

Windspeaker

April 1999

Celebrating our 15th Anniversary

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Dudley George remembered

By Paul Barnsley
Windspeaker Staff Writer

LONDON, Ont.

As has happened each year since he was shot to death by Ontario Provincial Police Acting Sgt. Kenneth Deane in 1995, ceremonies marking Dudley George's birthday were conducted in various locations across Ontario on March 17.

It was the fourth time family members and others have participated in the annual demonstrations intended to remind the general public that justice has still not been done in this matter.

The days immediately before and after George's birthday saw a flurry of activity. On March 19, it was announced that Premier Mike Harris, Attorney General Charles Harnick, Solicitor General Bob Runciman, the former head of the OPP, Thomas O'Grady, and four OPP officers, would be called to be examined by George family lawyers who are pursuing the family's \$7 million wrongful death lawsuit.

In London, Kitchener and Ottawa, family members, their supporters and others who, for a variety of reasons, are interested in keeping the pressure on government officials — at both the federal and

provincial level — to dig deeper into the root causes of the events which led to George's death, gathered to keep the cause in the public eye.

During the day-long vigil in Ottawa on March 17, Indian Affairs Minister Jane Stewart made an appearance and was immediately presented with a copy of a legal opinion authored by Osgoode Hall law school associate professor Bruce Ryder that concludes the federal government has the legal power to call an inquiry. The Ontario government has refused to do so and Stewart has repeatedly said that it is a provincial matter that does not involve her department.

In London, Ont., more than 50 people (two-thirds of whom were non-Native) participated in a ceremony conducted on the rear parking lot of the Unitarian Fellowship building. After the Ojibway prayer circle ceremony, the people moved inside the church building for a feast.

During the ceremony that remembered a man who Amnesty International said was "extra judicially executed" by a police officer, the solemnity of the occasion was put to the test when traditional singers attracted the attention of a couple of young children who live in a nearby townhouse project. The young boys, who sounded about seven or eight years old, began yelling "Hey, Indians."



Dan Smoke, a Six Nations Seneca, spoke to the many non-Native people who attended the London memorial ceremony of Dudley George's birthday.

After several attempts failed to get the attention of the prayer circle members, the children began firing their cap pistols, playing 'cowboys and Indians.' (see Inquiry page 2.)

Scientists find diabetes link in Oji-Cree

By Joan Black
Windspeaker Contributor

SANDY LAKE, Man.

Scientists at the John P. Robarts Research Institute and spokesmen for the Sandy Lake First Nation announced a genetic discovery last month that may lead to better prediction and control of diabetes in Aboriginal people.

The doctors have discovered a genetic mutation in the Oji-Cree of Sandy Lake, Man. that may hold the answer to that population's diabetes epidemic. The new gene has so far only been seen in Sandy Lake people, although other Native groups have been tested. The Cree in the Sandy Lake area do not seem to have the genetic abnormality.

Dr. Robert Hegele, director of the Blackburn Cardiovascular Genetics Laboratory at Robarts, discovered the mutation. Other principal researchers were Dr. Stewart Harris

from the Centre for Studies in Family Medicine at the University of Western Ontario, and Dr. Bernard Zinman from the Samuel Lunenfeld Research Institute, Mount Sinai Hospital and University of Toronto. Also delivering presentations were former chief of Sandy Lake, Jonas Fiddler, who holds the band's health portfolio; Deputy Chief Harry Meekis; Dr. Mark Pozansky, president and scientific director of Robarts; and Robarts scientist Dr. Tom McDonald, past chairman of the Canadian Diabetes Association National Research Council.

Dr. Hegele hailed the discovery as "the strongest genetic effect on diabetes that I have seen in 15 years of research. I am unaware of any other diabetic population in the world that is so strongly affected by a single gene variant," he said.

The Oji-Cree of Sandy Lake have the third highest rate of Type 2 diabetes in the world.

A 1992 survey showed that 25 to 30 per cent of the population has diabetes; at least another 10 per cent have impaired glucose tolerance, which means they are at greater risk of developing the disease. Complications of diabetes include blindness, heart disease and stroke, kidney failure and gangrene, which results in amputations.

"Until 80 years ago," Dr. Hegele said, "few Aboriginal people in the Sioux Lookout zone had diabetes. In the last 10 to 20 years, diabetes started to be expressed at an epidemic rate. A gene or tendency was always thought to be there, but we think that the change in food and lowering of physical activity — plus the gene — results in diabetes."

In 1990, the people of Sandy Lake were so alarmed at the high incidence of the disease among their population that they asked their chief and council to approach Dr. Harris in

Sioux Lookout to investigate the problem. Dr. Harris contacted Dr. Zinman and they undertook the survey, which confirmed the Sandy Lake people have five times more diabetes cases than the national average. Setting up protocols and methodology for their study took them three to four years.

At that point, they asked Dr. Hegele to get involved in testing for a genetic link. Dr. Hegele thought the problem was in the people's DNA, so he tested one blood sample from each of the 728 band members who agreed to participate in the study.

The results were startling. Dr. Hegele's group found that a person who inherited one copy of the mutated gene from their parents was more than twice as likely to have diabetes as a person who did not inherit the mutation. If a person inherited two copies of the mutation, however, he was up to 15 times more likely to have diabetes.

(see Oji-Cree page 30.)

WHAT'S INSIDE

QUOTABLE QUOTE

"It was a terribly sad day for me. Our family has been ripped apart by this. I am all he has known for nearly four years and now he has been taken from a community that loves him and considers him as their own."

— The Native biological grandfather of a four-year-old boy ordered by the Supreme Court of Canada to be returned to his non-Native adoptive grandparents in the United States.



ABORIGINAL ACHIEVEMENT

Special Section in this issue of Windspeaker

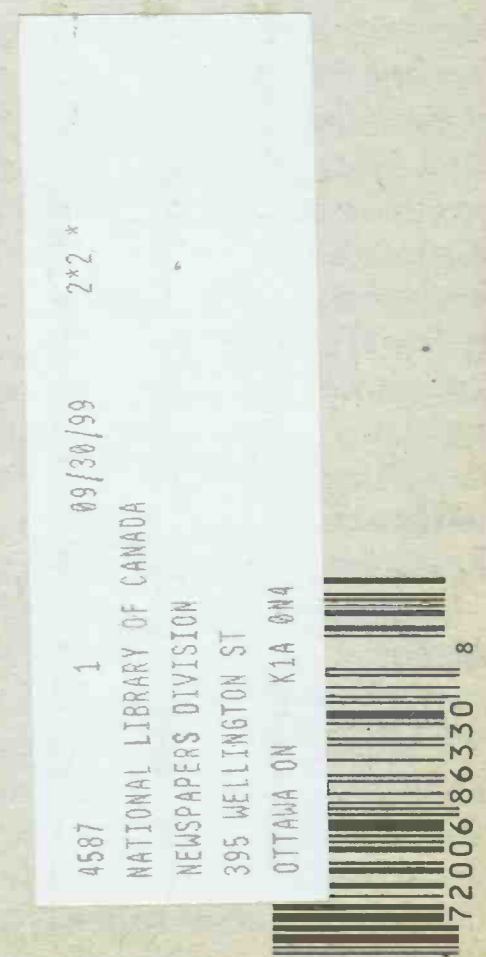
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Future of self government to be decided

By Len Kruzenga
Windspeaker Contributor

WINNIPEG

After a few unexpected delays, the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs will finally be holding its special chief's assembly on the Framework Agreement Initiative (FAI) on April 8 and 9.

They've chosen the Hotel Fort Garry, where the FAI was originally signed, as the site for the special assembly.

That the meeting promises to be a pivotal one for the self government process in the province is highlighted by the fact that the long-awaited consultants report on the FAI process will finally be released.

Speculation regarding the delay in releasing the report — originally expected in February — prepared by independent consultants MAANG and Associates, has fueled speculation that Indian affairs Minister Jane Stewart was on the verge of announcing the cancellation of the FAI agreement, a rumour vigorously denied by Indian affairs

sources in Ottawa. It is also rumored that a full one-third of Manitoba chiefs are on record as opposing the FAI process in the province, which is also strenuously dismissed by both the FAI office and members of the chief's committee on the FAI.

"I can only tell you that the last meetings on the FAI both at the political and community levels continues to be very positive," said FAI communications officer Joy Keeper.

"People are getting past their original negativity and the misinformation that has been spread and are realizing that the FAI process here is far more comprehensive and profound in nature than anything that is going on elsewhere in Canada."

But the FAI process, once touted as a national template for self government negotiations in the country, stalled shortly after Phil Fontaine's departure to assume leadership of the Assembly of First Nations. And many of the key staff involved in the FAI negotiations followed the new national chief to as-

sume new positions in Ottawa.

"For Phil this process was extremely important to him personally and he drove the activity at the FAI office," said long-time political observer Arnold Cook. "Since he left things just sort of ground to a halt and the chiefs opposed to the deal have really impeded any significant process because Bushie (Grand Chief of the AMC) lacks the dynamism and profile to get things moving."

Another problem the FAI process has experienced is a continuing debate over the \$9 million budget of the FAI office.

The Manitoba chief's successfully wrested control of nearly half of the budget two years ago by directing funds to the reserves for community consultations on self government.

However recent revelations in some communities include allegations that community consultations have either not occurred at all, or have been redirected by some chiefs and councils.

But Keeper says the community consultation process continues to demonstrate its impor-

tance at the grassroots level as meetings continue to be well attended.

"The people are asking some really good questions and have developed a greater understanding of the process and the advantages self government will have for their communities."

Of particular interest at the assembly will be recommendations in the consultant's report on how to revive self government negotiations between the federal government and the FAI office, which stalled in 1997.

The federal negotiator walked away from the table citing the lack of a mandate to negotiate the terms presented by the FAI office.

That moment highlighted the fundamental ideological difference between the government and the FAI office.

For the FAI office the process is about negotiating comprehensive self government for Manitoba's First Nations and for the government it appears to be about the transfer of administrative control of programs and services to First Nations.

"This is going to be a do or die moment for the FAI," said Cook, who attended the original FAI signing ceremonies in 1994. "The chief's will have to publicly show that they are fully committed to the process or the whole thing will simply fade away."

The federal government is also expected to be closely monitoring both the mood and the outcome of the assembly before it is prepared to restart negotiations and commit more funding to the process.

"Let's remember, these are politicians who don't want to sink any more time or money into a process unless they have some hope they can come out of it with an agreement that they can get someone political mileage out of," Cook added.

"As it is the feds have committed over \$25 million to the FAI process and haven't got anything to show for it. They won't be prepared to do a whole lot more unless the chief's show signs that they're willing to do a deal and quickly before the next election."

Inquiry into death sought

(Continued from page 1.)

Despite the immense irony of this distraction, the circle members kept their composure in a way that added even more dignity to the occasion.

At almost the same moment the memorials were being observed, Ontario social justice activists was in New York City doing the preliminary work in preparation for a March 26 appearance before the United Nations' Human Rights committee. The committee has agreed to hear a submission from the Coalition for a Public Inquiry into the Death of Dudley George. A 30-page brief filed on March 16 with the committee by the coalition alleges that eight articles of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights were violated at Ipperwash Park on the night in question. A five-person delegation will address the UN committee, which is preparing its official report (released every five years) on Canada's performance as a signatory to the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Ethel LaValley, the first Aboriginal woman elected as an officer of the Ontario Federation of Labor, Roger Obonsawin, an Abenaki treaty rights activist, Darlene Ritchie, the former chief of the Chippewas of Saugeen First Nation, Robin Buyers, a professor of community work at Toronto's George Brown College, and Ann Pohl, a member of the Turtle Island Support Group, will attend the UN hearing. They will ask the committee to urge the federal government to call a public inquiry into the shooting of Dudley George.

Organizers of the London memorial service say invitations were extended to the OPP, the RCMP and local police services. None of those groups attended. No provincial government representatives attended, either.

With an election said to be on the horizon in Ontario, two NDP candidates attended the

service. Jim Lee, the NDP candidate who will run against Tory Marcel Beaubien in the riding that includes Ipperwash Provincial Park, was critical of Beaubien for not attending the service. Beaubien has been accused of playing a role in the shooting of Dudley George because police logs show he was at the OPP command post prior to the decision to send in the tactical unit against the unarmed protesters.

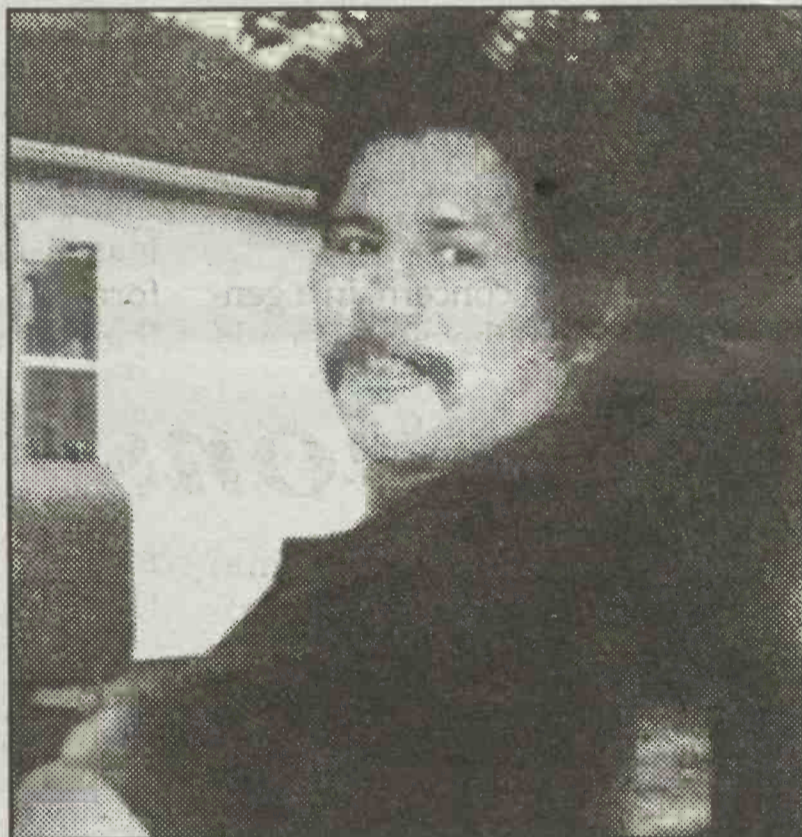
Lee said his party will make the conduct of the government during the Ipperwash confrontation an election issue. He also promised unequivocally that his party will call a full public inquiry, if elected.

The Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops has joined the long list of organizations that are publicly urging Premier Harris to call an inquiry. In a letter acquired by *Windspeaker*, dated Nov. 23, 1998, the Most Reverend John M. Sherlock, Bishop of London, urged the Ontario government to call an inquiry.

Bishop Sherlock told the premier the Social Affairs Commission of the conference of bishops had studied the incident closely before acting.

"Their study of the issue has led them to appreciate its complexity," the bishop wrote. "It has also left them profoundly disturbed, particularly by their perception that little has been done to learn from the events. A man was killed. When a similar incident took place at Oka in Quebec, an inquest was held."

The letter was not released to the public until several months



Dudley George was fatally shot at Ipperwash Provincial Park by an Ontario Provincial Police officer during a protest in September 1995. A public inquiry into his death has never been called.

after it was sent to the premier. In a press release on Feb. 10, the Catholic bishops explained why they were going public.

"The commission has tried to bring these concerns to the attention of the provincial government. The attached (Nov. 23) letter is an example of the attempt to do so. However, these efforts have, it appears, been completely ignored. This letter is being released at this time because it has not even been acknowledged," conference of bishops general secretary Tom Reilly wrote.

Deane will be the first examinee when the George family lawyers begin the pre-trial examination process. He has been summoned to appear at the offices of Toronto law firm Atchison and Denman on May 12 and 13. Other OPP officers are scheduled to appear through June and July. Runciman is expected to appear on Sept. 8 and 9; Harnick on Oct. 6 and 7. Premier Harris is scheduled for examination on Dec. 8 and 9.

Under civil law, if any person fails to attend once summoned, that person loses by default.

More charges against Plint, United Church

By David Wiwchar
Windspeaker Contributor

NANAIMO, B.C.

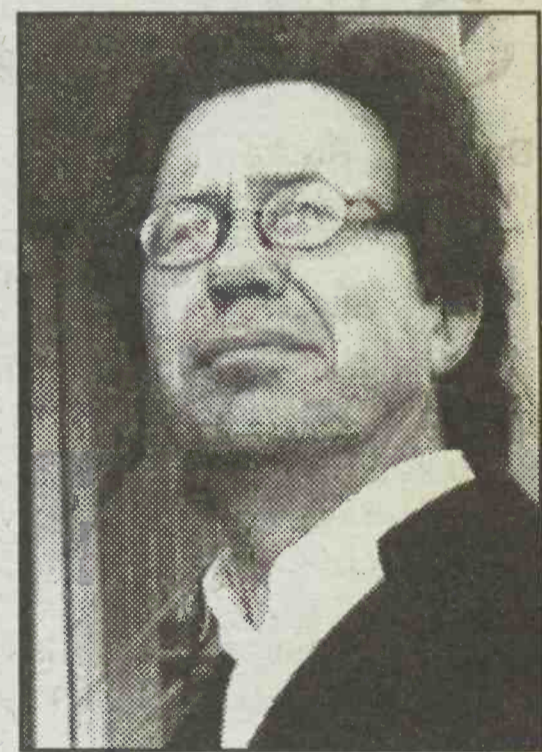
A second group of former Alberni Indian Residential School students has come forward to launch legal action against Arthur Henry Plint, the United Church of Canada, and the federal government.

Dean Wilson (Haida), Raymond Moore (Nisga'a), William Joseph (Songhees), Mark Reid (Kwagiulth), Peter Knighton (Gitksan), Daniel Edgar (Ditidaht) and Matthew Touchie (Ucluelet), filed their class-action suit in Vancouver, claiming they were physically and sexually abused by Plint while they were students at the school.

Plint, a dormitory supervisor at AIRS, was sentenced to 11 years in prison, but is now eligible for day parole from Mountain Institution in Agassiz. Having served two-thirds of his sentence, the Parole Board will be hearing his application for full parole on March 18.

"It's amazing the amount of people involved," said lawyer Allan Early, whose firm Hutchins, Soroka, and Grant will be representing the plaintiffs. "There are other people pursuing litigation with us for similar charges."

In their statement filed in B.C. Supreme Court, the plaintiffs charge Canada with the forced removal of



DAVID WIWCHAR

Allan Early, of the law firm Hutchins, Soroka, and Grant, represents seven new clients who have stepped forward with allegations of physical and sexual abuse against former residential school supervisor Arthur Henry Plint.

children from their families and communities and with sending them to residential schools where the United Church and Canada seriously breached their duty to care for the children they had placed under their guardianship.

The plaintiffs are seeking unspecified general, special aggravated, exemplary and punitive damages as well as costs for breach of fiduciary duty and negligence.

Since the papers were filed in the overloaded Vancouver courthouse, the earliest these charges would be heard in court would be in the latter part of the year 2000.

Press still barred from Sechelt meetings

By Roxanne Gregory
Windspeaker Contributor

SECHELT, B.C.

While the Sechelt treaty process may be an 'open and public' process, the workings of the Sechelt Indian Government District (SIGD) and the Sechelt Band Council are not. The non-Native public and the press are barred from all SIGD and council meetings as a matter of policy and that doesn't sit well with all band members.

Former chief, Stan Dixon, who recently lost another bid for the top band council spot to incumbent Garry Feschuk, said some band members are concerned about the way the council conducts business behind closed doors.

"They have their council meetings at one in the afternoon, twice a month, and if you're working you can't attend. It's difficult for band members to know what's going on," he told *Windspeaker*.

During recent elections, Dixon said, some councillors were campaigning for a more open government. He added that when he ran for chief in 1986, just after self government was proclaimed, he advocated for open government meetings but was defeated.

"No one followed up on this issue," he said, "But it's up to the band members to make the council more open."

"This [the barring of the press

and the non-Native public] isn't enshrined in our self government constitution, and to my knowledge, there hasn't been a band referendum on this issue. This is the council's policy to keep things behind closed doors," said Dixon.

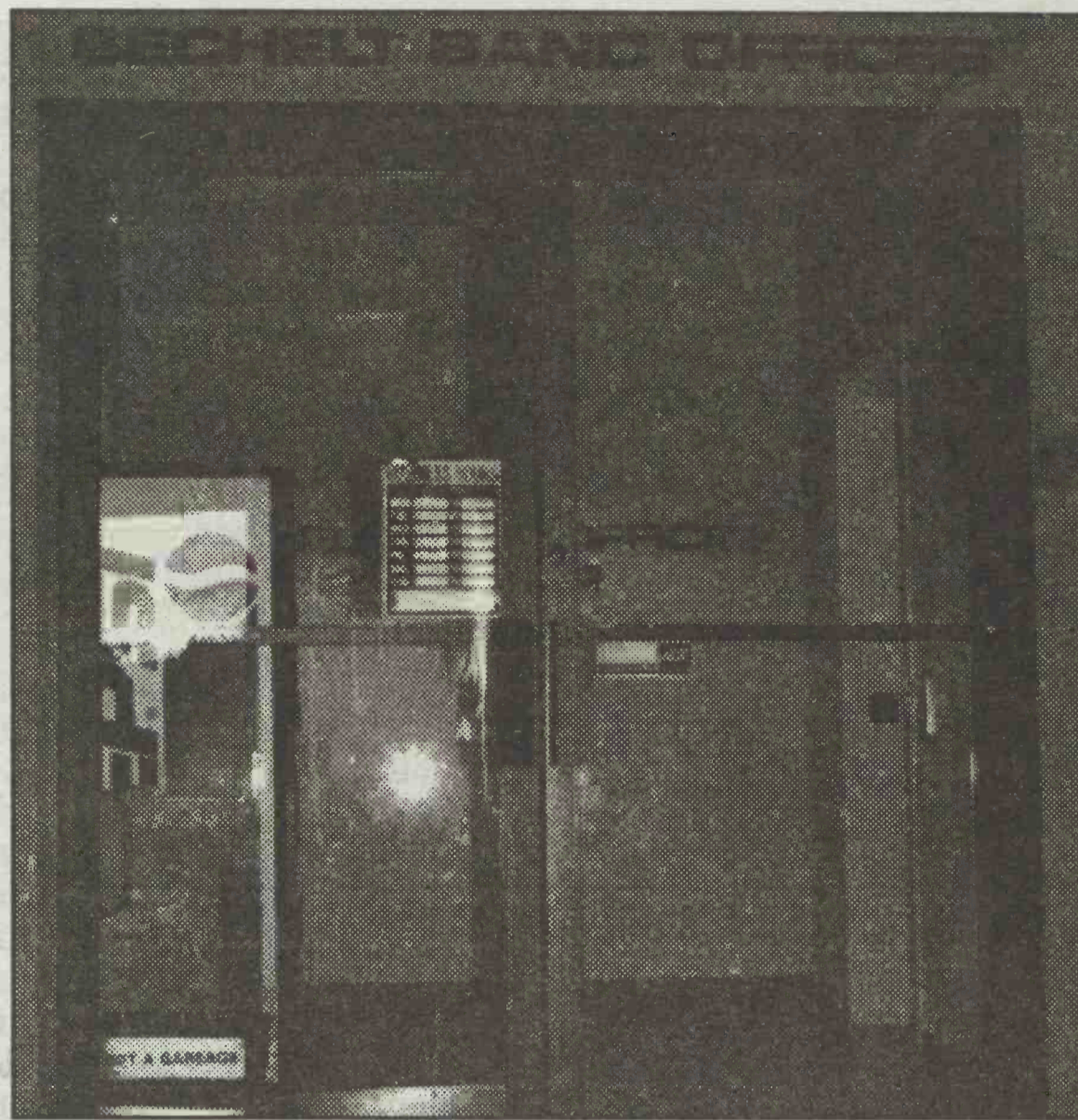
Under the 1987 Sechelt Indian Government District enabling act, the SIGD operates under some sections of British Columbia's Municipal Act. But it is not required, like other municipalities, to hold open meetings and there are no provisions in the Sechelt Treaty Agreement In Principle that would make the Sechelts hold open government meetings.

The Sechelt band council is the governing body responsible for land, tenant and development and infrastructure issues, and the SIGD is the official governing body. However, the band council meets bi-monthly, and the SIGD meets infrequently, only a few times a year. Only elected band council members sit on the SIGD.

Newly elected councillor Rochelle Baptiste, who was the band manager for seven years prior to winning the only council seat held by a woman, said council bars the public and press because they discuss personnel issues.

"We don't just deal with political issues," she said.

But she couldn't comment on why those issues couldn't be discussed during in camera sessions as they are in other local



The doors are closed to the press, and the general public.

municipal governments. Chief Garry Feschuk was unavailable for comment.

The province's Aboriginal Affairs ministry spokesman, Peter Smith, said the province has had some concerns about the way decisions have been made by the SIGD during the past 12 years of self government and they're hoping those concerns will be addressed in the treaty process, which he stressed wasn't finalized.

"We have a concern, in a general sense, that the public should

have access. In a democracy there should be equal access to a governing body," he said.

Smith admitted that there could be problems in the future for the band, if after the treaty is signed and it attains co-management status for resources, the band maintains a closed door approach to governing.

But he also argued that the SIGD advisory committee — made up primarily of Sechelt leased-land tenants — was a form of public access. But the five member advisory commit-

tee, which is elected, meets infrequently and deals only with leaseholder issues.

BC's Municipal Affairs minister Jenny Kwan, who was touring Sunshine Coast communities Tuesday, March 2, was reluctant to comment on the fact that the SIGD is the only municipal government in the province to bar the public and the press.

"I don't know enough about it to make a comment," she said.

While the Sechelts are within the riding of newly-appointed Aboriginal Affairs minister, Gordon Wilson, Wilson didn't respond to queries about the band's exclusionary policy.

February 20, after a low-key campaign, Chief Garry Feschuk was re-elected for a third consecutive term after netting 186 out of 268 votes. Former chief, Stan Dixon, counted 82 votes. Ben Pierre, Jr. was the only incumbent band councillor to return for a second term after winning 144 votes. Former councillors Trent Dixon and Warren Paul returned to council with 172 and 130 votes respectively. New councillor Rochelle Baptiste took office with 110 votes. Baptiste said she hoped to be a voice for women's issues at the council table.

The SIGD is hoping to expand their economic development base by building a sawmill, a shopping mall, and a recreation centre within the next three years.

Off-reserve organizations challenge feds

By Marie Burke
Windspeaker Staff Writer

HAMILTON, Ont.

A Federal Court judge is willing to give the government time to make adjustments to the way it funds training for off-reserve residents, but the judge made a point of letting Human Resources Development ministry staff know he's keeping an eye on them.

Off-reserve organizations claim the federal policy of allowing First Nation councils to administer training funding makes it close to impossible for many off-reserve band members to get a fair share. They're in court asking a judge to force the government to come up with a fairer system.

The constitutional challenge before the federal court over the on-reserve control of employment training programs started on Feb. 22 in Toronto.

Government lawyers asked the judge to throw out the case, saying changes related to new funding announced in the recent federal budget will address the complaints.

The judge wasn't willing to take their word for it. He reserved judgment on adjourning the challenge until the policy is completed in April.

"The decision was postponed and we're looking at that as favorable for us," said Vince Hill, president of the Niagara Peninsula Aboriginal Area Management Board (NPAAMB).

NPAAMB and two other off-reserve Aboriginal organizations started the court action. Intervenor included the Winnipeg Aboriginal Council, which supports the challenge.

Lawyers representing the off-reserve groups say their clients have not been given any decision-making authority over how the funding for programs will be spent. They claim the policy of the federal government discriminates against off-reserve by denying them equal access to training programs.

The case will be decided over the next few months after the federal government finalizes the budget and any changes to the Aboriginal Human Resource Strategy.

"What that means is if we're not satisfied with the changes the government makes to the program, we can go back to court," said Hill.

Lawyers for the federal government asked the court to dismiss the case based on impending changes to the Aboriginal training program that would make funding arrangements more equitable. Changes to the program were not specified in court.

Lawyers representing the federal government vigorously opposed the judge's decision, said Hill.

In 1996, the federal government decided to give control of the employment training programs to the political representatives of status Indians, Métis and Inuit through bi-lateral agreements.

Prior to 1996, Aboriginal management boards with representation from off-reserve organizations had access to HRDC employment programs funds and decision-making authority, this is the arrangement the Niagara group is fighting to regain.

Hill is making a presentation at a meeting of the National Association of Friendship Centres in Ottawa this month. The off-reserve training program delivery organizations included Friendship centres.

Hill is proposing a coalition of off-reserve organizations be formed. Representation from each province will be effective in gaining equitable rights for training funds, said Hill.

"We are not going to be standing around and waiting for change," said Hill.

The sentiments of the court challenge are echoed by another off-reserve organization that delivers training programs to off-reserve Aboriginal people.

The New Brunswick Aboriginal Peoples Council called on Pierre Pettigrew, minister of Human Resources Development Canada, to give fair and equal treatment to off-reserve organizations.

"I'm sitting here shaking my head. I mean I am almost in tears after seeing the proposed budgeted allocations. I've spent the last two weeks lobbying the federal government representatives in Ottawa at my expense," said Betty Ann LaVallee, president of the council.

So far LaVallee has not heard

from a HRDC official or minister Pettigrew.

Late last year, Lavallee and representatives from five of the off-reserve organizations in the Atlantic provinces met with HRDC provincial officials.

At that time \$5.5 million was earmarked for training off-reserve people in Atlantic Canada, said LaVallee.

In a copy of the proposed national Aboriginal resource allocation, which LaVallee provided to *Windspeaker*, \$185,666 is allocated for urban Aboriginal people in New Brunswick with the total budget for the urban Aboriginal population totaling less than a million dollars. LaVallee said there was no explanation given to her about where the rest of the \$5.5 million went. LaVallee demanded an answer to the proposed allocation in her letter to Pettigrew.

Its no longer about the funding dollars, said LaVallee. She sees the policy of the federal government to negotiate only with Assembly of First Nations, Métis National Council and the Inuit as discrimination against the off-reserve Aboriginal people.

"I'd like to see what constitution the federal government is reading because Aboriginal people are everywhere, not just on-reserves. The federal government has a fiduciary responsibility to all Aboriginal people," said LaVallee.

"All you are seeing here is Mr. Chretien implementing the *White Paper*," said LaVallee.

The *White Paper* is the 1969

proposal the federal government presented to Aboriginal people, without consultation, that set out to repeal the Indian Act, that would eventually lead to the termination of the legal distinction between Aboriginal people and other Canadians. The *White Paper* also proposed to transfer services for Aboriginal people to the provinces.

"Anyone and their dog can go into a HRDC office and apply for services. Well, that's what the federal government wants us to do, to become like everyone else, but Aboriginal people aren't like everyone else and we're not going away," said LaVallee.

To access the New Brunswick funds for employment and training services for off-reserve Aboriginal people, the New Brunswick Council will have to bid and compete with consultants, private businesses and other off-reserve organizations, said LaVallee.

"We don't have the infrastructure or the capabilities or the funding to hire a specialist in proposal development to do that," she said.

The government is expecting the provinces to pick up the responsibility for off-reserve Aboriginal people, she said.

The current court challenge is needed to let the federal government know off-reserve people are falling through the cracks, said LaVallee. She also believes other challenges to federal government policies for off-reserve Aboriginal people will be happening in the future.



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Time for a reality check

The Canadian Human Rights Commission's annual report hit the desk with a heavy thud, its expensive, glossy pages heralding the advances of respect and human dignity in Canada. It was tossed to one side.

A quick glance across the country will tell a better tale. The Brothers Grimm had nothing on some of the stories that hit Windspeaker pages this month, with an eye to a few we won't be able to bring you until next.

Take for example the Supreme Court decision to send a four-year-old Native boy away from the reserve community he's come to know and love and back to his non-Native adoptive grandparents in the United States. This despite legislation that attempts to limit cross-cultural adoptions and more than 100 years of history that has proven time and time again that raising Native children in non-Native homes is not in the best interest of the children.

Money talks and culture walks, and the Supreme Court decision shows that, despite its lofty pretense, it doesn't value the child's connection to his own people. To add insult to injury, the U.S. couple stated they felt threatened and intimidated by the Native people who fought to keep the boy. How's this going to play at home around the kitchen table? What is the boy going to learn about his people, and himself, now?

In Manitoba, another racist has raised his or her ugly head. A letter placed on the windshields of cars at a hockey game and on the Native team's bus demonstrates what Native people are up against in this country.

The letter begins, "Why does racism exist (sic) against Natives? It concludes that Native people are their own worse enemies because:

- a) they complain when welfare rates go down
- b) vandalize other people's property
- c) get qualifications lowered in order to get jobs
- d) they have children when they can't afford them and because they know they can always go on welfare
- e) they have hatred towards society, particularly white people.

"What right do you have to hate society?" the writer asks, and goes on to advise that if Native people want respect they should act like civilized human beings, work several part-time jobs to make ends meet or pay for their own education, and respect authority.

We don't know who penned this offensive letter, because the person didn't have the courage of his convictions to sign his name. Perhaps he too was afraid of the reaction that Native people, who were the target of his poisonous barbs and racial judgements, would have against him. He should be.

In Blenheim, Ont., Chatham-Kent police are in-

vestigating a case where persons unknown spray-painted remarks on a barn on Caldwell First Nation property. The police have labeled the act a "hate crime" and are monitoring the situation, concerned such acts directed at the band that is attempting to buy land and create its own reserve in the region will "escalate."

Some non-Native residents in the area are dismayed at the way their neighbors have responded to the possibility they may soon have Aboriginal neighbors. On March 21, to commemorate the United Nations internationally-designated day to focus on the elimination of racism, one Blenheim resident organized a community meeting to welcome the Caldwells to the community. About 50 people (in a community of 4,600) attended.

"Canadians take human rights seriously," said the chief commissioner of the Canadian Human Rights Commission, Michelle Falardeau-Ramsay, in her annual address to Parliament on March 23. Well, perhaps, the commissioner should get out more.

The commission has called on governments, Aboriginal communities and institutions to co-operate to create conditions that will enable Aboriginal people to enjoy a better quality of life. What about the non-Native communities and institutions? Don't they have a responsibility too? Frankly, Aboriginal people have bigger fish to fry.

Great job this year with awards

Publisher's Statement

By Bert Crowfoot
Windspeaker Publisher

As publisher of Windspeaker, I usually don't write a publisher's statement unless I feel very strongly about an issue. Last year I used this space to express my concerns about the National Aboriginal Achievement Awards and how creative license was taken with Aboriginal culture, as well as other concerns.

After attending the 1999 National Aboriginal Achievement Awards on March 12 in Regina, I felt that I had to make a comment on this year's show and let John Kim Bell and the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation staff know they did a great job this year.

In making my comments last year, I hoped that the situation would improve this year and that the foundation would refocus the tremendous efforts that are made to showcase the incredible capacity of Aboriginal people.

This year's set was beautiful and featured a lush rain forest, complete with a stream. The lush vegetation was so realistic it felt and looked like you were in the forest in northern British Columbia. Great detail



'Alika LaFontaine, won the National Aboriginal Achievement Award in the Youth category.

was paid to the totems, masks and carvings. The set was so beautiful, there was a gasp from the audience when the curtain lifted.

All of this year's winners were outstanding individuals and just listening and watching the video clips of these great Aboriginal role models

was inspiring.

The program was refreshingly different from past years and featured Michael Greeyes and Jennifer Podemski, two bright stars with great futures. The talent was outstanding and the cultural component was handled with the proper respect.

The highlight of the evening for me was the Aboriginal Youth award winner, 'Alika LaFontaine. He was amazing and will be a fantastic role model for young people.

It would have been great to see more young Aboriginal people in the audience and maybe next year some of the corporate sponsors will designate some of their seats specifically for Aboriginal youth. The National Aboriginal Achievement Awards is a powerful vehicle for motivating and inspiring Aboriginal youth.

I still want to hear from the award winners. I realize the time restraints that are in place for television, but if the winners could say a few words to the audience and be edited out for the television program that would be aired it would be great.

Let me say again, John Kim Bell and his staff did a great job on this year's show, and I left the evening feeling proud to be an Aboriginal person and this is what the National Aboriginal Achievement Awards should be all about.

Good faith expected

Dear Editor:

The Gitanyow Hereditary Chiefs in Northwest British Columbia are culturally Gitksan, although a separate entity from the Delgamuukw (vs the Queen) plaintiffs. The chiefs are currently working on a national campaign to stop the much hailed Nisga'a Final Agreement in its present form. The Nisga'a treaty is currently being read in Victoria, then moves to Ottawa after it's ratified in B.C. No one disputes the fact that the Nisga'a deserve a treaty on land to which they are entitled, however some serious issues remain.

Most British Columbians know that about 130 per cent of the province is claimed by First Nations because many of the land claims overlap each other. The Crown has a duty to address the overlapping claims issue, especially in light of the Nisga'a treaty, which gives the Nisga'a exclusive rights to 84 per cent of their neighbor's traditional territory, the Gitanyow (formerly Kitwancool) — land that both governments accepted for negotiation in 1994 as part of Gitanyow's claim.

The Nisga'a Agreement-in-Principle threatens the Gitanyow people with loss of their traditional lands and with it, loss of traditional food supplies and alienation from their cultural, spiritual and historic property.

Canada and British Columbia have a duty to protect Gitanyow interests but so far they have received no protection. That's why the Gitanyow are forced to challenge the historic Nisga'a treaty in B.C. Supreme Court. The Gitanyow have asked the high court to declare that the B.C. and federal governments must negotiate a treaty in good faith.

Justice Williamson's ruling could have significant ramifications on the first modern-day treaty which has been initialed but not yet ratified. The chiefs are seeking a declaration that the Crown is not negotiating in good faith. The Gitanyow could then ask the court at a subsequent trial to make a second declaration that by signing the Nisga'a treaty, the Crown has breached its duty to negotiate in good faith, in effect, nullifying the Gitanyow treaty process.

The hereditary chiefs contend good faith is the Crown's legal duty. However, the Crown argued vigorously in the high court that it only has a "moral, honorable and political duty" to negotiate in good faith. Also that the court has no place in binding the Crown into good faith negotiations. The governments also made it clear that the Nisga'a final agreement is "inviolable."

The Gitanyow maintain negotiations must be based on the Gitanyow perspective of oral and archeological evidence, Aboriginal rights and title as outlined in s.35(1) of the Constitution, good faith, and by the principles stated in Torngat and Delgamuukw. The chiefs oppose the Crown model of cash, land selection and the cede and surrender of any Aboriginal rights and title.

The Gitanyow chiefs say if the government continues to demonstrate an unwillingness to negotiate in good faith, the "made in B.C." treaty process will only continue to fan the flames of uncertainty, rather than extinguish them. The Crown must address this deficiency in the Nisga'a treaty now, before it moves to the ratification stage this spring in Ottawa.

Gitanyow Hereditary Chiefs

Help needed to argue young mother's case

Dear Editor:

I am from White Bear First Nation in Carlyle, Sask. I am 16 years old. I am asking for help. My baby was born in November 1997 at Kelowna General Hospital. She was "removed" by the Ministry for Children and Families on Nov. 27, 1997 at approximately 3 p.m. They had asked me to bring her to the hospital nursery, but I had told them no, because I knew what they were going to do. They were going to remove my baby. I asked them if they were, but they denied that they were going to take her. Meanwhile, she was only 20 days old. They did not give me a chance to bring her home, which would have been my best wish if my baby was to

come home and live with her own family and learn her own culture.

What I am asking for is funding to get a lawyer, an Aboriginal female lawyer, that will understand what I am going through.

Ever since my baby was taken, I have tried to do everything that the Ministry for Children and Families has asked me to do. I have taken parenting courses, counseling, first aid instruction, and I am a regular volunteer at my local friendship centre.

It's been a long time since I last saw my baby. It seems like forever. Last time I saw her was on Dec. 17, 1998. Right now I am going to try to get an access order, but the Ministry for Children and Families is trying not to let me see her.

The ministry has decided that they are going to adopt her out.

I need a lawyer who knows the Indian Act. So please, someone come forward soon. I love my baby and I need all the help I can get to get my baby back home. Right now I am trying to get her registered with my band, but they need the father to sign, but he is not First Nations. They will not register until he signs and he refuses. He has not been involved in my baby's life, and we are no longer together.

Sincerely

Jennifer (last name withheld)

If you can help Jennifer, call (250) 763-4905 and leave a message.

Sixties Scoop stories wanted

Dear Readers:

I am an Aboriginal woman, originally from a First Nations reserve in southwestern Ontario. In 1968 my brothers and I were removed from our biological family, and each of us adopted into non-Native homes. We were vulnerable, unknowing participants in the Sixties Scoop, the period from the 1960s to early 1980s when an estimated 15,000 Native children were apprehended by child welfare authorities and placed in non-Native homes.

I am writing a graduate thesis paper about this time in

our Native social history, and looking at the effects that trans-racial adoption had on the lives of the Native adoptees. For my brothers and I the end result was the same, each of our adoptions broke down. We have all had different ways of coping with the loss of our family, our culture, and our connectedness, but the common thread that we share is our ever constant search for identity, and for self acceptance. I am seeking out, and would like to interview Aboriginal men and women who were adopted by non-Native families between the years 1960 and 1980. I would like to hear how

your adoption — successful or non-successful — affected who you are as a person, and where you are in life today. If you would be willing to speak about your trans-racial adoption experience with someone who has traveled in similar shoes, and to talk about your life history in a private context, please contact me at the following address. I so look forward to hearing from you. Meegwetch and thank you.

V. George

Suite #233

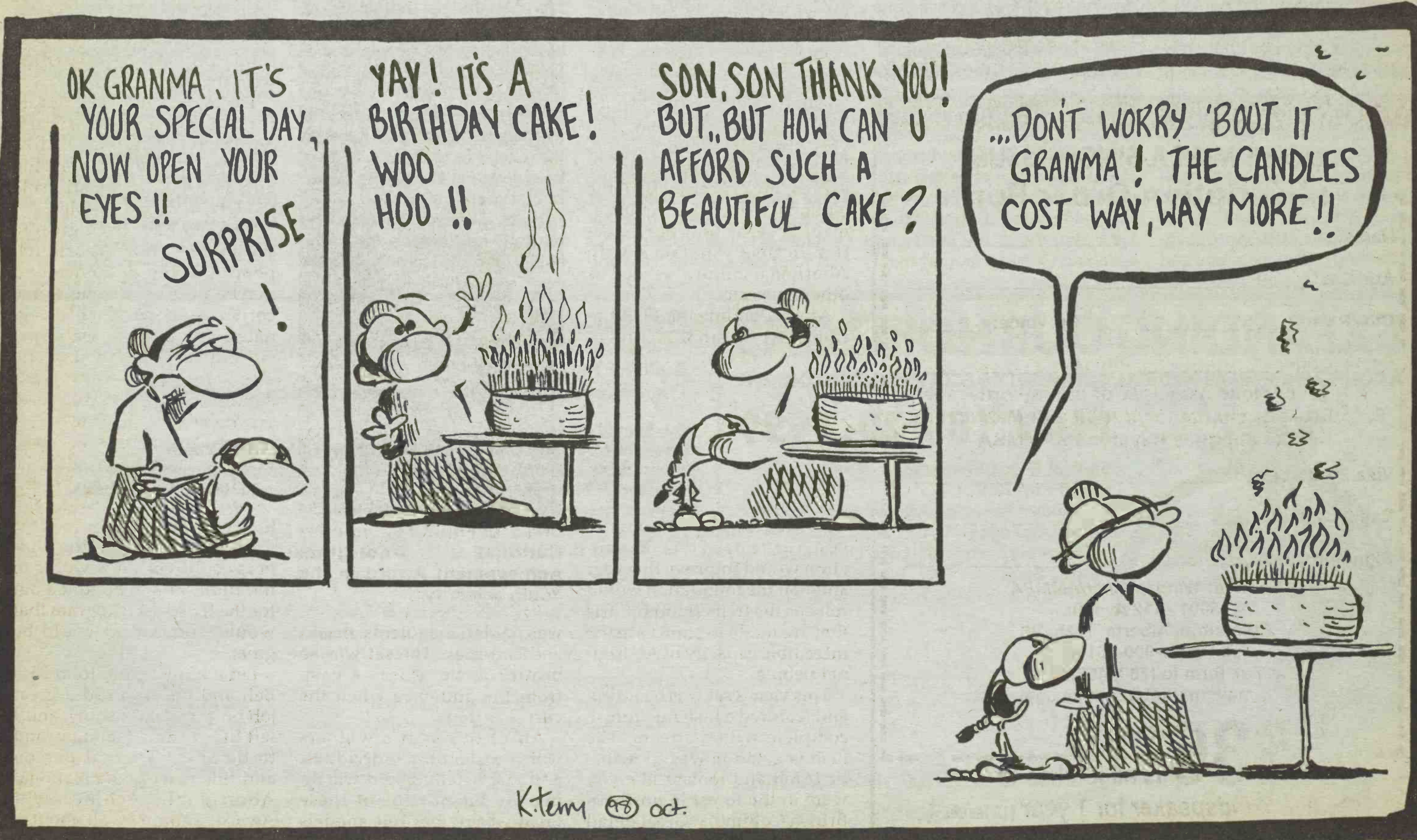
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OTTER

By Karl Terry



K. Terry © Oct.

What happened to the \$20 million for languages?

By Verna J. Kirkness
Guest Columnist

VANCOUVER

Do you remember the exciting news back in October 1997 when the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Sheila Copps, promised \$20 million for Aboriginal languages? It was to be doled out at \$5 million a year for four years beginning on April 1, 1998. While it was a pittance to what is needed to restore languages, we saw it as a glimmer of hope and the beginning of the government's commitment to "right an historic moral and legal wrong."

We have now passed March 1999 (Aboriginal Languages Month), and the money that was to begin to flow is just beginning a slow trickle from the government coffers to Aboriginal organizations and to a limited number of hopeful communities that submitted proposals. Why has it taken some 15 months to get the money moving?

It all has to do with politics. Which of the nine national Aboriginal organization should disperse the money? Which of four options should be followed? Option one suggested a collaborative process with the establish-

ment of a steering committee made up of one representative of each national organization along with three federal representatives. Option two suggested dividing the \$5 million a year among the nine organizations. Option three would have Canadian Heritage manage the money and option four suggested having the national organizations develop their positions on key issues and provide them to Canadian Heritage.

It appears that after months of debate and political posturing, none of the four options was chosen. It was decided instead that three Aboriginal organizations would "manage and administer" the funds — the Assembly of First Nations, the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada and the Métis National Council. Canadian Heritage is entering into multi-year transfer agreements with the three organizations and the \$20 million will be allocated as follows:

First Nations languages will receive 75 per cent of the funds; Michif (the Métis language) will receive 10 per cent; and Inuktitut will receive the remaining 15 per cent.

While the jurisdiction of the Inuit Tapirisat is clear, one wonders how the monies will be divided among the AFN and the

MNC who represent many of the same language groups, or does the MNC administer only the 10 per cent allotted for Michif?

The \$20 million which is referred to as the Aboriginal Languages Initiative is not following the original plan to provide \$5 million a year. Rather, the allocation has been trimmed to about \$2.2 million for 1998-99, \$4.4 million for 1999-2000, \$4.3 million for 2000-01 and 3.7 million for 2001-02. My math tells me that adds up to \$14.6 million. Where did the other \$5.4 million go?

No doubt, it is for administration at the government level. One can assume that the three national Aboriginal organizations managing the funds will take an administration fee off the \$14.6 million, as will their delivery organizations. After all that happens, we will be lucky to see \$10 million reach the communities for the actual work that has to be done to save our languages.

The AFN has two ad-hoc committees: the Chiefs Committee on Languages, which is made up of a representative from each of the 10 provinces, (it appears the territories are not included) and the Technical Committee on Languages made up of field representatives and language techni-

cians from the provinces.

There is also the First Nations Confederacy of Cultural Education Centres that has an historic affiliation with the AFN.

We know that the cultural education centres have been given the responsibility by the AFN to administer 30 per cent of this year's allotted funding for "critical" languages which are those in the most danger of being lost. Its jury committee reviewed 160 proposals, of which only 59 were selected for funding. None of the 59 received the full amount requested. In fact, the total cost of the 160 proposals came to \$22.5 million and the centres had only about half a million to distribute. It is not difficult to imagine the hard work that went on in the communities to put together plans outlining what it would take to begin to revive their languages. It is not hard to imagine the disappointment at the paltry sum they got or are to get.

This is reported to show the serious problem that was faced, not only by the cultural education centres, but by those administering the 70 per cent for the so-called, enduring, flourishing languages. And as if all this is not bad enough, the monies for the approved proposals will reach

the communities likely this month and must be spent by the 31st of this month or it lapses back into the government coffers.

The amount of money being quibbled over is not nearly enough to launch a serious effort to save our Aboriginal languages. Secondly, our own organizational structure is cumbersome and only adds to the bureaucracy. It does not follow cultural boundaries. It follows the dictates of government.

In my opinion, this approach is all wrong. Preservation of our languages cannot be used as a political football.

The "keepers of the language" should be the language family - Algonquin, Athapaskan, Eskimo-Aleut, Haida, Iroquoian, Hutenai, Salishan, Siouan, Tlingit, Wakashan. Should it not be up to the families to make decisions about the future of their languages? Shouldn't the families decide how their languages are to be protected, revived, maintained and used?

It is time to return to the way it was intended to be - to follow the natural law of the Creator.

Verna Kirkness is the author of the self-published book, *Aboriginal Languages*. For information about the book, FAX (604)731-5005.

Gift of language welcomes people home

By Richard Wagamese
Guest Columnist

OTTAWA

I remember the first word I ever spoke in my traditional language — *Peendigaen*. Come in. I was 23 and had been reconnected to my original family for less than a year. The gentle roll of Ojibway was foreign to me after two decades in the non-Native foster care system and, at first, that simple word felt awkward, clumsy, wrong. But when the person I spoke to smiled and stepped into my mother's house, I felt complete, worthy, real.

Peendigaen. Come in. It's significant this would be the first word I spoke since it allowed me to come in to a fuller realization of myself. Up to that point I still felt like a stranger in my own home. When my people would talk around me I could not be included and I felt alone, afraid and

angry.

Alone is not a comfortable feeling. Human beings were not created for solitude and when language prevented me from being included, the sense of aloneness was difficult. It made me withdraw. Coupled with the fear I felt, it was devastating. I was afraid that people, my own people, would think less of me when they discovered I did not speak my language. So I withdrew even further. After struggling to make a reconnection, feeling like withdrawing over the language issue was confusing.

All of which made me angry. I was angry at the Children's Aid Society for removing me from my roots at three years old, for forcing me into a non-Native world, and for abandoning me to the so-called care of people who did not care whether I discovered my real self at all. Added to that, I felt angry with my family for speaking Ojibway around me. I

thought they were purposely trying to isolate me when all they were doing was what came naturally to them — speaking their language.

And I was angry with myself. Inside me was a private rage. I felt inadequate because in the short year I had been returned to my family, I had not picked up any words at all. I felt inferior. My years in the outside world had taught me to rebel at inferiority, to fight it, to prove myself capable in the eyes of that world, to take a strong, prideful stance against it — and my reactions were the same in this case. I became closed, aloof and distant.

Eventually, however, the magic inherent in our culture saved me. My people allowed me my feelings and the time to acquire a sense of the language. There was no forced feeding of expectation — merely a quiet acceptance of where I'd been, what had happened to me, and the

knowledge that we all arrive where we need to arrive when we are supposed to get there.

When I felt no pressure to become more, I relaxed. My eyes, ears, heart and mind opened up to the possibility of the reconnection experience and I began to learn. Soon the idea of the language became real to me and soon after that, my first Ojibway word rolled off my tongue.

In the years since, I have learned more. Although I am far from fluent in my first language I have an understanding that allows me to feel included, a part of things, when Ojibway is spoken around me. The knowledge of belonging is the greatest gift that comes with speaking our languages. Language is the door that allows us to come in to a full knowledge of ourselves as Aboriginal people.

There will always be those who return to our circles without the ability to speak. I have heard peo-

ple tell returnees that they are not Indian if they cannot speak their language. I have heard them called down, rejected and abandoned because of their lack of the tongue. This is what we need to avoid if our languages are to survive and flourish.

Our people cannot speak their languages largely because of circumstances beyond their control. Maybe their parents left the language behind and did not teach them, or more likely, outside agencies removed them from their roots and access to their language. What's required is patience and acceptance of where they've been, what has happened and the fact that we all get where we need to go at our own speed. You can't force feed language. It's learned slowly over time and should be part of the gifts we extend to our own when they return to us, when we stand at the doors to our communities and say *Peendigaen* — come in.

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Class system in Native communities flourishes

By Dan Ennis
Guest Columnist

TOBIQUE, N.B.

In Native society, prior to contact with the Europeans, there was no such thing as a class system. There were no richer and poorer; the ruling philosophy of "sharing" made sure of that. Even the leaders were no richer than others in the community. In fact, many leaders often temporarily had less than other members of their communities, because they gave away what they had when there was a need. Food was distributed within the community to everyone.

Everything was done with the ancestors and the seventh generation yet to come in mind, a reverent model of accountability. Leadership did not bring power, and people were not judged by the accumulation of their possessions. All of these attributes of feudalism were the legacy of the new post-contact dominant society, and they have caused a great deal of damage

for Native people everywhere. In Native society prior to contact, all human beings were considered equal and related. Leaders were the servants of their people. But things changed.

When I was a kid in the 1930s and 40s, all Indian people were still equal, equally poor by Euro-Canadian standards. But, according to these same standards, Indians were no part of a class structure. They were below poor. They were just Indians living in imposed desperation and Third World conditions.

During my lifetime, I witnessed this and I also saw it gradually begin to change until my people were also thrust into a class structure of the "haves" and "have nots," just like our colonizers. It began after the end of the Second World War. The bureaucrats and politicians suddenly remembered there were Indians living on those pieces of land, the reserve ghettos, and they decided to lend a hand to those poor, wretched people. They decided they would make some changes to make condi-

tions more civilized, more like Euro-Canadian conditions.

And things did begin slowly to change for those poor Indians. The Indian agents began to appoint favored, compliant, "good" Indians to some menial/meaningless positions of authority by designating certain tasks to them. Thus was born the class system for Indians.

In the 1960s, the federal government began pouring money into the reserve system, and the new class system experienced a steady growth from that time until today. In the 1970s and 1980s, the government began pouring millions and millions of dollars into the reserve system. The class system, by this time, was solidly entrenched within the reserve system, and many leaders forgot those traditional philosophies upheld by our ancestors.

Once these new breed of leaders, elected through the imposed Indian Act legislation, got into positions of power they became exactly like the Indian agent: unaccountable to anyone, and prepared to stay in power

for life at all costs. They practiced favoritism, making themselves, their friends and their families rich from the public coffers. They practiced nepotism, building themselves and their families big houses with picket fences, buying big cars or trucks and building summer cottages for family to enjoy while others lived in substandard conditions or went homeless. They had learned the strategies well from the colonizers. It was a class system in all its Euro-Canadian splendor.

Today, all reserves in Canada have a class system. Most have a wealthy class, a middle class, a poor class and a desperate class. Yet, overall, Indian people remain below even the most desperately poor Euro-Canadian class.

We continue to copy our Euro-Canadian colonial masters by dreaming up ways to combat the rapidly growing disparity between the "haves" and the "have nots." We establish committees, conduct studies and surveys, and set up institutions and government departments

as a way of appearing to look for solutions. We create, just like our Euro-Canadian masters, bigger, costlier, more cumbersome and more bureaucratic governments to fight poverty, drug and alcohol abuse, homelessness, domestic violence, pollution etc. But it's all to no avail, just like our Euro-Canadian masters.

We fail to recognize, acknowledge, accept or reconcile just who the real culprit is in all of the man-made, self-destructive madness and abuse of power we are witnessing today. We turn on individuals instead of confronting power structures and systems, structure like the exploitive and exclusive free market economy, big business monopolies, the development-for-development's-sake paradigm. These are the structures constructed by small, fearful men with no vision. This kind of paradigm needs a class structure in order to thrive, and, unfortunately, some Indian people have bought into this. They have become victims of the colonial mind set.

Law requires First Nations to be consulted

By Chief Danny Bradshaw
Guest Columnist

O'CHIESE FIRST NATION, Alta.

In the ongoing, public debate between environmentalists and the province over the issue of wilderness protection and the designation of certain Crown lands as 'Special Places', an important but powerful voice has so far remained unheard.

The voice does not belong to those in the forestry, oil or gas industries, who handsomely profit from 'developing' the natural resources of our lands. And the voice does not belong to those in the recreation or tourism industries, who also profit from our lands but in a different manner.

Our voice has remained unheard because none of these parties has chosen to listen nor seek our thoughts on the best uses of our lands.

But our voice will be heard, and it will be heard loudly.

Long before there was a province of Alberta or its oil and gas

heritage, long before the first tree-hugger or Nature-nut refashioned himself into an environmentalist, there were the Cree, the Stoney and the Blackfoot, and the Sarcee, the Dene and the Dakota. There were also the Saulteaux, my own people, and together our traditional lands comprised most of what is now called the Prairie provinces.

While we signed treaties with the Crown and agreed to share our lands with the wave of settlers finding their way into our territories, our traditional rights to our traditional lands remained unaffected.

And when the federal government transferred all federal Crown lands to the Prairie provinces under the Natural Resources Transfer Agreements of the early 1930s, our traditional rights remained unaffected, despite our lack of consent or consultation on a matter of central importance to each of our respective treaty First Nations.

The O'Chiese First Nation, my own community, is in the

midst of documenting our traditional use of lands in an area that is now being offered to the province as a 'Special Place' by a coalition of outfitters, guides and environmentalists. This area, called Bighorn Country, is said to contain \$77.7 million a year worth of tourism and recreation, and is now being touted by the media as the Kananaskis of the North.

The province, which now considers this area as provincial Crown lands, has politely indicated that this request will be seriously considered under its 'Special Places' program.

But again, the pattern of not consulting First Nations about their traditional lands has been blindly repeated. Again, neither this coalition or the province have the right, nor our consent, to make far-reaching decisions regarding these lands without first consulting our First Nation, or the other First Nations that also have traditional lands within this vast expanse of territory.

As a signatory to Treaty 6, the

O'Chiese First Nation must be consulted and involved, as a matter of law, in any plans to develop Crown lands that fall within our traditional territories, whether this development be undertaken by those in the forestry, oil and gas industries or those in the industries of recreation or tourism.

Despite the province's past words to the contrary, this law applies to Alberta, as well as to any other groups that would seek to limit, rescind or reduce the legitimate exercise of our treaty rights, rights that have been afforded constitutional protection under Section 35 of the Constitution Act (1982).

The O'Chiese First Nation, however, is not the only First Nation in Alberta that is afforded this legal protection. All First Nations, whether in this province or throughout Canada, are on an equal footing with respect to this matter.

In 1997, the Supreme Court of Canada in its historic Delgamukw decision confirmed that First Nations have a 'bundle

of rights' that they can legitimately exercise on Crown lands, and that these rights cannot be impinged or reduced without the consultation or consent of First Nations.

In the case of the proposed 'Special Place' designation of Bighorn Country, the O'Chiese First Nation has strong traditional ties to some of the Crown lands within this area.

Should we continue to be denied a voice in any discussions concerning these lands, the O'Chiese First Nation is more than prepared to take strenuous legal action to prevent this designation from ever being made, even if we must challenge this provincial program itself. We are committed to creating a united front among First Nations to protect our treaty rights and our traditional access and use of Crown lands.

The time has come for our rights to be respected. The time has come for our voice to be heard. This proposed area should instead be called the Little Bighorn of the North.

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Crees sue Ottawa over Nunavut

By Alex Roslin
Windspeaker Contributor

MONTREAL

Nunavut is only days old, but it's already facing a legal challenge. The Crees of Northern Quebec say the federal government violated their rights and Constitution when it agreed to give Nunavut islands in the James and Hudson bays that have been part of Cree ancestral territory for thousands of years.

The Grand Council of the Crees filed a court action on Feb. 19 asking the Federal Court of Canada to keep the islands out of Nunavut. Crees also want to make sure no development occurs on the islands until their status is settled.

"We were very reluctant to undertake this action as we support Inuit claims and efforts to achieve recognition of their rights," said Cree Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come. "However, Canada swept our islands into Nunavut without consulting us."

The Cree complaints echo those of an alliance of Manitoba First Nations, which also say the inclusion of their lands in the new territory was done without their consent. They fear their rights in those lands could be extinguished with the new territory's birth.

The Cree islands, most of them a few kilometres from the shore, have been part of the Northwest Territories, but became part of Nunavut on April 1, the date the Northwest Territories was divided to settle a long-standing Inuit land claim. Crees have been negotiating for 26 years to get jurisdiction over the islands, but the



Matthew Coon Come.

"We were very reluctant to undertake this action as we support Inuit claims and efforts to achieve recognition of their rights."

talks have continuously broken down.

A key Cree fear is that Nunavut will require them to get export licenses to bring game from the islands when they go hunting. The rule is enforced on Amiski Island, a large island close to the west coast of James Bay, but not on the islands claimed by Quebec Crees. But Nunavut could start enforcing the rule everywhere.

"When you go into another province or territory (with freshly killed game), you require certain permits. So those may be required (of the Crees)," said James Eetoolook, first vice-president of the Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., the political body that represents the 20,000 Inuit people of Nunavut.

Eetoolook conceded, however, the Inuit of Nunavut never claimed the Quebec Cree islands as part of their historical territory.

Nigel Wilford, a senior negotiator at Indian Affairs, said the islands were tossed into Nunavut for simplicity's sake, not because the islands were claimed by the Inuit.

"We didn't want to create a third territory out of the N.W.T." Legally speaking, Wilford ac-

knowledgeed Crees will have to get export permits if they go hunting on the off-shore islands. Whether the rule is enforced is up to Nunavut authorities.

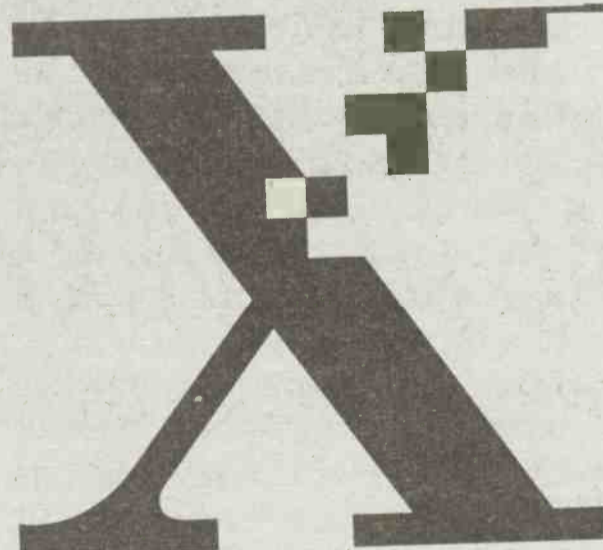
At the same time, Wilford insisted that rights of First Nations whose lands overlap with Nunavut won't be hurt.

NDP MP Bev Desjarlais is dubious. She represents Manitoba's northern Churchill riding and took Indian Affairs to task over the issue in Parliament last month.

"One land claim doesn't trump another," she said. "The government is using the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement to get out of its treaty obligations to other Aboriginal people."

Francis Flett, Grand Chief of the Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO), an alliance of 26 Manitoba First Nations, said his people are worried. The MKO took Ottawa to court in 1993 to protest the inclusion of Dene ancestral lands into Nunavut, but the case still isn't resolved.

"We're not against the Inuit having self-government. But certainly, they have to respect the rights we have," said Flett. "The government is trying to shove us aside."



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Acadia fears the worst

By Ray Lawrence
Windspeaker Contributor

ACADIA FIRST NATION, N.S.

Before something tragic happens, members of a Nova Scotia band want a paved road connecting them with vital services more than 30 kilometres away.

Residents of one of Acadia First Nation's reserves, located in the southern reaches of the province, have to travel the dirt road every day to bring their children to school. The road frequently washes out, cutting them off from ambulance services, the fire department, and police.

The road is often in such bad condition that vehicles can only move at a crawl, which is far too slow should there be an emergency. The New Year's Eve disaster in the remote Northern Quebec community of Kangisualujuaq is still fresh in people minds, but for the people of the Acadia First Nation, it rings an alarm bell. Disasters can strike quickly, but for people in remote areas, rescue and relief can be too slow to arrive.

They have already had brushes with disaster that give them cause to worry. Last spring a fire truck from nearby Liverpool, N.S. almost rolled on the road while trying to reach the reserve - the truck had to be towed from the mud and did not make it to the reserve.

Currently, the people from the

small community are circulating petitions in hopes of persuading the province to pave the road connecting them to Milton, which is about 35 kilometres away, and Liverpool, which is another 15 kilometres further off.

"The road is definitely not good up there at certain times of the year," said Jim Parks, fire chief at the Liverpool Fire Department. He says from autumn through until late spring it is difficult to guess what conditions will be encountered.

"Our concern is that when the road is not at its best it will slow our response time for getting up there. They deserve the same kind of protection as anyone else," Parks said.

Response time might increase dramatically, even double, depending on conditions. The 35 permanent residents share the road with power commission employees, staff of a nearby fish hatchery, logging trucks, bush workers and cottagers.

"The road is bad in the spring, summer, fall, and winter. It isn't fit for anyone to travel on," said Acadia band council member Debbi Wentzell. At the time of the interview, the area had recently been hit by a snowstorm followed by several days of rain. She said she doubted it would be possible to travel the road. Although they have pressed for years to have the road fixed, repairs have so far included dumping gravel and grading the road.

But when waters rise, residents say the road turns to soup and becomes impossible to travel with conventional vehicles.

"You have to pretty much crawl because you have deep mud. When they grade the road it only lasts a couple days and if they put gravel on it, it just turns to soup because you have large trucks hauling on that road too," said resident Jean Whynot. "When it rains our road gets washed out until it gets fixed."

"The road's in an emergency situation. There's times we're stuck in there with no way out," she said, then adds, "When I went into labor, I almost had the youngest boy coming down the road because it took so long to get there. They told me another five minutes and I wouldn't have made it to the hospital."

She said the community is concerned about the safety of its children and Elders.

"If there was something serious, the ambulance just wouldn't make it on time," Whynot said. A paved road will put residents' minds at ease but Whynot believes it may have greater implications than peace of mind.

"If something does happen and the road is fixed, there could be lives saved. My young fellow had fallen down the basement steps and if it wasn't for us putting him into our vehicle and meeting the ambulance, he might not have made it," she said.

Shelter seeks a bit of relief

By Stephen LaRose
Windspeaker Contributor

FORT QU'APPELLE, Sask.

An organization that provides help to women and children in times of crisis is itself seeking help from the town of Fort Qu'Appelle, Sask.

At a recent town council meeting, the board that oversees the operation of the Qu'Apple Haven women's shelter in Fort Qu'Appelle, asked the town to consider a break on its taxes.

The Qu'Appelle Haven pays about \$7,000 a year in municipal taxes, said board member Joan Bellegarde. In comparison, its shelter in Regina pays about \$70 in property taxes.

Under the auspices of the Touchwood Qu'Appelle Tribal Council, the board oversees the operation of two emergency shelters for battered women and children.

In Regina, the shelter is known as Wichihik-Iskwewak - A Safe Place. The tribal council, through

the board, took over operation of the shelters in 1995, but while the Regina shelter is licensed by the province of Saskatchewan, the Fort Qu'Appelle shelter receives funding from the federal government.

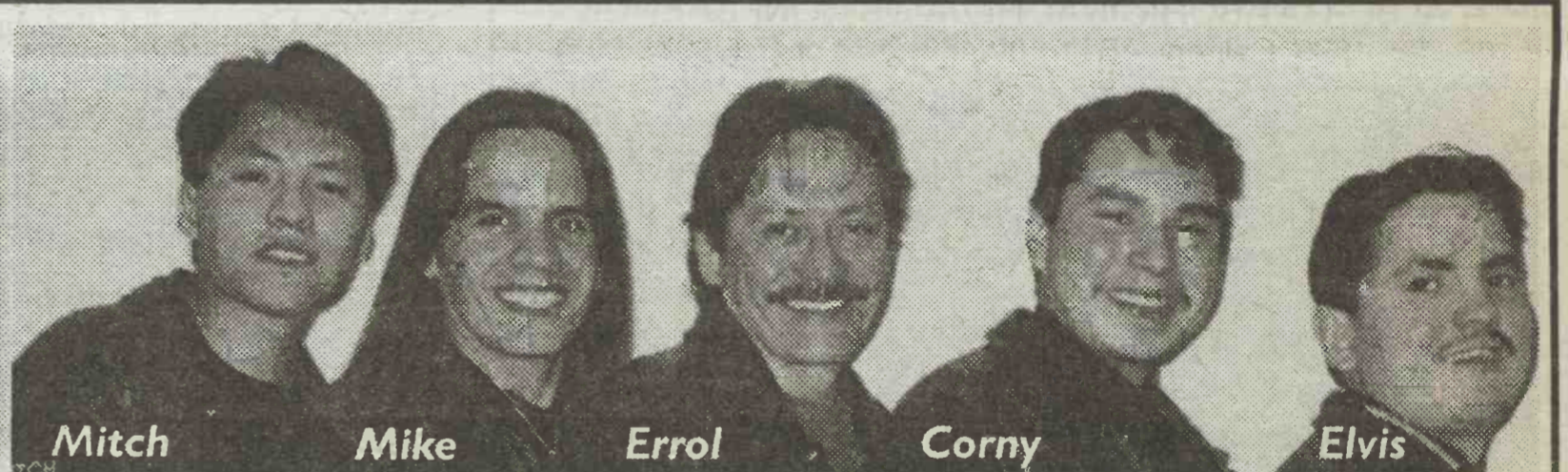
Under provincial law, provincially-licensed women's shelters are eligible for grants from the province that come close to covering the cost of municipal taxes. No such program exists for shelters with federal licensing.

"We could use that extra money in other areas," Bellegarde said. "We need more funds to assist families who are going through a lot of turmoil."

Qu'Appelle Haven has an annual budget of about \$300,000, said shelter manager Elaine Kayseas. In 1997, 117 women who sought refuge from domestic abuse were housed by Qu'Appelle Haven, she said. Figures for 1998 weren't immediately available.

Council voted to refer the shelter board's request for further study.

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Winners and losers in fishing rights battle

By Roberta Avery
Windspeaker Contributor

MEAFORD, Ont.

Like his father, grandfather and great grandfather before him, John Perks has commercially fished on southern Georgian Bay all his life. But now he's been told that his fish quota has been used up by Bruce Peninsula Native people.

Two fishing tugs from the Nawash band from the Cape Croker reserve and one from the Saugeen First Nation reserve moved to Meaford, Ont. about 30 kilometres east of Owen Sound earlier in the year.

"My family has fished here for 85 to 90 years. Now the ministry tells me my quota has gone to zero. The Native boats have used it up," he said.

Guy Nadjiwon's family from the Cape Croker reserve also has a heritage of commercial fishing that goes back generations. But until a 1993 court decision that recognized the right of the local Ojibway bands to commercially fish in traditional waters, the fishing activities of the Nadjiwon family were severely restricted.

"The entire quota for everyone on the reserve was 10,000 pounds of fish a year," said Nadjiwon.

The 1993 decision changed all that and Nadjiwon was able to return home to Cape Croker to



TED SHAW

Guy Nadjiwon, captain of a Native-owned fishing tug, said sports fishermen are playing politics with the fishery.

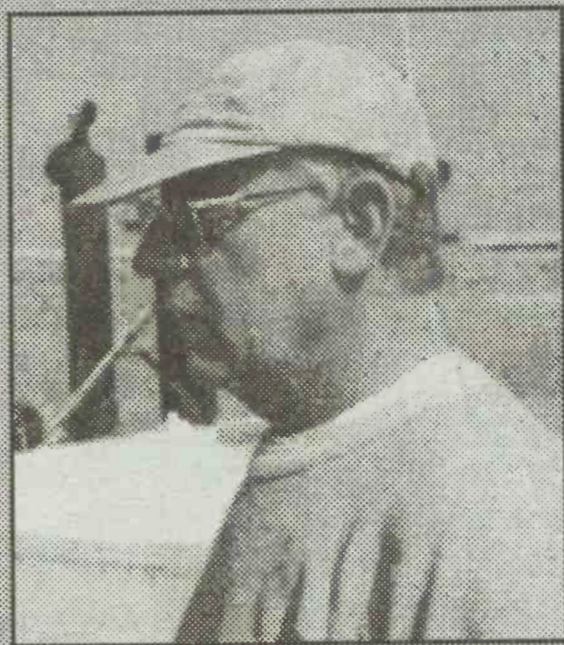
follow a family tradition of casting nets for whitefish and lake trout.

"Fishing was born and bred into me," said Nadjiwon.

On an average day, his boat ties up at the dock in Meaford with about 1,400 pounds of whitefish and 100 pounds of lake trout.

There is a certain camaraderie between the two men. They deeply respect each other's determination to go out onto the lake in all kinds of weather and their knowledge of the lake and the fish habitat.

"My family has fished here for 85 to 90 years. Now the ministry tells me my quota has gone to zero. The Native boats have used it up."



TED SHAW

John Perks, captain of a non-Native-owned fishing tug.

"He's a good guy," said Perks, waving to Nadjiwon as he backed his fish-laden truck away from the dock.

Perks, standing next to his idle fishing tug, said he isn't against Native fishing rights, but the decision that will cause him and his family to lose their livelihood is hard to take.

"If this is happening as a result of the courts interpreting the part of the Constitution that refers to fishing rights, then something has gone wrong," he said.

The Ministry of Natural Resources has set the annual commercial whitefish quota at 50,000 pounds for the Meaford area, but based on information from the customers of the three Native tugs fishing out of

Meaford, that has already been used up.

The ministry has made an offer to buy or lease Perks' quota.

"It's on the table, but I've put that to one side. It's not what I want. Fishing is my life," he said.

Despite mediated talks between the ministry and the leaders of the First Nations since Justice David Fairgrieve confirmed the Saugeen First Nation's rights to fish the waters around the Bruce Peninsula, no agreement has been reached on how the rights should be implemented.

The Native fishing rights issue has dragged on too long and it's time the matter was settled, said Nadjiwon.

He has joined an independent

association of Native fishermen who feel their band leaders are selling out the interests of Native fishermen in hopes of getting more government subsidies.

Nawash Chief Ralph Akiwenzie couldn't be reached for comment, but in earlier interviews Akiwenzie stated that negotiations are on behalf of all band members and conservation of fish stocks is of prime importance.

"Our rights and the health of the fishery are in our mind, inseparable," he's said.

Nadjiwon said his fight is not with Perks.

"I don't want to make enemies, but non-Natives have fished these waters for 150 years and now it's our turn," he said.

He hires as many as eight band members to work on his boat and the economic spin-off is vital to their families, he said.

"And I've got a wife and two children to support," he said.

Nadjiwon said he is at a loss to understand why an area fishing club has cancelled its summer fish derby, citing the cancellation of Perks' quota and a concern for the state of the fish stocks as the reason.

"I can't understand what difference a Native tug using up the quota this year instead of a non-Native tug makes. The decision to cancel the derby is sports fishermen playing politics," he said.

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Aboriginal Artist Fred McDonald

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Grandfather forced to give up child to U.S. couple

By Len Kruzenga
Windspeaker Contributor

SAGKEENG, Man.

A protracted and emotional custody dispute centering on a four-year-old child waged by the boy's maternal Native grandfather and his adoptive non-Native American grandparents finally played itself out last week in Winnipeg as the toddler was handed over to be taken to the United States.

For the boy's grandfather, known simply as Buddy, the transfer was a devastating blow in his year-long battle to keep the child.

"It was a terribly sad day for me," he said. "Our family has been ripped apart by this. I am all he has known for nearly four years and now he has been taken from a community that loves him and considers him as their own."

The thirty-something Sagkeeng First Nation man started his fight in the British Columbia courts to gain permanent custody of the boy who has been raised by him for the last three-and-a-half-years, and is the product of a Native mother and an African-American father.

Losing the first case, the determined Cree grandfather subsequently appealed to the province's court of appeal where he won custody. However the American couple appealed that decision to the Supreme Court of Canada.

The boy's fate was further complicated by the fact that his mother, along with her sister, had

been adopted by the U.S. couple.

The subsequent ruling by the Supreme Court of Canada that the boy, who had been living with his grandfather, first in British Columbia and then later on a reserve in Manitoba, should be turned over, has been vigorously challenged by representatives of First Nations organizations across the country, including Assembly of First Nations National Chief Phil Fontaine, who called for an end to Native child-grabs.

"I am deeply concerned about this case and about the fact that one of our children is again being removed from his own community and taken away from his own people," said Fontaine.

The national chief reiterated that he would be asking Indian Affairs Minister Jane Stewart to intervene in the case and press for a ministerial order to return the child until a procedural appeal of the Supreme Court decision is settled.

For Buddy, the fight to retain his grandson continued right to the last minute as his lawyer argued unsuccessfully to have the original British Columbia judge in the custody case, Justice Robert Bauman, delay having to turn over the boy.

A week earlier the American adoptive grandparents had illegally taken the child back with them to the United States during a weekend visit in Winnipeg, which had been arranged to simply prepare the wide-eyed toddler for his eventual move.

The couple later claimed they felt intimidated and threatened by the Natives, singling out MLA

Eric Robinson, a northern Cree who was worked tirelessly to have the boy remain with his Native grandfather.

After the boy failed to be returned to his Native grandfather at the appointed hour, a flurry of calls between Buddy's lawyer and the counsel for the U.S. couple forced the boy's return.

There was growing hope by those supporting the boy's grandfather that the U.S. couple's actions would contravene Bauman's ruling that the transition of the boy's hand over to the U.S. couple be a gradual and non-detrimental process and would buoy attempts by the grandfather to keep the child.

Those attempts include a claim by the grandfather's home First Nation, which received intervenor status during the original custody trial, that they had not received proper legal notification on the appeal to Canada's top court.

However, Bauman ruled that the intense media scrutiny of the case and the insistence by First Nations that their children not be turned over to non-Native families were harming the well-being of the child.

The ruling by Bauman has outraged a group of Elders from Sagkeeng who have rejected the court's claim to jurisdiction in the matter.

"Canadian laws are for Canadians," said Elder John Courchene. "They're not for people like this Ojibway kid."

Elder Peter Kinew blasted the courts for failing to respect Ojibway laws and customs. He



BY LEN KRUZENGA

Elder Peter Kinew (left) with boy's grandfather, Buddy.

noted that if the community was to assert its inherent right to self-determination, the full weight of the police and government child welfare agencies would be brought to impose their will on First Nations people.

"It's not right. We hear the government and the courts talk about Aboriginal rights and yet, in actuality, as this case proves, they don't really exist."

While many First Nations people have urged the grandfather to retain the child - some First Nations have gone so far as to offer to hide the child - the boy's grandfather maintained his commitment to obeying the court order in order to save the child from any detrimental emotional effects.

The group of Elders also slammed Fontaine, the AFN and the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs

for acting too late in the case and not being present at the 11th-hour press-conference.

"Where were our political leaders when this boy, his grandfather and the community needed them most?" asked Kinew.

Even MLA Eric Robinson conceded that First Nations political groups should have done more from the outset of the case and should have pressed for intervenor status at the original court case as well.

"This is a tremendously important issue and as Aboriginal people we have to stop the continuing removal of Native children from their own culture and identity," he said.

"This case was the opportunity for First Nations to draw the line in the sand, but we failed to act soon enough and now it's too late."

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Housing problems addressed at AFN conference

By Kenneth Williams
Windspeaker Contributor

TORONTO

The Assembly of First Nations and the department of Indian affairs can agree on one thing - on-reserve housing is woefully inadequate leading to serious social problems.

According to an Indian Affairs fact sheet, on-reserve housing is "among the worst in Canada." To address this crisis, the AFN hosted a First Nations housing conference in Toronto on March 9 and 10. More than 600 delegates from across Canada with 45 corporate booth participants attended to share ideas on financing, constructing and maintaining houses on reserve.

Philosophical fractures, however, appeared almost immediately during the conference's opening remarks. Marilyn Buffalo, president of the Native Women's Association of Canada, derided the male-dominated organizations for ignoring the fact that 90 per cent of Aboriginal single-parent homes are led by women, making the issue of social housing a women's issue.

National Chief Phil Fontaine and Ontario vice-chief Tom Bressette, stressed that housing was a matter of resource control, employment and treaty rights.

"Treaty obligations have not been met by governments," said Fontaine. He also attacked the willingness of bu-



KEN WILLIAMS

Marilyn Buffalo, president of the Native Womens Association of Canada insists that social housing is a women's issue because 90 per cent of the Aboriginal single-parent homes are led by women.

reaucrats to seek the easiest means to solve the housing crisis.

"It is easier to fill out a form than it is to figure out how communities can use the resources that are already there," he said.

To back up his assertion, Fontaine described how First Nations in Manitoba are usually forced into dealing with construction companies from Winnipeg that get their building materials from Vancouver, even though construction-quality timber is available right next to the communities. But these communities cannot cut or mill the timber because it is owned by the province.

Bressette, as well, described the frustrations of Northern Ontario First Nations that watch as truckloads of timber

are shipped out of their treaty territories without any financial compensation or employment opportunities.

Jane Stewart, minister of Indian affairs, was invited to the conference but was unable to attend because of Parliamentary obligations. Her Parliamentary secretary used the conference to announce an additional \$20 million in housing funding to 74 First Nations, increasing the department's housing investment to about \$200 million for this year. The announcement was warmly received by the delegates, but, to some, it was considered a Band-Aid solution.

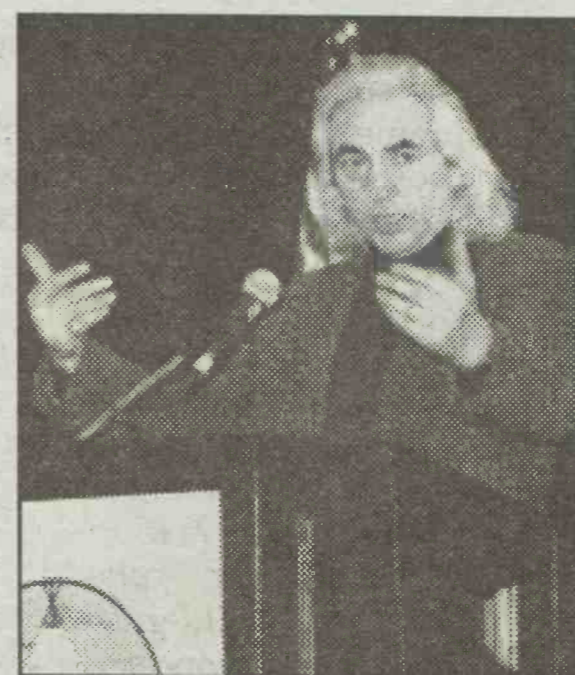
According to Indian Affairs' own statistics, about 36,000 of the current 76,000 houses on-reserve are in serious need of repair, while an additional 5,275 need to be replaced.

Peter Broeren of Guildcrest Building Corporation, a builder of pre-fabricated houses, said "as a Canadian, it's embarrassing, it's humiliating to see some of the conditions that exist in First Nations communities."

Guildcrest has built more than 100 homes in First Nations communities throughout Ontario over the past two years. Broeren said his perception of First Nations people changed dramatically after working in their communities.

"I've seen an 800-sq. ft house with 17 people living in it," he said. The northern communities give you a much better sense as to how serious the problem is, he said.

Good housing means that



KEN WILLIAMS

Assembly of First Nations National Chief, Phil Fontaine, said federal bureaucrats force First Nations communities to purchase goods and services far from their communities, when the product they need is right next door, under provincial control.

children had their own space for homework and that it improved their grades in school. When as many as three generations live in one house, there is little space or time for homework. The future of the community improves with good housing.

Financing housing programs had always been under the control of Indian Affairs. Individuals who wished to buy houses on-reserve were refused mortgages from banks because the Indian Act prevented seizure of reserve land or using it as collateral. The Royal Bank has found a way around this problem, even though Indian Affairs still holds the purse strings.

As long as an individual on

a reserve can get the band's housing authority to act as a guarantor, the Royal Bank would be willing to consider that person for a home loan.

Peter Montgomery, manager of public sector and Aboriginal business for Royal Bank, said the pilot project on four communities has been an incredible success. The project has \$10 million in loans with only a couple of instances of defaults, and well below the banks tolerance for bad loans. With this success, the bank plans to make this program national.

But the program will only apply to financially sound First Nations and still doesn't address the larger housing crisis.

Holly Johns from the Samson Cree Nation in Alberta still thinks that reserve land should remain band owned, but also feels that Indian Affairs shouldn't be solely responsible for housing. This, she said, will allow bands to seek other opportunities to solve their housing needs. Even though she recognized that conferences such as this were valuable and new ideas were emerging, the housing situation on reserves was intolerable.

"A lack of adequate housing means people are forced to leave their communities and live in the cities," she said. And that, as Marilyn Buffalo mentioned in her opening remarks, means that more First Nations people are being lost to the streets.

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Band claims Toronto islands

By Paul Barnsley
Windspeaker Staff Writer

NEW CREDIT, Ont.

The Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation council is sure it has a legitimate claim on its traditional homeland. Council is just not sure what category the claim falls under.

Chief Carolyn King said her research staff has made a case that all lands south of Front Street (which runs east/west across downtown Toronto) were not part of her people's 1805 surrender of the land where Canada's largest city now stands.

Toronto Mayor Mel Lastman, the longtime mayor of the borough of North York who was elected mayor of the amalgamated super city of Toronto two years ago, laughed off the land claim when reporters asked him about it a few weeks ago. Cashing in on local jokes about his political longevity, he cracked that he was mayor at the time of surrender and he recalls that everything was done by the rules.

Chief King also appreciates a good joke.

"Well, they've got somebody to blame now," she said, laughing.

But as negotiations continue, it may turn out that Lastman is going to have to take the Mississaugas a little bit more seriously.

"If it was legal — a legal surrender — then the compensation wasn't right. We're not happy with the compensation," she said. "The other part is we're not happy with what is viewed to be the boundaries. There was dispute from the traditional chiefs at that time about what the boundaries were, from what the original understandings were to identifications like 'the water's edge.' Our people's understanding was that [the surrender] did not include the islands because the islands were sacred lands where they went for healing purposes. Our history tells us that the islands were part of it and then the water would wash it away. Sometimes it was an island and sometimes a peninsula and attached. So 'Where was the water's edge?' is part of our claim and 'Why would we give up our



PAUL BARNSELEY

The plan is everything. Chief Carolyn King's New Credit community has 1,400 members. Half live on the 6,100 acre reserve near Hagersville, Ont. The band council faithfully follows its 20-year plan and expects to use compensation from land claims to make their home a shining example of what a First Nation can be.

sacred lands?"

New Credit maintains the water's edge at that time was Front Street That could mean that some of the most expensive real estate in Canada, if not North America, still belongs to New Credit. Such landmarks as SkyDome and the new home of the Toronto Maple Leafs, the Air Canada Centre, are on reclaimed land that is south of where the water's edge was at the time of the surrender.

Canada's Specific Claims policy rejects relocation of third parties in landclaim settlements. If the research proves the New Credit claim then compensation will be negotiated. But if New Credit decides it is not prepared to surrender the islands off the Toronto waterfront because of their value as a spiritual place, then the claim moves into the realm of a comprehensive claim.

"If we say that it's still ours then it's a comprehensive claim, which doesn't belong in this process," she said. "I think more data and more discussion will decide which side we belong in."

Historical records show that the Mississaugas were living in the area when the colonial government decided to make the city of York (later renamed Toronto) the capital city of Upper Canada. Encroachment by settlers and the development of

this growing major urban centre pushed the Indigenous people to the outskirts of the city. They settled along what is now called the Credit River where the modern city of Mississauga now stands. As more settlement occurred, the pressures increased on the Mississaugas.

In 1787, the first Toronto treaty was negotiated. In 1792, Lieutenant Governor Simcoe discovered that the treaty was a forgery. A blank deed was passed off as the "Toronto Purchase."

"They'd pasted the chiefs names on there and some of them were even dead," King said.

In 1805, a second treaty was formalized. New Credit claims neither deal included the islands.

The original claim was rejected by Canada in the mid-1980s. But since the Delgamuukw decision, which accepts oral history as legitimate, New Credit has been able to enter into negotiations to get the claim back on the table.

When band member Jim Secord was charged with hunting illegally by provincial authorities, the band came to his aid. The charges were laid because Secord was caught hunting near Parry Sound, which is more than 100 km away from the New Credit reserve, the province's limit for Aboriginal hunters. The band council came to his defense claiming their traditional territory encompassed almost all of Southern Ontario and therefore he had the right to hunt and should not have been charged.

The charges were eventually dropped when the province realized the Mississaugas had a potentially good case. But provincial authorities did not recognize any Aboriginal title to any area besides the present reserve.

In the 10 or more years the claim was in limbo, New Credit has waged a subtle battle to raise awareness of its traditional ties to the land around Toronto. The band was invited to participate in the celebration of the 200th anniversary of the city in the early 1990s. King was working for the band at the time and she decided to attend.

(see Toronto page 17.)

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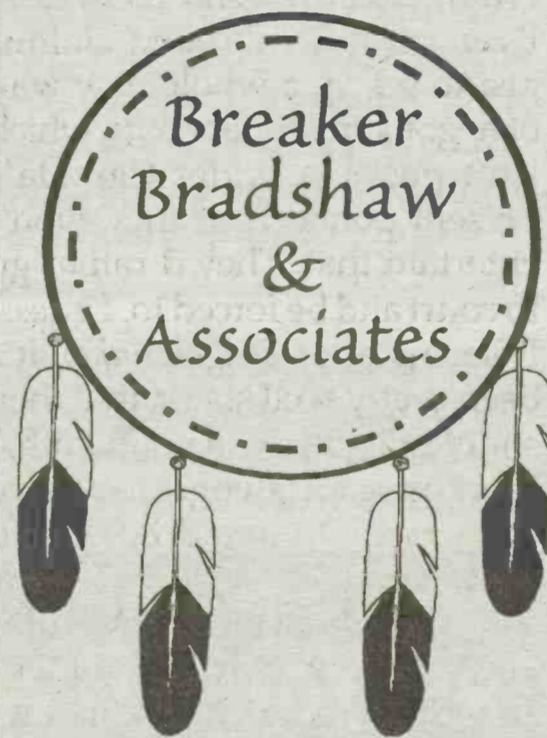
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Time scheduled for unique court case

By Paul Barnsley
Windspeaker Staff Writer

SIX NATIONS OF THE GRAND RIVER, Ont.

It's not a land claim; it's not a fight for determination of Aboriginal title. But it is a significant court battle that will be of great interest to all Indigenous peoples in Canada and around the world.

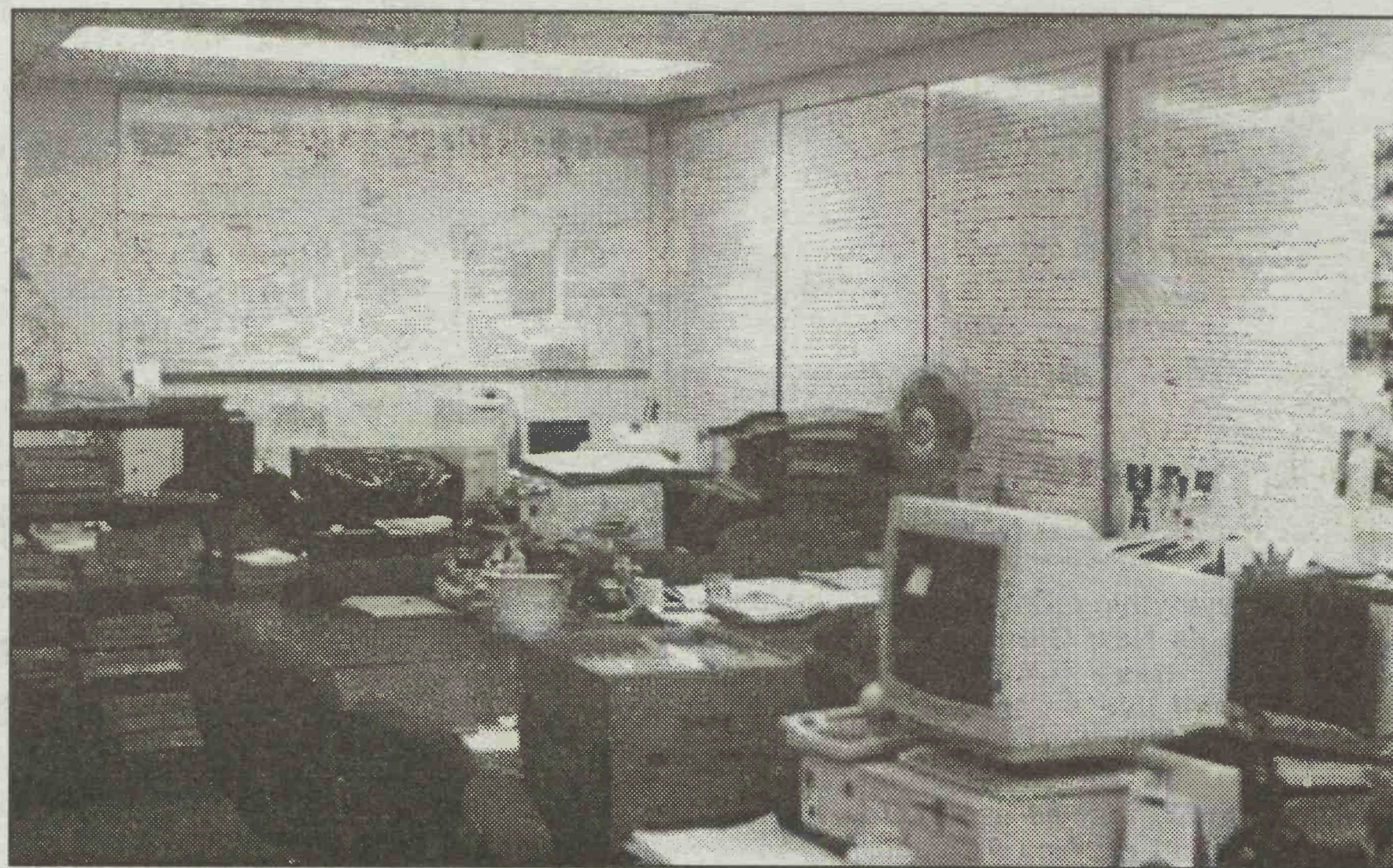
Beginning May 17, one entire week of court time has been set aside in the City of Brantford's Ontario Court of Justice as Six Nations' elected council attempts to force the federal and Ontario governments to account for Six Nations lands and monies held in trust by the Crown.

That fight is already raging in the United States where a federal judge recently cited Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin, Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt and his top bureaucrat for Indian Affairs, Kevin Gover, for contempt of court. Judge Royce C. Lamberth said the three senior government officials showed a "shocking pattern of deception" as they attempted to resist court orders requiring them to produce trust fund records. Several Native Americans have filed a class action suit alleging more than \$2 billion has been lost through mismanagement.

Six Nations Land Claim Research director Phil Monture is looking forward to getting his staff's extensive research in front of a judge. The southern Ontario First Nations' legal strategy is unique. Rather than file a specific or comprehensive land claim, Six Nations has asked a court to order the federal and provincial governments to explain where all of Six Nations land and money is — or where it went.

While there are no allegations in Six Nations demand for an accounting, the band's research staff has labored for years to find its own answers and Monture said they're prepared to present evidence of extensive corruption and wrong-doing.

After notifying Canada and Ontario on Dec. 24, 1994 that it intended to pursue this matter in court — outside the specific claims process — all funding for Six Nations Land Claim Research was cut off by Indian Af-



A mountain of documents and an almost unmanageable amount of information has been compiled to back up the Six Nations demand for compensation for lands and monies held in trust by the Crown that have disappeared for one reason or another. The case goes to court in Brantford, Ont. next month.

fairs as of April 1995. Monture said that was just one of the tactics the governments have employed to frustrate the band's demands for accountability.

"We've offered to negotiate. We've offered to negotiate everything outside of the court case. Even on the validated claims, just to set up a whole new way of negotiating settlements, which isn't possible under Canada's present policy. And they won't entertain that. They'd rather go to court and be forced to, I guess. It seems after *Delgamuukw*, it's been pretty well stated that they should negotiate in good faith," Monture said. "I've got to believe it's a tactic to avoid having to deal with it."

In 1784, the senior Crown official in that part of North America, Frederick Haldimand, signed the Haldimand deed. In that document, in reward for their service to Britain during the American revolutionary war, the Six Nations were given title to all land within six miles of the Grand River from its mouth to its source. That represented close to one million acres. Almost immediately, one-third of that land disappeared through the Simcoe Patent, which Six Nations insists was illegal. As settlers moved into the area, the Crown negotiated land surren-

ders with the Six Nations. The 1763 Royal Proclamation decreed that only the Crown could buy Indian land. All payment for surrendered land was supposed to be collected by the Crown and held in trust.

With their land base down to about 40,000 acres and the trust fund down to less than \$2 million, Six Nations is convinced huge amounts of its lands and monies are missing. If all of Six Nations claims are validated, the amount approaches \$40 billion, say government sources.

"I really think they're somewhat overwhelmed by the size of it. But in reality, we've never even asked for a price on anything," Monture said.

The council decided the right legal tactic was to just ask the Crown to provide a detailed accounting of the trust funds.

"If it's all accounted for and everything's right, well, what's the big deal? Basically, we put our money into the bank. Now we want to know how much is in there and what's been done with it," Monture said.

Six Nations suspects the Crown gave away their land or sold it and used the money for its own purposes, confident they'd never have to account to the band. If they can persuade a judge they have a right to an ac-

counting from a legal entity that has acted as their trustee, then the onus will be on the government to prove the land deals were done legally. Any transactions that don't stand up to scrutiny will require compensation.

"If our money should be there and if isn't, we'll ask the court order that it be there," he said.

Years of research has gone into backing up the demand.

"On a lot-by-lot basis, we're going to go through and challenge Canada: What happened to the money for this; and that one and this one. Why wasn't this one paid for when everybody knew it was supposed to be paid for," he said.

Six Nations isn't expecting the government will someday be forced by a court to write a \$40 billion cheque. But they do expect recognition, and some form of compensation for their loss.

"We're not looking at numbers," Monture said. "We're looking at creative solutions. Joint ventures, guaranteed education, health care... to our standards. First right of refusal on jobs on the Grand River tract."

If Canada is found to owe the First Nation money, the council is willing to take payment over the long term, using the money to build a community that is truly self governing.

"We know what we want. People stand up and talk about new partnerships and all these things. The words are cheap. The debts are going to be so big. What's that going to do? It's going to anger the taxpayers. Let's run a credit against Canada. They can post loans for us because financial enterprise will pay off our loans and it won't cost Canada a penny," said Monture. "You can never have self government if you have to rely on somebody else for any financial dollars to determine your future. That just makes me laugh. It's an oxymoron. Until you have a continual source of income, you can't build your own community."

If Six Nations is deemed to still be the legal owner of a significant portion of the Haldimand tract, Monture suggests the First Nation could generate its own revenue by collecting a portion of the property taxes collected on that land. But Six Nations will insist on its own Aboriginal right to continue to be tax-exempt.

"We should be tax free. If our money went into building Canada, we should be tax free. We paid our taxes in advance," he said.

Six Nations claims it has proof its trust funds were a significant pool of money that was used to build a nation.

"We were financing the beginning of Canada," Monture said. "Generally it was to run the infrastructure. From municipal loans to public works, public debt. The list goes on and on."

Monture reminds you that this court action is not a Native land claim. He said it's a simple matter of justice.

"It's not about Aboriginal title, it's legal title. There are agreements!" he said. "That why we're doing the court case the way it's structured. It just so happens we're Aboriginal people doing it. If you put your money in the bank and you went back the next day and you didn't see it there, you'd have legal title — a legal claim. It's no different. It just so happens that we're Natives."

After years of preparatory work, the process of seeing it all pay off will begin when the parties meet in the Brantford court house for the first time in May.

"The court house that's on land that was never paid for," Monture said, laughing.

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So it wasn't an "Indian problem" after all

By Paul Barnsley
Windspeaker Staff Writer

AKWESASNE, Que.

Executives of an American-based cigarette company pled guilty in late 1998 to funding and directing cross-border cigarette smuggling in the early 1990s.

Despite the fact the First Nation community of Akwesasne has been tagged by the mainstream press as Canada's smuggling capital, Northern Brands International, an affiliate of Canada's number three cigarette-maker, Montreal-based RJR-Macdonald, Inc., the manufacturers of Export "A", accepted a plea bargain recently that saw the company agree to plead guilty to smuggling charges and pay a \$15 million (U.S) fine. The federal indictment alleged that Northern Brands sold more than one million cartons of Export "A" to smugglers.

With the Mitchell case slated to be heard in the Supreme Court of Canada sometime in the near future, the politics of tax-free trade — or "smuggling" if you don't have the right to be tax-exempt or an Aboriginal right to carry goods across the Canada/United States border — in this border community is once again primed for public discussion.

Cigarette smuggling has been the most visible example of

FRICITION

the friction between competing Indigenous and colonial jurisdictions, but it certainly isn't the only example. Other sore spots for First Nations leaders and provincial or federal bureaucrats include: GST regulations covering deliveries to reserve territories; cigarette quotas, and gasoline voucher systems. Native leaders say the issue that never gets examined in the mainstream media is one that should be, if one is to take any discussion of this issue seriously. Native people, whether other Canadians like it or not, have rights that are recognized as legal, proper and necessary by any and every court in the land. When bureaucrats seek to find ways to isolate these pockets of special rights, which exist within their own jurisdictions, they tend to treat the problem as if it is an "Indian problem."

Instead of constructing regulations or laws that aim to prevent non-Native people from buying tax-free cigarettes, for example, the regulations or laws are always focused on telling Native people they can't sell to non-Native people. It's a subtle but revealing difference.

Native people have to contend

with a web of complicated, arcane rules and regulations designed to prevent non-Native people from sharing in the special rights of Native peoples. The bottom line is, when non-Native people seek to avoid (or evade) taxation by crossing into Native territories, the authorities, rather than spending the money it would take to enforce non-Native laws on non-Native people, instead create more rules that complicate the lives of Native people.

Native leaders have objected to

this for a long time. This isn't really an Indian problem, they say, but the federal and provincial governments have made it an Indian problem. They argue the mere existence of federal GST regulations or provincial cigarette quotas or the gasoline voucher systems can be seen as active, government-sponsored discrimination.

Akwesasne Grand Chief Mike Mitchell says his community has been traumatized in many ways by the actions of governments and smugglers. He said that now that smugglers have changed the commodity

gling to more dangerous substances like drugs, weapons and illegal aliens, his community has decided to implement its own brand of justice on community members who participate. A community vote was scheduled after our deadline, could result in a decision to impose traditional punishments. But Akwesasne, once again, is butting heads with federal officials as the community attempts to take some concrete action to assert its jurisdiction so it can control smuggling. Mitchell suggested any attempt by his community to assert jurisdiction against smugglers was seen as a challenge by Ottawa, and that's the real reason smuggling flourished.

"We're looking at banishment and things like that. There's very severe measures," he said. "As one government official noted, there's many elements which are contrary to many elements in the Canadian Charter. Many of our residents just shrug their shoulders and say, 'What's new? They're certainly not helping us here on our territory.' I don't know if this is called taking matters into your own hands but they mean to stop it."

Tribal officials on the U.S. side of the border are looking at their own, similar measures.

Mitchell said Canadian authorities, unlike American authorities who have made the investigation and prosecution of smugglers their first priority in this unique region, are putting obstacles in the path of local attempts to crack down on illegal activity on the reserve.

"On the Canadian side they're more concerned with: 'Well, you don't have that authority. We didn't give you that right. We



Steve Williams, president of Grand River Enterprises the makers of Sago cigarettes.

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has decided to implement its own brand of justice on community members who participate. A community vote was scheduled after our deadline, could result in a decision to impose traditional punishments. But Akwesasne, once again, is butting heads with federal officials as the community attempts to take some concrete action to assert its jurisdiction so it can control smuggling. Mitchell suggested any attempt by his community to assert jurisdiction against smugglers was seen as a

JUSTICE

didn't acknowledge that you had that right.' Meantime, your community's going through hell and they're not helping," he said. Steve Williams, the former band council chief of Ontario's Six Nations of the Grand River First Nation, is now the president of Grand River Enterprises (GRE), an on-reserve cigarette manufacturing company that has had more than its share of trouble with governments and law enforcement agencies. When he was chief, Williams' council fought Ontario's cigarette quota system in court and won — but found the win to be of no value because the government's response was to simply change the wording of the law.

"Actually, the elected system paid \$300,000 for the court costs, fighting the province's quota system on Indian reserves," Williams explained. "We fought it on the grounds that they don't have jurisdiction and it was an illegal system. We won the court decision. The government appealed it and when they appealed it, they changed the word from 'quota' to 'allocation.' So, our lawyers suggested there's no reason to keep fighting it because you're just going to spend 'X' number of dollars again and they'll just change the wording again."

After the court told Ontario there was no legislative hook on which to hang its cigarette quota regulations — that there was no justification for the quota system in any law — the bureaucrats simply changed the wording of the regulation so the fight would have to be waged one more time, Williams said, adding the only reason his legal advisors could see for this was to financially outlast the band council and deny justice by making it too expensive for Six Nations to continue to challenge the quota system.

ment can continue to do what it wants regardless of what the courts say. But it's something that happens regularly when governments deal with Native sovereignty issues.

Now that Williams is president of a Native-owned cigarette manufacturer, he says he sees even more bizarre government manipulation. In many cases, he said, the rules imposed by the various levels of government seem to be aimed at making it impossible for his company to do any business at all.

"We've applied to the province for a license to sell cigarettes off-reserve," he said. "They've said 'no.' Then they explain to us about the quota system or allocation system and they say the reason they have a quota system or allocation system or whatever you want to call it, is because there's too many non-Native people coming to the reserve to buy cheap cigarettes. I think everybody can understand that. So I said, 'All right then, issue me the license to mark the

cigarettes so I can sell them off reserve and keep it in their stores and they'll have no reason to come to the reserve.' And they say, 'Oh no, we can't do that. We don't trust you to be collecting tax money. You won't submit it to us because we don't have jurisdiction on the reserve.'"

The federal government has licensed GRE, but the provinces, because the Indian Act gives very little power to provincial governments on Indian land, won't issue provincial licenses. So a company owned by people who are tax-exempt under Canadian law can't conduct a legal business because people who aren't tax exempt might buy their products. Provincial governments, whose job is to issue licenses and collect applicable taxes on manufactured products, can stop a Native-owned business from get-

ting off the ground because the province isn't willing to spend the money to do its job and enforce the payment of taxes by non-Native people. Williams and many other Native business leaders call this discrimination.

"Our position would be, 'We aren't tax collectors for any provincial or federal government.' The whole point of it being, if you want to stop these non-Natives from coming to the reserve and buying our products then you sit on the boundary line and you collect the taxes from them," he said. "But they came back with the answer that it's unconstitutional for them to stop taxpayers. So, we'll mess with you guys because you don't pay taxes. That's just totally discriminatory. Everything they do to us is discriminatory."

GRE has run into government opposition as the company attempts to find new markets for Sago, its cigarette brand.

"We got the federal license. The federal legislation says you have to apply to the provinces to get a lower rate of excise. So we did that. We wrote to every province and applied like we're supposed to. They say they can't look at our application until we have a license from our host province. I've got the acts. I've read them. There's nothing in the regulations or the tobacco tax act for B.C., Manitoba, Alberta, any of the provinces, saying we have to get a license from our host province first. They say 'it's not written down but it's a protocol we have between us'. I said if I took them to court their protocol would be shot down. They say 'yes, we'd have to give you a license but we'd probably audit you every other week.' They do things that aren't legal but they're the ones who make the laws so I guess they can do anything they want. It just doesn't make sense to me."

While his company is mired in a tangle of government red tape, one major tobacco company was allowed to aggressively break the law to protect its markets and its profitability. Northern Brands International's guilty plea proved it, Williams said.

"That's the whole situation. We told them that from day one. The reason [smugglers] were getting so many cigarettes from the states and shipping them back was because the big companies were doing it. They said, 'No, they don't do that.' Then it got proved they did!" said Williams.

Most of the 10 original partners who formed GRE, before Williams was involved, have been in trouble with the law. The company operated for three years without a license and was charged by the RCMP, but the charges lost momentum when the company acquired its federal license. Williams was chief at the time the company began operations. He supported the company despite the fact the partners stated they were going to operate without a Canadian license. He knew how difficult the mainstream governments make it for Native businesses to operate and he couldn't blame the partners for being impatient.

(see Smuggling page 37.)

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(see Smuggling page 37.)

Equal opportunity required

By David Stapleton
Windspeaker Contributor

SUDBURY, Ont.

Self government is a major key to the resolution of many of the pressing issues facing Aboriginal people, a Sudbury conference of Elders has been told.

Assembly of First Nations National Chief, Phil Fontaine, was speaking at Laurentian University on March 9. He said eradicating poverty, dealing with poor housing, and addressing health issues, like rampant diabetes, are major challenges facing Canada's Aboriginal people. He also listed high unemployment and the high incidence of incarceration as other challenges.

Fontaine said Canadian governments and the country's people need to undergo a fundamental attitude shift if a sensitive understanding and appreciation about value and cultural differences is to take place.

The national chief said 25,000 new housing units are required just to catch up to the current housing needs in communities. He said Native people's health is generally poor with rampant

diabetes a foremost concern. High unemployment and high incarceration rates complete the picture, said Fontaine, noting Native men between the ages of 16 and 24 commit suicide at a rate four times the national average.

Fontaine believes poverty can only be dealt with when Native people have access to both land and resources.

"It very much represents the wealth of Canada," he said, adding it was First Nations' land first, though now less than one per cent is occupied by Aboriginal people.

"People shouldn't fear our development," he said, "because it will be good for the culture."

Fontaine confronted a belief that Indians are not ready for self government and listed the excuses he's heard to support this belief. Native people are regarded as unaccountable, unable to manage well, prejudiced against their own people, and some Canadians see Native chiefs as corrupt and lining their pockets while their people starve, he said.

It is "criminal, immoral and racist" to suggest Aboriginal people have no right to self government, Fontaine said. He cited

Saskatchewan's former Devine government where former ministers, including the deputy premier, were convicted of fraud as an example of the double standard Aboriginal people face in their fight for self government.

"It's never suggested the Saskatchewan people aren't ready for self government."

The national chief said Canada and Aboriginal people need a more "respectful and qualitative relationship. We've tried to convince government we're ready, but a fundamental shift is needed."

Citing the recent social union talks among first ministers, Fontaine noted "we weren't invited," because officials termed the talks an "administrative arrangement" and not constitutional. But the issues under discussion impact Native people, said Fontaine.

"Under section 35, our rights are protected. The Supreme Court said we need to be consulted."

Fontaine said Native people must return to treaty relationships that were not just real estate transactions but about sharing and peaceful co-existence.

Toronto islands

(Continued from page 14.)

"Our chief at the time didn't want to be a part of it. He said we've got nothing to be happy about. I think it's true to say we didn't have, eh? But we have survived here," she said. "We've been coming into our own and now starting to thrive here at least in building our community and making it stronger. But when I looked at that, knowing the hardships we've had to face in trying to make things happen in our community, and sat there and watched all that happened with all the water and all the development and the big city behind us and the nice islands out across the water there... well, when I got up to talk — and they were about to do a reenactment of the war — and I said, 'In war there are winners and losers and on both sides there are survivors, the Mississaugas are survivors. We're on the surviving side and we live 75 miles from here and we strive to survive yet today. As you celebrate your great city, think of us.'"

The group that picked up from the Credit River and moved to the present reserve, located southwest of, and ad-

acent to, the Six Nations of the Grand River territory near Hagersville, Ont., was a very Christian community. King is proud that her community is gradually getting back in touch with its traditional Ojibway customs. She is also proud of the community's development, something that was accelerated by the settlement of a 200-acre land claim for an area near Mississauga. The successful completion of that claim nearly three years ago brought close to \$18 million worth of benefits to the community, which boasts a beautiful new school, a commercial plaza with a number of new business developments and several public buildings that rival any on any reserve in the country.

New Credit may also be the only reserve in Ontario, or perhaps the country, with fire hydrants and its own water and sewage system.

King and council believe in long-range planning. They see the successful completion of the Toronto claim as a way to scratch a few more items off their wish list and improve the standard of living in their community even more.

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You just have to laugh at this big bear of a guy

By Yvonne Irene Gladue
Windspeaker Staff Writer

WINNIPEG

What happens when you admire people who make you laugh, like Johnny Carson, Jay Leno, and David Letterman? The answer was clear to Gerry Barrett — become a comedian.

He is one of the acts that works the crowds at Rumors, a comedy club in Winnipeg.

"The club is great. They are behind me all the way. They are a great bunch of people to work with," said Barrett.

His show usually consists of stories involving Aboriginal politics and anecdotes about himself. He recalls when Assembly of First Nations National Chief, Phil Fontaine, would drop by and see his act. "I really got nervous. I was sweating," said Barrett. "Finally one evening as I was getting off the stage, he came up and shook my hand."

Ross Rumberg, owner of the club, said Barrett's got some very creative material.

"We are happy to have him perform here."

Barrett, who goes by the stage name Big Bear, is well known in the Winnipeg area. The name Big Bear is a nickname given to him by his childhood friends.

"My last name being Barrett, and together with my size, the name just kinda stuck," he said.

"... when I'm on stage in front of a thousand people making them laugh, I'm not doing it for me, I'm doing it for my mother."

— Gerry Barrett

Barrett, an Ojibway from the Saugeen Reserve in southern Ontario, is the second youngest of 10 children. He comes from the Wabagonah - Skye family. His biological mother was blind and deaf. She died in the 1960s.

"My natural mother never got to experience the normal things that we take for granted, so when I'm on stage in front of a thousand people making them laugh, I'm not doing it for me, I'm doing it for my mother," said Barrett.

Barrett and his brothers and sisters went through the foster and adoption systems. He's had a chance to reunite with three of his biological brothers and sisters and is optimistic he will get to meet the other seven.

Barrett said adoption worked well for him. He is proud of his non-Aboriginal parents, Joseph and Phyllis Barrett of Grand Valley, Ont.

"Education is the key to success, and knowledge is power. I truly thank my adoptive parents for making me stay in

school," he said.

Barrett has a diploma in Applied Arts, Radio, Television, Film and Broadcasting from Niagara College. He's spent 15 years as a radio announcer.

His most recent radio gig was as a morning talk show host on NCI-FM, Manitoba's Aboriginal Radio Network in Winnipeg. For one of his on-air commercials he won the Signature Award, which is given by Manitoba's Broadcasting Association. In 1993 he entered a stand-up comedy competition, and hasn't looked back since. He was featured at Winnipeg's Fringe Festival as a performer.

"I've done my shows at some conferences as well," said Barrett.

His performance credits include the Saskatchewan Provincial Aboriginal Awards, the Dakota-Ojibway Winter Tribal Days as the opening act for Williams and Rees, a comedy duo, the University of Manitoba's Aboriginal Students Welcome Week 1999 and other Aboriginal fundraising events.



Big Bear Barrett has performed at a number of Aboriginal events in Manitoba, including Dakota-Ojibway Winter Tribal Days and University of Manitoba's Students Welcome Week 1999.

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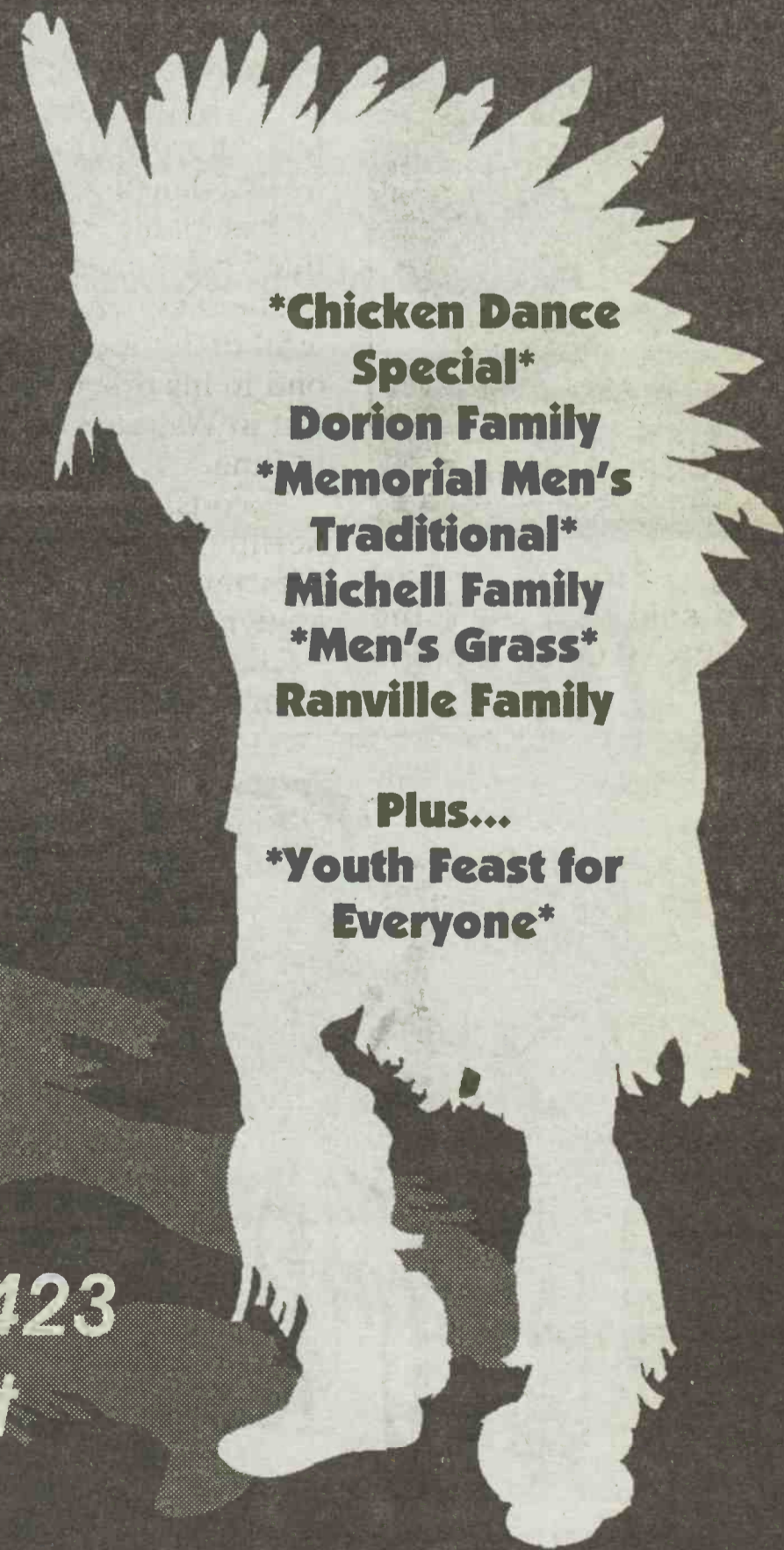
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Man combines his two loves

By Yvonne Irene Gladue
Windspeaker Staff Writer

MERRITT, B.C.

Army fatigues and traditional dance regalia, Earl Charters wears them both well. He's been in the Canadian Armed Forces since 1989, and has been traditional dancing for the last three years.

"I like what I do," said Charters, who was born in Merritt, B.C. and comes from a family of 11 children. His father Dempsey Charters is a retired logger and cowboy who is from the Shulus Reserve. His mother Mary is a member of the Okanagan Indian Band in Vernon, B.C. to which Charters also belongs. Both parents live in Merritt.

"They've been together for the past 33 years," said Charters. "Dad is 71, and mom is 60 years old. She works as a caregiver to handi-capped people in Merritt."

Charters is a navy medical assistant in the Canadian Armed Forces. His rank in the army is Leading Seaman. Charters, 30, has completed two oversea duties, one in Rwanda, Central Africa, and the other in Bosnia in the former Yugoslavia.

"The army's been good to me. When I feel like it's not fun anymore, I will get out of it," says Charters. He is one of the first Aboriginal men allowed to wear braids in the Armed Forces.

Charters is a hoop and fancy dancer and makes his own



Earl Charters likes the feeling of friendship and community he gets when he goes to traditional powwows.

fancy dance regalia. The patterns and colors of red and white and yellow and black in his regalia are based on the medical Red Cross and the bumble bee.

"I'm presently making a dance outfit that will have all of the sky colors," said Charters.

Many of his dance movements depict a sky, an eagle and a hawk. He also does the phases of the moon. His grand finale in the hoop dance depicts the eagle turning into the earth while dancing with the sun and the moon.

"One of my sisters has three kids that dance. I feel happiest when I'm dancing with them," said Charters.

Charters, who dances mostly exhibition, also teaches cultural dancing at the Red Road Healing Society in Edmonton.

"I prefer to go to traditional powwows, rather than competition powwows," said Charters. "I started to dance for the love of dancing, and the feeling of friendship and community that I get at these dances."

Charters, who dances with a total of 30 hoops, came in second in his first ever dance contest in Wabasca, Alta., last year in June.

"I consider hoop dancing a healthy way of life for me," said Charters. "I will not perform anywhere there is alcohol."

Charters is currently living in Edmonton.



Leading Seaman Earl Charters said he'll leave the Armed Forces when it stops being fun.

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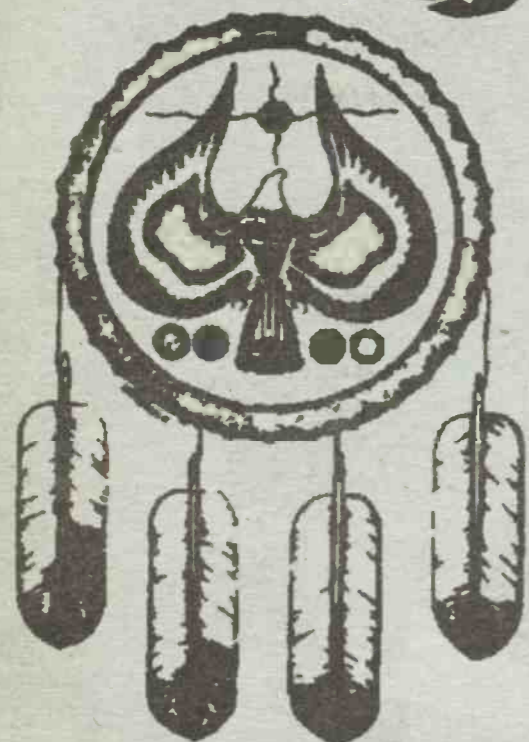
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Artwork from the west coast complimented the awards stage with a stunning rain forest as the backdrop.



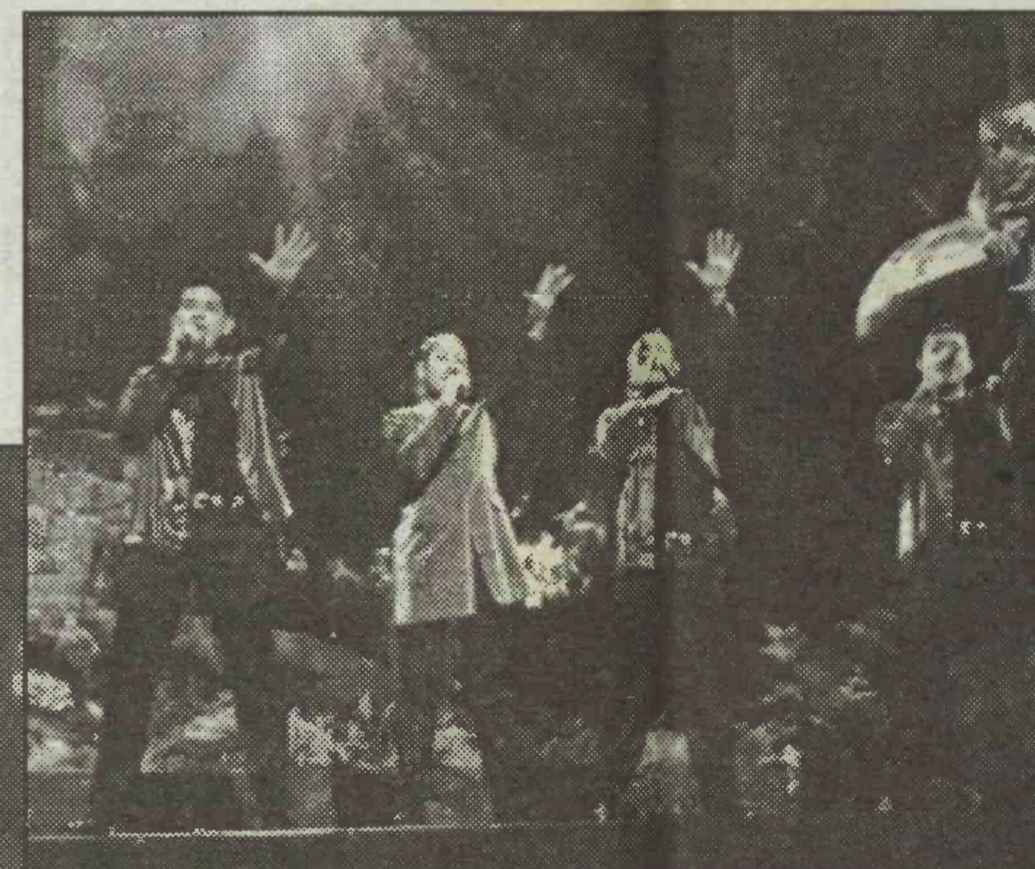
One of the traditional dancers at the opening of the awards show dancing to the beat of the drum.



The Creespirit drummers warm up the crowd for the awards show along with the traditional dancers.



Photos by Bert Crowfoot



A piece of the rain forest from the Canadian west coast inspired awe from the audience.



Justin Bellegarde doing his best imitation of John Kim Bell.





**Wind
speaker**

CELEBRATE

**Aboriginal
Achievement**

Photo By Bert Crowfoot

'Alika LaFontaine
Dr. Allen Sapp
David Tuccaro
Dorothy Betz
Dorothy Grant

Militarijuk Attasie Nappaaluk
Judge James Igloliorte
Dr. Lillian Eva Dyck
Judge Rose Toodick Boyko

Theresa Stevenson
Dr. Malcolm King
James K. Barileman
Dr. Edward Cree
Dr. Howard Adams

Gandmother believed in boy's artistic talent

By Joan Black
Windspeaker Contributor

Some things about Allen Sapp you should know. He has stayed true to his vision, all his life it seems like, becoming materially successful on his own terms. The other things you should know is that he is proud to be an Indian and he is proud of what he has accomplished as an artist, but he never fell into the trap of producing knock-off 'Native art' to make a buck. In fact, he used to be criticized sometimes for not painting the stereotypical Norval Morrisseau derivatives that gallery shoppers buy from some other Indians as "the real stuff."

Today, Sapp's portrayal of rural life on the Red Pheasant Indian Reserve in the Saskatchewan of the first half of this century has come into its own. You know when you view one of Sapp's pictures you are seeing a slice of his reality and not a copy of somebody else's. It's the real Plains Cree life of days gone by, which Sapp is painstakingly recording so people don't forget. Sapp's culture and heritage are set down in every brushstroke. All you have to do is look.

Many have, and many have recognized the same talent that Sapp's grandmother, Maggie Soonias, believed in and encouraged more than 60 years ago. His art is and has been exhibited and sold in galleries around the world, recently in the trendy Yorkville Avenue district of Toronto. There is also a permanent collection of his works in a gallery bearing his name in North Battleford, Sask., where he lives. A retrospective of his work toured Canadian cities for two years before closing at the Canadian Museum of Civilization in 1996. Many honors have come to Sapp as a result of his lengthy artistic career.



Bert Crowfoot

Dr. Allen Sapp's work as an artist was recognized by the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation on March 12 in Regina.

In 1975, for instance, Sapp was elected to membership in the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts, which recognized his "outstanding achievements in the visual arts field."

Diane Rosenthal, director of the Hollander York Gallery in Toronto, prices Sapp's paintings into the thousands of dollars now. She describes them as "focused, celebrating a family-centred time... an optimistic look at his life as a child on the reserve - nostalgic and... a little bit impressionistic."

Rosenthal reinforces that Sapp's art is grounded in the daily life of his people in the 1930s and 1940s, when they still lived without modern conveniences; it does not reflect the mythological themes of a lot of Native art.

It is the nature of the business that there have always been

some critics, though.

"Sometime people say I have painted too many winter scenes," Sapp explains; "but nobody says the Group of Seven painted too many landscapes." Sapp still enjoys doing what he does and that seems to be enough for most people.

But there is more to Allen Sapp than his paintings. Aboriginal people are proud that he maintains his strong cultural ties and provides a positive, progressive array of Indian values their youth can carry into the next century. He speaks his Cree language and he is proud to be a traditional dancer, too, Sapp will tell you.

In 1985, Sapp became one of

the first recipients of the Saskatchewan Order of Merit; in 1987 he was named Officer of the Order of Canada; and in 1996 the Saskatchewan Arts Board gave him the Lifetime Award for Excellence in the Arts. Last spring, the University of Regina bestowed on Sapp an honorary doctorate. Along the way, three books reproducing his art, and a number of film documentaries have brought Sapp's perspective on life to the world. On March 12, the Aboriginal people of Canada recognized Sapp's great legacy and contribution, by selecting him for the National Aboriginal Achievement Award for Lifetime Achievement.

Sapp's life began in 1929. The rural life he was born into and that he recreates in his art evokes memories of daily life lived on the land for anyone raised on a farm or in the bush. Whether it's a scene of skating on the pond, hauling logs, feeding the stock or spending time with grandmother in the kitchen, Sapp's pictures are emotive of a life many of us have known or wish we had. There is also a preponderance of winter scenes that depict the reality of seasons above the 49th parallel. That's just the way Sapp remembers it, and his paintings reveal he has hung on to every detail.

Sapp started to draw around age 5 or 6, he says, and sold an early picture "the size of a postage stamp" to a teacher for a nickel. He drew with whatever materials were at hand, even just in the ground with a stick.

"I like to paint mostly happy memories," Sapp revealed; "everybody has some bad times, but I don't like to think about that too much. I'd rather paint the good days that I remember."

Sapp says most days did seem good to him although he was a

rather sickly child. Many have heard him tell the story that when he was very ill, his grandmother's sister said he would not recover unless he was given an Indian name. She named him Kiskayetum, which means "he perceives it." Thereafter, Sapp recovered and is living up to the long and prosperous life she foretold would be the result.

By the time Sapp was in his late twenties, he was selling his pictures in town to whoever would buy them for \$5 or \$10 or some groceries. He didn't start to paint on canvas until he was in his thirties. He took some pencil drawings to a hobby shop in North Battleford, where the owner, Eileen Berryman, befriended him.

"She gave me supplies to work on and gave me space to work and a table in her shop," Sapp recalls.

Selling his pictures around North Battleford brought him to the attention of the police, though. An officer told him he could get in trouble - probably because he had no permit to sell on the street, Sapp figures.

"I said, 'How can I get in trouble trying to help myself?'" Sapp related. The discussion ended when the police officer paid him \$35 for a painting he said was for his wife.

(see Lifetime page 12.)



Laura Wilken

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Allen Sapp's support has enabled the Native Heritage Foundation of Canada Inc. to build a collection of art by Native artists from across Canada presently housed in the Legislative Building, Regina, Saskatchewan.

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Clear goals and a loving family help youth succeed

By Joan Black
Windspeaker Contributor

Sixteen-year-old 'Alika LaFontaine seems to have it all together for his age: a close and loving family, a solid record of academic achievement, a career goal, community and peer support for just about everything he does, and to top it all off, he is recognized this year as the Youth recipient of the National Aboriginal Achievement Award.

You might think the first-year, pre-med student from Regina would be a little full of himself, with people telling him how good he is a lot. But nothing could be further from the truth. He is self-effacing and gives his family and professors most of the credit for his motivation and the success he has gained so far. In fact, LaFontaine says he was "quite surprised" to receive recognition from the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation for his community service and all-around sterling attributes when "so many other outstanding people" were nominated.

Della Anaquod, dean of students at Saskatchewan Indian Federated College, nominated LaFontaine, whom she describes as "fantastic... very mature, very giving, very con-

siderate." She attributes his well-rounded personality and multiple gifts in large part to "great parents," and the dedication they put into his upbringing and home schooling.

LaFontaine currently is earning marks in the high 80s in the department of science at SIFC where chemistry is his best subject. Following two years of pre-med, he plans to attend the University of Saskatchewan for four years to earn his MD, then become a cardiac surgeon.

LaFontaine says his family is the reason he tries hard.

"Everything that they do affects me positively... makes you want to give something back," he explains.

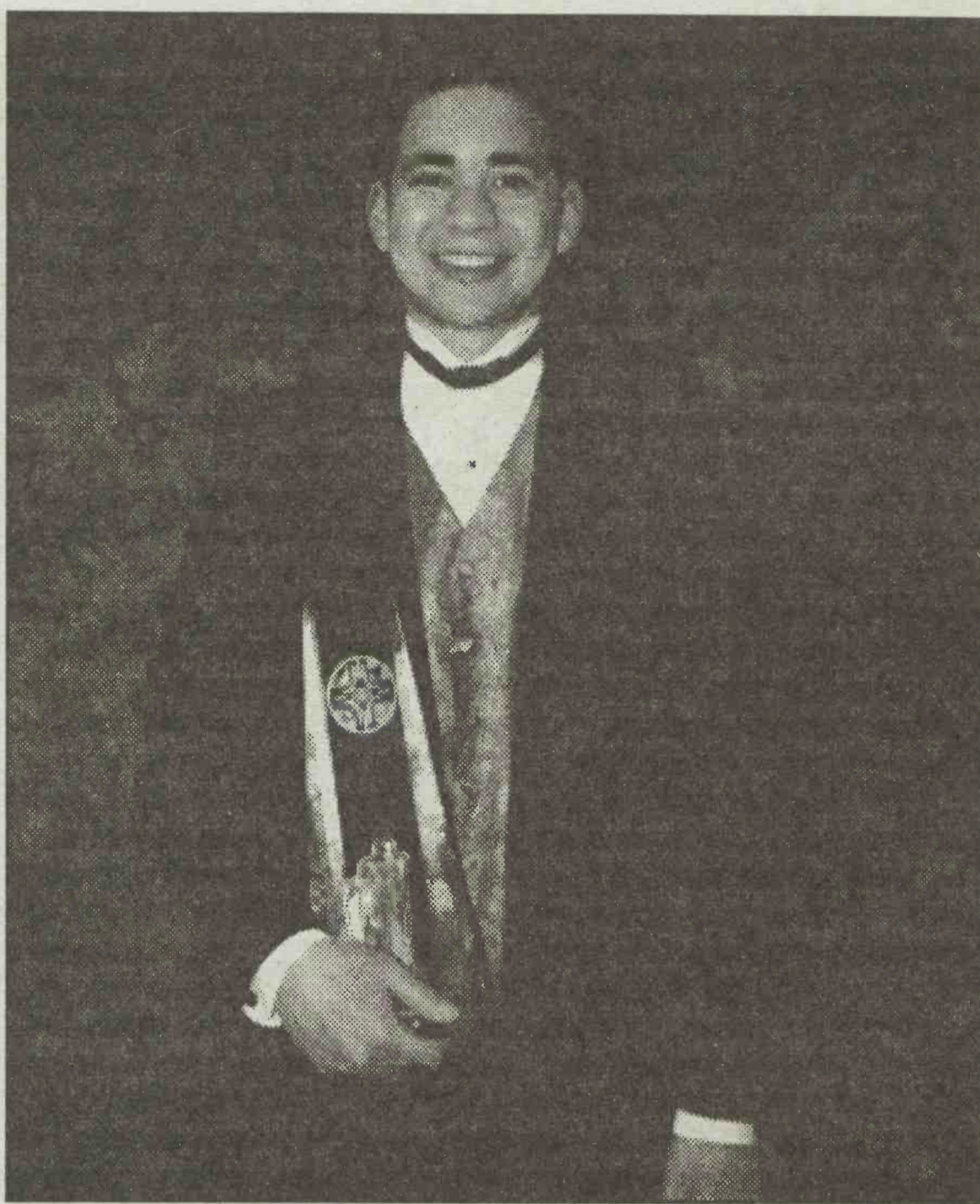
Life wasn't always quite so rosy. Around Grade 4, the public school system labeled him "developmentally delayed," because his speech was slurred. A strange label for someone who could already read when he started school.

"It was really a hearing problem," LaFontaine says, "not even permanent." It was a couple of years before school authorities figured that out, and in the meantime he received speech therapy and was put in a class for students with difficulties. Asked why it took so long to have his problem properly diagnosed, LaFontaine responded in his typically serious and measured way.

"Teachers are taught behavioral modification," he said. "If a kid has a problem, they work on changing his behavior; they don't look at any other cause (for what they perceive to be) a behavior problem."

A lack of confidence in public education was the result, so LaFontaine was home schooled from Grades 8 to 10. Except for science, he completed Grades 11 and 12 by correspondence.

The hard work paid off — LaFontaine graduated with an



Bert Crowfoot

'Alika LaFontaine was surprised to be recognized by the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation in the Youth category.

88 per cent average, earning several "community service-related" scholarships. One was a 1998 Canada Youth Award for service to his school and his community. Others he received last year were the Rotary Club Service Award for academics and the Sherwood Co-operative Service Award.

LaFontaine regularly volunteers to help elderly people in Regina; he's involved with the North of 55 Senior Citizen's group there, and he assists older Aboriginal women by shovelling snow, shopping for them and generally helping out.

His leisure activities reflect the same self-discipline and focus that he brings to his academic

subjects. LaFontaine plays piano to the Grade 7 Royal Conservatory standard, and according to Anaquod he "could have a singing career" if he wanted that too. He's also been playing the organ at his church for four years and teaches music sometimes.

He likes a variety of music, he says, including hip hop, R & B, and classical, but does not like heavy metal, which he describes as "too harsh."

LaFontaine says peer pressure to do harmful things such as smoking and drinking alcohol just isn't an issue for him. He says his friends respect his boundaries.

"You need to decide something before it actually happens — how you will act in a situation," he says.

Every member of the LaFontaine family practises taekwon do, an activity they often

participate in together. 'Alika, along with his father, his sister Kalea and brother Leemai, has a first-degree black belt in that sport. Here too, he has received honors, notably in the Canadian national championships and the Pan-American International Championships. If all this isn't enough to keep him busy, LaFontaine says he does sometimes just "hang out" with his friends and play basketball.

When asked how he identifies with his Native culture, which is Cree/ Saulteaux on his father's side, the young man preferred to stay away from ethnic or nationalistic labels. He says he is part French and Polynesian and he appreciates all aspects of his mixed heritage. He says he has studied the history of Aboriginal people.

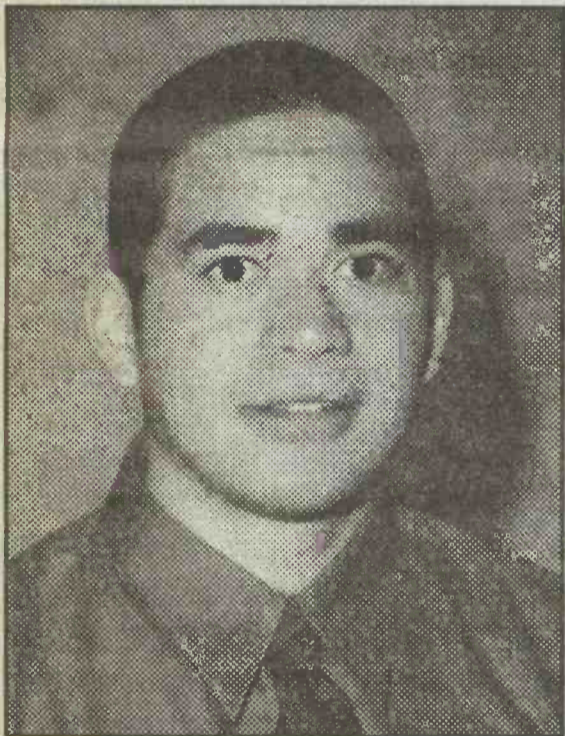
"Culture," LaFontaine says, "has more to do with the way we live our life — that is, we are taught to respect our bodies and minds, alcohol is not used, and we learn respect for Elders. [Culture], lived in its purest form, means you can identify with anyone."

LaFontaine adds that his father has taught him a holistic approach to achieving a physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual balance. He says this kind of training "gives you an edge" that can be applied, in his case, to the rigors of medical school.

He adds there are five main rules for life he learned from his father:

- To do more than participate — to belong. That is, you must feel committed to any activity you undertake and make it personal.
- To do more than dream — to work.
- To do more than be polite — to respect.
- To be more than honest — be trustworthy.
- To do more than give — you must serve.

That is the standard LaFontaine has set for himself.



Kenneth Williams

'ALIKA LAFONTAINE

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Creating opportunities for others motivates businessman

By Joan Black
Windspeaker Contributor

David Gabriel Tuccaro is up to his elbows in business ventures, enjoying prosperity and success. Planning, staying committed through the difficulties, reading, taking courses to keep current, and hiring "the right people" are the reasons his dreams come true, he says.

Tuccaro imparts his business philosophy to his several companies: "to create opportunities for Aboriginal people at every level of employment." In other words, his vision goes beyond mere commercial acquisition, ensuring that others get chances too. It's hard to think of a better reason for his selection as this year's winner of the National Aboriginal Achievement Award for Business and Commerce.

"It's real good to be recognized by your own people — it's kind of humbling. It's going to get me into places I haven't been before." That could mean collaborating with a well-known business reporter on a book that Tuccaro is considering writing.

Tuccaro, a 40-year-old member of Mikisew Cree First Nation, lives in Fort Chipewyan, Alta. He owns and controls the firm, Tuccaro Inc., which finances interests such as property rentals and commercial development. His companies include Aboriginal Global Investments (money market investment); Aboriginal Technical Services (environmental engineering and laboratory services); Tuc's Contracting (water and vacuum truck services); and Neegan Development Corporation Ltd. (heavy equipment earth moving).

He's also got a stake in a computer training company; in addition, an "all star team" of management professionals is in the development stage. He's also looking at trade ap-



Bert Crowfoot

David Tuccaro won this year's National Aboriginal Achievement Award in the Business and Commerce category.

prenticeships in the manufacture of specialized furniture and fittings.

Fervently independent, Tuccaro stresses that having his own business puts him in charge of his destiny. He sees the rising number of Aboriginal people earning diplomas and degrees as a sure sign that others aspire to the same success.

"Those people [young and educated] are not going to permit anybody to treat them as second-class citizens," Tuccaro points out. "I think the level of education is rising, but not fast enough among Natives. I think leadership (chiefs and councils) needs to establish education as the number one priority, even before social issues or housing."

Tuccaro grew up in Fort Chipewyan, went to school there except for one year at a

residential school, and then attended Grandin College in Fort Smith, N.W.T., where he graduated from high school in 1976. He admits he was never a great student, working only hard enough to attain the 65 per cent average he needed to play collegiate sports. Grade 12 was "good enough" back then to get a job, he says.

Tuccaro's winning nature shone, though, in wrestling, basketball and hockey.

"The competition was what drove me," he says, adding he earned a gold medal in the Arctic Winter Games in Grade 12.

He's involved in the Alberta Chamber of Resources, a board that assists Alberta and North-

west Territories Native people to develop natural resources such as forestry, mining, oil and gas. The organization aims to make sure that Native communities get information about potential projects in time to make presentations and bids on projects. Tuccaro was the first Aboriginal person to sit as director of the organization.

The goal of Tuccaro's companies is to achieve 80 per cent Aboriginal employment, "to create opportunities for Aboriginal people at every level of education and every level of employment," he says. For example, heavy equipment operators and mechanical apprentices might have less than Grade 8 education, while financial officers or engineers need a college diploma or university degree.

Just now, Tuccaro adds, he is putting together a national Aboriginal business association, and expects to be hiring a director in about three months. He foresees the organization's members getting involved in bulk purchases as one way of saving on the cost of doing business.

Tuccaro started out in the oil patch after Grade 12. He's also owned and driven a cab, and worked in construction. But he always aimed to be his own boss and says he has taken management and refresher courses just about every year since leaving high school.

Tuccaro stresses that he backs not only the education and training initiatives that ensure his own staff is fully qualified, but encourages other Aboriginal people to become entrepreneurs. Another part of his philosophy dictates that commercial success will not come at the expense of the environment, as a highly skilled and informed Aboriginal workforce increasingly will be planners in resource development. He won't compromise workplace safety either.

These days he's also active in volunteer committee work. Tuccaro says he wants to make sure government and industry are getting timely, accurate information about Aboriginal people, since critical business and resource development decisions hinge on what they know.

"We have to start saying we can do it ourselves, or someone else will still be looking after us," he says. "I left my community because there wasn't enough opportunity for me there. I had to compete in the Canadian marketplace."

Tuccaro said the future of his people is always uppermost in his mind, and that is why he takes his message of self-determination to regional high schools.

"Don't listen to those who say you won't succeed." Tuccaro tells students to "apply drive and commitment and don't give up." He says they should visualize where they want to be in five years and then keep after it.

"A lot of times people quit one day before they [would reach] success," Tuccaro says.

Success wouldn't mean much if he couldn't relax sometimes and spend time with his family. He fishes, plays golf and goes on holiday two or three times a year, confident in the abilities of his associates to keep business on track.



DAVID TUCCARO

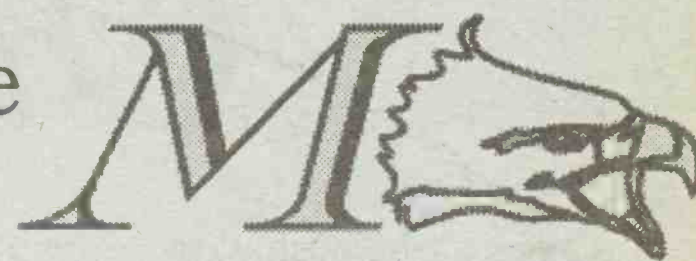
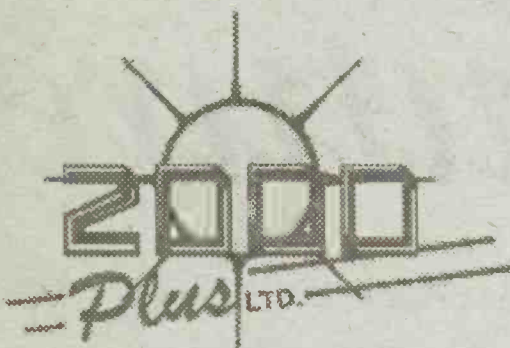
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Our friend and business associate

David Tuccaro

*We wish to congratulate you on receipt of a
National Aboriginal Achievement Award*



Nursing aspirations put on hold for career in law

By Joan Black
Windspeaker Contributor

Ontario Superior Court Judge Rose Toodick Boyko says she never had big dreams but has pursued interests that are meaningful to her, taking full advantage of opportunities she sees. This simple recipe for success has accompanied her since her earliest memories of life on a trapline on the Parsnip River at Findlay Forks, B.C.

Nevertheless, Boyko says she is "thrilled" to be recognized by her peers as this year's National Aboriginal Achievement Award winner in the Law and Justice category.

Her first career was nursing, but that was just the beginning. A desire for more education led Boyko to enroll at Queen's University in Kingston, Ont. in 1974. By the time she graduated with her BA in 1977, she had decided on a medical career. Unfortunately, none of the several medical schools where she applied would accept her.

This is one of those times when a disappointing situation ended in a good way. Boyko saw that although one door was closing on her, she had other talents. It would have been easy to "settle," but that has never been the judge's solution to problems. In-

stead, she grasped the opportunity to study law. That decision led to her eventual appointment as the first Aboriginal woman Superior Court judge in Canada.

Boyko was born in 1950. Her mother was from the Tsek'ehne First Nation at McLeod Lake, B.C. and her father was a Ukrainian immigrant. She has fond memories of her first five years on her father's trapline, when the family enjoyed the rural environment. Rose left British Columbia before the trapline was flooded by the construction of a dam around 1967.

After graduating from high school in Montreal, she entered nurse's training at the venerable Royal Victoria Hospital there in 1969. She graduated with her RN diploma in 1972 at the age of 22. Then it was off to serve remote Cree communities on the Quebec side of the James Bay region. She says she was comfortable living in the bush because of her early upbringing.

She began her nursing career with Medical Services Branch in Wemindji, Que. She learned to speak some Cree, enough to get along without an interpreter in the clinic. After a year's service, Boyko was motivated to acquire further training in northern nursing at the University of Western Ontario.

From there, she took her enhanced skills to Lac Mistasini, about 50 miles out of Chibougamau in northcentral Quebec. Then she was posted to Fort George, Que. in the region of what is now called Chisasibi. She saw a lot of towns up the James Bay Coast before the LaGrande Rivière II dam flooded much of northern Quebec and destroyed Fort George. This was the second time a dam project wiped out some of Rose's past, but before that happened she had a new career in sight. With medical school ruled out, she instead completed pre-law



Bert Crowfoot

The achievement award winner in the Law and Justice category brings her traditional values to play in the court room.

studies in the Saskatchewan Aboriginal Law Program.

Returning to Ontario, Boyko's legal studies consumed most of her time between 1978 and 1980.

The Honourable Madam Justice Rose Toodick Boyko was called to the Ontario bar in 1982 and was admitted to the Saskatchewan bar in 1988. She took the middle name Toodick to honor her Aboriginal grandfather, Mack Toodick, and as a reminder of her Aboriginal roots.

Native cultural beliefs are important to the judge, but true to her mixed heritage she has also embraced complementary teachings from other philosophies.

"I think fostering a spiritual life is necessary," she says, relating

that she attends powwows and other traditional gatherings when she can.

New Brunswick Provincial Court Judge, Graydon Nicholas, who has known Boyko for a decade, says one of the outstanding things about his friend is that she has "maintained her Aboriginal values and identity" while pursuing goals and achieving success in the larger Canadian society.

She launched her public service career in the federal civil service, becoming attached to the Department of Justice in Ontario, Alberta and Saskatchewan. Then she went on a government interchange program from 1989 to 1991 with the Que-

bec Department of Justice in Quebec City. After that was a stint with Indian affairs' Indian Taxation Secretariat in Ottawa, where she remained until her appointment to the judiciary.

Today Judge Boyko sits in chambers in Newmarket, Ont. in the Central East Judicial Region, where she presides over family law trials, criminal trials and civil trials. She still participates in the Indigenous Bar Association, of which she was vice president early in the decade.

Currently vice president of the Canadian Chapter of the International Association of Women Judges, she has injected Aboriginal content — in the form of ceremonies, drummers and dancers — into at least one of that association's conferences.

Judge Boyko has always had a keen interest in social issues. She is interested in sentencing circles and in the use of circles for healing victims and offenders. Although she has not yet tried the concept, she views circles as "a powerful alternative to deal with disputes." That is why, as a member of the Board of Trustees at Queen's University, she has taken advantage of the opportunity to have the topic introduced into Aboriginal education.

In 1997, Judge Boyko received an honorary Doctor of Laws degree for promoting Aboriginal legal education at Queen's. In addition, she has been a legal advisor for several government departments, has worked on legislative reform and has been involved in legal policy analysis and teaching.

"I would encourage those interested in the pursuit of law to retain their traditional values so these values can be used to enrich the way we settle disputes. The majority system does not give all the answers and it is only through striving together that the best solutions can be found."



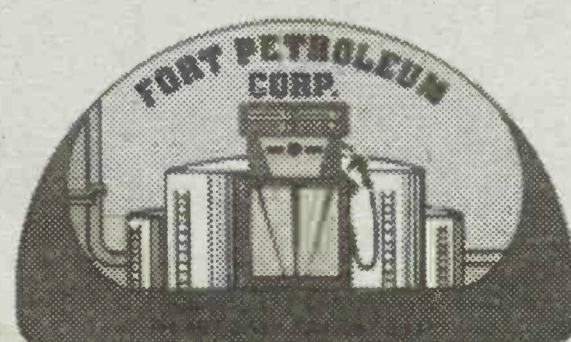
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David Tuccare

member of the Mikisew Cree First Nation

in receiving the

National Aboriginal Achievement Award in 1999

for his accomplishments in

Business & Commerce

Sports helped keep man on track to successful career

By Joan Black
Windspeaker Contributor

"What a person can do, another person can imitate. If you put your mind into something, you will succeed. Excuses won't get you there." That's the advice of Dr. Edward Kantonkote Cree, this year's recipient of the National Aboriginal Achievement Award in the category of Medicine. He's also the current head of the oral and maxillofacial surgery department at Centre Hospitalier de l'Université de Montreal. The words of this Mohawk from Kanehsatake are good advice for anyone, but Dr. Cree had in mind Aboriginal young people who may be attracted to a career in medicine. There still are not nearly enough of them taking up the challenge, so far as Dr. Cree is concerned.

A high degree of personal initiative, parents with an ardent belief in the value of education, and physical and mental stamina that sprung from an avid interest in sports were probably the main ingredients in his own success, he says. "I think that had I not been involved with sports [in school], I would not have done anything good," he adds. He played hockey until two years ago, has played lacrosse, and maintains a keen interest in golf, skiing and swimming. These activities, he says, kept him away from substance abuse and other negative influences when he was young.

His friend, Mr. Justice Rejean Paul, who nominated Dr. Cree for the Aboriginal Achievement Award, says that even today Dr. Cree "is quite an athlete — he's still quite an outstanding hockey player." Mr. Justice Paul notes that Dr. Cree is considered "an outstanding person, surgeon and teacher" who has numerous



Ken Williams

Dr. Edward Cree was recovering from surgery and was unable to attend the awards gala. Family members represented him there.

friends and admirers among French and English Quebecers, as well as among his own people.

"I think he is the best candidate you can think of — he is fluent in English, French, Mohawk — you can't ask for better than that in the Province of Quebec. Maybe he should get the Order of Canada next," the judge asserts. As he lists Dr. Cree's many talents — surgery, teaching, prowess in sports — what impresses him most is Dr. Cree's dedication to the service of remote Native communities without regard for being paid.

In addition, he learned responsibility towards others early in life. His parents made sure he did his fair share of chores such as cutting wood. Although he was happy that boarding at Montreal College relieved him

of these duties, learning to balance work and play helped Dr. Cree and his four sisters and one brother all to establish themselves successfully.

Dr. Cree, born in 1938, graduated in dentistry first, after obtaining his BA at the University of Montreal. It was in his second year of university that he had become interested in the idea of becoming an oral and maxillofacial surgeon, after reading in an American medical journal about large numbers of war-related facial and oral injuries.

He got his MD in 1964, followed by his specialist's certification four years later after studying in New York City and Pittsburg in the United States. He started to

practise in 1969, and continued further post-graduate training in Germany and Switzerland.

Dr. Cree enjoys working at a university hospital where he combines surgery and teaching duties. He is pleased to be in a position to help and influence students. But he wishes there were more Aboriginal mentors in his field.

"Kids have to be directed and counselled when they have academic problems," he states emphatically.

Attracting Aboriginal students is one thing, keeping them motivated to complete the rigorous demands of medical school is another problem, Dr. Cree continues. He acknowledges that family problems and the lack of study facilities create barriers to academic success for many students. Meeting the entrance requirements of universities in Quebec presents another obstacle, he says, because of the stiff competition for admission from foreign medical graduates seeking to obtain Canadian credentials.

Racism is less of a factor than it once was, Dr. Cree maintains. Students had no recourse when he was young, yet he did not feel that being an Indian held him back even then. Getting good marks were what mattered most, he says, so far as getting ahead in his career.

While it is true that Native students will encounter situations that others don't encounter, he says non-Native people have difficulties too. The important thing, Dr. Cree concludes, is to stay focused on the goal.

He suggests Native people need to seize the opportunity today to be examples to all that they can become both respected members of their own communities and of Canadian society at large.

Dr. Cree is involved in a study club that is examining ways to

encourage Aboriginal youth to pursue medical careers. Various solutions are being looked at by physicians' groups and by medical school deans, he says. More girls are going into medicine, dentistry and pharmacology, which they view positively. Ultimately, though, it is Aboriginal communities that must take leadership in promoting their young peoples' futures, seeking outside help where necessary. Dr. Cree would like to see chiefs encouraging potential students by developing liaison with medical professionals. "Young people need to see a hospital intensive care unit, attend lectures in a hospital auditorium, view televised surgery," he says.

He hopes to add his own slice of encouragement by presenting a conference about the main Aboriginal diseases on his own reserve in the near future, using lots of slides to illustrate his talk. Dr. Cree returns home to Kanehsatake nearly every weekend when he is not on call. Students may have to go through the "dark fog and bad weather," as they used to say on the reserve, Dr. Cree concludes. He quickly adds, though, that "whatever the dream — if they put the effort in, they will succeed."



DR. EDWARD CREE

**Mohawk Council of
Kanesatake**

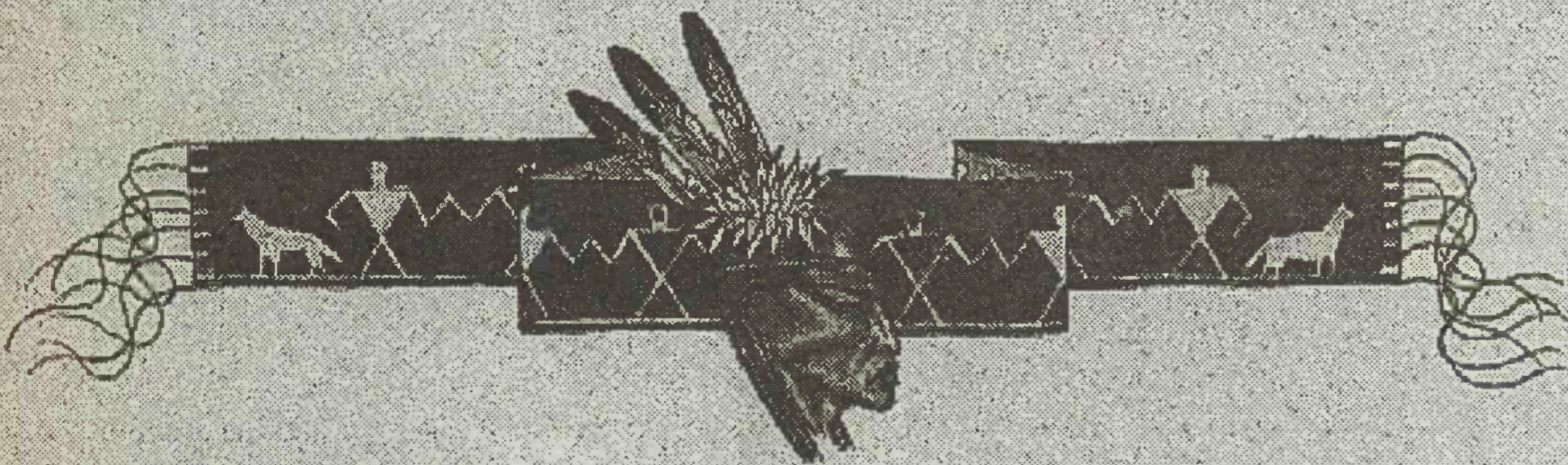
would like to Acknowledge

Dr. Edward Cree

on his accomplishments in the field of Medicine and to

Congratulate

him on receiving the 1999 National Aboriginal Achievement Award in Medicine.



Brother encouraged 'A' student's curiosity about science

By Joan Black
Windspeaker Contributor

"It's good to have goals, but try to be realistic; if the job market isn't there, you may have to try other things." Dr. Lillian Eva Dyck, this year's National Aboriginal Achievement Award winner in the field of Science and Technology, says that although people need to plan their future, they should remain flexible in a rapidly changing society.

The same advice applies if you find you are completely unsuited to the career choice you have made — change it for something you like and success will follow, she adds.

That was Dr. Dyck's decision. The member of the Gordon First Nation in Saskatchewan considered becoming a high school science teacher in 1970, but realized on the very eve of her practice teaching session it wasn't for her. She lacked confidence in her knowledge, even though she had a Master's degree; she also was not comfortable speaking in public. So she quit.

Instead, Dr. Dyck became a neuropsychiatrist at the University of Saskatchewan. Her team of scientific researchers is looking for a drug that treats stroke,

Alzheimer disease, schizophrenia and other illnesses believed to have the same underlying disease process. She's also testing the theories of experts who think Native people's metabolism may make them more predisposed to alcoholism.

She made the right choice. Not only has Dr. Dyck become a full professor in the University of Saskatchewan's department of psychiatry, she has been recognized for her efforts in promoting women in science. She was even cited by the House of Commons: Georgette Sheridan, former Liberal MP from Saskatoon-Humboldt, raised Dr. Dyck's name in the House during International Women's Week in March 1997.

"I do my best to pass along what I know," Dr. Dyck says modestly.

Along the way to obtaining her PhD and becoming a scientist, she overcame her shyness about public speaking. In addition to her research, she now teaches at the graduate level in neuropsychiatry, neurochemistry and the field of alcohol and substance abuse.

"It was lots of practice in public speaking that got me over it," Dr. Dyck says.

The former Lillian Quan, born in 1945 to a Cree mother and a Chinese father, was fortunate that her parents taught her determination and to use her abilities because she encountered a decided lack of high expectations for her in her Swift Current, Sask. high school.

Although she had been an "A" student in elementary school, in Grade 9 she was shuffled through schools and into a class for slow learners, along with her brother, Winston. By then she was already showing an aptitude for science; in Grade 10 she won an academic proficiency award, while still in the class



Bert Crowfoot

The Aboriginal achievement award in the Science and Technology category is Saskatchewan's Dr. Lillian Eva Dyck.

for under-achievers. At least, she says, the vice-principal, John Dyer, recognized the Quan children's abilities, and he encouraged both to strive to attend university.

When she graduated from high school in the early 1960s with an 80-something average there was a lot of excitement about science with the launching of the world's first satellite. Her brother, one year older and majoring in chemistry at university, really encouraged her scientific curiosity. He helped his sister get her first job in a chemistry lab. The success of that experience and her brother's encouragement kept her in science, she says.

Dr. Dyck says she is an "urban Indian," who had little knowledge of her Aboriginal culture until 1981. By then she had her doctorate and was interested in finding out about the Native side of her heritage. She explains that, typically for the time, her mother had distanced herself from her Aboriginal identity when she married her father, a Chinese restaurant owner, and lost her status. The cultural link was further weakened when Dr. Dyck's mother died at age 36.

To learn Cree traditions, Dr. Dyck sought out the company of other Aboriginal women in Saskatoon, and she attended some women's conferences. Her search subsequently led her to an Elder at the Indian Federated College, who also helped her find her place in the circle.

"Now I have sorted out who

I am," Dr. Dyck says, stressing that she found her peace with the help of many friends.

Ironically, she says that becoming proud of her identity has caused some people to say she "has it made," because she is an Aboriginal woman. Dr. Dyck answers them that even though opportunities are said to exist for Aboriginal people, they're often "on paper only."

She has come up against biases against women working in science, but attitudes are changing.

"The university," she adds, "is still quite hierarchical."

Dr. Dyck further says that her own experience as a scientist is atypical, in that she has chosen to study and work in the same place for a long time. This arrangement, she says, fit in with raising a family. She feels her choice may be the reason she had to struggle for promotions: "Because people were familiar with me... my talent may have been taken for granted." Dr. Dyck achieved the rank of full professor in 1996.

There are no regrets. Dr. Dyck emphasizes that she feels very happy and privileged to be where she is today. Realizing that she has broken a few barriers and is in a position now to encourage others, she enjoys participating in Native youth conferences and career fairs.

Dr. Dyck aims for a balanced life. She loves her career, but is not obsessed with it to the exclusion of other interests. Her leisure time is spent with friends or in group activities. She's also an avid traveller and bird watcher. A favorite activity is visiting the Wanuskewin Indian Heritage Park outside her city.

"It reminds me the real world is nature; the university world is artificial," Dr. Dyck says.



Laura Milliken

DR. LILLIAN EVA DYCK

The University of Saskatchewan
salutes all recipients of the

1999 National Aboriginal Achievement Awards

Your accomplishments inspire us all.



We are especially
pleased to congratulate

Dr. Lillian Dyck,
Neuropsychiatric Researcher

at the University of Saskatchewan
and winner of the award for Science
and Technology. Dr. Dyck is a
valuable role model for our students
and a credit to this university.

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University of Saskatchewan,
our people are our strengths.



Métis activist just wanted a fairer deal for his people

By Joan Black
Windspeaker Contributor

Ten years past retirement, Métis educator Howard Adams still defines his views as "radical." Whatever the political stripe, Adams' conversation and writing reveal the passion of a man who has made a career out of combating the systemic racism he says holds Aboriginal people back.

His is a lifetime of daring and innovative support of unpopular Métis and Indian social causes. Great numbers of publications illuminate his historical research, and his books are classics of Native literature. Adams' efforts and example continue to motivate Native people to aspire to quality educations and to challenge the status quo.

It's fitting then, that for decades of tireless activism inside and outside of the academic institutions where he spent his working life, Adams should be honored for his contributions in the field of education. The accolades come now not only from Aboriginal people, but from government, educators and others with whom he has not always been on-side.

Political action to improve opportunities for Aboriginal people started early for Adams.

"I can remember holding a demo in high school," he says. Later, while completing his PhD studies at the University of California, Adams was inspired to action by the free speech movement that fuelled sit-ins, strikes and demonstrations. He saw the aims and causes of the 1960s movement as "kind of parallel to our own people."

Where did Adams' political awareness and self-admitted radicalism come from? What drove the half-breed boy from the dirt-poor background to pursue his education to the PhD level?

Adams says his outlook was



Bert Crowfoot

The free speech movement in the sixties had a huge influence on the award winner in the field of education, Howard Adams.

the exception in St. Louis, Sask. where he grew up. Few students there aspired to more than the subsistence farming and labour-for-hire existence of their parents. Most of his peers never completed even Grade 8 at Gerrond Elementary School.

His own willingness to tackle unpopular causes probably stemmed from his being "kind of an aggressive kid." The confidence to channel that aggression into positive action came from a few "lucky breaks" Adams says he experienced early in life.

Above all, he credits a happy family life with good parents.

"They didn't drink; they were good to the kids," Adams says. His mother also respected the local teacher and education in general.

Adams recalls that teacher, Mr. William Lovell, was a "very pow-

erful influence." Adams was motivated to be a good student at least in part because Lovell favored him. The teacher promoted sports participation as well as academic subjects, and here too, Adams excelled.

At the same time, the seeds of discontent were planted as young Howard compared the luxury and extravagance of some non-Native people to his life in a humble log house where the family often knew hunger. He was angered at the inequities he saw, but wanted to do more about it than just blame the government.

Adams' next lucky break, he says, was being sent away for his last year of high school in a convent.

"Nobody would teach those half-breeds in St. Louis." He stresses the nuns were really good to him and gave him solid preparation for university.

His sense of Métis identity was boosted by his uncle, Medric McDougall, who related how his great-grandfather, Maxime Lepine, and his great-uncle Ambroise stood with Riel. By the time Adams returned from the University of California at Berkely in 1965, he claimed "radical, revolutionary ideas," which stemmed from this heritage. He identified fully with ancestors who had sacrificed everything for their home and people.

Despite Adams' academic abilities, he did not proceed to university right away. Instead, he joined the Royal Canadian Mounted Police during the 1940s.

Three years later, street patrol in Gravelbourg, Sask. seemed unfulfilling. So he tried farming, then work that he describes as "typical half-breed jobs." Eventually, this restless spirit went to Vancouver and graduated from the University of British Columbia with a BA in Sociology in 1950.

"That's when I developed a political consciousness," he says.

Soon, however, the old spirit of restlessness took over. After four years of teaching unmotivated high school students from East Vancouver's working class, Adams knew he needed a fresh academic challenge and decided to pursue his doctorate. He emerged from the University of California, Berkely with his PhD in History in 1964.

Adams found a job as associate professor at the College of Education, University of Saskatchewan, where he eventually obtained tenure and taught for 10 years, until 1974. From 1968 to 1972 he was also President of the Métis Society of Saskatchewan. Throughout the 70s and 80s he taught summer sessions, wrote,

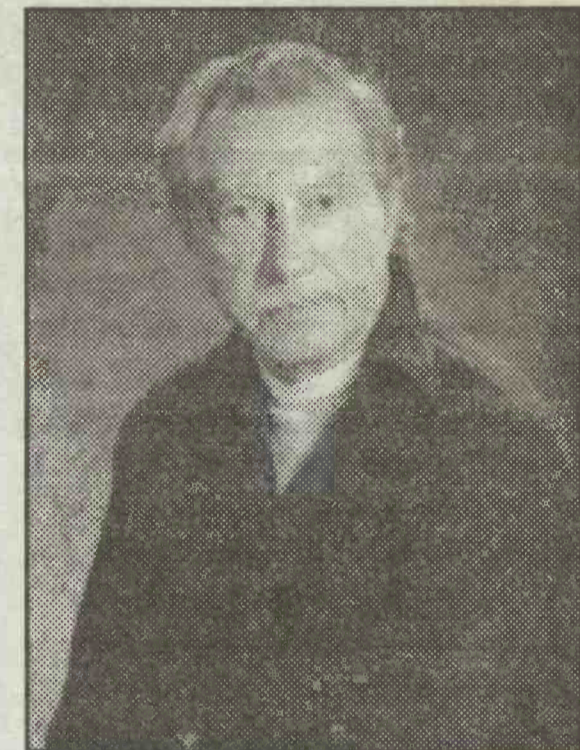
and was active in human rights issues.

In 1969, Adams turned down the post of deputy minister, Saskatchewan Department of Indian and Métis Affairs, which was offered while he taught in Saskatoon. He maintains he has never compromised his politics for a paycheck.

From 1986 to 1989, as professor at the University of California, he taught minority students and conducted demographic research on Indian reservations. In the first half of the 90s he taught summer sessions in Native studies at the University of Saskatchewan, lectured across Canada and in Germany on Aboriginal issues, conducted workshops on justice issues, did a stint as a radio announcer and founded the Vancouver Métis Association, where he's currently active on the education committee.

He's also a member of the adjunct faculty, University of Alberta graduate program in First Nations education. Other activities include revising his 1995 book, *A Tortured People: The Politics of Colonization*.

Adams wants only to be remembered as a person who worked uncompromisingly to get his people a fairer deal. This National Aboriginal Achievement Award for education shows him he made his mark.



DR. HOWARD ADAMS

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Bert Crowfoot

Karen Donaldson and Murray Porter performed a rendition of Porter's song, *1492 Who Found Who* at the 1999 National Aboriginal Achievement Awards gala show held in Regina on March 12. Donaldson was particularly well received by the audience as was the magnificent set on which she performed.

Gala awards show set a spectacle of nature

By Marie Burke
Windspeaker Staff Writer

REGINA

Deep in the rain forest, somewhere in the Canadian Pacific Northwest, a mountain stream trickles down the rocky side of a mountain, past towering ancient cedar and pine trees and into the thick overgrowth of forest.

A reproduction of that very scene from the Northwest Coast was created on the stage at the National Aboriginal Achievement Awards gala on March 12 held in Regina. When the curtain rose to reveal the magnificence of the huge and elaborate set, gasps of astonishment came from the audience.

The centre stage curtain featured a design of brightly colored animal faces, though some people in the audience laughed and others seemed embarrassed as the animal faces that were represented on the curtain were transformed into the faces of the award winners during their individual video presentations. The two large screens

for the video presentations were located on each side of the stage and were framed by Northwest Coast Aboriginal designs.

This year's awards show theme centred around Northwest Coast Aboriginal art with huge reproductions of original artwork.

One spectacular piece by artist Norman Tait from Northwestern British Columbia featured a carving of a man kneeling on a whale's tail.

Most of the set was assembled at the CBC's Toronto studios. When CBC technical crafts people went on strike on Feb. 17, the set was completed by independent technicians and then trucked to Regina, according to sources.

Crews worked around the clock for seven days to construct the immense set at the Saskatchewan Centre for the Arts, said John Kim Bell, founder, chair and executive producer of the National Aboriginal Achievement Awards show.

The show was to have been co-produced with CBC, but as guests entered the lobby of the Saskatchewan Centre for Arts,

striking CBC technicians handed out notices about their grievances. Ernie Steinhuvl, a lighting technician, was one of the eight people that stood in the lobby.

"I was supposed to work this show. We agreed not to picket because John Kim Bell met with the local executive and certain concessions were made," said Steinhuvl.

Bell agreed to use CBC employees who were laid off as freelance technicians, to allow CBC striking employees access to the lobby to hand out strike information, and to hold off on broadcasting the awards show until strikers were back to work.

Bell provided the striking technicians who were giving out information at the show free tickets to the gala.

"We didn't picket the show due to the nature of it. That is a charitable event. Sometimes you have to take the high road on these things," said Ken Sunley, president of CBC local 87S. "The CBC is the only network that would air this kind of thing," he said.

The old saying in theatre, the

show must go on, applied to the awards show, as taping by independent camera people was apparently going according to plan.

The awards show opened with traditional dancers and the sounds of traditional singing for the grand entry. The members of the Saskatchewan First Nations Veterans Association stood as honor guard and as an honor song was sung, the audience rose from their seats to stand in respect. The Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations had approached Bell a year ago about hosting the 1999 awards in Saskatchewan. Bell was very receptive to the idea, said Grand Chief Perry Bellegarde of FSIN. The FSIN reportedly contributed more than \$300,000 to help produce the awards show.

"It's such a powerful tool to bring out the positives about Aboriginal people, to bestow honor on them," said the chief.

A welcome from Bell was next on the agenda, but when 11-year-old Justin Bellegarde came out instead, a parody of Bell began. Young Bellegarde introduced himself as John Kim Bell

and welcomed the crowd.

"How do you like my set?" he asked. On screen, John Kim Bell appeared, apparently in his dressing room tied up with rope. Seconds later Bell came running on stage and, with a quick goodbye, exited off stage, but not before endearing himself to the audience with his professional on-stage presence.

Murray Porter and Karen Donaldson were next up and belted out a tune written by Porter called *1492 Who Found Who*, but it was clearly Donaldson's voice that commanded the audience's attention as it filled the auditorium.

The hosts of the gala show, Michael Greyeyes and Jennifer Podemski, brought a fresh youthful feeling to the show as they danced their way on stage.

"I was most impressed with the talent from Aboriginal people from across this country," said Chief Bellegarde.

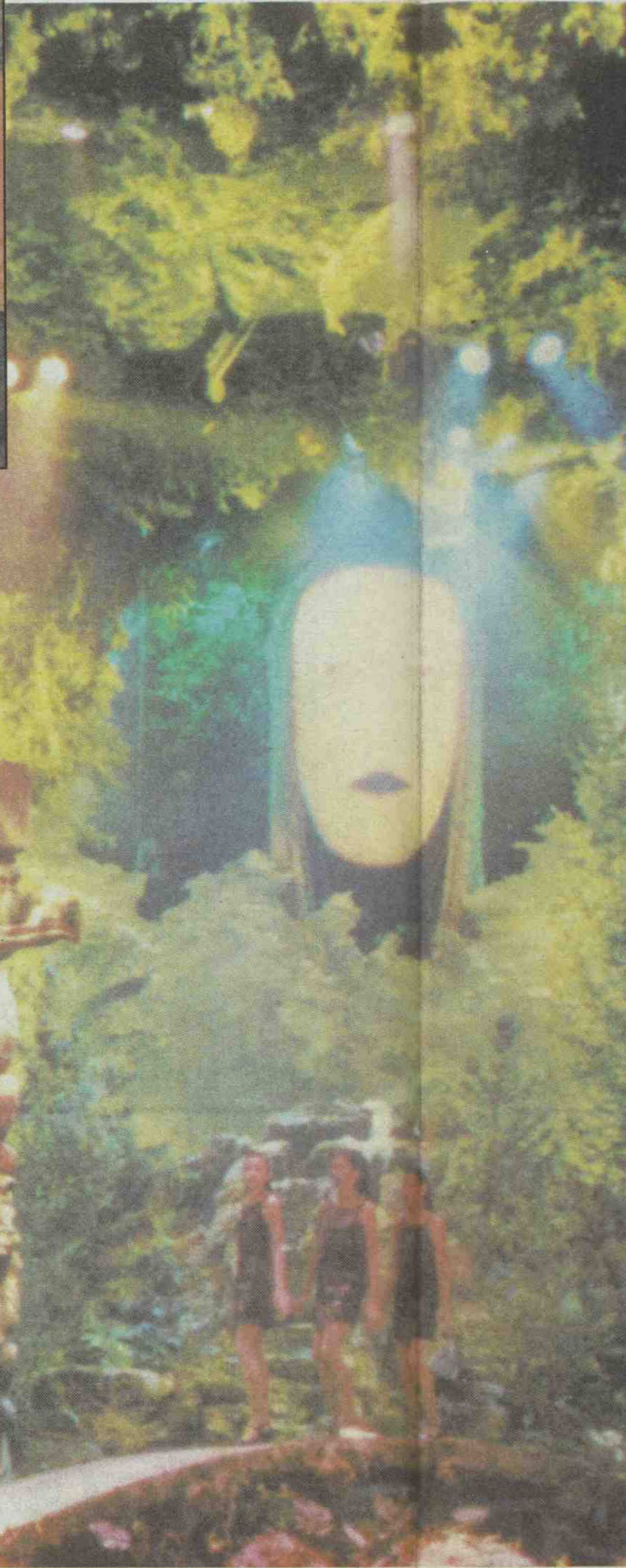
Bell likely echoed most people's thoughts about the set by pondering out loud that the challenge of next year will be a big one to meet.



Michael Greyeyes and Jennifer Podemski danced onto the stage and into the audiences' hearts as hosts of the 1999 National Aboriginal Achievement Awards gala show, held in Regina on March 12.

The Saskatchewan-based Creland Square Dancers provided some of the entertainment at the gala award show, performing a Jig Medley, including *Howards Breakdown*, *Wind that Turns the Mill* and *Daydream*.





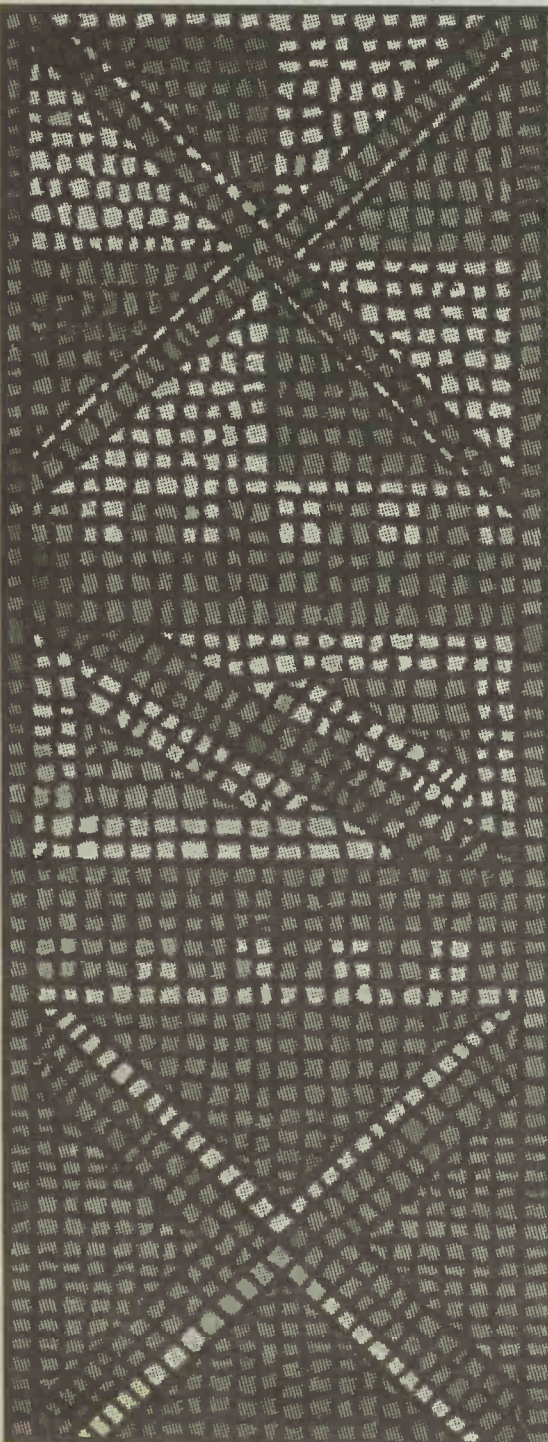
Saskatchewan People Making Saskatchewan Proud

SaskTel is pleased to be a corporate sponsor of the sixth annual National Aboriginal Achievement Awards. We wish to congratulate all the recipients of awards, with special recognition to the five Saskatchewan winners.

- Dr. Howard Adams for Education
- Dr. Lillian Eva Dyck for Science and Technology
- Dr. Allan Sapp for Lifetime Achievement
- Alika LaFontaine for Youth
- Theresa Stevenson for Community Development

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The National Aboriginal Achievement awards, presented this year in Regina, recognize distinguished contributions made to Canadian life by Aboriginal citizens.

On behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan, we are pleased to join in applauding all of the recipients and to particularly acknowledge the five Saskatchewan residents honoured for 1999. This year's Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to **Allan Sapp**. Through his paintings, Dr. Sapp has shared a unique and personal vision of our province with the rest of Canada and the world. Other Saskatchewan recipients included **Howard Adams, Ph.D., Dr. Lillian Eva Dyck, Alika Fontaine, and Theresa Stevenson**. These Saskatchewan citizens have made significant social contributions in Art, Education, Métis Leadership, Science, Youth and Community Development.

With great pride, we extend sincere congratulations.



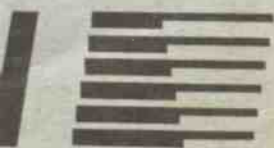
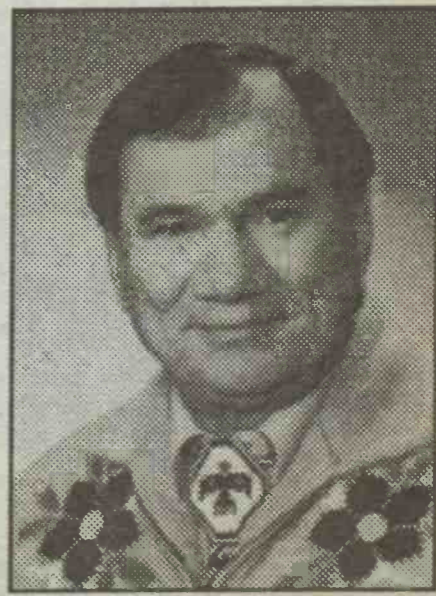
Berry Wiens

Honourable Berry Wiens, Minister
Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs



Keith Goulet

Honourable Keith Goulet, Minister
Northern Affairs



Little imposter opens the show and welcomes audience

By Stephen LaRose
Windspeaker Contributor

REGINA

As the performers and technicians scurried throughout the Saskatchewan Centre for the Arts in Regina during the last rehearsal before show time, Justin Bellegarde appeared to be the most relaxed person involved with the National Aboriginal Achievement Awards gala show.

The Grade 6 student at Fort Qu'Appelle Elementary school was the host of the nationally televised awards ceremony - for all of three minutes. His job was to welcome the more than 2,000 dignitaries that made up the audience at the centre - and the estimated 500,000 who will watch the show on CBC in the coming month - to the sixth annual awards show.

Once onstage, he said he was John Kim Bell, the

founder of the awards. It was a good enough con, until the real John Kim Bell, draped with ropes, screamed for guards to catch the little troublemaker who tied him up backstage.

So what if it was staged? Justin Bellegarde is learning the ropes of the acting business. His role was to kick-start the awards ceremony, and that's just what he did, and he had a good time doing it.

"I got to meet a whole bunch of new people," he said. "I made some new friends, and you get to eat pretty good, too."

Acting is something Bellegarde now wants to do with his life. And it all started thanks to a costume.

Last year, a production company began filming the television movie *Big Bear* on Pasqua First Nation. When the call went out for extras to perform in some scenes, Justin was the only person who could fit into a small boy's clothing and

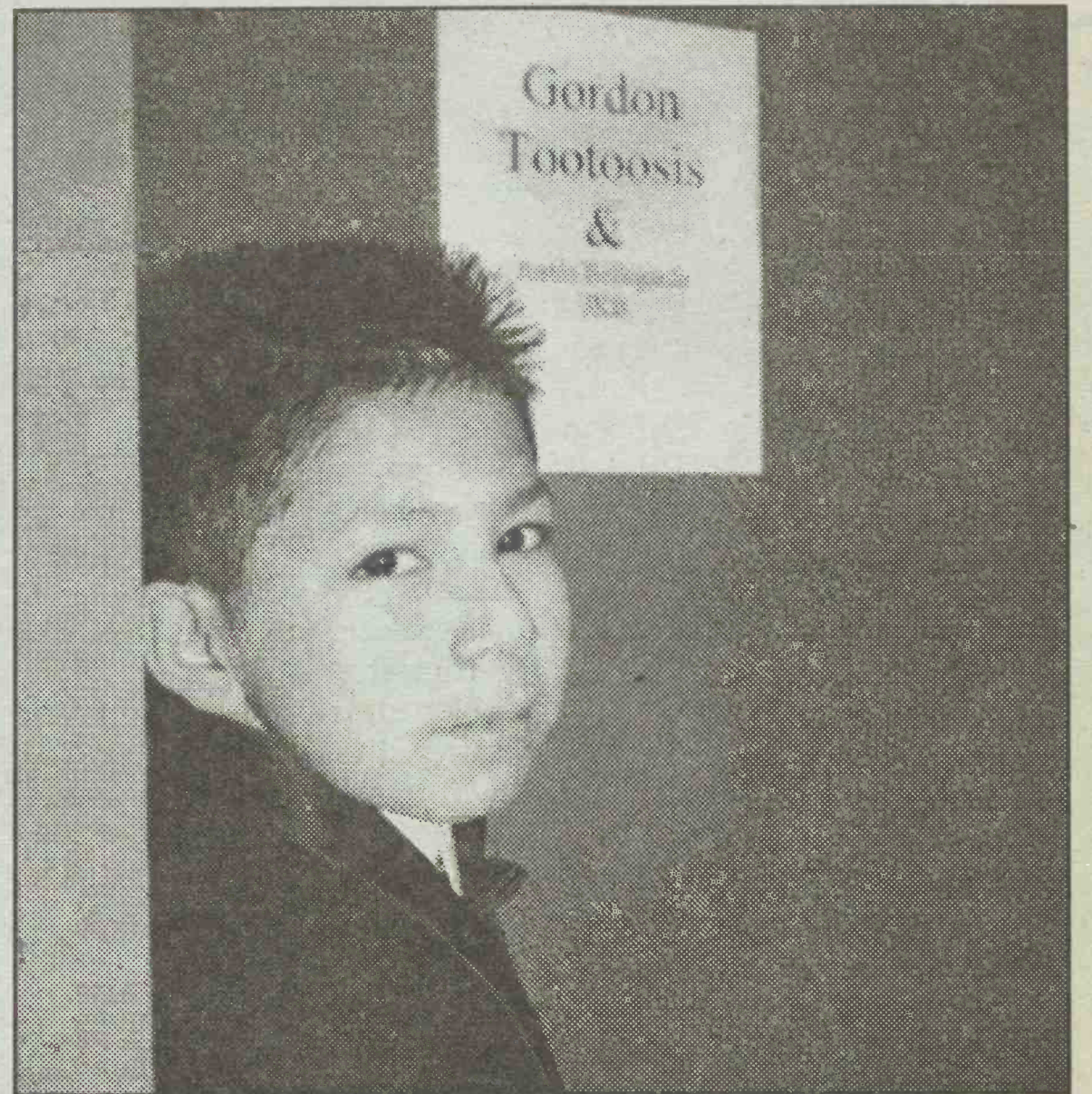
headress.

"I hadn't done anything like that before, except in school plays or something like that," he said. But the experience has given the 11-year-old, who lives with his grandmother on the Pasqua First Nations, a whole new idea about what he wants to do with his life.

"Yeah, I'd like to be an actor. I see some things like shows on TV and I think, 'yeah, I could do that'."

Working on *Big Bear* gave him an opportunity to work with the best actors and behind-the-scenes crew in Aboriginal cinema. Working last week at the Saskatchewan centre was a bit of a homecoming for Justin, since he shared a dressing room with Gordon Tootoosis, the star of *Big Bear* as well as the television show *North of 60* and the movie *Legends of the Fall*.

"He's really good. I really like what he's done," said Bellegarde.



Stephen LaRose

Justin Bellegarde behind the scenes at the National Aboriginal Achievement Awards in Regina.

Lifetime of achievement in world of art honored in Regina

Assembly of First Nations National Chief Phil Fontaine (left) and Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations Grand Chief Perry Bellegarde present the National Aboriginal Achievement Award for Lifetime Achievement to artist Dr. Allen Sapp.



Bert Crowfoot

(Continued from page 2.)

In 1967, Sapp met Dr. Allan Gonor, who encouraged him to make art his career. The doctor became his patron and friend and introduced him to University of Saskatchewan art professor Wynona Mulcaster, who shared her artistic knowledge with Sapp. She and Dr. Gonor arranged Sapp's first show in 1968, at which all of his paintings sold.

After the doctor's death in 1986, Mrs. Ruth Gonor donated 80 paintings to what became the Allen Sapp Gallery -

the Gonor Collection, in North Battleford. Sapp subsequently donated at least 30 more pieces to the collection; he sees it as a permanent memorial to Dr. Gonor and to his own Cree people. Any success he has, Sapp insists, is not for himself only, but for all Cree.

Sapp notes that both public and commercial galleries supported his work at the start. In the late 1970s, Sapp began a relationship with the Kurtz family, owners of the Assiniboia Gallery in Regina, which continues to this day.

Sapp's manager, John Kurtz, related how Sapp enjoys sharing his good fortune with others. He has donated his time and his art to worthy causes, and he cares a lot about helping children, Kurtz said.

That means passing on stories in the traditional Cree way. Sapp urges children to learn all they can about their culture, so it will provide them strength throughout life. And, Sapp adds earnestly, he tells them to get an education, to "listen to their parents and teachers - to learn English and Cree."



The Fifth Generation, including National Aboriginal Achievement Award winner 'Alika LaFontaine with sister Kalea, and brothers Ali'i and Chris, performed two numbers at the awards show.

Singer Fara is a return performer at the National Aboriginal Achievement Awards show. In fact, Fara has performed at three previous shows. Last year, Fara was nominated for a Juno Award for Best Music in Aboriginal Canada.



Achievement, once acknowledged, must be shared.

Windspeaker would like to thank the many community groups and organizations that, by supporting this special publication, shared our vision that Aboriginal achievement is something to be shared with our entire community.

By doing so they assure future Aboriginal achievements.



Canada's National Aboriginal News Source

Windspeaker's coverage and profiles are available on-line at www.ammsa.com/achieve

Hot lunch program one of many services to community

By Joan Black
Windspeaker Contributor

Theresa Stevenson, this year's recipient of the National Aboriginal Achievement Award for Community Development, is best known for the hot lunch program called "Chili for Children," which she established in 1979 in a low-income neighborhood in Regina for Aboriginal school children. That program is still going strong and has expanded to three locations with new people at the helm.

What is not as well known outside Saskatchewan are the many contributions Stevenson has made on numerous boards and projects to improve Native people's access to housing and education. She has been involved in every aspect of community life from libraries to literacy programs to lobbying government on behalf of her people.

Her current memberships illustrate her devotion to humanitarian causes and her commitment to her own people's betterment. The 71-year-old member of Cowesses First Nation near Broadview, Sask. is retired now, but is still involved with 10 committees and boards. Principally, she is the executive director of Regina Indian Community Awareness, Inc.

She also works with the public library system, her local community centre and a high school parent council, and is on the board of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations Silver Sage Housing. Other involvements include the Touchwood File Hills Tribal Council Pathways Project; Regina Treaty Status Indians Services Inc.; and Wichihik Iskewak Safe House. The fact she never got beyond a Grade 10 education has never stopped her seeking out challenges and getting the job done.

Her motivation to fight poverty and take a leadership role stemmed from the example of her grandfather, a former chief of the Cowesses Indians, who worked hard on behalf of his people. That and her own experiences with deprivation and hunger, which drove her and her husband Robert to leave their three children with relatives in 1955 and head to Wolf Point, Montana, where Robert could get work. The Stevensons lived in Montana 16 years.

Her work on housing issues began 21 years ago. Appointed executive director of the newly formed Regina Indian Community Awareness, Inc. (RICA), Stevenson began by assisting Native people moving into the urban environment in hope of a more prosperous life. Often they could not afford the lodging that was available. Her group forged links with the province to provide low-income houses, initially through Saskatchewan Housing.

Eventually the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations was formed and control of Native housing was turned over to the bands. The project grew beyond a few wartime houses to nearly 400 now. Silver Sage Housing employs about 15 people and has recently hired an Aboriginal general manager.



Bert Crowfoot

Unfailing devotion to her community has earned Theresa Stevenson the award in the Community Development category.

Stevenson is on the housing selection committee, which gives first priority to Elders and second priority to Native students.

Another project Stevenson took to heart more than 15 years ago was tackling the board of education about the demoralizing lack of success of Native students in the public school system. Indian children were not graduating; there were no Indian teachers; and there certainly were no Indian role models in the schools.

Stevenson's group, consisting of a United Church minister, two University of Regina professors, a public school teacher and herself, presented a brief to the school board requesting role

models.

Now there are role models in place. Native teachers are being hired out of the Indian Federated College and more Native people are employed by schools generally, but Stevenson thinks there is still room for improvement. She sees her greatest contribution as having brought the issues regarding Indian education to the attention of the school board, which was very resistant to change at the start.

Stevenson's story is incomplete if the hot lunch program, "Chili for Children," is not explained. She got the idea from the people at Wolf Point.

"I really admire them," she says of the Indian people stateside. "One thing, the students there don't like to be called dropouts." Kids can't learn when they're hungry, and in Montana

they addressed that problem at school. She adds she saw there were a lot more graduates coming out of the Montana reservation than at home.

So Stevenson and RICA began a similar initiative in Regina, after a school principal told her that many Indian children came to school hungry. Stevenson says her middle son, Wes, now the vice president of the Indian Federated College, helped her get started, and so did some local churches, which provided funds. Twenty little boys came for the first lunch of soup and sandwiches.

The school board was persuaded to contribute \$1,200, and the numbers of children coming for lunch jumped to 50, then 100. High schools and the local police pitched in to help defray expenses, but it was hardly enough.

"I prayed that if God wanted the lunches to continue, he would help us," Stevenson relates. She adds that she was prepared to accept that they might lose the program for lack of money.

Soon after, a Native reporter from the CBC got interested and arranged to get Stevenson's hot lunch program promoted in the media, when it looked like it would end after a year. Stevenson and her group had noticed that chili was the most popular lunch they served, so when asked on television what the program needed most, she said "Beans." The resultant publicity netted them enough money to provide nutritious lunches for three years and to buy a second-hand van to transport the food.

"It was an answer to prayer," Stevenson says. "If you have a vision and you are being guided from above, nothing will stand in your way," Stevenson concludes. She attributes all her successes in life to following this basic creed.



Laura Milliken

THERESA STEVENSON

It gives us great pleasure to honour

Theresa Stevenson

for her outstanding work in Community Development and to

congratulate her on receiving the National Aboriginal Achievement Award



Making clothes for her sisters was beginning of great career

By Joan Black
Windspeaker Contributor

Dorothy Grant has been on the cutting edge all her life. The 43-year-old member of the Kaigani Haida people of British Columbia is renowned for unique Native fashion designs that highlight her artistic talent in everything from ready-to-wear to exclusive, one-of-a-kind collections. Grant's famous button blankets, spruce root hats and other garments combining art and Haida culture are on display in prominent collections and exhibits worldwide.

At the pinnacle of success in the international design community, Grant is proud to be recognized by her peers and especially her own Haida people as a recipient of this year's National Aboriginal Achievement Award in the Business and Commerce category.

"The jury panel is quite successful in its own right," Grant said. "It is an honor to be chosen — the past recipients are great company to be in."

Last June, the University of Northern British Columbia in Prince George, B.C., awarded Grant an honorary doctor of laws degree. She was singled out for her talent and her commitment to promoting and maintaining Haida culture in her work. Grant was also recognized as an "outstanding" role model among First Nations people.

There have been many other endorsements of her work. In 1993, the Canadian Council for Native Business gave Grant the "Best Professional Designer" award at its Winds of Change design competition. The award included a trip to attend a fall fashion show in Paris, France, where Grant was fêted for her design acumen at the Canadian Embassy.

Grant, originally from Hydaburg, Alaska, started sewing for her younger sisters



Designer Dorothy Grant was awarded the National Aboriginal Achievement Award in the Business and Commerce category.

at age 13. Today her name is synonymous with the term "wearable art."

Grant produces clothing in a range of prices and styles that reflect traditional Haida shapes and designs. Her casual line includes jackets, sweat shirts and embroidered men's shirts, while the Dorothy Grant label features silk-screened and embroidered garments. The high end Feast Wear label showcases traditional Haida regalia with hand-cut appliqué; these garments are reserved for ceremonial use. Fifty per cent of Grant's clients, she says, are Native people.

This entrepreneur has been a singular presence in Northwest Coast fashion design since the early 1980s. Her Feast Wear includes the elaborate Raven Creation Tunic that made its debut at Expo '86 and is now permanently enshrined in the

Canadian Museum of Civilization. An ancient Haida myth that depicts Raven releasing Haada Laas (Children of the Good People) from the clam shell is translated through Grant's artistry to the tunic. That garment is one of Grant's favorites. Another classic, her copper creation known as "Hummingbird Copper Panel Dress," is also displayed at the Museum of Civilization.

Other Grant designs can be found in the National Gallery of Canada. Her Seven Raven Button Blanket, once part of a touring exhibit by Canadian Aboriginal artists, is an example.

Grant's wonderfully appliquéd button blankets have

been a mainstay of her work since she designed the first one in 1977. They represent a 160-year-old tradition that was influenced by the apparel of 19th century traders. The blankets became a ceremonial item featuring material, buttons and beads brought from Europe. They are worn at potlatches, ceremonial dances, weddings and graduations. Their designs represent Haida family lineage.

Eleven years ago Grant studied with Helen Lefeaux Fashion Design for one year, but that was the only formal education she obtained in her field. She has had no formal business training either; Grant says it has been "learn as I go."

Grant's early teacher and mentor was her maternal grandmother, Florence Edenshaw Davidson, who shared her knowledge of fabrics, shells, roots and weaving. When Grant was 24, she began to learn spruce root weaving under Davidson's tutelage — "one of the hardest classes I ever learned in my life," she says. Grant adds she "worked continuously at it for about five years" to perfect her skill in that area. "It taught me a lot of patience," she says.

Her informal apprenticeship continued as she operated a home-based business for five years. Button blankets were the focus of her efforts for another 10. From the beginning, Grant had the encouragement of her quiet, soft-spoken mother, who "always showed her confidence in me," Grant said.

Grant's first collection of 55 pieces produced after Helen Lefeaux was slated to be shown at the Canadian Museum of Civilization in 1988-89.

"It took off from there," Grant says of her trail to success.

It certainly has. In 1992 and '93, Grant undertook market re-

search and put together a business plan for her most ambitious venture to date — her first retail store. In 1994, an upscale boutique to market Grant's fashions opened in Vancouver's Sinclair Centre. Sales of \$500,000 are projected this year.

She says her success is "better than I visualized it... I created a store I knew I had to fill." To help meet her targets, she employs up to eight part-time people, and both her sister and niece are involved in the business. In addition to clothing, the boutique offers hand-carved silver and gold jewelry with a Northwest Coast theme, as well as limited-edition, silk screened prints.

Grant adds she thrives on the challenges of both designing clothes and running a business. She's constantly exploring new ways to be creative, to express herself functionally.

"I'm an artist — that could lead me into other things," she says. In the future, Grant hints that she could consider expanding her designs into interior decorating or household products, but there are no definite plans to do that yet.

A selection of Grant's fashions can be viewed on the Internet at www.dorothygrant.com.



Courtesy of www.dorothygrant.com

DOROTHY GRANT

Aboriginal Business Leadership

Aboriginal Business Canada salutes **Dorothy Grant** and **David Tuccaro**, recipients of 1999 National Aboriginal Achievement Awards in the Business and Commerce category.

Dorothy Grant, fashion designer and Vancouver boutique owner, incorporates her First Nations identity into her award-winning designs. Ms. Grant is a role model in entrepreneurship.

David Tuccaro, president and general manager of Neegan Development Corporation and Tuc Contracting in Alberta, tirelessly promotes global business opportunities for Indigenous peoples.

Aboriginal Business Canada is pleased to profile these individuals and commends their leadership as entrepreneurs.



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Dorothy Grant



David Tuccaro



Woman overcomes difficult childhood to help others

By Joan Black
Windspeaker Contributor

Dorothy Betz, a 70-year-old retired community activist who helped spearhead the friendship centre movement in Canada, is excited to receive this year's National Aboriginal Achievement Award in the category of Community Development.

Wayne Helgason, president of the Indian and Métis Friendship Centre in Winnipeg, who nominated Betz for the award, has known her 25 years.

"She's very principled," he says. "If Dorothy is involved with a committee you know there's no shenanigans going on... she's there as the conscience of an organization."

She had a long career as a court worker based in the friendship centre in Winnipeg. In February, the Winnipeg Police Service presented her with a Certificate of Appreciation for her dedication in helping Aboriginal people.

Helgason says Betz never failed to give "very strong advice" to young people who needed direction. He thinks more than a few of them have turned themselves around as a result of listening to her advice.

Her contribution is all the

more remarkable in that she did not exactly get off to a privileged start in life. Both parents were dead by the time she was seven, and Dorothy was placed in residential school for 15 years, beginning when she was three.

The school stood on her own Pine Creek Reserve, so she was close to her grandparents. Not too close, however. For some years, the only access to the school was by boat. For 10 months of the year, the 250 children were segregated from their families for the dubious privilege of being educated to the Grade 6 level, which was as far as the system went. At least in the summers they had the chance to pick berries, dry and scrape deer hides, make pemmican and learn other traditional pursuits.

The year Betz turned 18 is the year the school introduced Grade 8, but the authorities gave her a dollar, a change of clothes and sent her out into the world to make her living. She got jobs as a domestic and waitress to start.

Later, Betz's interest in helping Native people to move up in the world was sparked when her uncle, a chief, started taking her to meetings and conferences in Winnipeg. The lack of a place to meet was a problem that caused Dorothy to become involved in starting up the friendship centre in her city. When the Indian/Métis Friendship Centre opened in 1957, Betz became the first chairwoman.

Betz volunteered with the centre for seven years. She was in on the ground floor, training court workers and learning everything she could about the judicial system. From there she helped develop other programs, including starting up Kinew Housing. She trained Native counsellors for social services and worked as a counsellor with Indian affairs.



Bert Crowfoot

Though working behind the scenes now, Dorothy Betz has devoted a lifetime to the betterment of her community.

Sometimes her help even extended to purchasing bus tickets and alarm clocks for people so they would make it to work.

In 1980, Betz accepted an appointment to the parole board in Saskatoon, participating in case reviews and parole hearings. She also mentored university social work students during their summer work placements.

Five years later, Betz wanted to return to her family in Winnipeg where, true to her tradition of community service, she went to work with young offenders in the Juvenile Youth Centre. Her career there was abruptly halted by an automobile accident, however.

Betz hasn't let limited mobil-

ity dampen her spirits or her quest for new challenges. While she was still in a wheelchair, she got on a hospital committee that was seeking Aboriginal participation in its study of seniors' issues. At the same time, she helped put a proposal together to establish a seniors' centre. It took more than six years, but in 1991 an Aboriginal senior citizens' complex called Kekinan Centre opened to serve 30 residents. She also acted on a hospital commission to review treatment of Aboriginal people in hospital emergency rooms and was instrumental in obtaining interpreters.

Today, Betz still volunteers, but not on the front lines. She sells her knitting and donates the money to the Youth Program at the friendship centre. Her friend Wayne Helgason says this activity, as much as any

other, illustrates her "consistency." He points out that "she still knits and sets up a table, year in and year out. She's very selfless and always thinking of other people."

Formerly, she was on as many as 13 committees:

"I had my nose in everything," she adds, "everything from working with children to assisting ex-offenders. I was forever studying and trying to learn new things. I even took public speaking — the Dale Carnegie course — a real difficult one."

At the time, Betz adds, she was the only one of three Aboriginal people in the course who finished it. She says the confidence to try public speaking may have come from being an orphan with "no-one to boss me around."

She said her skill at developing relationships started in school, when she often mediated disputes and protected younger students from the older ones. She also liked sports, which taught her teamwork. And by the time she started working in the court system, she had six children in her care too.

As time went on, Betz's public speaking skills were in demand at graduating classes of colleges, universities, nursing schools, the RCMP and city police and the Law Society. She let the graduates know what they could expect in the way of cultural differences when working with Aboriginal people.

Despite her busy schedule, Betz says her goals have been basically simple: "to try to better our people; to overcome racism and the barriers between people." What helped her stay focused was her determination that the generations of young Native people coming up after her would not see themselves as second-class citizens. She sees the National Aboriginal Achievement Awards as a reflection of her ideals.



Kenneth Williams

DOROTHY BETZ

To a community leader and our friend *Dorothy Betz*.

We cannot fully express our appreciation for the contribution you have made in the lives of our people.

Congratulations on the recognition of your achievements from . . .

The Indian & Métis Friendship Centre of Winnipeg Inc.

Tribal Councils Investment Group of Manitoba

National Association of Friendship Centres

Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg

Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs

Manitoba Métis Federation Inc.



Northern resident helps bridge the gap between cultures

By Joan Black
Windspeaker Contributor

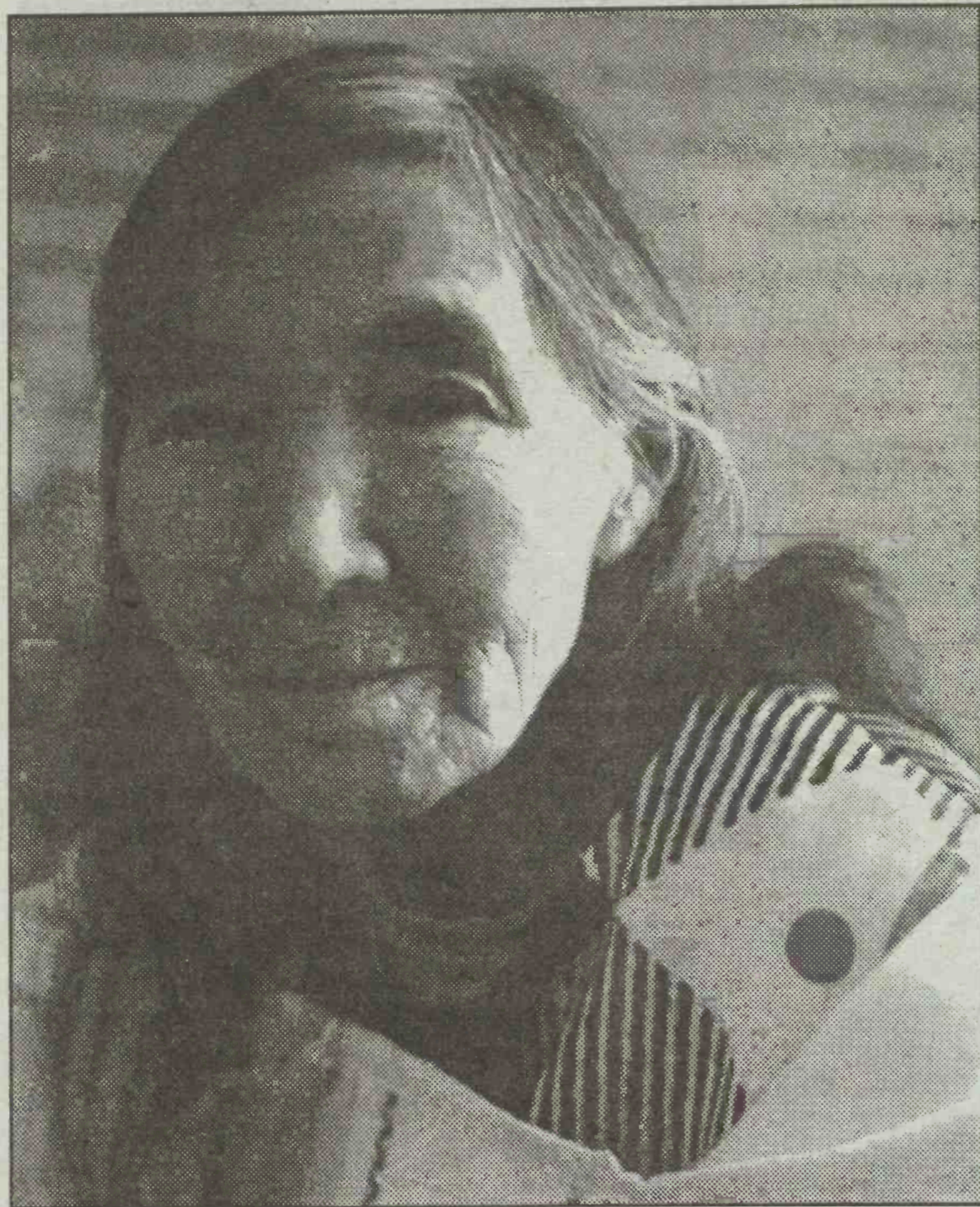
Mitiarjuk Attasie Nappaaluk was born in 1931 on the Ungava Coast near present-day Kangirsujuaq, Que. There were no schools in her village until the 1960s, but Mitiarjuk has earned the reputation of a scholar and legendary authority on Inuit language and culture. Years of unstinting service to Inuit education, of holding up the standard of traditional values and heritage, a lifetime devoted to learning and sharing from her hands and her heart, are the reasons the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation presented her with an award this year for Heritage and Spirituality.

Mitiarjuk's mission is to preserve the Inuttitut language of her people, not just as history but as the living spirit of Inuit culture, the medium that holds all the songs and stories together, the breath that holds all knowledge of the old ways that must be passed on.

She is the recorder of ancient wisdom, of the disappearing words and way of life that belonged to her people in the days before priests, provincial laws, schools and satellite television.

She is the broker for new knowledge, the trier of technology that she knows must be harnessed to serve the needs of Inuit society. The people of Nunavik look to Mitiarjuk to teach them how to carve and pile the blocks that bridge the dark water between minds and tongues and souls.

Because community life is all about sharing, it was in the right order of things that Mitiarjuk's parents passed on their people's ways to their daughter. Because she was the



MARIE BURKE

Ancient wisdom and modern knowledge live in the heart, mind and soul of Mitiarjuk Attasie Nappaaluk.

eldest daughter, Mitiarjuk needed to learn the traditional tasks of Inuit men as well as the work of women.

The first half of her life was spent living entirely with the land, engaged in the rhythms of the hunting culture to which she belongs. Hunting and fishing the caribou, seals, fish, Beluga whales and geese in their seasons; cleaning skins, passing on the stories — surviving.

The stories Mitiarjuk learned were imparted by the oral tradition of both her mother's people on the east coast of Hudson Bay, and her father's people on the Ungava coast. In time, she shared this rich tradition with her own children and community.

Sharing did not stop when the strangers came either. In the 1950s, Mitiarjuk helped the Catholic priest in her village to learn Inuttitut; he in turn showed her how to write syllabics. That was the beginning of her writing career and a life that has brought honor to the Inuit of northern Quebec. It was an exchange of different cultures.

"Mitiarjuk has devoted her life to promoting understanding between the Inuit and southern cultures," Kativik School Board director general Annie Grenier affirms.

Grenier also calls her "the greatest teacher in Nunavik with respect to Inuit culture, history and traditional knowledge," and

"the greatest story teller."

Mitiarjuk compiled an Inuttitut encyclopedia of Inuit culture. It was translated by Prof. Bernard Saladin, head of the anthropology faculty at Université Laval, where it is used in the Northern Studies department. Mitiarjuk's life was the subject of a film made by the university in the 1960s, too.

She worked with the priests of Nunavik — Father Dion, Father Schneider and Father Lechat — to translate Bible readings contained in the Roman Catholic lectionary into Inuttitut. They also translated a combined hymn book and missal for the Inuit, and Mitiarjuk helped write a dictionary in her language, Father Dion said.

"We asked her . . . how she would translate certain things, and after the translation has been made, we asked her to read it, or we read it to her, and she made the corrections," Dion explained. Mitiarjuk also has the distinction of writing the first novel to be published in Inuttitut.

Sanaaq is about a young couple living the traditional life on the tundra in the 1920s. It was published by Association Inuksiutiit Katimajit Inc., Université Laval. Father Dion says he believes it has been translated into both English and French.

Books by Mitiarjuk are being used by teachers and students of the Kativik School Board's jurisdiction, so they can learn the archaic words, legends and natural history of the region's original inhabitants. She has also contributed to Nunavik's cultural and historical magazine, *Tumivut*.

Mitiarjuk has embraced the inventions of the 20th century "to ensure . . . the expressions of old are recorded before they vanish," as Debbie Astroff, public relations officer at the Kativik School

Board explained it. CBC North broadcasts audiotapes that Mitiarjuk records for them. The morning after her return from the National Aboriginal Achievement Award ceremony in Regina, she was at the radio station relating the experiences of the Saskatchewan trip to her people.

Officially retired since 1996, Mitiarjuk worked for the school board from 1965 till then, teaching Inuit culture and language. She still visits Arsaniq School to share stories with the children. According to Grenier, Mitiarjuk believes strongly that survival skills and traditional values are relevant in a changing world. She remains active on the Kangirsujuaq Community Council and is a member of the Inuttitut Language Commission in Nunavik.

Mitiarjuk is married with 54 children and grandchildren. According to daughter Arnaujaq Nappaaluk Qumaaluk, "when the time came for her to get the award in Saskatchewan, she was really happy about it, because it was not only for herself, but all Inuit people. She would never think about that, that she would get the award, but when she did, she was really proud of it. We are all . . . proud of it," her daughter said.



MITIARJUK ATTASIE NAPPAALUK

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Phone: (819) 338-3342 • Fax: (819) 338-3237

It is with Pride that the Municipal,
Council and fellow people of Kangirsujuaq

Congratulate
Mitiarjuk Attasie Nappaaluk

on receiving the
National Aboriginal Achievement Award
for Spirituality & Heritage

Champion of Aboriginal health looks to traditional remedies

By Joan Black
Windspeaker Contributor

Dr. Malcolm King, a prominent research scientist and professor of the pulmonary division, department of medicine at the University of Alberta, is the 1999 National Aboriginal Achievement Award winner in the category of Medical Sciences. Dr. King's main area of interest is mucus rheology, which is the study of the flow of mucus in the lungs and other organs. His research is directed to treat diseases such as asthma, bronchitis and cystic fibrosis; it has led him to patent two therapies for chronic respiratory disease.

The university's medical faculty dean, Dr. D. Lorne Tyrrell, along with medical and dental students, nominated Dr. King on the basis of outstanding achievements in his specialty, his stand on Aboriginal health issues and his promotion of medical education for Aboriginal people. Dean Tyrrell's letter of support for Dr. King called him the "Champion for Aboriginal health issues in the Faculty of Medicine and Oral Health Science's Curriculum Innovation Committee."

Dr. King was born in 1947 on the Six Nations reserve in Ohsweken, Ont., and is a mem-

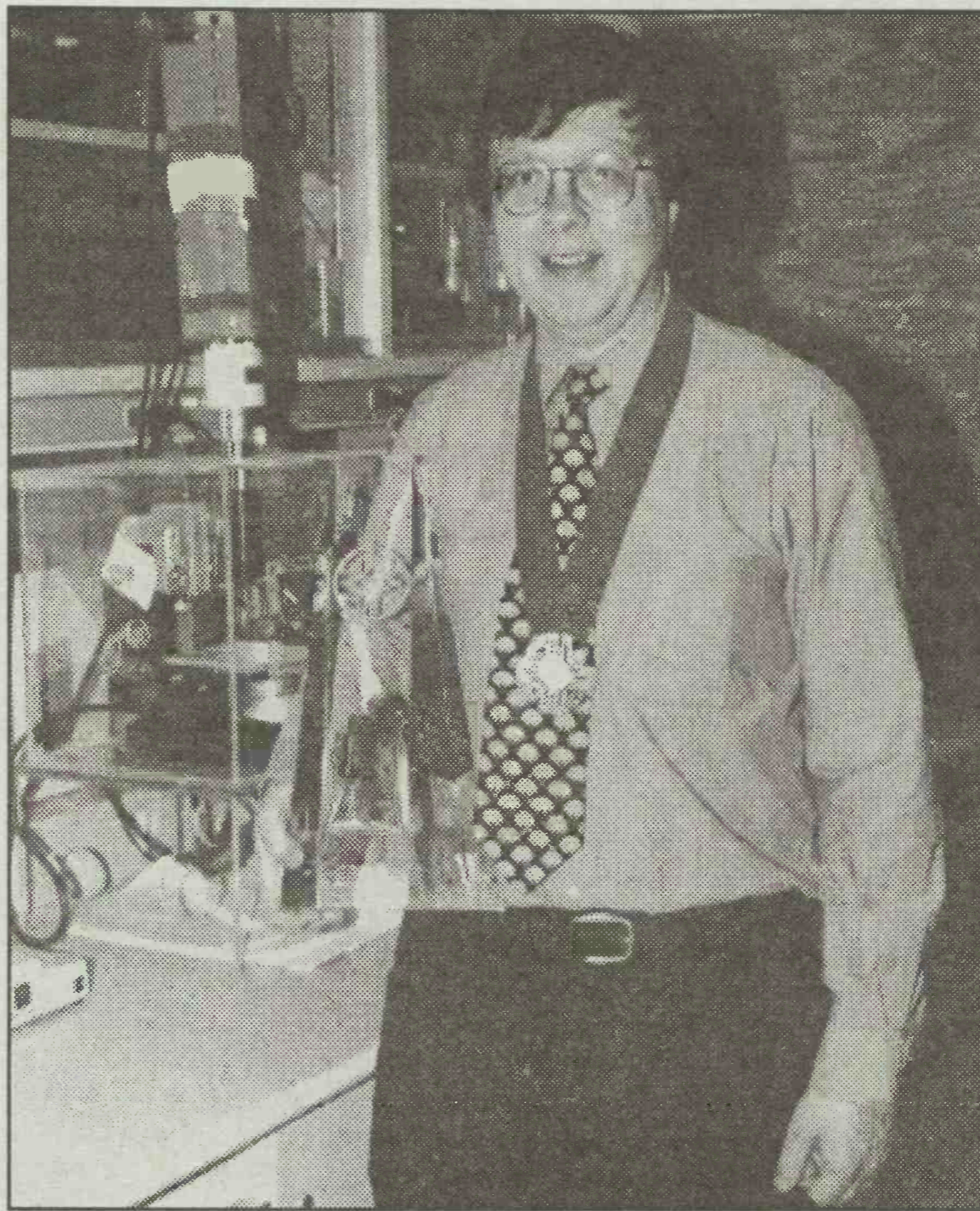
ber of the Mississaugas of New Credit First Nation. His grandfather, who died in 1946, was a traditional Native healer who learned about medicines from Dr. King's great-grandmother. Unfortunately, he did not pass on this knowledge to any of his four sons, one of whom was Dr. King's father, but Dr. King says he's been told his grandfather treated even serious diseases with traditional medicines.

Dr. King says he's very interested in exploring herbal medicine; specifically, the use of traditional Native peoples' remedies to treat respiratory illnesses. One of his students is examining whether Canadian native plants can be grown commercially. He adds there is some interest from Aboriginal organizations in this venture.

Three years ago, Dr. King and a student examined how an extract from rat root improved the excretion of mucus from the lungs. It appears to help clear the lungs of infection; Dr. King wants to learn more about the root's effects on inflammation and infection. They also looked at several varieties of licorice root, which in the laboratory works better than rat root in clearing mucus, according to Dr. King. He has used the extract himself to treat a cold.

"It's hard to get funding to carry on [the study of herbal medicines], though," Dr. King says. He explains that drug companies usually provide a major portion of research dollars, but because natural products are not patented, the drug companies are not interested in them. The other side of the coin is that traditional Native healers "would not be interested in sharing with drug companies."

Dr. King has had a passion for science since his youth, when he attended elementary school on the Six Nations reserve. He was the top student in his high school



Bert Crowfoot

Dr. Malcolm King is the winner of the Aboriginal achievement award in the category of Medical Sciences.

in Hagersville, Ont., and at age 17 went to McMaster University in Hamilton, where he obtained a BSc in chemistry in 1968.

There was already a tradition of high academic achievement in his family. His father, an elementary school teacher, had also been a top student, and was the first person from his reserve to graduate from university. Dr. King's brother is the principal of the Mississaugas of New Credit elementary school.

In 1973, Dr. King obtained his doctorate in polymer chemistry from McGill University in Montreal, Que. Several years of post-doctoral training followed, during which time he became interested in biomedical research. A

lengthy faculty appointment at McGill preceded a move to an assistant professorship at the University of Alberta, which came about when Dr. King was awarded an Alberta Heritage Foundation Scholarship in 1985.

In 1990, the award was renewed and Dr. King was promoted to full professor in the department of Medicine. In 1992, he was elected a Fellow of the American College of Chest Physicians, and this year he received the latest in a string of scholarships and awards dating back to the 1960s — the Alberta Lung Association Lorraine Award of Excellence. He is also current president of the Canadian Thoracic Society.

Dr. King has membership in numerous professional societies and has a long history of participation on various boards. Since

1990, he has served on the Native Health Care Careers Committee — as chairman since 1994. Nationally, Dr. King is chairman of the Special Interest Group on Aboriginal Health Education of the Association of Canadian Medical Colleges. He has also published 126 scientific papers and has lectured extensively abroad.

Lewis Cardinal, a Native student services spokesman at the university, says Dr. King "is one of our great inspirations." Cardinal says Dr. King is the epitome of a role model in a profession where "we're largely short on role models."

Up to 15 Aboriginal medical students enroll yearly at the University of Alberta.

"We accept only Aboriginals who meet the basic requirements," Dr. King says; "we have the same criteria all the way through for Natives."

He points out that Native students are having fewer problems with academic work than they once did, since they formed their own self-help group. Still, basic science is not promoted enough in Native communities and there are not enough enrichment programs for Native students who could benefit from them, Dr. King says.

Dr. King has been designated to hold the position of associate director in the University of Alberta's Centre for Aboriginal Health Education and Research, which has been approved in principal as a Canada-wide organization. Its aims are to increase the number of Aboriginal students in medicine, dentistry and related professions, and also to negotiate, as an institution, for research dollars. There will be a Native majority on the board of directors, and they will work on behalf of Native people in partnership with the university, Dr. King told *Windspeaker*.



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Ambassador helped end last great smallpox epidemic

By Joan Black
Windspeaker Contributor

James Karl Bartleman, as Canada's current High Commissioner to the Republic of South Africa, has done little in his 33-year public service career that isn't a matter of record. And what a stellar record it is.

In the thick of foreign policy implementation in Cuba, Israel and a host of other hot spots for years now, in 1994 Bartleman was picked as foreign policy advisor to Prime Minister Chretien and assistant secretary to the Cabinet for foreign and defence policy, Privy Council office. Then last year, he was posted to South Africa, where he will serve two more years in the role of ambassador.

What is not widely known, however, is that Bartleman holds the highest foreign service rank of any Canadian Aboriginal person. He is also at the top rank of a foreign service career. These facts alone are reason enough for Bartleman to receive the 1999 National Aboriginal Achievement Award in the Public Service category. But there is a lot more about the member of the Minjickang First Nation in Ontario (Chippewas of Rama) that should inspire pride in Aboriginal people.

Windspeaker spoke to Bartleman at his home in Pretoria, South Africa, at the end of a 36-hour trip following the presentation of the award to him in Regina on March 12. Despite the late hour, Bartleman was more than ready to talk about what the award means to him. Aware as he is, too, that living in other countries most of his working life means a lot of Aboriginal people have never heard of him, Bartleman also spoke at length about his connection to the people of Rama.

"It's the greatest honor I have ever received in my life,"



Bert Crowfoot

From Rama to South Africa, the winner of the achievement award in the Public Service category is proud of the road he's travelled.

Bartleman said of the award. He explained that it gives him a real sense of belonging to the community in which he has his roots. There is no greater reward than receiving the approval of his people, he said.

"For me, it's very, very important culturally and personally to receive this award, for the sense of cultural identity.

"I'm a Bill C-31 Indian; my mother (an Indian from Rama) lost her status when she married my father, so we could not live on the reserve."

He then talked of his family's origins.

"The Indians in Rama had their hunting grounds in the Muskoka area, and they still have a small

reserve in Port Carling. They share that reserve today with the Mohawks from Gibson, and so it's a kind of combined Mohawk, Chippewa, Ojibway reserve. My mother spent her youth travelling back and forth between Rama... and the Village of Port Carling. I was born in Orillia, which is right beside Rama, but raised in Port Carling, which is north of [the reserve]." His father learned the Ojibway language, Bartleman added, but the children did not.

"I still have one uncle left on the reserve... and property, and in a small reserve like that with only 400 or 500 people, you know you're related to virtually everybody there." He said he is happy

to be able to go home for major community events, as he has done at least twice in the last five years or so.

"I've spent 33 years in the public service as a foreign service officer. This is my fourth assignment as an ambassador," he said.

He noted there have been a lot of changes at home over the years, and the wide-spread poverty that used to be evident in Rama is gone.

"Rama is one of the most progressive and industrious reserves in Canada," Bartleman said.

"[There is] pride in home ownership, nice houses, well-paved streets and progressive band management - even before the casino, they had excellent industrial parks and a big marina. I'm very proud to be associated with Rama, although I live in South Africa," Bartleman said.

Bartleman got a break when a wealthy American he worked for as a teenager helped him with a scholarship in Grade 13. He went on to complete an honors BA in history at the University of Western Ontario in 1963.

Bartleman says he taught after that - just long enough to save for a trip to Europe. He quickly got a taste for life abroad and decided to write the foreign service exam. He joined the Department of External Affairs in 1966, and was subsequently posted to Bogota, Dhaka, Bangkok and the North Atlantic Council in Brussels.

From 1981 to 1990, Bartleman served as ambassador to Cuba, then ambassador to Israel. Next came a posting back in Belgium, where he served as permanent representative and ambassador to the Canadian joint delegations to the North Atlantic Council.

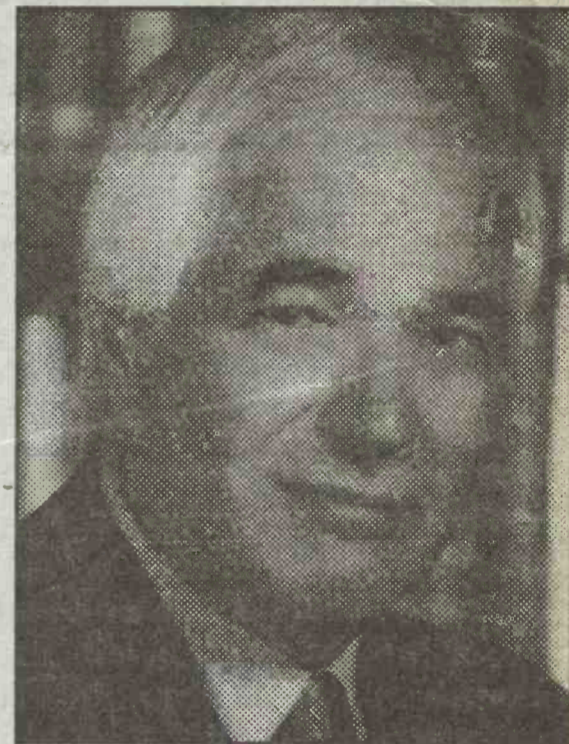
Returning to Ottawa, Bartleman was appointed director general of the bureau of intelligence analysis and security and he serve also as director general of the economic intelligence bureau. All that responsibility

didn't leave much time for recreation, but Bartleman says he did manage to find time for tennis and rebuilding an 18th century home he bought in Belgium.

When he started working with the prime minister, though, Bartleman had only 22 days off in five years. He took it in stride; he says of that time that he was serving the country, not a political party. It also helped that he had, and still does have, a good rapport with Jean Chretien, Bartleman added.

His favorite job, however, was in 1972. Then he opened the Canadian mission in Bangladesh and had a direct hand in preventing illness and starvation of millions of people.

"At a very early age I was put in charge of an enormous aid program," Bartleman recalls, "and brought in the large volumes of smallpox vaccine which put an end to the world's last great smallpox epidemic. I was asked by the [World Health Organization] if I would allocate the funds, and I had the authority in those day to do it, so I just did it, and 75 million people were inoculated. ... Also we rented the supertanker Manhattan and used it as a floating grain terminal and sent teams out to Singapore... to bring the grain upriver to help combat the enormous starvation."



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Justice applied with respect to culture and traditions of Inuit

By Joan Black
Windspeaker Contributor

Newfoundland and Labrador provincial court judge, James Igloliorte, as the only Inuk judge in Labrador, says the importance of being a role model has not escaped him. His contributions as jurist and educator and proud spokesman for his people have not escaped the notice of his peers either, who have honored Igloliorte with this year's National Aboriginal Achievement Award in the Law and Justice category.

The 49-year-old Igloliorte, born in Hopedale, Labrador, realized his life would reflect his values back to others as early as 1973 when he became vice-principal and teacher at St. James School in Lark Harbour. In a small East Coast community they'll soon let you know whether or not they like what you stand for; Igloliorte must have been doing something right, because in 1980 the Justice Department in St. John's asked him to assume the duties of a magistrate.

The time had more than come for the Aboriginal people of Newfoundland and Labrador to be represented in the judiciary by one of their own. Igloliorte,

already highly educated and experienced in the cross-cultural milieu at the time of his appointment, had a lot to offer.

From the time he first served on the Bench, Igloliorte has ensured the Canadian justice system he respects is applied in a way that respects the culture and traditions of the Inuit and other Aboriginal peoples.

Igloliorte made a place for himself in Canadian legal history when he became the first judge in this country to apply the so-called "code of color" to a decision affecting Native people. When a group of Innu occupied a Canadian Armed Forces base, asserting their right to land they consider to be theirs, they were charged with trespassing. Igloliorte dismissed the charges, which the Innu viewed as acknowledgement by Canada that their claim had merit.

Igloliorte has seen his jurisdiction expand, as well as his responsibilities, since he earned his law degree at Dalhousie University in Halifax and was called to the bar in 1985. He has performed judicial duties throughout central Labrador and beyond, in places where his Inuktitut language is often the language of record.

Igloliorte is "very comfortable" in his role now, he says, adding he gets a lot of personal and professional satisfaction in a job that allows him to have contact with people he enjoys working with.

At the beginning of his judicial career, it was a little harder to reconcile the expectations of everyone around him as he undertook to administer the law.

"Early in my employment," Igloliorte explains, "I found it quite disconcerting . . . because I was so young and because I was perceived to be part of the 'system'." Now into his second decade of service, however, people are used to seeing "Judge



Bert Crowfoot

People are familiar with "Judge Jim" (centre) and have come to trust he will ensure they understand their rights under the law.

Jim" presiding. They know that if they have to be in court, at least this judge will make sure they understand the proceedings and know their rights.

Igloliorte has always believed in the importance of education, which he views as an opportunity "to see and learn about things outside your own experience." At the same time, he admits that Aboriginal people who leave their communities to attend school inevitably lose some of their culture.

Since 1949, he explains, when Newfoundland joined Confederation, school curricula have been directed to mainstream models. As in other Native populations, the Inuit have been

subject to an education system that did not reflect their language and culture.

Igloliorte says the loss of the Inuktitut language in Labrador can be tied to the decline in influence of the Moravian church there. When the Moravians brought their version of Christianity from Europe to Labrador they learned and respected the Inuktitut language, aiding its survival. As the outside world moved in, however, the Moravians moved out, and the language declined steadily since 1949, according to Igloliorte. This phenomenon did not affect the Cree who moved there from Quebec, nor the Innu; both these groups have a greater attach-

ment to their language and more retention. Igloliorte kept his language he says, only because he never desired to live away from where he grew up.

In 1974, Igloliorte graduated with a BSc. and B.Ed. from Memorial University of Newfoundland, where he majored in physical geography and minored in geology. As a student he worked as a geological field assistant for a couple of years, before joining the department of education in St. John's. He taught in Lark Harbour from 1973 to 1980.

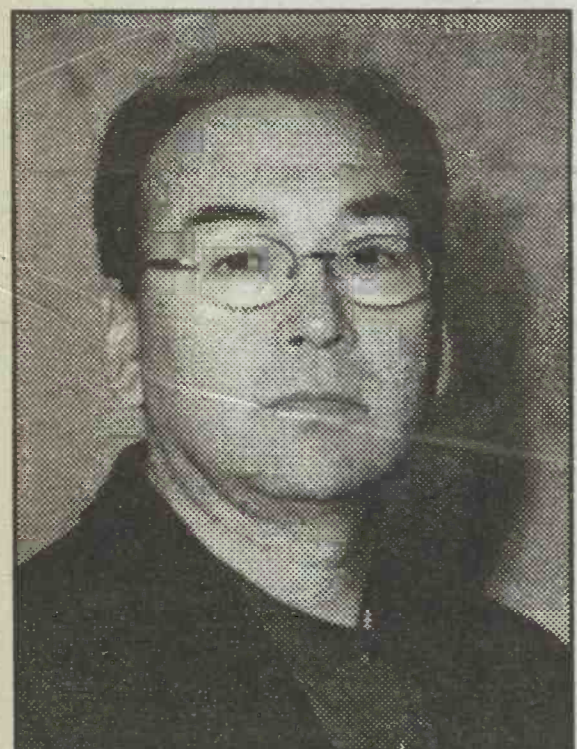
At the start of his judicial career, Igloliorte was appointed circuit judge for the Labrador coast from Nain to Mary's Harbour, based in Goose Bay. The circuit became all of Labrador from 1985 to 1993. The next three years he served Corner Brook and the Northern Peninsula, including Burgeo and Stephenville circuits. This grueling schedule kept Igloliorte away from home a lot.

"Four or five years ago, Igloliorte says, I was away for half the year." Now, he adds, it is typically a few days a month.

Over the years Igloliorte has been involved with organizations such as the Boy Scouts, the International Grenfell Association, and the Melville Native Housing Association. He has been a member of the Labrador Inuit Association since 1985, and in 1996 was a member of a Comprehensive Land Claims team. He is a member of the Newfoundland Provincial Judges Association and the Canadian Bar Association.

Wherever his judicial duties take him, he makes time for hunting and spending time with local people. At home in Happy Valley-Goose Bay, his leisure time is often spent gardening with his wife. He grows the root crops, she the flowers, with considerable success despite the short growing season.

"Effort and work equal results," Igloliorte concludes.



Ken Williams

JUDGE JAMES IGLOLIORTE

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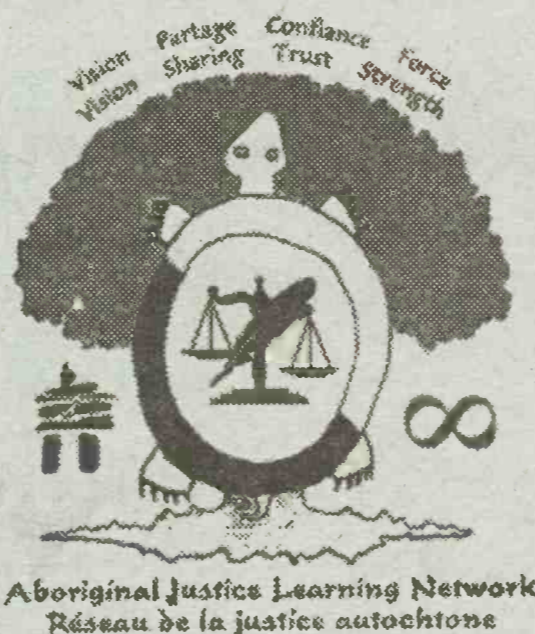
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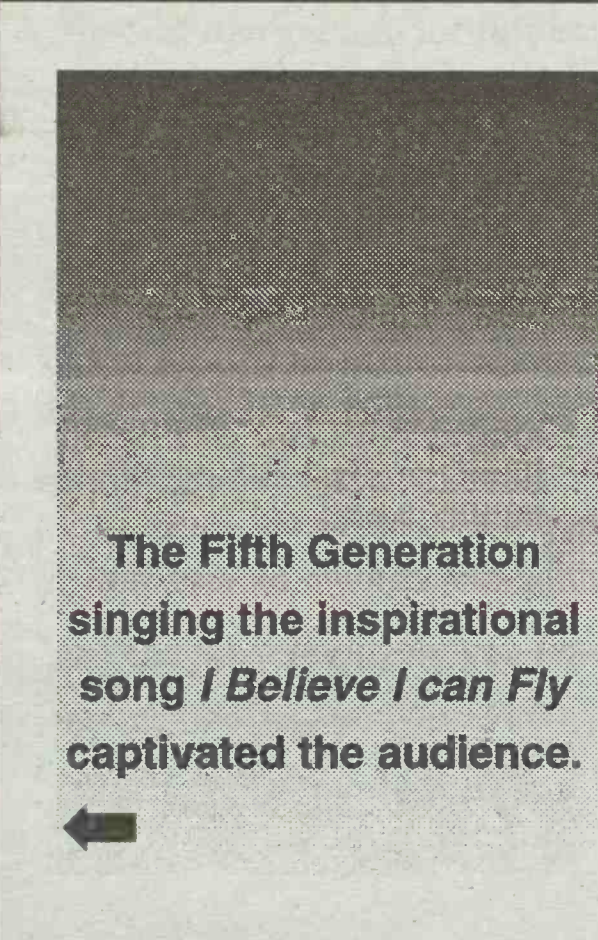
Gordon Tootoosis presents the third video segment of the award recipients profiles.



One of the traditional dancers at the opening of the awards show dancing to the beat of the drum.



Photos by Bert Crowfoot



The Fifth Generation singing the inspirational song *I Believe I can Fly* captivated the audience.



A piece of the rain forest from the Canadian west coast inspired awe from the audience.



The huge glowing reproduction of a mask by artist Art Thompson overlooked the stage.



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Long lost art form makes a come back

By Pamela Sexsmith Green
Windspeaker Contributor

LLOYDMINSTER, Sask.

Porcupines leave their stories on the trees. They are our little four-legged brothers from the forest who have long been part of the sacred legends and lives of the people of the Plains and Woodland tribes.

Since prehistoric times, Aboriginal people have benefited from the porcupine, learning to weave intricate stories and designs with quills, sinew and natural dyes. So it is, that the quills of the porcupine have come to carry the same spiritual significance as the porcupine himself, protective shamanistic qualities that ward off harm, similar to the magical power of a tortoise shell.

An ancient art form that predates European contact, quillworking is alive and well today in the hands of a few dedicated and patient practitioners. A gift from the Creator that echoes the soft colors of a Prairie sunset, waving fields of sage and sweetgrass, ripe groves of saskatoon, blueberries and juniper - and the feisty spirit of a little critter who carries his own medicine wherever he goes.

The modern rebirth of quillworking is part and parcel of a new North American trend. A vigorous and disciplined return to that most authentic of traditional paths, the recreation and preservation of real pre-contact culture and regalia.

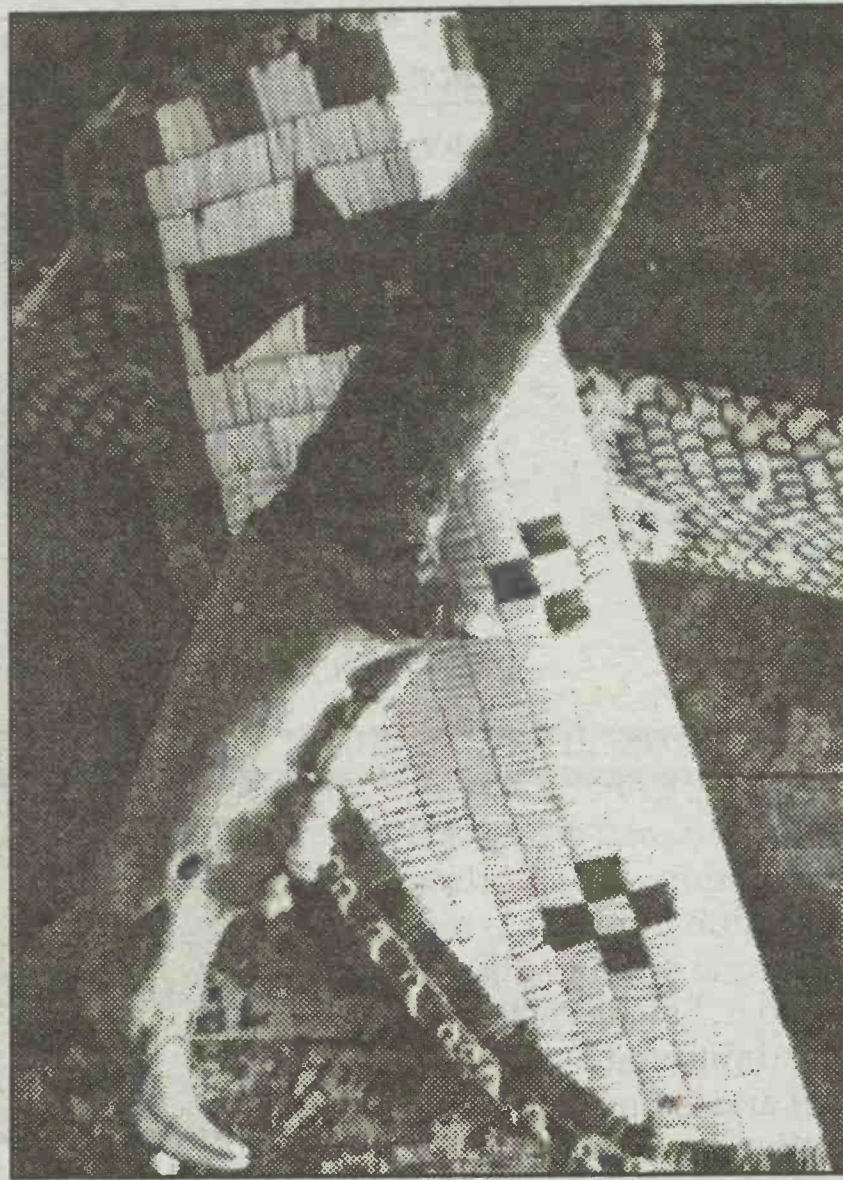
"Why use smoked moose hide instead of cloth, deer hoof rattles instead of bells, and quillwork instead of beadwork, when cheap

modern substitutes are readily available," asked traditional dancer, artist and regalia maker, Norman Moyah.

"Because it's totally and completely ours, the genuine article. And like Clovis and Folsom fluting on stone points, it is found no where else in the world. If you are pursuing authentic traditional garb, quillwork is the way to go, it's the real thing," he said.

The ancient art of quillworking began to lose ground in the 18th century with the arrival of glass beads, a highly prized trade item from Europe. The ease and availability of opaque pony beads and smaller multi-colored seed beads, led to the eventual demise of quillwork as a popular decorative medium, just as the introduction of cloth and woolen goods had replaced brain-tanned leather garments.

Beadwork became a prestigious and almost universal decoration of choice among Aboriginal people. Porcupine quillwork was driven so far underground, that almost all that remained were ghost forms of an ancient art, hiding inside beadworking patterns that imitated the layered



Fully quilled knife sheath for flint knife with bear jaw handle by artist Norman Moyah.

NORMAN MOYAH

rows of quillworking. It is a style that is commonly found on the heavy ornamental beadwork that decorates women's traditional regalia in today's powwow.

"With all due respect to the great skill and deft handling of beadworking materials by Native artisans, and to five generations of beadworkers among the women in my family, I have personally never felt any spiritual connection with a bead," said Moyah.

"What we seem to be forgetting is our spiritual connections with the animals, their shamanistic power, place in myth and storytelling and everyday life round

the campfires. A tasty delicacy for the ancestors during the long cold winter moons, each mature porcupine would yield between 30,000 to 40,000 quills, more than enough to keep even the most determined quillworker busy."

Aspiring quillworkers can gather all the quills they need from porcupine roadkills, a tragic part of modern reality for this slow moving rodent. In an ironic twist, the harvesting of this roadside carnage actually helps to meet conservation needs, while honoring the spirit of the dead animal.

The quills of the animal are easily removed by following the direction of the hair and pulling them out carefully by hand.

Preparation of the quills is very time consuming, from the gathering, washing and sorting to the preparation of natural dyes and pigments.

The use of natural dyes in traditional quillwork only adds to the power of Native medicine; berries, roots, grass, flowers, leaves, bark and minerals.

"All of my dyes are natural and it's a process of continual discovery and experimentation to rediscover the ways of the ancestors. Saskatoon berries are my favorite for making redish violet. Thorny Buffalo berries make a vibrant red, while Sage, Sweetgrass and copper pigments create varying shades of green," said the artist.

After coming out of the dye vat, each quill can be flattened and moistened before the final weaving, plaiting, wrapping, folding and attaching with bison sinew or thread, can begin.

"Quillwork was traditionally

attached to brain tanned leather from moose, deer and elk, and is definitely the way to go, as commercially processed hides tend to stretch," said Moyah.

"The oldest quillworkers tool kit found by Plains archeologists dates back to the 6th century AD, something which suggests to me that Aboriginal people have been refining their techniques for many thousands of years. The elaborate and ornate decorations created for ceremonial regalia, everyday household items and sacred artifacts such as pipestems, rattles, whistles and medicine bags, showed a high level of sophistication and mastery of the materials," he said.

Quillwork designs that reflected the geometric shapes of mountain and prairie landscapes and the intricate floral patterns of the Woodlands, were once very hot commodities on a vast trade network that stretched across the face of the continent in Pre-Columbian America.

Nowadays, most of the trade in finished quillwork pieces, porcupine lore and secrets of the craft is done on the World Wide Web among those with a serious bent for creating and wearing the real thing.

"Once we were quillworkers, and the trick is to find that connection, find our way back. I would like encourage more Aboriginal people to take up quillworking, search out books, study techniques, and view museum collections," Moyah said. "The more I work with porcupine quills, the more I grow to respect this shy, nocturnal animal who carries his own medicine on his back."

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Independence artist's top asset

By Terry Lusty
Windspeaker Contributor

CHATEAUGUAY, Que.

If ever there was an idealist committed to her own convictions, it is Carrie Taylor.

C. J., as she is more commonly known, is an accomplished artist who absolutely refuses to apply for, or accept handouts, in particular, of the government variety.

For that reason, she does not make overtures for funds from the Department of Canadian Heritage, Canada Council, or the National Aboriginal Arts Foundation, she asserts.

But don't get her wrong; she is not one of those starving artist types. She has her bad spells, she admits, but overall she manages and is proud to be an independent and free spirit with the flexibility to do what she wants without someone dictating how, why, where or when she can or cannot do whatever it is she wants to do.

In addition to the several hard cover children's books that C. J. has authored and illustrated through Tundra Books, Taylor is now being published through McClelland and Stewart, as well as Stoddart.

Her latest publication, *Messenger of Spring*, was released last fall by Tundra, as was *Fire Dancers*, a book written by Jan Bardeau, but illustrated by Taylor. She's got three more illustrated books in the works.

One of these is a full-length novel called *Singing Wolf*, which utilizes some of her black-and-white paintings. The story revolves around an early Canadian explorer, Pierre Radisson, who is captured by Mohawk Indians.

Taylor writes in the voice of a 16-year-old boy who becomes Radisson's adopted brother. Written "through Native eyes," says Taylor, it's a millennium project that will likely not be completed for another year or two.

A second book, *Little Mouse*, is dedicated to her one-year-



TERRY LUSTY

C.J. Taylor's most recent book is called *Messengers of Spring*.

old grandson whose name is Little Mouse. Scheduled for completion this summer, Taylor hopes it will be animated for television.

"Interest has already been expressed by CBC," she adds.

Her third project is a collection of her poems and paintings for a book called *Fragments of Thoughts*.

It will employ paintings that are abstract and three dimensional, and contain social and moral statements.

Taylor's also completed a series of 'Piggy paintings' on the issue of secession of Quebec. She began the paintings in 1989, transferred them onto slides and shows them at various schools and communities, along with accompanying poetry of her own creation.

Last year, for example, she toured schools and libraries in Norway House and Thompson, Man. the Images conference in Winnipeg, the Spadina Library in Toronto, and around Montreal.

She even got around to writing poetry at a few literary conferences in American spots, such as Sun Valley, Idaho, and

Billings, Montana.

Much of her touring involves Montreal schools, mostly elementary, where she explains her books, how she got started, her legends and paintings, and the stories behind the stories.

High schools act as a bit of a magnet too, she said.

"They are more of a challenge. I use my poetry and paintings, show slides, explain my work and the materials I use," said Taylor.

On July 6, she'll present workshops on her books and poetry to teachers and students at the University of Calgary's department of English.

Taylor gets her inspiration from music and life situations, she explains. They come from social, political, and environmental issues, documentaries on radio and television, she said. One of her key inspirations is music.

"It's seldom that music isn't playing when I stand in front of my canvas," she said.

"Mostly blues — works by Dr. John, Willie Nelson, B.B. King, Keb Mo, Johnny Lang, Bob Dylan," said Taylor about her favorite music.



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Dennis Lakusta releases new CD

By Terry Lusty
Windspeaker Contributor

EDMONTON

Edmontonians recently had the opportunity to sit back, relax and enjoy the original songs and music of Canadian folk music artist Dennis Lakusta, a Métis who now lives in Victoria.

Performing before a packed house at Edmonton's Full Moon Folk Club, Lakusta introduced the audience to a few choice cuts from his new and third CD, *Crow-child*. One of the songs, "The Warrior's Song," tells the tale of Canada's most historic personalities, the Métis leader, Louis Riel.

The feature song on the CD, *Crow-child*, speaks a lot to his past, he said. It also weaves in a bit of First Nation chanting, something that can be heard through a variety of compositions penned by this songwriter, as does the his falsetto and soft vibrato.

Lakusta, the off-spring of an epileptic mother and a father who "split the scene" very early in his life, was bandied about from one foster home to another, as well as religious institutions, until he'd gone through no less than 17 different homes.

As a young man who spent most of his life in and out of foster care, he did not get to meet his mom until he was 16. It was just this year that Lakusta met his father at Two Hills, Alta.

Lakusta set off on his own after quitting school at age 17. He wound up spending a lot of time in British Columbia's beautiful Nicola Valley and managed to acquire his first guitar, a Raven, when he was 23.

It was a \$25 guitar from the San Francisco Pawn Shop in Vancouver, he said.

When he was not playing guitar, Lakusta worked as a bridge builder for the railroad and also



TERRY LUSTY

Dennis Lakusta performed at the Full Moon Folk Club in Edmonton.

as a warehouseman.

When Lakusta took his first fling at music, it was in the country genre, which is reflected in his folk renditions of today. Around 1970, he made the crossover to folk, which is better suited to the material he writes and which often mirrors his soul, he said.

They are songs of friends and acquaintances, like Megan, a young girl who is immortalized in his song "Megan", which tells of a girl who thinks she's a bird, William who thinks he's a black bear, and Brad, an old coyote trickster. There are songs of the land and environment on the new CD, including "Let The River Run."

Other songs by Lakusta reflect everyday life and philosophies, as well as those of his Aboriginal heritage and traditions.

For Lakusta, his gig at the Full Moon was one of his very first of the circuit tour that began at Calgary. He then plays in Saskatoon, Pincher Creek, Alta. Fernie, Nelson, Vancouver, Victoria, and Nanaimo in British Columbia.

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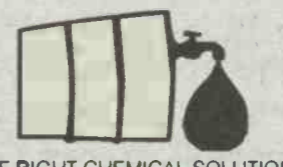
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It remains important, particularly during the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, to raise Canadians' awareness of the impressive accomplishments that are so widespread among the First Nations, Métis and Inuit in this country. Many thanks to the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation for organizing this distinguished awards ceremony.

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James Bartleman, Canada's High Commissioner to South Africa

Dorothy Betz, founder of the Winnipeg Indian and Métis Friendship Centre and pioneer court worker

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SEEING BEYOND®

Young talent takes to stage at Voices of the North

By Paul Sinkewicz
Windspeaker Contributor

PRINCE ALBERT, Sask.

It's a little bit country, a little bit rock and roll, and it's all fun.

Prince Albert, Sask. was treated to the seventh installment of Voices of the North on Feb. 18 to 20 as part of the Prince Albert Winter Festival, and organizers say the music showcase is getting bigger and better with each year.

The show features the best of Aboriginal talent from around Saskatchewan and has become one of the highlights of the yearly winter festival.

Bernice Sayese, co-producer and one of the founders of the showcase in 1993, said attendance at this year's event surpassed last year and featured the best roster of acts yet.

"Overall we felt it was very successful," Sayese said. "I was very pleased with the calibre of the performers, considering several of them were new."

Although the show featured fan favourites and veterans of the spotlight, the show could have easily been called Voices of the Young North.

Many of the performers were young up-and-comers, like 15-year-old Krystle Pederson of Martensville, who easily captivated the audience. Although only in Grade 10, Pederson brought a highly polished and expressive performing style, and a crystal-clear singing voice, to bear on the Rankins' "Gillis Mountain." She later came back to

close the show with "That's What Friends Are For", leading the rest of the entertainers in what was billed as the theme of the 1999 Voices of the North show.

Pederson said she is currently studying both voice and piano in Saskatoon and says she is hoping to parlay her talent into a career in music.

Pederson, who has already been very successful at various music competitions, was encouraging to other young singers likewise hoping to make it big. She said they should set their goals and just follow their dreams.

Other strong performances from the younger singers came from Loretta King, 16, of Meadow Lake and Prince Albert's Charity Greyeyes, 22. Prince Albert's nine-year-old Shayleen Dawn McNabb and Lindsay Jarrett, 15, of Shellbrook, were also hits with the crowd.

Fletcher Greyeyes has been a keen observer of the talent show since it began in 1993 when his brother, Gerald Greyeyes helped found it.

He said it's been exciting to watch the show grow from its beginning and seeing what it's done for Aboriginal talent.

"It was really hard for an Aboriginal person to break in," he said. "Aboriginal talent never really had a showcase."

Now Greyeyes sees all the young singers at the show, including his daughter Charity Greyeyes, and can see the positive effect it has had on them. He would like to see that talent continue to be nurtured.

"I can foresee a Northern Ol' Opry up here," Greyeyes said. "The talent up here is just phenomenal."

Greyeyes would like to see a weekly open stage where performers can hone their skills.

"It's very important to foster continuing support — we have the voices, we just need the support."

Sayese said the Voices of the North is starting to have a very positive effect on young talent coming up.

"I think that's one of the things that is happening," Sayese said. "I think it provides a lot of incentive."

The show normally features 12 regular singers plus other guests and four youth singers, Sayese said.

This year with 20 youth trying out for the show, there were double the usual number of auditions for the youth spots.

Deressa Shingoose, 16, of Yorkton, had been a youth participant last year, but made it into a regular spot this year on the strength of her talent, Sayese said.

All that growth in the younger talent pool may prompt Musqua Entertainment, the non-profit organization that produces the show, to add a separate youth show.

"We find from the interest of the youth we need to do a youth show," Sayese said. "That's one of our goals, to expand into other areas."

She said Musqua will be trying to line up grants or sponsorship money for the potential youth show for possibly as early as this fall.



PAUL SINKEWICZ

Krystle Pederson, 15, of Martensville, Sask., treated the crowd at the Voices of the North showcase in Prince Albert, Sask. to a beautiful rendition of The Fankin Family's "Gillis Mountain."

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KEN WILLIAMS

New York goalie Sam LoCascio stopped this Toronto Rock shot but it wasn't enough to prevent a 13 to 9 loss at Maple Leaf Gardens on Feb. 26.

Hot lacrosse action in Maple Leaf Gardens

By Kenneth Williams
Windspeaker Contributor

TORONTO

Maple Leaf Gardens may not be the home of the Toronto Maple Leafs anymore but a new tenant, the Toronto Rock of the National Lacrosse League, is making sure fans are still lining up for exciting action at this hallowed hall of sports.

More than 9,000 fans filled the stands to see the Toronto Rock roll over the New York Saints 13-9 on Feb. 26.

It didn't look good early on for the Rock as the Saints scored three quick goals in the first quarter before the Rock were able to respond with one of their own. Toronto couldn't capitalize on their early opportunities while the Saints seemingly scored at will. Before the first quarter was over, the home team was trailing 4-1.

But the Rock fought back and shifted the momentum of the game by scoring two quick goals to make it 4-3. In the middle of the second quarter, the Rock thought they had tied the game on a spectacular short-handed

effort by Dan Stroup. His diving shot trickled between the legs of the Saints goalkeeper, Sam LoCascio and bounced on the goal line. Even though he didn't score, Stroup drew a New York penalty on the play nullifying the Saints power play.

The game ground on, with plenty of scoring opportunities for both teams, but no one was able to put the ball past either goalie. The Rock's dominating play forced the Saints to take some careless penalties, giving them a five-on-three advantage at one point. The Rock, however, just couldn't finish up any of their set plays with a goal.

Dean Harrison managed to tie the game with a drifting shot that popped between the legs of LoCascio with 3:30 left in the second quarter, and the momentum was clearly going Toronto's way by the halftime break.

If nothing could go right for the Rock at the beginning of the first quarter, nothing could go wrong for them at the beginning of the third quarter as they turned their momentum into an avalanche. Six Nations' Kim Squires got it rolling with a quick snap shot from the top of

the crease that somehow got between the legs and under the stick of LoCascio early in the third. Then the Rock scored two more, increasing their lead to 7-4, before the Saints finally ended their 33-minute drought and got one back for themselves.

But just a minute later the Rock's Chris Gill fired a long, low screen shot through a crowd that completely fooled LoCascio. The Rock were completely in charge and increased their lead by five goals, leading 11-6 at the middle of the fourth quarter. But Saints weren't giving up the ghost just yet, and pulled within striking distance after two quick goals. Sensing that the wind was now on their side, the Saints pulled LoCascio for the extra attacker. It was a tactic that backfired as Kim Squires brother Rod scooped up a loose ball in front of the empty Saints net and sealed their fate with a flick of his wrist. The Rock pocketed another one before the Saints scored the final goal of the game. Bob Watson, the Rock's goalie, made 38 saves during the game. The Rock improved their overall record to 4-2, with a perfect 4-0 at the Gardens.

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Two provinces out of Hobbema games

By Terry Lusty
Windspeaker Contributor

REGINA



FILE PHOTO

The Indigenous Sport Council of Alberta says Saskatchewan is not going to participate in the Hobbema games. Sources say Manitoba has, or soon will, make the same decision.

Barb Modeste, executive assistant of the Alberta sport council, explains that the Saskatchewan Indian Summer Games are so close, timewise, to the western games that it would just be too much for them to handle, especially on the money end of things.

The western games are scheduled to take place in the last week of July at the Hobbema reserve, a one-hour drive south of Edmonton. Organizer Marcel Saulteaux maintains that they will proceed even though he admits they do not yet have a games manager nor funding confirmations. The community does have adequate facilities, an ambulance and fire department, security, transportation services and the ability to feed the sports delegates. Nonetheless, finances are crucial to the success of any such major event.

The current standing of the western games was to be dealt with at a March 22 chef de missions teleconference, which was postponed until March 25 due to a funeral at Hobbema. Two of those individuals included

The on-again, off-again nature of the games is causing concern.

Saulteaux and games chairperson, Willie Littlechild.

While there still appears to be some question about whether the games at Hobbema will proceed, the Indigenous Sport Council is adamant that they will have a western games one way or another. "We'll go with Plan C," said Modeste.

Sport Council director Ted Hodgson reiterates Modeste's statement that the games will happen, even if they have to split it up between different First Nation communities. However, the dates would likely change as well, he said.

"I won't go with July. I'll probably go with the end of August."

The director of sport, culture and recreation for the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations,

Glen Pratt, said his organization supports the concept of a western games and even hopes to one day host such an event. But, for this year, it's not going to work out for Saskatchewan.

"We didn't feel we could do a good job of fielding a team," he said. "We had to look at spending \$400,000 to benefit 300 athletes at the western games or spend the same \$400,000 to host our own games — something that will benefit 2,500 athletes."

He said the on-again, off-again nature of the games was not considered a good risk by Saskatchewan decision-makers.

"They didn't seem to be too prepared," he said. "We decided it would be better to focus on our own games."

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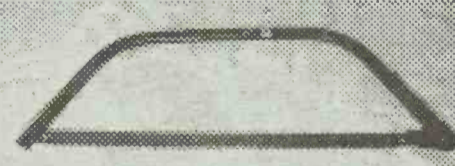
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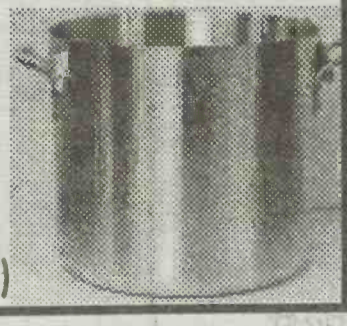
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Depression may be difficult to recognize because it presents in many different ways and in all ages. Symptoms are often not as clear in the elderly or in children. Children may have behavioral or learning problems in school, withdrawal, slow speech, reading difficulties, refusal to attend school, or eat poorly. Elderly may be become confused or more de-

pendent on others. Your doctor may consider other psychiatric and medical conditions as a cause of the symptoms.

People with major depression are at higher risk of abusing substances such as alcohol, drugs, or prescription medications. They are also at higher risk of having anxiety problems or committing suicide.

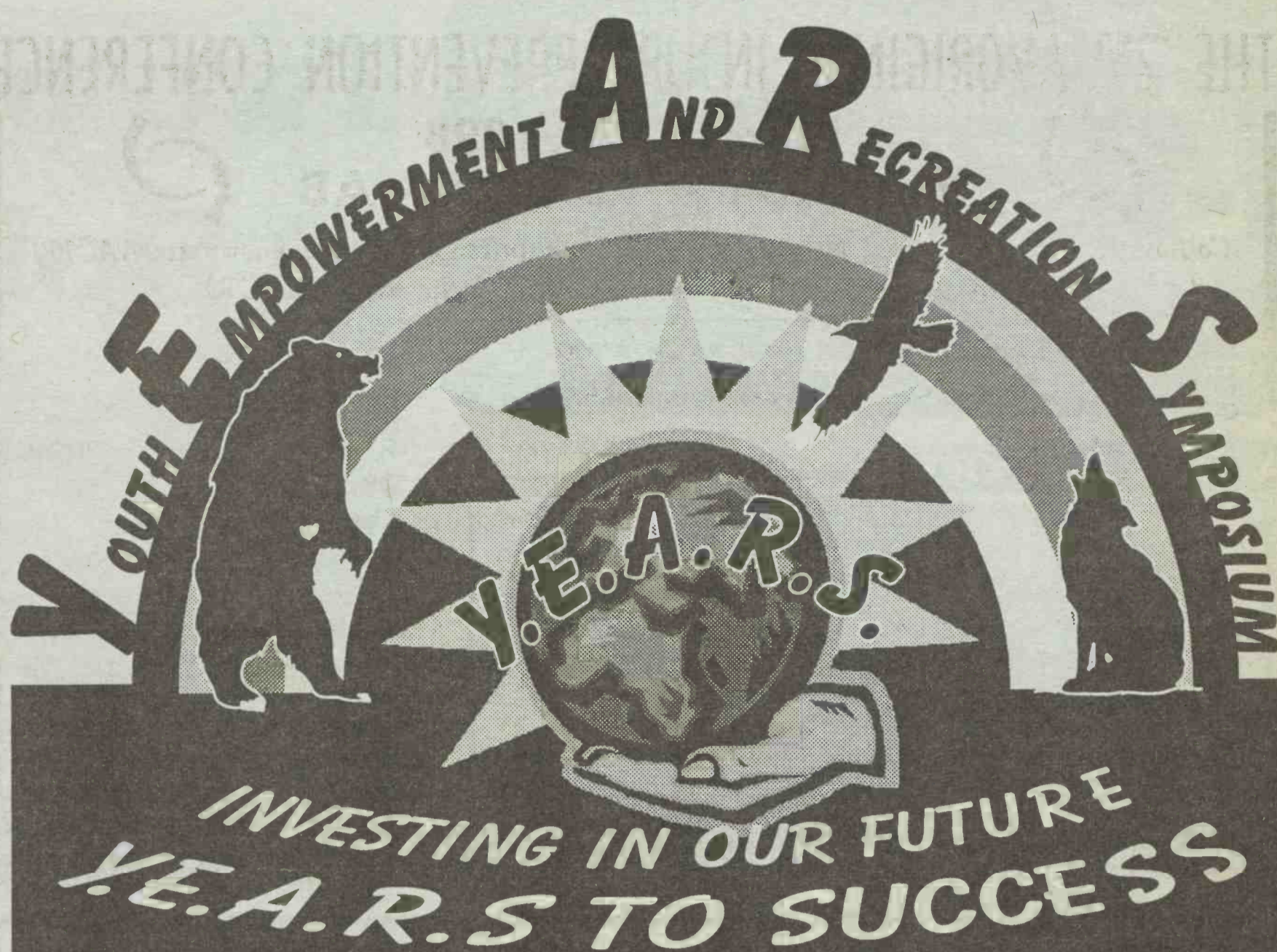
Most people with depression are treated by their family physician. Psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, and other mental health professionals may become involved if there is a need. Most patients are treated outside of the hospital and respond well. Hospital admission may be needed if a person needs intensive treatment or if they pose a danger to themselves or others.

Treatment is usually a combination of psychotherapy and medication. Psychotherapy allows a person to work through emotional, behavioral, personality, and psychiatric problems. There are many medications used to treat depression. They differ in the way they act on the body and the side effects they may cause. Doctors will evaluate each individual person to give them the most appropriate medication. Most medications start working within days and take from 4 to 6 weeks to get full response.

Electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) or shock therapy has gotten a bad reputation over the years. When performed with the modern equipment and anaesthetic procedures that we have today, ECT is a safe and very effective treatment for some major depressions.

Support by family, friends, and appropriate health professionals remains one of the most important parts in treatment of depression. If you or someone you know has depressive symptoms, you should see your doctor to be assessed.

This column is for reference and education only and is not intended to be a substitute for the advice of an appropriate health care professional. The author assumes no responsibility or liability arising from any outdated information or from any error or omissions or from the use of any of the information contained within the text. Dr. Pinette is a Métis family physician in Manitoba. If you have comments or suggestions for future health articles, write to Dr. Pinette, care of this newspaper.



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Spiritual harm is health issue number one

By Paul Barnsley
Windspeaker Staff Writer

EDMONTON

It was a plan that worked, perhaps even better than expected.

When Gitksan Hereditary Chief Barbara Clifton was asked by Native Women's Association of Canada President Marilyn Buffalo to oversee the three-day consultation conference where NWAC delegates would prepare their organization's contribution to the planning of the Aboriginal Health Institute, Clifton made sure that many traditional healers and chiefs would be present to give their point of view. It was a move that caused more than a bit of friction with Native health care providers who have been trained in the western, scientific tradition and objected to the focus on traditional, non-scientific approaches.

But, bit by bit over the course of the weekend, the two sides moved closer together.

More than 100 Native women and men in Edmonton from March 5 to 7. The weekend began with a federal government employee explaining the history of the health institute. From there, delegates were welcomed to advise the association on what points of view it should be adding to the process.

Health Canada has budgeted \$20 million over the next four years to establish and run the institute. Monique Charron, the director of Health Canada's Medical Services Branch's Program, Policy and Transfer Secretariat, said Health Minister Allan Rock has committed a continuing annual funding pot of \$5 million per year beyond the initial four years.

"The federal government had heard for years that there was a need to build capacity in Aboriginal health in a number of areas," Charron told the delegates. "In 1997, the National Forum on Health released a report in which it supported an Aboriginal health

institute. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal People supported the idea of an institute that would work within other mainstream institutions to build capacity in Aboriginal health. Some parameters were set, but it really gave a lot of the ownership of what the idea was to Aboriginal people. It recommended that the institute would conduct health research focused on the needs of Aboriginal people, gather information on culturally appropriate medicines, support training of Aboriginal health workers and serve as a support system for workers in Aboriginal communities."

Each of the five national Aboriginal organizations has representation on the joint steering committee that has been charged with making the institute a reality. Each of those groups was asked to provide input into what the institute should look like.

NWAC decided to look beyond the standard program-oriented approaches. Barbara Clifton told *Windspeaker* that the Native Women's Association strategy was to present traditional Aboriginal values as a strength, not an impediment to science-based health care.

"What we wanted to do was come with a strength. The strength is spiritual," she said.

Marilyn Buffalo said traditional healing and western medicine both have roles to play in the healing process that Indigenous peoples need to go through. Part of the harm done to Indigenous cultures has been the way that European systems have discounted them and treated them as backwards or inferior.

"I decided that since that's an area that's always neglected, that's an area we should concentrate on," she said. "Every one of those players understood traditional knowledge. Along with that comes the key element of respect."

The planning process will continue with meetings in Ottawa later this month. The institute is expected to open next spring.

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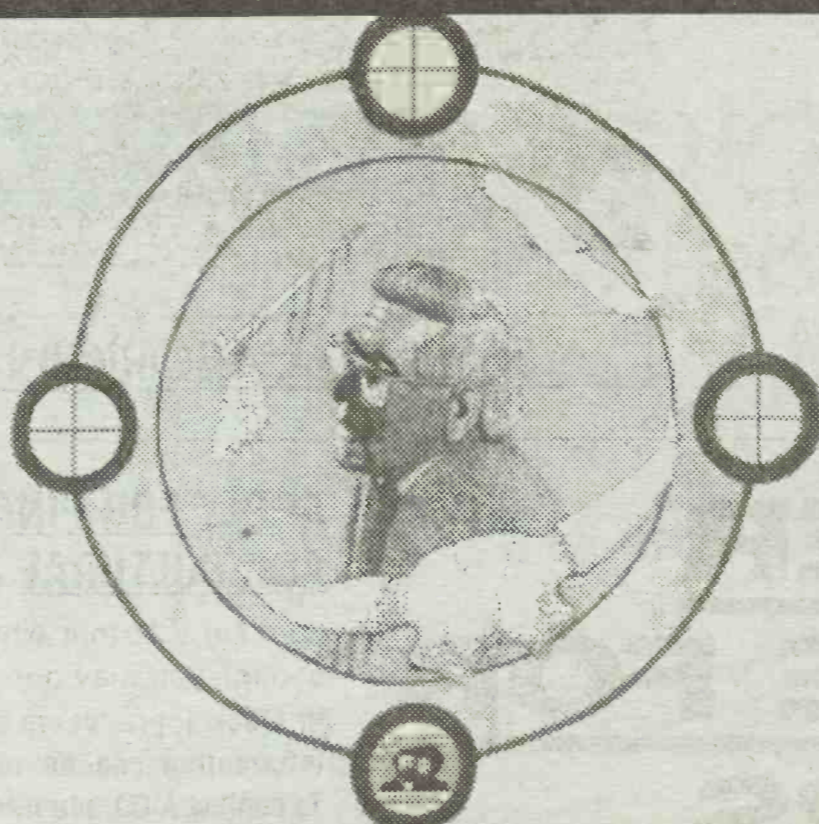
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Communities tackle health issues using holistic approach

By Len Kruzenga
Windspeaker Contributor

WINNIPEG

Like many First Nations communities, the Manitoba communities of Garden Hill, Wasagamack, Red Sucker Lake and St. Theresa Point have struggled with the effects of an ever increasing incidence of diabetes among their 7,500 residents. Since 1990 the rate of diabetes in these communities has doubled, according to recent health statistics.

With an estimated one in every eight Oji-Cree people suffering from or in danger of developing the disease, health officials, educators and band councils realized that heightening public awareness of the disease and its effects was essential to countering the disease.

That realization has led to an intensive health education program aimed at the youth in the community, to discuss the important role of a healthy diet in combating the disease.

"We know that the changes in the diet of our people, from their traditional staples of wild meat, fish and game to processed food high in fat, salt and sugars, has contributed to the increase in the disease and to its continuing effects on those who already suffer from the disease," said Island Lake Tribal Council health director Pauline Wood Steinman.

A recent health survey conducted on the four tribal council member communities, said Wood-Steinman, indicated education was urgent.

"Over 80 per cent of those interviewed said that greater public education on nutrition and the disease itself was needed, so we responded immediately."

That response included establishing an education program in the schools that promotes a high intake of fruit and vegetables and reduced consumption of processed and fatty foods, she added.

However, a recent health sur-

"They're are many people in our community who are not even aware that they have the disease. That is a particularly frightening danger."

— John Harper

vey prepared by the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC), Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak, and the Northern Health Research Unit of the University of Manitoba, revealed that families in the community often ran out of money for food. It was also found that people were suffering from weight problems, were experiencing problems in obtaining wild meat, and were suffering from the after effects of the disease, such as depression, kidney and heart problems.

And because the communities are remote, the cost of obtaining nutritious foods is a major impediment to improving diets.

"We are working on alleviating these problems at the regional and tribal council level," said Wood-Steinman.

She said communities are attempting to establish their own grocery stores in order to ensure a healthier range of food products are available. Some communities are looking at setting up co-operative bulk food purchases to offset the high shipping costs of fresh vegetables, fruit and high fibre products.

"The problem cannot be solved by a quick fix. It took years for our people to develop vulnerability to the disease and it will take some time to reverse that trend through improving living conditions and accessibility to services," she said.

"Education remains the most effective tool to start this process and the youth are our best hope to begin reversing the trends we have experienced."

Teachers, community health professionals and band government's have played an active role in the education process by using every opportunity to promote healthier lifestyles for the young people and assist the youth to identify the signs they or family members might have the disease.

"They're many people in our community who are not even aware that they have the disease. That is a particularly frightening danger," said Wasagamack First Nation community health coordinator, John Harper. "We give them the knowledge to improve their diets or how to obtain treatment for the disease. One of our continuing lessons is that by identifying the disease early it can be managed and prevent problems later such as blindness and heart disease."

While the program has only been running for a few months there are great hopes it, along with the emerging revitalization of traditional lifestyle, cultural awareness and infrastructure improvements in the community, will begin to turn the tide in fighting and preventing the disease.

"You have to remember that we are looking at the big picture, at improving the basic living conditions for our people and building healthier spiritual and physical communities. You can't look at diabetes in isolated terms, you have to look at everything from people's mental, cultural and physical needs, in order to make a lasting impact," said Wood-Steinman.



Pictured above are: Jonas, Fiddler, of Sandy Lake First Nation, Dr. Stewart Harris, Dr. Robert Hegele, Harry Meekis, of Sandy Lake, Dr. Bernard Zinman, and Dr. Henian Cao.

Oji-Cree diabetes link

(Continued from page 1.)

They also found that people with one copy of the mutated gene tended to develop diabetes in their thirties. On average, people with two copies of the mutation developed diabetes in their twenties. The findings were published in the March issue of the *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism*.

The researchers don't claim to have all the answers. They want to know why some people who do not have diabetes have the variant gene, which could indicate they are predisposed to developing diabetes, Dr. Hegele said.

They also found that 50 per cent of the people in Sandy Lake who have diabetes don't have the genetic mutation. Doctors suspect there could be yet another gene connected to the puzzle.

Finally, they say that two additional studies showed more than 100 people had a variant form of the gene, raising still more questions. And no one can say why eight Inuit communities or the Ojibway of Manitoulin Island they tested do not have the gene, although a high rate of diabetes exists in these places too.

"This discovery is a major contribution to further our ongoing research," Dr. Harris said. "Diabetes is emerging as a major epidemic among First Nations . . . and there is an urgent need to develop (prevention) strategies."

Drs. Harris and Zinman and the people of Sandy Lake decided they needed to do more than conduct laboratory research to get this urgent problem under control. They consulted with anthropologists and nutritionists and, starting in 1995, they set up a prevention program, which is ongoing.

One thing they did was to start diabetes education for Grades 3 through 5. They also aired a "Dr. Diabetes" show on the radio. Even the community's Northern Store assisted the project by agreeing to identify healthy food choices through the use of icons, colors and syllabics on their products. Health workers also undertook home visits to treat and educate those with diabetes.

Dr. Zinman said of the gene mutation discovery that it is important "but not earth-shattering." While he sees it as "an important advance" in doctors' understanding of diabetes, he believes the emphasis will have to remain on prevention through education for a considerable time yet.

All the doctors agree that it could be years before an effective new treatment for diabetes is found. Right now, even the test for the aberrant gene is not available outside the research lab and it is not covered by any health care plan.

"This announcement today confirms the importance of committing research dollars to finding new solutions," Harry Meekis said.

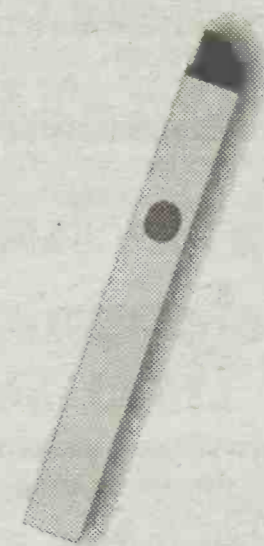
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Small miracles for Ken

Blessed Creator:

Let's to share since I last wrote. Where does one begin? First of all to the blessed folks in Northern Saskatchewan, let's dispel any rumors that I am gravely ill. It's not true. Best thing to do - check it out. Phone my band office at (780) 470-4505. The receptionist is always the first to know. I appreciate the concerns and good prayers.

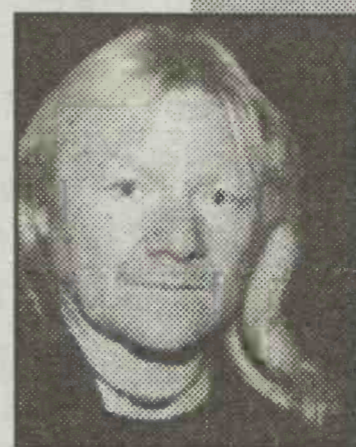
Health Status - four months ago my viral load was four million. Today, only 110. What a great drop! My doctor, Barb Romanowski, spoke to me of my results. Her first words were "small miracles." Yes Barb, they do exist.

The viral load test is the count of the HIV antibodies. If it's extremely high it can be serious stuff. You are prey to many infections, especially when your white cell (immune) count is low. It's time to regenerate your health, in other words take care of yourself. My energy level has bounced back to the point that I'm able to put in full days. It was time to take a break, and I did. By the way, ask your local AIDS service organization for more information about viral load tests and the T4 cell test.

Finally, it's happened. Alberta is having its first Aboriginal AIDS conference on April 26 to 28 in Calgary at the Cavalier Hotel. It was time, now that all of the groundwork has been laid at the community level and they are able to share what they have learned. Communities on reserves need to be educated about the issues, to digest the information, work on initiatives and discover what works and what doesn't. We are asking people to bring to the conference the results of the progress. Also, this conference is community driven, which in itself is one of the highlights. It will have a grassroots fine flavor and that will be quite visible to the eye and heart.

Another bonus will be the presence of Kecia and (big girl) Rakiya. You know it will be eight years since Kecia and I have been together at a conference? It's like two old moccasins reuniting. What an honor. There will be other special blessings at this conference. An Elder's circle directed by Mr. Joe Cardinal and his lovely wife Jenny Cardinal of Saddle Lake, Alta. This couple presents a positive role model of a family - husband and wife and such a caring people. I am truly honored that they will be sharing their time with us.

A strong component of the conference is the recognition of Aboriginal Persons living with HIV and AIDS and their families. It will be a time to honor those who believe in the values



Ken Ward

of life, sharing, honesty and respect. We are not forgotten. A special sacred round dance memorial will be held in their honor. For more information contact conference co-ordinator Denise Lambert at 1-800-459-1884.

Thank you to all of those who are dedicated to the consideration of the people the conference is intended to benefit. We love you for that and will always remember. By the way Ruth Morin of Nechi, you will earn my leopard shirt.

You know, dear people, there are times when there is doubt, that a simple little prayer does go a long way. By the way - I hope the documentary The Long Walk helps your effort's in addressing realistic issues when

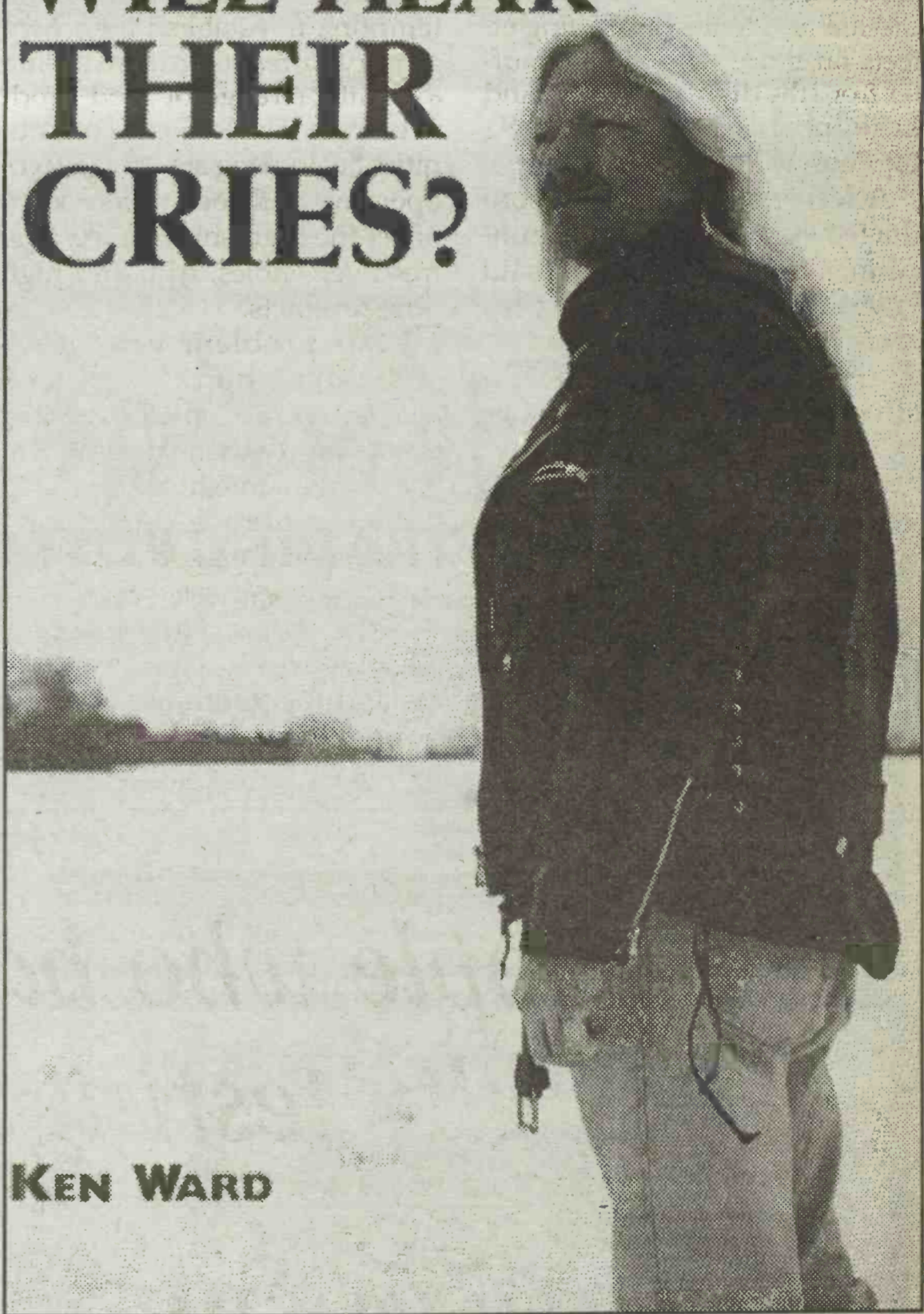
it comes to HIV in Indian Country. Thanks National Film Board.

Lastly, it would be terrific to read other personal stories from people who are affected by HIV/AIDS, including the leadership and their opinions surrounding the disease. Perhaps you could forward them to *Windspeaker* for possible publication. It's nice to hear from others, as well.

Special thanks to *Windspeaker* for its contribution to this issue and for helping to raise awareness. My prayers to you are, in good life, a good journey. Also to Lorraine Blyan of Enoch, Alta., life goes on.

Sincerely
Ken Ward

AND WHO WILL HEAR THEIR CRIES?



KEN WARD

Ken Ward is the author of a book of poetry about living with the AIDS virus called *And Who Will Hear Their Cries?*

Information on health and wellness is now on-line!

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Learning to read and write opens up the world

By Pamela Sexsmith Green
Windspeaker Contributor

ONION LAKE, Sask.

It took a lot of courage for Yvonne Carter to go back to school, not only as a shy Elder working in a classroom full of younger students, but as a survivor of the residential school system. That was an experience which left her frightened and confused and saddled with a legacy of broken Cree, broken English and a smattering of French.

"There were a lot of things I hated about the Roman Catholic residential school at Onion Lake. The nuns talked to each other in French and they had a word for us, 'sauvage... sauvage.' Every day there was that word ringing in our ears. I had always thought that it was a good word and we didn't have anything like it in Cree. I didn't know until later what the nuns meant. I didn't like it when they cut off my long hair, took away my homemade dresses and put me in uniforms and hard shoes."

As a mother and grandmother returning to high school, almost half a lifetime later, there were some real stumbling blocks that Carter had to get past, including anxiety about speaking in public and the idea that, because she was older, she must be wiser.

"I thought that as an Elder, I'd be wiser, but I find that it's the young ones that are teaching me things now, helping me with my speaking and writing. In my mind I would know what I wanted to say, but I had a very hard time saying it. I grew up learning Cree and English to-



PAMELA SEXSMITH GREEN

Yvonne Carter (left) and Marie Tootoosis battle illiteracy.

gether and at the [school] we weren't allowed to speak Cree - but they (the nuns) couldn't stop us. There were more than a few ear pinchings and twistings, but they couldn't take that away from us," said Carter.

Currently enrolled in the Adult Basic Education program at the Sakeweskam Learning Centre in Onion Lake, Sask., Carter said she has finally found a way to put all the pieces of her life together, in a good safe place and on her own terms as a Cree woman who is deeply committed to her own Native spirituality.

"It's so safe here. That other school was so scary and intimidating," said Carter.

Coming back to finish high school after a 40-year absence, she is busy tackling new challenges and a heavy Grade 12 course load, including computer technology and subjects like algebra and biology that weren't taught in her time.

Yvonne is one of more than a hundred students working on the GED, (general educational development), which will give

her the Grade 12 equivalency of university entrance, explained Marie Tootoosis, an instructor at the learning centre.

Each student is assessed and works at their own pace in a personalized program that addresses their own goals and needs, and includes students who have been classified as completely illiterate (starting at a Grade 1 level) right up to those wanting to upgrade for university entrance.

Onion Lake First Nation, which plows a lot of time, effort and money into adult literacy, offers the year-round programming to all adult band members, said Tootoosis.

The literacy program, an extension program of Eagleview High School, is designed to meet the needs of adults coming in from all walks of life, including the learning disabled.

Few students are classified as totally illiterate, said Tootoosis, with many returning to pick up lost or rusty skills. Adults can sometimes be hard to assess, she said. They often know words that

children don't know, but cannot comprehend sentences or paragraphs. Some have set challenging, long term goals for themselves in terms of further education, and others want to learn basic skills like how to count their own change and sign their name to a cheque.

"One of our students, a very shy Elder, grandmother, and friend of Yvonne's, came in to us with a special goal of her own, to learn to pen enough words to be able to write her own shopping list. She had spent a lifetime drawing columns of little pictures on a shopping list to remind herself of what she needed to buy at the store. For her, this is a big goal and an important one, to be able to do this thing," said Tootoosis.

For Yvonne Carter, high school graduation in June will not be a beginning or an end, but another link in a strong circle and a big step forward in a life of learning, serving and healing.

"Because of what I have been through in my life, surviving the residential school, losing my husband to alcohol, and grandchildren to a fire, I know what it is like to go through healing and I really believe in my Native culture. I have been helped by traditional healing, go to fasting rituals down south, and sun dances in the States, and it feels like somebody is always looking after me. I almost turned to that other religion (Christianity) one night when I was stuck, with no way to go to my sun dance. I prayed to the Creator and said, 'Well Creator, if you want me to go to that other religion I will, give me a sign.' I got a call early next morning from a couple

traveling down from Fort Chippewa who were on their way to a sun dance in North Dakota and wanted to pick me up and take me with them. That's when I knew, a sign that the Creator was looking after me. That's why I believe so strongly in our Native culture. There's someone looking after me, someone standing behind me."

Born in Thunderchild First Nation and currently a member of the Onion Lake Band, Carter is determined to put her new literacy to work, both on the reserve and out in the bigger community.

"My mother was Cree and my father Saulteaux, and it was from my mother, Mabel Paquette, that I learned how important it was to share. I thank my mother who was so loving, so kind hearted and never hurt anyone. I remember as a child that if we were down to our last flower or bannock and somebody hungry came to our house, she would share what we had. That's what she taught us, to help and share. My new literacy, learning to speak and write better, has opened up the world for me. Learning to work well with other people is another challenge, to see what use they can make of me and I to them," said Carter.

Recently elected to be an Elder advisor on the board of the Lloydminster Native Friendship Centre, she is also looking forward to a graduate year, a 10-month residency for Native artisans at the cultural school in Lac La Biche, Alta. where she wants to be able to deepen and share her own knowledge and understanding of Plains Cree culture and spirituality.

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Aboriginal women and Bill C-31: Research in action

By Audrey Huntley
Special to Windspeaker

VANCOUVER

The Aboriginal Women's Action Network (AWAN) held a training workshop on participatory research at University of British Columbia's First Nations House of Learning recently. The gathering was the second phase in AWAN's research project investigating and analyzing the impact of Bill C-31 on the lives of Aboriginal women and their children.

Bill C-31, introduced in 1985, replaced Section 12(1)(b) of the Indian Act, which caused Aboriginal women to lose their "Indian status" when they married non-Aboriginal men. Aboriginal men did not lose status when they married non-Aboriginal women.

Although the bill was designed to clean the Indian Act of its gender-based discriminatory elements and thereby improve the situation of Aboriginal women, it has become apparent that, in fact, little has changed. Or as one speaker at the gathering put it: "sexist discrimination has simply been knocked down to the next generation."

Many women who regained status were rein-

stated into categories that do not allow them to pass their status on to their children or to their children's children. As well, many women have not gone through the complex process to become reinstated, as there has been little support provided to them by either the federal government or local band councils.

AWAN hopes to change that situation. Its research project, set for completion in late Spring, consists of four phases: generating a literature review that brings together and analyzes the findings of academic, community and government studies; interviewing women affected by Bill C-31 across the province; compiling their stories; and producing a final report to be used in lobbying for changes to the legislation as well as for educational purposes.

In preparation for Phase 2, about 40 delegates from different Nations all across the province came together for the weekend workshop on participatory research. Sixteen of the women in attendance had agreed to conduct the interviews in their home communities.

They received background information on Bill C-31 and training through a popular education workshop on interviewing. Over the course

of the weekend, a set of questions to be used in gathering stories from other women across the province was generated.

The participants spent a considerable part of the weekend talking about their own, often painful, experiences resulting from loss of status, and about the difficulties they've faced in trying to go through the reinstatement process and return to their homes.

Little or no advocacy is out there to help women with this process, and in many cases, band councils that are not supportive of women being reinstated have tried to deter women from returning home or have forced them to leave.

Many band councils feel threatened by the presence of strong vocal women returning from urban areas, and many do not want to share the resources and programs with them. Under Bill C-31, band councils have the authority to determine who has "membership" in the band, and therefore access to education, health, housing and income support programs administered by the band.

The treaty-making process in British Columbia has also reinforced discrimination against women because

women who do not have "status" cannot vote on treaty agreements affecting their home communities. Their participation is obviously not seen as necessary or important, as no government — federal, provincial or band — has seen to it that their voices are included in the process.

Other common themes discussed on the weekend were the loss of culture and issues of identity. "Aside from the Indian Act [definition,] who is 'Indian'?" was a question which arose. "How restrictive should band membership codes be?" was another.

While opinions differed on blood quantum as a system of measuring identity, a sense of separation from community and division of community was shared by many. How bands are served by discriminating against women was also a point of discussion.

Theme related questions were formulated that examined the effects of Bill C-31 on individuals, families and communities. They also addressed the reinstatement process as well as access to rights under the bill.

Sharon McIvor, a member of the Lower Nicola Band in Merritt, B.C., spoke on the first full day of the gathering. As a lawyer and activist,

she has long been fighting for the rights of Aboriginal women. Drawing from her experience, she underlined to participants the importance of extensive and complete documentation, so it is useful in court challenges. She said a number of the women she is representing will likely take their cases to the Supreme Court of Canada, where the project's final report may make a difference.

The weekend was a success, not only because the process of participatory research on Bill C-31 is underway, but also because Aboriginal women who are isolated in their communities, and in some cases geographically, had the opportunity to share their experiences and begin organizing against patriarchal discrimination by both the state and Aboriginal men.

AWAN is still looking for Aboriginal women from the following regions to conduct interviews in their communities: Kamloops, Northern Vancouver Island, the Kootenays, and Northeastern B.C. Volunteers will also be needed to help with transcribing the interviews. To participate or for more information, contact AWAN at (604) 879-8094, 435-5449, 255-0704.



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First Nations Youth Council to be established

By Len Kruzenga
Windspeaker Contributor

WINNIPEG

The dream of a full-fledged First Nations Youth Council inched closer to reality last month as 300 First Nations youth gathered in the city to formally prepare for the establishment of their own political arm to represent them at the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs.

Youth representatives from the province's major urban centres and its 61 reserves went about the task of hammering out a vision for the new council, as well as developing an organizational plan.

For many of the youth, the one-day conference marked a milestone in their relations with the AMC, which helped sponsor the event, an organization

that had rebuffed previous attempts to establish formal political representation by the youth.

"The numbers are inescapable for anyone to ignore because First Nations youth represent over 60 per cent of the population both on- and off-reserve," said conference co-chair, Clayton Thomas.

"Political organizations like the AMC and others are beginning to understand that if the youth don't have a formal political voice and a seat at the table then these organizations can't really say that they represent the interests of a majority of their own people."

For Thomas, who also heads up Aboriginal Youth Initiative, the need for a political voice for the youth is a pressing concern.

"The issues of economic development, training and employment, education, health

and self government are all aspects affecting our lives today," said Thomas. "We aren't just saying to everyone else, 'hey you better do something about this,' but that we are prepared to do things for ourselves."

Yet plans to have the youth council become a formal part of the AMC are a worry for some of the youth.

"They should remain separate from all the other political organizations," said Sean MacKenzie, who describes himself as an "urban Indian."

"Once groups like the chiefs or the Aboriginal centre have their hooks into you, then you become nothing more than pawns for their own agenda."

Sandy Lake First Nation member, Mandy Fiddler echoed that concern.

"We need our own distinct voice and representatives

whose sole concern is to move our issues forward and not get mired down in the politics of these other groups.

"That's the only way anyone is really going to take us seriously. We have to create a group whose support is regarded as essential by the other Aboriginal organizations and by the governments."

However, for Thomas and many of the young people who attended the event, the support of the AMC in organizing the conference came as a bit of a surprise, albeit a pleasant one.

"This is a tremendous accomplishment for the youth and for the AMC in supporting this event because it finally sends a crystal clear message to the youth that they (the AMC) are taking us seriously."

The apparent recognition is credited to Chief David Crate

(Fisher River First Nation) and Chief Margaret Swan (Lake Manitoba First Nation) who drafted a resolution at the last AMC assembly calling for the chiefs' support of the youth initiative.

For Swan, the support of the AMC for the creation of a youth council will ensure the chiefs' organization remains relevant.

"The youth absolutely must have a political voice within our organization in order for it to represent the interests of all our people. Self government, economic and other political issues are having, and are going to have, an impact on the lives of our youth and their future," she said.

"If they're not included in the political process that decides the outcome of these issues then they won't be able to take ownership of them."

Blockade may lead to hot summer, says grand chief

By Marie Burke
Windspeaker Staff Writer

NAKINA, Ont.

The week-long blockade of a forestry road by members the Aroland First Nation has forced the logging company, Buchanan Group, back to the negotiating table with community leaders.

Aroland First Nation members were joined by about 100 First Nations people from Marten Falls, Fort Hope and Constance Lake, to block two access roads that run through the Aroland community when Buchanan refused to sign a forestry agreement that was negotiated more

than three years ago.

"The people put up a public meeting when we saw logging trucks driving by with logs on them. We found out they weren't just building a road, they were clearcutting," said Sonny Gagnon, Aroland band councillor.

The blockade started March 5, and came down a week later when officials from the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Buchanan Group and Aroland First Nation agreed to meet.

The ministry granted a license to the company on the condition it negotiated an agreement with Aroland for a working partnership in forestry development.

"We asked the Ministry of Natural Resources to come up with some arrangements and set April 12 as the final date to negotiate a reasonable agreement," said Gagnon.

The Buchanan Group is set to open a mill in Nakina, Ont., that, under the agreement, was to provide employment and business opportunities for Aroland First Nation members.

The agreement outlined terms to include the First Nation in the development and management of the forest in the licensed area.

Gagnon believes the Buchanan Group used the unsigned agreement with Aroland to secure a license from the ministry with no

intention of pursuing a partnership with the community.

"Our agreement was negotiated, but for the last two-and-a-half-years we got the run around. Then they rejected our agreement and countered with one that was not what we negotiated," said Gagnon.

Ron Running, natural resource district manager for the Nipigon region, confirmed Buchanan rejected a draft agreement with Aroland, but he is hopeful the agreement will be re-negotiated by April 12.

"The ministry sat down with the three chiefs and Buchanan and agreed all the trees that had been cut could be hauled, but

there would be no further harvesting or road construction until an agreement could be reached or both parties feel comfortable working on the agreement between themselves," said Running.

The three chiefs at the meeting represent the Aroland, Marten Falls and Fort Hope Aboriginal communities, he said.

The ministry is acting as mediator and there will be a review of the progress made at the discussions on April 12, said Running. If an agreement isn't reached by that date, the ministry will deal with that possibility at that time, he said.

(See Ready page 38.)



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First Nations Bank's national vision on schedule

By Marie Burke
Windspeaker Staff Writer

REGINA

In its second year of operation, the First Nations Bank is on its way to meeting the goal of becoming a national bank with the opening of a third branch in Walpole Island, Ont.

"There's great opportunity for a bank that is focused on the First Nation market. The bank is growing and expanding to be First Nations driven and owned," said David Ross, president of First Nations Bank of Canada.

The First Nations Bank held its annual general meeting of shareholders in Regina last month. Students in the business administration program at Saskatchewan Indian Federated College were invited to attend and ask questions.

The meeting was held on the same day as the National Aboriginal Achievement Awards and business students were also invited to be guests of the bank at the gala, said Ross.

The First Nations Bank opened its head office and first branch in Saskatoon on Sept. 23, 1997. The proposal for the bank came from the Saskatchewan Indian Equity Foundation that was established by the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations in 1993.

The Toronto-Dominion



COURTESY OF TD BANK

The intention to form a First Nations Bank was announced in 1996 and the first branch was opened in Saskatoon in 1997. Now, two years later, a third branch has opened in Walpole Island, Ont., with more interest being shown from across Canada.

Bank offered a proposal as a financial institutional stakeholder. It was accepted by SIEF and the FSIN, but the two Aboriginal organizations reportedly made it clear to TD Bank that it wanted to be an equal partner and no less.

The TD Bank agreed to a business partnership with SIEF and the FSIN. The announcement of their intention to form the bank came in 1996.

The First Nations Bank functions as a subsidiary of the TD Bank. TD Bank provides op-

erational support through its branches and access through their network of automated banking machines.

First Nations Bank offers the full range of services that any other bank in Canada does, including investment services for individuals, businesses and communities.

"Over time TD's interest needs to be brought down, but that hasn't changed much yet. We just really started offering shares to Aboriginal groups," said Ross.

When the bank first opened, it was anticipated that it would take 10 years to repay the TD Bank's investment.

The expansion of the shareholder base is needed to raise the capital of First Nation shareholders, said Ross. An offer of memorandum is provided to interested Aboriginal groups for an opportunity to purchase shares.

The board of the First Nations Bank currently consists of four directors appointed by

the common shareholders and four directors appointed by the TD Bank.

"The James Bay Cree expressed an interest in banking, which led to the opening of a branch in Chisasibi, Que. Matthew Coon Come is one of our board directors," said Keith Martell, chairman of the board of the First Nations Bank. Coon Come is the grand chief and chairman of the Grand Council of the Crees of Quebec.

While the bank offers its services to non-Aboriginal customers as well, the common share ownership is restricted.

"We have the shares as a private offering to Aboriginal people as defined in the constitution, to protect us from foreign investors," said Martell.

Common share ownership starts at \$500,000 and is directed at Aboriginal groups or corporations, he said.

"We have a \$5 million target for this offering, that is to achieve a 58 per cent common shareholder base and a 42 per cent base in Saskatchewan," said Martell.

The one thing the First Nations Bank wants to make clear and make people understand is that this is not just a Saskatchewan bank, said Martell.

"What's really important is the vision, an Aboriginal institution for Aboriginal people. We want them to deal with us because we offer the best services," said Martell.

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Buying group to net members big savings

By Len Kruzenga
Windspeaker Contributor

WINNIPEG

The saying that there's strength in numbers has taken on new meaning in Manitoba with the launch of the First Nations Buying Group (FNBG).

For the province's 60-plus First Nations, hundreds of political, economic and cultural organizations, independent entrepreneurs, and the 100,000 Aboriginal residents in the province, it will mean big savings on everything from office supplies, long distance rates and computer equipment.

Launched in 1998, the group's goal is to link First Nations individuals and groups. One of its first members, the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, is a vocal supporter of the idea.

"It's a great idea," said Grand Chief Rod Bushie. "The FNBG will help us gain some significant financial savings for our people."

It's a vision pioneered by com-

pany president Mike Birch.

"We realized that if we buy together as one group we could have a great deal of bargaining power."

Since its inception, the group has successfully negotiated a rebate of two per cent on all long distance charges for both business and private calls for First Nations' members.

Birch said for a community of only 450 people, the rebate is estimated to hit \$3,500 every year, and that's only the beginning.

National office supply company, Grand and Toy, has also inked an agreement with the group providing for discounts of up to 40 per cent off catalogue prices and a two per cent rebate paid by the group to its members.

Corporate partners include Xerox, and Henry Armstrong printing services. The group has also recently inked another discount deal with Powerland Computers, said group spokesperson Gary McLean.

At present more than one-third of the province's bands have

joined the group, as well as three tribal councils and a number of other Aboriginal organizations.

The response by First Nations has Birch and McLean confident that everyone will have joined in by year's end.

"It just makes sense for First Nations to try and maximize every dollar they spend because for every dollar they save on supplies or telephone expenses they can pump those dollars into other programs," said McLean.

For First Nations and their organizations the only requirement for membership is a \$100 annual fee, which is simply deducted from any rebates the First Nation or group receives from the buying group at year-end.

For Birch and McLean, the recent developments are only the tip of the iceberg as other Aboriginal groups and organizations in Ontario and Saskatchewan have started to express an interest in joining the group.

"The way things are going we'll probably be expanding the group across Canada," said

McLean.

"As the buying group membership increases so will the level of discounts we will be able to negotiate and the level of rebates we can offer.

One of the most intriguing areas of the buying group is the fact that individual Aboriginal people can apply for membership as well, whether on reserve or living in major urban areas such as Winnipeg.

McLean says private individuals can receive the same discounts and rebates as First Nations and Aboriginal groups.

"What we are developing is a way for everyone from individual families to First Nations organizations to get some real savings. Mainstream retailers have been developing all sorts of membership clubs and discount incentives in mainstream society and our group's goal is to provide our people with their own membership and discount benefits."

It's this type of innovative business thinking that First Nations will be using to fashion their own

form of self-reliance and self-sufficiency, adds McLean.

"This represents a fundamental shift in thinking for First Nations that sustainability and self government also includes economic initiatives where we can make our mark and showcase our entrepreneurial skills and spirit," he said. For the buying group the initial success in developing strong relationships with retailers and corporate suppliers indicates the time is ripe to have the buying group branch out into building and construction supplies, vehicles, groceries and deals with department stores.

"Our goal is to get our members the best prices possible on every conceivable consumer item, and we do that by developing partnerships and working relationships with companies that are prepared to look at First Nations business in a more progressive way. That has to include being able to turn some of those savings back to the communities and groups through rebates," said Birch.

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Smuggling problems engulf community

(Continued from page 37.)

"They make you act like that," he said. "You try to do something legitimate like we're trying and they put roadblocks up every which way you go."

Mitchell also believes that federal and provincial governments are going to have to change their approach if poverty and economic stagnation are going to disappear from First Nations.

"I want to make this statement. I've made it before; I repeated it in Ottawa," Mitchell told *Windspeaker*. "We don't have an economy to speak of that would provide for our people. With low employment, it's easy to entice iron workers or anybody else that's out of work. It's easy to approach someone who has a boat and say, 'Take this across.' I've been watching with some interest the way the law enforcement officials have exercised their enforcement policies. A lot of undercover work, a lot of waving a carrot in front and enticing and those that have bitten were rounded up. It's like one of those traffic police that has a quota, speeding tickets that he's got to hand out. So they've achieved the desired result. But I look at the majority of the people that got involved in some capacity in this and they're no big time smugglers nor are they even crooks. They were victims of economic enticements."

While some observers suggest the big cigarette companies couldn't have gotten away with

the scheme that led to the charges against the RJR-Macdonald affiliate without at least some compliance with federal officials, Mitchell isn't prepared to make that accusation without concrete proof. But he says federal inflexibility — whether there was an ulterior motive or not — caused the smuggling problems that engulfed his community.

"Canada can complain that it has suffered greatly monetary-wise from Akwesasne's boundary. But when this whole thing started I proposed certain laws be created and recognized and supported. That didn't happen. I proposed a Mohawk border patrol program to protect our interests as well as any abuses," he said. "Back in the middle 80s when this thing started there was a non-Native person who put me on that path. He said there's collusion here between the cigarette manufacturers, the government and the people involved in this trade and your people are going to be used. So I tried to follow his logic. It was pretty hard to believe — until almost 16 years later — the people who are directing this operation are the cigarette manufacturers themselves. If you look at it, at the time — which was 1986-87 — they were sending thousands of cartons of cigarettes and it was escalating monthly and Canada had no problem with it," Mitchell said. "As a matter of fact, it was Akwesasne that flagged it. We had meetings with Ottawa on this. Any regulations

that our community's leadership tried to put on — that's both the traditional and elected leadership — was stifled by Ottawa. Two dozen community laws, by-laws, that were passed were all rejected by Ottawa. Their rationale was that the laws that we were trying to address were *ultra vires*. They already existed in Canada's laws and they were more than equipped to deal with it. If Akwesasne was any First Nation within the boundaries of Canada... but we were dealing with a very different situation. The oddity of it all is that five, seven years later, when it was really out of control and Canada was losing over a billion dollars a year, all fingers pointed back to Akwesasne. People were saying look at that criminal community. It was quite an experience. I have very strong feelings about the treatment they put this community through."

That frustration and bitterness is what prompted Mitchell to launch his challenge of the border-crossing laws that, after two victories in Canadian courts, is on its way to the Supreme Court of Canada.

Mitchell spoke to the standing parliamentary committees on Justice and Aboriginal peoples, hoping to convince legislators to pay attention to the issues of on-reserve poverty and economic stagnation as well as the jurisdictional issues that all combined to create an atmosphere that smugglers could exploit.



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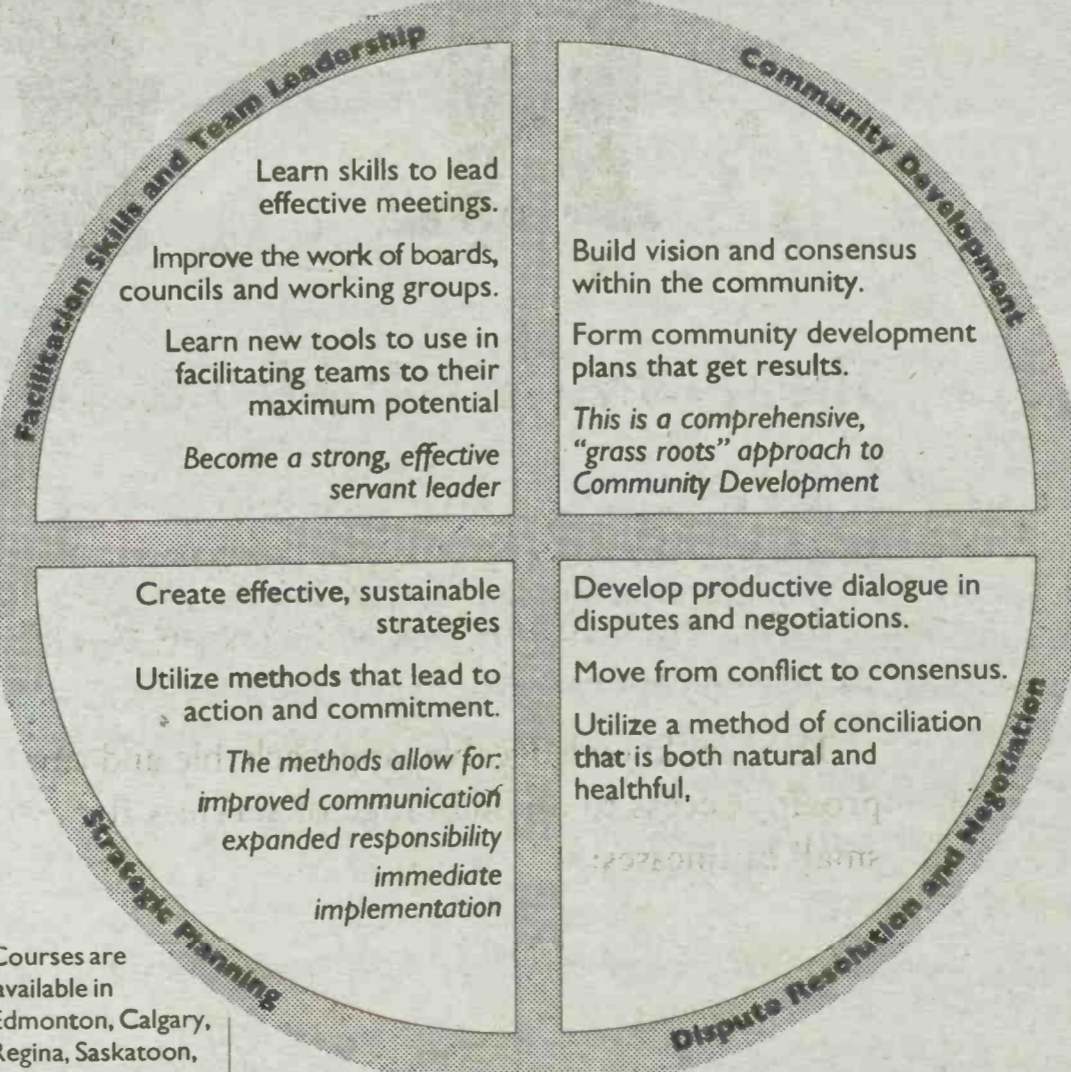
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Ready for war this summer

(Continued from page 34.)

"The leaders of the parties involved need to take advantage of this situation. This is an opportunity for economic and social development and it is clearly the responsibility of the ministry to work with them towards that," said Running.

Grand Chief Charles Fox of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation doesn't feel as optimistic as the ministry does about future land use agreements.

Fox took part in the blockade to support the First Nations communities in their protest.

"I'm not happy about the historical events that have happened here. These negotiations have been ongoing for years," said Fox.

Fox blames the Ministry of Natural Resources for granting a license to Buchanan without protecting the negotiated, but unsigned, agreement.

"We are just preparing ourselves for a long hot summer with the province of Ontario," said Fox. "The Aroland blockade is just the bubbling point."

Fox is also concerned with the Ontario government initiative, Lands for Life, an extensive public debate on land use and protection in Ontario, specifically Crown land.

First Nations leaders in Ontario were involved in discussions as stakeholders, but Fox said that is not the case now.

"We were involved until the 11th hour, that is until a report was submitted without our approval. Now what we want is government-to-government negotiations," said Fox.

The consolidated report of recommendations on Lands for Life was completed last year. Recommendations in the report on Aboriginal peoples' participation included the

Ministry of Natural Resources assurance that Aboriginal people are part of resource co-management and economic opportunities from Crown land and resources.

"The terms of condition 77 is supposed to provide First Nations with consultation and participation in forestry development," said Fox.

The Environmental Assessment Act in Ontario contains condition 77, which is to ensure Aboriginal communities are consulted on land use.

"The minister called and asked me what I wanted. I said I want Ontario back," said the grand chief.

Discussions will not go any further on the Lands for Life initiative until treaty rights are respected by the Ontario government, he said.

"We're getting ready for war," he said.

Call for Presentations

The 4th BC Conference on Aboriginal Women & Wellness The Legacies We Leave Our Children

January 8 - 11, 2000
Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada



For

Indigenous women, health care providers, researchers, community health planners, native leaders, elders/youth

Conference Description

As we enter the new era, what legacies are we leaving our children for the next seven generations? The goal of the conference is to focus on traditional ways of birthing, parenting, health, language, dance, value system, plant medicines, storytelling, governing, cultural and political movements, oral traditions and spirituality. There will also be opportunity for discussions amongst elders and youth of our many nations.

Types of Presentations

We welcome presentations on the legacies we leave our children from traditional (past), current (present) and future perspectives. The presentation should be cultural, interactive and successful models in the following area: ways of healing; storytelling; parenting; health promotion; music; dance; and other creative expressions.

Health Fair

A health fair will be held during the conference. Educational exhibits and wellness information will be made available to participants.

Arts and Crafts - Displays

Those interested in obtaining a table for their arts and crafts are invited to contact the address listed below for information and table fee. The display space is limited. Space will be assigned on a first come first served basis.

Please note: For abstract presenters, the conference does not cover accommodation, travel and honorarium. However, the registration fee will be waived for presenters.

Deadline for Submissions: June 1, 1999

Mailing Instructions: 4th BC Conference on Aboriginal Women & Wellness, Continuing Education in the Health Sciences, The University of British Columbia, Room 105 - 2194 Health Sciences Mall, Vancouver, BC, Canada V6T 1Z3. Fax: (604) 822-4835; Email: elaine@cehs.ubc.ca; Telephone: (604) 822-4965

Sponsored by: Association of First Nations Women, Children and Women's Health Centre of British Columbia and Continuing Education in the Health Sciences, The University of British Columbia



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The Ben Calf Robe Adult Education program, located at the Jasper Place Campus, is designed for Aboriginal adults who are preparing for post secondary education. The program offers Math, English, Science, Native Studies, Cree Language, Personal and Career Development, and Introduction to Computers. An Outreach Assistant is required to provide clerk/administrative support, word processing, customer service, information dissemination, and student support. This is a full-time, term position from July 1, 1999 to June 30, 2000.

Candidates will have Grade 12 with post secondary business diploma, plus two years administrative office experience, preferably in an Aboriginal agency or post secondary setting. Specific skills needed include excellent spoken and written English skills and experience on WordPerfect 6.1 on Windows 95. Preferred candidates will have knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal culture and a genuine interest in the educational growth and development of Aboriginal people. Excellent customer service skills, ability to respond to deadlines, handle multiple tasks, and take initiative with tasks and responsibilities will be assets.

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CLOSING DATE: April 30, 1999 at 4:30 p.m.

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President & C.E.O

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The Opportunity - Reporting to the Board of Directors through its Chairperson, the President is responsible to lead and manage all of the Corporation's business activities in pursuit of its mission and goals. Exercising full bottom line responsibility, the President will lead the strategic planning process; develop operational policies/procedures for implementation of the approved business plan; establish and maintain positive relationships with all constituencies of interest to the corporation; provide effective leadership to a strong senior management team; and ensure achievement of the FFMC mandate. Key priorities and focus for the successful candidate during the first year:

- Strengthen relationships with key constituencies...fishers, customers and government.
- Lead the development of a long-term strategy to expand world wide market opportunities for FFMC product.
- Review the operational effectiveness of the Corporation and implement actions to improve margins while supporting business plan strategies for growth.

The Person - This position requires a seasoned executive with at least ten years senior management experience in a process manufacturing, distribution or marketing board environment. We are seeking a leader with outstanding interpersonal skills, able to build and maintain relationships based on trust, accountability, open communications and decisive action. A generalist business background, with an imaginative approach to new business development, is essential. The successful candidate must be willing to spend time with fishers and customers around the world to listen to their expectations and needs. Strategic planning, change management and communication skills must be well developed.



Individuals interested in learning more about this challenging opportunity should contact Russell May, CMC or Lori May, BN quoting Project #91001 at The Harris Consulting Corporation, Suite 1400-444 St. Mary Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 3T1, Tel (204) 942-8735, Fax (204) 944-8941, Email: harcon@escape.ca

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Aboriginal Relations Manager

Sakaw-Askiy (Woodlands) Child and Family Services Authority, Westlock – The newly created Authority seeks an Aboriginal Relations Manager to develop, implement and maintain Aboriginal programs and services in the region. Reporting to the CEO, you will work with Aboriginal communities and organizations to plan, develop, implement and evaluate services for Aboriginal children and families. The focus will be to ensure that provincial standards are met and that services are available. You will work closely with the regional Authority Board, Aboriginal Relations Committee, to promote an Aboriginal focus throughout the region. You will have extensive knowledge and experience with Aboriginal issues and social program services.

Qualifications: Degree in Aboriginal Studies, Social Work or equivalent. Several years human services work and experience in Aboriginal communities including program development. Knowledge and ability to speak Cree an asset. Good communication and consulting skills, valid driver's licence, reliable vehicle, criminal records check and CWIS check. Salary: Up to \$55,000. **Closing Date: April 1, 1999.**

Competition No. 4541-WDSP

Please submit your resume quoting the competition number to: Paul Schofield, Alberta Family and Social Services, P.O. Box 1410, Lac La Biche, Alberta, T0A 2C0 Phone: (780) 623-5283; Fax: (780) 623-6980

We thank all applicants for their interest; however, only individuals selected for interviews will be contacted.

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Candidates must have a university degree from a recognized university in a field that focuses on understanding and assessing human behaviour. Preference may be given to candidates possessing a degree in Sociology, Psychology, Social Work, or Criminology. Experience in interviewing, counselling and identifying and assessing human behaviour is essential.

Proficiency in the use of the English language is required.

Send your application or resume, with proof of education, qualifications by **April 15, 1999**, quoting competition number **99-CSC-BOW-OC-16**, to **Joan Edgington, Chief of Personnel, Bowden Institution, P.O. Box 6000, Innisfail, Alberta T4G 1V1** OR may be sent via facsimile to **(403) 227-7332**.

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Children's Advocate

MANAGER

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You must have the ability to relate to children and youth, accompanied by a genuine interest in advocating for their rights. This challenging role requires advocacy, negotiating and conflict management skills, excellent ability to communicate verbally and in writing, and strong organizational, analytical and problem-solving skills, as well as excellent computer skills. Familiarity with the child welfare system and knowledge of normal growth and development of children and youth are also necessary.

Qualifications: Undergraduate degree in a Human Service discipline (e.g. social work, law, psychology), plus considerable, directly related work experience. Management, negotiation and advocacy experience is preferred. Experience working with Aboriginal people would be considered an asset, as would the ability to speak an Aboriginal language. Equivalencies may be considered.

For further information you may contact Bob Rechner, Children's Advocate at (780) 427-8934.

Note: Extensive travel in northern and southern Alberta will be required for the respective positions. Transportation arrangements must meet the operational requirements of the Office of the Children's Advocate. Flexibility regarding actual work location may be considered. Salary: \$45,000-\$62,300. **Closing Date: April 16, 1999.**

Competition No. 4532-WDSP

Please submit your resume, stating location preference and the competition number to: Donna Lehman, Human Resource Consultant, Alberta Family and Social Services, 3rd Floor, 10035 - 108 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T5J 3E1 Fax: (780) 427-1018

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Fort Nelson First Nation (FNFN) seeks a highly-qualified and experienced manager to serve as Executive Director. The Executive Director reports to Chief and Council and provides Council with administrative and decision-making support, as well as providing the administrative and support staff with direction, leadership and guidance in the day-to-day performance of their duties. Start date for this position is May 1, 1999, to allow for a thorough transition with the outgoing Executive Director. A detailed position profile will be sent to all candidates who are short-listed.

Minimum qualifications:

- Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration. MBA desirable.
- Six - ten years experience (at least three - four at a senior management level) working with First Nations or with organizations involved in meeting the needs of Aboriginal people, in a general management / administrative role.
- Formal training and demonstrated experience in accounting.
- Experience working with funding authorities and government agencies, particularly INAC, supporting First Nations.
- Excellent interpersonal and personnel management skills.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills; computer literacy.

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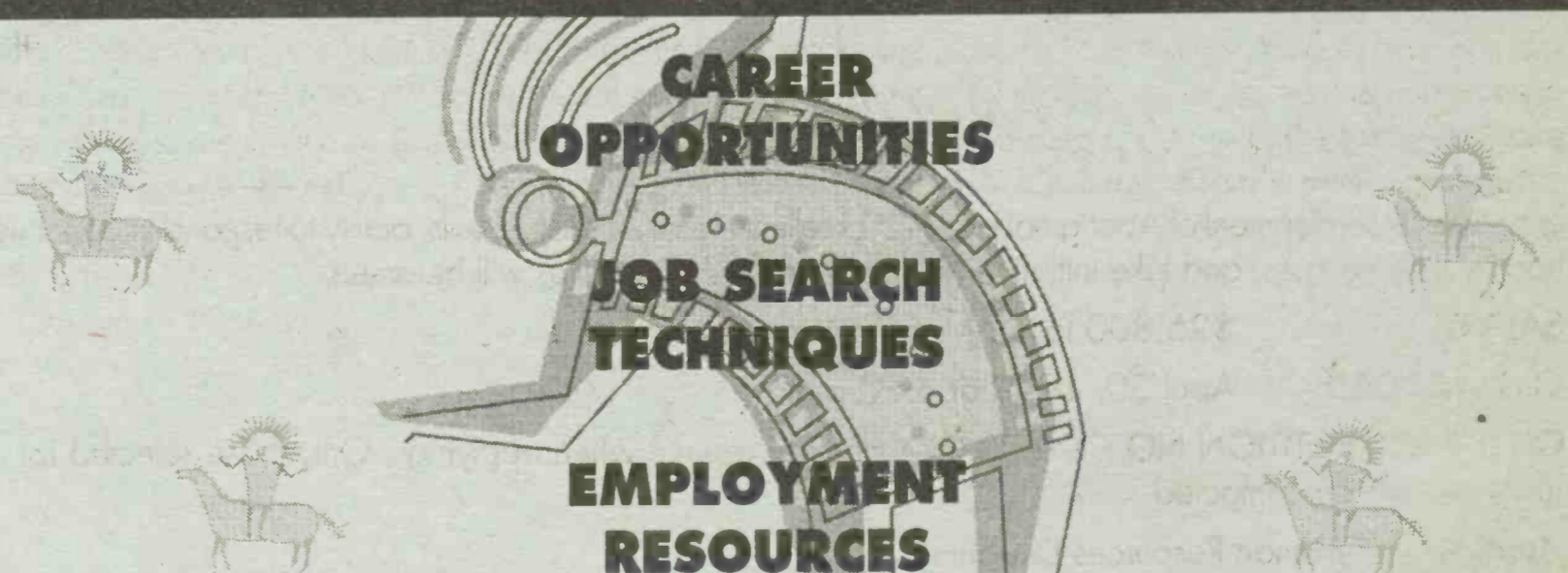
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