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# Wind speaker



Canada's National Aboriginal News Source

**Court will hear  
child welfare  
complaint  
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**100 recommendations  
made to curb  
youth suicide  
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Volume 29 No. 7 • October 2011

plus G.S.T.  
where applicable

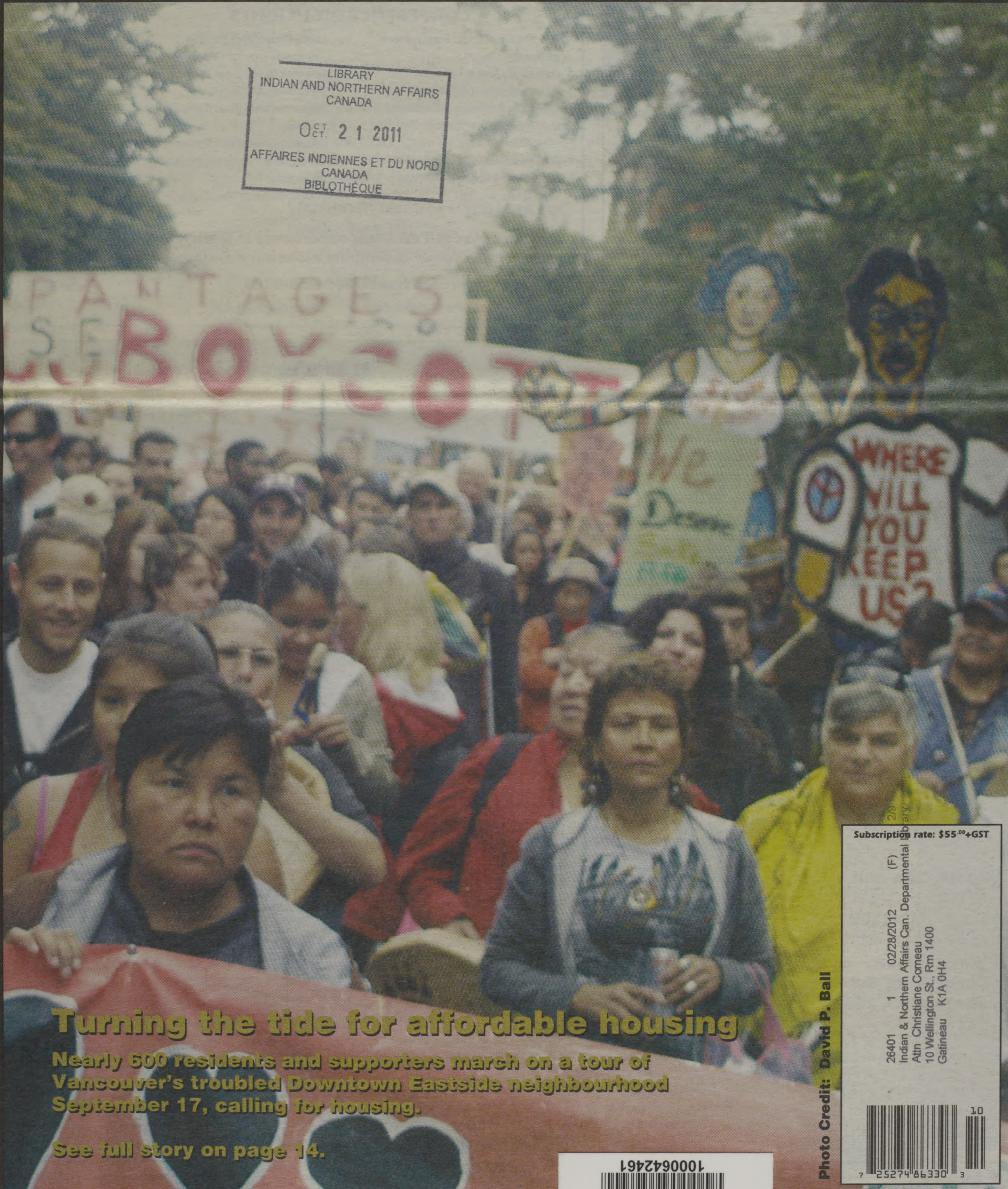
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## Turning the tide for affordable housing

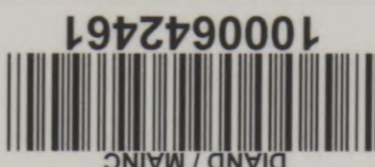
Nearly 600 residents and supporters march on a tour of Vancouver's troubled Downtown Eastside neighbourhood September 17, calling for housing.

See full story on page 14.

Photo Credit: David P. Ball

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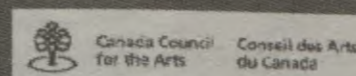
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For more detailed criteria information, please visit [www.bookawards.sk.ca](http://www.bookawards.sk.ca)

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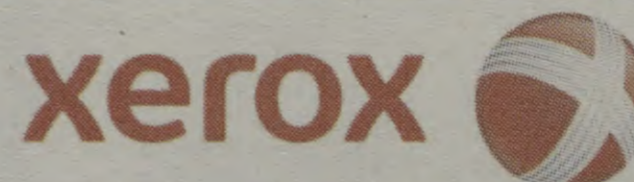
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AFOA Canada is now accepting nominations for the Xerox Canada - AFOA Canada Excellence in Aboriginal Leadership Awards. Created in 2004, the award is designed to recognize and celebrate Aboriginal achievement in finance and management.

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There are two categories for nominations for the award. The NATIONAL category recognizes individuals who have contributed to the Aboriginal financial management profession on a national or institutional level. The REGIONAL category recognizes those individuals who have made their contributions at the regional, local or community level.

### AWARD CRITERIA

Recipients of the award continuously demonstrate a sincere and long-term commitment to excellence in Aboriginal finance and management. Please follow the Awards & Scholarship link at [www.afoa.ca](http://www.afoa.ca) for full information about criteria and how to submit.

Awards will be presented at a special ceremony at AFOA's National Conference scheduled for February 14 - 16, 2012 at the TCU Place in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan



## AFOA

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### 2011 AWARD RECIPIENTS

(National Category)  
Terry Goodtrack,  
Aboriginal Healing Foundation

(Regional Category)  
Alana Dixon,  
Canim Lake Band, B.C.



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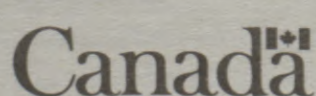
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Windspeaker acknowledges the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Canada Periodical Fund - Aid to Publishers for our publishing activities.



**Features**

**Court will hear child welfare complaint 8**

One year after the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal [CHRT] dismissed a complaint against the federal government for its alleged discrimination in underfunding on-reserve child welfare services, the case is again going forward, this time through the federal court system.

**Frustration and concern greets Missing Women's inquiry 9**

Grainne Barthe felt listened to, but she isn't confident that her words will make a difference. "I thought that (Commissioner Wally Oppal) was very respectful to me and to everybody at the whole thing, but I feel that sometimes these events are token events, just to kind of appease the people, to say, 'Well, we were there,'" said Barthe, counselor with Stopping the Violence, a program offered by the North Coast Transitional Society.

**100 recommendations made to curb youth suicide 10**

A high rate of youth suicide in Pikangikum, a rural Ontario reserve, prompted the province's Deputy Chief Coroner to investigate and provide recommendations to help the First Nation community address the tragic epidemic.

**Settlement restores some land and creates new nation 11**

A special ceremony was held Sept. 12 that celebrated the conclusion of years of negotiation that resulted in the creation of Alberta's 45th First Nation.

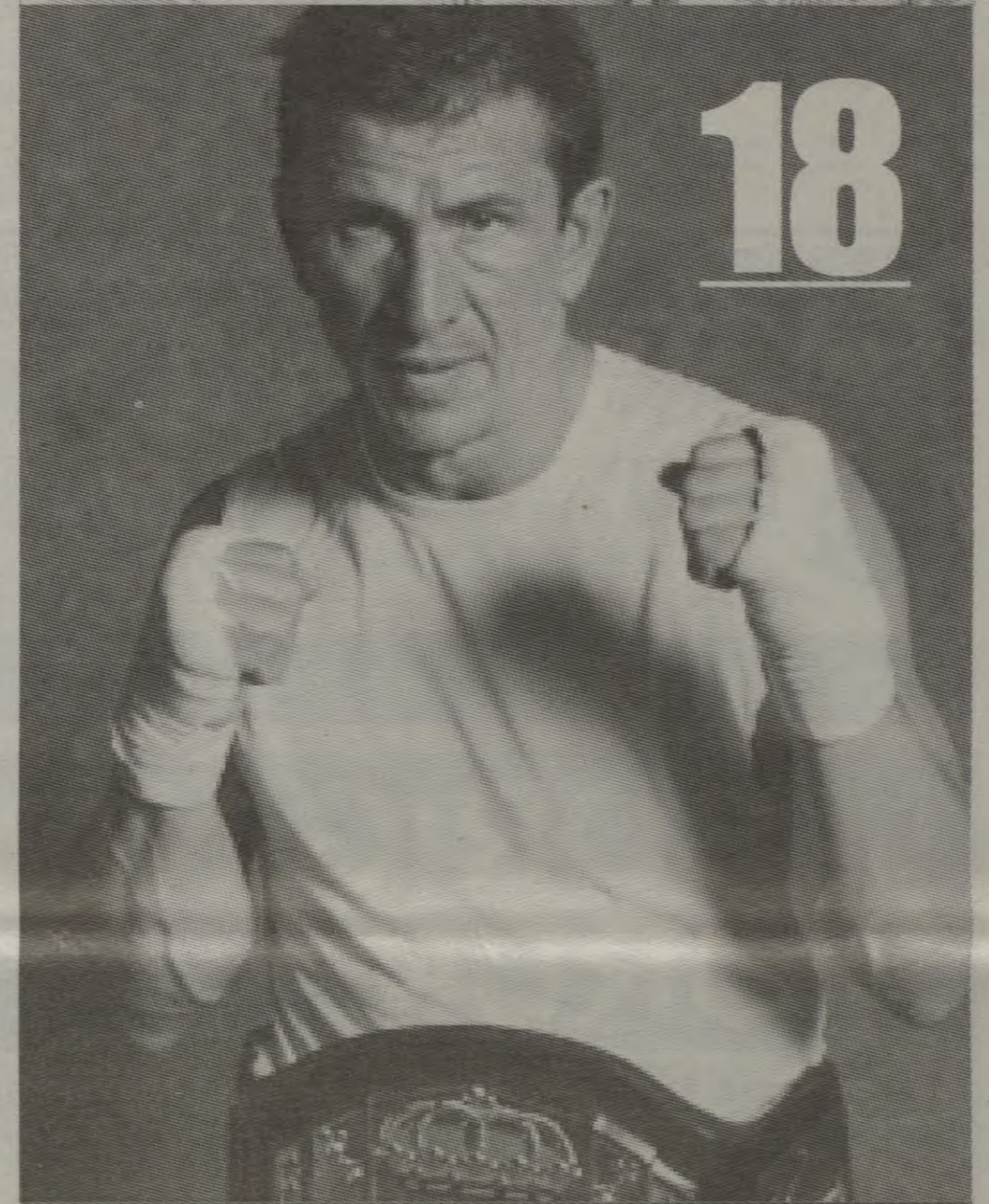
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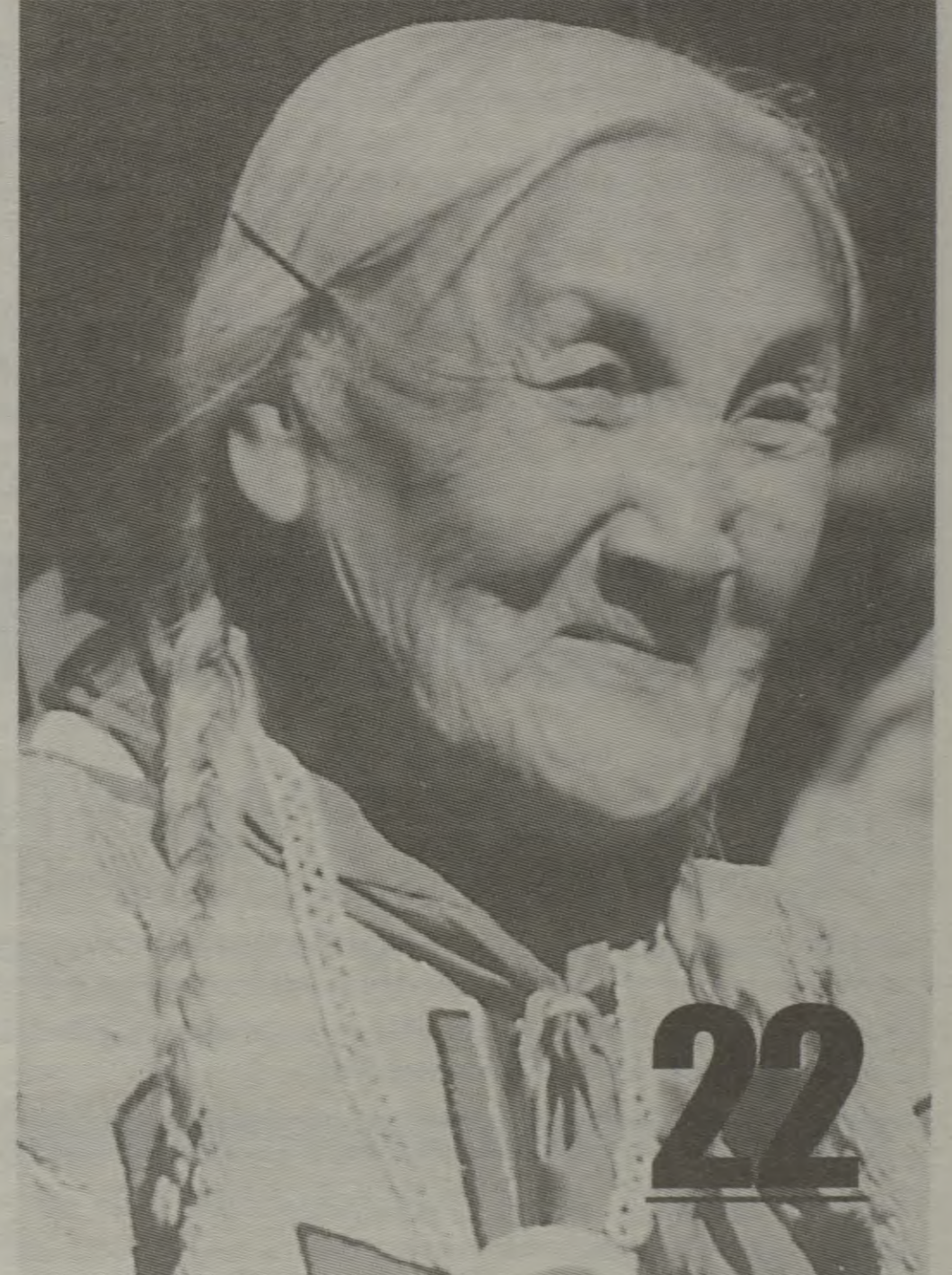
To walk into Maggie Black Kettle's tipi from the bustling grounds of the Calgary Stampede was to enter the peaceful eye of a pounding, frenetic storm. The muted light, smell of prairie sage, and lilt of her soft voice—sometimes dipping so low as to sound like a whisper—soothed the senses. Her stories of a carefree childhood along the banks of the Bow River in southern Alberta could transport you to another time and place.



11



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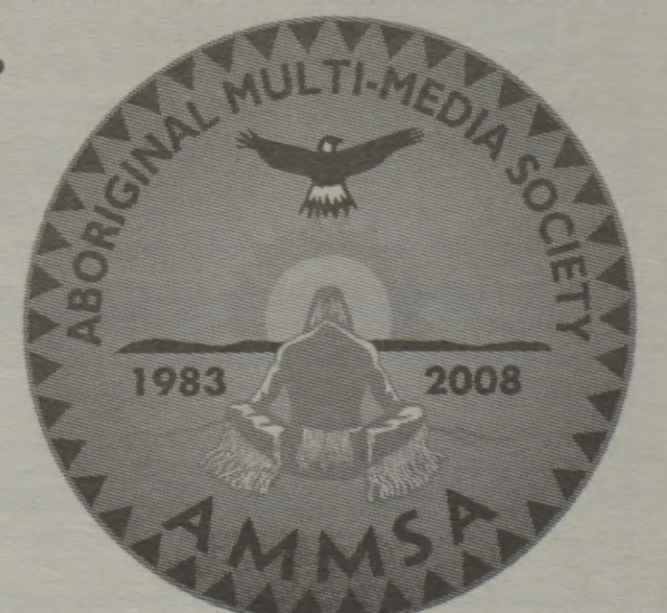


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Windspeaker is published by the Aboriginal Multi-Media Society (AMMSA) Canada's largest publisher of Aboriginal news and information.

AMMSA's other publications include:

- Alberta Sweetgrass — The Aboriginal Newspaper of Alberta
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- Business Quarterly — Canada's Aboriginal Business Magazine



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- Water - Politics and Preservation
- Developing Reserve Land: Opportunities and Challenges
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- Application of Human Rights to First Nations: Repeal of Section 67
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- ... and more

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**Comedian Carl Bird** from the Peguis First Nation will make us laugh at lunch.  
**Eagle and Hawk** will perform at the dinner on Wednesday, November 23, and more keynote speakers to be confirmed...

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- Health services delivery for First Nations Communities: What's Next?
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- Culturally Sophisticated Professional Development and Training: Enhancing the Skills of the Aboriginal Health Workforce
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- Cultural Safety: A Self-Assessment Tool for Healthcare Providers and Organizations
- Getting You There When it Counts: Challenges, Issues and Solutions in Medical Transportation
- Connecting the Dots with The Wharerata Declaration as an International Initiative in Mental Health Leadership
- Accreditation Canada's Aboriginal Health Services Program: Setting the Standard



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- Cultural Competency and Cultural Safety for Health Service Professionals
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First Nations Health Managers Association

## On behalf of the children

We're taking this opportunity to give a nod of the head to a couple of remarkable women in our community who know a few of things about pushing an agenda forward despite the great force of government working to thwart their efforts. These women do what they do with great skill and good humour, but know how to lock horns with the best of them when the situation demands it.

Both of these women have ruffled the feathers of Canada's most powerful to state that what is being done to the country's most vulnerable—children in care—is unacceptable, and in many cases reprehensible.

Cindy Blackstock is the executive director of the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada. Blackstock has led the charge against inequity, attempting to use Canada's own Human Rights laws to demonstrate the miserly and wrong-headed approach the federal government applies to funding child welfare services on reserve. A human rights tribunal dismissed the complaint she made that First Nations children living on reserve are discriminated against because they don't get the same level of financial support that off-reserve children receive from the provinces. The fact that Canada was "satisfied" that the complaint was dismissed on a technicality shows the uphill battle Blackstock, and those involved in fighting this inequity face in motivating Canada to do the right thing. The fact that she's preparing to get back into the ring for round two, bringing the case to a federal court, makes us proud to have her on the side of our children.

We're also proud to say we have Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond fighting on behalf of our children. Establishing the office of B.C.'s Representative for Children and Youth was an initiative of the legislative assembly. The idea for the office was spawned from a review of British Columbia's child protection services, completed in 2006. The Representative advocates on behalf of children and youth, because they "deserve" to be protected and feel safe. And the Representative works to hold the government

and those providing child protection services accountable through investigations, reviews and audits.

Turpel-Lafond is unapologetic when exposing abuses and inadequacies in the child welfare system in that province. She is independent from government and Turpel-Lafond has had to skirmish on many fronts to keep that autonomy pure and true.

She's not shy about wading in to alligator-infested waters either. We're anticipating her report about the tasing of a young boy by police in Prince George. The police report was, let's say, timid in its response to one of their own using a taser on a kid living in a group home, saying that the officer involved did not use excessive force. Whether it was the right way to handle the situation remains to be seen.

When it was learned that the Minister of Children and Family Development under its Youth Forensic Psychiatric Services was using phallometric testing on boys 12 to 17 years of age, some of whom were special needs, the Representative felt it necessary to ask why. Phallometric testing measures sexual arousal as an indicator of deviant sexual behavior, and the practice was halted once advocacy groups raised the matter publicly, but the Representative felt an examination of the subject was still warranted, in case the minister changed his mind.

Her most recent report about a four-month-old's death in care describes the child welfare system in B.C. as chaotic and inadequate. Turpel-Lafond said the BC government has used the delegated authority system as a way to avoid responsibility, rather than a way to provide the best for children in care.

With comments as clear and pointed as that, Turpel-Lafond is sure to have made a few enemies since her five-year appointment in November 2006. She's soon up for re-appointment, and one wonders if the Liberal government under new Premier Christy Clark will have the coconuts to face another five years under Turpel-Lafond's scrutiny.

Good luck to you ladies. Your work is important to us.

*Windspeaker*

[ rants and raves ]

## Page 5 Chatter

### SOUNDS LIKE THE REPUTATIONS

of Saskatchewan's Aboriginal lobby groups are taking it on their respective chins. First the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations heaped insult upon injury with the one-two punch of buying off their embattled reformer grand chief Guy Lonechild to get rid of him, while attempting to push out the reformer board chair of the Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority Kirk Goodtrack. Goodtrack fought back after the board, made up of FSIN cronies, "removed" him from his post for trying to curtail board member spending. The way Saskatchewan's First Nation organization is conducting its business is now raising eyebrows, with funding from government sources being re-evaluated. Now the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan is having to face response from a federal government report that rates it as "high risk." And that could mean funding problems for the Métis organization. The report says the MNS is not following its own internal processes or "generally accepted accounting principles" and there are discrepancies between its financial reports and audited financial statements. The report is also suggesting that there are too many Métis at the political trough, saying 12 regions are about double what is needed. To the credit of the MNS, the organization was the one that released the report. CBC quotes MNS President Robert Doucette as saying "Nobody can say that this Métis government ever hid anything. And for me, that's important," he said. "At the end of the day, we all live in this community, and we have to ensure that everybody feels comfortable about our role."

### INQUIRY'S SECRET APPLICATIONS,

secret discussions with police must end, said the BC Civil Liberties Association which is demanding the end to what the organization describes as "secret applications for standing and secret discussions between police, government and staff of the Missing Women Commission of Inquiry." The complaint came after another police officer, with two lawyers, was granted "full" standing in the inquiry, which gives his legal team the right to cross examine any witnesses. The application from the police officer's team was heard, considered and decided on by the Commission without notice to family members or organizations interested in police accountability, women's rights or Indigenous rights, said the BCCLA. BCCLA, Amnesty International Canada, the Assembly of First Nations, and the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs, along with a coalition of 10 women's organizations, have only been given "limited" standing and can only ask questions with the permission of the Commissioner. The BCCLA said there have been a series of "non-transparent decisions involving the police, the police union, the Criminal Justice Branch and the Commission, many of which remain unresolved," including discussion and circulation of the transcript of Commissioner Wally Oppal's phone message to former Attorney General Barry Penner; the terms of the document disclosure agreement between the Commission, the RCMP and the VPD, and what information will and will not be disclosed to all parties; and the preparation of an expert witness list and a witness list by the Commission, despite repeated requests for access to that list by participant groups.

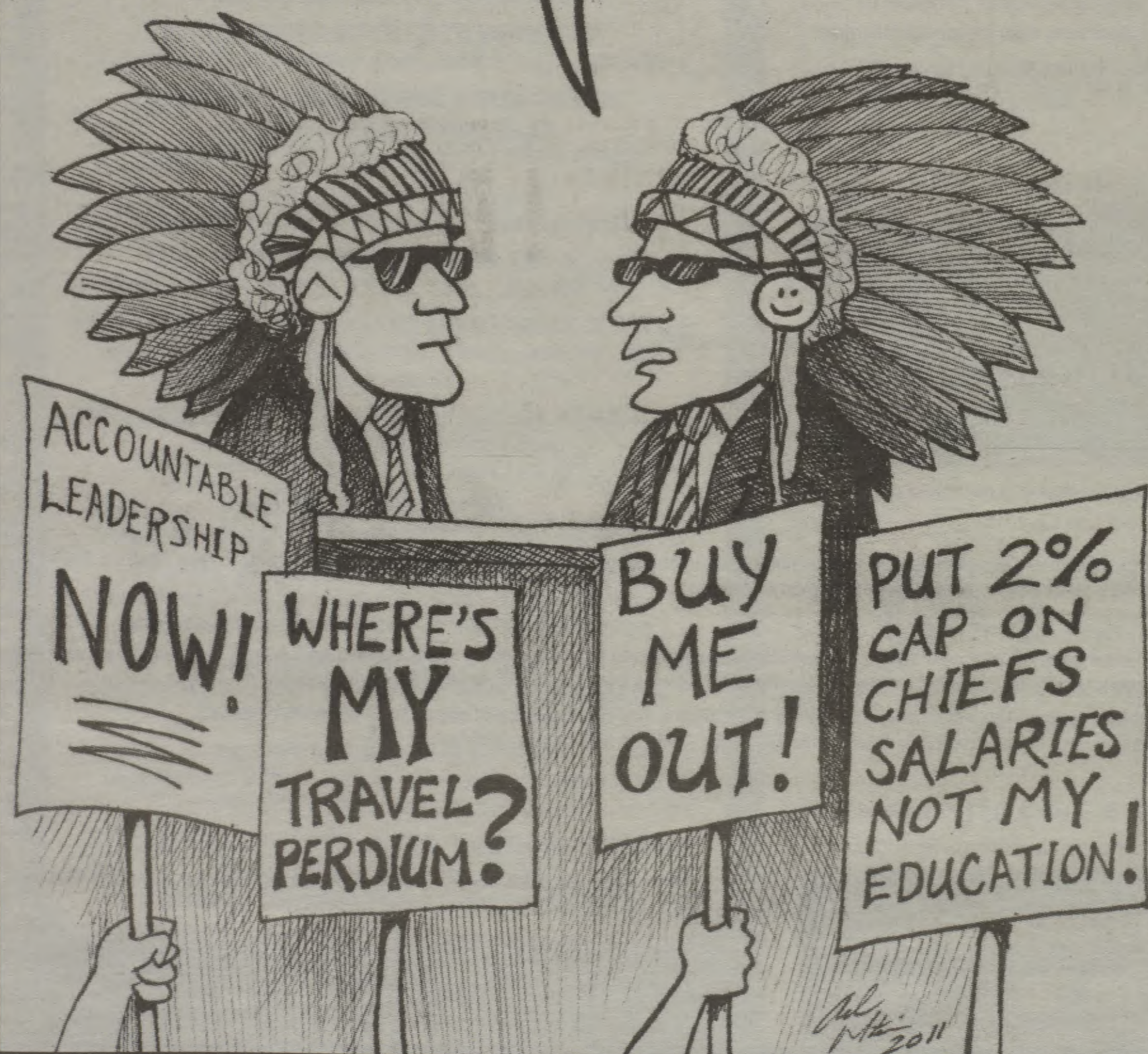
### THE REPORT, SO MANY PLANS, SO LITTLE STABILITY:

A Child's Need for Security, identifies inadequacies in child welfare planning, case management, decision-making, and holes in how government and delegated Aboriginal agencies work together, and courts assess potential caregivers. B.C.'s Representative for Children and Youth released her investigation report in the chaotic life and unexpected death of a four-month-old infant. Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond said "A child at the most vulnerable stage of life was not well-served by jurisdictional shifts between agencies with a duty to care for him. Everybody knew there was a problem—family, community members and agencies—but no one saw through the confusion and took concrete action to safeguard this little boy." She said 11 different placement plans for the infant's care were made over a four-month period, ranging from the infant being cared for by various different relatives to the infant being brought into the legal care of the Ministry of Child and Family Development. But with no follow-through or oversight, most became nothing more than ideas and theories, and were later abandoned. Turpel-Lafond's report states that 16 social workers touched the case before the infant's death, as did lawyers and the family court. The infant's file was transferred five times between MCFD and the delegated Aboriginal Agency. "The focus was not on the needs of this First Nations infant, and there was no observable logic to what happened regarding his care," said Turpel-Lafond. "There was limited consideration given to the safety, stability and consistency required for a newborn to thrive. Instead, chaos and confusion prevailed throughout his brief life." Turpel-Lafond said she cannot conclude whether the infant's death was preventable or find any evidence that links this baby's death to the care he received. But this does not minimize concerns raised by her investigation, she said, because case management was clearly chaotic and this child's best interests were not considered.

## Rank Comix

by Adam Martin

THIS ISN'T EXACTLY WHAT I HAD IN MIND WHEN WE ORGANIZED THIS "DAY OF ACTION" PROTEST...



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- How to finance the First Nations projects
- How to create an investment environment that attracts quality investors
- Innovative approaches to partnering with First Nations communities
- Enabling Aboriginal economic participation – pathway to success or road to nowhere?
- Striking the balance: renewable energy developments on Traditional Territory
- Partnerships models: negotiation and drafting of Impact Benefit Agreements and related participation agreements

## WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

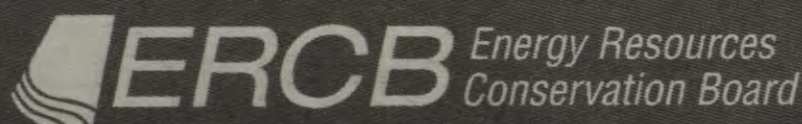
- Chiefs, Leaders and Members of Aboriginal Communities and Associations
- Band Council Members and Officials
- Economic Development Directors and Officers
- Legal Counsel practicing Aboriginal, Natural Resources Law
- Managing Consultants in Energy and Natural Resources
- Energy and Environmental Lawyers
- Energy Advisors and Consultants
- Regulators and Policy Makers – Power and Utilities
- Power and Utilities Consultants
- Independent Power Generators and Service Companies
- Independent Power Producers
- Renewable Energy Companies
- Federal and Provincial Government Officials

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## NOTICE OF HEARING

APPLICATION NO. 1600065

PETROBANK ENERGY AND RESOURCES LTD.

MAY RIVER PROJECT—PHASE 1

ATHABASCA OIL SANDS AREA

The Energy Resources Conservation Board (ERCB/Board) will hold a public hearing of Application No. 1600065 (Application) at the Sawridge Hotel, 530 Mackenzie Boulevard, Fort McMurray, Alberta, commencing on **March 6, 2012**, at 9:00 a.m. All interveners to this proceeding must be present at the commencement of the hearing to register their appearance.

### Description of the Application

Petrobank Energy and Resources Ltd. (Petrobank) has applied, pursuant to Section 10 of the *Oil Sands Conservation Act*, for approval to construct and operate Phase 1 of its May River Project with a production capacity of 1590 cubic metres per day (10 000 barrels per day). The proposed commercial project will use the toe-to-heel (THAI™) thermal recovery process. The proposed project includes four surface well pads consisting of 18 horizontal production wells and 18 deviated air injection wells. The project would be located about 13.5 kilometres west of Conklin, Alberta, in Sections 11, 12, 13, 14, 23, and 24 of Township 77, Range 9, West of the 4th Meridian.

To obtain a copy of the Application, contact

Petrobank Energy and Resources Ltd., Suite 1900, 111 - 5 Avenue SW, Calgary, Alberta T2P 3Y6, Attention: Melanie Sharpe; Telephone: 403-750-4437; Fax: 403-266-5794; E-mail: [msharpe@petrobank.com](mailto:msharpe@petrobank.com)

To view a copy of the Application and supporting documents, go to the ERCB Web site [www.ercb.ca](http://www.ercb.ca): Industry Zone: Applications: Proceeding Search and enter Proceeding ID 248 or contact the ERCB Fort McMurray Office at 780-743-7214.

### Requirement to File a Written Submission

If you have an interest in this matter and wish to make submissions or provide evidence at the hearing of the Application, you must file a written submission with respect to the Application even if you have previously filed a submission with the Board or with Petrobank on this Application. Submissions must include photocopies of all documentary evidence that you intend to present and/or rely on at the hearing (including, but not limited to, copies of expert reports, PowerPoint presentations, photographs, articles, etc.) and a summary of all evidence you intend to present.

If you do not file a submission, the hearing of the Application may be cancelled and the ERCB will continue to process and may approve the Application without a hearing and without further notice.

### How to File a Submission

Any party intending to make submissions with respect to the hearing of the Application must file by 4:00 p.m., on or before the filing dates below.

<b>October 25, 2011</b>	Final date to register your intent to file submissions on EPS. Final date to submit information requests to Petrobank.
<b>November 15, 2011</b>	Final date for Petrobank to respond to information requests.
<b>December 6, 2011</b>	Final date for submissions from interveners. Final date to submit a Notice of Question of Constitutional Law.
<b>January 3, 2012</b>	Final date to submit information requests to interveners.
<b>January 24, 2012</b>	Final date for interveners to respond to information requests.
<b>February 14, 2012</b>	Final date for response submissions from Petrobank.

Submissions, information requests, and responses are to be filed through the Digital Data Submission (DDS) System, Proceeding ID 248, as bookmarked and page-numbered PDF documents. For information on using DDS to file submissions, contact Kim Clayton, Senior Applications Officer, Applications Branch, Energy Resources Conservation Board, Suite 1000, 250 - 5 Street SW, Calgary, Alberta T2P 0R4; Telephone: 403-355-4313.

For submissions of PowerPoint presentations, maps, and/or logs, file a copy through DDS and send one paper copy to the applicant at the name and address above and two complete paper copies to Anna Louie, Application Coordinator, Oil Sands and Coal Branch, In Situ Oil Sands Applications Group, Energy Resources Conservation Board, Suite 1000, 250 - 5 Street SW, Calgary, Alberta T2P 0R4.

### Contents of a Submission

Under Section 24(2) of the *Energy Resources Conservation Board Rules of Practice (Rules of Practice)*, submissions must contain the following:

- a concise statement indicating
  - the manner in which the intervener's rights may be directly and adversely affected by a decision of the Board on the proceeding,
  - the nature and scope of the intervener's intended participation,
  - the disposition of the proceeding that the intervener advocates, if any,
  - the facts the intervener proposes to show in evidence,
  - the reasons why the intervener believes the Board should decide in the manner that the intervener advocates, and
  - the intervener's efforts, if any, to resolve issues associated with the proceeding directly with the applicant;
- the name, address in Alberta, telephone number, fax number and, if available, e-mail address of the intervener;
- if the intervener is represented by a representative, the name, address in Alberta, telephone number, fax number and, if available, e-mail address of the representative; and
- if the intervener is an unincorporated organization, the nature of the intervener's membership.

Any party intending to raise a question of constitutional law at the hearing must, pursuant to Section 25 of the *Rules of Practice*, include the following in its submission:

- the constitutional question the person intends to raise,
- the legal argument the person intends to make, and
- the evidence the person intends to rely on in support of the person's legal argument.

### Compensation Issues

Submissions relating exclusively to compensation for land usage are not dealt with by the ERCB and should be referred to the Alberta Surface Rights Board.

### Eligibility for Hearing-Related Local Intervener Costs

A finding by the ERCB that a person is entitled to participate in a hearing under Section 26(2) of the *Energy Resources Conservation Act (ERCA)* is not a decision on that person's eligibility for an award of costs under Section 28 of the *ERCA*. Persons intending to seek repayment of hearing-related costs must apply under Section 28 and *Directive 031: Guidelines for Energy Proceeding Cost Claims*.

### Applications for Confidentiality

Section 13 of the *Rules of Practice* requires that all documents filed in respect of an ERCB proceeding must be placed on the public record. However, any party may apply for confidentiality of information under Section 13(2). Any application under Section 13(2) must be copied to the other parties to the proceeding. The Board may grant a request for confidentiality on any terms it considers appropriate, subject to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

Petrobank has applied for and been granted confidentiality over certain information it has submitted for the proceeding. This information is not on the public record. For further details and questions on access to it, contact Anna Louie, Application Coordinator, Oil Sands and Coal Branch, In Situ Oil Sands Applications Group, Energy Resources Conservation Board, Suite 1000, 250 - 5 Street SW, Calgary, Alberta T2P 0R4.

### Prehearing Applications and Motions

All prehearing applications to the Board that any participant intends to make must be made and completed on or before 4:00 p.m. **February 21, 2012**.

### Questions of Constitutional Law

Any person intending to raise a question of constitutional law in the proceeding must, pursuant to Section 12 of the *Administrative Procedure and Jurisdiction Act*, complete and file a Notice of Question of Constitutional Law. All notices filed must be in the form and contain the information provided for in Schedule 2 of the *Designation of Constitutional Decision Makers Regulation*. Notices must be submitted to the Board at least 14 days before the proceeding commences.

For information about ERCB procedures, contact

Oil Sands and Coal Branch, In Situ Oil Sands Applications Group, Attention: Anna Louie; Telephone: 403-297-8396; E-mail: [anna.louie@ercb.ca](mailto:anna.louie@ercb.ca)

Issued at Calgary, Alberta, on September 19, 2011.

Patricia M. Johnston, Q.C., General Counsel



# Court will hear child welfare complaint

By Shauna Lewis  
Windspeaker Contributor

OTTAWA

One year after the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal [CHRT] dismissed a complaint against the federal government for its alleged discrimination in underfunding on-reserve child welfare services, the case is again going forward, this time through the federal court system.

A federal judicial hearing regarding the inequitable distribution of child welfare funds to on-reserve recipients is scheduled to take place early next year.

In February 2007, the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada (the Caring Society), a national non-profit organization providing services to First Nations child welfare organizations, and the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), the national organization representing First Nations citizens in Canada, filed a Human Rights complaint of alleged discrimination against Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC).

The complaint was filed with the Canadian Human Rights Commission. It alleged that INAC, now known as Aboriginal

Affairs and Northern Development Canada [AANDC], was acting in a discriminatory manner under the Canadian Human Rights Act for providing on-reserve Aboriginal children and family services significantly less funding than provincial governments offered those living off-reserve.

In October 2008, the Commission referred the case to the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal.

And in March 2011, after a lengthy delay, the Human Rights Tribunal dismissed the case on the basis of legal technicalities. They found that INAC was not responsible for discriminatory funding practises because the federal funding of services for on-reserve Aboriginal children could not be compared with the provincial funding of services for off-reserve.

Social assistance funds for people living on reserve comes from the government of Canada through AANDC [formerly INAC] and assistance for people living off reserve in BC, for example, known as income assistance or welfare, comes from the BC provincial government through the Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance.

The Tribunal argued that a

comparison between the two levels of government regarding funding was incomparable and therefore inconsequential and the complaint was dismissed.

The announcement outraged some Aboriginal leaders, while others said the decision didn't come as a shock.

"Based upon the proceedings to date, we fully anticipated that the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal chairperson would find a way to dismiss this case," Grand Chief Randall Phillips of the Association of Allied and Iroquois Indians, said in a statement following the Tribunal's decision last March. "As a result of this decision, the Chiefs of Ontario will participate in requesting a judicial review," he vowed.

"First Nations children deserve the same level of services provided to off reserve, non-Aboriginal children," added Ontario Regional Chief Angus Toulouse.

The institutionalization of discrimination witnessed in the provision of unequal child welfare benefits is unacceptable. The Canadian government must be held accountable for the inequity faced by First Nations children," he added.

"We applaud and support the dedicated efforts of the First

Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada and the Assembly of First Nations," continued Toulouse. "We especially acknowledge every individual and organization at the forefront of this struggle who work tirelessly to deliver services to our First Nations children in need," he concluded.

But the case was only beginning.

In April 2011, the Canadian Human Rights Commission applied to the Federal Court of Canada for a judicial review of the Tribunal's decision. The Commission alleged that the Tribunal's decision was wrong in law, and further that it had erroneously failed to conduct a full inquiry into the merits of the complaint thereby violating basic principles of procedural fairness.

In regard to the Tribunal's decision, the Caring Society has stated that the interests of children should have been based on facts and not legal loopholes and technicalities.

Moreover, they claim that the Canadian Human Rights Act does not require a comparator group, but even if one was required it is clear that child welfare is a statutory and public service available to all children; therefore children receiving child

welfare services off-reserve are a legitimate comparator group in determining funding and resource distribution amounts.

Cindy Blackstock, executive director of the Caring Society and Shawn Atleo, AFN National Chief, were unavailable to comment.

But the AANDC claims it is sticking to its mandate to support Aboriginal people (First Nations, Inuit and Métis) and Northerners in their efforts to improve social well-being and economic prosperity and develop healthier, more sustainable communities.

"The Government of Canada is satisfied with the Tribunal's decision to dismiss the complaint filed by the AFN and the Caring Society," stated AANDC

Ministry spokesperson, Michelle Perron. "We will continue moving forward with willing partners and taking concrete actions that result in important progress with respect to child and family services," she stated.

The Caring Society, AFN and the Canadian Human Rights Commission [CHRC] have each filed a judicial review of the Human Rights Tribunal's decision. The hearing is expected to take place Feb. 13 to Feb. 15, 2012 in Ottawa Federal Court.

## Time and funding crunch challenges Atlantic working group

By Shari Narine  
Windspeaker Contributor

HALIFAX

Only one school in Atlantic Canada is recognized under the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement (IRSSA), but those students are not the only ones impacted by the trauma of being torn away from their families.

"We have the least number of survivors ... recognized under the settlement agreement (at) 750. But we estimate it could be 10 times more," said Vanessa Nevin of the Atlantic Policy Congress (APC) of First Nations Chiefs.

Nevin is co-chair for the regional working group, which consists of the settlement stakeholders, and is providing advice to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on the national event to be held in Halifax Oct. 26 to 29. Cultural and logistical committees, which consist largely of survivors, were also established by the APC.

"We're making it so that survivors are driving this event," said Nevin.

Shubenacadie Indian Residential School is the only

residential school in Atlantic Canada that fits the IRSSA formula. Built by the federal government 60 kms from Halifax, Shubenacadie was operated by the Archdiocese of Halifax from 1929 to 1967.

Other Indian residential schools operated in Atlantic Canada but because they were run by the church or provincial government and had no federal connection, students who attended those schools do not qualify for compensation under the IRSSA.

A concept paper prepared by the TRC for the Halifax event tracked the figures for Common Experience Payments as of September 2010 with Nova Scotia at 369, New Brunswick with 128, Newfoundland and Labrador with 22 and Prince Edward Island with 43. Only students attending residential schools recognized by the IRSSA are eligible for CEP.

The lack of official residential school survivor numbers, a small budget to work towards the national event, and plans that have had to be made in a short time frame have made the process frustrating, said Nevin.

The Halifax event is following on the heels of the second

national event, which was held in Inuvik. That event had a budget of nearly \$1 million for survivor travel, said Nevin, compared to the \$85,000 the Atlantic has been offered. The APC has made a proposal to Aboriginal and Northern Affairs for more funding.

Nevin said the working group, which will mete out the federal dollars to the communities, will leave disbursement of the funds to the communities. Communities will have to decide whether funding goes only to survivors of the one recognized residential school or to survivors of all residential schools.

"We do understand that choices need to be made when there is limited funding and there will need to be priorities set," she said.

Added to the planning frustration for Nevin's group is the understanding that Halifax is a TRC event and as such needs to reflect consistency with the other TRC national events.

In mid-September, with less than six weeks until the three-day event, the APC community regional group was still only discussing cultural ideas that would make the event

meaningful for First Nations and Inuit in Atlantic Canada.

"We would like to see an event that is culturally relevant for our region where our survivors feel that it is healing for them to attend and that they have the financial means to attend and that it expresses what our healing needs are," said Nevin.

In 2009, the APC sent a letter to the TRC asking to be part of the planning process for the national event to be held in Atlantic Canada. In March 2010, a subcommittee was formed from the Outreach Residential School Atlantic Committee to determine what they would like to see at the national event. However, it wasn't until June of this year that the regional working group was struck. The cultural and logistical committees were formed in July. Nevin said the regional bodies are only advisory to the TRC.

"We've been under a compressed time frame to plan a national event," said Nevin, adding that the event planners were only hired in mid-August.

However, she pointed out that this is a TRC event and that "ultimately the TRC will need to be accountable to survivors

and government and the Canadian public."

Halifax was chosen because the city "provides optimal opportunity to educate a young and growing population on the history and legacy of residential schools," said the TRC's concept paper.

Nevin said all the hearings leading up to the Halifax event, as well as the event itself, are open to all residential school survivors. Hearings began in early September and will conclude in mid-October. There were seven days set aside for six locations: Fredericton; Goose Bay and Hopedale in Newfoundland; Charlottetown; and Indian Brook and Eskasoni in Nova Scotia. The locations selected for the hearings were on the recommendation of the APC.

The first hearing on Sept. 8 in Fredericton was held at Government House.

"That was an important location," said Nevin. "(Lt.-Gov.) Graydon Nicholas has been a real supporter of survivors and is very trusted among survivors of our community."

Nicholas is Maliseet, born and raised on the Tobique First Nation.

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# Frustration and concern greets Missing Women's inquiry

By Shari Narine  
Windspeaker Contributor

## PRINCE RUPERT

Grainne Barthe felt listened to, but she isn't confident that her words will make a difference.

"I thought that (Commissioner Wally Oppal) was very respectful to me and to everybody at the whole thing, but I feel that sometimes these events are token events, just to kind of appease the people, to say, 'Well, we were there,'" said Barthe, counselor with Stopping the Violence, a program offered by the North Coast Transitional Society.

Barthe was one of a dozen people to make presentations at the first public forum hosted by the B.C. Missing Women Commission of Inquiry in Prince Rupert on Sept. 13. She was joined by two other organizations, two elected provincial members, Elders and family members of missing women in making statements to Oppal.

Vicki Hill was one of those family members. Her mother, Mary Jane Hill, disappeared in 1978 when Vicki was six months old. Mary Jane's body was found along the Highway of Tears, Highway 16 which runs between Prince George and Prince Rupert. The death remains unsolved.

There were about 70 people at the forum; less than Barthe had expected.

"One of the women there said it wasn't well advertised," said Barthe.

Barthe's presentation reflected concerns that have been voiced as consistent criticism of the newest inquiry struck by the province:

1. that the inquiry should not be lumping the Downtown Eastside Vancouver murders of serial killer Robert Willie Pickton with the disappearances along Highway 16; and

2. that community groups did not receive government funding for legal counsel for the second phase of the commission's work.

Barthe said Oppal spoke to her in private after her presentation, ensuring her that he had supported full funding

for community groups, but no money was available.

This lack of funding is the reason that the Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC) and the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council (CSTC) announced at the end of July they would not be participating in the process.

Terry Teegee, vice tribal chief of CSTC, said UBCIC and CSTC formed a partnership at the direction of the commission and were granted status for the inquiry. Oppal requested that the coalition receive funding for legal counsel to allow for the questioning of police on how missing women investigations were handled. However, funding to the coalition and a number of other organizations was denied by then Attorney General Barry Penner.

"We don't have the capacity, we don't have the money, we don't have the resources to fully participate the way we want," said Teegee. He added it is clear the BC government has given low priority to the process, considering the government has funded a new roof on BC Place and put money into the Olympics.

Teegee noted that CSTC "fully participated" in 2006 in the Highway of Tears Symposium, which resulted in more than 30 recommendations, most of which have not been implemented.

Megan Hunt, manager of special projects and acting director for child and family services for Carrier Sekani Family Services, points to the Highway of Tears Symposium for two reasons. First, she said, it and this newest inquiry are examples of government posturing. Neither Aboriginal organizations nor Aboriginal women were consulted in how the process for the Missing Women inquiry would work, nor was either group given input into choosing the commissioner.

Secondly, because lumping the Pickton investigation and his victims from Vancouver's Downtown Eastside with something as different as the murders along the highway is wrong.

"Adding the Highway of Tears is like an at-the-end add-on to

the inquiry and doesn't provide that specific issue with the time and energy it really deserves," said Hunt, explaining why CSFS did not attend the local forum.

"The recommendations for Vancouver would probably not fit necessarily the recommendations for the northern and remote communities. There are very different needs. You can't have a cookie cutter approach and expect that to work across the province," said Hunt.

Art Vertlieb, commission counsel, said he has heard support for the decision to have both investigations included in the same inquiry.

"The issues that gave rise to the people who were picked off by Pickton are the same issues that give rise to problems on the Highway of Tears and that is poverty and lack of education and lack of jobs and a feeling of despair. That's what drove many of Pickton's victims from the rural communities to Downtown Eastside," said Vertlieb.

Vertlieb said people who attended the forums expressed frustration with the lack of movement on recommendations that came from the Highway of Tears symposium. He wouldn't commit to a better outcome for any new recommendations.

"We'll do the very best job we can . . . and hopefully the force of that work will lead to change," Vertlieb said.

Forums have taken place in Moricetown, Terrace, Kirwanga, Smithers and Hazelton and were "well-attended," said Vertlieb. "You could tell people were interested."

In mid-October, the commission will switch from a study commission to a hearing commission under oath when the work of the Vancouver police will be examined. The RCMP is expected to make a presentation to the commission at a later date.

The commission began its work September 2010, reading "voluminous documents," said Vertlieb. The final report is to be delivered in December 2011.

"That's an unlikely end date. It's just not feasible and at some point we'll have to talk about a new end date," said Vertlieb.

## Windspeaker News Briefs

### THE TK'EMLPS AND SKEETCHSTN INDIAN

Bands want the Supreme Court of British Columbia to provide an injunction to prevent International Forest Products Ltd. and West Fraser Mills Ltd. from logging in four sensitive watersheds within their traditional territory. The companies hold licenses and permits to cut within the Jamieson Creek, Criss Creek, Heller Creek and Tranquille River watersheds. "These watersheds are crucial to the people," said Skeetchstn Chief Rick Deneault. "The cutting International Forest Products and West Fraser Mills are approved to do in these watersheds threaten our culture, our way of life and our constitutionally protected rights. We must take steps to protect and manage our remaining intact forests." The forests in the key watersheds provide habitat for animals traditionally hunted by the Secwepemc people, contain important streams and rivers for fish, and support plants that are significant for cultural and medicinal purposes. Tk'eml'ps Chief Shane Gottfriedson blamed the current situation on decades of forest mismanagement. "The province of BC and the forestry industry have created this mess," he said. "Now our territory is a patchwork of roads, clearcuts and sick pine plantations. Industrial forestry and silviculture practices have fundamentally changed the composition of the forest and made it susceptible to mountain pine beetle epidemics. These watersheds are a snapshot of what is going on all over our territory and across the BC interior and we worry there are only a few more years of logging left. It must be sustainable. Said Chief Deneault "We are the rightful stewards of the forests in our territory. We have the knowledge and capacity to sustainably manage forestry activities in our territory. Our bands have tried repeatedly to get the provincial government and various forestry companies to the table to work out a plan for co-management. But we've reached a tipping point. We simply cannot wait any longer."

### THE NEW CHIEF OF BEARDY'S AND

Okemasis First Nation in Saskatchewan says her community is deep in debt and though she's cutting programs and services, Raymonda Gardipy says it's going to take time to dig the community out of a \$9-million hole. It's been reported that the band has not been paying its bills in months and power and other services may be cut. Staff payroll funds are even being used to fund operations and make interest payments. "(Beardy's) is in serious financial difficulty with virtually no payments being made to suppliers," an Aug. 10 letter from accounting firm MNP said. The letter was released by chief and council to the media. "The Nation continues to overspend without implementing the necessary changes to drastically cut spending in all areas." Banks won't lend to the band and the federal government has said they will not bail the community out of its problems.

### THE NATIVE COURTWORKER AND

Counselling Association of B.C. took an unusual step and issued a letter urging those people with a record and eligible for a pardon to apply for one as soon as possible. Pardons allow people with criminal convictions to have their criminal records kept aside from other peoples' criminal records provided they meet certain conditions. NOW IS THE TIME TO DO IT, they wrote, because the federal government has given notice that it will raise the fees to apply for a Pardon from \$150 to \$631 per application. That fee increase may come into effect very shortly. Secondly, the federal government also tabled legislation on Sept. 20 which will limit the people who can apply for Pardons. Pardons will no longer be available for certain types of offences. The Native Courtworkers are concerned that the new fees and the legislative changes will mean that some Aboriginal people will no longer qualify for Pardons and also that very few Aboriginal people will be able to afford to apply for a Pardon. To see if you meet the conditions, you can visit the Parole Board of Canada Web site at <http://www.pbc-clcc.gc.ca/prdons/servic-eng.shtml>.

### THE DIVERSION OF "MASSIVE AMOUNTS OF

water" into Lake Manitoba and restrictions on the Fairford dam resulted in the flooding of reserve lands and sacred ceremonial sites that was unnecessary, says Peguis First Nation and Ebb and Flow First Nation in lawsuits. The two nations are suing the provincial and federal governments and Manitoba Hydro saying they mismanaged water resources resulting in the flooding of their reserves. "The defendants have treated the province of Manitoba and the lakes and rivers as a giant province-wide flood diversion or hydro-electrical project, manipulating water flows on an ongoing basis... to the direct detriment of and damage to the plaintiff(s)," say the lawsuits, which target all "works, facilities, developments and projects... that increase or decrease lake levels, restrict or increase the flow of rivers and other water bodies... for any alleged flood control and prevention or water diversion purposes for the alleged benefit of other communities in Manitoba."

## Peaceful protest leads to charges

By Shauna Lewis  
Windspeaker Contributor

### STAND OFF, Alta.

Three First Nations women were detained and arrested Sept. 9 after staging a protest against oil and gas exploration on their southern Alberta reserve.

Arrested were Elle-Maija Tailfeathers, Lois Frank and Jill Crop Eared Wolf, all members of the Blood Tribe which is a part of the Blackfoot Confederacy.

"It was three unarmed women in a peaceful protest to honor our land," Tailfeathers told Windspeaker.

The protest was an act of defiance against the actions of United States-based Murphy Oil Company, one of two companies that signed on to a \$50 million deal with the Blood Tribe last fall allowing the companies to gain a five-year hydraulic fracturing lease and access to nearly 50 per cent of Blood Tribe land for the purpose of oil and gas exploration.

Fracturing or "fracking" is a form of drilling that involves pumping gallons of water, proprietary chemicals (often toxic), and sand under high pressure into a well causing the shale or coalbed to fracture, releasing the desired natural gas.

The Blood Tribe is one of the largest reserves in Canada occupying about 549.7 square miles or 884 square kilometres, and has a member population of over 10,000.

(See *Peaceful* on page 20.)

[ news ]

# 100 recommendations made to curb youth suicide

By Shauna Lewis  
Windspeaker Contributor

PIKANGIKUM, Ont.

A high rate of youth suicide in Pikangikum, a rural Ontario reserve, prompted the province's Deputy Chief Coroner to investigate and provide recommendations to help the First Nation community address the tragic epidemic.

"I would absolutely call it a crisis. There's no other way to characterize it," said Dr. Bert Lauwers, who led the review and wrote the report.

The report—The Office of the Chief Coroner's Death Review of the Youth Suicides at the Pikangikum First Nation 2006-2008—reviewed the deaths of 16 Pikangikum youth ages 10 to 19 during a two year span.

Lauwers said that in last two months there has been six more youth suicides in the remote community of 2,400 people, located about 100 kilometres north of Red Lake, Ont.

Work on the review began in March 2010 and involved a number of parties, including health care professionals, the provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, and child welfare providers.

A multi-disciplinary team, including Pikangikum First Nation chief, council and Elders, and Nishnawbe Aski Nation Grand Chief Stan Beardy, contributed expertise, guidance and insight during the review process.

The report was released Sept. 2 by the province's Chief Coroner Dr. Andrew McCallum.

The purpose of the review was to examine the circumstances of the death of each of the children and youth, collect and analyze information about the deaths in order to prevent further deaths in similar circumstances and to make recommendations to avoid future deaths.

The report includes a total of 100 recommendations in the areas of education, policing, child welfare and health care, with a particular focus on the development of suicide prevention strategies.

Findings conclude that "A lack of an integrated health-care system, poor education by provincial standards and a largely absent community infrastructure are uniquely positioned against the backdrop of colonialism, racism, lack of implementation of self-determination and social exclusions," and are noted factors in the deaths.

"[The Pikangikum First Nation doesn't] have running water, no sewage and they get their hydro from generators," explained Lauwer.

"It's not something that you can really believe," he added. "It's really, really an impoverished

community."

Michelle Perron, spokesperson for Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC), said the federal department continues to work with the community and other partners to ensure lasting improvements to the quality of life in Pikangikum [and] work continues on a range of infrastructure projects in the community to achieve this goal.

"AANDC officials are reviewing the Ontario Coroner's final review and are developing responses to those recommendations which fall within the department's mandate," she said, adding that "the department continues to work collaboratively with Pikangikum First Nation, as well as our federal, provincial and other partners, to address the recommendations in the review."

"The department is very concerned by youth suicide rates in Pikangikum First Nation. The suicides are a tragedy for the families and the community and our thoughts and prayers are with them. The health and safety of First Nation members is a primary concern of the department," continued Perron.

The ministry said it has invested about \$22.5 million in projects in Pikangikum First Nation since 2007, including \$16.2 million for the design and construction of the temporary school, \$1.7 million to repair water points, \$2.8 million on Diesel Generating Station (DGS) upgrades and \$1.05 million on grid development work.

After a fire destroyed the former school in Pikangikum in June 2007, AANDC said it provided more than \$14 million to build an interim school facility which has been in operation since January 2008.

The ministry said a new school for the community is in the works.

"Funding to support the design and construction of the new school is currently scheduled in future years of the First Nation Infrastructure Investment Plan (FNIIP)," said the AANDC spokesperson,

A better power source is also in the band's future, reports the ministry.

"Design work for the grid connection project is complete," Perron confirmed.

Pikangikum Chief Jonah Strang said help can't come soon enough for the community.

"It's a really, really huge concern when you lose young people like that," he said, adding that the shock is felt in every aspect of the community.

Strang said he doesn't know why young people are choosing to end their lives, but says a lack of basic resources and poor infrastructure compounds the

issue. "We don't have much for youth," Strang admitted.

"A school would be really nice," he said. "What they need is something immediate," adding that students are getting their education in various portables set up on the reserve and a new building is needed.

Strang said high school graduation numbers have dropped from nearly one dozen annual graduates to two or three per year. He suspects that if a proper school was built the high school graduation numbers would climb.

Strang said he hopes provincial and federal departments review the recommendations carefully and make decisions that will help expedite the band's current projects.

"We would like the government to fast-track what we are currently working on," he said, adding that the community is in urgent and desperate need for a better power source.

"We want to get the grid line going," said Strang, "We've been working on it, but [the process] is slow, very slow."

First Nations leaders across Canada have publicly applauded the work done by the Ontario Coroner's office.

Assembly of First Nations (AFN) National Chief Shawn Atleo applauded the coroner's report and is urging the provincial and federal governments to address the many recommendations aimed at ensuring First Nation youth are supported in achieving success in and outside their communities.

"First and foremost, my thoughts are with the families and community members of the young people lost from suicide in Pikangikum and across Ontario and Canada," Atleo said in a statement. "In honor of their memory we must look to the future and create a better day for our youth. I urge all levels of government to immediately review and act on the recommendations in this report, particularly those that speak to the necessity of achieving basic infrastructure needs in First Nation communities and achieving fairness and equity in education, including comparable funding arrangements and culturally relevant education supportive of lifelong learning and respectful of First Nation traditions and languages.

"While suicide prevention is essential, education is the key to unlock the full potential of our young people and to provide them the hope and opportunity they need. They must be supported to achieve success through education."

The national chief also made a personal pledge to the First Nation community.

(See Recommendations on page 21.)

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# Settlement restores some land and creates new nation



PHOTO: DENIS CARNOCHAN

Peerless Trout First Nation Chief James Alook signs as (from left) RCMP Sgt. Ralph Cardinal (originally from Wabasca), Alberta Aboriginal Relations Minister Len Webber, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada Minister John Duncan, and Bigstone Cree Nation Chief Gordon Auger look on.

for this," said Peerless Trout Nation Chief James Alook. The Peerless Trout First Nation was officially constituted on May 19, 2010. Alook was elected to his position a month later.

The celebrations took place at Wabasca, one of the three communities retained by Bigstone Cree Nation. Alook was joined by Bigstone Cree Chief Gordon Auger.

"This landmark settlement marks a new beginning for the Bigstone and Peerless Trout First Nations, opening up new opportunities for economic development that will bring long-term benefits to the lives of First Nation members," said Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada Minister John Duncan, who also took part in the celebration.

Working with industry – gas, oil and forestry – is important, said Alook.

"We won't depend on handouts. I don't see myself as that in the future. There are lots of opportunities in this area," he said.

Alook said he wanted his community to be self-reliant, and that will come through the development of natural resources in the area and promotion of tourism.

Webber stressed that industry wanting to operate in the area would have to consult with First Nations.

Consultation is what the provincial government wants, said Alberta Aboriginal Affairs Minister Len Webber.

"It would mean that industry will have to consult with two First Nations now," he said. "It wouldn't be easier for industry ... (but) it would be important that they do consult."

The Lower Athabasca Regional Plan, which is the first regional watershed plan created by the provincial government, sets out guidelines for industry development and protected areas and sets consultation with First Nations as a priority.

"There can be good relations between the government and First Nations and between the First Nations and industry," said Webber.

The province's contribution in this settlement agreement includes \$28 million and a commitment to construct two new elementary schools in Peerless Lake and Trout Lake, as well as water treatment plants for each of these communities.

Other capital dollars will be spent on housing which is a priority, said Alook, along with social development.

"We are making progress on building our new community," he said.

Since 1986, the provincial government has completed 13 land claims.

"The fact we can negotiate a settlement means we can work with each other in a cooperative manner," said Webber.

By Shari Narine  
Windspeaker Contributor

## WABASCA, Alta.

Industry has one more First Nation to consult when looking to do work in northern Alberta.

A special ceremony was held Sept. 12 that celebrated the conclusion of years of negotiation that resulted in the creation of the province's 45th First Nation.

Peerless Trout First Nation was created through the settlement of the Bigstone Cree First Nation specific claim, the largest claim ever concluded in Alberta. The settlement resolved outstanding issues relating to treaty promises dating back to the late 1800s.

When the first lands for the reserve were surveyed in 1913, the size of the reserve was calculated at 128 acres per person based on membership. However, membership north of Bigstone Cree Nation was not taken into consideration, and although this oversight was discovered, no new reserve lands were added to compensate for the additional members once they were counted.

It wasn't until 1998 that Bigstone Cree's shortfall claim was allowed to proceed under Canada's Historic Treaty Land Entitlement Policy and its Specific Claims Policy. The Ancillary Treaty Benefits claims were accepted for negotiation by Canada in 2006 and 2007.

The settlement includes approximately \$259 million and up to 140,000 acres of unoccupied provincial Crown land to become new reserve land for the First Nations. Peerless Trout First Nation will receive 63,000 acres while, 77,000 acres will be set aside for new reserves around the Bigstone communities of Wabasca, Calling Lake, and Chipewyan Lake.

"We've been waiting a long time

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# [ strictly speaking ] Being Native till the end

I am going to tell you the obvious. It's a complex world out there. More specifically, all across this country, in its bureaucracy, in its media, in its politics and in its culture, being Native is becoming more and more complex.

It's also becoming more departmentalized and segmented.

For example, there is a First Nations' bank. There is the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network. There is a Native university, and in some places, Native schools for young kids.

Let us not forget Native social services and Native granting organizations. If suddenly the mother ship returned to Earth to pick up all the non-Native people in Canada, I think Canadian society would be able to carry on pretty much the same way. Because there are Native police services boards, and Native baseball leagues and Native theatre companies, publishing houses, restaurants, casinos, smoke shacks etc.

There is a Native version of practically everything you can think of. I have even seen a Native Elvis impersonator, as the King (or the Chief as we call him) would say, "Meegwetch,



## THE URBANE INDIAN

Drew Hayden Taylor

meegwetch very much."

One of the things that separate us from the United States is that we are not the great melting pot they claim. We are more of the grand mosaic. Cultures, different and unique, unite to make an even greater country.

So, obviously Native people are a part of that great mosaic.

Still, I sometimes wonder if perhaps occasionally, things can go a little too far in establishing our place in the larger Canadian society. True, it's rare if you find a Native person who is not extremely proud of their people and their place in history. But that can be said of Jews, Arabs, Japanese and so on.

I guess what I'm trying to say is sometimes, in our attempt to celebrate who we are and where

we come from, I am occasionally left scratching my head by some of the choices made. What some people consider is a truly Native way to live.... And die.

Not that long ago, I came across a brochure from a company that, being perfectly serious here, specializes in handmade 'Native caskets. Our wood caskets provide what nature and our Elders taught as a natural process."

The company has an 'understanding of the culture and the needs of the Indigenous people.' That's impressive when you consider at one time there were almost 600 Nations across Turtle Island.

In terms of how you spend eternity, you have a choice. There is the Four Winds casket, which

goes for \$2,500 American. It could be made from northern pine or aromatic cedar, and 'can be lined with various styles of Pendleton blankets.' You may also include a 'framed picture of choice with engraved script included'. Or there's the more economical Wilderness Oak, which retails for a more comfortable \$1,000 with a fleece lining (\$200 to add Pendleton).

Don't get me wrong, I am not attempting to ridicule this company. It's a beautiful concept and the caskets look first rate and exquisite. I know there are Jewish cemeteries, just like there are Catholic ones, and now, maybe, Native ones.

I've been to services for Native friends that have passed away where they were buried with an eagle feather or tobacco, with a drum group present. But, and don't kill me for this, are we now trying to make our deaths uniquely Native too?

It's all a very weird discussion. I know that when my mother died she didn't particularly care what kind of casket she ended up in, as long as it was nice and respectful.

Me... I don't know yet. I'm not tied to the idea of a necessarily

Native casket. I figure any casket I end up in will be Native as judged by its contents, and not its exterior.

A Pendleton blanket, as beautiful as they are, doesn't necessarily make you Native, unless they are made out of status cards.

With that said, as the years continue to pass me by, I have expressed a wish to those I will leave behind, on what to do with my remains. I want one of those ancient Egyptian pyramids built for me. I like the geometry of the idea, and Curve Lake could use a decent tourist site and a make works program.

And let's face it. Those things last forever. It will give everybody something to talk about.

If someone wants to paint a medicine wheel on one of the stone blocks, fine with me. More power to them. In addition, the stone blocks could have pictographs and petroglyphs on them for authenticity. Anything more might be a little too ostentatious.

Hey, chock it all up to living in the Canadian mosaic. An Egyptian Ojibway mausoleum, which, it turns out, is actually a Greek word.

# Faked illness may be a cry for help

Dear Auntie:

An acquaintance of mine is going around telling everyone she has a fatal illness. She even organized a feast to say goodbye to her friends, but the night before the event she cancelled saying she was too ill to host it. I've since learned that her condition is being faked. I'm so mad at this person for playing with my emotions I want to expose her in some dramatic fashion. I know that's immature, but that's how I feel. I just don't know how to calm down.

Signed  
Steaming Still

Dear Steaming Still:

Feeling revved-up emotions can be expected with such a betrayal of trust. However, revenge is not justice and is rarely, if ever, satisfying, especially in the case of someone who would make up such an elaborate lie.

What your friend did is, no doubt, infuriating, and other feelings like confusion, embarrassment or disbelief are normal.

In my years of working with suicide prevention, saying goodbye and/or making grand and unrealistic plans are among the warning signs that indicate people are really crying out for help. More information might reveal the underlying motive for your friend to plan such a dramatic action.

Your feelings of being manipulated bring up reasonable anger, but compare your friend's action to suicide attempts or



## DEAR AUNTIE

By J'net AyAy Qwa  
Yak Sheelth Cavanagh

driving while on an alcoholic binge; one can be an implicit cry for help and the other a symptom of an addiction problem. This "fatal illness" lie is, likely, another type of self-destructive tactic to get attention.

I recommend you ask yourself what is most important in this crisis: expressing your emotions to your friend or your friend's need for serious intervention. Would expressing your anger help in this instance, or possibly make things worse for your friend?

One way to move your hurt could be to write an unplugged letter that details all your feelings. And though it would be tempting to give the letter to your friend, it sounds like she needs professional crisis intervention. The letter is for you to get your feelings off your chest, and you could burn the letter as a way, ritually, to let go of the anger. This might even help you connect with some compassion to let your friend know she needs help.

It is important to acknowledge and process your feelings. And hopefully, someday, your friend will understand the hurt she has

caused and may make amends. But while she is in the midst of a crisis it is not usually the best time to expect this.

As long as your friend hasn't used this "fatal illness" lie to trick people into giving her money or other material support (which is legally called "fraud"), this is a very serious mental health issue. All there is left to learn is "what's going on for this person that they would manipulate the trust of friends, family and community with such a lie?" Professional help options can be accessed through a crisis phone line, community health clinic or local hospital. You do not need to be the person who confronts your friend, but can have qualified service providers work directly with her. You may also be open to learn about possible support options for you to sort through your emotions.

Lovingly, Auntie

Dear Auntie:

I just moved away to school, and I'm thinking of dropping out. I miss my family. I really miss my mom. I just want to hang out and play basketball with my cousins.

I want my degree, but maybe I just don't want it enough.

Signed  
Ready To Go Home

Dear Ready To Go Home:

Home is where the heart is, and being away for the first time is a true test of maturity. The beginning of any journey will feel disruptive and unfamiliar and will leave one longing for the comforts we know and love.

Home is not going anywhere and neither is your dream of having a degree. Most campuses have supports for Indigenous students that include social gatherings, counsel with Elders and just a place to hang out.

I have no idea how you cope with stress. Personally, I have been known to isolate myself and cut myself off from connecting with others so I can fuel my misery privately. Isolation is a natural reaction for many, but I recommend stretching your comfort zone to get familiar with your surroundings.

Find out where the basketball courts are on campus. Research options for drop-in time on the courts, pick-up games or a team you can join. Visit the campus student centre to learn more about services and/or other Indigenous organizations you can connect with like a local friendship centre.

Once you connect with others, you may find out that some share the same feelings as you and can perhaps offer positive ways to cope in your new surroundings.

There are only 15 weeks in each

semester. By the time you read this issue you'll be halfway through the first semester. Keep your head in the game and make your goals come alive with focused determination.

Perhaps to ease missing home, make a schedule of times you can call, chat online or even set up a free SKYPE account and have a virtual visit for those who have the same technology.

Old school letter writing is still an option and it's a nice surprise to get personal mail. Planning a Thanksgiving and/or Winter Break visit will be something to look forward to.

Hang in there and find ways to surround yourself with supports that include laughs, sharing food and time on the basketball court to improve your game so you can kick-butt when you do see your cousins next.

Lovingly, Auntie

Have a question for Dear Auntie? Then please send it via email to: [letters@ammsa.com](mailto:letters@ammsa.com)

Check out Dear Auntie on facebook @ AskDearAuntie. You can read previous questions and answers or ask new questions of your own.

Editor's Note: The Ask Auntie column is published for readers' entertainment and consideration only. The opinions expressed are those of the author and are not necessarily endorsed by Windspeaker or the Aboriginal Multi-Media Society.

# Louie Gong — [ windspeaker confidential ]

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

**Louis Gong:** Integrity.

**W:** What is it that really makes you mad?

**L.G.:** Greed

**W:** When are you at your happiest?

**L.G.:** I'm happiest when I'm sharing my art and ideas through conversation, speaking gigs and workshops.

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

**L.G.:** Indecisive

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

**L.G.:** Bruce Lee. He was self-made, innovative and courageous.

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

**L.G.:** I chose to move away from home for graduate school, leaving my grandma to live by herself.

**W:** What is your greatest accomplishment?

**L.G.:** In March 2012, I will represent my family and community on a speaking tour of Germany as a guest of the U.S. Embassy.

**W:** What one goal remains out of reach?

**L.G.:** I would like to create an artist edition shoe with Vans or Converse.

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

**L.G.:** Quirky host of an animal adventure show.

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

**L.G.:** If you want to be successful, you must have the courage to risk failure.

**W:** Did you take it?

**L.G.:** Every day.

**W:** How do you hope to be remembered?

**L.G.:** Eyes in the sky. Roots in the community.

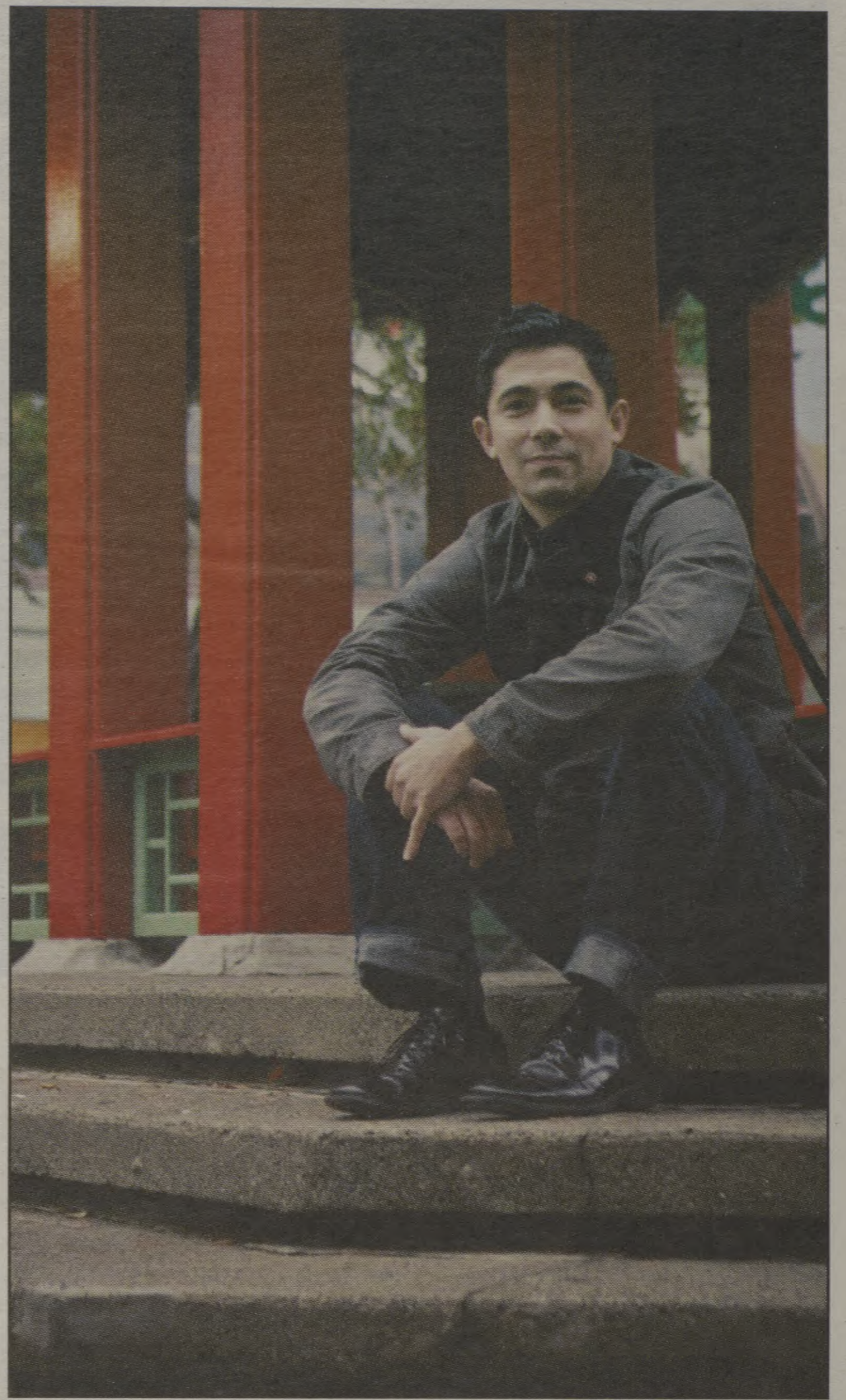
Louie Gong sees himself as one who walks in multiple worlds. From a mixed heritage of Nooksack, Squamish, Chinese, French and Scottish, he was raised by his grandparents, father and step-mother in Ruskin, B.C and in the Nooksack tribal community. Gong graduated from Western Washington University's School Counseling program in 1999 and has worked as a child and family therapist, teacher and a counseling program coordinator. In his current role as Education Resource Coordinator for Muckleshoot Tribal College, Gong recognizes the need to deal with the realities of modern living while maintaining his cultural

identity. Coming from a mixed heritage has played a key role in the direction of Gong's life. One of the classes he has taught is "Mixed Heritage: Thinking Outside the Box about Tribal Communities." In 2010 he gave the keynote speeches at National Indian Education Association Convention in San Diego and the National Critical Mixed Race Studies Conference in Chicago.

Gong has become a celebrity of sorts with his 8THGEN company. Most recently Gong has been making a name for himself in the art world. In 2009, 'on a whim', he took a Sharpie marker to a pair of Vans shoes and the result was a unique art form of expression. Gong felt that using his Coast Salish art and applying it to a pop culture icon like Vans made a statement that represented his complex cultural identity. Some related to that medium and message. Some are simply touched by the Coast Salish art. Gong is noted as saying, "I'd rather have my art available for \$1.75 in a grocery store than in a gallery for thousands of dollars and available to only a certain demographic."

In March 2012 he begins a lecture tour of Germany as a guest of the US Embassy. To learn more about Louie Gong and his art and his message, visit his Web site at [www.eighthgeneration.com](http://www.eighthgeneration.com)

Check out *Windspeaker Confidential* on facebook @ [windspeakerconfidential](http://windspeakerconfidential).



Louie Gong

PHOTO: SUPPLIED

## OUR PICK

**Artist—Murray Porter**  
**Song—Dog House**  
**Album—Songs Lived & Life Played**  
**Label—Independent**

Back in 1995 there was a release of an album called *1492 - Who Found Who*, which changed how people looked at music released by an Aboriginal artist. People found Murray Porter! It seemed everywhere you went, people's music players were loaded with this cd. Very quickly Murray Porter established himself as one of the most recognizable voices in music with an instantly classic gritty and silky smooth vocal. People anxiously waited for the follow-up release that didn't come until eight years later with a collaboration cd by Pappy Johns Band. For Porter fans this proved to be only a teaser. Now it's 2011 and Porter fans finally get what they have been waiting 16 years for.



Opening the cd, Porter delivers an earthy blues number "Rez Blues", reminding us that Native people have probably earned the right to sing the blues as much as anyone. A classic harmonica accompaniment by The Twister's David Hoerl makes this a classic redman sings the blues song selection. Porter may be classified as a blues/rhythm & blues performer by many and though he doesn't stray far from those roots, it's a shallow description of what this album delivers. Murray Porter is a song writer first and foremost and every song is instantly enjoyable, easy to listen to in almost any setting. *Songs Lived & Life Played* includes both uplifting cheerful songs and slow ballads. Porter touches on serious subjects by dedicating a song to murdered and missing women and their families with "Since She Went Away". A song favorite for sure is "Dog House" which is delivered with humour, from a man's point of view asking his woman to give him more respect. This album satisfies the hunger for more Murray Porter music, though I hope Porter recognizes 16 years is way too long to wait for the next fix. Properly aged and aired, this album tastes great to the ears.

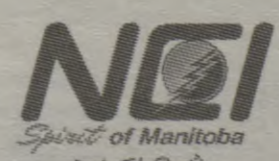
Review by : K. Kanten

## [ radio's most active ]

# ABORIGINAL RADIO MOST ACTIVE LIST

ARTIST	TITLE	ALBUM
Mike Gouchie	I Cried	Shattered Glass
Samantha Crain	Up On The Table	You (Understood)
Jerry Sereda	Morning After The Night Before	Single Release
Rhanna Gagnon	Come And Get Me Guy	Single Release
Little Hawk	Beautiful Me	Vigilance
Robbie Robertson f. Eric Clapton	He Don't Live Here No More	How To Become Clairvoyant
John McLeod	The Breed	Do It Anyway
Cassidy Mann	Kinda Cute	Cassidy Mann
Derek Miller	Wonderful Night	Hard Done By & Still Crazy
Crystal Shawanda	Fever	Single Release
Shoot The Image	Reykjavik	Cranes In The City
Ali Fontaine	Runaway	Ali Fontaine
Bruthers Of Different Muthers	Speakers Of Tomorrow	Speakers Of Tomorrow
Marc Merilainen	Paivaa	The Wolves Of Tuonela
Hank Horton	Someone You Can Count On	Mama's Waiting
Alexander McKay Jr.	Trapper	Single Release
Michael Archibald	Together We Stand	Single Release
Will Belcourt	Coast Of Gold	Epoch
Murray Porter	Set My Love Free	Murray Porter
Indigenous	Should I Stay	The Acoustic Sessions

CONTRIBUTING STATIONS:



## Turning the tide for affordable housing in Vancouver

By David P. Ball  
Raven's Eye Writer

### Vancouver

A scattering of cigarettes is strewn as offerings over the sidewalk concrete in front of the Regent Hotel on Hastings. Candles of all shapes are placed tenderly as memorials amidst photographs of a 50-year-old Native woman, Verna Simard. Flowers are placed to remember the late Vancouver resident who fell to her death on this spot on Sept. 16.

The sidewalk shrine was erected by a close friend of Simard's within hours of her untimely death, which came almost exactly a year after the similarly suspicious falling death of Ashley Machiskinic from the same hotel.

Simard's friend, who stayed up the entire night following the death, said she was exhausted and had few words to share with *Windspeaker*, only a tearful hug.

"Verna Simard was my cousin and she was a person who mattered," said Christine Simard-Chicago. "The media

dehumanized her. She was a mother, grandmother, sister, cousin, aunt and daughter."

The Regent Hotel is located just west of the Downtown Eastside (DTES) at Vancouver's Hastings and Main intersection. The 98-year old brick building is typical of low-income hotels in this neighbourhood—the poorest off-reserve postal code in Canada.

With a bar on the main floor, the Regent hosts hundreds of long-term residents living in single-resident occupancy suites (SROs). Some of the residents live on the verge of homelessness, many battling addiction, poverty and violence.

Police were investigating the death, speaking with Simard's boyfriend who was in the room with her when she fell from the sixth floor. No bars were on the window, and it was unclear whether the death would be ruled an accident, a suicide or a murder.

Locals say Simard's death—like Machiskinic's and the many missing and murdered Indigenous women from this very neighbourhood—underscores a housing crisis of

devastating proportion in Canada's third-largest city; a city which touts itself as the "best place on earth."

"We lost a sister last night," said Dalannah Bowen, an African-Canadian Cherokee member of the Women's Memorial March committee. "At the Women's Centre we add two names a week to our memorial.

"Why does this happen? It's because of poverty, of homelessness, and of violence against women."

With one of the highest urban Indigenous populations in the country, Vancouver's Downtown Eastside has become the site of a battle over rising housing prices, a lack of affordable lodgings, and encroaching up-scale development. Residents are fighting for their right to safe, affordable housing

Although the City of Vancouver was unavailable for comment, one city staff person (who asked not to be named) told *Windspeaker* that creating affordable housing is a priority for Vancouver, and that there have been many positive developments in tackling the issue despite a lot

of negative press.

However, City Councillor Ellen Woodsworth disagreed, saying that conditions were worsening in the DTES, particularly for Aboriginal women. This year, Woodsworth succeeded in passing a resolution at City Hall, opening Vancouver's first women-only housing shelter. Protesters occupied a public housing office and collected 4,000 signatures on a petition.

"It's the fight of these women that enabled me in council to push for a 24-hour shelter," said the long-time councillor, who describes herself on her Web site as a 'community organizer.' She frequently attends community demonstrations, particularly in the DTES.

While the City of Vancouver's official housing strategy calls for affordable housing to increase at the same pace as commercial and up-scale development, such as condominiums, critics claim that instead the latter has outpaced low-income housing creation by a factor of 11 to one.

The result: rising property values and rents, increasing costs across the board, and a net loss of

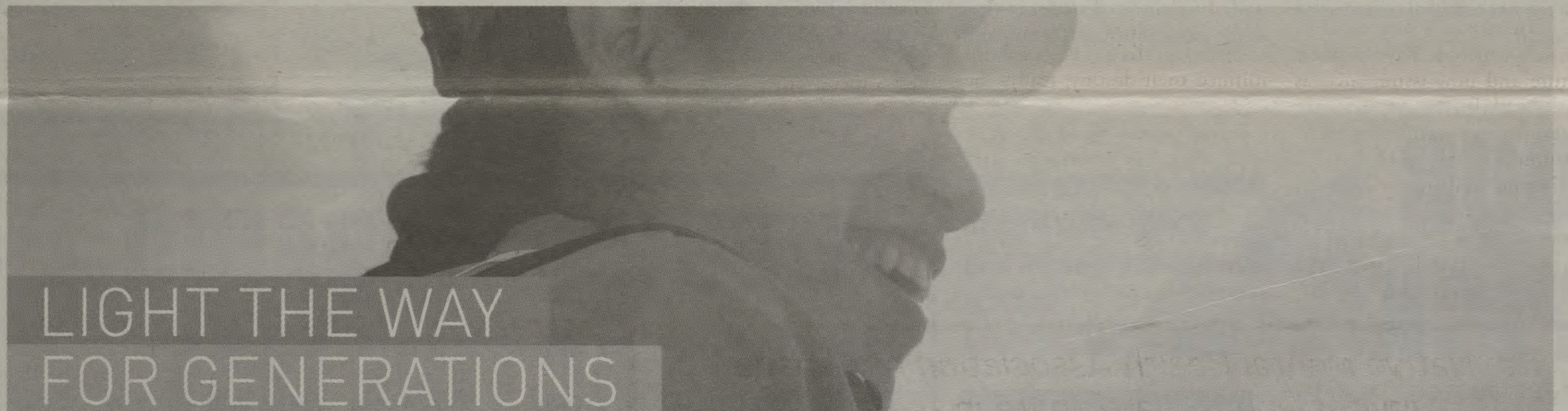
cheaper housing. This process—called 'gentrification'—happens in many cities, experts say, and can lead to the gradual displacement of residents from their own communities.

"[Gentrification] is a process of social transition in a neighbourhood as the population moves from low-income—often renter—to middle- and upper-income owners," explained Nicholas Blomley, chair of geography at Simon Fraser University, which operates an Urban Studies program only blocks from the Regent Hotel.

"This is often associated with the displacement of the lower income population as rents rise, and affordable housing becomes less available.

"The fact that a large Indigenous population lives in the [Downtown Eastside], often under difficult conditions, is clearly associated with a history of dispossession and colonial policy," he said in an earlier interview, arguing that the City of Vancouver bears responsibility for not enforcing or investigating its own housing guidelines.

(See *Turning* on page 16.)



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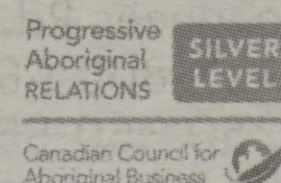
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# Assu takes a fresh look at West Coast art

By Shauna Lewis  
Raven's Eye Writer

## Vancouver

Contemporary artist Sonny Assu has a knack for infusing the politics of modern pop culture with traditional First Nations style, and his latest works are no exception.

In his exhibit entitled 'Longing,' Assu, a member of the Laichwiltach First Nation on Vancouver Island, takes a modern look at the meaning of reclamation in the way only a contemporary artist can, by examining Aboriginal West Coast tradition and analyzing where renewable resources and discarded objects fit in the face of growing big business consumerism.

On display at the West Vancouver Museum, Assu's exhibit boasts a series of uncarved, reclaimed raw chunks of cedar; leftovers from a logged woodlot used for his Campbell River band's economic development ventures.

The message in Assu's exhibit is a bold one and it illuminates the intrinsic connection Aboriginal people have to their culture and how issues such as land claims, economic development and modern consumption color their lives.

His pop culture-style of art screams as loud as the raw prefabricated masks he based his exhibit on, and in such, the message is clear: All objects,

especially those considered sacred and traditional, demand to belong.

Although the pieces in the exhibit have been untouched by the artist, they look as though they have taken on their own identities as traditional West Coast ceremonial masks used and revered by the artist's community for generations.

"I was really trying to figure out if I wanted to do anything with them, like carve them or sand them," Assu explained. "But as I was sitting there looking at these things for five years I realized that they do have their own faces, they do have their own lives and they do have their own souls," he said.

"These pieces are longing to be something else," Assu continued. "They're longing to be that totem pole, they're longing to be part of that ceremony, but in the eyes of consumption and consumerism they never had that chance," he explained.

Assu said he listened to the natural beauty screaming out in these haunting pieces and simply helped them become something they desired to be.

"I've given them that artistic life, that artistic vision, that artistic quality," he said. "I fulfilled their destiny, really," he said.

Tanya Kim, a friend of Assu's, said his art is innovative and challenging.

"His work re-conceptualizes ancient works and makes them meaningful in the modern context," she said.

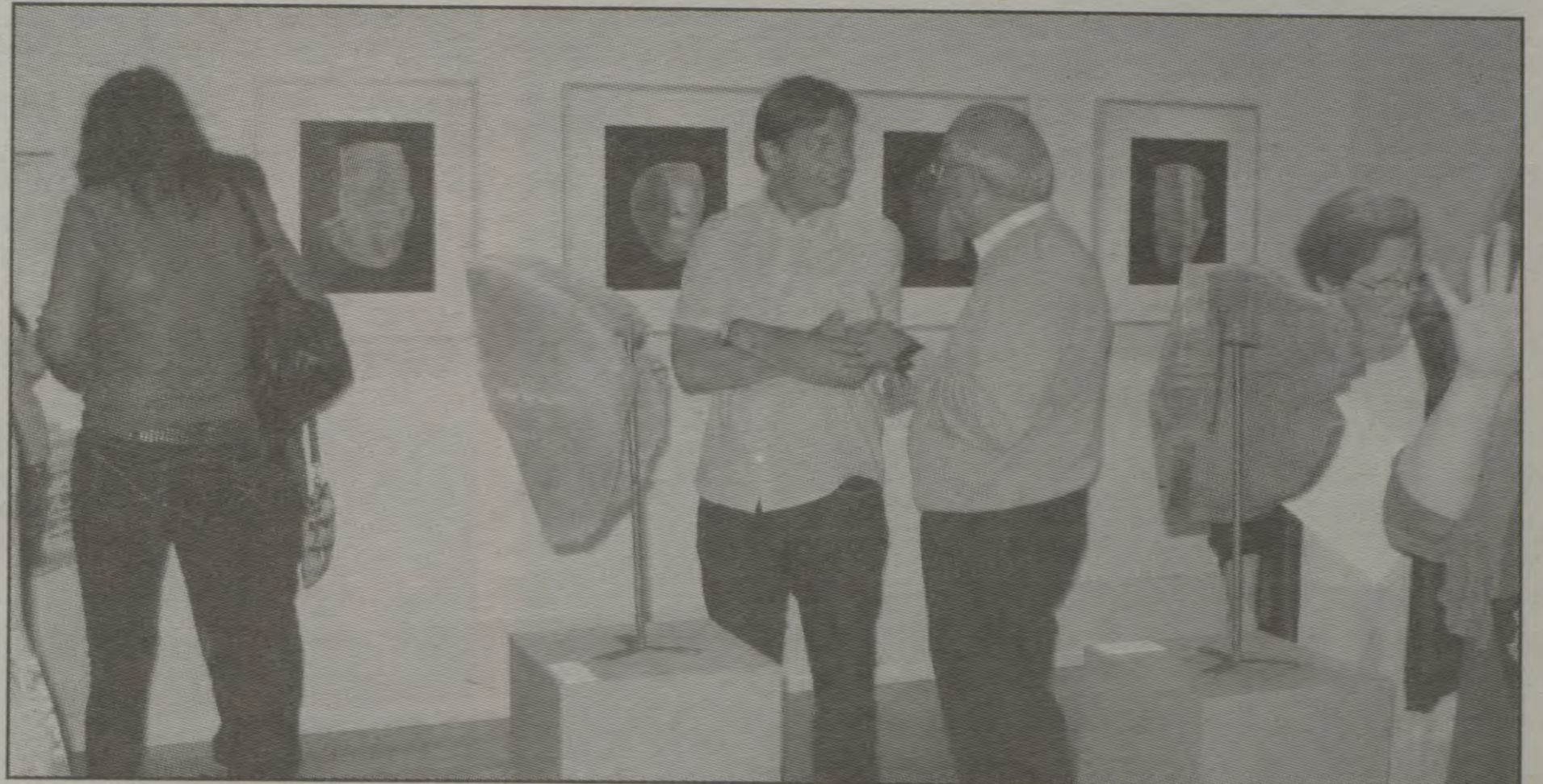


PHOTO: SHAUNA LEWIS

'Longing', the exhibit, is being held at the West Vancouver Museum through to Nov. 5.

"There's always been a sort of majesty about his works," she continued. "He just tends to bring out the glory of unforgotten things."

"One of the roles of an artist is to make you see things differently and I think that's what he's doing," she added.

"I think it's about the challenge and the fascination of how we might look at objects and certainly masks," said Barry Downs who attended the exhibit opening night on Sept. 13 in West Vancouver.

According to Deborah Jacobs of the Squamish First Nation, the exhibit sends a "very important message."

"Masks, in a sense, tie us [First Nations] to a sacredness of what is our belonging and of what is our inheritance" she said.

"When an artist is creating a piece, they're bringing it to life and they put life into a piece," she added.

"And in its unfinished state, [artwork] speaks to us of needing to have some sense of fullness and completion," she explained.

Asked whether contemporary First Nation art can hold its own in a market primarily based on traditional stylization, Jacobs said "absolutely."

"Our cultures are never static. They always continue to evolve," she said.

"The wonderful voice that young artists bring in terms of their interpretations make our culture that much more vibrant," Jacobs added.

"I am, without question, a big fan of Sonny," Jacobs concluded.

"I think Native art is whatever you define it to be," explained Pam Brown, curator for the Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia.

"It's very contemporary," she said of Assu's work.

Diane King, who met Assu while they were both in college, said his art reflects his character.

"This is Sonny's form of Native art," she said. "He is a modern man with modern sensibilities and modern concerns and he is so in touch with his traditions that he is able to pull it together and make a message that maybe someone hasn't thought about before," she said.

"It's about progress," added Nisga'a artist Vince Fairleigh. "It's not traditional, but it's still Native art," he said.

That said, Fairleigh admits that his opinion on what defines art is more relaxed than most.

"My interpretation of art is, if you put it on your front door and no one takes it, it's not art," he laughed.

But by all contemporary and aesthetic definitions, Assu's work is not only considered art, it is exemplary of a movement set on redirecting and reclaiming the idea of First Nations art.

"We're blurring the categories," explained Shawn Hunt,



PHOTO: SHAUNA LEWIS

Laichwiltach artist Sonny Assu.

contemporary Heiltsuk First Nation artist." It's about blurring the lines and challenging the boundaries," he said.

"We're put in these categories arbitrarily," Hunt continued. "It's nice to just burst out of them," he added.

"I'm breaking it apart," Assu said of the traditional art style. "I'm removing the tradition and inserting the contemporary."

Assu, who said he would rather be known as an "artist who happens to be First Nations," than a First Nations artist, calls his works "the abstraction of abstraction." He said that even traditional West Coast Native art has abstract qualities in how the lines, ovoids and designs are implemented and his work just takes a further step into that notion of abstraction.

Contemporary art is not only political and thought-provoking it also has the ability to promote growth and inspire change, said Assu.

"I feel contemporary art is relevant to help push the culture forward," he said.

"It's a way of helping our culture grow and develop [and] it helps us as First Nations people reclaim our culture for ourselves."

Sonny Assu's exhibit 'Longing' can be seen at the West Vancouver Gallery until Nov. 5.

Visit the Web site at <http://westvancouvermuseum.ca/>

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Ontario Birchbark: Special Section providing news from Ontario

# Circumstances of youth deaths remain unexamined

By Jennifer Ashawasegai  
with files from Sarah  
Coombs  
Birchbark Writers

## Thunder Bay

The family of Reggie Bushie is no closer to finding the answers surrounding his death. Police recovered the body of the Poplar First Nation youth from the McIntyre River in Thunder Bay on Nov. 1, 2007. He had been attending Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School when he died.

Reggie's death was the fifth such death in the northwestern Ontario city. Two more teens have died of similar circumstances. All seven youth were from remote First Nations and had to attend high school in the city.

An inquest into his death was postponed in 2009 after lawyers for Nishnawbe Aski Nation and Bushie's family questioned the way people were being selected to sit on the jury for an inquest in the area. A hearing was held in July to 'inquire into the representatives of the 2011 jury roll of the Judicial District of

Thunder Bay.'

The issue was that there were no First Nation jurists sitting at the inquest for Reggie Bushie. To have a fair look into circumstances, First Nations jurists would have better cultural understanding and awareness when examining evidence and hearing from witnesses.

According to the ruling from Coroner David S. Eden, Coroner's inquests are comprised of a jury of five people who are selected through procedures set out in the Juries Act and Coroner's Act, 'which incorporates by reference specific provisions of the Juries Act.'

In his ruling, Eden wrote, "Under the Juries Act, the sheriff in a county or district prepares a jury roll each year. The jury roll consists of a randomly selected group of Canadian citizens resident in the province, who have been sent and who have returned a jury service notice. The persons randomly selected to receive jury service notices are taken from municipal assessment lists."

In short, there are problems with the selection process since it doesn't include First Nation

representatives. (That's also the point of an inquiry currently underway in the province. The Ministry of the Attorney General appointed former Supreme Court Justice Frank Iacobucci to inquire into and report on First Nation representation on Ontario jury rolls, with a final report due in the summer of 2012.)

After Eden's ruling came out Sept. 9, Nishnawbe Aski Nation called for a Commission of Inquiry to look into all seven youth deaths in Thunder Bay.

"We didn't specifically talk with respect to the Bushie Inquiry," said Deputy Grand Chief Terry Waboose, "but we called for a Commissioner of Inquiry to look into the circumstances surrounding the deaths of seven NAN youths who tragically passed away while attending school under the similar circumstances as Reggie Bushie."

"The Coroner's Inquest system is obviously not sufficient to get to the bottom of what the families are trying to find answers to, as to what happened to not only Bushie, but also to the other young people," added Waboose.

The Bushie family lawyer, Jonathon Rudin of Aboriginal Legal Services, said prior to the hearing, information on First

Nation jury participation had never been revealed before and what they learned in the hearing was "quite disturbing." Out of the jury questionnaires sent out and received, 50 per cent of those are qualified to sit on juries, but only seven per cent of First Nations are qualified to sit.

Rudin also said, "the ruling concluded that the jury roll in Thunder Bay does not in fact comply with the requirements of the Juries Act, because First Nations people who live on reserve are simply not adequately represented, therefore it was impossible to put a jury together in Thunder Bay that's representative of the community...the inquest can't be held because a proper jury can't be convened...That means the inquest into the [death] of Reggie Bushie can't be held."

"It's our feeling, for a number of reasons, it makes sense not to pursue the inquest issue anymore but in fact urge the government of Ontario or whichever party forms the government of Ontario next month, to hold a Commissioner of Inquiry into the seven deaths that have occurred among the young men who have come from the reserve to attend school in Thunder Bay," said Rudin.

The Ministry of Aboriginal

Affairs stated in an email, "We take this issue very seriously and believe the best approach is to get all the key parties together and try to solve the issues. We don't have to wait for the Bushie inquest to start discussions with key players (city, federal government, province, NAN and others). Ontario would be pleased to participate in any such discussions."

The Ministry also added in its statement, "These are terrible tragedies and our thoughts are with the victims' families. No youth should suffer such a fate."

Meanwhile, after NAN called for a Commissioner of Inquiry, the organization didn't get the favorable response they wanted from the province, and NAN released another statement. In it, Deputy Grand Chief Waboose rejected an offer from the province to convene meetings instead of a provincial Commission of Inquiry.

So for now, the families of Jethro Anderson, Curran Strang, Paul Panacheese, Robin Harper, Reggie Bushie, Kyle Morriveau and Jordan Wabasse have no choice but to continue waiting for answers into why these youths from remote First Nations died so young while attending high school in the city over the past 11 years.

## Turning the tide for affordable housing in Vancouver

(Continued from page 14.)

But traditional policy solutions to the housing crisis, such as homeless shelters and a housing fund paid by condominium developers, have so far not worked for Vancouver, said speakers at a Sept. 17 rally. This year's annual women's housing march launched a campaign to boycott businesses and developers that organizers said are making life unaffordable in the DTES.

Led and organized by residents, the colorful rally included giant puppets, traditional ceremony and drumming, a neighbourhood jazz band, and even salsa dancing. Elders offered prayers at the site of Simard's death, while speakers decried the ineffectiveness of traditional solutions, calling for more fundamental change.

"They're dead end solutions to the problems," said Carol Martin, a community-based victim services worker at the

Downtown Eastside Women's Centre, which organized the annual protest.

"They don't see us as human beings.

"We are human beings; we have rights to housing. We do have a voice, but it's just not heard."

Martin, who is Nisga'a-Gitksan, emphasized that the DTES is not only a site of suffering and oppression, it is also a community where people care for each other and struggle for a better life.

"My love for this community, for the people who live here, they truly are the warriors of this community," she told *Windspeaker*. "I've been trying to find hope the last few days.

"The tide has finally turned. Now I'm at a crosswalk [deciding] which way we might go. I pray to Creator, to Mother Earth for guidance. We're not only living here, but we're making a difference. We are going to make a change."

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# Kids Help Phone improves its understanding of Aboriginal youth

By Jennifer Ashawasegai  
Windspeaker Contributor

## TORONTO

Kids Help Phone has launched its newest poster campaign designed for Aboriginal youth with a message from Aboriginal youth: You're not alone.

It's a simple and poignant message displayed on the new posters which better reflects Aboriginal youth than the previous generic posters from Kids Help Phone.

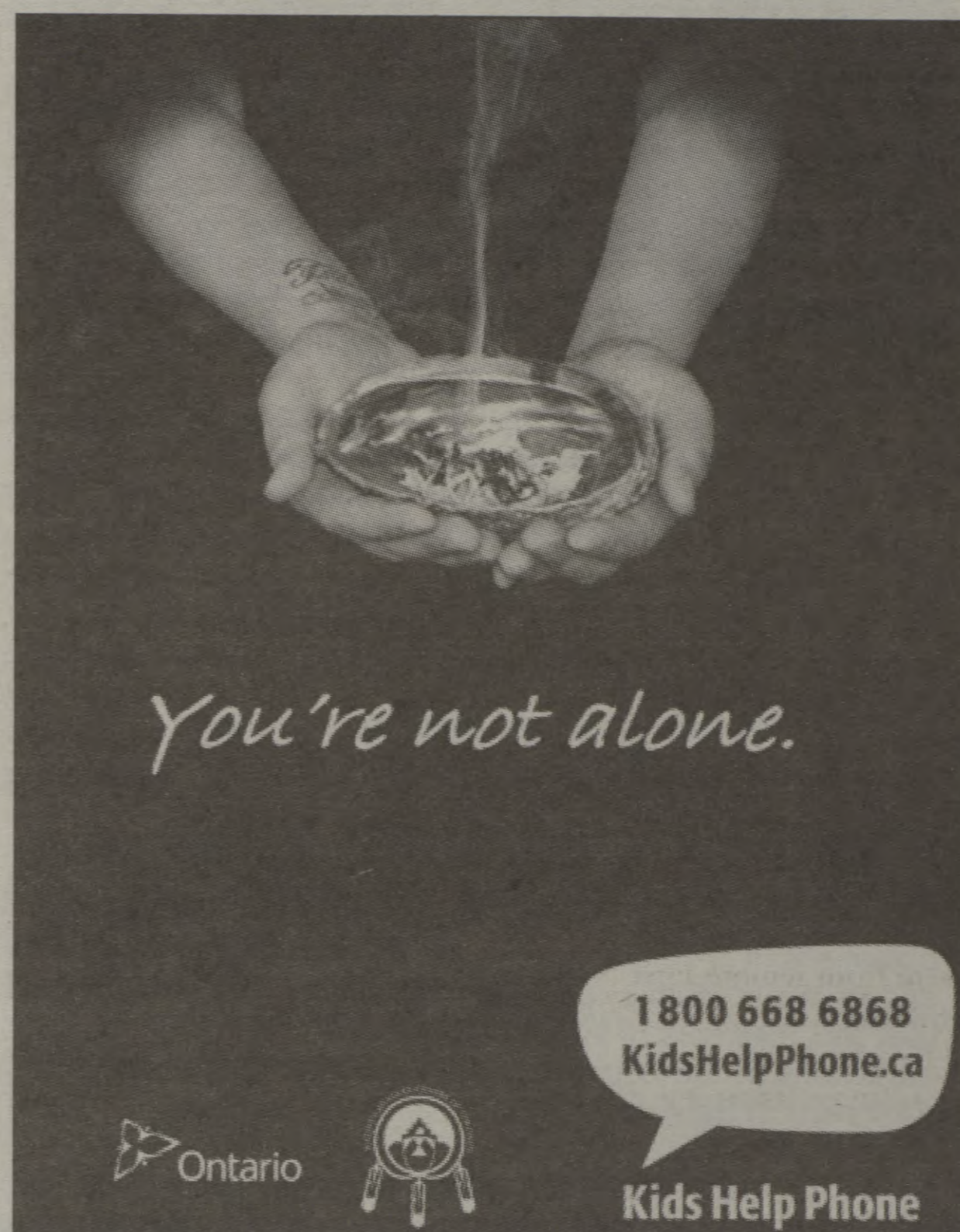
The organization not only released new posters, but has also been working on improving service to Aboriginal youth.

The new campaign, entitled Building Capacities to Better Support Aboriginal Youth, came out of meetings with Aboriginal youth throughout the province, including northern communities, over the past year. The organization partnered up with the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto to invite youth to help shape a new awareness campaign.

In spring 2011, the organization received a grant from the province to enable a team of counselors to visit five communities, including Moose Factory, Serpent River, Toronto, Thunder Bay and Kettle and Stoney Point. The intention of the trips was to gain a deeper understanding of the realities that Aboriginal youth have to face.

On the Moose Factory trip, Kristen Buckley, Knowledge Coordinator at Kids Help Phone, said Kids Help Phone posters were displayed on the walls for the attending youth. They wanted feedback from youth about the posters.

Buckley said the kids gave positive criticism, directing members to possibly include more items to posters that would have meaning to Aboriginal



youth.

But one comment really stuck with Buckley while she was there. One particular poster from a previous year's campaign included a tubular slide with a phone cord going up through it.

"A youth from Kasheshewan told me that poster really wasn't relevant to him because in his community they didn't even have a playground."

It's the small things that matter when reaching out to Aboriginal youth. Buckley said she also learned that even though there are negative stereotypes about First Nation communities in media which sensationalize the poverty and remoteness of some of the communities, First Nations youth are very proud of who they are and where they come from.

Buckley said all members from the organization based in Toronto and Montreal attended cultural sensitivity workshops to be better prepared to counsel Aboriginal youth.

Springwater Hester-Meawassige is the Healthy Communities Project Assistant with Kids Help Phone and was based at the Native Canadian Centre in Toronto. In a June telephone interview, Hester-Meawassige said the work to improve services to Aboriginal youth came from the phone counselors themselves.

She said, "The Healthy Communities project was an initiative from the counselors and was meant to properly equip the counselors to better respond to their Aboriginal callers and do more outreach with the

Aboriginal community so that more Aboriginal youth are aware of the services provided at the agency."

Buckley said youth wanted counselors to basically understand the context of their reality on reserve.

"A lot of times, counselors may suggest a service in their community that they could go seek face to face assistance." It was important for young people to express that they may not have access to the same services that would be available in cities.

Another thing the youth stressed is that they liked the anonymity Kids Help Phone provides them. Buckley said anonymity is not always available for youth living in a small community.

With the new knowledge and

collaboration with Aboriginal youth, the Native Canadian Centre and the National Aboriginal Health Organization, Kids Help Phone hopes to reach out more effectively now to Aboriginal youth.

The posters have been sent out to select communities. Nine posters were designed by the youth, and were promoted online where voting determined the winning images. All nine posters can be viewed on the Kids Help Phone Web site at [www.kidshelphone.ca](http://www.kidshelphone.ca).

The winning poster depicts a young woman holding out a phone while standing near a road, and the runner-up poster depicts someone smudging.

Buckley said posters and promotional materials can be ordered by any community.

## New Web site promotes sexual and reproductive health

By Shauna Lewis  
Windspeaker Contributor

## OTTAWA

An online resource designed to provide Aboriginal women with sexual health and reproduction information was launched this summer. To access the site go to [Aboriginalsexualhealth.ca](http://Aboriginalsexualhealth.ca)

"In Canada, Aboriginal women have the highest rates of cervical cancer, STIs and HIV/AIDS, diabetes, including gestational diabetes, among other sexual and reproductive health issues," explained Alisha Nicole Apale, Aboriginal Health Initiative Coordinator at the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC) in Ottawa.

"Aboriginal women are also more likely to experience high-

risk pregnancies and complicated or pre-term deliveries," she continued. "The risk of maternal mortality for Aboriginal women is double that of non-Aboriginal women in Canada. Similarly, the infant mortality rate for Aboriginal babies is more than twice that of the general population," she said.

The Aboriginal Women's Sexual Health Web site was launched in June 2011. It was established through a collaborative approach between SOGC and the Aboriginal Health Initiative Committee (AHI), a nation-wide committee of health professionals working in Aboriginal communities.

Information on everything from childbirth, parenting, and relationships to sexuality, sexually transmitted infections and the

importance of annual women's cancer screenings are found on the Web site, said Apale, adding that even the site's logo references the need for a holistic approach to Aboriginal health care.

"We chose the circle as our centre image for the Web site because it symbolizes the cycle of life and how everything in life is connected," Apale said. "The medicine wheel is a First Nation sacred teaching that speaks to the four directions. It is symbolic of harmony, balance and an inclusive place for everyone and we felt it is fitting for the objective of this site," she said.

Asked why the site was needed, Apale said "What is known is that there are several contributing and overlapping issues at play," she said. "The social determinants of health provide a great framework

through which we can understand the prevalence and disproportionate rate of sexual and reproductive illness within Aboriginal communities. Access to quality and culturally-safe health care is one of the cross-cutting and underlying issues, and removing barriers to care—the things practitioners can do in their individual practices—is a key aspect of our initiative," she said.

Also, "We aim to address the larger systematic barriers through advocacy and leadership as a society of women's health professionals."

"There is a discrimination in the way that Aboriginal people [experience] health care compared to the white population," said Dr. Sandra de la Ronde, co-chair of the Aboriginal Health Initiative

Committee and obstetrician at the Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health in Ottawa.

"As a group, Aboriginal people still experience the most overt racism in the arena of health care, which makes them less likely to want to get care," she added.

Dr. de la Ronde said residential school abuses have also catered to the ignorance many women have concerning necessary annual cancer screenings, such as cervical pap smears and mammograms.

She said the site is a lesson in 'cultural competent care' in regard to how Aboriginal woman address their health concerns as well as how mainstream practitioners care for their Indigenous patients.

Asked just who the Web site targets, Apale said their target is distinct.

(See *New* on page 21.)

## Sports Briefs

By Sam Laskaris

### Another provincial tournament

Aboriginal youth teams are being sought for a provincial basketball tournament in British Columbia.

The inaugural BC Aboriginal Provincial Basketball Championships are scheduled for Oct. 21 to Oct. 23 in Prince Rupert. This event will feature both girls' and boys' divisions in the under-14, under-16 and under-19 age groupings.

The tournament will be hosted by the Friendship House Association of Prince Rupert. This event though does not replace the long-running BC Junior All-Native Basketball Tournament that is traditionally staged each March. This new tournament is sanctioned by Basketball BC, and it is also part of various provincial championships that will be run by the Aboriginal Sport, Recreation and Physical Activity Partners Council.

These provincial championships and various development camps will help determine which athletes represent BC at the 2014 North American Indigenous Games in Regina. The tournament registration fee is \$150 per team. More information is available by sending an email to [aboriginalbasketball@gmail.com](mailto:aboriginalbasketball@gmail.com) or by calling (250) 627-1717.

### German vacation

Members of a Vancouver-based Aboriginal youth martial arts group spent 12 days of their summer on a sports/cultural exchange in Germany. Members of the Shudokan Karate and Education Canada Society took part in the exchange with youth from Artern, Germany.

The British Columbia-based group is in its ninth year of operations. It is a non-profit society which assists Aboriginal and inner-city youth by engaging them in martial arts. During their trip, members of the Canadian contingent visited many attractions in the country, including the German national parliament in Berlin.

### Injuries hurt Weglarz

Injuries continue to hinder the professional baseball career of Nick Weglarz. The 23-year-old outfielder, who is from Stevensville, Ont., was limited to just 41 games in 2011 with the Ohio-based Akron Aeros, members of the Eastern League. The Aeros are the AA affiliate of the Cleveland Indians.

Despite his age, Weglarz, whose grandfather was Sarsee, has already played seven seasons of minor pro baseball. Weglarz started and finished the 2011 season somewhere he didn't want to be, on the disabled list.

For starters, he tore the meniscus in his left knee in March during spring training. As a result, he didn't suit up for the Aeros until early June. Then, tendonitis with his knee forced him out of the lineup on several occasions. He also missed other contests this year because of an eye injury and an elbow injury.

Weglarz has been considered one of the Indians' top prospects since 2005 when the Cleveland organization drafted him right out of Stevensville's Lakeshore Catholic High School. But injuries have plagued him throughout his career. A broken hand limited him to just one game in 2006. And in '09, his first season in Akron, a shin injury cut short his year.

Then in 2010 Weglarz again struggled to stay in the lineup; he had a thumb injury as well as tendonitis from an off-season leg surgery.

Last season, though, was also a significant one for Weglarz. It marked the first time he was called up to the AAA ranks, one step below the major leagues. He played 50 games for the Columbus Clippers, an Ohio-based club that competes in the International League. Another career highlight for Weglarz was representing Canada at the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing, China. Weglarz and his teammates placed sixth in that competition.

### New lacrosse league

Ohsweken is one of the teams that is listed to compete in the inaugural season of Canada's newest professional lacrosse league.

Officials with the Canadian Lacrosse League, also known as CLAX, were hoping to have divisions in both western and eastern Canada for its first season, but now it appears the fledgling circuit will only have teams in Ontario and Quebec for its first year. And that's if the loop does indeed get off the ground. CLAX officials were hoping to start their first season this fall. But now its start has been pushed back to January.

The league's Web site, [www.clax.ca](http://www.clax.ca), states that five teams are set to participate in the first year of the loop. Four of those teams are in Ontario: Ohsweken, Oshawa, Brampton and Kitchener. A club from Montreal is also slated to take part.

Some cynics do not believe the CLAX will be successful as it will be operating at the same time as the National Lacrosse League, which has established franchises in both Canada and the United States and traditionally features many of the sport's top players.

CLAX officials are hoping to attract those players who do not crack the rosters of NLL teams. And they are purposely placing franchises in smaller markets.

[ sports ]

# World champ still contributes inside and out of the ring

By Sam Laskaris  
Windspeaker Contributor

TORONTO

Though he's now in his fifties, former Canadian boxing champion Wayne Bourque still likes to be in the middle of the action.

Bourque, who is Metis, opened up a gym called Centre Ring in Toronto 22 years ago. This facility offers Boxercise classes.

As its name implies, Boxercise is a combination of exercises that a typical boxer would use during training sessions. Workouts include skipping rope, push-ups, shadow boxing, as well as arm, leg and abdominal drills.

Centre Ring is open seven days a week. Classes are offered at different times throughout the day. And the facility has about 400 clients.

The age range of these clients is from 12 all the way up to people in their seventies.

"Most of my clients are women," Bourque said. "I'd say 70- to 75 per cent are women, from corporate executives to nurses to girls who go to private schools."

Over the years Bourque's clients have also included about a dozen athletes who have played in the National Hockey League. He himself has a connection with a current NHLer. His cousin is Rene Bourque, a Calgary Flames' forward.

Besides pro hockey players, over the years Bourque has also helped to train younger players. At times he's worked with entire youth hockey teams. And for a few years he worked with the St. Michael's Buzzers, a Toronto-based Junior A squad that competes in the Ontario Junior Hockey League.

Workouts last at least an hour—and closer to about 75 minutes—each. Bourque usually leads two sessions each day, except for Sundays, when he does not work.

"It's what I do," he said. "It's what I love to do."

Many years ago Bourque thought his ties to boxing were over. He had won a Canadian amateur boxing title in 1973. And a decade later he captured a bronze medal at the 1983 national championships. This meant he was a contender to represent Canada at the '84 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles. But a knee injury curtailed that dream. His knee

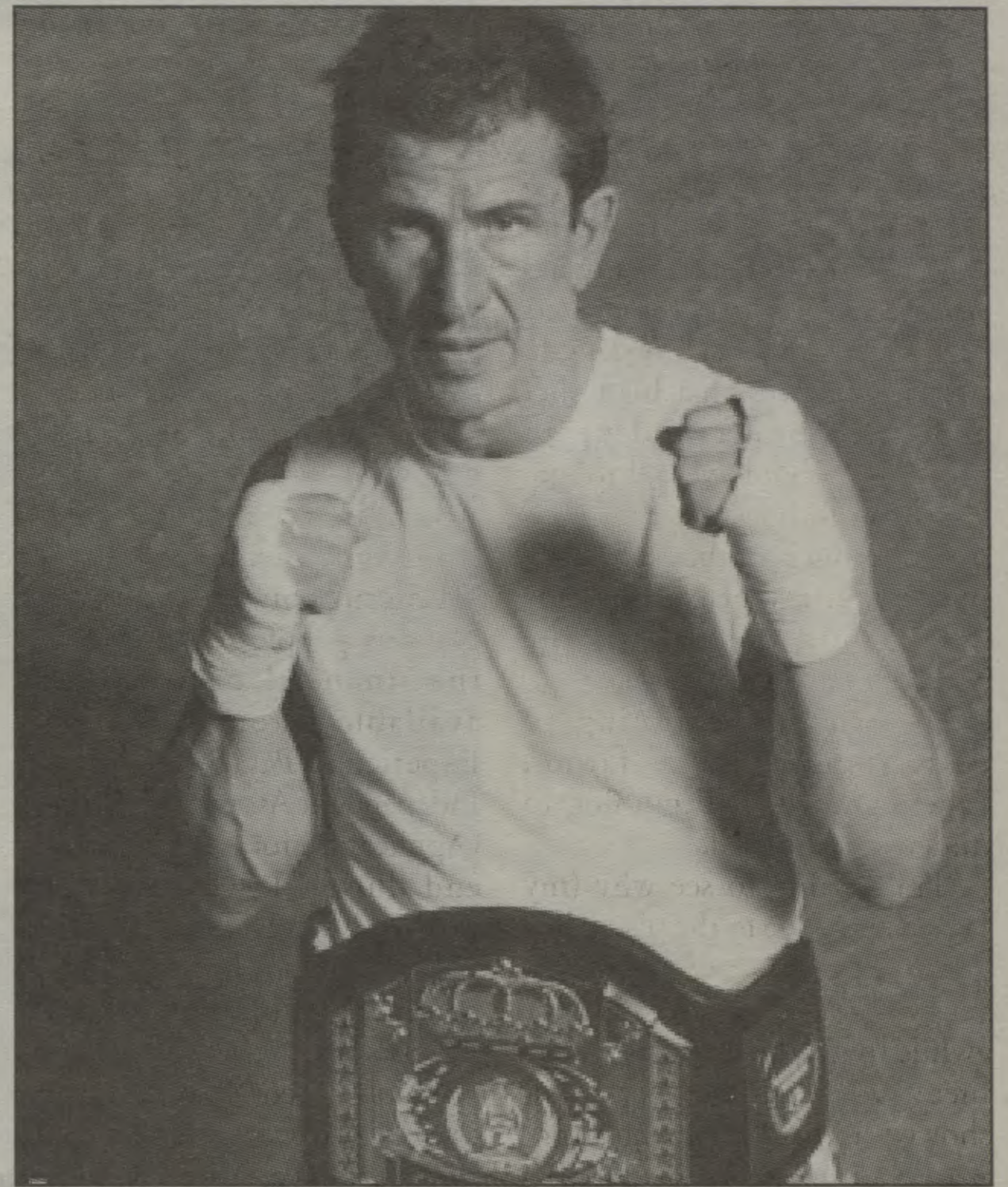


PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Wayne Bourque

injury sidelined him for the national trials, where the Canadian Olympic team was chosen.

Bourque gave up boxing in '85.

"I thought that I was going to be a plumber," he said, adding he took an apprenticeship and worked in the business for awhile.

"My father told me you have to be happy with whatever you do in your life. I'm not saying there's anything wrong with being a plumber. But it just wasn't for me."

Bourque also worked in various sales and marketing jobs yet he still wasn't content.

Bourque, 52, was born in Lac La Biche, Alta., but he spent most of his early years in another Alberta city, Fort McMurray. He's now lived in Toronto for the past quarter century.

It was in the Ontario capital where he returned to his roots and opened up his gym.

"I have no regrets whatsoever," he said of his job.

There are a few other things, however, that Bourque would still like to accomplish.

"What I want to do is start having a couple of franchises for Centre Ring," he said.

Ideally, Bourque would like to open up a second Centre Ring location in Toronto. And he's looking to expand and have a facility in Calgary and possibly

open up yet another one somewhere in British Columbia.

The proposed western Canadian franchises would allow Bourque to travel a bit as he would be keen to frequent those facilities to oversee their operations.

Bourque is also eager to do another thing in the near future. He'd like to make a training video.

"I've got to make that soon before my body starts getting all wrinkly," he joked.

Despite his age, Bourque can also call himself a world champion. That's because he travelled to Kansas City, Missouri in October of 2009 to compete in the Ringside world masters championships.

Bourque won his one and only fight in the men's 45-55 age grouping for those in the light heavyweight category. Though he had just one other rival in his division, Bourque's victory meant he was also crowned a world champion.

The world masters meet is held annually. And when Bourque attended the championships two years ago there were participants who were in their seventies.

But he's not sure whether he'll go back and try to win another world title.

"I've got a bad knee," he said. "I still love to fight. But I know it's a young man's game."

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# Creating awareness during walk to national event

By Shari Narine  
Windspeaker Contributor

## BONAVENTURE, Que.

Walking alongside his father from Cochrane, Ont., and now with about 800 km left until they reach Halifax and the third national Truth and Reconciliation Commission event, Patrick Etherington Jr. has come to realize that the blisters on his feet and his aching legs do not compare to what his father and other former students of residential schools went through.

"It's hard what we're doing but my suffering is nothing. It really puts me in my place," said the 28-year-old member of the Moose Cree First Nation.

Along with beginning to understand his father, Etherington Jr. is beginning to understand himself.

"I'm starting to see why (my father) has gone to the places he's gone. It's because of residential school. My dad and me, for awhile there, the love was always there but sometimes he's never showed it," said Etherington Jr.,

speaking during a break in the comfort of accommodations in Bonaventure, Que.

"And I see the way I act. Sometimes I don't express myself too much and when I do it's only anger. And I'm starting to understand why."

Patrick Etherington Sr. is leading his second walk to a TRC national event. He walked from Cochrane to Winnipeg last summer. The walk is to raise awareness about the plight of survivors of residential schools, said Etherington Sr., and to educate, not only non-Aboriginals, but also First Nations people.

Etherington Sr. wants First Nations people to know about the financial compensation available through Common Experience Payments and the Independent Assessment Process. (Application for CEP came to an end during Etherington Sr.'s walk, though First Nations leadership is hoping to encourage government to extend the CEP deadline.)

"A lot of people weren't aware of the full package," said

Etherington Sr.

For non-Aboriginals, the issue is awareness of a different kind.

"Non-Natives don't understand. They don't really know what this is about. Some people listen to what we are talking about," said Etherington Sr.

The group, which involves a second residential school survivor, Frances Whiskeychan, has spoken to people along the route. As well they have attended more formal outings such as talks at community meetings. They have done interviews on the radio, and held discussions with churches who signed the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement.

Etherington Sr. said that United and Anglican churches have been welcoming, allowing the group to speak to their congregations, but the Roman Catholic church hasn't issued the same invitation.

"I'm surprised (by the Catholic church). We're not saying something against them. We just want to dialogue," said Etherington Sr.

Etherington Sr. and Whiskeychan's travelling companions are a younger generation. Although these young men have never experienced residential schools, they have all felt the impact personally.

"I'm starting to understand, starting to really see it happened. I'm hearing the stories. We've met survivors along the way," said Robert Hunter. "I'm not really a feeler, but I'm feeling hurt from what they had to go through in residential schools. And it makes me angry because they were taken away from their homes."

Hunter, 29, is a member of the Peawanuk First Nation. Both his mother and father attended residential schools. Neither of his parents speaks freely of the experience.

"I went on (this journey) because I needed to know what happened," Hunter said. "I get really shaky when I hear about the stories. It makes me look at my life, how lucky I am."

For James Kioke, 27, of the Attawapiskat First Nation, the walk is not only an opportunity

to learn more about the experience his grandparents and father talk about, but it is an opportunity for him to stay drug-free.

"By walking on the road, there are no drugs to buy. I've been off drugs for almost three months now," he said. He added he is not thinking ahead to what will happen when he finishes the walk. "I have four children. They're just babies. I'm a better person right now."

Sammy Kooseses, at 21, is the youngest walker. Kooseses, from the Attawapiskat First Nation, said he is taking this journey for the youth.

"What they're doing, getting into drugs, not respecting their Elders, I'm hoping (the youth) can understand from what I'm doing," said Kooseses. "I'm learning about living this life. This life is worth living without the drugs and alcohol."

The walkers began their journey on July 29. They will reach Halifax in time for the start of the TRC's national event, Oct. 26. They will have travelled 2,200 km.

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(Continued from page 9.)

Tailfeather, 26, who grew up on the Blood reserve and who now lives in Vancouver, has been a loud public voice against the fracturing of her land. She, along with the other protesters, are members of a grassroots organization called KaiNai Earth Watch.

Since the multi-million dollar deal was signed last year, KaiNai Earth Watch has written letters and created petitions to raise awareness about the environmental impacts of fracking.

Tailfeathers, who is also the creator of the Protect Blood Land Web site, claims the group does what it can to draw attention to the issue. She said they have repeatedly contacted the Blood Tribe chief and council, Kainai Resources Incorporated, the gas and oil companies, the media, the Energy Resources Conservation Board, and various levels of government, including Aboriginal and Northern Affairs Canada. Despite their loud voices, no one is listening, said Tailfeathers.

So, last month when she heard there was a protest against fracking on her land, Tailfeathers, who was home for a visit, decided to join in.

"It was honestly a really peaceful protest," she said, adding that the group had no interaction with oil company personnel and even shared their food with a site security guard.

Despite that, however, she, along with Frank and Crop Eared Wolf, were arrested and held by Blood Tribe police for 10 hours for blocking oil trucks from leaving the fracturing site on Blood Tribe land. The woman were later charged with violating Section 423 (1)(G) of the Criminal Code for "intimidation" and were released the morning of Sept 10.

Tailfeathers said she does not regret her participation in the protest or her subsequent arrest, but says she is surprised the issue has gone this far.

"We were given an ultimatum buy the Blood Tribe police. Either we desist the blockade and let the workers off the site or we would be arrested," she said.

"The protest was peaceful," confirmed Blood Tribe Police Chief Lee Boyd.

"Our officers did the job they were required to do in a manner that was respectful and tolerant of all involved and their individual points of view," he added.

Boyd said the women were arrested only because they were blocking the roadway leading in and out of the fracturing site and not because they voiced their concerns.

"The issue was not the protest but the interfering with others who also had a right to use the roadway," he explained. "If the protesters had let the others pass they could have continued the

protest as long as they wanted as far as we were concerned," he said.

"The police service supports the right of all people to have opportunity to express their opinions on all issues. However, everyone's right to legal access is equally important," he added.

"We weren't letting any trucks on or off the site because we didn't know what chemicals were being carried [in the trucks]," Tailfeather explained.

She said that at one point during their interaction with police, the protesters requested to talk with Blood Tribe Chief Charles Weasel Head, but their request went unanswered.

"We were told by the [Blood Tribe] police officer that the chief would not meet with us," Tailfeathers said.

"They [protesters] may have indicated that they wanted to talk to Chief Weasel Head, however, we have no more access to the chief than they do," explained Boyd. "They were certainly free to call whomever they wished and I know there were several people there with cell phones," he added.

Following the arrests there were accusations that Weasel Head had requested that the protesters be charged. Tailfeathers said she couldn't comment on the accusations, but the chief denied any connection to the arrests.

"As a chief I am not above the law. I do not have the authority to decide who gets charged or not," he stated.

"The case of the three tribal members arrested was strictly a police matter and jurisdiction of the police. No direct contact was made by me to the police," he said. Weasel Head further claims that he had put in a request to Kainaiwa Resources Inc. (KRI), a band-run entity overseeing the oil project on the reserve, requesting that police consider a warning to protesters over laying formal charges.

"Chief Charles Weasel Head was not involved in any way," Boyd confirmed. He said the decision to arrest the three was made by the supervisor on scene in conjunction with one of our inspectors and it was based on the need to clear the roadway.

Weasel Head admitted to sharing environmental concerns regarding oil and gas exploration with the protesters, but maintains that stringent government regulations regarding oil and gas corporations are strictly mandated by Indian Oil and Gas Canada, a branch of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, and that Murphy Oil and Bowood Energy Corps are not exempt from these rules and regulations.

In a statement from KRI, the company spokesperson also said that regulation and protocol regarding drilling has been followed.

"Protecting people and the environment is a top priority for

KRI, Chief and Council, Bowood and Murphy. Bowood and Murphy remain committed to complying with all government rules and regulations when drilling, completing and operating oil and gas wells on the reserve," the spokesperson said.

"In advance of any drilling activity on reserve land, Bowood and Murphy must first get approval from chief and council, Indian Oil and Gas Canada, and the Energy Resources Conservation Board. Bowood and Murphy must also complete an environmental assessment and an on-the-ground assessment from a respected Blood Tribe Elder for each location. All regulatory approvals, including the necessary Chief and Council Resolutions, have been issued and are in place for current drilling activities," the statement concluded.

"We work with the chief and

council and the companies to ensure that all relevant environmental legislation, policies and practices are followed," agreed Alexandra Steinke, Communications Officer for Indian Oil and Gas Canada [IOGC].

Pursuant to the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (CEAA), IOGC ensures that the environment is protected and environmental impacts are minimized, she said.

"As part of this process, IOGC ensures that an Environmental Assessment is completed. The Environmental Assessment identifies and evaluates all risks there might be to the environment as a result of oil and gas development. As a result of the environmental assessment process, environmental mitigation measures are identified. IOGC then issues Environmental Protection Terms

letters and companies are required to comply with these terms," she explained.

But Chelsea Flook of the Sierra Club Prairie Chapter, a grassroots non-profit organization aimed at protecting the environment, says regulations and protocols governing environmental safety measures are weakening.

"We've seen an overall loosening of environmental regulations and enforcement. These protections do little to ensure long-term health and integrity of ecosystems upon which people rely on for life," she said.

Flook calls fracking a "very destructive process," and says "In general it's pretty risky, bottom-of-the-barrel energy procure-ment."

"It's going to have an impact on human life as well as an impact on land use," she says.

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**New Web site promotes sexual health**

(Continued from page 17.)

“First, as part of a professional society of women’s health professionals, we needed to address the needs and interests of the SOGC members and other women’s health care professionals. Second, with advancing Aboriginal women’s health as the main goal of the AHI, our site needed to have information targeted towards the public, namely, First Nations, Inuit and Métis women, their families and communities. Third, at the AHI, our projects, products and advocacy initiatives are undertaken via partnerships

with both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organizations,” she explained.

To date, creators of the site say it has been successful.

“We have been monitoring it and so far, we are pleased with the response,” said Apale.

She said the Internet is an ideal way to get women motivated and active in their personal health care.

“We are well aware that increasingly people turn to the Web to get health information and there is deluge of information out there. With the launch of the site our focus is on quality, not quantity,” she said.

“People can expect to find that our focus will remain on presenting high quality information and resources, with a strong emphasis on culturally-safe materials—materials that speak to the specific health needs, interests, beliefs and realities experienced by Aboriginal women,” she added.

Apale said the site can only get better from here on in.

“We will aim to evolve conscientiously, advancing the site in a way that respects diversity, promotes ownership and continually supports the ability of health professionals to provide culturally-safe care.”

**Recommendations to curb youth suicide**

(Continued from page 10.)

“To all those in Pikangikum, let me offer this message – our hearts and minds are with you. We stand with you and join our voices with yours and all First Nation citizens in seeking understanding and support for a better tomorrow. We take this stand together, to resolve and take full responsibility to protect and nurture our families and children and we will take every step to support your advocacy,” he promised.

Two key recommendations endorsed by the First Nation suggest that:

Funding for First Nations education should be provided by Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada at a level comparable to that provided to other children and youth being educated in the province of Ontario. Also, Aboriginal Affairs should fulfil its commitment to build a new school in Pikangikum as soon as possible and the school should be built to accommodate

all children currently of school age and projected into the future, and will include children’s playgrounds, soccer fields, baseball diamonds, and basketball courts, include an auditorium where community members can gather for traditional and cultural community events, and include a daycare facility.

But while all of the hundred recommendations are crucial, Lauwers said his top recommendation is for the formation of a steering committee—made up of Pikangikum community members, health professionals, law enforcement and government representatives—tasked with ensuring that the report recommendations are carried through.

“The solution to First Nations issues must come from the First Nations themselves,” said Lauwers. “There has to be a collaborative approach to building a healthy community,” he added.

The ministry agreed that a

collective approach to adequately addressing the issue of suicide is vital.

“AANDC recognizes that youth suicide is a very complex issue, with no single cause or easy way of resolving it. Responding effectively requires the involvement of a number of parties because the solutions cross so many lines of responsibility,” the Aboriginal Affairs spokesperson stated.

Calling the report broad and “highly unique,” Lauwers said the data collected through the investigation could be utilized by the government and First Nations across Canada who are facing the sad reality of suicide.

“We didn’t just look at the deaths. We looked at the social determinants of health, policing in the community and education,” Lauwers explained.

“[The report] is broad enough that it could apply to any First Nation community where there is an excessive mortality rate,” he said.

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Government of Alberta ■



[ footprints ] Maggie Black Kettle

# Blackfoot Elder overcame fear to pass on traditional ways

By Dianne Meili

To walk into Maggie Black Kettle's tipi from the bustling grounds of the Calgary Stampede was to enter the peaceful eye of a pounding, frenetic storm.

The muted light, smell of prairie sage, and lilt of her soft voice—sometimes dipping so low as to sound like a whisper—soothed the senses. Her stories of a carefree childhood along the banks of the Bow River in southern Alberta could transport you to another time and place, so much so that you didn't want to return to the rodeo competition or midway crowds.

Black Kettle was honored at the Stampede's Indian Village closing ceremonies this past July. This year marked the final time Niinayiiniimakii "Chief Capturing Woman" would pitch her tipi at the Stampede grounds. She passed away in hospital on Sept. 14 at the age of 94.

Her father, traditional Chief Sitting Eagle, was one of the first to participate in the inaugural Calgary Stampede back in 1912.

The matriarch of the Siksika First Nation, located east of Calgary, was affectionately known as the grandmother of her community. Black Kettle was a fixture at North American powwows and attended as many as she physically could "to get some exercise and meet friends," she said when interviewed in 1990 for the book "Those Who Know." At that time, she was teaching the Blackfoot language and cultural arts at the now defunct Plains Indian Cultural Survival School (PICSS) in Calgary.

On the day of the interview she was teaching students to make feathered fancy dance bustles. After recording some of her memories, she walked in a park close to the school. There she touched a pine-cone on a tree branch and recalled how she made them into dolls when she was a child, with cut gopher-skin rugs for their playhouses.

She confided, though, that her youthful exuberance was

dampened by her experience in a Catholic residential school in Cluny, which she entered at seven. Seeing one of her classmates being punished traumatized her, and made her "a shy and scared kid."

"I still get scared easily, and if anyone is being hurt by another person I get a sick, cold feeling in my stomach," she said.

Her disclosure was no small thing since, at the time, the atrocities that occurred in residential schools hadn't yet received much publicity.

Despite being soft-spoken, Black Kettle's sense of justice overpowered her timidity. She went on to discuss an incident that occurred when she returned to the school as an adult to work in the kitchen. One of the nuns was treating Maggie's co-worker, also a grown woman, with obvious disdain.

"She was ignoring this poor woman and so I ran after her when she left to go to the chapel. I told her 'you always say you're married to God and helping the poor, but look at what you're doing to us. Why are you doing this?' She didn't say anything, but when she came back, she changed."

Black Kettle said she could see from a classroom window the tops of tipis pitched in a circle for the annual summer sundance, but was scolded by the nuns for looking at the 'pagan rituals.'

Shortly after graduating from school at 16, Black Kettle was told she'd been offered to Nickolas Black Kettle in an arranged marriage. After both of her parents passed away, an uncle had assumed responsibility for her and made the proposal.

"It was really frightening," she once explained to *Windspeaker*. "When my uncle asked Nickolas if he would accept me as his bride, I was afraid he'd say no."

But Nickolas said "yes" and the Black Kettles were married. Over the next 10 years the couple worked side-by-side in farmers' fields and she did a man's work—



Maggie Black Kettle

PHOTO: FILE

even as she had her babies—helping to clear land, drive horses, mend fences and plough fields.

The marriage also helped Maggie regain the culture she lost in boarding school. Her mother-in-law taught her beadwork and, after returning to a ceremonial lifestyle, she was approached to become a member of the Buffalo Women's Society.

By 1969, she and her family had moved to Calgary. Nickolas passed away in 1973 and so Maggie worked for years in a downtown bus station café, until her granddaughter came home from PICSS one day and announced the school principal was looking for an instructor to teach beadwork.

"I thought, 'Well, I don't think they'll hire me because I don't even write or have a good education,'" Maggie said. She summoned her courage and applied; she needn't have worried

because she was hired on the spot and remained a cultural instructor at PICSS for many years.

The Elder taught generations to speak Blackfoot, along with traditional arts and dancing, and was recognized with the YWCA's Woman of Distinction award for arts and culture in 1994.

Black Kettle travelled across North America to participate in sundances, powwows and other gatherings, and noted she was deeply moved by the spiritual leaders she met. Over the years she overcame her shyness to speak at numerous cultural conferences, and became so well known that line-ups to shake her hand were long at almost any event she chose to attend.

She was an ambassador both on and off the reserve, called upon to receive Prince Charles in 1977. Her recognizable face won her roles in movies such as *Wild*

America, *Medicine River*, and in the TV series *North of Sixty*.

Black Kettle's daughter, Daphne Good Eagle, said her mother was the matriarch of the family, and taught them all the power of prayer and to love each other.

"She had so many adopted grandchildren from the powwow circuit. Adam Beach, the movie star, called her grandma ever since they were in a film together," Good Eagle said.

"She devoted her life to renewing Blackfoot traditions."

Nine children, 24 grandchildren, 57 great grandchildren, and two great-great grandchildren survive Maggie Black Kettle.

*Editor's Note: Dianne Meili is the author of "Those Who Know."*

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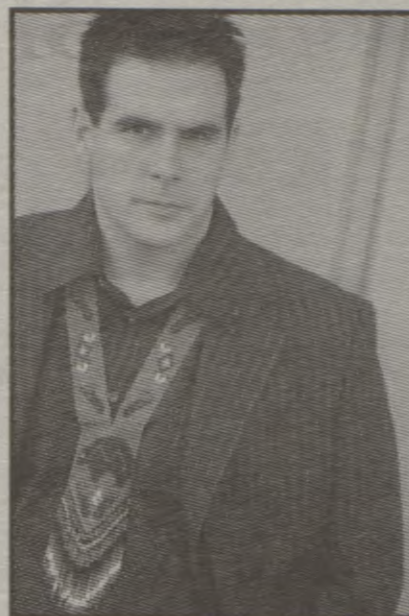
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By mail: Windspeaker • 13245 - 148 Street NW • Edmonton, Alberta • T5L 4S8  
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Notice of Public Hearing  
MHW-001-2011

**PetroBakken Energy Ltd. (PetroBakken) Application to Abandon a Pipeline (Abandonment)**

**Pursuant to section 74(1)(d) of the *National Energy Board Act* (NEB Act) and section 50 of the *Onshore Pipeline Regulations, 1999* (OPR-99)**

On 6 September 2011 the National Energy Board (NEB or Board) has announced a public hearing to consider an application from PetroBakken for Leave to Abandon the Alsask Pipeline.

The Alsask Pipeline is a 580 m long, 88.9 mm outside diameter pipeline located approximately 30 km east of Oyen, Alberta that was used to transport oil effluent from a well at 3-27-27-29W3 in Saskatchewan to an oil gathering system in Alberta at 1-25-27-1W4. PetroBakken indicated that operation has ceased and there is no purpose remaining for the line.

The National Energy Board will hold a public hearing regarding PetroBakken's application to hear matters relating to: consultation with stakeholders; measures taken and proposed to abandon the facilities; potential environmental and socio-economic effects of the abandonment; adequacy of soil and groundwater contamination assessment; reclamation and monitoring; and the financial provisions related to the abandonment. Copies of the application are available for viewing:

- on the Board's Internet site at [www.neb-one.gc.ca](http://www.neb-one.gc.ca) click on "Quick Links" and scroll down to the application

- at the Board's library at **First Floor, National Energy Board** 444 - 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW Calgary, AB T2P 0X8

- and at PetroBakken's offices **PetroBakken Energy Ltd.** Suite 2800, 525 - 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW Calgary, AB T2P 1G1

#### Public Hearing

The public hearing will consist of a written portion and potentially an oral portion. The Board invites parties to comment, as part of their application to intervene, on whether the oral portion of the hearing is necessary. Further details with respect to whether this hearing will include an oral portion will be announced at a later date. Any person interested in participating in the oral hearing should consult the Board's Hearing Order MHW-001-2011 for further background and instructions. You may access the Hearing Order through the Board's Internet site at [www.neb-one.gc.ca](http://www.neb-one.gc.ca) (click on "Major Applications and Projects", then scroll down to the PetroBakken Alsask Pipeline Abandonment Application and click on "Regulatory Documents", then "Hearing Order").

#### Information for Intervenor and Government Participants

Any person wishing to intervene or become a Government Participant in the hearing must file an application to intervene or declare its intention to participate as a Government Participant by **18 October 2011** with the Secretary of the Board and serve a copy on PetroBakken at the following address:

Mr. Leo Jansen, P. Eng.  
Senior Advisor  
Environment Health and Safety  
PetroBakken Energy Ltd.  
Suite 2800, 525 - 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW  
Calgary, AB T2P 1G1  
Facsimile: 403-218-6075

Mr. Tim Sweeney  
General Counsel  
PetroBakken Energy Ltd.  
Suite 2800, 525 - 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW  
Calgary, AB T2P 1G1  
Telephone: 403-213-3250  
Facsimile: 403-218-6075

You may use a form on the Board's Internet site to file an application to intervene or declaration of intention to participate as a Government Participant. Go to [www.neb-one.gc.ca](http://www.neb-one.gc.ca) and under the "Regulatory Documents" heading, click "Submit Documents", then "Submit documents electronically" and scroll down to "Application for Intervenor Status" or "Declaration of Government Participant Status". PetroBakken will serve a copy of the application and related documentation on each Intervenor and Government Participant.

#### Letters of Comment

Any person wishing only to comment on the application will have an opportunity to file a Letter of Comment with the Board. The deadline for Letters of Comment is **18 October 2011**.

The draft scope for the Board's Environmental Assessment is attached to this Hearing Order as Appendix VI. Any parties who wish to suggest a revision or comment on the scope must file their suggestions or comments with the Board and serve a copy on PetroBakken by **25 October 2011**. You must include a clear explanation of the relevance of the suggestion.

You may use forms on the Board's Internet site to file your Letter of Comment. Go to [www.neb-one.gc.ca](http://www.neb-one.gc.ca). Under the "Regulatory Documents" heading, click "Submit Documents", then "Submit documents electronically" and then scroll down to "Letter of Comment".

#### Information on Hearing Procedures

You may obtain information on the procedures set out in this Hearing Order by contacting:

Danielle Comte  
Regulatory Officer  
403-299-2731 or at the toll free number 1-800-899-1265

Additional information on the hearing process is available by going to the Board's website at [www.neb-one.gc.ca](http://www.neb-one.gc.ca), click on the "Acts and Regulations", and select the *National Energy Board Rules of Practice and Procedure, 1995*.

*AnneMarie Erickson*

Anne-Marie Erickson Secretary of the Board National Energy Board  
444 - 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW  
Calgary, AB T2P 0X8  
Facsimile 403-292-5503

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