understood that difference."

Crowfoot emphasized the importance of Aboriginal media and the need for the Aboriginal worldview to be seen in the press.

"Aboriginal media's role—like APTN and all these other groups—is they're telling the stories from our perspective," he said.



Raven's Eye: Special Section providing news from BC & Yukon

A SOLAR PANEL FEASIBILITY STUDY WILL BE

conducted by the West Moberly First Nation. The study will be focused on the installation of solar panels in the community. Through the provincial government's First Nations Clean Energy Business Fund, the First Nation will be getting \$25,780 towards its Solar 1 PV Solar installation project's feasibility study. The community has set a goal of supplying 10 per cent of its own energy through clean-based energy projects by 2020, and the province argues that this will greatly help them in achieving that status. "I'm pleased we have been able to provide assistance from this business fund to help the West Moberly First Nation with its energy plan," said Peace River South MLA Blair Lekstrom. "Developing clean-energy alternatives is part of the government's plan to promote economic and resource-based opportunities for First Nations within their own territory." In 2009, West Moberly was the first B.C. First Nation community to be awarded the honour of "Solar Community" by SolarBC, having completed a community energy plan that year that sets out the energy generation goal, along with reducing fuel use and energy use in community buildings.

A BILLION-DOLLAR MINE IN THE PROVINCE'S

northwest has been given the go-ahead despite the objections of the Nisga'a Nation where the mine site is located. Avanti Mining Inc. will revive a molybdenum mine located 140 km north of Prince Rupert. The Kitsault Mine was given the green-light after a review concluded the mine would not result in any significant adverse effects. While the review was provided to the province March 1 and had 45 days to make its consideration, the approval was fast-tracked, say the Nisga'a Nation, because of the upcoming May election. The Nisga'a have

filed a notice of disagreement under treaty provisions to slow the process down. They believe the mine's effects haven't been properly weighed. The province believes the dispute resolution process under their historic treaty — the first modern-day treaty in the province — will "meaningfully address" outstanding issues. Vancouver-based Avanti said it has undergone "extraordinary and unprecedented" work to ensure the Nisga'a treaty requirements have been met. It's expected the open-pit mine will produce 50,000 tonnes of ore per day and 300 local jobs. It was originally operational in the 1960s but closed in 1982. The site will include a processing plant, tailings storage facility, containment embankments, and other waste diversion and collections systems. The company must meet water quality guidelines, monitor aquatic effects and develop a plan for managing the wildlife corridor and must provide \$100,000 in annual funding to recover the Nass moose population over the 16-year life of the mine.

THE TSESHAHT FIRST NATION HAS DEMANDED THAT

the Province of B.C. conduct more testing for high levels of arsenic, cobalt and selenium in the Barkley Sound area. The Toquaht Bay Marina, boat launch and campground were closed March 21 by the province due to high levels of these contaminants. Provincial health officials also advised people not to consume shellfish from the campground's foreshore.

"It appears this pollution was caused by an iron ore mine being allowed to dump sand and tailings onto Toquaht Beach and its foreshore," said Tseshah Chief Councillor Hugh Braker. "The Province of B.C. allowed that to happen. It was the Province of B.C. that allowed the mine company to dump the tailings and sand without adequate testing or control and now it should be the

Province of B.C. that is responsible for the testing to see if seafood in Barkley Sound is safe. B.C. is also responsible for the clean-up of the contaminated area." Testing will occur over the next months at the Toquaht Bay Marnia, as per the land transfer part of the treaty agreement with the Toquaht Nation, but Tseshah Chief Councillor Hugh Braker said "This limited testing is not enough." In a letter of March 25 to Minister of Environment Terry Lake, Braker said, "Given the presence of Tseshah reserves in the area and given the tidal and current patterns in Toquaht Bay, Mayne Bay and Barkley Sound, the Tseshah are justifiably concerned." Braker pointed out that the Tseshah have a reserve known as Equis Reserve. The Equis Reserve is partly on Mayne Bay, which is adjacent to, and joined to, Toquaht Bay. The Tseshah have been in discussions with potential investors about an aquaculture (shellfish) development at the Mayne Bay side of the Equis Reserve. The Tseshah also have a clam operation on the Barkley Sound side of the Equis Reserve which is immediately outside of Toquaht and Mayne Bays. "We harvest shellfish from that area." Braker said that the Tseshah harvest seafood from many places in Barkley Sound and are now worried that the pollution has spread throughout the area due to tides and currents and stream flows. "This has the potential to turn into an environmental nightmare and economic disaster for the Tseshah," Braker said. "While we hope that the pollution is minimal, we need assurances that the seafood from Barkley Sound is safe for our children to eat. Only adequate testing can provide that assurance." Tseshah harvest seafood year-round from Barkley Sound and surrounding areas.

Compiled by Debora Steel

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Jeannie Cranmer,

Aboriginal Education and Employment Strategy Manager

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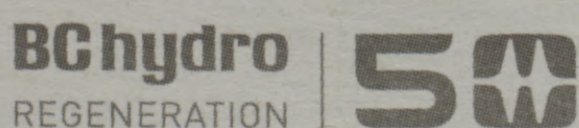
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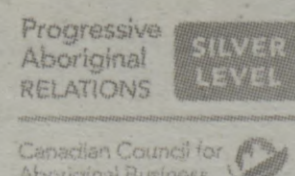
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GDS11-255

Alberta Sweetgrass: Special Section providing news from Alberta

ERCB issues enforcement actions against three energy companies

The Energy Resources Conservation Board has issued enforcement actions against Plains Midstream Canada, Pembina Pipeline Corporation and Pengrowth Energy for pipeline spills that occurred in 2011. The ERCB issued four high-risk enforcement actions against Plains Midstream Canada in relation to the April 28, 2011, 28,000 barrels spill of crude oil on the Rainbow Pipeline in Northern Sunrise County. Plains was found to have inadequate backfill and compaction procedures, inadequate operations and maintenance procedures, inadequate leak detection and response, and failure to test its emergency response plan. The investigation report also describes Plains' substandard efforts, beyond initial notification, to ensure that the public and other stakeholders were kept informed of the incident and its progress. Plains has been directed to engage a third party to conduct an audit of the company's ability to manage communications during a crisis, with the results submitted to the ERCB no later than April 30, 2013. The site has been cleaned up, and reclamation and remediation efforts are still underway. As well, a high-risk enforcement action was issued against Pembina Pipeline Corporation and a low-risk enforcement action against Pengrowth Energy for pipeline spills that occurred in mid-2011. A high-risk enforcement action was issued against Pembina Pipeline for neglecting to immediately inform the ERCB about a pipeline spill on July 20 near Swan Hills. Pengrowth Energy has been issued a low-risk enforcement action for operating the pipeline for more than a year under faulty construction practices before a pipeline failure on June 26, 2011, near Swan Hills. The ERCB has issued directions to both companies to take specified action to ensure that these occurrences do not happen again.

Fatality report findings released

The fatality report on Bernadette Auger, who suffered fatal gunshot wounds at the hands of the Edmonton City Police on Jan. 16, 2010, was released by the Minister of Justice and Attorney General. The inquiry found there was "nothing that the police could have done differently when faced with these events. Accordingly, there are no recommendations to make for the prevention of similar

deaths." Auger, 48, was shot in an alley where she was surrounded by police after having dialled 911. Auger was holding a gun, which she raised at one of the police officers. She was shot twice. Auger's gun was an Airsoft toy gun, which was painted black and similar in size, style, and external characteristics as a police-issued firearm. Unknown to the police at the time, Auger was under several different prescription medications as well as having a high level of alcohol in her system, all of which had sedative side effects. Auger's common-law husband George Coward later told the police he expected Auger "was attempting to commit suicide by forcing the police to shoot her."

Change in Medevac services challenged

Rural doctors have been joined by the Wildrose Opposition in expressing concern over government plans to relocate Medevac Services from Edmonton City Centre to Edmonton International. Northern doctors claim there are dangers in moving the Medevac services, which would add 40 to 50 minutes to every emergency. The Alberta Liberals are also slamming the Redford government for a recently released report from the Health Quality Council of Alberta on Emergency Medical Services, which says lack of communication and planning has put the lives of Albertans in jeopardy. The government says it is taking immediate steps to improve ground ambulance services and has accepted four of the report's five recommendations and has accepted the other recommendation in principle.

Three Alberta recipients of Canada Post award

Constance Day Chief, Lloyd Desjarlais, and Cynthia Jim are the Alberta recipients of Canada Post's Aboriginal Education Incentive Awards. Awards were handed out to 24 people from across the country. Applicants must have resumed studies after at least 12 months away from the education system. The winners of the \$1,000 annual prize are chosen by a jury of representatives of Canada Post and one Aboriginal community member. The awards, which launched in 2004, acknowledge the hard work and drive required to continue education following an absence from formal schooling.

Gift Lake school back in operation

The Gift Lake school has been in operation since Jan. 19, after being closed Oct. 4, 2012, when mould and asbestos were discovered inside the building. Elementary students were allowed back first because construction in the elementary wing was finished earlier than the other areas. ECS students and office staff returned to the school following the Family Day long weekend in February. "This has been a tough year for everyone involved with Gift Lake School," said Superintendent Donna Barrett for Northland School Division. The return to the school was marked by a community supper and workshop session to discuss strategies to enhance learning for students.

De Grandmaison's work gifted to Lethbridge Art Gallery

BMO Financial Group has donated 67 original pastel portraits by Nicholas de Grandmaison (1892-1978) from its art collection to the University of Lethbridge Art Gallery. The collection, which is valued at more than \$1.66 million, spans a period of over 30 years and traces the development of de Grandmaison's talent and facility as one of the most important painters and portraitists of western First Nations people in Canada. De Grandmaison was well-known and beloved in the south and before his death in 1978 he was made an Honourary Chief of the Peigan Nation. University of Lethbridge President Mike Mahon says the portraits are of special significance due to the fact that de Grandmaison created most of his work in southern Alberta capturing the individual histories and personalities of those he painted. "Future projects include conducting an oral history project about the artist and the First Nations subjects in the portraits as well as commissioning First Nations artists to produce new work in response to the BMO donation. This generous gift will significantly enhance our collection, exhibitions, and public programs and thus be an excellent resource for our community," said Director/Curator of the University of Lethbridge Art Gallery, Dr. Josephine Mills. The University of Lethbridge Art Gallery has scheduled an exhibition of selected works from the BMO gift from May 2 to June 27.

Compiled by Shari Narine

PUBLIC NOTICE

CENOVUS FCCL LTD.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT ACT

NOTICE OF APPLICATION

AMENDMENT TO EXISTING IN-SITU PROJECT

In accordance with the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act, Cenovus FCCL Ltd. has applied to Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development for an amendment to construct and operate a wastewater treatment plant at the Cenovus Foster Creek facility. The treatment plant will be for the Kodiak Den construction camp located in the SW 1/4 of Section 14 Township 70 Range 4 West of the 4th Meridian. The treatment system consists of flow equalization, aeration, MBR treatment and disinfection. The effluent will be discharged at grade and/or reused.

Pursuant to section 73 of the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act, any person who is directly affected by this operation may submit a written statement of concern regarding this application. Failure to file a statement of concern may affect the right to file a Notice of Appeal with the Environmental Appeals Board. Such a statement of concern must be submitted within 30 days of the date of this notice to:

Director of Northern Region
Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development
Regulatory Approvals Center
Main Floor, 9820 - 106 Street Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2J6
Fax: (780) 422-0154

Please quote Application No. 021-68492 when submitting a statement of concern in regards to the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act application.

NOTE: Any statements filed regarding this application are public records which are accessible by the public.

Copies of the application and additional information can be obtained from:

Cenovus FCCL Ltd.
Attention: Michael Hinton
500 Centre St. S.E.
BOX 766
CALGARY AB T2P 0M5
Telephone: (403) 766-4302
Fax: (403) 451-1566

PUBLIC NOTICE

SUNCOR ENERGY INC.

Water Act

NOTICE OF APPLICATION

Notice is given that Suncor Energy Inc. has filed an application under the provisions of the *Water Act* for a Licence for the diversion of up to 28,000 cubic metres of water from four (4) man-made water bodies located at SE 04-092-10-W4, NE 33-091-10-W4, NE 31-091-10 W4 and SW 08-092-12-W4 for Commercial (dust control) purposes.

Any person who is directly affected by the application may submit a statement of concern to:

Environment and Sustainable Resource Development
Regulatory Approvals Center
Main Floor Oxbridge Place
9820 - 106 Street
Edmonton, AB T5K 2J6
Phone: 780-427-6311
Fax: 780-422-0154

within 30 days of the providing of this notice.

Please quote file number: **00307934**

Further information regarding this project can be obtained from:

Krista Pooley
Suncor Energy Inc.
Phone: 403-296-7503
Fax: 403-296-3628

Statements filed regarding this application are public records which are accessible by the public. Statements should explain why the filer is directly affected and provide the full printed name, phone number and/or email address, postal address and legal land location of the filer.

Failure to file statements of concern may affect the right to file a notice of appeal with the Environmental Appeals Board.

Saskatchewan Sage: Special Section providing news from Saskatchewan



The Treaty 6 flag from Onion Lake First Nation Chief Wallace Fox was accepted by University of Saskatchewan President Ilene Busch-Vishniac at a formal ceremony held March 12.

Treaty 6 flag presented to U of S

University of Saskatchewan President Ilene Busch-Vishniac accepted the Treaty 6 flag from Onion Lake First Nation Chief Wallace Fox at a formal ceremony held March 12. The flag was developed by the Onion Lake First Nation to signify the ongoing Treaty 6 relationship between First Nations and non-First Nations. The ceremony honoured the existing relationship between the U of S and First Nations in the Treaty 6 territory, and committed to continue to work together for widespread education on Aboriginal issues.

No jail time for Poundmaker chief, councillors

Eight members of the Poundmaker First Nation who admitted stealing treaty money from their band's Treaty Land Entitlement fund have been ordered to repay the funds into a special bank account that will be used to benefit school children on the reserve. However, Provincial Court Judge Dan O'Hanlon did not order any of them to serve jail time although most will be providing 50 to 100 hours of community service. Poundmaker's current Chief Duane Antoine, 53, current band councillor Colin Favel, 53, Ted Antoine, 57, Norman Antoine, 64, Burton Baptiste, 58, Hickson Weenie, 67, Bryan Tootoosis, 61, and Irene Tootoosis, 72, were charged after an extensive RCMP investigation and pleaded guilty last year to theft under \$5,000. Each admitted wrongly accepting \$2,500 in TLE funds from the band in June 2003. Favel, Irene Tootoosis and Bryan Tootoosis also pleaded guilty to theft over \$5,000 for a separate transaction in which they each received \$10,000. Duane and Teddy Antoine both received suspended sentences with 20 months of probation. Baptiste, Weenie and Norman Antoine each received a suspended sentence with 18 months of probation. Favel and Bryan Tootoosis received a conditional sentence of one year to be followed by 12 months of probation and Irene Tootoosis received a conditional discharge with 12 months of probation.

Vote buying results in ousting of chief, councillor

An investigation into vote-buying on the Mosquito, Grizzly Bear's Head & Lean Man First Nation has resulted in Chief Noel Stone Jr. and Councillor Milton Oxebin being removed from office on Feb. 22. Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada determined that the pair bought votes in the band election two years ago. A third councillor, Elbert Rahsaknunk, was also found guilty of vote buying, but resigned before his post could be declared vacant; the department said. Stone and Oxebin

are barred from running in the upcoming general election, which is set for April 17. However, Rahsaknunk can still run for office as he resigned his seat.

Standing Buffalo has two chiefs

A March 16 election has resulted in two chiefs for Standing Buffalo First Nation. Roberta Sooyewaste was elected chief but Roger Redman is holding on to the position. Sooyewaste was one of three people to run for the position; Redman was not on the ballot. Ten others vied for six positions as councillor. Now there are two sets of chiefs and councillors claiming to be duly elected. Standing Buffalo First Nation has its own election custom code. Redman is challenging the election.

Potash mine another step closer

Muskowekwan First Nation is a step closer to having the first on-reserve potash mine. The federal government will develop regulations for the mine under the First Nations Commercial and Industrial Development Act. Gordon Keep, chairman of the board of directors for Encanto Potash, said a feasibility study for the mine, finished at the end of February, found the mine can produce 2.8 million tonnes of potash annually for 50 years. "This is a significant amount of years that we can, through treaty, change the lives of our First Nation and our people," said Chief Reginald Bellerose. There are a possible 1,000 construction jobs and 400 to 500 jobs when the mine is running. Bellerose would like to see some of the money generated from the mine invested in education, language and culture. Members of the First Nation voted 80 per cent last year in favor of designating land for the project. An environmental impact study is expected to wrap up later this year. Encanto Potash hopes to have the mine up-and-running by late 2016 or early 2017.

FNPA, SaskPower sign up for opportunities

The First Nations Power Authority signed a new master agreement with SaskPower on March 1. The agreement defines a process for establishing a number of independent power generation opportunities for First Nations with SaskPower. "This is a giant step forward in creating economic development opportunities for First Nations people. It will provide tremendous benefits not only for First Nations but for everyone in Saskatchewan," said FNPA Chair Ben Voss in a news release. FNPA is a not-for-profit entity with a mandate to facilitate the development of First Nations-led power generation projects with SaskPower. Aboriginal Affairs and Northern

Development Canada provided \$1.39 million in funding for the creation and development of FNPA. In addition to the master agreement, SaskPower and FNPA are in discussions to explore additional projects and agreements that could result in further economic development opportunities for First Nations over the life of the agreement, such as the Meadow Lake Bioenergy Centre, a \$150-million 36-MW biomass facility located in Meadow Lake. FNPA and SaskPower have also signed a three-year funding agreement under which SaskPower will provide \$100,000 per year to FNPA with the option to renew for another two years by mutual agreement.

Organizations push government to address violence against Aboriginal women

The Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan have joined forces to call for funding from the federal government to protect Aboriginal women against violence and abuse. "The current violence Métis Nation, First Nation and Inuit women and girls face on a day to day basis is unacceptable," said MN-S President Robert Doucette in a news release. David Arnot, chief commissioner of the SHRC, said a recently released Statistics Canada report indicated that Saskatchewan and Manitoba have the highest rate of police-reported violent crime against women. That rate is double the national average. The SHRC is urging the federal government to partner with Aboriginal organizations to address the issue. FSIN Chief Perry Bellegarde reiterated both the FSIN's and the Assembly of First Nations' call for a National Public Commission of Inquiry on ending violence against Indigenous women and girls.

Okanese, Parkland sign MOU

Parkland College has expanded its commitment to partnering with First Nations in East Central Saskatchewan with the signing of a memorandum of understanding to establish a formal relationship with Okanese First Nation. The affiliation between Okanese First Nation and the college seeks to improve labour market participation among members of the First Nation through essential skills programs, Adult Basic Education, and specific skills training linked to industry and jobs. Among the other goals of the MOU, college programs and courses offered to Okanese First Nation will be strengthened, and both parties will work toward securing provincial training allowances for students learning on reserve. The agreement will be in effect for five years, with Okanese and Parkland officials meeting twice a year to assess the progress of the collaboration.

NWMO provides information in closed session

First Nations attended a closed-to-media session hosted by the Nuclear Waste Management Organization in late February to learn more about the possibility of storing nuclear waste in northern Saskatchewan. The Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations was provided with \$1 million by the NWMO to host information meetings over the next three years. Speaking to the Star-Phoenix during a break in the meeting, FSIN Vice Chief Bobby Cameron said, "To tell you the truth, I represent 74 communities, and the consistent message out there is the majority of them don't agree with nuclear waste management and the safety of it — and I speak on behalf of them." The NWMO is considering 21 sites, three in Saskatchewan and the rest in Ontario. Interest has been expressed by Pinehouse, Creighton and English River First Nation. The site will store millions of used nuclear fuel bundles, which are currently being stored on an interim basis at various facilities around the country. The NWMO is hoping to narrow down that list of 21 by the end of the year.

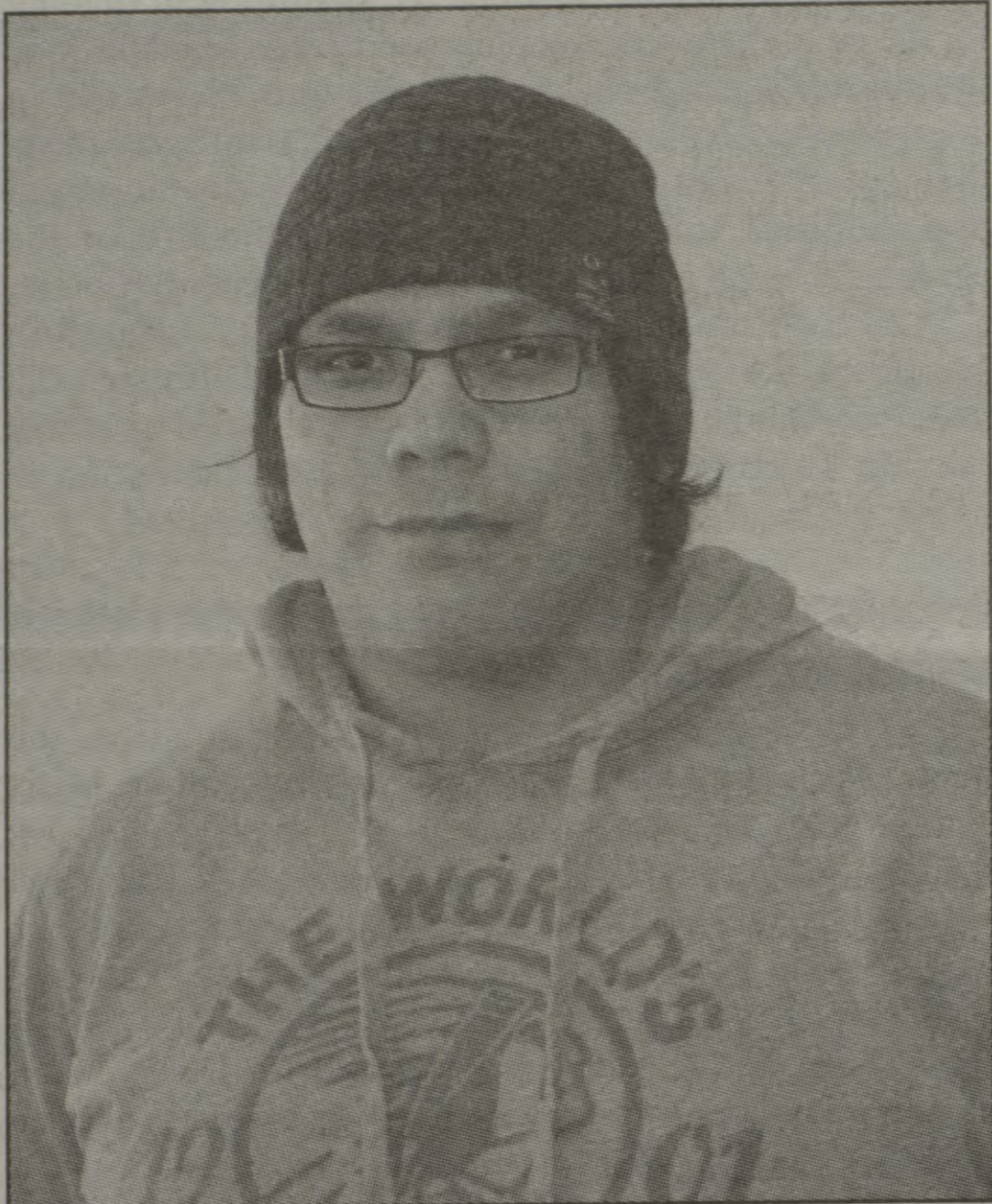
Compiled by Shari Narine

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Manitoba Pipestone: Special Section providing news from Manitoba



Robert Robinson

Opportunity Fund helps student to change life

Robert Robinson has benefited from the University of Winnipeg's unique Opportunity Fund. Robinson, who came to Winnipeg from Little Black River at the age of 17, wanted to advance his education after having an epiphany following an altercation with the law. "A part of me I didn't know existed woke up," said Robinson. "I knew I had to do something to change my life." He enrolled in the Beginning University Successfully program and is now continuing at UWinnipeg. The Opportunity Fund bursary allowed him to focus on his studies. Since its inception in 2007, UWinnipeg's Opportunity Fund has provided more than 1,112 bursaries. The funds help youth and young adults, regardless of background and socio-economic status, attain access to post-secondary education. To date, more than \$1.4 million has been invested in students and \$71,000 is still to be awarded this academic year. The

Opportunity Fund is unique among Canadian universities. It aims to build a \$10-million endowment that will bridge the graduation gap and transform lives. The fund includes tuition credits for K-12 students, fast-track bursaries for university students, as well as tuition waivers for youth raised in the child welfare system.

Chiefs boycott talks on First Nations Education Act

Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs Grand Chief Derek Nepinak sent a letter to Ottawa saying the First Nations Education Act consultations planned for Winnipeg would be boycotted, in line with what other chiefs in other provinces have done in protest of the federally-driven talks. Grand Chief Murray Clearsky, who represents 33 Southern Manitoba chiefs, said he would attend only as an observer. Consultation meetings, the fourth of seven planned in various parts of the country, still went ahead. First Nations are not in favour of a one-fits-all approach to education and made it clear in a recent Assembly of First Nations Special Chiefs Assembly that the Nations Education Act would not be supported.

Peat mining to go ahead on Peguis traditional land

After 20 months of community consultations, and extensive technical work by Peguis First Nation, Manitoba Conservation has refused the First Nation's licence appeals of peat mines. Licences were issued Feb. 22 for two new peat mines in Peguis territory and the Peguis treaty land entitlement area. The Washow Peninsula into Lake Winnipeg is the location of the two peat mine leases and licences. Despite "stringent new standards" for the licences, and new requirements for both SunGro and Berger to set up before operating the new mines, road building by Berger Peat Moss started immediately. "We told the government this peninsula is our pharmacy, and a primary source of medicinal plants. We told them drying out this peninsula, which filters wetlands for Lake Winnipeg, is a high risk activity. We told them they did not include our subsistence economy and hunting in their decisions," said Councillor Mike Sutherland. The new licences require plant studies, transplanting of endangered species, and medicinal plants, new buffers on all riparian zones, plus setting up extensive water testing and monitoring systems. Numerous appeals of the 2011

SunGro and Berger peat mine licences came from First Nations, cottage associations and environmental organizations.

MCCN, HudBay in court over mine development

The sovereign nation of Missinippi Nehethowak, as represented by Mathias Colomb Cree Nation, and HudBay Minerals Inc. were in Winnipeg court March 20 over protests undertaken by MCCN blocking entrance to where HudBay's gold, zinc and copper mine is being developed near Lalor Lake, which MCCN contends is unceded Missinippi Nehethowak Territory. MCCN says neither the company nor Manitoba government received MCCN's consent to operate. MCCN led two peaceful demonstrations on Jan. 28 and March 5 at the site. "We are sovereign and asserting our laws and jurisdiction over our unceded ancestral traditional territory. We have never given up our lands, waters and natural resources. We have a responsibility to manage their use and protection," said Chief Arlen Dumas. MCCN served HudBay with two stop work orders. HudBay is suing MCCN for millions of dollars in general, special and punitive damages.

Métis lawyer appointed judge of Court of Queen's Bench

Diana M. Cameron was appointed a judge of the Court of Queen's Bench of Manitoba replacing Justice W.J. Burnett, who was appointed associate chief justice of the Court of Queen's Bench. Cameron is actively involved in the Manitoba Métis Foundation and Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg. Cameron had been Crown counsel with the Constitutional Law Branch of Manitoba Justice since 2004 and senior Crown attorney, Criminal Prosecutions from 1989 to 2004. Her main areas of practice were constitutional law, Aboriginal law, taxation law and criminal law. She was a member of the Law Society of Manitoba, the Legislative and Law Review Committee of the Manitoba Bar Association and co-chair of the Criminal Law Section. As well, she was co-editor and contributor to the Canadian Bar Association (Criminal Law Section) electronic newsletter "Voir Dire" and co-chair for the Constitutional Law and Human Rights Section.

Compiled by Shari Narine

Justice system in crisis, 'quite frankly', says Iacobucci

By Barb Nahwegahbow
Windspeaker Contributor

TORONTO

First Nations people were not surprised to learn the findings of Justice Frank Iacobucci's report entitled "First Nations Representation on Ontario Juries."

The report, released on Feb. 26, stated bluntly that, "the justice system generally as applied to First Nations peoples, particularly in the North, is quite frankly in a crisis."

Iacobucci said that while his mandate did not extend to examining or making recommendations on the reform of the justice system or for improvements of First Nations socio-economic programs, these matters were of much relevance to the issue in question and should not be ignored.

In 2011, the retired Supreme Court Justice was appointed as an Independent Reviewer by the Ontario government to look at why First Nations people were not represented on juries, and to provide recommendations on strategies for inclusion.

Iacobucci's review took him to 32 First Nations

communities where he met with community members, Elders, service-providers and leadership. First Nations organizations and Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto were also included in the engagement process.

Systemic issues, said Iacobucci in his report, are at the heart of what he referred to as "the current dysfunctional relationship between Ontario's justice system and Aboriginal peoples in this province." He cited overrepresentation in the prison population and underrepresentation not just on juries, but in jobs in the justice system.

The review found First Nations people reluctant to participate in the jury process for a number of reasons, including the systemic discrimination experienced by them. This has led to an overall mistrust of the justice system making them adverse to participating in a system that works against them.

Iacobucci also acknowledged a divide between traditional First Nations values and the Canadian justice system values in dealing with conflict resolution and offences.

In the engagement process, First Nations leaders expressed the need to assume more control of community justice matters as an element of their inherent right to

self-government. They spoke about their past experience in developing and delivering culturally-appropriate approaches to justice, but as with many programs that achieve a measure of success, funding was discontinued.

Lack of knowledge and awareness of the jury system was also identified as one of the reasons for non-participation.

The report contains 17 recommendations, including the establishment by the Ministry of the Attorney General of two committees comprised of First Nations and government members—an Implementation Committee to oversee the implementation of the report's recommendations, and an Advisory Committee to the Attorney General on matters affecting First Nations people and the justice system. These committees should not be merely window dressing, cautioned Iacobucci, but should signal a change in the ministry's commitment to improve the situation facing First Nations people.

A statement released by Ontario Regional Chief Stan Beardy made it clear that First Nations expect the provincial government to act quickly to address the flaws in the justice system and to work directly with First Nations to implement the recommendations in Iacobucci's report.

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Ontario Birchbark: Special Section providing news from Ontario

Ontario Throne Speech does not impress

Ontario Regional Chief Stan Beardy of the Assembly of First Nations said the Ontario government's Throne Speech, delivered Feb. 19, offered little to signal a genuine change of course in the First Nations and provincial government relationship. "There were some promising statements in the Throne Speech but nothing new to signal that Premier (Kathleen) Wynne and this government will act to make the fundamental changes that need to be made to address First Nations priorities and to improve our relationship," said Beardy. The Throne Speech reiterated a commitment to work to ensure that Aboriginal communities have access to the tools and training to fully participate in the economy and to share in the benefits derived from resource development, and also pledged to work with Aboriginal communities to "close the gap" between First Nations, Métis and Inuit children and their non-Aboriginal peers. Beardy said while he appreciates the intent of Wynne and the provincial government to work toward a more fair society, he emphasized the need for both levels of government to consider those factors that have contributed to the Idle No More movement and its popularity. "First Nations have a unique relationship with governments as defined by our treaties and we must be dealt with on the basis of our treaty relationships and our constitutionally-protected rights," said Beardy.

Committee formed to look at Ontario jury reformation

Attorney General John Gerretsen has committed to "immediately work to address" the first two recommendations made in a report by Justice Frank Iacobucci in his report "First Nations Representation on Ontario Juries." Gerretsen said an implementation

committee that includes representatives from the First Nations community and from various government ministries will be formed. The committee will consider the report's recommendations, and how they might be implemented. A provincial advisory group will also be set up to provide advice to the Attorney General on matters relating to First Nations and the justice system. Iacobucci's report is an independent review which began in the fall of 2011 and addressed the lack of representation on juries of First Nations people who live on-reserve. Iacobucci's report includes 17 recommendations, including recommendations specific to Nishnawbe Aski Nation. "We accept this very credible report and look forward to working with the Ministry of the Attorney General to ensure not only that all First Nations can exercise their right to serve on juries but that there is a path forward to fix the justice system," said NAN Deputy Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler.

Chiefs of Ontario oppose Canada-China FIPPA

Chief Isadore Day of the Serpent River First Nation has provided an affidavit in support of the application by the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs for a Federal Court application calling for the suspension of the Canada-China Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement. Both Day and Ontario Regional Chief Stan Beardy have been vocal opponents of the Canada-China FIPPA since Oct. 31, 2012, saying that it is inconsistent with the international treaties already made between First Nations and the Crown and in breach of the fiduciary obligation to consult and accommodate First Nations in accordance with Canadian law, among other reasons. The FIPPA was also condemned by 133 First Nations in Ontario as an "unlawful violation of the sacred and sovereign treaties." Day and Beardy have written letters to leaders of both

Canada and China over three months ago, but have not received acceptable responses. While many First Nations and enterprises have ongoing business relationships with Chinese counterparts, First Nations are opposed to the unilateral imposition of the FIPPA.

Wabano Centre set to open this month

Construction on the new \$14.2-million Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health in Ottawa was expected to be completed in March with the official opening set for May 9. Wabano Centre is designed by Ottawa architect Douglas Cardinal and his son Bret. The building is clad in a golden, rough-cut stone that contrasts with the polished transparency of blue-green glass flowing across it. The materials evoke cliffs, water and sky. The new three-storey structure wraps around Wabano's original two-storey building, combining it into one facility, adding 25,000 square feet. The old building, with 15,000 square feet, has been renovated. Wabano will become Canada's first national centre of excellence for Aboriginal health care. It will house a maternal and child wellness centre, expand programs in chronic disease, women's health and mental health, and introduce a social enterprise program to develop job skills. The expansion will enable Wabano to double the number of clients from 10,000 to 20,000 a year. The centre will include an educational display on Indian residential schools, funded by the Legacy of Hope Foundation. Construction on the centre began in 2011. The project received \$4.6 million in federal and provincial stimulus money. Wabano's share was \$9.6 million; \$5.7 million has been raised and fundraising continues for the remaining \$3.9 million.

Compiled by Sha'ri Narine



BUILDING ABORIGINAL WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

The aim of the Building Aboriginal Women's Leadership (BAWL) Program is to assist in the removal of barriers to Aboriginal women entering leadership arenas.

Many Aboriginal communities are working hard to overcome the effects of historical and current conditions of oppression & racism.

ONWA believes that this can be influenced by Aboriginal women changing the presence and practices of our women by encouraging networking and by women taking a more active role in understanding how leadership and governments function.

The BAWL program focuses on the issues, challenges, and inequities that Aboriginal women face as we strive to fulfill the responsibilities of our jobs, meet the needs of our family members, and answer the demands of the community.

The program also addresses the issue of under representation of women in positions of influence on tribal and band councils, management boards, and boards of directors of Aboriginal organizations.

Program Initiatives:

1. Leadership skills development training for Aboriginal women from across the province on leadership methods, facilitation skills, board development training, and financial literacy.
2. Mentorship by established ONWA Locals for women in less established centres/member groups to provide effective community leadership.
3. Public education, development and use of community and information networks to help promote awareness of Aboriginal women in leadership roles.
4. Planning sessions for Aboriginal women from four communities (representing ONWA's four regions) to shape the training program to address specific needs of their communities for community development leadership and business development leadership

Training Available On:

- Social and economic issues, trends and implications
- Supporting Aboriginal women as agents of change
- Hands-on strategic planning - a model for personal, community, or business planning
- Life balance: stress management, healing, personal boundaries; separating self from career, family, and community
- Communications and media relations
- The challenges of leadership: accountability, performance, decision making, delegation, and mentoring
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Community solutions developed to battle prescription drug abuse

By Barb Nahwegahbow
Windspeaker Contributor

TORONTO

Judy Desmoulin, Health and Social Director of Long Lake #58 First Nation located 330 km east of Thunder Bay, Ont., became aware of the prescription drug abuse problem in her community when she was a Grade 4 teacher. She spoke about Long Lake's experience at the Chiefs of Ontario Health Forum in Toronto in February, and in a follow-up interview with Windspeaker.

People were abusing Oxycontin and Percocet, narcotic pain medications, said Desmoulin. The on-reserve population of the community is 430. Out of 166 adults between the ages of 18 and 35, she said about 104 were addicted to prescription drugs.

"I saw the effects on the kids in my class, coming to school hungry, not properly clothed for the seasons or weather, unkempt. A lot of aggressive behavior to other kids, teachers and people in authority."

Desmoulin started working with her students' families, doing workshops and home visits.

"I knew if I got them on a better path, their kids would be looked after much better." In 2007, Desmoulin was hired as Health Director. She's encountered no resistance working with families. "They didn't like the situation they were in," she said. "These are very powerful drugs."

Her team offers workshops on grief, loss and childhood trauma, and culture and tradition are embedded in everything. Her team is growing. "As people get healthy and well, they get added to the team," she said.

Treatment includes the use of Suboxone. Many of the clients are using Methadone which is dispensed by a clinic in a nearby community.

"It's an urgent situation to get people off meth," she said, citing a multitude of health problems suffered by Methadone users.

"A lot of the young men and women are toothless, they suffer severe constipation and two people have almost died, weight gain, sugar craving, joint pain and depression."

Suboxone and Methadone are still drugs, she said, and the goal is to get them off.

"Drugs are a form of security for them," she said. "You take away the drugs and the



PHOTOS: BARB NAHWEGAHBOW

Judy Desmoulin, Health and Social Director of Long Lake #58 First Nation; in Toronto for Chiefs of Ontario Health Forum in February 2013

memories come flooding in." Family support is crucial because "it takes a lot of courage to go to those dark places."

A strong believer in community-based healing, she feels they're making progress. There are still some people using drugs, but they've asked to be put on the waiting list for programs.

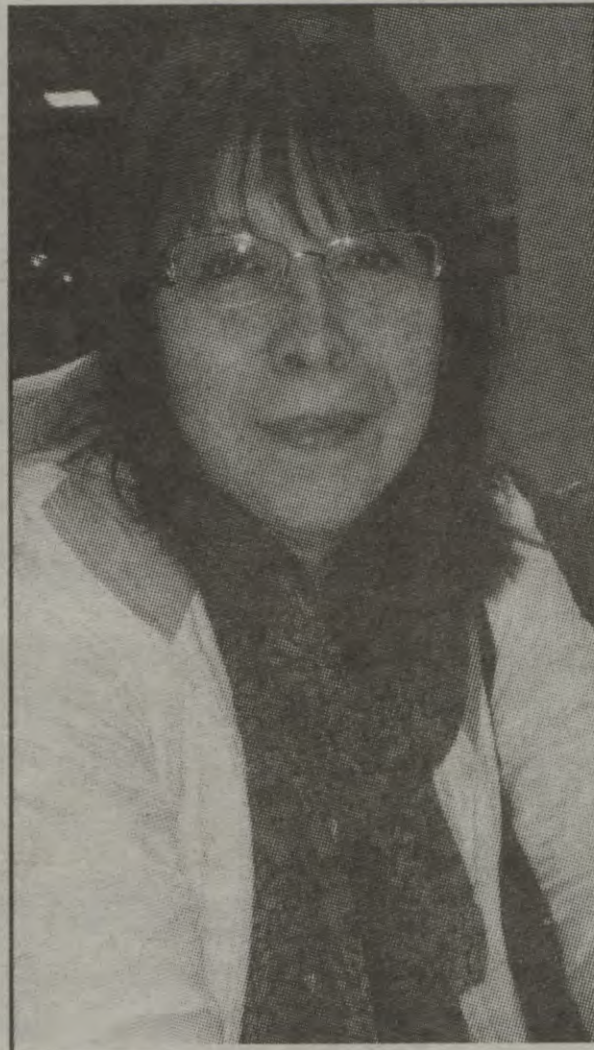
A six-bed residential facility is almost ready to open. The length of stay will depend on individual circumstances.

"Since we started this community-based healing," said Desmoulin, "there are a whole lot of people healing together, and I think that's the real key to our success. And we need our people understanding and learning what the heck happened to us."

Liz Atlookan, Health Director of Eabametoong First Nation, also spoke at the forum and in a follow-up interview. Eabametoong is located about 400 km northeast of Thunder Bay with an on-reserve population of 1,200.

"Something was gripping our community. We were almost like strangled, crippled," she said. People were addicted to Percocet and Oxycontin and turning to crime to pay for their habit. Between January and October 2010, there were 876 occurrences involving police, including arson, vandalism, theft and homicide. "There was a state of panic," she said.

In October 2010, the band declared a state of emergency. Health Canada visited and said the prescription drug abuse



Liz Atlookan, Health Director for Eabametoong First Nation in Toronto for Chiefs of Ontario Health Forum.

problem was so severe it should be treated similar to a pandemic.

Despite the severity of the crisis, Health Canada provided no funding. The chief and council channeled the band's funds from Casino Rama to programming and a six-bed detox was opened less than a year later. The residential program has since changed to a 21-day outpatient program treating 20 clients at a time.

A staff of 10 provides treatment that blends western best practices with traditional cultural practices, and includes counselling, education and group work, dispensing of Suboxone, and a land-based program.

"One of our strengths as a community," said Atlookan, "was using the land. Out on the land, you get a sense of freedom, pride and identity." Health Canada recently funded this program and participants are taught "anything from snaring rabbits, skinning marten and cleaning and tanning moose hides."

Over 140 people have gone through the program and the majority are doing really well, according to Atlookan. "There are still issues," she said. "But the adult population is more stabilized. In stores you see empty shelves, which means people are buying food. You don't see people running to and fro, from house to house, and kids are back to school more regularly." The next issue that has to be tackled, she said, is providing job training and job readiness training.

Health Watch

By Shari Narine

Yukon gov't programs embrace active living

The Yukon government has committed \$250,000 annually to help raise the activity level of children and adults in order to combat the rising rates of obesity. "This funding commitment in support of the Renewed Yukon Active Living Strategy maximizes opportunities for children and youth to be active in all communities, and represents an investment into the health, wellbeing and quality of life of all Yukoners," said Community Services Minister Elaine Taylor. In step with the Renewed Yukon Active Living Strategy, the Health and Social Services department launched its Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Strategy and its Pathways to Wellness initiative. Together these programs share resources to increase access to sport and recreation, healthy living, healthy eating and a higher quality of life. The renewed funding investment is subject to legislative approval in the 2013/14 budget.

Study shows breastfeeding reduces asthma in children

Research on Aboriginal children in Canada has determined that breastfeeding can reduce the risk of asthma occurring in young children. The main goal of the study, conducted by Ming Ye, PhD candidate with the School of Public Health, was to see if breastfeeding had any effect on young Aboriginal children living in non-reserve areas in Canada. The data indicated that the prevalence for asthma overall, regardless of gender, age, socio-economic status, and other such factors, was lower in urban Aboriginal children than the Canadian average. According to the study, which is reported in the Canadian Respiratory Journal, the prevalence of asthma is 11.4 per cent for children that were not breastfed. Even children that had been breastfed some of the time, but not exclusively, showed lower prevalence for asthma (nine per cent) than those children who had never been breastfed. Exclusively breastfed children had an asthma prevalence of 6.8 per cent.

N.W.T. examines ways to partner to prevent cancer

The Department of Health and Social Services will team up with the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer to see how they and other health organizations can work together to reduce the impact of cancer on Aboriginal peoples in the Northwest Territories. "Advancing cancer control with and for First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities is a priority for the Partnership," said Lee Fairclough, vice-president at Canadian Partnership Against Cancer. "We are working hard to educate our residents about cancer and prevention," said Minister of Health and Social Services Tom Beaulieu. The Partnership has a First Nations, Inuit and Métis Action Plan on Cancer Control.

New funding to address prescription narcotics addictions

Ontario is working with First Nations communities to increase access to care and community supports for those addicted to prescription narcotics. The province is providing ongoing annual funding to support five new Community Wellness Development Teams and to increase the use of telemedicine equipment in First Nations treatment centres. Community Wellness Development Teams provide mental health and addictions expertise and support to First Nations communities seeking help in addressing prescription narcotic addiction by blending tradition and cultural practices. Using new telemedicine equipment will allow providers to conference with patients in remote communities to enhance addictions treatments. In October 2012, Ontario announced \$15 million in new funding for addressing prescription-narcotics addictions, \$2 million of which supports Aboriginal and First Nations initiatives.

Language, culture key to improve health of children

Anthropologist Dawn Martin-Hill says improving the health of Aboriginal children requires teaching them about their traditional languages and culture. Martin-Hill, speaking at an Indigenous children's health symposium recently at McMaster Innovation Park, said ongoing and systemic racism within the medical profession coupled with a deep distrust of doctors by Aboriginals are two of the major reasons why the quality of health of Aboriginal children is worse than other young Canadians. She said that restorative health through traditional methods of intervention, bringing back rituals, learning about culture and language allow children to be empowered. Martin-Hill, a Mohawk of the Wolf Clan, holds a PhD in cultural anthropology. She lives on Six Nations territory and is one of the founders of the Indigenous studies program at McMaster University.

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Sports Briefs

By Sam Laskaris

Hockey talent sought

Officials with the television program Hit The Ice have put out a call for Aboriginal male teenage hockey players who wish to be part of the second season of the series.

As they did a year ago, Hit The Ice officials will be scouting players at this year's National Aboriginal Hockey Championships (NAHC). This year's Canadian tournament, which will be held in Kahnawake, Que., begins April 28 and continues until May 4.

Many of those who shine at the 2013 tourney will be invited to take part in the upcoming season of filming for the show, which is broadcast on the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network.

Those who do not compete at the NAHC, still have a chance though to be part of the series. That's because series officials will once again be accepting virtual tryouts. Application forms can be downloaded from the series Web site located at www.hittheice.tv. The virtual tryout is open to Aboriginal players ages 16 to 18. A video of the applicant playing hockey must also be included.

The inaugural season of the series featured 13 half-hour episodes. The series follows the trials and tribulations of 20 Aboriginal players who are put through a vigorous two-week training camp led by former National Hockey League player and coach John Chabot.

Winners announced

Manitoba's top Aboriginal athletes, coaches and volunteers for 2012 have been announced.

All of the recipients, revealed in early March, were chosen by officials with the Manitoba Aboriginal Sports and Recreation Council.

Winnipeg's Skyler Boulanger and Logan Thacker of Ochre River were selected as the top Aboriginal female and male athletes, respectively.

Boulanger starred with her high school basketball team, the University of Winnipeg Collegiate, this past year. She led the club to an undefeated season, which ended with a provincial AAA championship.

Thacker won his award for his efforts with the Dauphin Regional Comprehensive Secondary School football squad. He was a captain for the team, which won its league championship. Thacker also played for his school's basketball and volleyball clubs.

As for the Aboriginal coaching awards, they were won by Kelly Chinchilla of Winnipeg and Brandon's Gavin Young. Chinchilla has coached the Anishinabe Pride, a juvenile girls' (players ages 16 to 18) basketball team the past two years. The club competes in the Winnipeg Minor Basketball Association.

Young was certainly busy during the past year as he was on the coaching staff of five different teams. He coached the basketball, football and 8-on-8 football teams at Vincent Massey High School. And he also served as a coach with a pair of community football teams, the under-16 Team Westman and the Westman Wolverines' major squad.

Winnipeg's Jackie Anderson and Dennis Park of Selkirk were honoured as the top volunteers of the year. Anderson started the Anishinabe Pride basketball program in 2006 with a single team. Last year the organization had seven clubs operating.

Anderson also helped run weekly youth development basketball camps this past year. About 60 youths attended those weekly camps, which ran from January through June.

Park was honoured for his longtime involvement with the Lord Selkirk Minor Hockey Association and with Hockey Winnipeg. Park was also selected as an officer with Hockey Winnipeg last year. He serves as the vice-president responsible for programming for those players ages 12 and under.

New name forthcoming

One of Canada's newest sports franchises caused a controversy several months before its first scheduled game.

That's because officials with an Ottawa expansion team in the National Basketball League of Canada announced in late February that the club's moniker would be TomaHawks.

After receiving plenty of flak that the name was racist and offensive to Aboriginals, team owner Gus Takkale revealed just a day later that the franchise would not be called TomaHawks.

Takkale said the name TomaHawks was not chosen because of an Aboriginal tool. Instead, he thought the name was catchy as it described a tomahawk dunk, a type of slam dunk utilized in the sport. The team's original logo consisted of a basketball with wings, which was symbolic of a flying hawk.

Takkale was uncertain when the club would announce its new name. The Canadian league is finishing off its second season now. Its regular season campaign runs from November through March. With the addition of the Ottawa franchise, the Canadian hoops league will now have nine entrants for the 2013-14 season.

The existing teams in the league, which was founded in 2011, are the Oshawa Power, London Lightning, Windsor Express, Montreal Jazz, Halifax Rainmen, Moncton Miracles, Saint John Mill Rats and Summerside Storm.

[sports]

Reason for walk makes Corporate Canada uncomfortable



Theo Fleury with the staff at the the Siksika Health Centre.

By Sam Laskaris
Windspeaker Writer

CALGARY

Former National Hockey League star Theo Fleury has had his share of well documented challenges throughout his life, and now the 44-year-old, who has Métis heritage, is training and preparing for his next task.

Fleury is planning a nine-day walk, from Toronto to Ottawa (a total of 401 kilometres) in May to raise awareness of the issues surrounding childhood sexual abuse. The event, which will be staged May 14 to May 23, is called the Victor Walk.

Fleury deems himself a victor. That's because he has overcome childhood sexual abuse himself. In his autobiography titled *Playing With Fire*, which was released in 2009, Fleury confirmed he had been sexually abused by his junior coach Graham James.

James is currently serving a jail sentence for abusing Fleury and another former player. He was originally sentenced to two years for these crimes, but an appeal court increased the sentence to five years in February of this year.

James had previously spent more than three years in jail for also abusing one of his other former junior players, Sheldon Kennedy, who also went on to play in the NHL.

"We're trying to put an end to 100,000 years of abuse," Fleury said of the reason for his Victor Walk. "It's going to take some time."

Fleury plans to begin his walk at the Child Abuse Monument in Toronto. And the plan is to conclude the walk on the steps on Parliament Hill.

In an effort to raise awareness and to try and help get stricter

child sexual abuse laws in the country, Fleury and others will read their Victor Impact Statements at the conclusion of the walk.

Since his own revelations of his abuse, Fleury has become an ardent advocate. Gaining support for his cause, however, has not been easy.

"It's a subject not many people want to talk about," he said.

Proof of this is that walk organizers haven't found any businesses to support the walk.

"We've sent sponsorship packages to everybody," Fleury said. "We've done big-time marketing. And we've had zero corporate interest across Canada."

Alberta's Siksika Nation though has formed a partnership with the walk. A contingent of about 10 people, including Tyler White, the chief executive officer of the Siksika Health Services, will be among those walking with Fleury for as much of the 401 kilometres as they can.

"I wouldn't categorize myself as an athlete of any sort," White said. "We want to do as much as we can though to support Theo."

White is hoping others will soon jump on board.

"It's disappointing we're not getting the big corporations behind us," he said. "But I'm confident once the walk gets going it will pick up momentum."

Besides Fleury, it is uncertain how many others will cover the full distance of the walk. He is planning to walk between 40 to 50 kilometres each day in order to complete the event in nine days.

"We're looking for as many folks [as possible] that want to be a part of it," White said.

A portion of the walk proceeds will go towards the planned

expansion of the Siksika Health Services facility. Expansion plans include a traditional healing centre and a clinic for victims of child sexual abuse.

Fleury visited the Siksika Health Services last year.

"I was completely blown away with what they were doing out there," he said, adding he was impressed a facility was offering help to so many, ranging from those who needed X-rays, dental work or mental health assistance.

"They are a one-stop shop for all your needs."

Edmonton's Little Warriors Foundation and the Sexual Assault Centre for Quinte and District in Belleville, Ont. will also receive some of the walk proceeds.

Fleury said organizers will not speculate on how much money they can raise.

"Any amount would be just fine," he said. "If you have expectations for a certain amount you're just setting yourself up for failure."

Fleury last played in the NHL a decade ago, during the 2002-03 season with the Chicago Blackhawks. He is best known though for being a member of the Calgary Flames, an organization he spent portions of 11 seasons with.

Fleury won the Stanley Cup with the Flames in 1989, his first season as a pro. He also had NHL stints with the Colorado Avalanche and New York Rangers.

Fleury averaged more than a point per game during his NHL career. He appeared in a total of 1,161 games and earned 1,167 points, including 488 goals.

Fleury was also a member of the Canadian team that captured the gold medal at the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City.

Indigenous educators recognized for outstanding contributions

By Darlene Chrapko
Windspeaker Contributor

CALGARY

The procession of Guiding the Journey: Indigenous Educator Award recipients, together with David Johnston, Governor General of Canada, were welcomed by the traditional drums of the Chiila Elementary School Drum Group, 10 youth ranging in age from five to 12 years from the Tsuu T'ina Nation in Alberta.

Hosted by comedian, hip-hop artist and motivational speaker Wab Kinew, the inaugural Guiding the Journey: Indigenous Educator Awards were held at the Telus Convention Centre in Calgary at a black tie dinner on March 15.

Recently appointed director of Indigenous Inclusion at the University of Winnipeg, Kinew charmed the audience with his sense of humour and light-hearted banter throughout the evening. At one point, he related how he had always been told that "Education is the new buffalo." To this phrase he added, "but the Sundance is still the Sundance."

Johnston asked the audience gathered at the dinner to remember three words: "Cherish your teachers," a theme that resonated throughout the evening. Departing from his prepared speech, the Governor General related personal anecdotes of his own life's journey that told of the formation of his identity, honoring the influence of his own mentors and guides along the way.

Steve Williams, president and CEO of Suncor Energy, which

had earlier announced a \$1.7 million commitment to the Inspire Institute, spoke of the wealth that young, engaged people bring. When he said, "It is in the best interest to make the relationship a two-way street," he received loud and continuous applause.

Elder Francis First Charger, Ninnaisipistoo: Owl Chief of the Kainai First Nation, gave the opening prayer in the Blackfoot language. That was followed by lively entertainment that began with Métis jig dancer Corbin Poitras, who had everyone clapping and tapping along to his fancy jig steps. His performance of three traditional dances, the traditional Métis sash dance, the broom dance and the ever popular Red River jig, gave the evening's festivities a warm glow and energetic tone.

Accompanied by his cousin Shauna Seeteenak's throat singing, Nelson Tagoona captivated the crowd with his original creation, throat boxing, a fusion of traditional Inuit throat singing and modern beat boxing. The Chiila Elementary School Drum Group was warmly welcomed when they took centre stage for a second performance.

The stage was then set and the atmosphere lively for the audience who had come to see their family members, friends and colleagues receive the great honors bestowed upon them for their outstanding contributions to Indigenous education on this memorable evening.

As patron of the awards, the Governor General accompanied Roberta Jamieson, president and CEO of Indspire, in recognizing 11 recipients in six categories: Community Service, Innovative

Practice, Indigenous Education Partner, Language, Culture and Traditions, Leadership and Role Model.

Established in 1993 as the National Aboriginal Achievement Awards, this year's awards marked the 20th anniversary of the Indigenous community celebrating the highest honour of its achievers. Presented as part of the National Gathering for Indigenous Education, the awards recognized outstanding Indigenous educators for their innovation, their leadership, and their devotion to community.

"Indspire's inaugural Guiding the Journey awards shine a much deserved spotlight on recipients who, by their achievements, dedication and commitment to Indigenous values, are helping countless youth succeed," said Jamieson.

The crowning glory, the lifetime achievement award, was bestowed upon Lottie Keye of

the Six Nations of the Grand River in Ontario. When the jury received Lottie Keye's nomination, they were overwhelmed, said Jamieson. Because it didn't fit into any particular category, the jury created the Lifetime Achievement Award for an individual whose lifelong contribution was in two or more of the six key areas of achievement.

Jamieson described Keye as a tremendous mentor and an inspirational role model. At a time when languages were in tremendous difficulty, she was one of the first language teachers in the 1980s without assurance of pay.

"She started with nothing but a rich sense of passion and commitment," said Jamieson.

Described as a pioneer in language revitalization, Keye was a founding teacher of the community's Cayuga language immersion schools. She devoted

her entire career to preserving the Cayuga language.

In her 28 years of teaching, Keye taught language, culture and tradition to multiple generations through sharing her own experiences, stories and Indigenous knowledge. She furthered her career as a researcher, translator and transcriber of the Cayuga language and co-authored the *Gayogohonin/Cayuga Dictionary*.

In 2008 she was recognized as an Indigenous Knowledge Guardian by the Six Nations Polytechnic board of directors, of which she is a member.

"At 75, she continues to work for our people," said Jamieson.

Jamieson, acknowledged the permanent mark the honoured educators have left on their communities.

"They will forever have a place in the history of this country as inaugural recipients," she said.

(Continued on page 21.)

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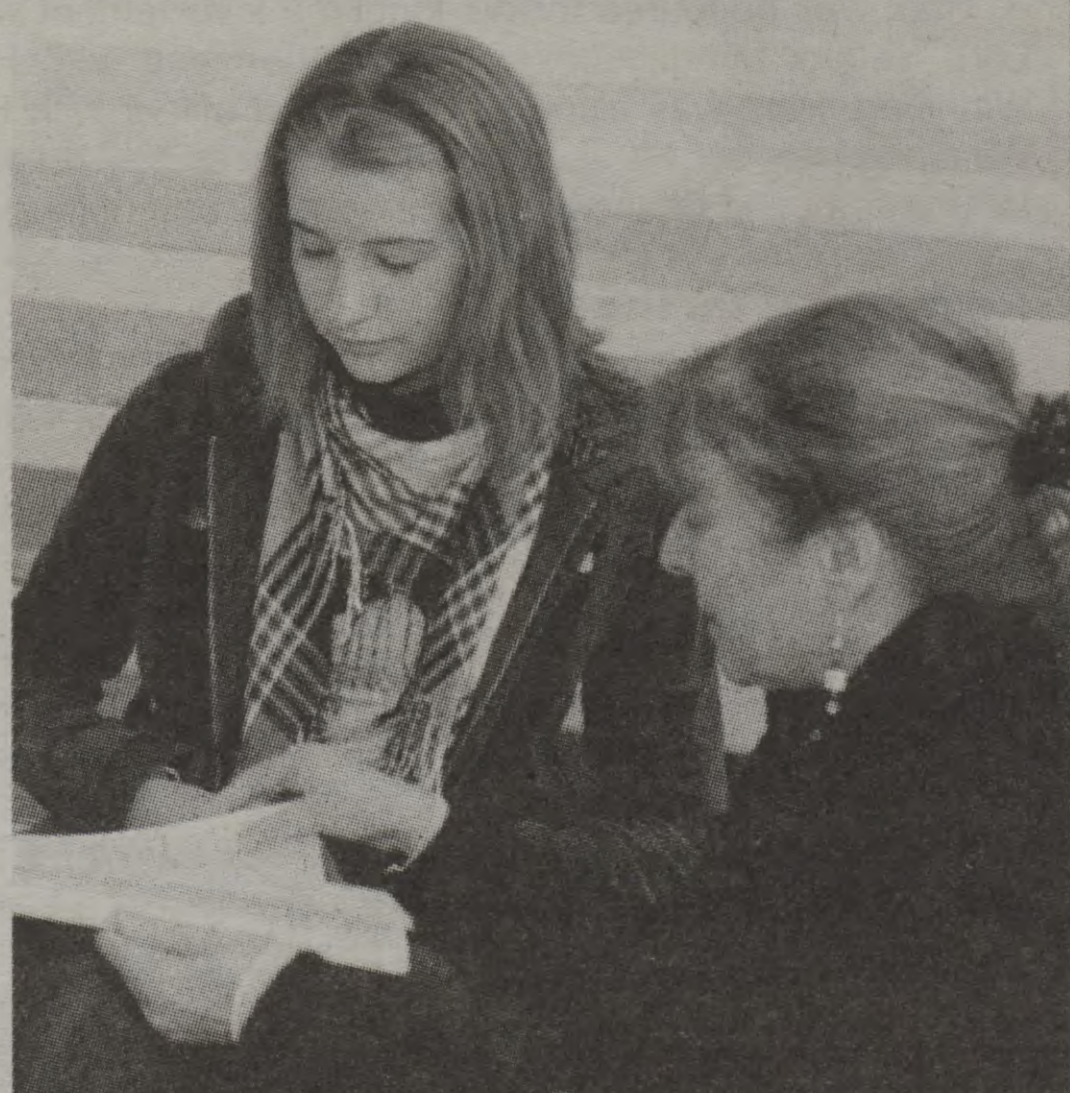
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Indigenous educators recognized

(Continued from page 20.)



PHOTOS: SUPPLIED

Elder Francis First' Charger gives the blessing



PHOTO: PIERRE GAUTREAU

Wab Kinew emcees Indigenous Educator Awards



PHOTO: PIERRE GAUTREAU

Lottie Key receives Lifetime Achievement Honour, with His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston and Roberta Jamieson

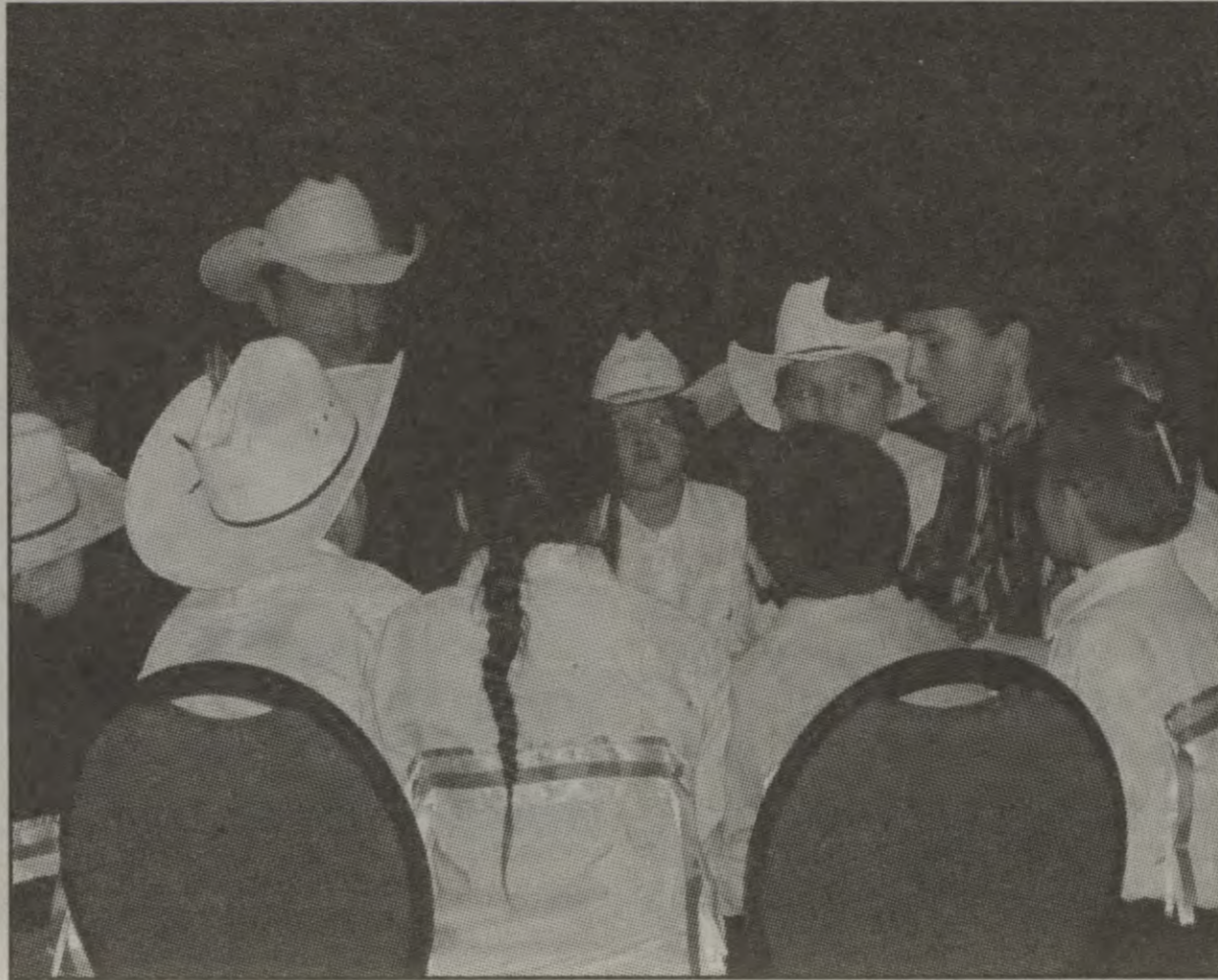


PHOTO: PIERRE GAUTREAU

Tsuu T'ina's Chiila Elementary School Drum Group

Indigenous Educator Award Recipients

Kelly-Lee Assinewe, Sagamok Anishnawbek First Nation, Ont., Community Service

Brent Kaulback, Fort Smith, N.W.T., Indigenous Education Partner

Tanya Leary, Roseau River First Nation, Man., Innovative Practice

Doris Camsell, Deh Gah Gotie Dene Band, N.W.T., Language, Culture and Traditions

Curtis Michael, Shubenacadie Mi'kmaq First Nation, N. S., Language, Culture and Traditions

Neil Debassige, M'Chigeeng First Nation, Ont., Leadership

Deloria Many Grey Horses, Kainai First Nation, Alta., Leadership

Gordon Martell, Waterhen Lake Cree First Nation, Sask., Leadership

Eric Wilson, Peguis First Nation, Man., Leadership

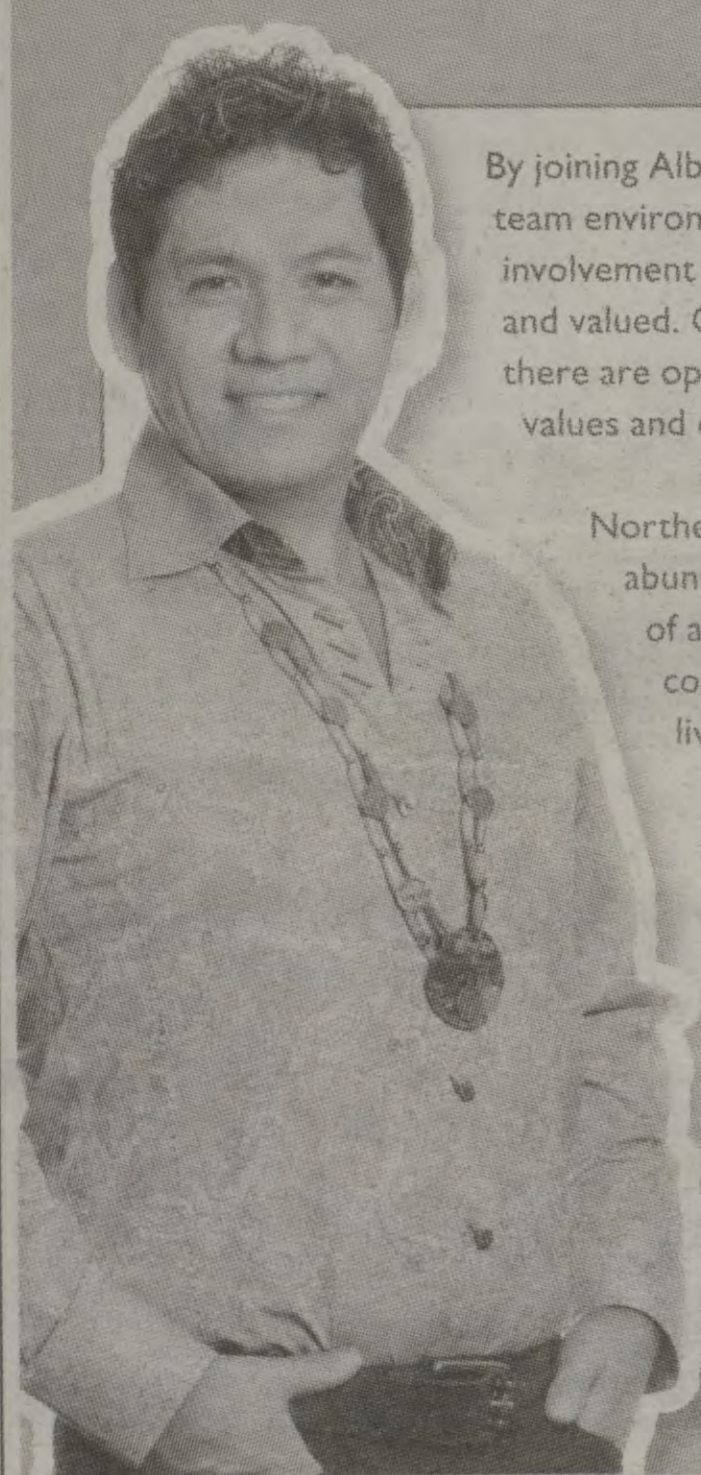
Kirsten Barnes, Gitksan First Nation, B.C., Role Model

Brandi Vezina, M'Étis, Man., Role Model

Lottie Key, Six Nations of the Grand River, Ont., Lifetime Achievement in Education



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[footprints] Alfred Scow Retired judge worked to bridge equality gap

By Dianne Meili

Alfred Scow, the first Aboriginal judge ever appointed to B.C. court, had much to celebrate.

But he refused the "role model" moniker, taking more pleasure, it seemed, in the idea he may have played a part in reconciling the gap between Aboriginal and mainstream Canada.

Placing no blame and fuelling no anger, Alfred chose a passive approach to educate Canadians about the disparate Aboriginal experience. In his retirement years, for example, he published *Secret of the Dance*, imparting the true story of how he, as a nine-year-old child, snuck in to watch his father dance at a potlatch, ceremonies prohibited at the time by the Indian Act.

Written with Andrea Spalding and Darlene Gault, the book was selected as one of the 2007 Best Books for Kids and Teens by the Canadian Children's Book Centre.

Tina Dion, a Cree lawyer in Vancouver, met Scow in 1996 when he appealed to her University of British Columbia law class for help.

"He had a question for us," recalled Dion. "He wanted Aboriginal students to advise him in his efforts to combat misinformation about Aboriginal people in the media." Dion sensed his genuine purpose and helped him establish the Scow Institute for Communicating Information on Aboriginal issues, of which she is currently president.

The institute was named for Scow without his knowledge.

"He and Joan (his wife) missed one meeting and that's when the committee came up with the name. We joked, 'That's what you get when you miss a meeting,'" Dion explained in a 2010 article in the Law Society of British Columbia's *Bencher's Bulletin*.

The Scow Institute is responsible for making available unbiased information about specific laws that affect Aboriginal

people and shape their experience.

According to Dion, "Alfred was a decade shy of not being able to be a lawyer." A law was passed in 1919 preventing First Nations and other minorities from being admitted to the legal profession, because they were barred from voting in government elections.

"Aboriginal people were only allowed to vote in 1960, and Alfred graduated in 1961, so he just made it in," Dion said. Before that, he was not considered a Canadian citizen.

Not only was Scow the first Aboriginal judge in B.C., he was also the first Aboriginal to graduate from law school in B.C., and also the first called to the bar in that province. He was awarded the Order of Canada in 2000 and the Order of B.C. in 2004.

Born April 10, 1927 in Alert Bay, Scow's parents were Chief William Scow of the Kwicksutaineuk Nation, and his mother's name was Alice. The couple valued formal education and used subtle coercion to keep their son in school.

As Scow recalled in an article published in 2005 in the UBC Law Alumni Magazine, at 15 he told his parents he wanted to quit school to fish and support the family of 18. They agreed, and Scow was secretly disappointed they didn't argue with him. A few days later he overheard them talking about arranging his marriage now that he was a working man. He tiptoed out of the house and went for a long walk, pondering this unexpected turn of events. The next day he announced he would stay in school and continued his studies for the next 20 years.

Scow's story has an epilogue: years later, at a family gathering he took his parents aside and asked if they knew he could hear their conversation of so many years ago. Smiling, they nodded "yes."

Alfred could have been the poster boy for the saying 'slow



Judge Alfred Scow

PHOTO: SUPPLIED

and steady wins the race.' He had fished with his father from the time he was six, and financed his law degree on halibut and salmon boats. At first, he found the concepts of the western legal system to be foreign, and claimed to be far from an academic. He found school difficult and lacked good study habits, struggling with his classes but never giving up. Fortunately, the UBC Dean and some of the professors encouraged him and he finally graduated at 34.

"For a long time, it really didn't strike me as significant that I was the first (Aboriginal to graduate in law)," Scow is quoted as saying in the law alumni magazine, even though the head of the Indian Affairs Department for B.C. attended his ceremony. "I want to do whatever I can to show my gratitude because (it) really changed my whole life."

Scow began private practice in 1962 and married his English wife Joan Heaton-Peterson in 1964. The couple had no children.

As a lawyer with only two years' experience, he was asked by a Fort Rupert couple to defend their daughter, charged with murder. He deferred, insisting they hire a senior lawyer, but they wanted him. Finally, he asked a top criminal lawyer what he should do. "You're a lawyer, aren't you?" the man asked. Scow replied in the affirmative and was told "Well then, take the (expletive) case!" He did, and his client was acquitted.

Scow was appointed to provincial court in 1971, and expected to hold the job for the rest of his career. But in 1967, he was appointed as a representative of Canada on a fact-finding commission in Guyana, and was later appointed chair of a board of review for the B.C. Workers Compensation Board.

He also served on the management council for UBC's First Nations House of Learning and was a lifetime member of the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Society, where he was the

founding president.

In his retirement years, Scow broadened his scope to include activities that would better the position of Aboriginal people across Canada.

"He didn't sit idle," said Dion. He quietly developed organizations and set up scholarships to help individuals, and Canadian society, as a whole, she explained. Significantly, he established a bursary fund with the Provincial Court Judges for needy law students at UBC, and the Scow Institute for Communicating Information on Aboriginal Issues.

Scow would have been 87 on April 10, and would have celebrated his 50th wedding anniversary this August. He died at home surrounded by his extended family on Feb. 26. "We all die. The goal isn't to live forever; the goal is to create something that will," reads a post on the Facebook page developed after his passing.



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First Nation police services remain underfunded

By Shari Narine
Windspeaker Contributor

OTTAWA

A commitment for the next five years for funding police services on First Nations is an important step in acknowledging First Nations police services as essential, but that funding doesn't address the entire picture.

"Ongoing negotiations need to continue because although there's a five-year commitment, there are still funding shortfalls," said Assembly of First Nations Justice Portfolio holder Alberta Regional Chief Cameron Alexis.

In early March, federal Public Security Minister Vic Toews announced that funding for policing agreements with First Nation and Inuit communities would be renewed under the First Nations Policing Program, but did not specify the funding amount. Presently, the federal government spends about \$122 million, which covers 163 policing arrangements that encompass 1,250 trained police officers in about 400 communities serving about 338,000 people.

Alexis gives credit to AFN National Chief Shawn Atleo and Quebec/Labrador Regional Chief Ghislain Picard for pushing the issue of funding.

"Throughout the years, First Nations and their police services of choice have been operating almost year-to-year on their funding. First Nations police services across this country are essential services and that's the key word, 'essential' services, and because they've been funded year-to-year, to a degree, they haven't been recognized as essential services," said Alexis.

Those First Nations that do operate their own police services will have to negotiate tri-partite agreements with the provinces and the federal government. The federal government covers 51 per cent of the cost while the province picks up the remainder.

Alexis said he is not aware how negotiations are going with any of the provinces.

Picard is calling for an immediate signing of a single-year agreement with the First Nations in Quebec, the province

and the federal government. He is concerned that delays will put at risk 18 tripartite agreements governing the police services in 26 Quebec communities.

"What the AFNQL chiefs are demanding is clear and simple: We want to see, first of all, the immediate signing of tripartite First Nations-Canada-Quebec agreements for a one-year period. Then, over this one-year period, the AFNQL Chiefs will conduct a review of their police services and the conditions governing these services, and we expect the federal and provincial ministers to participate in this review," said Picard in a news release.

Also of concern is the correctional system. In February, the Board of the Nishnawbe-Aski Police Service and the Chiefs of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation wrote a letter to the Office of the Chief Coroner in Ontario to "put (him) on formal notice ... that safety of 35 of NAN's communities currently policed by NAPS is in severe jeopardy."

The letter followed the Feb. 1 death of Lena Anderson, 23, who had been taken into custody by the NAPS Kasabonika Lake Detachment. She was held in a police cruiser because of the lack of heating in the detachment. She allegedly committed suicide in the cruiser.

The letter also noted that the May 2009 Kashechewan Inquest designated seven communities to receive modular units for detachments. Only one unit had been installed. This does not take into account the 19 detachments which are unsafe because they do not have sprinkler systems.

Alexis said the police funding announced by the federal government does not target correctional facilities, which falls under a different category and "is vastly underfunded." To date, the AFN has not been approached by any First Nations group in a "cohesive fashion" to push for funding for correctional facilities and programs.

AFN was approached by the First Nations Chiefs of Police Association for support on the police funding issue.

"Unfortunately the funding does not equate to an all-inclusive cohesive funding to meet all these issues," said Alexis.

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