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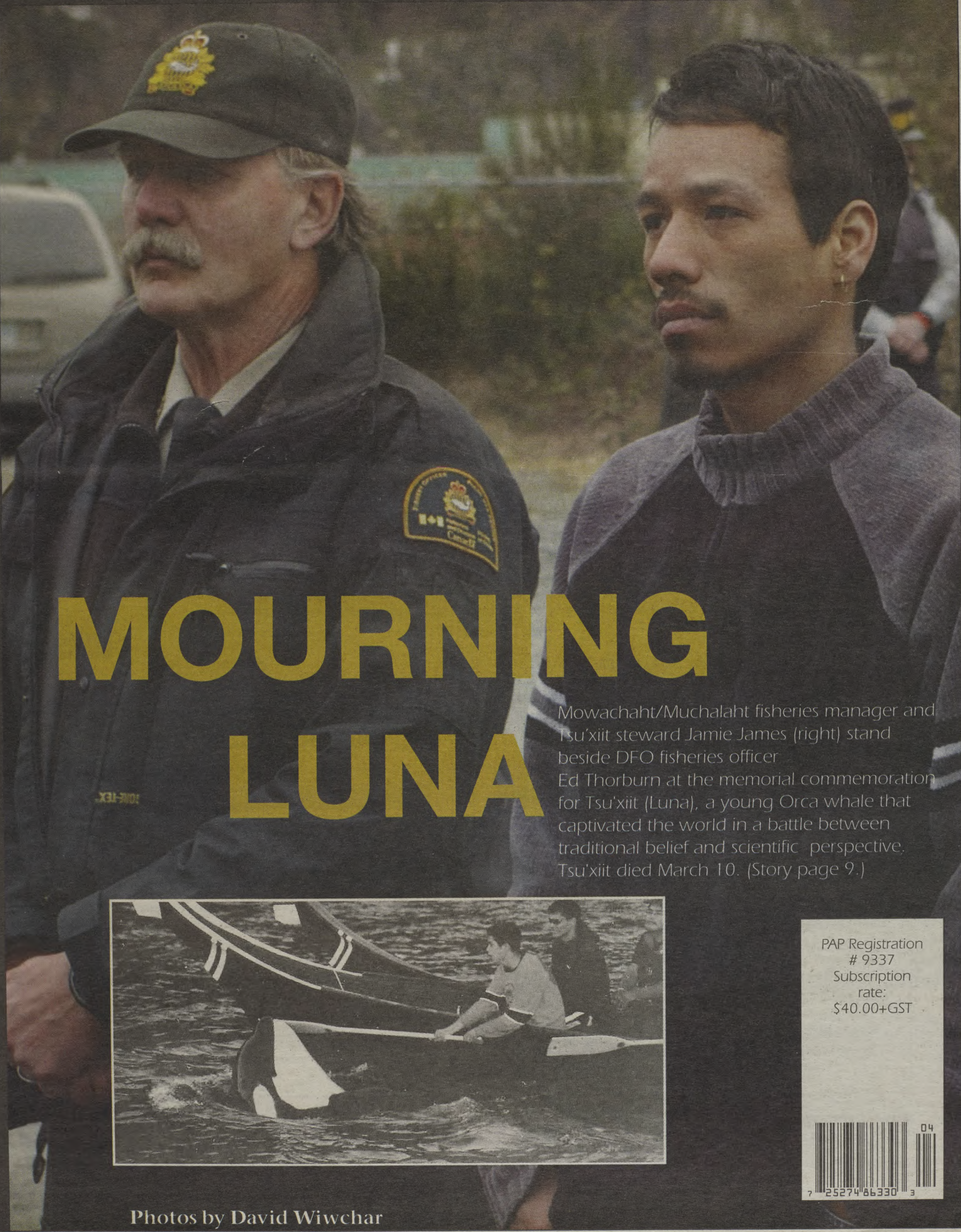
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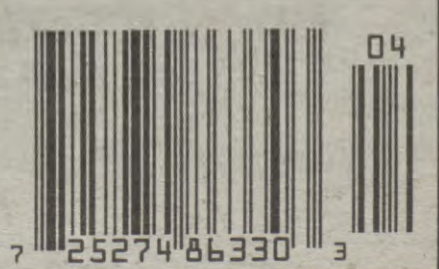
MOURNING LUNA

Mowachaht/Muchalaht fisheries manager and Tsu'xiit steward Jamie James (right) stand beside DFO fisheries officer Ed Thorburn at the memorial commemoration for Tsu'xiit (Luna), a young Orca whale that captivated the world in a battle between traditional belief and scientific perspective. Tsu'xiit died March 10. (Story page 9.)



Photos by David Wiwchar

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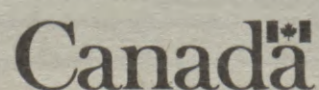
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Features

Governance legislation coming back? 8

That's the rumor around Ottawa these days, and Indian Affairs Minister Jim Prentice isn't denying it. The Conservative Party government was elected on an accountability platform and that's what it plans to provide. The question is: Do the feds plan on running over our right to be consulted?

Luna the whale is mourned by community 9

The Mowachaht/Muchalaht people have said a final goodbye to a whale that caused a stir in the Nootka Sound in British Columbia. The young killer whale was thought to embody the spirit of a former chief, and when it wouldn't leave the area to join up with its pod, the Native people and the government commenced a hot dispute over the Luna's relocation.

Another win for a new chief 10

A councillor from Norway House who won a court decision that said his colleagues on council were subverting democracy is now the chief. Marcel Belfour is hoping his fellow councillors can put aside the fight and get down to the business of leading and caring for the Cree nation's members.

No overtime in Saskatchewan's north 15

An exemption in the Labour Standards Act regulations allows employers to escape paying overtime to workers in the northern third of the province. Who lives in the northern third of the province? You guessed it. It's heavily populated with First Nations and Metis.

Departments

[rants and raves] 5

[what's happening] 7

[radio's most active] 17

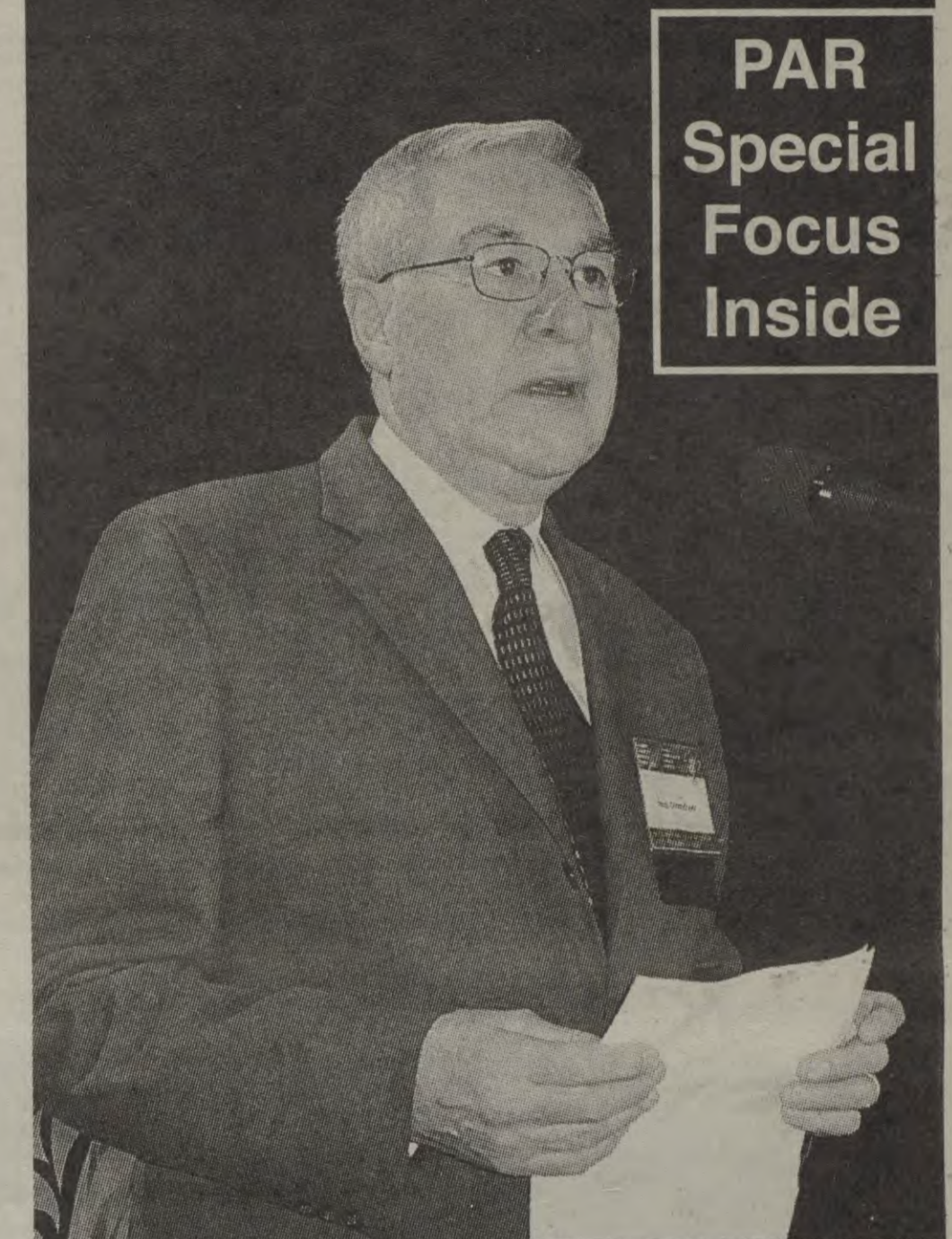
[strictly speaking] 19

[footprints] 26

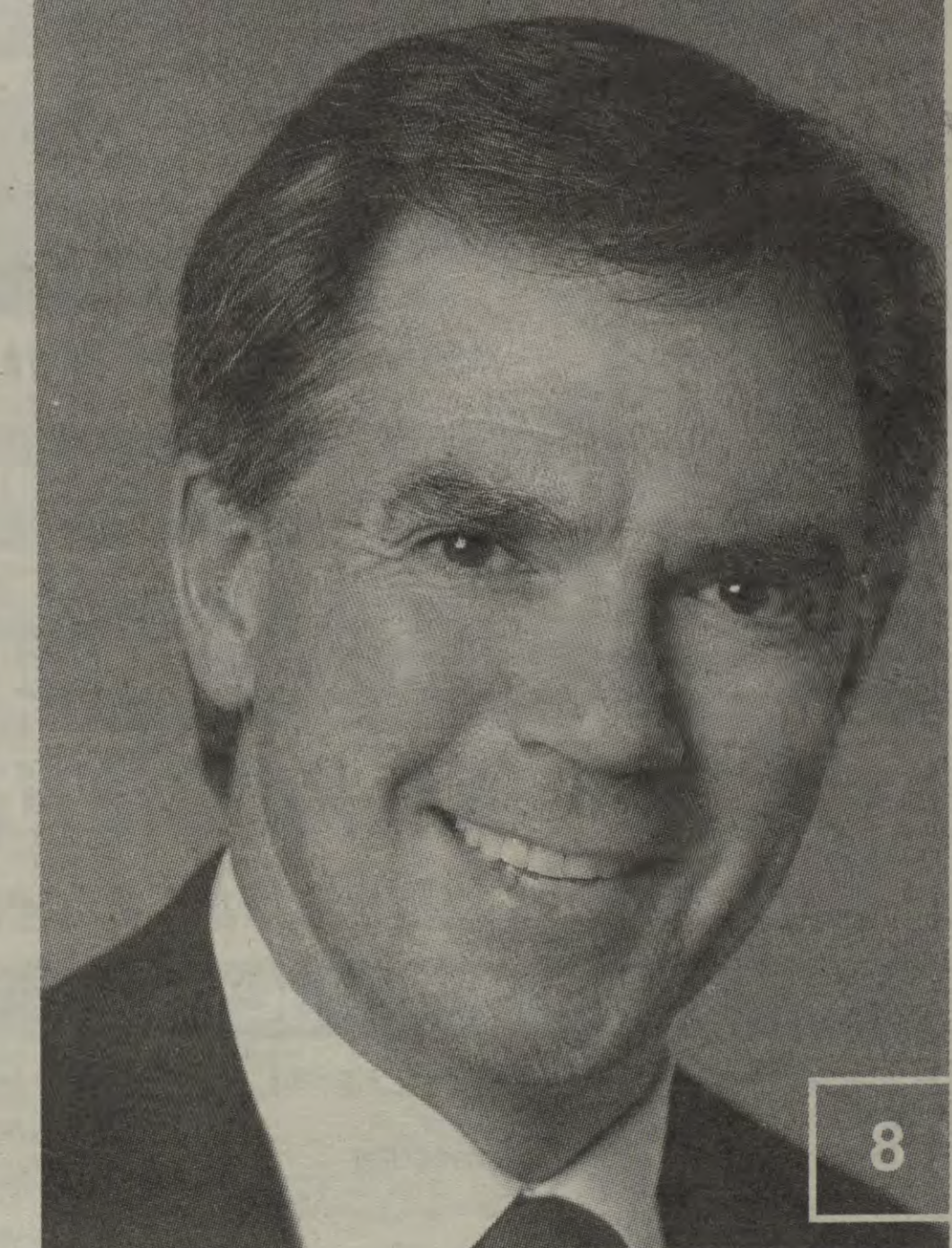
Francis Flett was a good man and a great leader. So say the people who gathered on Opaskwayak Cree Nation (OCN) in northern Manitoba to pay their final respects and mourn his passing. Flett was persistent in his attention to his community and worked to better the quality of life for his people. Flett worked hard to try to have changes made to Bill C-31 so that the decision as to who is and isn't a First Nations citizen isn't made in Ottawa and to ensure future generations don't lose their treaty status.



9



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Focus
Inside**

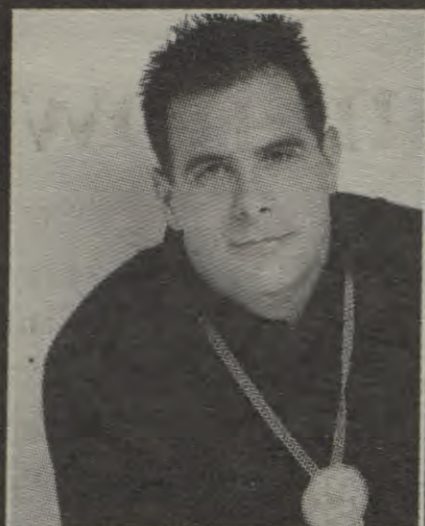


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As accountability questions arise again and plans for more rhetoric and political posturing are being prepared, let us try to keep things from getting silly this time around.

Knowing the world of Indian Affairs as well as we do, we believe this must all begin with someone saying the things that everybody knows but nobody talks about.

One: Most chiefs don't want dramatic change. They've figured out the game and they know how to play it so their interests are furthered. In too many communities, the grassroots people are totally dependant on the good will of the chief and council for every necessity of life—employment, housing, health care, eligibility for welfare and everything else.

We hear too many stories about undue influence, intimidation, enrichment of the chief and his family and supporters. We also hear about corrupt practices that we can't prove because access to information about band council operations is practically non-existent.

And that brings us to two: The system needs dramatic change. Sunlight really is the best disinfectant. If First Nations truly aspire to be universally respected governments, they need to be completely transparent. Very little information should be kept from the press and public. Planning, legal strategizing and proprietary information is kept secret at all levels of government and that's all right as long as it doesn't go too far. But everything else should be easily accessible, so that community members know what their government is doing and so that chiefs and councillors can be held accountable for their actions and decisions.

Three: The opportunity to work and create wealth should be open to all. This will require a conscious effort on the part of everyone involved and some sacrifice on the part of those at the table. Simply put, if you want to be a council member and make political decisions, do that. But while you're busy governing, you forfeit the right to be a CEO of a band-owned company.

Four: Politicians must not meddle in public administration. Sorry chiefs, but if you want any credibility at all, you cannot both make the political decisions and then control how they're implemented. In communities where family ties often have a lot more to do with who becomes the leaders than proven ability, the establishment of an arm's-length professional civil service is absolutely necessary to prevent abuses.

That's going to cost money and it's going to take time to develop. If the government wants to do this on the cheap, there's no point in even beginning. And the fact that a community is not yet ready to implement truly accountable and professionally managed self-government is no excuse to allow the human rights of the membership to be trampled.

Five: We were careful when Bob Nault introduced his First Nations Governance act because we saw a lot of merit in the legislation. What eventually persuaded us to call for the former minister to call a halt to his efforts to pass the FNGA was the top down approach and the flimsy and questionable consultation process. We saw the Chretien government's efforts at appearing to consult to be little more than an attempt to mask the belief of the government that it knew what was best.

Something is coming in the near future. We're absolutely certain that some attempt will be made by the new Conservative government to strengthen accountability in First Nations' governments. We're told it will be a legislative initiative. We're also told there is no plan to consult First Nation leaders or grassroots citizens. Mr. Prentice, that Great White Father stuff is way out of fashion. Don't even go there. Mutual respect and a sincere desire to make life better for the grassroots people should be the only objective to any process of reform. That's a crucial and a genuinely life and death point that leads us to six.

Reform is needed. Everybody involved has got to take a close look at themselves and the other stakeholders and cleanse corruption and self-interest out of the process right from the beginning. If Canada's looking to shake off a little fiduciary obligation and disguises that as a genuine desire for reform then Canada will bear almost all responsibility for every tragedy that happens in our communities while more time and money is wasted.

If the chiefs want a little cosmetic reform that allows them to keep their power and influence, see above.

As we implored several years ago when the Nault process began: Remember the people, the grassroots people. It's the only way this will work. And it's the only moral and correct thing to do.

—Windspeaker

Hurry up and wait

Dear Editor:

The Canadian government has procrastinating down to an art when it comes to dealing with First Nations residential school survivors. The agreement-in-principle has to go before cabinet on March 31, and then before all the courts on May 30, and then it has a six-month waiting period for residential school survivors to opt-in or out which then is Nov. 1. This does not guarantee any money for the survivors before the year's end. Also, the government has not drafted a form for the advance payment for the elderly (65 and older) after all these months. When the government wants their money, they don't waste any time forwarding you threatening letters that say they're going to garnishee your income tax return. [Makes this survivor down right pissed off.] The government has no plan in place how they're going to disburse these payments and will probably create another scandal wondering where all their money has gone.

I wonder how the Japanese internees got their money so quickly?

—Cyberonimo

Taking pride and making changes

Dear Editor:

I am writing from Montiel Correctional Facility regarding the article titled "Take Pride In Your Successes." I haven't been the type to be able to communicate socially. I always got lost in my thoughts. Then I would feel sweaty and out of place. Your article helped me see that I have been something I'm not. Just always trying to fit in socially with a horrible crowd. I feel people don't look at these problems and realize that it's happening in their environment.

Thank you for the realization.
Louis Boily, 19

Clearer and clearer

Dear Editor:

Just read the piece in Windspeaker Business Quarterly titled "Tax court upholds GST exemption." I enjoyed it and became a little more aware of a First Nation citizen's right to be GST exempt. I'm often asked questions about tax issues involving Aboriginal people and the First Nations and Canadian taxation policies, especially when dealing with financial matters. It can be quite overwhelming. Province to province, First Nation to different levels of Canadian government, not to mention Metis and Inuit, makes for mind-numbing reading. And I still have to contact a friend over at KPMG (we're in the same building) to get a basic understanding.

Thought you did a good job of explaining it.

Blaine Knott
Aboriginal Specialist, CIBC Western Region

Another way to go

Dear Editor:

Before you read this I would just like to say that all that money the government is trying to avoid giving to Natives for residential school should just go towards language and culture renewal. I don't doubt that all those Elders that went to residential school would love for their money, or part of it, to go towards the renewal of language and culture. It would just reverse the effects of all that s**t. And bring up a lawsuit against the church as a whole! I am not against religion. It is an OK thing as long as it works the way it is supposed to. But what they did was not "righteous" or an "act/want of god."

I am an Ojibwe from Thessalon First Nation, Ont., and my grandmother went to residential school along with all my other older relatives. And now the government is trying to say that she doesn't deserve compensation because she can't prove she went there! How can they say that she didn't go there when every Nishnaabe had to go there! She went to Spanish residential school. And when I ask her what happened to her there she just says "bad things."

And now about 150 years after all that, and that's not to say that it isn't over, I can't speak the language of my ancestors.

—Baamaapii

[rants and raves]

Stop racism now

Dear Editor:

In honor of the United Nations' International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) has launched a new initiative, Stop Internet Hate, to fight hate on the Web.

The CJC Web site now carries a link for anyone wishing to report what they believe may be an Internet site with hateful content. This new initiative is an attempt to both educate and empower everyone who uses the Internet to recognize and report potential Web sites that may be promoting hatred.

We all have a moral responsibility to speak up in the face of hate. That includes hate on the Internet. This link on the CJC Web site will make it a little easier for concerned Web users to report sites they have concerns about. We will assess the information and if we believe it violates either Canada's Criminal Code or the Canadian Human Rights Act it will be reported to the authorities.

The link to report hate on the Internet is available and can be accessed through the CJC Web site, at www.cjc.ca. Buttons with the message "Stop Internet Hate" are also available to groups and individuals while supplies last.

Len Rudner

National director of community relations

Practice your faith

Dear Editor:

I have listened with dismay as Aboriginal prisoners described how, due to strict non-smoking policies, they are no longer permitted to smudge and pray in their cells. I am writing now to register my displeasure with such cultural insensitivity and the violation of religious freedom. As I see it, the justice policies are being used to strip away rights and freedoms of the most vulnerable, which include Aboriginal prisoners, who face the prospect of losing a basic right of Canadian citizenship (voting) as well.

I strongly urge prisoners to consider how valuable the freedom to smudge is in their lives. If it is worth the sacrifice of disciplinary action, by all means practice the positively spiritual and non-violent expression of your relationship with the Creator. I do not believe in violence in any way, but like Gandhi's people making salt freely on the shores of the Indian Ocean, the act of smudging privately in your cell could very well be the next step in asserting our rights as Aboriginals, as Canadians, and as dignified people.

We are engaged in a spiritual battle against forces that seek to see us isolated from our Creator and each other. The most basic right and freedom I have experienced while in jail was, of course, my freedom to talk to God in peace and quiet, inside from the cold. Often I would ask a jail guard to place me in a private place while I quietly prayed and was comforted by the Creator. I wonder what would happen if the good will and peace we show towards the corrections officers was countered by disdain and disrespect. The peace treaties our ancestors signed in good faith might tempt one to break peace. I urge prisoners only to do what is right and good in the eyes of the grandfathers and grandmothers.

Merci, Miigwetch, Thank you very much.
Sincerely,

Brendan William Cross

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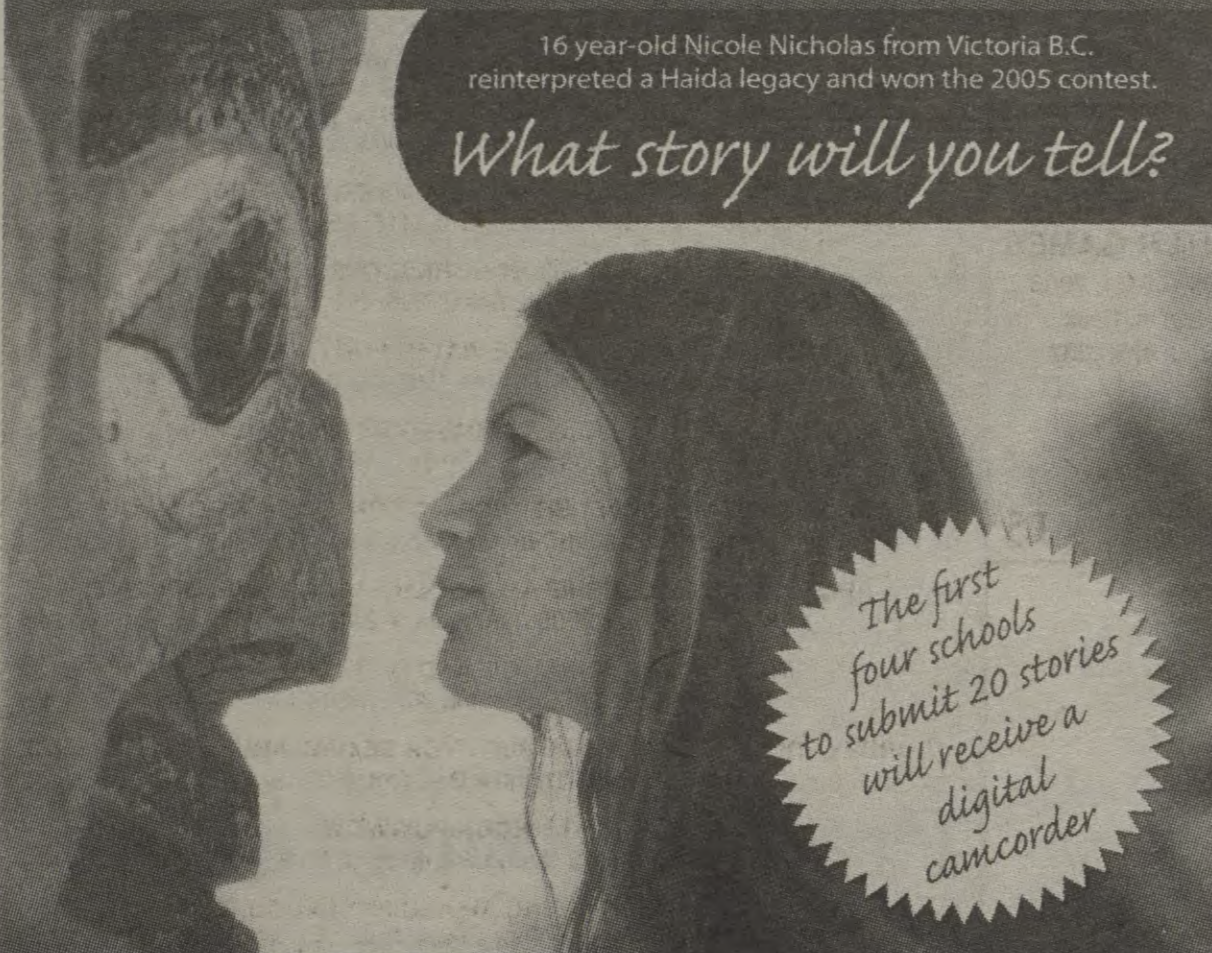
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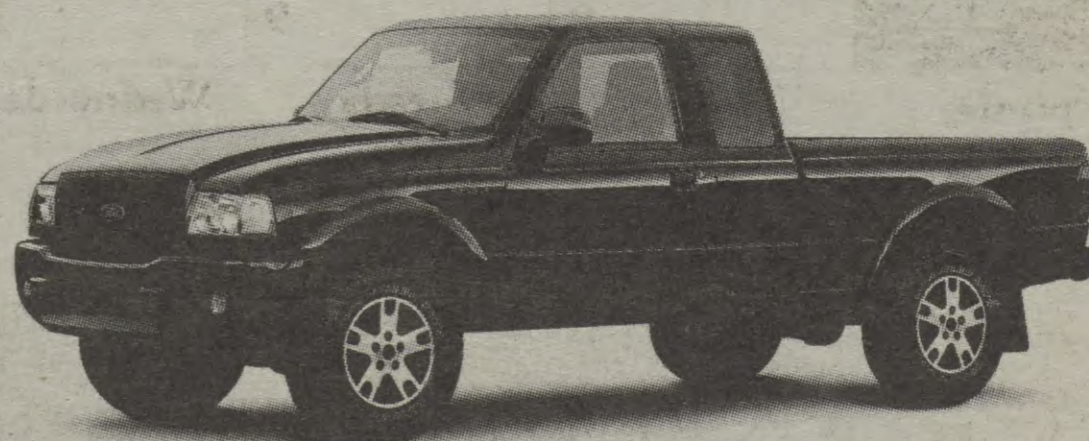
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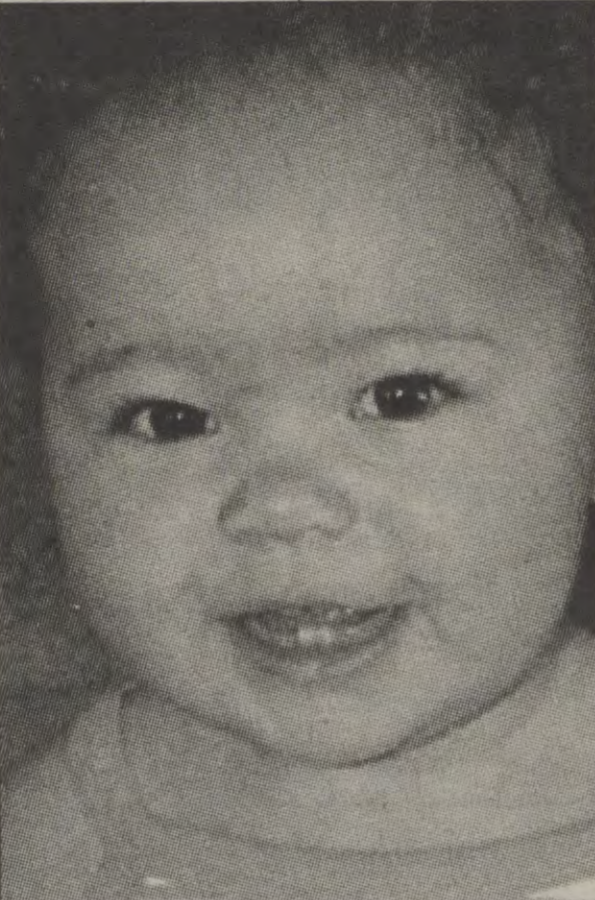



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2	3	4	5	7	8	
<p>INNER CHILD WORKSHOP April 10-13, 2006 Edmonton, Alta. 1-866-456-8022 (see ad page 20.)</p>	<p>CONGRESS OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLES—ALBERTA INITIATIVE CONSULTATION April 11, 2006 Lethbridge, Alta. www.abo-peoples.org</p>	<p>CONGRESS OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLES—ALBERTA INITIATIVE CONSULTATION April 12, 2006 Calgary, Alta. www.abo-peoples.org</p>		<p>CHILLIWACK POWWOW April 14-16, 2006 Chilliwack, B.C. (604) 824-9927</p>	<p>SASKATCHEWAN FIRST NATIONS WINTER GAMES April 15-21, 2006 Regina, Sask. (306) 835-2232</p>	
9	10	11	12	14	15	
16	17			<p>B.C. RURAL SUMMIT April 20-22, 2006 Osoyoos, B.C. www.bcruralsummit.ca</p>	<p>ALBERTA CONFERENCE ON GAMBLING RESEARCH April 21-22, 2006 Banff Centre, Alta. abgaming.ualberta.ca</p>	
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23	24			<p>DESIGNING INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS April 27, 2006 Winnipeg, Man. (204) 953-5820</p>	<p>SHAPING OUR FUTURE: THE TRANSFORMATION OF WESTERN CANADA'S ECONOMY April 28, 2006 Calgary, Alta. (403) 264-9535 ext. 350</p>	<p>RECLAIMING YOUTH CONFERENCE April 29 to May 2, 2006 Victoria, B.C. corabtree@reclaiming.com</p>
				27	28	29
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May 1	2	3	4	5	6	
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THE WESTIN
EDMONTON

Governance legislation coming back?

By Paul Barnsley
Windspeaker Staff Writer

OTTAWA

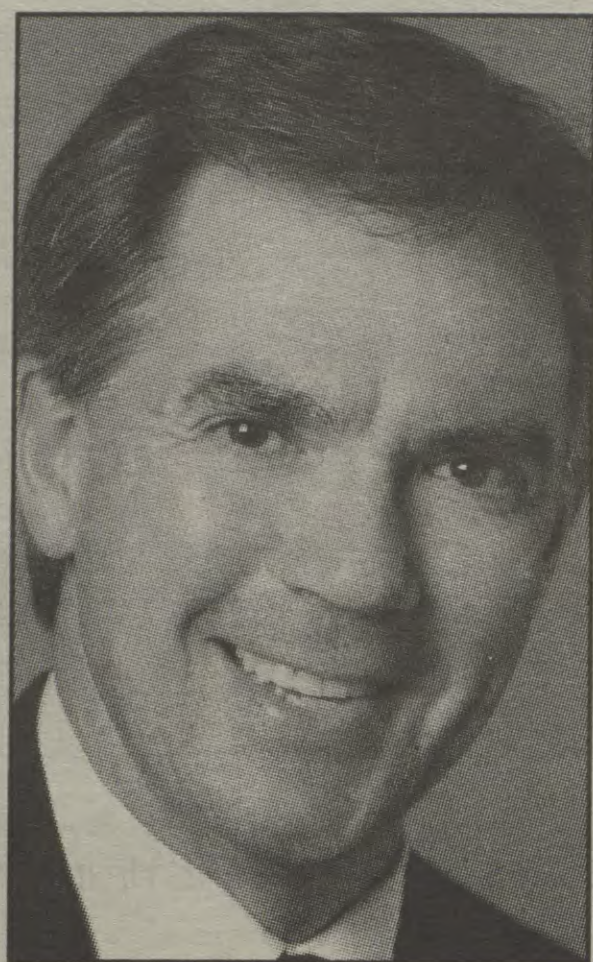
First Nation officials have been told to prepare for a busy season once newly elected Prime Minister Stephen Harper and his Conservative Party of Canada government begin their legislative session after the April 3 throne speech.

Several technicians we contacted this month have been told to take time off and use up any backlogged overtime before Parliament resumes.

The new government is preparing its new Federal Accountability Act (FAA), which sources say will also be known as Bill C-2. It will follow through on Harper's campaign promise to improve accountability and transparency throughout the federal system. An informed Ottawa source says C-2 will also contain provisions that will seek to force tighter accountability measures on First Nation governments.

Harper has promised that the FAA will be the first piece of legislation his government will bring forward. It's expected the bill will be introduced in the first weeks of the new parliamentary session.

The timing suggested by our source tells us that no formal consultation process will be established in advance of tabling the FAA. If that happens, it will cause legal problems for the



"This is a new government that was elected on a clear mandate that includes financial accountability in the expenditure of public funds ... [L]ook at this issue from my perspective as a minister of a department that expends something in the nature of \$8 billion per year. The voters of Canada have made it clear, very clear, that they expect me as the minister to be accountable in terms of how those monies are expended, whether directly or indirectly."

—Minister Jim Prentice

Later, in a one-on-one with Minister Prentice via telephone on March 21, we asked the same question directly.

"I'm not going to speculate on the accountability act," the minister replied. "It will be tabled in the House of Commons when it's tabled. It's a piece of legislation that will apply to all Canadians."

Hours earlier, on national television, Prentice was asked essentially the same question by the host on CTV's Mike Duffy Live. His answer was the same.

But accountability is clearly on the new government's radar. During his first speaking engagement as minister in early March in Vancouver, Prentice raised the subject with the chiefs of the First Nations Summit.

"This is a new government that was elected on a clear mandate that includes financial accountability in the expenditure of public funds.

And I know that there are many points of view in this room on that issue and I would just counsel you for a moment to consider two things," he said. "First, look at this issue from my perspective as a minister of a department that expends something in the nature of \$8 billion per year. The voters of Canada have made it clear, very clear, that they expect me as the minister to be accountable in terms of how those monies are expended, whether directly or indirectly. Secondly, ladies and gentlemen and our guests, I have never yet met a responsible First Nation chief or council member who wasn't fully committed to financial accountability to the people who they serve. So I would like to hope that we will focus that debate in the days ahead on the question of how we achieve that sort of financial

accountability rather than the negative question of whether we proceed that way."

With the surprise retirement of Dwight Dorey in late February, Patrick Brazeau, a citizen of the Kitigan Zibi First Nation near Maniwaki, Que., is now the national leader of the Congress of Aboriginal People (CAP). He was vice-chief when CAP endorsed Harper's Conservative Party of Canada during the election campaign.

Brazeau told *Windspeaker* that Harper's response to CAP's inquiries included a commitment that was the "first time any government had tried to address the issues with respect to off-reserve people."

"That's why we supported them," he added. "It's always been our position that the current reality of funding is that for every \$8 spent on reserve, only \$1 is spent off reserve and yet the majority of Aboriginal people, regardless of whether they're First Nations, Inuit or Metis, reside outside the context of reserves. And we have been pushing for years and years for the level of funding to be more reflective of the numbers."

The new CAP leader confirmed that there is lots of talk around Ottawa about governance reform.

"It's definitely a rumor in discussions that we've been hearing. In terms of the specifics, first of all, the congress hasn't asked the question and we haven't been approached in terms of how that would all pan out," he said.

(see Governance page 12.)

Feds set agenda for clean drinking water

By Paul Barnsley
Windspeaker Staff Writer

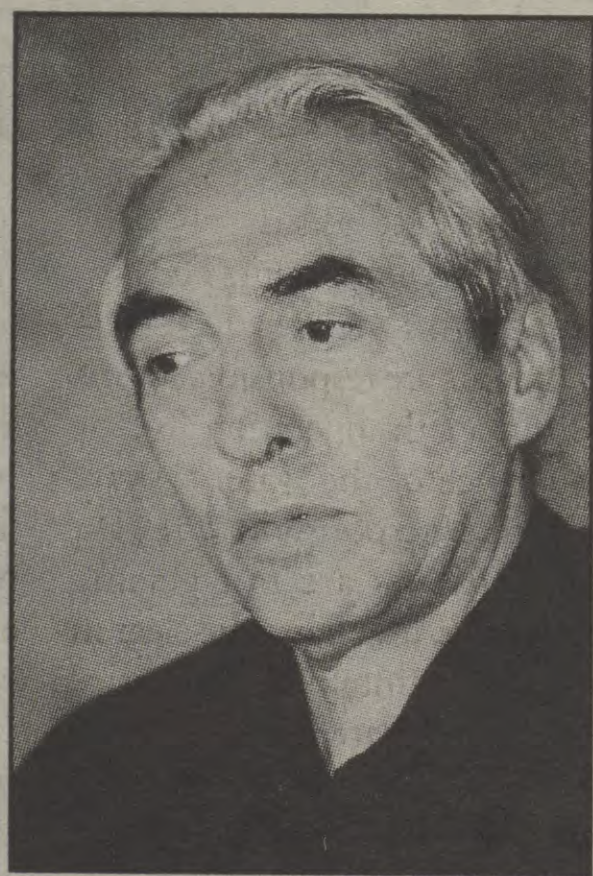
OTTAWA

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada says it's getting serious about the quality of drinking water in First Nation communities. The move comes early in the life of the new Conservative Party of Canada government.

Indian Affairs Minister Jim Prentice and Assembly of First Nations (AFN) National Chief Phil Fontaine appeared together at a press conference on March 21 to announce the new national water quality standards.

Prentice acknowledged that 170 of the more than 700 on-reserve water treatment centres across the country have problems. But he said setting standards and demanding accountability from all parties involved will be enough to fix the problems.

"The critical problem isn't money," the newly appointed minister told *Windspeaker* during a phone interview hours after the press conference. "The critical problem, according to the auditor general, is accountability. So that's step one. The other critical problem to the auditor general is



"The plan that we are presenting today is consistent with plans put forward by the AFN and First Nations. It is encouraging that the minister is willing to listen and willing to act. His efforts on dealing with this issue and ensuring that the government moves on our issues are encouraging."

—National Chief Phil Fontaine

the absence of standards, so we've dealt with that. I think you have to appreciate what we've done here. We've introduced the concept of what I call communities at risk. In the past there was no system of prioritizing where communities fit into the overall framework. So if something bad happened, something bad happened. It seemed to be a surprise to people when it occurred."

Fontaine called the new initiative "an encouraging first step in our larger effort to close the gap in the quality of life between First Nations and non-Aboriginal Canadians."

The national chief saw it as a

good sign that the new minister was so quick to address this serious public health issue that critics have said is a glaring example of a double standard between what is acceptable for Native and non-Native communities in Canada.

"The plan that we are presenting today is consistent with plans put forward by the AFN and First Nations. It is encouraging that the minister is willing to listen and willing to act. His efforts on dealing with this issue and ensuring that the government moves on our issues are encouraging," Fontaine said.

But the national chief added that the drinking water situation is only one aspect of a much larger

problem.

"The drinking water crisis is not simply about specific issues like better treatment plants or more reporting," he said. "It is about ensuring more of our people graduate so they can get the necessary training they need to be effective water quality managers. It is about ensuring our communities have resources to keep these qualified people in their communities because they often get better offers by the public and private sector. And it is about seeing this issue as part of our broader efforts to foster healthy communities and healthy individuals."

The new minister took a shot

at the former Liberal government during his interview.

"What I think you're seeing here is a new government responding in short order to the fact that there are communities living at risk, and responding to most of the recommendations of the auditor general from about a year ago which the previous government was not prepared to act on. In fact, the previous government wasn't prepared to act on either of those things," he said.

In addressing the situation, the government has looked at the overall problem and come up with a new way to track the data and monitor progress.

"We've introduced a ranking system. Initially we've focused on the communities where there's a boil water advisory. And then we overlay other factors on top of it, five specific factors of risk: the water source, the extent of operations and maintenance, the quality of the reporting, the quality of the operators that are in the place, the age of the system, those types of things. So when you overlay all those factors on top of each other and look at it scientifically, we say that there are 21 communities living with risk and we've made a priority of dealing with those," he said.

(see Water works page 9.)

Mowachaht/Muchalaht mourns loss of Luna

By David Wiwchar
Windspeaker Contributor

GOLD RIVER, B.C.

As Tye Ha'wilth (chief) Mike Maquinna threw a cedar bough into Muchalat Inlet, he remembered the impact Tsu'xiit the killer whale had on his community and the world.

"Everyone learned a lot about killer whales and their habitat, and also learned who we are as Mowachaht/Muchalaht people," said Maquinna. "He was a part of our community, and we hold him in very high regard. In our culture, the killer whale is very significant, and everyone is saddened by the news a kakawin (killer whale) has died in our territory," he said.

Tsu'xiit (a.k.a. Luna, L-98) was born near the San Juan Islands on Sept. 19th, 1999, and was found alone in Nootka Sound in July 2001, three days after the passing of Mowachaht/Muchalaht Tye Ha'wilth Ambrose Maquinna.

Just before he died, the chief told another he planned to return as a kakawin after his death. Luna's arrival in this northern Vancouver Island inlet was seen as a spiritual reflection of his deep love for his people, community and hahoulthee (traditional territory).

Separated from other resident orcas, Tsu'xiit began bumping boats, sometimes peeling underwater transponders off hulls as the radar emitted from fish finders and depth sounders bothered him.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) saw this as a problem, and joined with the Vancouver Aquarium and U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in a plan to capture him, truck him hundreds of miles down island, and release him near his familial pod near Puget Sound, home of the highest concentration of boats on the West Coast of the continent. They failed to consult with First Nations, who had a different view of what should be done.

Documents obtained through the Access to Information program show many within DFO and their own scientific panel saw the plan as ill-fated. Behind the scenes, DFO was negotiating with Marineland Aquarium in Niagara Falls to take the whale when the reintroduction failed.

As DFO sought to capture Tsu'xiit in June 2004, the Mowachaht/Muchalaht First Nation launched their canoes, and led Tsu'xiit away from the government Zodiacs, tempting the young whale towards an underwater pen. After nine days of the two groups leading Tsu'xiit up and down Muchalat Inlet in what the world media described a tug-of-war, it all seemed lost one stormy afternoon.

High winds shot down Muchalaht Inlet from the open Pacific causing five-foot waves that were no match for the inexperienced paddlers. The high-powered DFO boats were able to finally lure Tsu'xiit into the pen tucked behind a former freighter dock and secured barbed wire fences.

"Our Elders and our traditions told us to stand beside Tsu'xiit just



PHOTOS BY DAVID WIWCHAR

(Left) Sam Johnson Jr. (in woven cedar hat) leads Mowachaht / Muchalaht singers and drummers.

(Above) Mowachaht/Muchalaht Tye Ha'wilth (chief) Mike Maquinna (right) stands beside Chief Jerry Jack in offering a ciquaa (prayer chant).

as we would one of our own, and let him know that he wasn't alone," said Maquinna. "Our interest was in letting nature take its course, and in keeping Tsu'xiit free," he said.

A quarter mile away, the Mowachaht/Muchalaht Nation gathered on the community dock, and sang Chief Ambrose Maquinna's paddle song at the top of their lungs, one last time for Tsu'xiit. Tears flowed as drums pounded, but then the weather broke. The winds subsided and the seas calmed as paddlers piled back into the canoes for one last try. As they sang, drummed and paddled towards the pen, Tsu'xiit darted out before the last gate could be closed, and the community members erupted with joy as DFO bowed their heads and gave up.

Tsu'xiit remained free, feeding on Chinook salmon, playing with local sea lions and communicating with transient whales. Although still fascinated with boats, Mowachaht/Muchalaht stewards were out on the water with him as much as possible, keeping him away from smaller sailboats and sport fishing boats seeking interaction with the famous whale.

Then, at 9 a.m. Friday March 10, Tsu'xiit's fascination with boats turned deadly.

The General Jackson, a large 30-metre tugboat pulling a fully loaded log dumping barge was heading out of Nootka Sound, with its 1,700 horsepower engine spinning a six-foot diameter propeller at full torque.

As the crew happily snapped pictures of Tsu'xiit playing alongside the ship, the whale dove under the stern and was sucked into the blades of the massive prop. There was nothing that anybody could do.

The distraught skipper radioed the Canadian Coast Guard base in Ucluelet and told them what had happened. Mowachaht/Muchalaht boats in the area sped to the scene, but Tsu'xiit was gone.

Back on shore, Chief Mike

Maquinna waited for word, unable and unwilling to accept the death until there was proof.

As the Mowachaht/Muchalaht boat finally came back to the dock late in the afternoon, solemn-faced fisheries worker Sam Johnson Jr. walked towards Maquinna, who reached out to shake his hand. As soon as their hands gripped, Johnson started to cry.

"It's never going to be the same out there again," was all Johnson could say before he turned and left.

On March 13th, more than 130 members of the Mowachaht/Muchalaht and neighboring town of Gold River gathered to remember Tsu'xiit at a special

dockside ceremony.

"Since time immemorial we've stood by each and every animal and living thing within our territory," Maquinna said to the crowd. "For the past few years, we've been honored by the presence of the whale. We have a lot to be proud of as Mowachaht/Muchalaht people, for upholding our beliefs of letting nature take its course, and keeping Tsu'xiit free," he said.

After a few songs were sung, and prayer chants performed, the canoe came out and spread sacred cedar boughs on the water. Community members then gathered for a luncheon, and talked to each other about Tsu'xiit, and how much he meant to them.

"It's the best experience that has ever happened to me, being so close to something like that was so powerful," said Mowachaht/Muchalaht fisheries manager and Tsu'xiit guardian Jamie James. "I'll always remember our encounters

and our relationship. I'll definitely miss his presence for sure."

"He touched a lot of lives and he really brought our community together," said Kelly John, whose image was beamed around the world in 2004 as he steered the Mowachaht/Muchalaht canoe, and dangled his fingers in the water, touching and rubbing Tsu'xiit's teeth and tongue.

"The world saw us standing together as a strong community with a strong culture, and he's part of our history now," he said.

"Every day when we went out on the water, we looked forward to seeing him," said Tsu'xiit guardian Rudy Dick, who helped attract the whale from the DFO pen in 2004. "I didn't want to see him in an aquarium. I wanted him to remain free, but there will be a big missing presence when I go out there again." Mowachaht/Muchalaht plan to hold a formal celebration for the life of Tsu'xiit in July.

Water works on reserve

(Continued from page 8.)

But he knows those 21 communities are just the start.

"We understand that the list is much longer than that," he said. "We know there are 170 other such communities. We are dealing with those as well. But we wanted to focus firstly on the systems where we know there are people living at risk."

In a previous interview the minister talked about clarifying roles and responsibilities within the department so that things won't fall through the bureaucratic cracks. He was asked if this was an example of that and if there would be other similar initiatives.

"It is part of an on-going plan," he replied. "I think it's part of an overall framework of accountability. One thing we tried to be very clear about today was to do what the auditor general called on us to do, which was to clarify who's responsible for what. I think there needs to be some discipline and accountability on the part of the department. If the department knows that these communities are in risky circumstances, the department needs to deal with it."

But First Nation governments also carry their share of

responsibility, he added.

"This is very important. The First Nation and their elected governments are responsible for the construction, the operation and the maintenance of the water system. That is their responsibility. If First Nation citizens are not getting quality water, that has to be clear in terms of accountability," Prentice said. "The department provides funding and it has to provide sufficient funding to help put these systems in place and

it has to provide standards. So that's clear that that's what the department is doing and the money has been tied to the standards so that if you're going to receive money from this department, you're going to have to live up to these national standards. And the department of Health, who is also a partner in all of this, they are responsible for testing. So we've tried to be very clear in all of this."

Many government policies are enacted without spelling out clearly the specific penalties that would result from non-compliance. The minister acknowledged there are not any such "teeth" in the new policy, but he said there soon will be.

"Initially these standards are tied

to funding and are expected to be followed. They will have to be followed. That's the contractual requirement. We will be appointing a panel of three experts who will, in the time between now and the fall, consider the whole issue of how to make these standards legally enforceable and what the consequences are," he said. "The other aspect of this that I think is important is we intend to report to Parliament and intend to be very clear in reporting to Parliament on the status of progress."

The AFN will appoint one member of that three-member panel of experts. The government will appoint the other member and the panel's chairman. Prentice believes there will not be a problem with non-compliance on the First Nation side.

"The First Nation leaders I have met have been pretty clear with me that what they need is the tools and resources to be able to get the job done," he said. "They expect to live up to these standards. I haven't met anyone today who disagrees with the need for standards or disagrees with the substance of these standards. People are prepared to follow them and to be accountable for following them. But they need the tools and resources."

Shunned councillor elected chief of Norway House

By Paul Barnsley
Windspeaker Staff Writer

NORWAY HOUSE CREE NATION, Man.

Marcel Balfour won't forget March 17, 2006 in a hurry. That was the day his election as chief of the Norway House Cree Nation became official. He defeated acting-chief Fred Muskego by 40 votes, 943 to 903.

This was not just any band election. Balfour was a duly elected band councillor who was stripped of his salary and responsibilities and kept out of the decision-making process by former chief Ron Evans and his supporters on council.

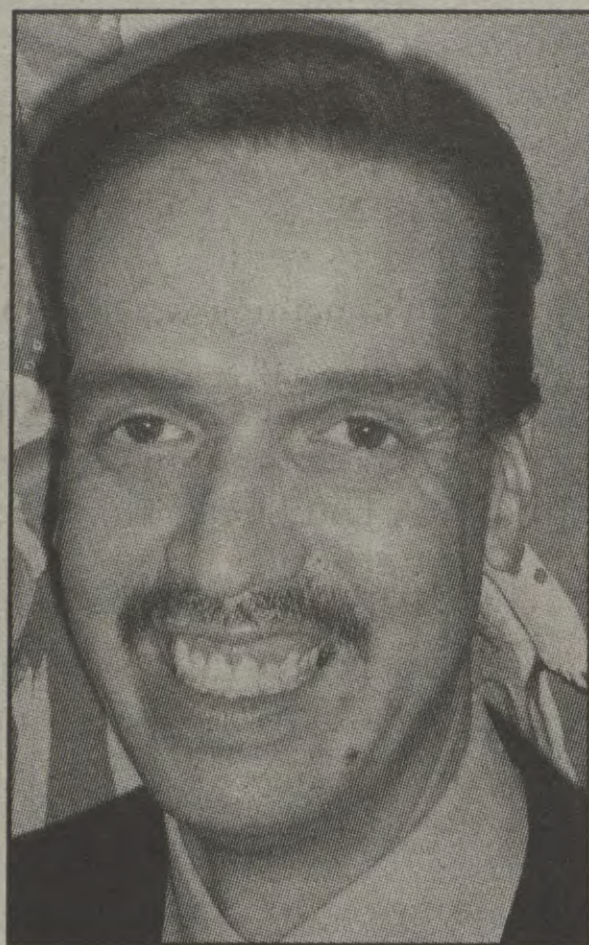
A lawyer by training, Balfour was successful in Federal Court in four different applications for a judicial review of those decisions.

The decision on the first application—handed down on Feb. 17 by Federal Court Justice Pierre Blais—was reported in this publication last month.

Judge Blais ruled that Evans and the councillors who supported him engaged in "usurpation of power" and that a "sub-group" of councillors held numerous "secret meetings" and had engaged in "deplorable blackmail and influence peddling." The judge also wrote that Evans and his core supporters on council were guilty of "failure to respect representative democracy," engaged in "unauthorized activities" and acted in "bad faith" and had put "democracy at risk."

On March 6, Justice Sandra Simpson of the Federal Court ruled on the three other cases.

She ruled that Evans and councillors Fred Muskego, Eliza Clark and Langford Saunders had "acted unlawfully" when they prevented Balfour from attending band council meetings and when they refused to allow Balfour to have access to band financial



Marcel Balfour

records.

The judge said the decision to appoint Fred Muskego as acting chief when Evans resigned last August to take up his new position as grand chief of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) was contrary to the band's own election law.

Judge Simpson noted that the former chief and his core supporters on council had "decided that [Balfour] was a dissident upstart who questioned and criticized their decisions, priorities and expenditures." In order to "reduce [Balfour's] influence," Evans, Muskego, Clark and Saunders had reduced Balfour's salary, tried to evict him from his apartment, confiscated his computer, denied him access to band council offices, held secret meetings, and denied him access to band records and documents, the judge also noted.

The judge ordered the former chief and councillors to provide Balfour prompt and full access to all council meetings, band offices and financial records, his computer, a locked work-room, and travel expenses to Winnipeg to consult financial advisors.

Evans and the others plan to appeal the decisions.

Reached by telephone in Norway House on March 20, Balfour told *Windspeaker* that Muskego had not been elected and Evans was in Winnipeg in his new role as grand chief but the others named in his court action had been re-elected.

"I'm anticipating, not a smooth ride, but that we'll all work together," he said. "I'm hoping that we will. I don't have any indications why we wouldn't yet."

The new council was scheduled to meet for the first time on March 22 to "talk about portfolios and talk about some outstanding issues, which basically are the court cases," he added.

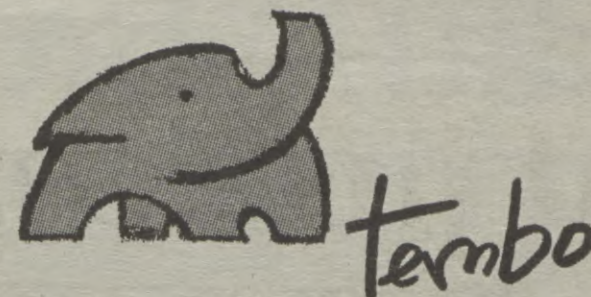
A pamphlet was circulated around the community criticizing Balfour and defending those who had been so severely criticized by the two judges. Balfour said it was an exercise in propaganda, which the voters saw through.

"The facts were presented to the court. There's a judge that listened to both sides. The position they were putting forward in their pamphlet was not what was accepted by the court," he said, adding, "there were some things that weren't exactly accurate [in the pamphlet]."

Since he had essentially taken on the leadership establishment and exposed tactics that are not employed only in his community, the new chief was asked if he anticipated trouble with his new colleagues. He revealed he was enjoying the irony of soon attending AMC meetings that will be chaired by Evans.

"I don't anticipate a rough ride with any Manitoba chiefs at all. Are you saying the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs? Are you saying Grand Chief Ron Evans? Well, Mr. Evans works for the chiefs and that means he works for me. I don't anticipate any problems. He has a job to do and so do I," Balfour said.

(see New chief page 13.)



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PUBLIC HEARING ANNOUNCEMENT

The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) has issued an official Notice of Public Hearing, available at www.nuclearsafety.gc.ca, that it will hold a one-day public hearing to consider the results of an Environmental Assessment Screening of Bruce Power Inc.'s proposed Refurbishment for Life Extension and Continued Operations Project at the Bruce A Nuclear Generating Station. The environmental assessment is being conducted pursuant to the requirements of the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*. The hearing will be held in the CNSC Public Hearing Room, 14th floor, 280 Slater Street, Ottawa, Ontario, on **May 19, 2006**.

Persons who wish to participate must file a request to intervene with the Secretary of the Commission by April 18, 2006. Hearing documents (submissions) are not available on-line and must be requested through the Secretariat at the address below. For more information, instructions on how to participate in this public hearing process or the complete text of the official Notice of Public Hearing, see www.nuclearsafety.gc.ca, and refer to Notice of Public Hearing 2006-H-06, or contact:

L. Levert, Secretariat
Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission
280 Slater St., P.O. Box 1046
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5S9

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Business Quarterly Windspeaker's Aboriginal Business Magazine

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Unequal justice: Racist attitudes root cause

By Paul Barnsley
Windspeaker Staff Writer

BRANDON, Man.

A Native activist's untrained eye has detected something that University of Windsor law professor David Tanovich has examined in detail in his recently released book.

Isabel Cuerrier is a Native woman on a mission. She wants to draw attention to what she sees as obvious examples of the unequal application of justice by Canadian authorities when it comes to Native people.

She has written many letters to police services, government ministries and human rights organizations trying to raise awareness of what she sees as differing levels of enthusiasm in police investigations, prosecutions and in sentencing when crimes involve Native people.

Crimes against Native people are not as harshly punished as crimes committed against non-Native people, she argues. And crimes committed by Native people against non-Native people are much more energetically prosecuted and sentences are harsher.



Isabel Cuerrier

In an open letter that Cuerrier wrote to Amnesty International and Canada's ministers of Justice and Foreign Affairs, she took issue with media reports about the so-called stolen sisters, the estimated 500 missing Native women.

"I believe that officials and police have failed to protect Aboriginal women from violent attacks and most certainly have ignored acts when they occurred. However, I must strongly contest the given statistics over the last 30 years. I firmly believe they are much higher," she wrote.

Cuerrier is a 52-year-old residential school survivor. She is also an author, a sessional university instructor at the University of Brandon (Manitoba), a keynote public speaker, and a loss-grief and childhood sexual abuse workshop facilitator.

She told *Windspeaker* that her father is non-Native and she does not appear Native. She has been able to fit in to mainstream non-Native society. She grew up on the Pukatawagan reserve in northern Manitoba and though she says she was the victim of physical and sexual abuse, her relatives who do appear Native have been victims of more violence than she can bear to think about.

"Though in many respects my life may appear to be normal, certain burdens within my heart are not. Like many in the Aboriginal community, I am responding to a soul-deep call for enlightenment of our society's dirty secrets. It is time to speak up and place the secrets out where everyone may see them. It is time to talk about the deaths of my own sisters, mother, and grandmother," she wrote.

Her grandmother died in 1981 on the Pukatawagan reserve in northern Manitoba. Police ruled the cause of death was

asphyxiation, saying she had choked on her own vomit.

"My family and I travelled north to attend her wake and funeral. During the all-night wake, we all were shocked and dismayed to see her covered in bruises. Something was horribly wrong," she wrote.

In 1986, her 49-year-old mother's body was found near a bridge in Flin Flon, Man. It was reported that she had drowned.

"I made the journey for yet another wake and funeral. I noted nothing out of the ordinary although there were variances in the stories of how she had died," she said.

In 1991, her 28-year-old sister's body was found behind a Main Street hotel in Winnipeg. The death was ruled a suicide. Family and friends disagreed. They believed she had been murdered.

Two-and-a-half years later, the body of her 37-year-old last surviving sister was found in a parking lot in Winnipeg. Officials ruled she died from natural causes.

"What I failed to understand was how natural is a death when the victim's shoes are in one area of the parking lot, and her shirt is lying next to her? Furthermore, during the wake, the family noted a head injury," she wrote.

These were not Cuerrier's only brushes with death. In 1973, her uncle Alison was murdered, stabbed twice in the heart. His killer received three years.

"This sentence pales in comparison to the recent sentence of an Aboriginal man who raped and murdered a little girl in Alberta. On May 26, 2005, he received a life sentence with no chance for parole for 20 years. What's wrong with this portrait? Alison was Aboriginal, and the little girl was not," she said. "Adequate justice for an Aboriginal's murder has been rare as far as I can recall, yet despite this dark and ugly truth, there is a light at the end of the tunnel," she wrote. "Groups, including Amnesty International, are all doing their part to bring about change and, yes, possibly even justice. Many individuals are currently working hard to assist in this struggle for change."

She was delighted when she learned last May that Kingston Police Chief Bill Closs had commissioned a study of who his officers stopped and why. The study revealed that visible minorities were stopped a disproportionate number of times.

(see Root causes page 22.)



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Governance resurrected

(Continued from page 8.)

"We supported the governance legislation back in 2001 specifically because of the accountability measures that were going to be introduced in that legislation. What I'm talking about is accountability to the members in the reserve. Because quite often many off-reserve or Aboriginal people or what they call Bill C-31 Indians often try to get access to budgets or where the money's being spent on those reserves and very often people can't get those answers because chief and council just shuts those people out. So when I talk about accountability and if that's the direction where this government is going, then we'll probably support that as well," Patrick Brazeau said.

Brazeau met with Prentice and made the point that there's no sense following through on the Kelowna commitments if it can't be assured that the money will reach the grassroots people.

"Our issue coming out of Kelowna was that we didn't know where the funds were going to be taken from and we didn't know where they were going to go," he said. "The point that we were trying to make in Kelowna is that there should be a mechanism put in place so that these funds will actually reach the Aboriginal people with needs and not filter down into the organizations so the organizations get the bulk of the money and the people at the grassroots level continue to suffer the consequences of that."

News that First Nation governance and accountability will

be resurrected as an issue was welcomed by former Manitoba Progressive Conservative Northern Affairs minister David Newman, who now spends a lot of his time representing clients with a complaint against their chief and council.

"The problem with the [federal] government is that they have been too cautious, too patient, too deferential with the argument of the chiefs from too many different bands that the government should not effectively legislate or have legislation applicable and enforced for the benefit of members against chiefs and councils. [The chiefs argue] that the government should leave it up to them to do it themselves and that's part of the process of self-government. Well, I simply do not agree that in the interim that should not be done. I think it's an abdication of responsibility by the federal government not to require, for example, that the Indian Act be subject to the Human Rights Act of Canada," he said.

Assembly of First Nations (AFN) spokesman Don Kelly said National Chief Phil Fontaine had no fear of any proposed accountability process. Although he said the AFN had no knowledge of any plans in that regard. Kelly said the AFN had been working on accountability measures as part of the Kelowna process and the AFN renewal process and that Fontaine had proposed a First Nation ombudsman and First Nation auditor general and that may well be what will be brought forward in the FAA.

New chief still fighting to view financial records

(Continued from page 10.)

"All leadership should be happy because this is the way we're supposed to be doing things. The way in which things have been done in the past, Norway House is probably a good example of it because it's been well documented and dealt with by the Federal Court," said Marcel Balfour.

There will be more court action on the judicial review applications. Balfour said Justice Sandra Simpson's order to disclose financial information of band owned companies, of which former and current members of chief and council are board members, has not been followed.

"I'm proceeding for contempt of court because they haven't followed those orders. I put that in as a councillor before the election," he said.

And Windspeaker has learned that there may be more court action in a very similar case in another First Nation in Manitoba.

Gordon Raven, a councillor for the Jackhead First Nation, has written several letters to the Manitoba region of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) asking for help because he has also been stripped of his salary and excluded by his chief and fellow councillors.

Winnipeg lawyer David Newman, the former Manitoba minister of Northern Affairs, with

responsibility for Native Affairs under former premier Gary Filmon, is advising Raven and will act pro bono (for no fee) should the matter end up in court.

"The similarities between the two cases are there are two councillors that were not paid and were being dealt with by the chief in ways that were unacceptable," Newman said when contacted on March 20. "It is an example I think of the kind of intimidation used to discourage dissent, used to discourage opposition to the policies of other members of council."

He applauded Balfour for making a stand against this kind of practice.

"Marcel's a lawyer and a pretty smart guy. So he had the capacity to handle much of this himself," he said. "He did a terrific job. Gordon Raven is a more typical person in a smaller reserve in Manitoba and has very little education and has many personal challenges, which makes it difficult to be an effective adversary as an individual against a band that still controls the resources."

He said his client is trying to avoid court by asking the government to intervene.

"There's not as much money at stake. It's a much smaller band. I think it's about \$1,000 a month. The approach that he's been

taking is to appeal to the good sense of INAC, who should surely be encouraging good governance in an Indian Act reserve. My bad experience with them in many cases is that they don't often enough require compliance with the regulations governing the conduct of governance," the lawyer said.

"What is disturbing here is that chief and council haven't even responded to the letters of Gordon seeking an explanation, seeking entitlement to participate, notice of meetings and those type of things. Gordon's an impoverished individual who's been driven off the reserve to live and survive. It's similar in many respects but it's very difficult for someone like Gordon to take on the funded government establishment."

He believes it is a democratic right and a human right to express disagreement with the local government, whether you are a duly elected member of that government or not.

"I believe the most absolute fundamental to democracy, and see it in my travels in the world as well, no different in an Indian reserve, is human rights," he said. "If you don't have an understanding of, and respect for, human rights and an ability to enforce those rights, you can't have an economy and you can't have democracy."



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Taxman troubles

By Paul Barnsley
Windspeaker Staff Writer

WINNIPEG

Ron Phillips beat the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (CCRA, formerly Revenue Canada) in court, but he says the matter is far from concluded.

As reported last month in *Windspeaker Business Quarterly* magazine, the Winnipeg businessman was ordered to pay close to \$100,000 in back taxes, interest and penalties because he did not collect GST for the educational training sessions he provided to First Nation administrators. Tax Court of Canada Justice Brent Paris ruled that the knowledge gained at these sessions became the property of the First Nation and was exempt from taxation by virtue of Section 74 of the Indian Act.

When the March 3 deadline for the government to appeal that decision came and went with no appeal filed, Phillips thought his troubles were over. He contacted CCRA's office in Winnipeg and asked that a lien placed against his home be lifted and that money garnished by the government be returned.

"They told me that they could still go after me or challenge me for the GST for the years 2001 to 2003," he told *Windspeaker*. "I said, 'What?' They said that court decision was only for the years from 1997 to 2001 and they said that they could still go after me. I said, 'You've got to be kidding.' And he said, 'No, we've decided not to but we could.'" That just made Phillips mad.

"I said, 'In the words of George Bush, bring it on.' This is insane," he said.

Phillips preferred not to name the official who made the threat.

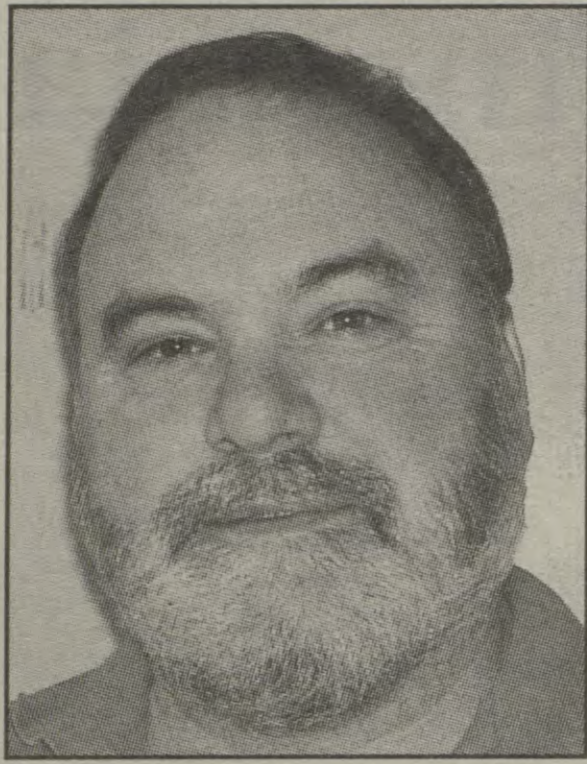
"In actual fact he's not a bad guy and I don't want to get him into too much trouble. He was just saying what the government could do," Phillips explained. "We were talking sort of off-the-record."

Weeks after that conversation, matters have not been resolved.

"I still have not seen any money. They have taken the liens off my house, though," he said on March 19. "They asked me to take the liens off. They sent me the forms. So I asked them what all these forms are for and they told me that I was supposed to take them down to the land titles office and get the lien off my house. I said, 'No. Why should I?' They said, 'Well, it's your house, your lien.' I said, 'That's right but why should I do your job? You put it on, you take it off.'"

He was told, "That's not the way we do things."

But later, CCRA agreed to remove the lien.



Ron Phillips

As for the cash and the damage done to his reputation, the government does not seem to be in any hurry to take care of those matters.

"They seized approximately \$35,000 from me in the last 16 months, half my salary plus my income tax refunds for the last two years or so," he said. "They don't seem to appreciate that a judge has made this decision that I was providing property. I was providing property from 1997 to 2001 and I'm still providing property. I told them that if they want to go to court, let's go to court now."

People all over the country are watching this case with interest, if not concern. The most basic fact, one that could affect any business that deals with First Nations, is that the government has a policy that is contrary to the laws of the land.

"The policy, which was revised in October 2005, still says that First Nations can purchase services for band management off reserve without paying the GST. That has no basis in law. Revenue Canada said in court three separate times that it was their position that all services to First Nations are taxable, on and off reserve. That was their position because there is no legislation that says services off reserve are tax-free," Phillips said. "The judge asked their lawyer three times: Are you telling me that all services are taxable? 'Yes, on and off reserve.' According to a strict reading of the Indian Act, [the CCRA lawyer] said, there is no exemption for services. The exemption is for property of an Indian band. There's no mention of services. That's the law. The judge had to find a legal basis to allow me to win and he used the Indian Act."

Others may not get such a favorable ruling.

"These particular services that I am providing are property. They still go after other people that are providing services and say, 'You owe for the GST because services are not exempt in any law. It's only policy.' And people have to realize this: When you go to court, you can't argue policy, you can only argue law," Phillips said.

(see Mister Taxman page 20.)

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Peace Hills Trust "Native Art Contest" Rules and Regulations

The Hills Trust "Native Art Contest" (PHT Contest) is open to Aboriginal Residents of Canada, except employees of Peace Hills Trust who are not eligible. Entries shall consist of a complete and signed Entry Form and an "UNFRAMED" two dimensional work of art in any graphic medium (not larger than 4 feet x 6 feet), must be received no later than 4:00 p.m. on August 31, 2006. Entries will be judged by a panel of adjudicators arranged through Peace Hills Trust whose decision will be final and binding on the entrants.

By signing the Entry Form, the entrant represents that the entry is wholly original, that the work was composed by the entrant, and that the entrant is owner of the copyright in the entry; warrants that the entry shall not infringe on any copyrights or other intellectual property rights of third parties. Each entrant shall, by signing the Entry Form, indemnify and save harmless Peace Hills Trust and its management and staff and employees from and against any claims consistent with the foregoing representation and warranty; waives his Exhibition Rights in the entry for the term of the PHT Contest, and in the event that the entry is chosen as a winning entry, agrees to waive and assign the entrant's Exhibition Right in the winning entry, together with all rights of copyright and reproduction, in favour of Peace Hills Trust; agrees to be bound by the PHT Contest Procedures and Rules and Regulations. All entries complying with the Rules and Regulations will be registered in the PHT Contest by the Official Registrar, Ms. Suzanne Lyrintzis. Late entries, incomplete entries, or entries which do not comply with the PHT Contest Entry Procedures and Rules and Regulations will be disqualified. All adult winning entries will become the property of Peace Hills Trust and part of its "Native Art Collection." Unless prior arrangements are made, non-winning entries will be returned as follows: entries hand delivered by the entrant should be picked up by the entrant, all other entries will be returned by ordinary mail. Peace Hills Trust assumes no responsibility for entries which are misdirected, lost, damaged or destroyed when being returned to the entrant. All entries **will not** be returned.

Entry Procedures

Ensure that all spaces on the Entry Form are filled in correctly, and that the form is dated and signed, otherwise Peace Hills Trust reserves the right to disqualify the entry. Entrants may submit as many entries as they wish however, a SEPARATE entry form must accompany each entry. In the Youth categories only ONE entry per youth is permitted. Entries must be "UNFRAMED" paintings or drawings and may be done in oil, watercolor, pastel, ink, charcoal or any two dimensional graphic medium. All entries will be judged on the basis of appeal of the subject, originality and the choice and treatment of the subject, and the creative and technical merit of the artist. (Entries which were rejected in previous PHT Contest competitions are not eligible.)

Peace Hills Trust will not acknowledge the receipt of any entry. If the entrant requires notification, the entry should be accompanied by a self-addressed stamped postcard which will be mailed to the entrant when the entry is received.

If you wish to sell your work while on display at the PHT Contest, please authorize us to release your telephone number to any interested purchasers. Should you not complete that portion of the Entry Form, your telephone number will not be released.

Peace Hills Trust at its sole discretion reserves the right to display any or all entries during the PHT Contest.

Adult category Prizes: 1st - \$2,500.00, 2nd - \$1,500.00, 3rd - \$1,000.00. Youth Prizes: 1st - \$150.00, 2nd - \$100.00, 3rd - \$75.00 in each category.

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Peace Hills Trust Native Art Contest Entry Form

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PRESENT ADDRESS _____

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HOME PHONE _____ WORK PHONE _____

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TITLE _____

MEDIUM(S) _____

DESCRIPTION _____

YES, you may release my phone number to an interested purchaser. Selling Price \$ _____

I hereby certify that the information contained in this Entry Form is true and accurate. I hereby further certify that I have read and understood the Entry Procedures and Regulations of Peace Hills Trust "Native Art Contest", as stipulated on the reverse and I agree to be bound by the same.

DATE _____ SIGNATURE OF ENTRANT (must be the original artist and owner of the copyright) _____

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IN Mail Del. _____ Date _____

OUT Mail Del. _____ Date _____

1. All entries are restricted to "2 dimensional art", that is work done on a flat surface suitable for framing

2. Works are restricted in size - no larger than 4 feet by 6 feet

3. The contest is divided into the following categories:

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Windspeaker's Special Section Serving the Aboriginal People of Ontario

Michif speakers talk language preservation

By CHERYL PETTEN
Birchbark Writer

THUNDER BAY

According to Metis Nation of Ontario (MNO) President Tony Belcourt, the best way to help promote and preserve the Michif language may involve combining the old with the new.

The MNO played host to the fifth National Michif Conference, held March 17 to 19 in Thunder Bay. Delegates from across the Metis Nation took part in the event, held to celebrate the Michif language and Metis culture and to look at what can be done to promote usage of the language.

"We talked about, well, let's just do things like play cards and let's just speak Michif like we used to, or our ancestors used to. And so we shared ideas from one end of the Metis homeland to the other about what is going on. Where are our strengths? How are we going to build on that? What are our experiences? And let's share and get behind each other and try and make sure that we keep this alive in our communities," Belcourt said.

"There are many, many Michif speakers in a lot of communities, but it's on the decline, there's no doubt about it, because we've got Michif speakers who themselves say, 'Well, my children don't speak Michif.' ... We've lost a generation, or we might have lost two generations. So we've got a

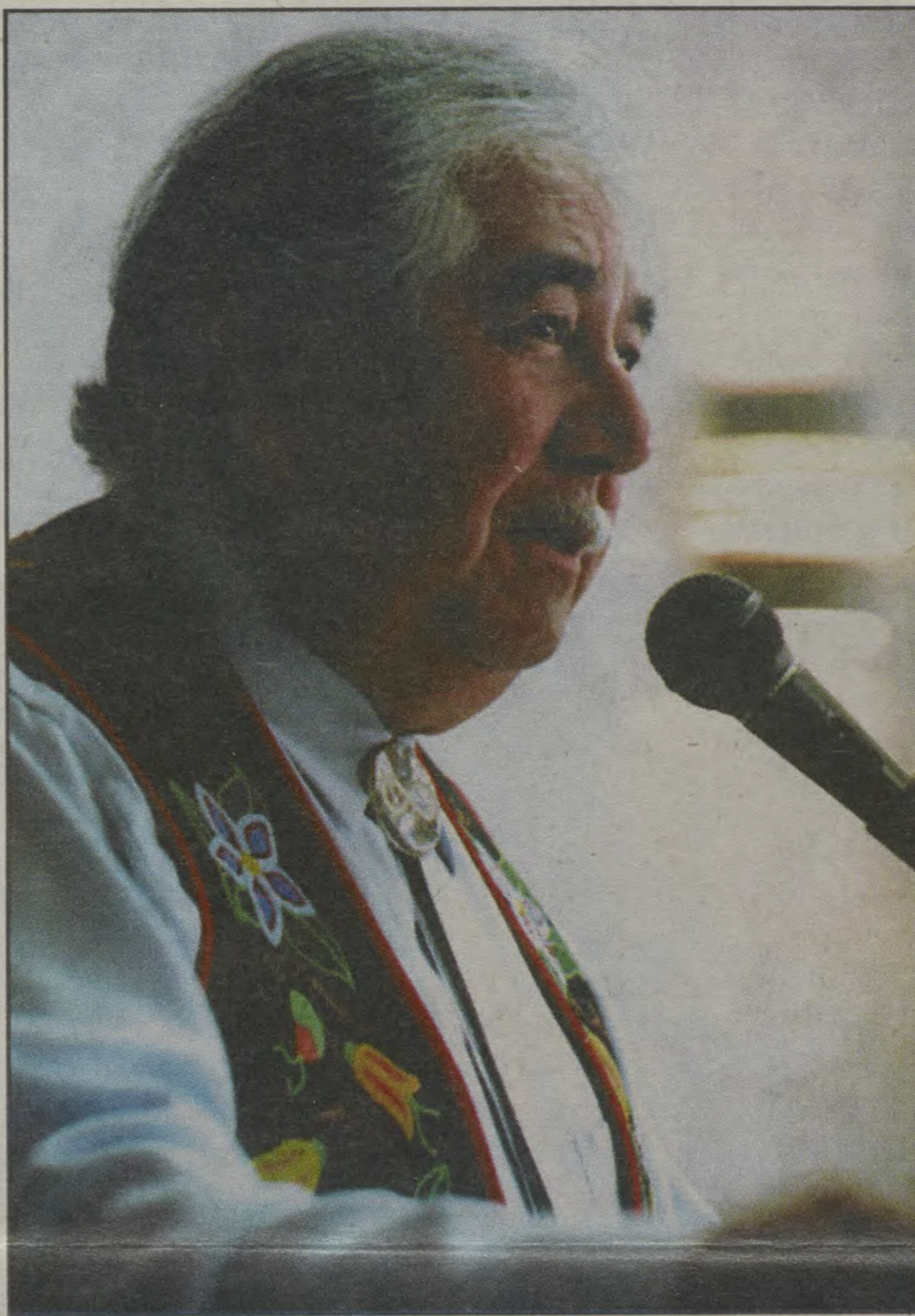
lot of catching up to do."

The design of the conference lent itself to encouraging Michif use. The language was spoken continuously throughout the event, with no interpreters provided.

"Our language is a living language. Much of it is through expression, not just letters on a piece of paper. So speaking the language is essential," Belcourt said. "And hearing it being spoken is essential."

The conference provided delegates with an opportunity to share information with each other about what is being done across the Metis Nation to preserve the Michif language. Part of the challenge, Belcourt said, is working to promote the language with limited resources.

"Those of us in our various



Metis Nation of Ontario President Tony Belcourt addresses participants during the fifth annual National Michif Conference held in Thunder Bay from March 17 to 19.

regions that are committed to keeping our languages alive are going to do whatever we have to and whatever we can do in our own areas and in our own communities. But the fact is if

we're going to be successful, we're going to need some help here. We're going to need some resources and we don't have that. We've had a limited amount of funds from the Aboriginal initiative at Canadian Heritage, but that program sunsets on March 31 this year. So we're going to have to lobby hard, not only to get that program extended, but that there be some new resources put into it. We also need to turn to our provincial governments to try to get some assistance as well."

While participants in the conference represented a wide cross-section of the Metis community, in hindsight, organizers realize not enough emphasis was placed on attracting youth delegates, something that everyone agrees will change for

next year's conference in Manitoba.

"We have to engage our youth. We talked about ways to do that, including very small children. Having our languages taught to our children. We also want to try to get some curriculum developed so we can get it into schools. And that this can be a lifelong learning exercise," Belcourt said.

While getting Michif into the school curriculum will go a long way toward preserving the language, that isn't the only way to create more Michif speakers. One resource that Belcourt thinks is being overlooked is old Metis songs and stories. He'd like to see a combining of the old with the new, having more of these songs and stories available on Web sites like the MNO's Metisradio.FM, where anyone with Internet access can listen to them.

"And then we're really putting a push on for people to tape our Elders. In 1982 and '83, a wonderful thing was done in Belcourt, North Dakota at the Turtle Mountain reservation. There was some 240 hours of taping that was done with Elders who were in their 80s and 90s at the time. And it's a wonderful, wonderful preservation of music, songs that had been passed down to them. We are an oral society and so we need to capture that knowledge that is there in the form of music and storytelling."

(See Songs page 2.)

Memorial held for missing and murdered women

By LAURA STEVENS
Birchbark Writer

TORONTO

A group of close to 60 people gathered together at the Oak Street Housing Co-op in Toronto on March 12 to remember and honor the hundreds of Aboriginal women and children that have gone missing or have been murdered in Canada over the past four decades. The families and friends of those being honored were among those gathered, and the names of each of the missing and murdered—more than 300 in total, some whose disappearances date as far back as 1965—were read aloud by those taking part in the memorial.

"We had a whole diversity of people who read the names, so it does affect all of us," said activist Amber O'Hara, who has been hosting the annual memorial and feast for five years. "Seeing the families' faces at the memorial was just

heart-breaking. I don't think that there was a person in attendance who wasn't crying. Even some reporters had tears in their eyes."

When O'Hara hosted the first memorial in a Toronto park five years ago, only five people were in attendance. She said each of the memorials has been filled with touching moments, but this year's was especially powerful.

"This year was especially touching because the families made it what it was. Three of them courageously came forward and shared their stories and these were the ones that are unsolved cases."

Everyone who attended was asked to bring a pair of shoes—baby shoes, or the type that would be worn by a young girl, a grown woman or a grandmother—in honor of the missing women and children. About 50 pairs of shoes were collected and pointed toward the western door, which in the Ojibwe tradition is the doorway

to death.

"This was to represent with their deaths and disappearances that many shoes are left unfilled and many families are left wondering where their loved ones have gone."

O'Hara knows all too well about how unjust the system can be in the worst of times. Almost 16 years ago, she was raped, stabbed and left for dead.

"It was a definite racist attack on me, it was a planned attack on me," she said.

Eight months later, she called the police to tell them that whoever raped her had infected her with HIV. The police response, O'Hara said, was to say that they couldn't find her file.

"I lived the life of prostituting, drug addictions and being an alcoholic for 13 years but somebody had faith in me and told me that I could make a change in my life and that's what I did," O'Hara said. "When I was infected with HIV, that's really when my life

changed."

O'Hara's dedication to creating awareness about the many cases that remain unsolved or that have never been investigated is clearly evident through her work with the memorials. For the last four years she's hosted and supported the memorial and feast on her own. This year the women of the No More Silence Network (NMSN), as well as other organizations, assisted O'Hara in providing food for the feast. The NMSN also provided tobacco ties that everyone received and also ensured that media attended the event.

"It was nice to see other groups getting involved and saying this affects me to," said O'Hara.

The NMSN was formed about a year ago. According to a press release, the coalition is made up of individuals and organizations "seeking to restore justice to Indigenous communities."

"These women involved in the NMSN are all very committed

to see that justice is done for the Aboriginal people here in Canada surrounding these cases," said O'Hara.

Through her travels into many First Nations communities across Canada as an AIDS educator, O'Hara said she has heard many stories and seen countless posters of missing women and children. That, she said, is the reason for her efforts to ensure these people are not forgotten.

"Whenever I would see one of those posters, I would remember Betty Osborne and I would get really angry," said O'Hara.

Helen Betty Osborne was only 19 years old when she was brutally beaten, stabbed, raped and left for dead near The Pas in northern Manitoba in November 1971. Sixteen years after her death, four men were implicated in the murder, but only one, Dwayne Archie Johnston, was ever convicted. In 1997, Johnston was granted full parole.

(See Activist page 2.)

Activist works to ensure women are remembered

(Continued from page 1.)

After many years of research and countless hours in a reference library, Amber O'Hara said she found very little information about these women that went missing, "which was very sad."

For the last decade, O'Hara has dedicated much of her time to constructing a Web site (www.missingnativewomen.org) to honor the Aboriginal women who are missing or have been murdered.

"This is what I've been really focusing on pretty much 24 hours a day for the last 10 years. I didn't want them to be

forgotten women, so I started building this Web site."

According to O'Hara, any time a case comes up that deals with a missing Aboriginal mother, teen or child or where there are unidentified remains, she is notified by police. She then does research to confirm that the missing individual is of Aboriginal ancestry before posting the information online.

"Everyone on my Web site is of Aboriginal ancestry and that's one thing I insist on," O'Hara said. "Because every other woman has been covered in the media and our women haven't been."

NAN and government establish partnership

The Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) has entered into a new partnership with the provincial government in order to try to improve the lives of people living within NAN territory.

The two partners announced creation of a Northern Table on March 21, designed to provide a forum to address the challenges faced by NAN communities and to try to close the socio-economic gap between people living in

those communities and the non-Aboriginal citizens of the province.

"A new era in government relations must begin in order for our people to begin to prosper from the natural resources that have contributed to the prosperity of other Ontarians," said NAN Grand Chief Stan Beardy. "Provided the table is approached by both sides in good faith, this is the first step to achieving that."

Songs and stories can be used to preserve language

(Continued from page 1.)

The Internet can also be used to reach out specifically to young people and to expose them to Metis language, culture and history.

"For example, if you've got our young children going to, at a tender age of four or five

years old, they're on the Web now playing Barbie.com. Then why can't we have our children also be dressing our own Metis voyageurs, for example ... let's make a Metis voyageur Barbie. Those sorts of things," Tony Belcourt said.

"Languages are central to culture. It's part of a person's being. And the reality is the Michif language is, like many other Aboriginal languages, they're in danger. So we need to do everything we can to revitalize and keep the language going."

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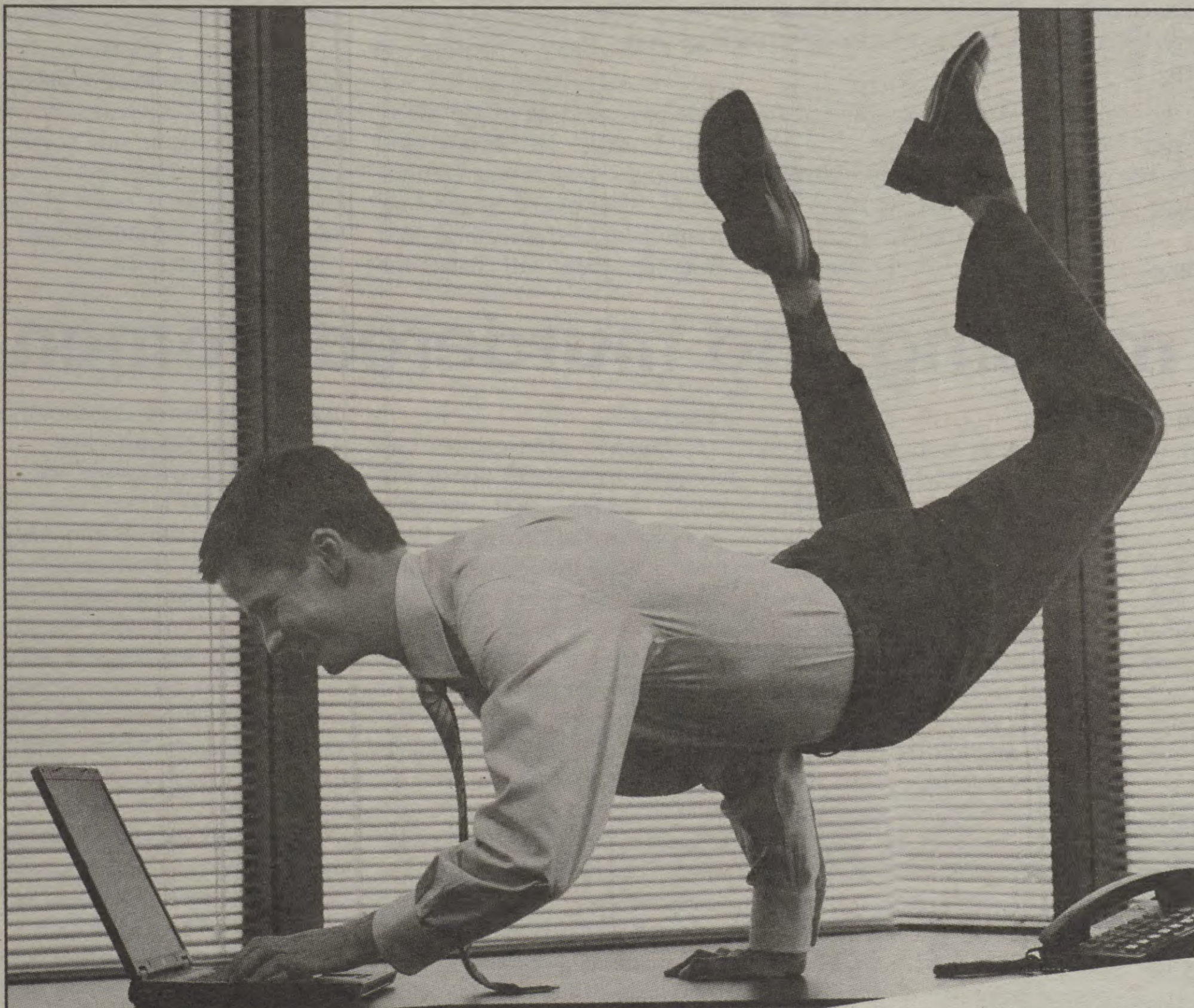
HOW

* Send us your ideas! Submit a short sample of your writing, and a letter describing what you imagine accomplishing with the facilities we can provide for you

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Ericka A. Iserhoff, Community Liaison

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Program helps young writers find their voice

By LAURA STEVENS
Birchbark Writer

TORONTO

Founded in 1982, Native Earth Performing Arts (NEPA) has dedicated itself to creating and producing Native theatre and dance productions. In March 2005, the organization expanded its mandate when it launched the Young Voices program, designed to provide young people between the ages of 16 and 24 with new ways of expressing themselves through the written word.

"We try to foster anyone who would be interested, especially if they are just starting out," said Erika Iserhoff, community liaison for NEPA. "We just want to give them a chance."

Young Voices participants get an opportunity to learn what is involved in creating theatre and to meet with and share their ideas with other young writers. They will also take part in an intensive script workshop in preparation for the 19th annual Weesageechak Festival, a Toronto event hosted by NEPA that showcases and develops new works of Aboriginal theatre and dance. The next festival will take place in early 2007.

"The participants of this program will get to see how it is to be working as a practicing artist, just getting experience and what that means," said Iserhoff. "They will also get experience within the Native theatre community."

There haven't been a lot of Aboriginal playwrights, Iserhoff said. "So we wanted to foster that in terms of helping them tell their stories. Everyone has a different approach to what they want to be writing about and some of them tend to integrate traditional aspects of their own culture. Most of them are telling stories from an Aboriginal perspective."

One Young Voices participant, 27-year-old Candace Brunette, who is of Cree and French descent, is writing about her own life and experiences and issues that she deals with in everyday life as a Native woman of mixed blood.

"I started with nothing except for this

uncomfortableness that I had within myself that I had to deal with, my own experiences," said Brunette.

Wandering Womb is the title of her 40-minute piece. She has written more than 30 pages of the story she describes as being about a "young woman who is a non-status by government definition trying to find her place in the world."

"This piece plays a lot with colonization and patriarchy. It looks at how our own people have kind of perpetuated these stereotypes about us. Some of the issues are serious but I try to bring light to it with some humor," Brunette said.

On top of her work with Young Voices, Brunette works full-time at the First Nations House at the University of Toronto as a student recruitment officer. She is also an part-time under-graduate student in the university's Aboriginal studies program, and gives up her weekends to learn more about story creation. Brunette recently attended a two-day workshop that dealt with improvisational movement.

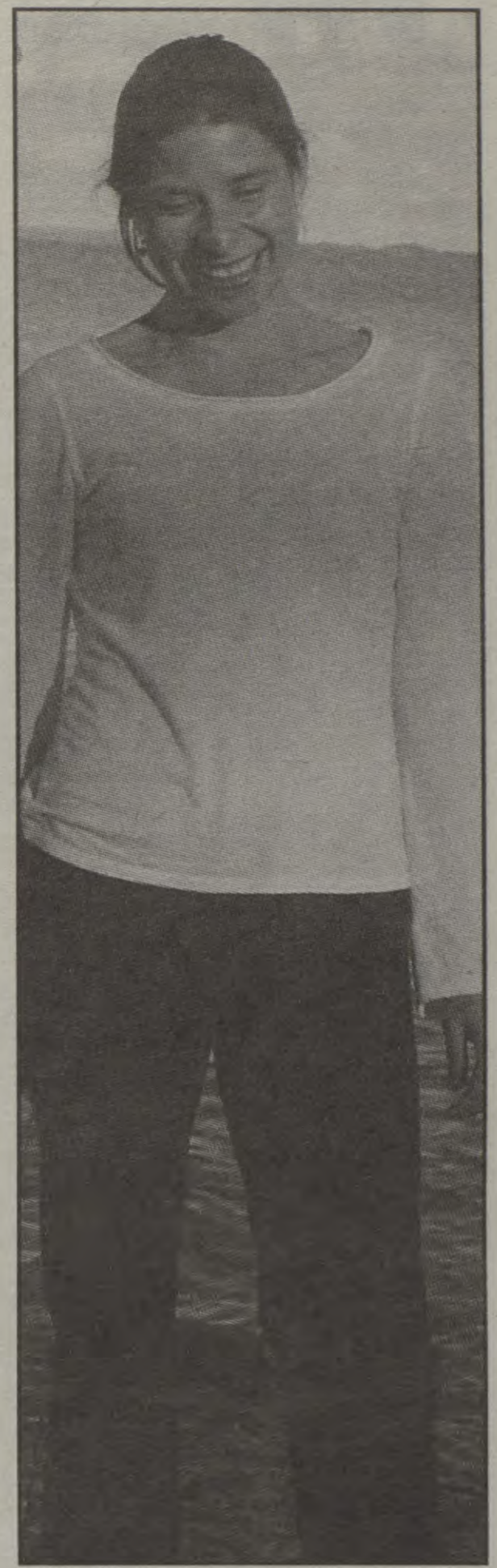
"I like my storytelling process to be organic," said Brunette. "I tend to try and use my body as a tool as much as possible in my writing."

She described her writing as sensual. "It engages not just your mind but also the senses in your body," she said.

"For instance, when you read about a description of something tasting good, your mouth starts to salivate. You want to engage the senses. You want your reader to feel it in their skin. This storytelling, this theatre has real effects on people."

Through the Young Voices program, Brunette said she has become more confident. "Not that I can take over the world or anything but there's a lot of support there."

According to Iserhoff, participants of the Young Voices program need to come into the program willing to do the work and demonstrating that they are dedicated and are going to see the program through. She suggests that if



Candace Brunette is one of the young writers taking part in the Young Voices program offered by Native Earth Performing Arts in Toronto.

individuals are seriously interested in learning more about the program, they should submit any type of written material they have produced.

"Once we have their submission, we will then try and bring them out to some of the workshops to see if that's what they like," said Iserhoff. "Then it would be just continuing with them, trying to support them in the areas that they would like to explore in terms of writing."

For more information about the Young Voices program, visit the Native Earth Performing Arts Web site at www.nativeearth.ca.

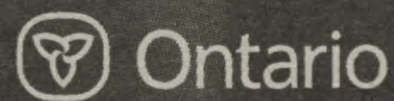


Lindsay shot up because she always said that she'd try anything once. Today she's trying to live with hepatitis C.

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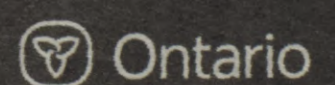
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CCAB continues to build strong relationships

The mandate of the Canadian Council For Aboriginal Business (CCAB), promoting full participation of Aboriginal people within the Canadian economy, hasn't changed much since the organization was founded in 1984. What has changed are the tools it has at its disposal to do its work.

One of those tools is the Foundation for the Advancement of Aboriginal Youth (FAAY), which works to encourage young people to stay in school. The scholarship and bursary program has been operating since 1994, and has seen terrific growth since its inception.

"We've gone from having two sponsors to having 10. We've gone from having 40 awards to 125. We've gone from getting 200 applications to over 1,000. And in the first year of the program we, on behalf of our sponsors, gave out \$30,000 a year. We're now over a quarter of a million dollars. We're at \$282,000," said Jocelyne Soulodre, CCAB president and CEO.

She attributes the growth of the program both to an increase in the number of Aboriginal people seeking an education and to a greater desire by those in the private sector to offer Aboriginal students the assistance they need.

The CCAB also hosts networking events, like its Circle for 2015 dinners and golf tournaments. The first Circle for 2015 event was held in 1999, created to provide Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal business leaders with an opportunity to get together and showcase economic opportunities within Aboriginal communities. This year's Circle for 2015 gala dinner took place in Toronto on Feb. 21, where one of the newest additions to the CCAB's line-up of programs, the Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame, welcomed two new members.

Established in 2004 to mark the CCAB's 20th anniversary, the hall of fame was created as a way to recognize Aboriginal business people whose business innovation and success make them ideal role models for future generations of Aboriginal people. Last year, Dr.



Billy Diamond of Waskaganish, Que. and Mr. Irvin Goodon of Boissevain, Man. became the first two inductees into the hall of fame. This year, two more Aboriginal business people were honored—Suzanne Rochon Burnett of Welland, Ont. and Fred Carmichael of Inuvik, N.W.T.

Last but by no means least in the CCAB arsenal of programs is the Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) program, which allows member companies to measure how well they're doing in efforts to develop good relations with the Aboriginal community and helps them set goals for further building those relationships.

The PAR program looks at a company's efforts in four areas—employment, business development, individual capacity development and community relations. Companies initially join the program at the commitment level, then once they've completed the assessment process, they're placed at either the bronze, silver or gold achievement level, depending on the results of the assessment.

The efforts of nine PAR companies that are leading the way through their efforts to develop progressive relationships with Canada's Aboriginal community were recognized at the Circle for 2015 gala. Alberta-Pacific Forest Industries, Xerox Canada, Syncrude Canada,

Manitoba Lotteries Corporation, the operations division of Canada Post, Western Lakota Energy Services Ltd., IBM Canada, Pitblado Barristers and Solicitors and the World Wildlife Fund were among those honored.

Alberta-Pacific Forest Industries, which joined the PAR program in 2001, was certified at the silver level last year and this year has certified at the gold level, the highest level of achievement in the PAR program.

Xerox Canada, which also joined the program in 2001, has also moved up from silver to the gold achievement level.

Syncrude Canada, another company that came on board with PAR in 2001, went through the re-certification for the second time in 2006 and remains at the gold level. Syncrude first attained gold status in 2002 and re-certified at the gold level in 2004.

Manitoba Lotteries Corporation, Western Lakota Energy Services Ltd. and the operations division of Canada Post Corporation, all moved up from the bronze level to the silver level this year. Manitoba Lotteries and Canada Post both joined the PAR program in 2003, while Western Lakota joined in 2004.

Three companies were also recognized for achieving the bronze level of certification—Winnipeg-based Pitblado Barristers and Solicitors and the World Wildlife Fund, which were both at the commitment level last

"When you look at PAR as a benchmarking hallmark program that is very useful for the corporate sector in terms of driving its Aboriginal relations, and the hall of fame as another program that really puts the spotlight on entrepreneurship and celebrates the role models that can get young Aboriginal people thinking about a career in business and then you take Circle for 2015 as a networking kind of program that is helping to build awareness, I think it's a pretty full suite of programs."

—Jocelyne Soulodre

year, and IBM Canada, a newcomer to the PAR program.

There are currently a total of 25 companies involved in PAR.

BMO Bank of Montreal reached the gold achievement level in 2004, while Cameco Corporation reached gold in 2002 and re-certified at that level in 2005. Diavik Diamond Mines Inc. and ESS Support Services also achieved gold in 2005. Winnipeg's Place Louis Riel All-Suite Hotel went gold in 2003, as did the remote sites division of Sodexo. Sodexo went through the re-certification process in 2005, remaining at the gold level.

Donna Cona and Scotiabank have attained the silver level of certification, Donna Cona reaching that marker in 2001 and Scotiabank in 2005. Nasittuq Corporation sits at the bronze level, reaching that achievement level after certification in 2005.

There are also seven companies at PAR's commitment level, meaning they have joined the program but have yet to go through the certification process. Almost half of the companies at this level are new to the program, having jumped on the PAR bandwagon within the last year.

Newcomers to the program include Saskatoon's Delta Bessborough Hotel, EDS Canada and Red River College. They join Global Television, Higgins International, SaskTel and the

Radisson Hotel, Winnipeg Downtown.

The programs offered by the CCAB—FAAY, Circle for 2015, the Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame and PAR—allow the organization to take a holistic approach that reaches out to every part of the Aboriginal community and private sector, Soulodre said.

"When you look at PAR as a benchmarking hallmark program that is very useful for the corporate sector in terms of driving its Aboriginal relations, and the hall of fame as another program that really puts the spotlight on entrepreneurship and celebrates the role models that can get young Aboriginal people thinking about a career in business and then you take Circle for 2015 as a networking kind of program that is helping to build awareness, I think it's a pretty full suite of programs," she said.

As a non-profit organization entirely supported by the private sector, it is the companies that are willing to put their money where their mouth is when it comes to getting more Aboriginal people involved in the economy of the country that are allowing the CCAB to run its programs. And each year, that support continues to grow, Soulodre said.

Part of what is luring new companies to get involved with the CCAB is the company the organization keeps. From Syncrude to Xerox to IBM to Scotiabank and Bank of Montreal, some of the biggest names in Canadian business have jumped on the CCAB bandwagon and are lending their support.

"Our major fundraising campaign is called the Seven Generations campaign. And those are the companies that support us at the highest level possible. And we just recently added three brand new companies in the last couple months ... so I think our message is really starting to spread and get heard and I think that it bodes well for the organization in the future."

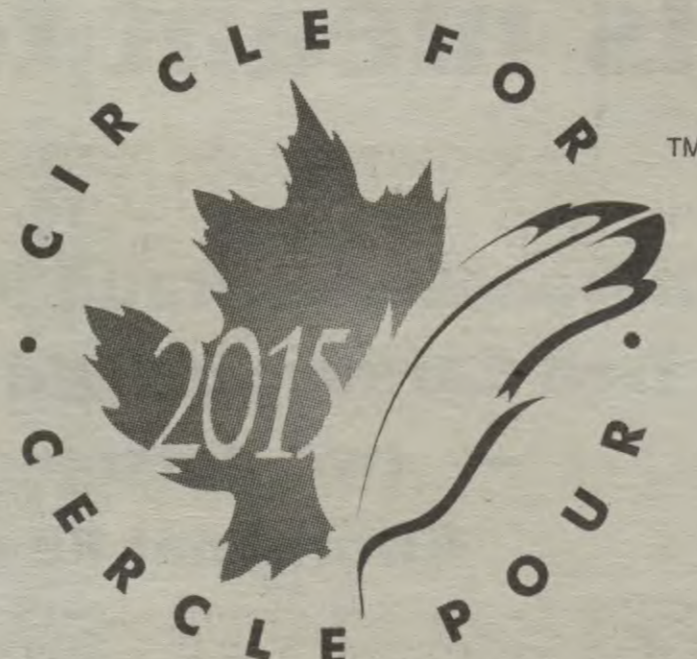
(see Seven Generations page 7.)

Where Corporate Canada meets Aboriginal Business



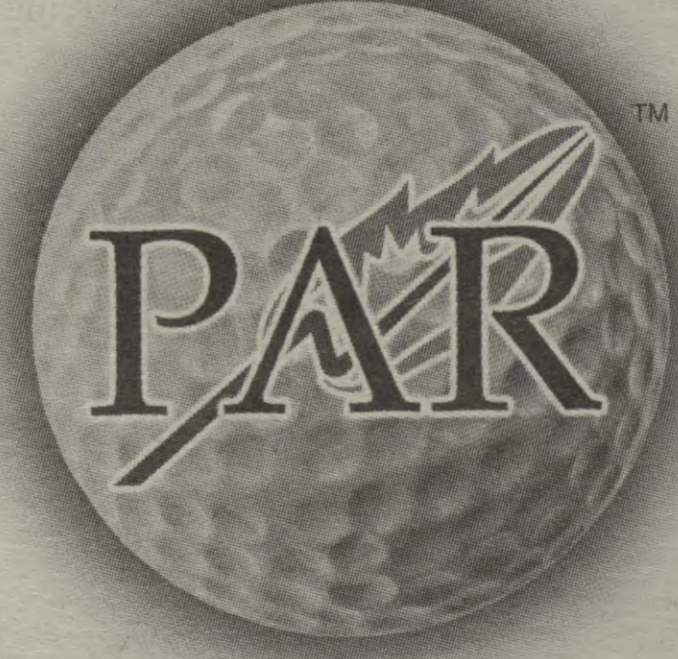
Circle for 2015 Gala Dinner

September 26, 2006 in Vancouver
October 24, 2006 in Calgary
November 28, 2006 in Winnipeg



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Circle for 2015 Golf Tournament

May 29, 2006 at Glen Abbey Golf Club, Oakville
June 26, 2006 at Redwood Meadows, Calgary



Success with a little help from friends in high places

Fred Carmichael says he was barely a teenager when he realized a career on the trapline wasn't in his future.

And although he hasn't moved too far away from his birthplace of Aklavik, N.W.T., located right inside the Arctic Circle, Carmichael has come a long way in the past 71 years.

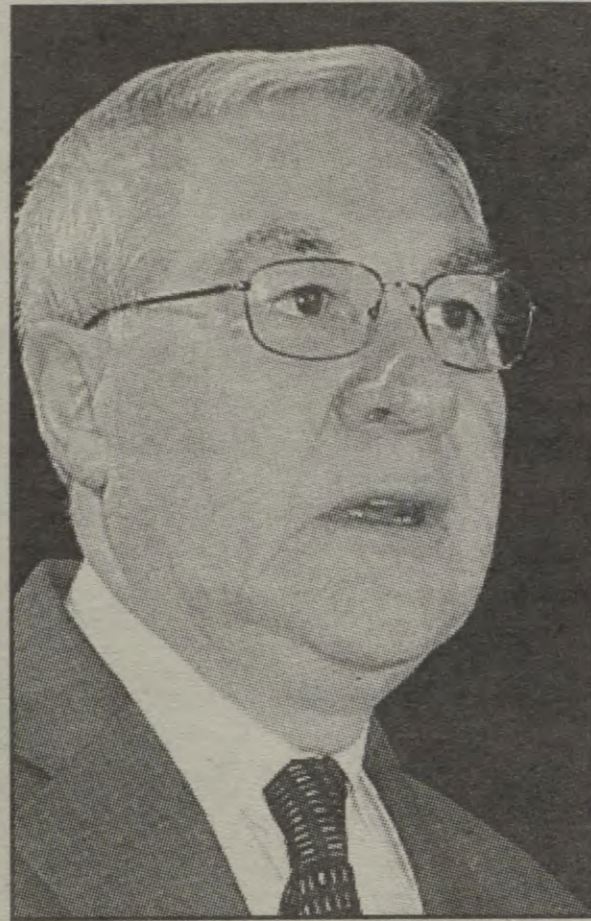
He now lives in Yellowknife and heads both the Gwich'in Tribal Council and the Aboriginal Pipeline Group, and just recently he was honored when the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business inducted him into the Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame for a lifetime of business achievement. The recognition gives a nod to a 50-year career in the air business, during which Carmichael became the first Aboriginal person to hold charter and commercial pilot licenses.

Carmichael says his story begins in 1947, back in Aklavik when he was 12 years old and not doing as well as his brother at bringing home furs from the trapline. He says it was around that time when a small airplane came to their community. The little red Stinson was the first plane he'd ever seen.

"My mother and my brother went into town for Easter and my mum chartered this little airplane," Carmichael says. "That's when I got a good look at it and I watched it fly in and I watched it fly out and I thought, 'Holy Smokes. That's what I'd like to do.'"

It wasn't until the late 1950s when he was working as a mechanic in Reindeer Station, a community near Inuvik, that Carmichael says the opportunity to pursue his dream of becoming a pilot actually surfaced.

"They needed to patrol the reindeer herd out there. They needed to keep control of it," he explains. "I went to talk to some people and said if I were to get a license I could have a



little air service here and do your patrol. They thought that would be great."

Carmichael says he didn't really know what he was doing when it came to setting up a business, but he adds he had a lot of help from friends and others with more experience. And, Carmichael says, he was persistent and determined, two qualities that would become more and more necessary to him as his career continued.

"I had to fight like heck to get that license," he chuckles. "And all it was was a restricted license for aerial control of the reindeer herd and yet there was opposition ... Back then it was a regulated industry. I applied for the license and was turned down by the transport commission.

"I appealed, and the appeal board turned me down again, so I went directly to the minister of transport. That was the last straw. Finally, I thought the minister saw my side of the story and yes, he approved my license."

Over the next few years Carmichael says he grew his company, Reindeer Air Services. A friend, who was also an RCMP officer, became his business partner and the two applied for a full class four

charter license. Carmichael says that application took some fighting for as well, but they were eventually successful. By 1965 he bought out his partner and continued to expand.

Broadcaster Les Carpenter is a fellow Northerner and remembers flying with Carmichael in those days, when it was Carmichael's turn to show off the airplane to young boys from the traplines.

"It was just fascinating being in an airplane," Carpenter says. "Freddy, being so inquisitive to a young mind, he managed to get through explaining all the workings of an airplane ...

"Years later in going to school there were perhaps two individuals who were constantly referred to when we were in communities and we were being talked to by Elders trying to suggest we stick with education and stay in the system. They always referred to Freddy Carmichael as a pilot. For a long time he was known as the local boy made good."

Carpenter says the other individual held out as an example was surgeon Noah Carpenter, but he ended up spending most of his career in southern cities. That was not the case for Carmichael.

"Freddy, you could see him

"My mother and my brother went into town for Easter and my mum chartered this little airplane. That's when I got a good look at it and I watched it fly in and I watched it fly out and I thought, 'Holy Smokes. That's what I'd like to do.'"

—Fred Carmichael

on the street, you could see him in an airplane, you could see him at bush camp. He was everywhere. With him, it was no big deal. He knew everyone."

Carmichael admits part of what has helped him succeed in business has been his relationships with people in his community. He says it's key to treat others with respect and to always be ready to make friends with those you meet. That's what happened when he started piloting for a lawyer by the name of Richard Rohmer, who introduced himself as a retired air serviceman with business in Tuktoyaktuk.

"He was a wing commander... who stayed active flying, so I used to let him fly the aircraft and we got to be very good friends," Carmichael says.

The friendship came at an opportune time, because it was at that point Carmichael was applying for a license to operate a scheduled service between Inuvik down the valley to Yellowknife.

"I put in an application and, of course, I got all kinds of interventions from Pacific Western Airlines, just about every airline in the country, Air Canada, Canadian Airlines and out of Saskatchewan,

Manitoba, Ontario. All opposing the little guy up in the frozen Arctic ... everybody brought their top lawyers ... to try and prove that I was a threat to their economic well-being; a little trapper boy."

Carmichael says it wasn't his first experience going through hearings, and considering his current involvement with the pipeline development in the N.W.T., it certainly wasn't to be his last, but at the time, he wasn't sure what the outcome would be.

"So when the hearing began in Yellowknife, [Rohmer] said 'Fred, I'll volunteer to act for you on this case'... I said 'Well that will be great,' and I didn't realize what a calibre of lawyer he was."

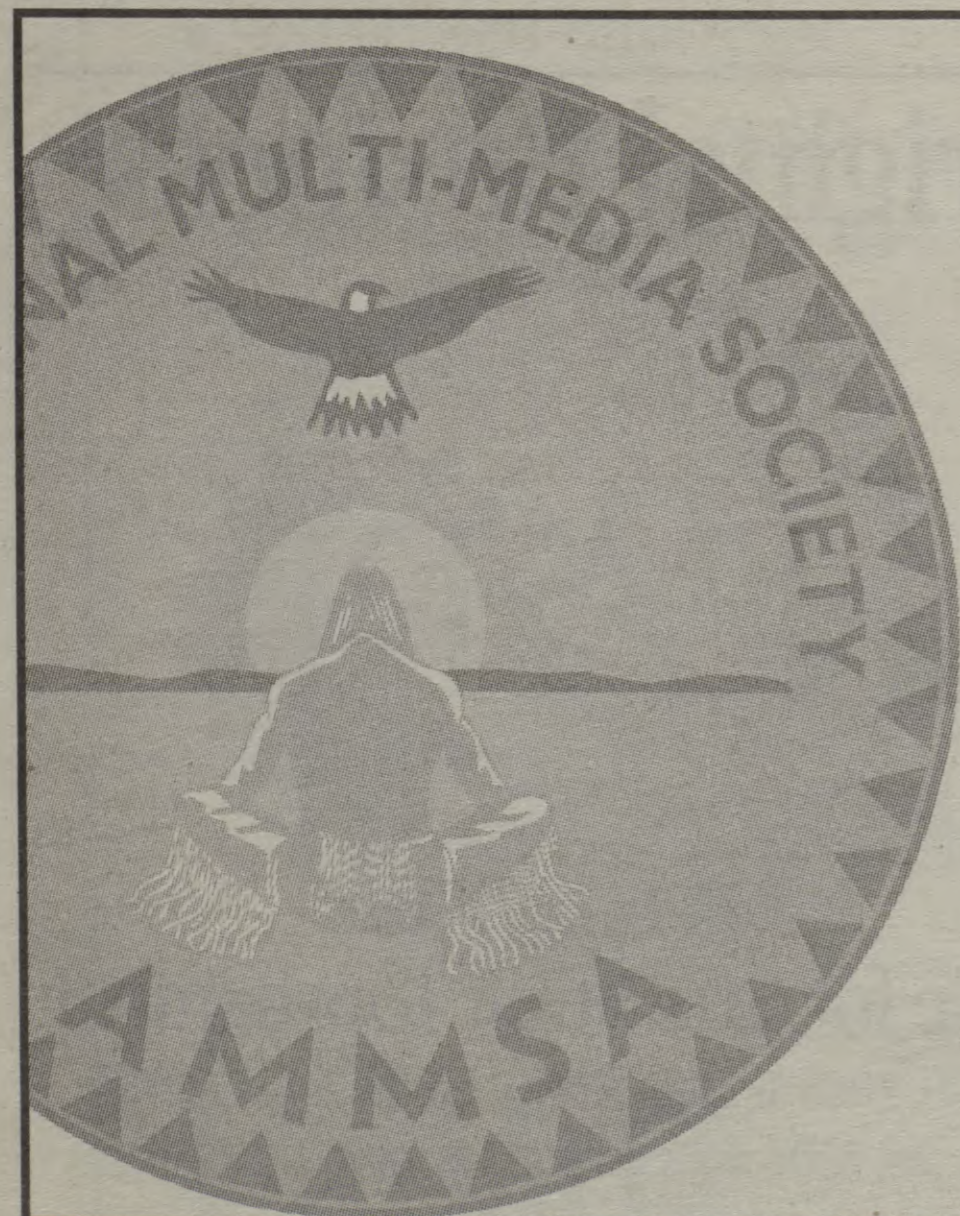
In fact, Carmichael says, it wasn't until he was reading the newspapers the morning after he finally won approval and got his license that he found out his friend's reputation as one of Canada's top lawyers specializing in land, air and administrative law.

"He never mentioned it," Carmichael laughs, still in disbelief. "And it didn't cost me a cent."

When Carmichael eventually sold Reindeer Air Services, he had a fleet of 15 planes including C-46s and C-47s. In 1982 he founded Antler Air, which eventually merged with Ram Air (coincidentally, the company of his former partner) to form a new entity, Western Arctic Air. Western Arctic was also a partnership with Metis and Dene bands in Inuvik, Aklavik, Fort McPherson and Arctic Red River.

Carpenter says Northerners think of Carmichael as a pioneer, "old style", he says. "Where there is somebody of respect you can look up to ... We had heroes and heroes were there and part of the community."

By Jenn Kelland



Achievement is meant to be shared.

Windspeaker is proud to congratulate and showcase Fred Carmichael and Suzanne Rochon-Burnett — two outstanding inductees to the Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame.

Their tremendous efforts and achievements are examples for us all.



The tender and brave heart of a warrior woman



The Canadian Council of Aboriginal Business (CCAB) has awarded its highest honor to Metis broadcaster and businesswoman Suzanne Rochon-Burnett for her lifetime contributions. She became the first woman ever inducted into the CCAB's Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame.

President and founder of Kakekalanicks Inc., a Native art consulting firm, and former president of R.B. Communications and Spirit 91.7 FM (CHOW) in Welland, Ont., Rochon-Burnett has continuously sought to protect and promote Aboriginal arts and business.

"I was very honored," says Rochon-Burnett "especially as the first woman to be inducted into the CCAB hall of fame. This is my pride, to lead the way." She has indeed led the way throughout her life.

Rochon-Burnett comes from a family lineage of strong matriarchs. Her mother and grandmother lost their husbands when they were young. She once said that the women in her life were all women of strength and ingenuity.

She grew up in the Metis way of sharing and helping each other. In the summer, she would go into the woods with her grandmother to pick mushrooms and herbs. She developed an admiration for Aboriginal art and started a private collection of Native artifacts, which she would one day like to see displayed all together in a Metis museum in her area. She learned smudging from her Elders and went on to become a pipe carrier.

Her love of learning based on observing others stayed with her throughout her life.

"Every person is a great book to learn from," says Rochon-Burnett who is grateful for the knowledge she gained. Gratitude comes easily to this

soft-spoken woman. In 2002 when she became a member of the Order of Canada, she said: "It's important for me to share what I've been given and I share this award with all those people who have helped me." Other honors include the 2004 National Aboriginal Achievement Award for Media and Communications, the Governor General's Award, the Order of Ontario and an honorary doctorate of letters from Brock University in 2002.

In 1987, Suzanne received an eagle feather to honor her relentless efforts to save a totem pole carved by renowned West Coast Squamish carver Chief Mathias Joe Capilano. Chief Mathias went to Great Britain as an official guest for the coronation of King George VI in 1937 and Elizabeth II in 1953, wearing full tribal regalia. Today this totem pole stands in Niagara-on-the-Lake thanks to Rochon-Burnett.

She has sat on many boards, including those of TV Ontario, the Ontario Arts Council, the Crafts Council of Ontario and the Canadian Council of the Arts. When she first sat on the Canadian Council of the Arts board, there was no particular office for Aboriginal arts. Today, there is the Aboriginal Arts Secretariat.

Rochon-Burnett admits that she has always felt the need to teach and explain the situation of the Metis and Aboriginal people to non-Natives, such as fellow board members with whom she has worked.

"After all, they didn't learn this history at school so they needed to be informed. Once they understood about us then they were generally more willing to effect changes to



Suzanne Rochon-Burnett

honor the Aboriginal world."

Asked what she believes to be her greatest legacy, Rochon-Burnett thinks of her board member work and responds: "I think it is the fact that I was able to convince Tom Hill, Canada's first Aboriginal curator, to take over my newly-vacated chair on the Canadian Council of the Arts in November 2004."

Tony Belcourt, president of the Metis Nation of Ontario (MNO), has known Rochon-Burnett for more than 35 years.

"She was not only co-founder of the Metis Nation of Ontario in 1994, but also the first co-chair of its provisional council," he explains. "As a long and well-established businesswoman, her experience and focus helped to get the MNO off the ground." Belcourt warmly adds "Suzanne is an absolutely classic role model for women and men alike. She got the first FM licence, no small achievement indeed; launched the careers of many Metis artists and has been a constant champion of the Metis people."

Belcourt describes this remarkable woman as "witty, fun to be around, unwavering in her loyalty to family, people and friends. She is a

tremendous asset to the Metis people."

However she has had to overcome many challenges throughout her life in order to be where she is today. Born March 10, 1935 in the charming Laurentian village of Ste. Adele about 30 minutes north of Montreal, she is one of three children in a very close-knit family. "I was born at home over my father's garage, a blue baby who needed oxygen quickly. I was rushed to the children's hospital in Montreal where I spent my first 11 months in an incubation chamber."

This experience shaped who she would become. Rochon-Burnett learned to fight and to overcome difficulties. This had to include the passing of her father when she was only 18. "One evening we were having fun joking around when he suddenly collapsed," remembers Suzanne. "The shock of his passing was a great heartache and I have always missed him."

Her experience in a nun-run convent school in St. Jerome also deeply marked the young Rochon-Burnett. Her family told her not to mention her Indian blood for fear of discrimination.

"At nine years old, I understood that somehow we were different. And the nuns kept trying to save my soul," says Rochon-Burnett. Much as she eventually grew to dislike the nuns, she also came out indebted to them for teaching her excellent French and diction. She became quite militant and went on to attend business school.

In those days, few career paths were open to women. "Either you became a Bell Canada operator or a bank clerk or an employee of the local Rolland Paper mill. I decided to apply at the mill, says Rochon-Burnett, who was surprised by

the decision not to hire her because she was too good for the job.

"When he said 'You're too talented to work here,' I thought, 'That's new, normally we get the opposite reaction.'" she laughs. As it turned out, Mr. Rolland, the man who turned her down for the job, was a close friend of well-connected Jean Lalonde, father of today's popular TV personality, Pierre Lalonde, who was about to launch a new radio station in St. Jerome. "He took me in for training. Eight months later, I was on the air and my career in media had begun."

It was all up from there. By 20 years old, she had a newspaper column and was working with radio and public relations. In 1967, she married Gordon Burnett, owner of CHOW, a Niagara radio station. They settled in Welland, Ont. where daughter Michele-Elise was born.

In 1974, Rochon-Burnett created a very popular French-language radio show called Chansons à la française, which aired on 22 radio stations. But another challenge arrived in 1995 when she was 60 years old, and had to single-handedly overcome the failure of her husband's business. In the process, she managed to become the first Aboriginal woman in Canada to obtain an FM radio license from the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission.

As always, she was brave, fearless, determined and ultimately successful. In a 2002 video clip filmed shortly after she received the Order of Canada, a smiling Rochon-Burnett told her then nine-year-old grandson why she had so many medals.

"It's not complicated, I said. I went to war; all my life I've been at war. Be a warrior. Be strong about what you believe."

By Marie White

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Castle fortifies for the future with PAR

In 1932 the Canadian National Railway built the Bessborough Hotel in Saskatoon, still known today as "the castle." Despite its yesteryear aesthetic appeal, there is nothing medieval in the 4.5 star hotel's modern strategy. Most recently, the castle joined the Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) program offered by the Canadian Council For Aboriginal Business (CCAB).

Bessborough's general manager Andrew Turnbull said there are two reasons the castle lowered its drawbridge for PAR. First, the hotel needs to fortify itself in the face of looming labour shortages.

"It just makes good business sense," he said. "We are fortunate in Saskatoon to have a young population that may well continue to meet the needs of the hospitality industry ... because traditionally much of our employment base has come from the younger side of the population. In Saskatoon, it's clear on looking at the demographics that that population is primarily Aboriginal."

The industry, said Turnbull, is already feeling the effects of that labour shortage. The hospitality industry will have to actively court employees if it hopes to meet rising demand.

"If we can be a leader and seen as the hotel of choice for

Aboriginal employment, that is definitely a winning scenario for us," said Turnbull.

Of its 170 employees, an average of six per cent are of Aboriginal heritage. "At peak we may have gotten as high as 10 per cent," said Turnbull, "We haven't had an extremely high turnover, but it is a moving number."

Those numbers, said Turnbull, will improve in the future in part due to PAR.

"We haven't at this point set a target. But we believe as we go through the PAR program that one of the things that will come from that will be setting some benchmarks so that we can measure our success. Those may not just be total numbers but may be in retention as well. Retention is in some ways more important," he said.

It's one thing to have a program; it's another thing to have a measurable program," said Turnbull. "And, of course, that's really what's driving us toward the PAR program is to have to have a measurable program so we'll have some sense of knowing where we are on the journey and so on."

How will the castle conduct its employee courtship?

"Cultural awareness is part and parcel," said Turnbull. "It's not uncommon in other centres for hotels to have gone through some kind of cultural awareness ...

What is unique here is specific to the Aboriginal community, whereas in other centres you may be dealing with high populations from foreign countries.

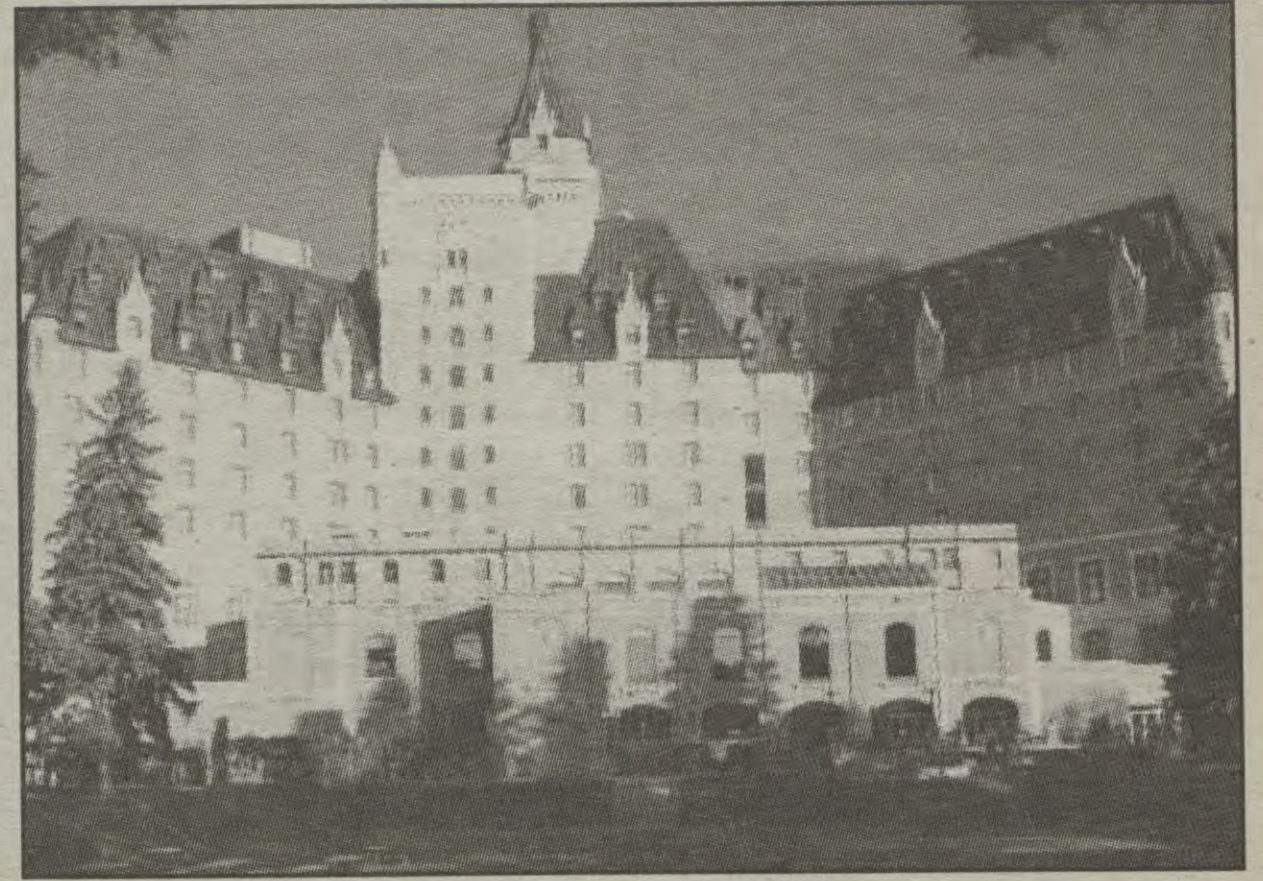
"There are a number of things we have done over the last two years," he added. "We started with sending our human resources director through to some Aboriginal awareness training, to do some corporate circle work with the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations [and] following that, starting to attend some Aboriginal employment fairs."

Building strategic partnerships is key to recruitment.

"We've been working very closely with the Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council that runs a program called Ready to Work," said Turnbull. "We have certainly seen some solid increases in the number of Aboriginal employees we have and we have some great success stories."

"We've had some business partnering as well with Wanuskewin Heritage Park here in the city," he said.

"Secondly," added Turnbull, "there are huge business opportunities already materializing for hotels that can align themselves to the Aboriginal community. So there is both the business potential and also the employment potential."



There is a third component to these strategies, Turnbull says. "You look beyond that and you have to say to yourself, it's also just the right thing to do."

Despite the programs and plans now underway, Turnbull says there's much more to do.

"We have done a number of things already but we are at the early stages of the commitment level. We really look forward to delving into it over the next while."

"At the end of the day, we see this as a win-win opportunity," said Turnbull. "It is going to be extremely competitive in Saskatoon in the very near future. It got quite competitive last summer, particularly for entry-level employees. If you look at things happening, such as the

expansion of the Teachers Credit Union Place, formerly known as the Centennial Auditorium, where they are doubling their convention facilities, the number of employees they will require to service that when it's running at capacity [will be very high.] Then you put on top of that the casino opening at the Dakota Dunes, the food and beverage facility as well as the casino operations ... So we are going to have to be creative. The company that is smart enough to tailor its business practices in a way that makes it more appealing and most conducive to hiring and retaining Aboriginal employees will be successful and the others will not," he said.

By Shirley Collingridge

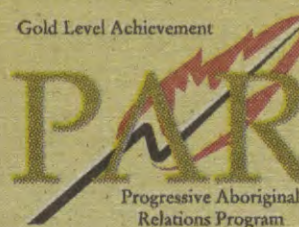


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IBM Canada Ltd. achieves bronze status

A little more than a year into its involvement in the Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) program, IBM Canada Ltd. is pleased to have achieved the bronze designation.

"We do view that as a significant accomplishment," said Mike Quinn, IBM spokesperson. "It reinforces that the work we are doing, our strategy led by John Longbottom, is getting some traction, getting noticed in the marketplace."

"We embarked on a very serious, significant national Aboriginal program strategy in late 2004," said Quinn. "A number of reasons drove that. One was to ensure that our business reflects the diversity of the Canadian population at large. Having a greater participation by Aboriginal people ... benefits not only IBM but the whole technology sector in Canada," he said.

Another reason, added Quinn, addressed the question of philosophy.

"Frankly, we felt it was the right thing to do. That was the philosophy behind why we go out and hire somebody the calibre of a John Longbottom, why we pour in the dollars to the program that we are, why

we are making these investments," he said.

"We want to do more business with the Aboriginal community," said Quinn. "We want to do more business with Aboriginal-owned companies. We want to purchase more products and services from Aboriginal-owned companies. We want to hire more Aboriginal people. So we have a number of different programs that John is doing a great job of leading on our behalf."

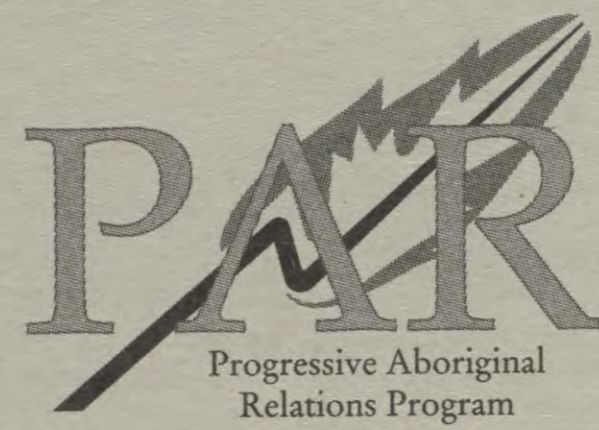
One such new program has already sparked a great deal of interest. Through IGNITE Camps, IBM Canada works alongside Actua to whet the technological appetites of youngsters. IGNITE is the acronym for IGNiting Interest in Technology and Engineering.

The technology camp is modelled after IBM Canada's longstanding women and technology program. The camps are meant to demystify the technology industry and to encourage Aboriginal youth to stay in school and pursue careers in science and technology through activities that demonstrate a broad range of job opportunities.

"What we're trying to do is get a message out: there's interesting careers in ... the

technology industry. It doesn't have to be all that scary," said Quinn.

IGNITE camps include both training and informational sessions.



"They do have computers there. They do some Web-based work," said Quinn. "But they also have role models. Aboriginal community role models and IBM role models ... talk about what it's like to work for a company like IBM, talk about the technology industry, and talk about what they have to do to get there."

"We've done Halifax, Victoria, Edmonton, Ottawa, and we will do more of these," said Quinn. "These are three-day sessions where we work with the Aboriginal community in that city."

The most recent IGNITE camp took place in January at the Odawa Native Friendship Centre in Ottawa.

"IGNITE Camps are an important part of IBM's involvement with Aboriginal

communities," said John Longbottom, the executive in charge of IBM's national Aboriginal strategy. "Not only because the kids are truly engaged, but also because parents, grandparents and family friends also participate, which provides tremendous support to the kids as they begin to explore the possibilities in science and technology."

Longbottom is very active in the various Aboriginal communities where he strives to develop business relationships. The company hopes that incentives like the youth camps will ultimately bring more Aboriginal youth into its ranks. At year-end 2005, IBM Canada and its wholly-owned subsidiaries employed 19,057 regular full-time and part-time people across the country, as well as more than 3,000 temporary workers.

Asked what percentage of this monumental workforce is Aboriginal, Quinn responded "I don't know, but I will tell you not nearly enough."

Quinn hopes programs like IGNITE will also influence youngsters to stay in school and to pursue post-secondary technical training.

"It's a two-way street. You meet us half way and we'd love to bring

you on board," said Quinn. "You've got to invest on your own by staying in school, get into college and university, but if you do the rewards can be fantastic."

And it's all part of the company's PAR strategy.

"The fact that we were given a bronze designation, you might say ho hum, that's third place. But not really," said Quinn. "The whole Canadian Council For Aboriginal Business program ... [we view] as the connection to open doors for us, to help us develop relationships with Aboriginal businesses."

"To get this type of recognition through the PAR program, we are very proud of that. It only reinforces that we are on the right track."

From an employee perspective, working with the company is a worthwhile goal. In a 2005 KPMG/Ipsos-Reid Survey, IBM Canada was ranked among Canada's Top 25 most respected companies. For the fourth consecutive year, the company also fell into *Maclean's* magazine annual list of the 100 best companies to work for in Canada. A recent survey by the Ponemon Institute ranked IBM Canada first as the most trusted company in Canada when it comes to protecting customer privacy.

By Shirley Collingridge



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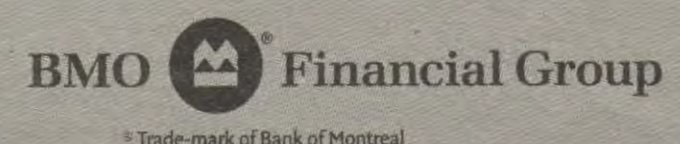
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College using PAR to prepare for the future

As president of the largest institute of applied learning in a province where Aboriginal people make up the fastest growing segment of the population, Jeff Zabudsky knows the importance of building strong relationships with Aboriginal communities. That's why Red River College of Applied Arts, Science and Technology in Winnipeg has joined the Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) program run by the Canadian Council For Aboriginal Business (CCAB), becoming the first educational institution to join the PAR ranks.

"We recognize that as a college

we need to be working very, very closely with Aboriginal communities, particularly here in Manitoba where the population of Aboriginal people is large and growing. There is a very large youthful population of Aboriginal people who are going to be making choices about their post-secondary futures and we want to be part of that, you know, make sure that we are very prominent in those choices. And we feel the best way for us to do this is to make sure our organization reflects the expectations of Aboriginal young people," Zabudsky said.

The college has made great strides in attracting Aboriginal

students, but more needs to be done to increase Aboriginal representation in other aspects of college operations.

"Sixteen per cent of student body in certificates and diploma programs are Aboriginal people, which is very good. But we know that number is going to increase and we want to make sure that, from our HR perspective, our teachers and our administrators and our support staff are reflective of that student body," Zabudsky said.

"We also want to be good corporate partners with Aboriginal businesses so that we are ensuring we're making every effort to procure from

companies that are operated through Aboriginal governance. And we think that's just good business in this province. And so for us it is a business decision. It makes good business sense for us to be involved because of the nature of the market. But we also believe we have corporate responsibility and corporate social responsibility. And aside from the business opportunity it's the right thing for us to be doing in today's Manitoba."

The college signed on as a member of PAR about a year ago, and since then has been talking to other PAR companies about their experiences and preparing to go through the accreditation process.

"What's good about PAR is that we've talked about the importance of connecting more with Aboriginal students, but also more with Aboriginal companies and businesses, because we can work with them. But PAR provided the structure that allowed us to move forward. Because it's a good thing to talk about it, but how do you actually make it happen? We became aware of PAR at the same time as we're considering how we're going to move forward in building relationships with Aboriginal communities. The timing was right and it provides a structure

for us that's already been tested and other organizations have already started moving through the process. So we thought it was a good way for us to go," Zabudsky said.

Among the things the college has already put in place to attract and accommodate Aboriginal students is an on-campus Aboriginal student centre where students can go to get counselling and support and take part in cultural activities. Two Elders in residence work out of the centre, providing guidance to students and presiding over cultural activities at the college.

The college has also established a relationship with the Centre for Aboriginal Human Resource Development (CAHRD) designed to help Aboriginal learners access post-secondary education programs, and is working to ensure Aboriginal culture is represented within the physical design of the institution during the campus renewal project that is being planned.

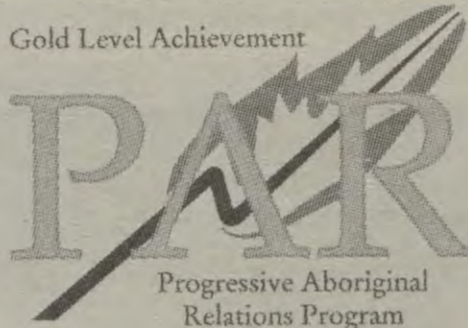
"One of the things we want to ensure is that the college reflects Aboriginal culture within the organization. And, in many respects, what's nice about PAR is that we're able to consolidate what we're already doing and be able to obtain some credit for that, then talk about goals that we want to set for ourselves."

By Cheryl Petten

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Seven Generations

(Continued from page 1.)

The CCAB's new Seven Generations patrons include software provider SAP, human resource service provider Ceridian Canada and PepsiCo. They join the organization's other patrons—Bank of Montreal, IBM, Sodexo and Xerox.

To become a patron, companies have to commit to sponsorship of the CCAB for a minimum of three years. Representatives from the patron companies sit on the CCAB board of directors and help to shape the policy direction of the organization.

Many companies involved with the CCAB don't limit that involvement to just one of the organization's program. Four of the patron companies are also involved in the PAR program, Jocelyne Soulodre said.

"So their association with us is

also helping to drive change for them within their organizations. And some of them are doing FAAY as well, so it becomes a very important package that they can implement within the organization in the sense that if they're doing the scholarship program, FAAY, then they're investing in the future of Aboriginal youth. And if they're doing PAR, they're demonstrating their tangible commitment to implementing positive Aboriginal relations everywhere they operate. And then they usually also are major supporters of our various networking events through the Circle for 2015."

For more information about the CCAB and its many programs, visit the organization's Web site at www.ccab.com.

By Cheryl Petten

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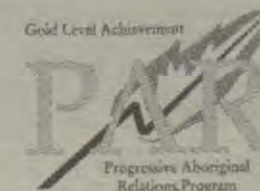
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EDS seeks to increase Aboriginal participation

When EDS joined the Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) program late last year, the technology giant was looking for a broad yardstick to measure its progress, particularly in the area of Aboriginal participation. PAR will be that yardstick.

"We measure different things within the organization and yet we haven't really sat down and said, as a whole, what are we doing," said Heidi Crann, EDS diversity program executive. "Are there things we could do better? And how do we continue that progress?"

"We have done a lot as a company in the Aboriginal area and I don't know that we ... assessed and really compared ourselves as to how we are doing to the marketplace," she said. "The PAR program is an excellent way to allow us to do that."

"We see this as way to really measure our progress in a physical way, both internally and externally, in dealing with Aboriginals," added Crann. "It gives us an opportunity to do that as well."

EDS is also impressed with the program's credibility. "We see PAR very much as a standard body," said Crann. "We really like the fact that the National Quality Institute is engaged with CCAB [Canadian Council For Aboriginal Business] on it."

EDS currently has programs aimed at increasing Aboriginal participation in its company. For example, said Crann, "The Manitoba office offers scholarships. There's a scholarship program focused on Aboriginals."

From an employment equity perspective as a federal contractor, EDS exceeds quotas in its 5,500-strong Canadian workforce. But the company wants to do more. EDS wants to add more Aboriginal people to its employee base.

"From a recruiting perspective," said Crann, "we are looking at how we can engage more closely with organizations to help us to target recruiting with Aboriginals. We are also looking at increasing our training curriculum to include training on cultural sensitivity, again directly related to Aboriginals."

The company also wants to add more Aboriginal companies to its supplier base.

"Another important aspect is that we're looking at our whole supply area," said Crann. "We are building a program looking at minority suppliers and Aboriginals. We certainly see it as a large market. We are a large buyer on an annual basis and so

we are going to look at our annual spend and determine from an Aboriginal perspective what we're doing in that area."

When a company the size of EDS increases Aboriginal participation, it could make a significant impact on this sector of the population.

"Traditionally, people in that area think of IBM, and EDS, we're kind of number two in the marketplace," said Crann. "We are a global company with roughly 30,000 employees. In Canada, we have roughly 5,500 employees. We are in most major cities across Canada. We do a lot of business with government, federal and provincial, as well as financial services, industry and manufacturing."

"We are committed to the PAR program," said Crann. "We are starting the bronze level this year as our goal so we are hoping at the awards dinner—the gala—that we'll be accepting a bronze level, to publicly state what our goal is. We are pretty confident that we'll be able to attain that."


"We are very excited about the organizations that we've signed up with, CAMSC [Canadian Aboriginal Minority Supplier Council] and the CCAB, and we are actually working with NAAF [the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation] as well, having some discussions with them about how we can better manage the scholarship program in conjunction with them. So we are very excited. I am delighted that we've got this focus as a company with an organization in Canada," she added.

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By Shirley Collingridge



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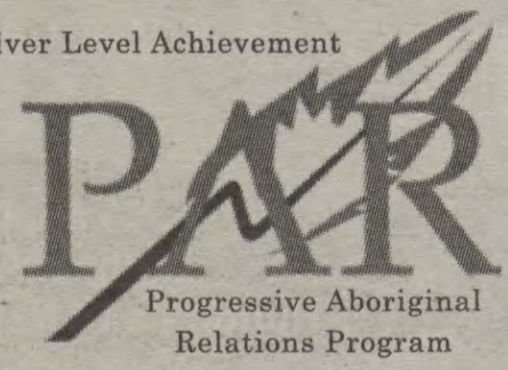

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Rights denied in Saskatchewan

By Paul Barnsley
Windspeaker Staff Writer

BEAUVAL, Sask.

Windspeaker on March 8 that the matter was being reviewed.

"The department has been asked by the minister to do a detailed examination of this file. We're conducting that examination right now and expect to have a report to the minister shortly," he said.

The minister will have the report in his hands fairly soon by bureaucratic standards.

"Probably not more than three to five weeks, in terms of a review to the minister and consulting with other departments and the due diligence that is typical," Craig said.

Laliberte, a former NDP and then Liberal MP, is now working as an apprenticeship coordinator for a Metis employment and training agency in Beauval. He finds it strange that a provincial government would not be eager to update legislation that is discriminatory.

"I thought the province and especially our northern leaders would jump on it but they haven't," he said. "It discriminates against workers in the north. The northern people are getting the shortest end of the stick. If you look at the whole Canadian map, this is the only region where there's no overtime provision in this country now."

He suggested that the province benefits from this unequal treatment of northern workers.

"The province has been getting away with saying they've left it to the companies. That's what their standard line has been up to now. What happens is the biggest users of this—or abusers, I should say—is the provincial government itself because of the forest fire policy. If a forest fire starts in Big River, the firefighters there get overtime. But if it's in Dore Lake, 50 miles north, they don't get overtime.

(see Overtime issues page 20.)

It's clearly unconstitutional, but there it is in Saskatchewan's Labour Standards Act regulations, an exemption that allows employers to escape paying overtime to workers in the northern third of the province.

Section 7 of the regulations, which were last updated in 1995, exempts companies located north of the 62nd township, an area that begins just north of the city of Prince Albert, from paying time-and-a-half when employees work more than an eight-hour day or a 40-hour week.

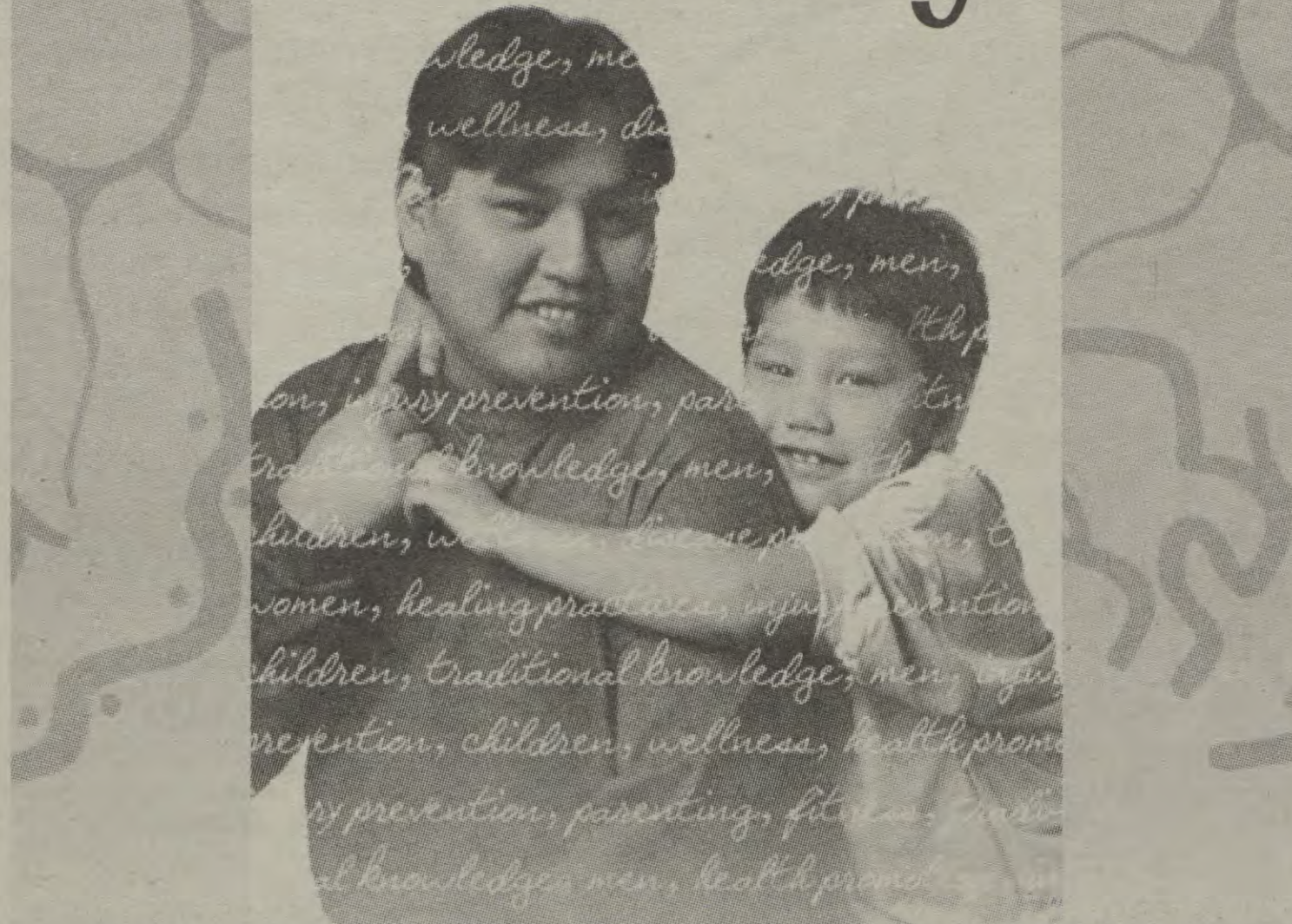
Three municipalities located in the designated area are not included in this exemption.

Since workers in the south—and in the northern communities of La Ronge, Creighton and Uranium City—get paid overtime, the equality provisions of Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms are very definitely violated by this arrangement. Former Member of Parliament Rick Laliberte circulated a petition asking Saskatchewan's New Democratic Party government to do something about it.

But, to his surprise, it took quite a while to get any action even though, in his petition, he asked the government to have this matter dealt with in time for the beginning of Saskatchewan's centennial year, Jan. 1, 2005.

Only now, more than a year later, is anything being done and what's being done is a far cry from the legislative reform needed to eliminate the discrimination against northern workers. Bill Craig, spokesman for Labour Minister David Forbes, told

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Shoshona Kish and Raven Kanataktá

DiggingRoots into the music industry

By Laura Stevens
Windspeaker Staff Writer

TORONTO

Shoshona Kish and Raven Kanataktá are two young Aboriginal artists who have come together to plant their 'seeds' of empowerment and celebration of life through their spiritual roots, blues, reggae, jazz and First Nations mixed music.

Their debut CD, *Seeds*, has been in stores since Jan. 31 and it has already sold out at Sam the Record Man in Toronto.

DiggingRoots first came together in 1997 and they describe their connection as natural. Even though they hadn't played together before, their very first gig won the final slot to perform at the Ottawa Folk Festival.

"They had one spot left so it was just kind of fluky that we went in cold like that and it worked out," said Kish, a Carleton-educated musician. "We just enjoyed it so much right off the top and it was very natural for us to collaborate."

Kanataktá recounts his first performance with Kish to be "very easy to express myself musically."

"Musically where we were coming from I think rooted in the same places," Kanataktá added.

Although she grew up mostly in Toronto, Kish said that her roots are in Batchewana First Nation, located near Sault Ste. Marie. She describes her interest in music as the typical story, where she had always been interested and always involved in musicals and recitals in school. She grew up listening to Billy Holiday and Miles Davis. Her first guitar was given to her by her grandpa Jimmy.

"He was a guitar and harmonica player and my grandma sang on the Tommy Hunter Show, so there was that kind of influence in my house," said Kish. "I never really considered doing anything else except being an artist."

Growing up listening to similar jazz and blues artists, such as Charles Mingus, Duke Ellington, Eric Dolphy, and John Coltrane, is one of many reasons that Kanataktá and Kish came together, however Kanataktá describes their connection as being more than just creating music together.

"It's sort of a collaboration of how we're musical beings, really," Kanataktá said. "It's sort of where we come from and where we want to go and it's sort of tied up in the album."

Kanataktá grew up on a reserve in Winneway, Que. While writing jazz compositions for a band, he received a music degree from the Berklee College of Music in Boston.

He describes their CD as a birthing process that has to grow on its own.

"Seeds. The title itself really comes from I guess us having these songs and as a songwriter a lot of times you want to write more songs but you have to give birth to a certain amount of songs before you move on," he said. "That's sort of what this process was like, a birthing process."

Windspeaker asked *DiggingRoots* if they had any interesting rituals they do before writing a song or performing.

"We were just talking about whether we should start smudging before a writing session and I think maybe the next time around when we write, we'll have some sort of ritual to do," said Kish.

Kanataktá said he sang and performed without shoes to feel more in touch with what he is doing.

"I feel more firmly planted on to the earth without shoes," he added. "You wouldn't go to a powwow and dance in heels. It wouldn't really work so I think it's just one of those things for me."

Certainly, they are thrilled to see their CD on HMV, Chapters and Music World shelves; however, they said they are enjoying the positive reactions from the public and their communities.

(see *Seeds* page 21.)

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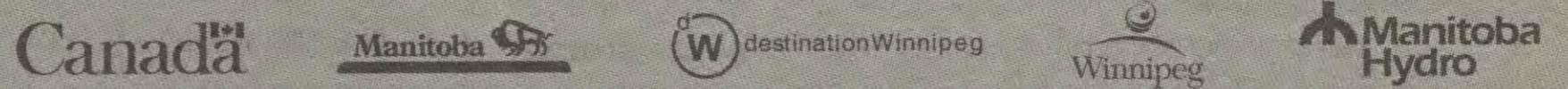
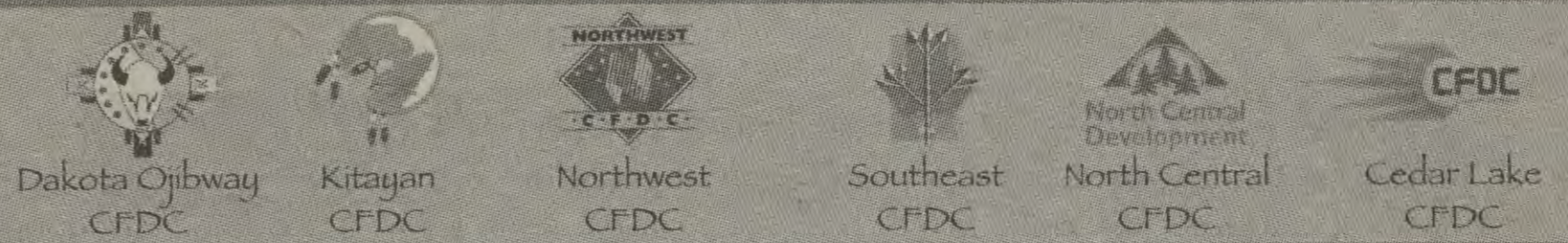


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Artist—Donna Kay with Little Island Cree

Album—The Journey

Song—Calling You

Label—Independent

Producer—Peter Bacsalmasi

A nice mix from accomplished singer

Singer, songwriter and percussionist Donna Kay has a chance to demonstrate all three of her talents on her new CD, *The Journey*. Kay provides both vocals and percussion on each song on the album, and wrote 10 of the 12 tracks featured.

As she did on her last album, *Full Circle*, Kay teams up with Little Island Cree for her latest effort. The drum group hails from Island Lake Cree Nation in Saskatchewan, near Ministikwan Lake where Kay was born and raised. The members of Little Island Cree provide hand drum, powwow drum and vocals for *The Journey*.

The two cuts on the album not written by Kay feature yet another Saskatchewan performer, storyteller, singer and musician Joseph Naytowhow, originally from Sturgeon Lake First Nation. Naytowhow contributes his storytelling and singing talents to the spoken word piece Earth Mother and to Joseph's Song.

The Journey is an interesting mix of sounds and styles. Mandolin and harmonica meet hand drum and Cherokee flute as Kay combines pop, rhythm and blues and country with a strong Native influence running throughout. But, regardless of the style of the song or the variety of instruments backing her up, it's Kay's dynamic and versatile voice that shines through.

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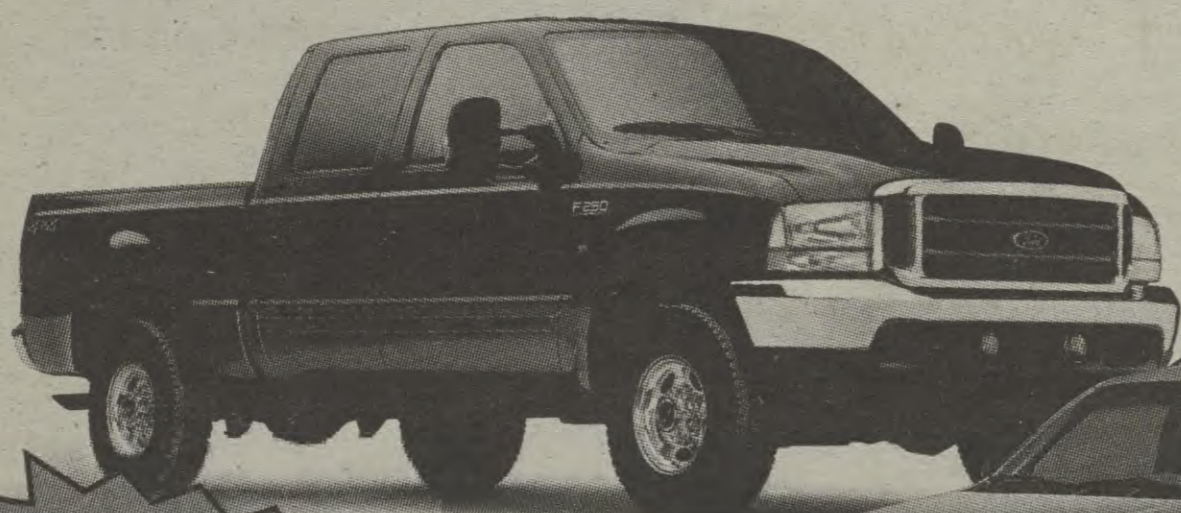
ARTIST	TITLE	ALBUM
Derren Geffre	I Am The One	Uncivilized
Ray Villebrun & Red Blaze	Make Our Mamas Proud	Been Awhile
Steve Rain	Move On	Only For A Moment
Crystal Shawanda	Maybe Someday	Cutting Room Floor
Little Hawk	Custer Rubbed Out	1492-1975
Andrea Menard	My Laughing Fool	Simple Step
Eagle & Hawk	I See Red	Mother Earth
Mike Gouchie	Somethin' Bout A Bad Boy	Bad Boys & Angels
DiggingRoots	Why Don't You Do Right	Seeds
Jessie Higheagle	Let's Dance	Manitoba Aboriginal Artists v2
Tamara Podemski	Meegwetch	Tamara
D.L.O.	Northern Hillbilly	Single Release
Les Shannacappo	From Dusk 'Til Dawn	Single Release
Donny Parenteau	The Great Unknown	Single Release
Don Constant	Northern Lights	Two Mending Hearts
Rayne DeLaronde	Damn Him For Messing With My Heart	Manitoba Aboriginal Artists v2
Tango Sierra	Great Big Hole	This Is It
Priscilla Morin	Already Gone	Single Release
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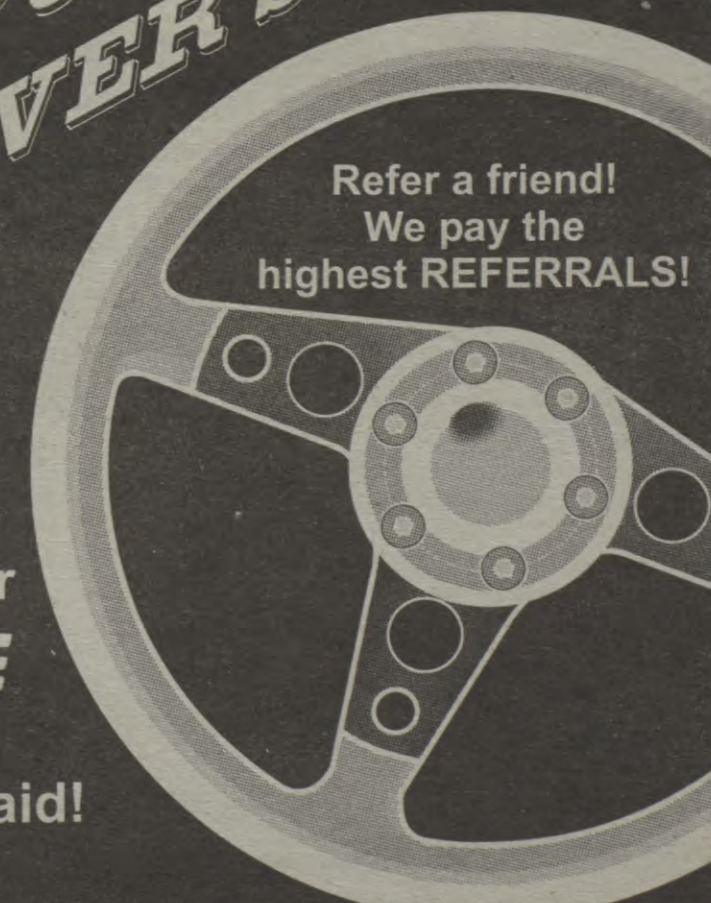
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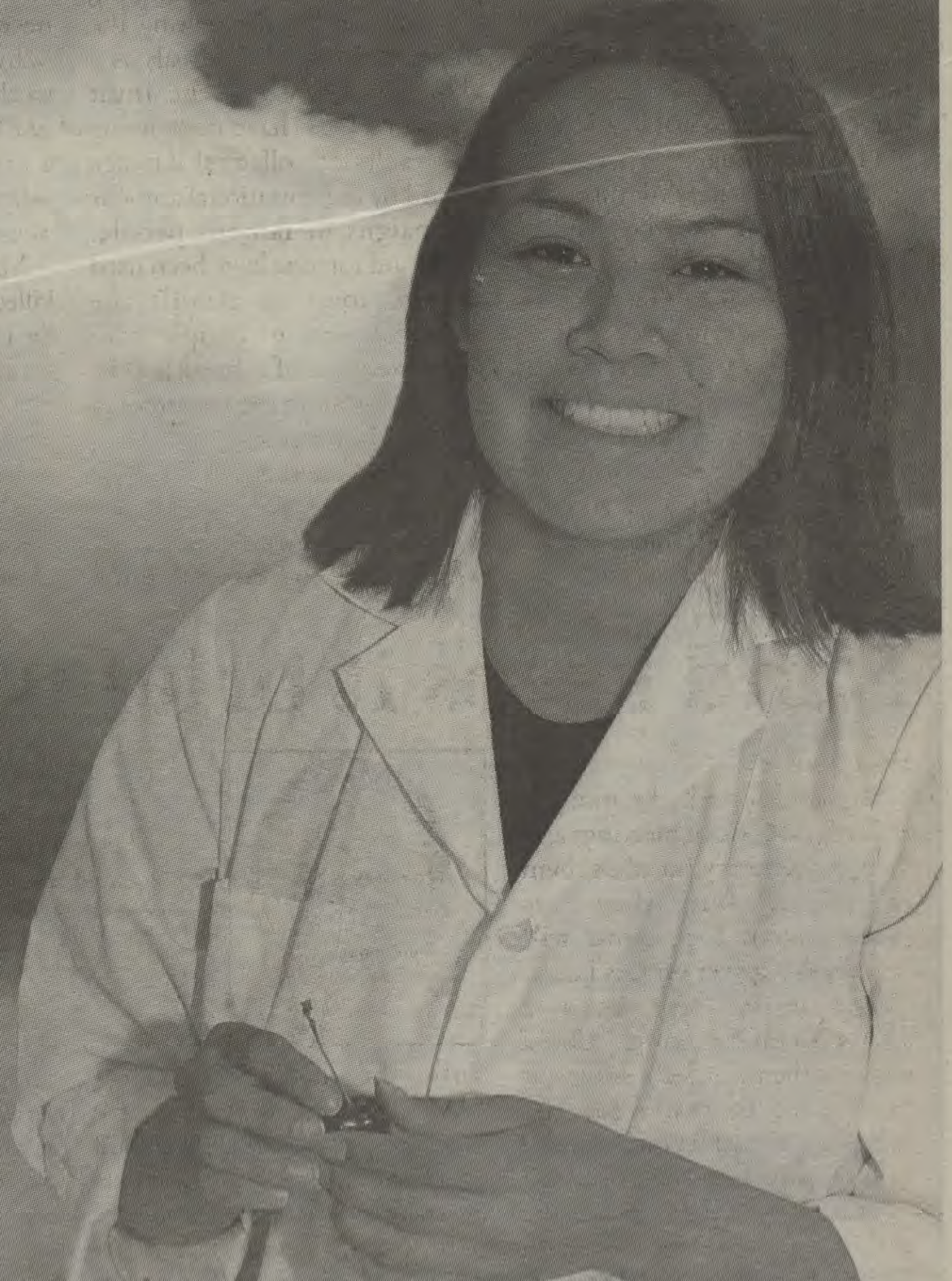
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Canada

It seems like just yesterday, or so I'm told

It was in China of all places that I found out something quite disturbing. Believe it or not, I found myself being in the unique position of disagreeing with the views of our beloved federal government. Shocking ... Yes I know. A Native person differing in opinion from that of the Canadian government ... I almost alerted the media. And, equally surprising, it had nothing to do with land claims, residential schools, public inquiries or money. It had to do with history in this country and publicity on the other side of the world.

I was in Chengdu, China with several other Native artists for a kind of Canada's Aboriginal people meets China's minorities type symposium. Red Sky was there showcasing a dance theatre piece written by Tomson Highway. Singer/guitarist George Leach and traditional dancer and



THE URBANE INDIAN

Drew Hayden Taylor

drummer Lorne Ducette were also in attendance. I guess you could say we made Red China a little more red. While there, we were treated to a variety of cultural performances from many of China's 56 recognized cultural minorities. There were images and memories I will carry with me for the rest of my hopefully long life.

During the 10 days I was there, I was also fortunate enough to see and experience a lot of other fabulous and interesting things the country had to offer,

including a sandstorm that blew in from the Mongolian desert. You can't get that in Toronto's China town. Ironically enough, my most startling discovery came instead from the press release issued by the Canadian Ambassador to China and our Embassy praising our appearance in Chengdu, and later in the cities of Yinchuan and Nanjing. It was all summed up in the document's first line. "Canadian First Nations have inhabited what is now Canada for centuries." I stopped reading there. Did he say

centuries ... like a couple hundred years? Those centuries? Perhaps the Canadian ambassador was thinking of these centuries in terms of dog years.

Was the paint still wet on all our tipis when Columbus and Cabot first arrived? Had we had time to unpack our powwow outfits yet? Maybe our canoes were still under warranty.

Our traditional knowledge dictates that we've been here as long as the winds blew, rivers flowed, grass grows, all that Time Immemorial stuff. And there are some people who rightly or wrongly believe we crossed over into Canada from China and Siberia, across the Bering land bridge. I can understand that because there didn't appear to be any Tim Horton's in China. Gee, was that only a couple hundred years ago ... seems like yesterday. Granted, Native people and

government people have always viewed the concept of time differently, but I think this is getting a little ridiculous.

Now admittedly I might be a little inaccurate in my judgement here because I don't work for the government, and as we know the government is never wrong. But we who find ourselves kicking stones around our local reserves have always believe, silly us, that it was people like the ambassador and his relatives that have enjoyed the benefits of Canada for those scant few centuries, not us.

Oh well, I blame that misconception on the notoriously bad education available in Native communities.

Luckily though, in gratitude for the fine treatment we received over there, I managed to warn the Chinese about the ambassador and his people.

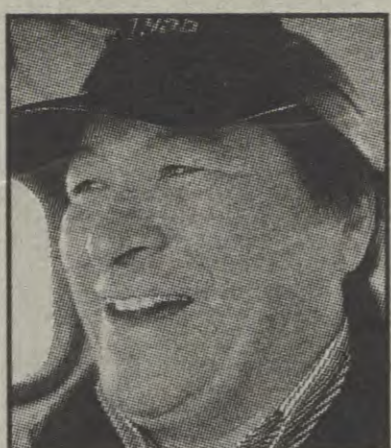
(see Centuries old page 21.)

Finding other work for Sir Paul McCartney

Former Beatle Sir Paul McCartney has taken up the cause of opposing the hunt for harp seals on Canada's Atlantic coast. Wearing bright orange floatation suits, he and his wife staged a photo opportunity with a harp seal pup on the ice. They didn't seem quite sure how to pose near the live pup, which was serving as their prop. But there they were, props themselves, publicizing the message that harvesting a sustainable resource is a terrible thing.

"Dear Prudence!" I thought, "How can Sir Paul be given a Ticket To Ride on The Long And Winding Road, to Get Back to where he once belonged, and Let It Be?" I couldn't see any poetry in a wealthy member of British nobility lending his profile to tell the world that lovable little seal pups are being slaughtered by a bunch of cruel Canadians.

Animal rights crusades in past



NASIVVIK Zebedee Nungak

years have succeeded in crashing the seal market, decimating the commercial harvest of seals as a viable livelihood in the Inuit economy. Inuit have been living the results of collateral damage caused by the sensational anti-fur campaigns of famous people. Fame and fortune have been used as a weapon to assault the circumstances of people who need every bit of a break to eke out a living from the resources in their environment.

There's Something In The Way Sir Paul passes the camera, and casually says, "Stop the seal hunt!" which causes an Eskimo to think

... Well-monied celebrities always need causes to be attached to. Why not help them find other work? Sir Paul McCartney need not be a Nowhere Man without a cause, if he can be guided to other causes where he can be just as useful. So ...let's see...

Millions of domestic animals are killed every year to feed and clothe Sir Paul's countrymen. Even if Sir Paul himself does not contribute to this consumption by never wearing leather or eating steak, he cannot deny that a lot of killing of animals goes on. If animal rights advocates define cruelty to animals as being caused by their slaughter, they need

not look far for something to crusade on. There's plenty in their own environment to get worked up about.

Cattle are turned into hamburger, pigs are turned into bacon and ham, and chickens into barbecued meals at fried chicken outlets, and eggs for breakfast. "Stop killing cows, pigs and chickens!" might be a more appropriate battle cry for Sir Paul and his like. There's enough work for them closer to home, Eight Days A Week and they wouldn't need to suit up in floatation gear to go about it.

If Sir Paul wants to save animals from real cruelty, he should look into zoos, circuses, rodeos, and racetracks. Who knows what suffering tropical animals endure while they are captive in climates which include winter? How are polar bears and walrus kept cold in confined areas in tropical heat while thousands of curiosity seekers gawk

at them through a grated fence? Are captive animals fed properly? Sir Paul should be intensely curious about such matters!

Why haven't any crusading celebrities ever thrown themselves in between a cowboy on a galloping horse, and a fleeing calf about to be lassoed in a rodeo? Calves have their neck throttled with a rope, are picked up by all four legs and violently thudded down, landing on their spine, upside down. All to determine which cowboy can wind his rope around its legs the fastest! Where is Brigitte Bardot when such things need looking into?

For his efforts of being photographed with a seal pup on an ice floe, Sir Paul got to be confronted by Newfoundland and Labrador Premier Danny Williams on the *Larry King Live* television show.

(see Sir Paul's work page 21.)

Band keeps it brief with minutes of meetings

Dear Tuma:

My band records the minutes of the band council meetings and then the secretary transfers them to paper, but they are summarized. (eg. Band will consult the lawyer on this issue.) There must have been a discussion on the matter. Could I ask for the recorded minutes or do I have to settle for the summary, even if it concerns me? Could I stay in the band council meeting to hear them discuss the matter and vote on the issue? They tell me I have to leave. Is this true?

Rumors

Dear Rumors:

Each band usually records what has happened at a council meeting. These are called minutes and they can be as varied as each band, but most record



PRO BONO Tuma Young

only the motions passed. Meanwhile, some bands have recorded word for word who said what and to whom. The minutes are used for the internal workings of the band, i.e. to be reviewed at the next meeting, and may not be made public.

Some bands have adopted a policy of posting their band council minutes in a public place, but have summarized the contents for brevity's sake or have edited them to exclude issues that are personal in nature.

The matter of finding out

about the discussion would not serve any real purpose, especially if a decision has been made on the issue. The minutes would contain whether a vote was taken on the issue and whether it was passed or rejected. That becomes the decision of the council rather than the discussions before the vote. A councillor can also request the secretary to record how they voted on a particular issue.

When discussing personal issues, it is often easier to have a frank and thorough discussion when the person being discussed

is not in the room, thus it is reasonable for the person to be asked to leave the room while the discussion and vote takes place.

Now, to obtain minutes: there are several different ways to do so and it all depends on how determined you are. The summary minutes are the easiest, especially if they are posted at the band office. You can just copy them. The ones used by the council may be obtained by asking your local councillor to provide you with a copy or by a formal request to the entire council.

Another method is to file a freedom of information request with the local provincial or federal office. This will take time and there may be a cost associated with it. Finally, if you are suing the band in a proceeding, minutes that are relevant to your case can

be obtained through the discovery process.

Dear Tuma:

Can a chief fire any of the band staff?

EI Claimant

Dear EI Claimant:

In order to fire someone on the spot, you need to have just cause. Some examples of just cause are drinking on the job or stealing from the band council. The usual process is that the chief or band administrator would fire the individual and then make a report to the entire council at the next meeting.

Now, anyone can also be fired for no reason whatsoever at all but this requires giving the person notice or severance in lieu of notice.

(see Labour standards page 21.)

Overtime issues unresolved in Saskatchewan's North

(Continued from page 15.)

Some workers are losing 20 hours of pay per week with typical wages varying from \$12 an hour for an apprentice to \$25 an hour for a journeyman. And Laliberte estimates that 60 per cent of the workers who are affected by this are Aboriginal.

"The one's that really get hit on are the lower end paying jobs, the catering jobs, the labourer jobs—no overtime. And it's racial based too because you can say the north as a whole but then they leave La Ronge, Creighton and Uranium City out and those are the predominantly non-Aboriginal cities," he said.

Laliberte thinks there's something going on here because the government has taken so long to act on a fairly straightforward matter of equality rights. He said the president of the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour told him his organization has been calling for action on this issue for 10 years.

"The province is too smug with it. There's got to be some under the table deal there. Otherwise some champion would have arisen," he said.

But the exemption stands out glaringly against all other Canadian jurisdictions, he added.

"When you looked at it by geography, we were the only ones. I think it's time to change it," he said.

Ile-a-la Crosse Mayor Max Morin sees this situation at the ground level every day in his northern Saskatchewan town.

"A lot of people are losing income. I know a lot of people are working 10- or 12-day shifts and they're putting in 10-hour days. So they're working 120 hours but they're just getting straight time when they should have getting at least 40 hours of overtime for at least time-and-a-half."

—Ile-a-la Crosse Mayor Max Morin

"It's a discriminatory policy. Most of the people living outside of La Ronge, Creighton and it used to be Uranium City but Uranium City is just a small unorganized settlement at this time because most people moved out of there, are First Nations or Metis people. The government of the day in Saskatchewan made regulation under the labour law saying that people operating in these communities, contractors coming in, don't have to pay overtime," he said.

"We have a general contractor building a high school and a health centre in Ile-a-la Crosse and I asked him that specific question. After a 40-hour week are you going to be able to pay overtime if they work 50 or 60 hours a week? They said, 'No, we don't have to pay overtime according to the legislation.'" He was aware that the province was looking into the matter but he hadn't received any assurances that anything would be done.

"We wrote letters to the minister of Labour and so far I don't know what the process is. They've indicated they were

going to look at it but they haven't indicated if they were going to change it or not," he said.

The lack of overtime is an everyday problem faced by people in the north.

"A lot of people are losing income. I know a lot of people are working 10- or 12-day shifts and they're putting in 10-hour days. So they're working 120 hours but they're just getting straight time when they should have getting at least 40 hours of overtime for at least time-and-a-half. I'll use Alberta as an example. A lot of our people work in the oil sector over there and after 40 hours they get overtime," he said.

Did he believe the policy was originally directed specifically at Aboriginal people?

"That's my first perception of it. I don't know why they made that policy. They're trying to use the scenario that we have a lot of mines operating in the north and maybe they tried to make exemption for the mines. But the mines are making millions and millions of dollars. Why would they want that exemption?"

Mister Taxman

(Continued from page 14.)

"Until there is a law that says First Nations can purchase services off reserve tax-free, there's always a possibility that some young guy trying to make a name for himself at Revenue Canada will go after somebody else. They tried me. It didn't work. Doesn't stop them from going after anybody else that's following their policies."

Phillips represented himself in court and had to do a lot of research to be ready when he went before the judge. He says the situation is not considered entrapment, although he agreed that requiring businesses to follow a government policy that is directly opposite to the law and then arbitrarily deciding to take enforcement measures based on the law rather than the policy make it look like entrapment. The government can get away with that legally and may decide to try it again at any time, he warned.

"They can just override it and say we're not going to follow our policy," he said. "And they don't suffer. You suffer. The people that went after me, they weren't fired. They wasted a great deal of time and money, caused me a lot of aggravation, but nobody there got fired."

He has been harmed but he doesn't think he'd have much of a chance filing a civil action against the government for compensation.

"The banks have a record of me having a lien against my property, a garnishment against my wages and I've done nothing wrong. I have a judgement that says what I was doing was correct," he said.

He asked *Windspeaker* to get

some answers from Minister of National Revenue Carol Skelton.

"Ask why they have a policy that they know is wrong in law. And if they can't answer that, ask them why," he said. "They know it's wrong in law because if you check those transcripts you'll see they said it three times." An e-mail message asking those questions and others was sent directly to the minister, well before our publication deadline. CCRA departmental spokesperson Jacqueline Couture responded four days after the e-mail was sent.

"We will implement the decision in the Phillips case in any situations that would have similar facts. The decision applies only to the taxation of intangible personal property and it would have no effect on the CRA's administrative policy on services acquired for band management activities," she said.

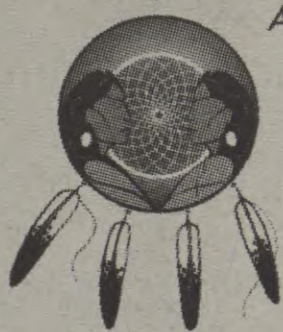
But she would not comment on questions regarding why the department chose not to appeal the decision.

"The decision [not to appeal] is based on legal advice from Justice Canada and legal advice is privileged under the law so it's not something I can comment on," she said. "In this instance it's client/lawyer privilege so there's nothing we can do."

The complex question of the alleged contradiction between the policy and the legislation was beyond the scope of knowledge of the communications person and will be responded to by a person with more technical knowledge. But that person was not able to respond before deadline.

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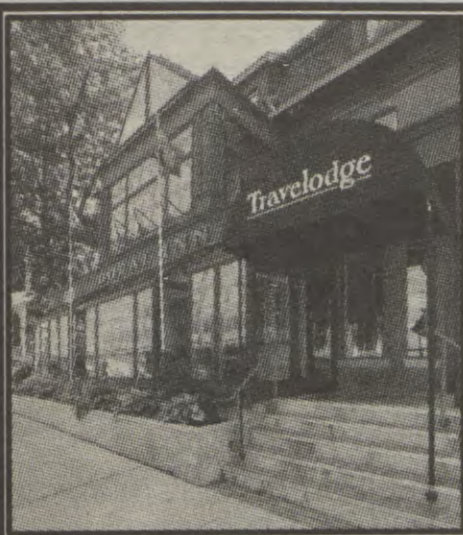
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NOTICE

TO POTENTIAL BAND MEMBERS OF PEGUIS FIRST NATION

A number of persons received letters from the Registrar of Indian Affairs confirming their reinstatement to Indian status. The letters also recommended that each person must apply to the Peguis First Nation for membership.

Accordingly, if you wish to be a member of the Peguis First Nation, you must submit your Application for Membership.

Membership applications can be downloaded from www.peguis.ca and mailed to Peguis First Nation, Box 10, Peguis, MB R0C 3J0, Attention: Angie McCorrister.

For further information, please contact:

Angie McCorrister
Membership Clerk
Phone: 204-645-2359
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Sir Paul's work for seal pups

(Continued from page 19.)

If he takes up the cause of farm animals, owners of McDonald's and Kentucky Fried Chicken might be less civil than Premier Williams in defending their interests.

Animal rights crusading celebrities should also be obligated to visit the Arctic, and see first-hand what devastation their handiwork has caused among the Inuit. Education here can work both ways, as Inuit try to learn what makes an animal rights crusader tick.

It's easy for Sir Paul McCartney to wield Maxwell's Silver Hammer to drive home his opposition to the seal hunt, While His Guitar Gently Weeps for the harp seal pups he goes to be photographed with. Sir Paul once sang, "Give Ireland Back To The Irish". Perhaps somebody can compose songs he can sing for these times: "Leave Sealing Be To The Sealers", and, "Very Sorry! This Is Really None Of My Business."

Animal rights campaigns can result in weird spin-offs. Imagine... here I am, thinking up alternative work and song ideas for a Beatle!

Centuries old

(Continued from page 19.)

They'll show up on your doorstep for a cup of tea, usually to prevent scurvy, and then end up staying for a "few" centuries. And then, before you know it, you're knee deep in Starbucks, Star Trek series and Toronto Star telemarketers. The whole scene reminded me of that famous George Orwell novel, *1984*, where he wrote about a big centralized government with a yen to rewrite history, as they felt necessary. It reminded me of Stephen Harper's big goof-up a year or two ago when he thought the Assembly of First Nations represented India, and

congratulated them on National India Day. I'm noticing a geographical theme here.

Of course the whole "inhabited what is now Canada for centuries" thing could just have been a misprint. An honest mistake. I considered the possibilities as I tasted a local delicacy called "10,000-year-old quail egg." I was pondering its unusual name when a member of the Canadian embassy leaned over and told me that actually they were only about 500 years old. A couple centuries at best.

Maybe that's why the white part of me still tells women I'm actually only 30 years old. Really.

Labour standards

(Continued from page 19.)

The Canadian Labour Code determines what is the required notice period but most court decisions on wrongful dismissal provide a range of one to two months' notice for each year worked. Thus, if you have been working for the band for 10 years and the chief wanted to get rid of you without any just cause, the council would have to give you at least 10 months notice or 10 months pay without notice. It may be more, depending on the circumstances.

Note, that the chief is usually not the employer, rather it is the council, thus in many cases the chief may not be able to fire you but can go to council to recommend firing you. It is council that has the power to fire you, as they are the employer.

Tuma

This column is not intended to provide legal advice, but rather highlight situations where you should consult with a lawyer. Questions can be sent to tumayoung@yahoo.ca

Seeds planted in good soil

(Continued from page 16.)

"I think one of the really exciting things for myself is just having certain people come up to me and sort of give me compliments about our music that have been related to identity and being proud of being an Indigenous person and that to me has been a really great gift," said Raven Kanatakta. "A few people have said you are raising a voice that hasn't really been heard before."

He recounts one occasion where he and Shoshona Kish travelled to his community to perform songs from their CD. While singing *Wake and Rise*, he remembers his cousin, who he had not seen for some time, came right up to the front of the stage and sang right along with them.

"It was amazing," said Kish. "The words for us are really of truth, and powerful for us because we're talking about standing up for what we know is right and believing in ourselves and here's this little girl, maybe about nine or 10 and she just knew all the words. It was so beautiful."

Windspeaker asked if they considered themselves to be role models.

"I don't know if we think of ourselves that way but I certainly hope that we are walking our talk," said Kish. "If somebody wants to look at us in that way then we can live up to that because I think we have a responsibility to walk a good road and affect each other in a positive way. I think we're comfortable with the idea of being role

models, if we were called on to be that. Certainly in Raven's own community, I think there's young people who really like what he's doing and know the words to his songs and really appreciate that he comes from there and that he's talking about that and that he's proud of being from there and I think that means something."

"We really want the seeds that we just planted in each one of those songs to let them grow naturally," said Kanatakta. "We took care of them, now we are just going to let them grow. Some seeds grow and some don't but the ones that do grow, hopefully, they'll grow in good soil."

This spring, *DiggingRoots* will be touring. Expect to see them in British Columbia and all over Ontario starting in June.

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Root causes of racism should be studied

(Continued from page 11.)

Bill Kloss became one of the first police chiefs in Canada to acknowledge that officers make decisions based on racial stereotypes.

"This man is my hero, and I applaud his good heart and intentions. I can only hope that many more forces, groups, and individuals will have a change of heart or a wake-up call. Yes, I call upon all politicians, policy makers, judges, and officers to do something about this travesty of justice to my people," she wrote.

During a phone interview, Cuerrier was asked why she challenged the accepted number of 500 missing Native women.

"When my mother and my grandmother died, it was over and that was the end of the story. There was no investigation into their death. It was kind of swept under the rug. I've talked to many women and they have similar stories and that's the main reason I challenge the stats that were given," she said.

For years, she lived a comfortable life, safe from the ravages of racism because of her non-Native appearance. It was only when she disclosed her Native heritage that she felt the sting of prejudice.

"I have experienced covert, subtle racism. Being treated as an equal and then later on the subject comes up that I'm part Native and then people become condescending—not all people but some," she said.

"People would treat me as an equal but then when they'd find out their attitudes would change. That would hurt. That would be very disappointing."

She decided not to mention her heritage for a while. But eventually her conscious started to bother her and she decided to use her skills to highlight the injustices she saw.

Professor David Tanovich isn't at all surprised when he's told of Cuerrier's experience. He said there is a long history of racism and a very deeply ingrained national case of denial in Canada. His superbly researched, ground-breaking recently released book *The Color of Justice—Policing Race in Canada* makes a powerful case that this state of affairs must be addressed. The first sentence in the introduction to the book says it all: "The color of justice in Canada is white."

But he knows it won't be easy to convince Canadians of that fact.

"It's not recognizing that we have this history of overt racism that prevents people from realizing just how systemic racism is today. That's what distinguishes us from the United States. I mean they're certainly no better but they certainly recognize that it's a problem and certainly recognize that it's their history and they're certainly taught about it. Whereas in Canada it's just completely ignored," he said, during a phone interview on March 21. "I think we've used that to somehow distinguish ourselves from the United States and when we think

about race we see it as a problem down south but not here."

One of the best opportunities to start the process is by following through on what Kingston Police Closs has already started, he said.

"The best way to do it in the context of policing is to force the police to keep track of who they stop and search. So that we at least get a sense of who's coming under their radar. Where we have kept track of the data, we're finding out just how many false positives there are. We're really capturing so many innocent people and missing the real criminals," he said.

He argues that this kind of treatment actually angers members of visible minorities to the point where they may do something unlawful. And since the overwhelming majority of those groups—as is the same with white people—never commit crimes, the misplaced focus on minorities allows the real criminals to go undetected.

One passage in the book superbly illustrates what is wrong with racial profiling.

"Suppose for example that Revenue Canada decided to focus all its attention on restaurant owners because of a belief that a significant percentage of income in this business was not reported," Tanovich wrote. "Assuming that the over-policing worked and a

significant number of arrests were made, so that fraud among restaurant owners was 50 times higher than in other businesses, would we be prepared to say that this depiction of fraud rates was accurate?"

That illustration shows, he said, that "arrest rates are more of a reflection of the people the police focus on than a reliable indicator of offending rates."

More research must be done on the profiling of Native people in Canada, the law professor added.

"To the extent that profiling became a national issue in the United States and even in Canada, it largely centred around the black and urban Muslim communities," he said. "Even the data we have in Canada has focussed on the black community in Ontario. There hasn't been a lot of discussion about profiling in the Aboriginal communities. Why is that the case? Is it because it will reveal some other assumptions about Aboriginal offending?"

Another problem that will need to be confronted is that marginalized people are ill-equipped to fight back against unjust treatment.

"In the States racial profiling became such a prominent issue because it was largely impacting on middle class black men. Because they were driving expensive cars and living in affluent neighborhoods, they were being

exposed to it," he explained. "They also had access to some power to at least come out and speak out against it. I am troubled about how we don't talk about—at least in the mainstream—profiling in Aboriginal communities. And profiling is seen as one of the causes of over-representation."

Police unions frequently fight when charges of racial profiling are made. Tanovich believes they are unconsciously defending the police right to be racist. The aggressiveness of the unions in protecting their officers has consequences.

"I think that fear of a lawsuit may be one of the reasons, in addition to this denial 'it's not part of our history' and 'it doesn't exist' is part of the reason why we don't have social scientists in Western Canada looking at the problem of profiling in Aboriginal communities," he said.

The resistance offered to the reality of the harm done by racial profiling comes in part because Canadians are very uncomfortable dealing with race issues.

"They are not taught at all what racism is in school. They're not taught about the incidents of racism in Canada. So it's almost like a shock to the system. I think it's a fear also of just looking inward and recognizing that everyone plays some role in the perpetuation of racism. It starts with education in high schools and that will go some distance," he said.



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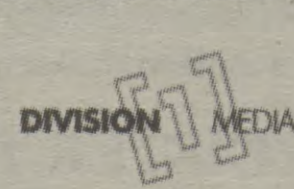
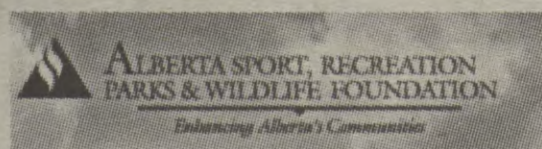
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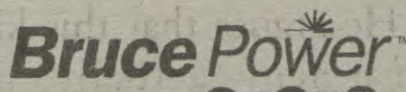
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and most importantly two of the company's three apprentices, Conrad Bird and Russell House, gathered together at Premay Equipment in west Edmonton on Feb. 27 to mark a milestone in Aboriginal apprenticeships.

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(see Apprenticeship page 24.)



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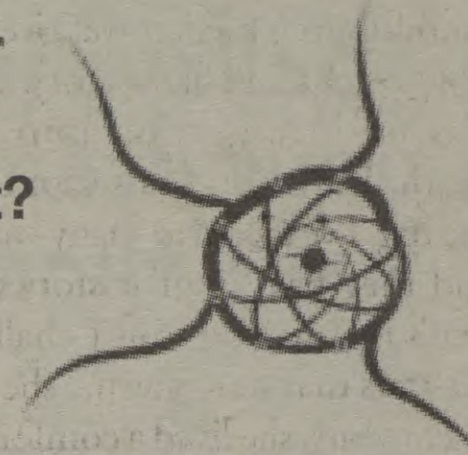
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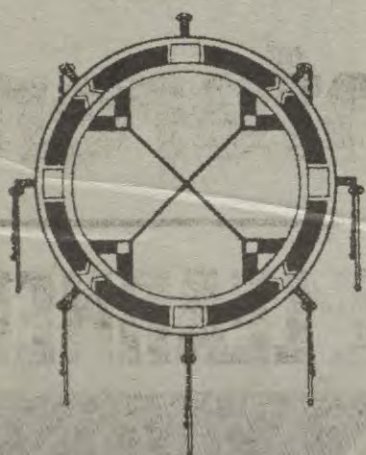
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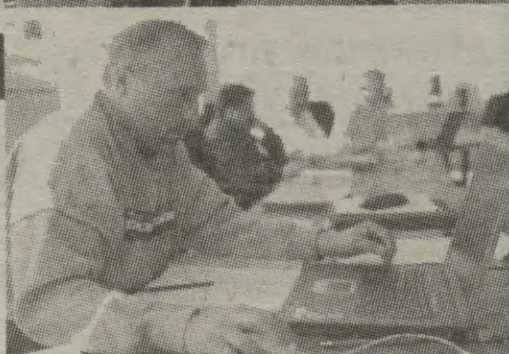
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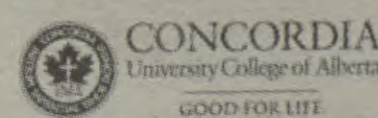
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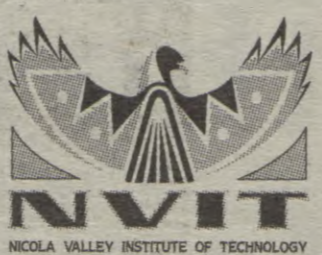
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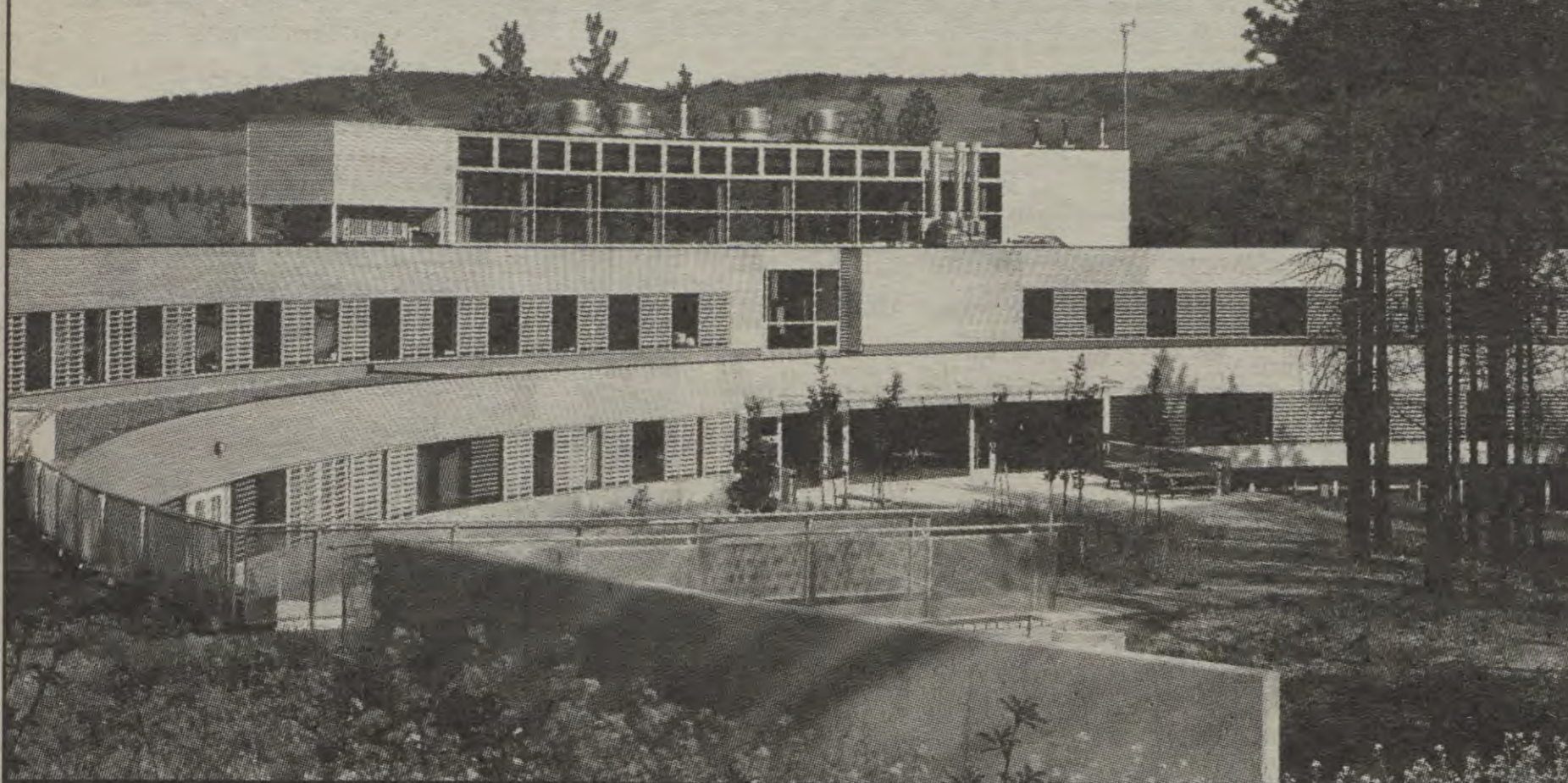


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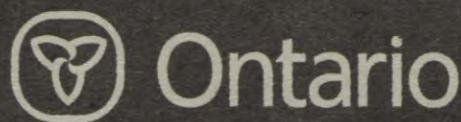
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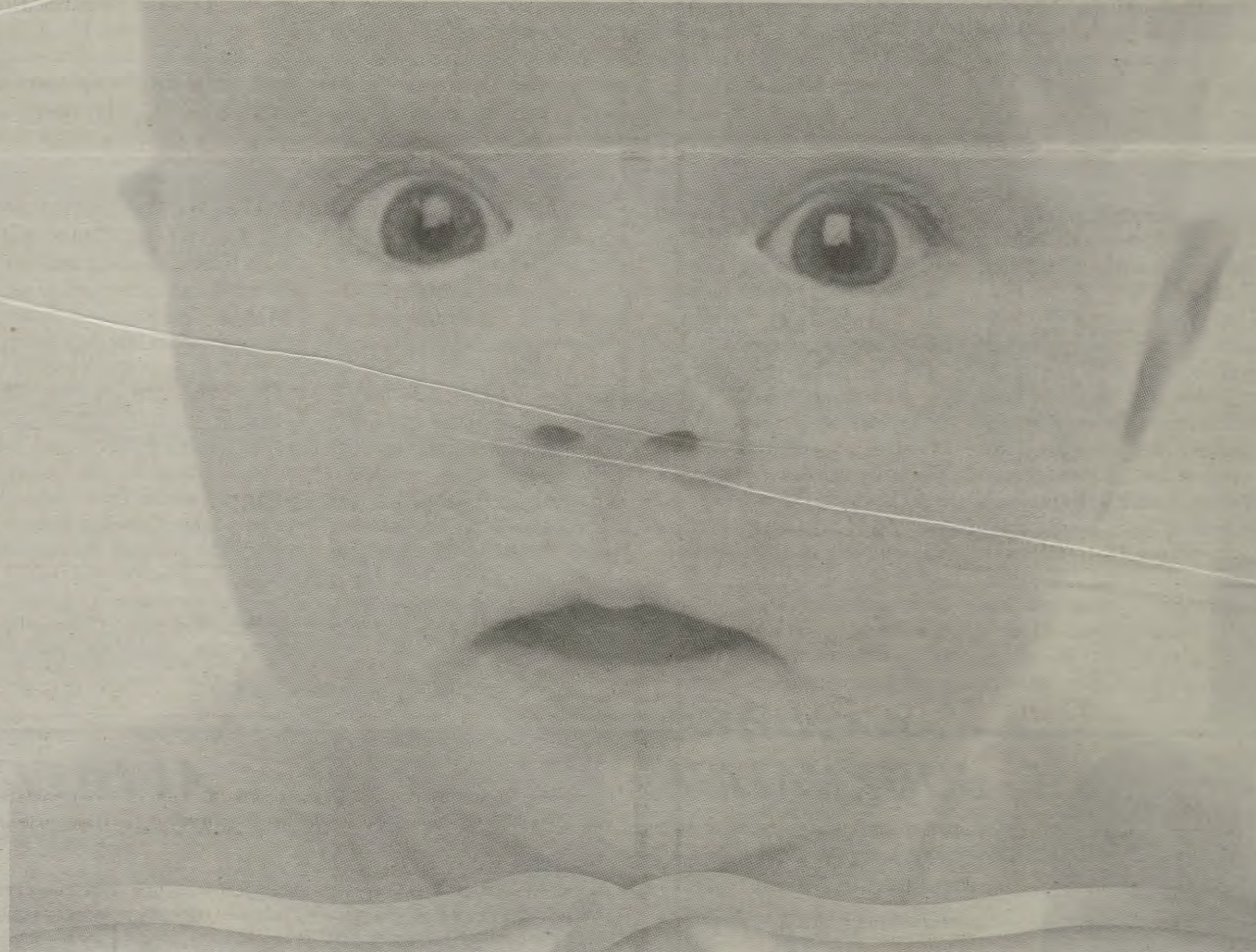
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Tireless defender of the rights of his people in Manitoba's north

By Cheryl Petten

On March 16, people from across the country gathered on Opaskwayak Cree Nation (OCN) in northern Manitoba to pay their final respects to Francis Flett, a man who had dedicated much of his life to improving the lives of First Nation people from across the country. In the early 1990s, Flett was elected chief of his home community of OCN and was re-elected to the position three times. During his time as chief, Flett accomplished many things that benefited both his own community and other First Nation communities, across Manitoba and the country. As OCN chief, Flett negotiated the first-ever gaming agreement for a First Nation in Canada. The agreement was signed in 1990 and established The Pas Indian Band Gaming Commission, now the Opaskwayak Cree Nation Gaming Commission, allowing the First Nation to have direct control of licensed gambling on reserve. Two years later, the OCN also became the first First Nation in the country to sign an agreement for the licensing of video lottery terminals on reserve. Flett played a lead role in negotiating the First Nations Land Management Agreement, signed in 1996 between the federal government and 14 First Nations from across the country, including OCN.

Under the agreement, First Nations have the ability to opt out of the sections of the Indian Act dealing with land administration, choosing instead to establish their own systems for management of lands and resources. In 2002, the initiative was opened up, allowing other

First Nations from across the country to gain more control over management of their lands. Flett was also a key player in the

negotiation of the Treaty Land Entitlement agreement in Manitoba, signed at OCN in 1997, under which 20 Manitoba First Nations received compensation for the land they were entitled to under treaty but did not receive.

On the economic development front, he helped to develop the Kikiwak Inn. Opened in 1996, the 60-room inn is the only three-and-a-half star Canada Select hotel in Northern Manitoba. Flett also wanted to provide opportunities for northern youth, so he worked to bring the OCN Blizzards Junior A hockey team to the community in 1996. Over the years, a number of young players have been given an opportunity to develop their skills on the ice in OCN thanks to the team, including Jordin Tootoo of the Nashville Predators.

Flett also worked to help build better relations between Opaskwayak Cree Nation and the nearby community of The Pas.

Flett served two terms as grand chief of the Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. (MKO), which represents 26 First Nation communities in northern Manitoba. As grand chief, Flett signed an agreement with the provincial and federal governments that allowed member First Nations to develop their own police forces or enter into an agreement with the RCMP for police services.

He also worked to negotiate a memorandum of understanding between the Manitoba government, the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs and the MKO that paves the way for First Nation involvement in establishment and management of protected areas in the province. He helped to develop a child welfare agreement that gave Manitoba First Nations jurisdiction over the

care of their children, regardless of where in the province they live. The specific agreement dealing with the MKO member communities was signed in July 2000, and paved the way for First Nation agencies in northern Manitoba to deliver services under the Child and Family Services Act, as well as adoption services under the Adoption Act. Similar agreements were also signed between the province and southern First Nations in the province, as well as with the Manitoba Metis Federation. From 2003 until 2005, Flett represented all of Manitoba's First Nations on the national stage as Assembly of First Nations regional chief for Manitoba.

It has been said that Flett was a great leader because he was a great man. If anyone had a problem or concern, Flett would take time to listen to what they had to say. He treated everyone equally, with respect and compassion, regardless of position or social status. And no problem was too small, or too large, for Flett to take on. He had the ability to laugh, and make others laugh, which could help diffuse even the most tense situation.

Despite his many accomplishments, Flett tended to shun the limelight, never seeking recognition for the work he did. After he spent two years trying to get the federal government to the table to negotiate and rights of the Dene in northern Manitoba, the Dene chiefs invited him to the signing ceremony so he could be recognized for his efforts. Flett declined, sending his vice-chief in his stead.

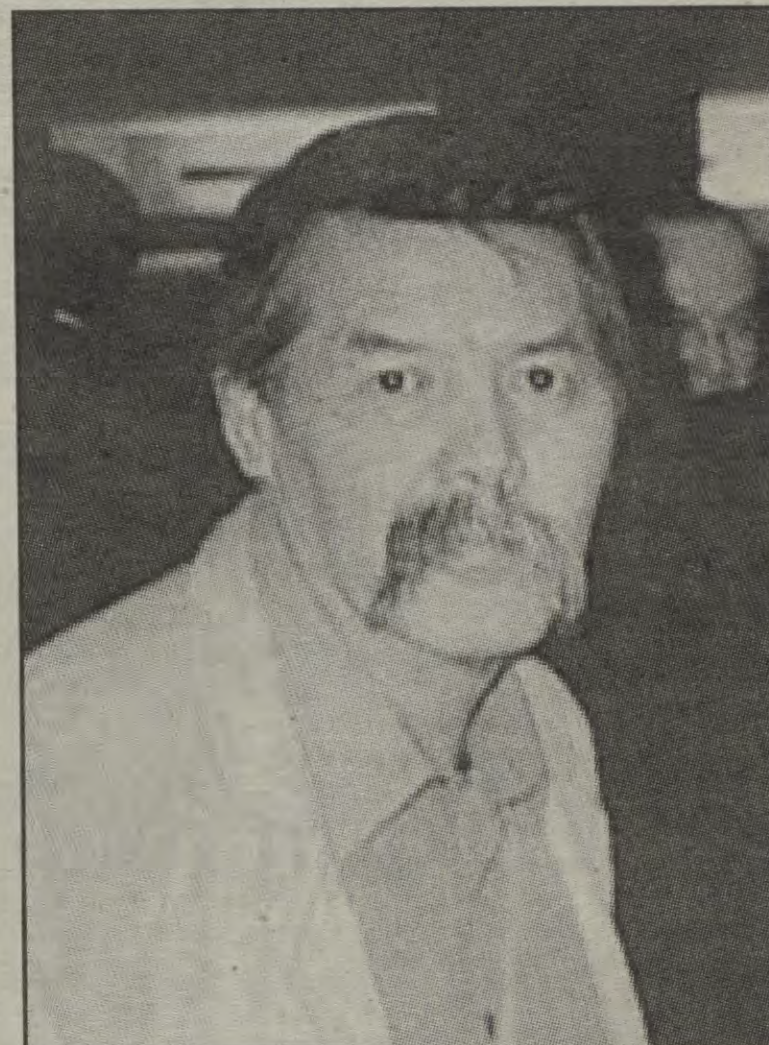
He developed a reputation as a person who would take on a fight and not give up until the battle was won, and as a leader who never lost sight of who he was fighting those battles for. His unflinching determination, and

the daunting workload he took on for himself despite the fact that he had diabetes, meant people often drew comparisons between Flett and one of his ancestors, Chief Big Bear, a proud and steadfast leader who was also dedicated to improving the lot of his people.

Flett dedicated himself to many causes throughout his political career, speaking out on behalf of the people he represented and voicing his opposition to government initiatives like federal firearm legislation and the now defunct plan to bring in a national consent form for non-insured health benefit clients. But there were two specific areas that were always on his agenda, fighting to change Bill C-31, and working to address the diabetes epidemic within the First Nations population.

Flett worked hard to try to have changes made to Bill C-31 so that the decision as to who is and isn't a First Nations citizen isn't made in Ottawa and to ensure future generations don't lose their treaty status.

He envisioned creation of centres of excellence for diabetes treatment and care, one in northern Manitoba and one in the south, where First Nations people could go to learn how to prevent the onset of diabetes or manage diabetes if they've already developed the disease. In January 2005, the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs took a large step toward having that vision realized,



Flett was a great leader because he was a great man. If anyone had a problem or concern, Flett would take time to listen to what they had to say.

passing a resolution during a special chiefs assembly on health and housing to support creation of the centres.

Flett left behind his work at the national level last year and was re-elected as OCN chief in September 2005. He was hospitalized in Winnipeg in early March and died on March 9 due to complications from diabetes.

On news of his death, wishes of condolence came from Native and non-Native organizations and leaders from across the country, recognizing Flett's work on behalf of First Nations people. Funeral services were held on March 16 at the Gordon Lathlin Memorial Centre on OCN with close to 2,000 people coming out to say goodbye to a man who had given so much of himself to the people that he served. Flett was laid to rest in Emmanuel cemetery in his home community.



JOURNALISM

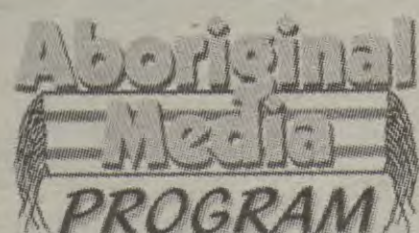
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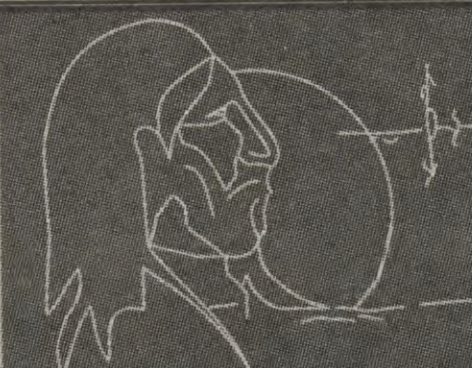
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Canada Post congratulates the recipients of the 2005 Aboriginal Education Incentive Award

Canada Post provides a gift-award to 24 Aboriginal students through the "Aboriginal Education Incentive Awards". Canada Post recognizes that many Aboriginal individuals must overcome numerous obstacles before pursuing education. This gift-award is a progressive statement in recognizing those who choose to move onward against adversity to improve their life situation.

Dwight Powless, the corporation's advisor on Aboriginal Relations, says, "These individuals need to know that someone is proud that they have decided to invest their efforts to get an education and increase their opportunities. This award may very well be the only educational award that isn't dependant on scholastic achievement. In some cases, just making the commitment to continue one's education is an accomplishment worthy of praise."

If you or someone you know is returning to school, Canada Post encourages you to contact Dwight Powless or visit the Canada Post website www.canadapost.ca to apply.

For more information, contact us by phone: (613) 734-6442 or visit our website.

Canada Post congratulates the following individuals from across Canada who persevere:

Atlantic Region

Rose Neebun Bear, NB Dartmouth NS
Sharon Lee Pellerin, Notre Dame

Huron-Rideau

Debbie Richards, London ON
Iphius Cornelius, Wallaceburg ON
Rosalind M Johnston, Sault Ste Marie ON

Prairie East

Victoria Virgin, Odessa SK
Clements Roulette, Brandon MB
Patricia Ford, Prince Albert SK

Prairie West

April Auger, Edmonton AB
Matthew Whitehead, Edmonton AB
Jeremy St Germain, Red Deer AB

Pacific

Reima-Lee Sellars, Victoria BC
Margret Lindsay, New Westminster BC
Audrey Woods, Hazelton BC

Northern

Tommy Blake, Ft. McPherson NT
Trina Cairns, Yellowknife NT
Irene Duncan, Rankin Inlet NU



Red Deer, Alta. Jeremy St. Germain had to overcome many obstacles before enrolling in a college program. A recipient of this year's Aboriginal Education Incentive Award, he hopes one day to join the RCMP.

Photo: Randy Fiedler, Photo Features

Aboriginal Education Incentive Award recipient faced many challenges

By D'Arcy Jenish

Jeremy St. Germain, one of this year's recipients of the Canada Post Aboriginal Education Incentive Awards, is enrolled in a second year arts program at Red Deer College in the central Alberta city of Red Deer and has big plans for the future. The 22-year-old Metis student intends to transfer to the University of Lethbridge next fall to pursue a bachelor's degree in psychology and hopes one day to join the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP).

"Ever since I can remember, I've always wanted to be an RCMP officer," he says.

But he has overcome many obstacles to get where he is. St. Germain has been diagnosed with Tourette Syndrome (a neurological disorder characterized by twitching and tics), attention deficit disorder and a learning disability. He did not enjoy high school and held a series of low-paying clerical and manual labour jobs afterward. "I felt trapped," he says. "I was becoming depressed and stopped caring about everything altogether."

School has changed all that. He is now focused on getting a good education and is very positive about the future. St. Germain says he has been inspired by his grandparents, who experienced discrimination and hardship because of their Metis heritage, but were honest, hard-working people who became respected members of their community. He is also thankful for the \$1,000 Canada Post Aboriginal Education Incentive Award that has made it possible for him to continue his studies.

"Without it I don't think I could have gone back this year," he says.

Are you eligible for the Canada Post Aboriginal Education Incentive Award?

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- a First Nations (status or non-status), Metis or Inuit person with a treaty or membership number?
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Then you are eligible for the Canada Post Aboriginal Education Incentive Award, which includes:

- two \$1,000 scholarships for the return to and successful completion of one full year of high school
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The Canada Post Aboriginal Education Incentive Award celebrates your motivation, determination and courage in overcoming personal, economic or social adversity in the pursuit of learning. Each of Canada Post's eight regions across the country will grant these three awards annually.

How to apply

Applicants are required to submit:

- an essay of up to five pages in length (typed and double-spaced) on letter-sized stationery
- a letter of support from a community member, such as a band counsellor, priest or minister or supervisor (excluding family members)
- a letter of reference from an academic supporter, such as a principal, guidance counsellor or teacher (excluding family members)
- the Applicant Submission Form in this ad

Submissions will be accepted between May 1st and no later than July 31st of the current year.

Winners of the Canada Post Aboriginal Education Incentive Award will be notified the third week of October. Award presentations will be held in each of the Canada Post regions during Louis Riel Week in November.

Mail your submission to:
Canada Post Aboriginal Education Incentive Award
2701 RIVERSIDE DR SUITE E0070
OTTAWA ON K1A 0B1

For more information, contact us:
by phone: (613) 734-6442
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Essay Submission Criteria:

The essay outlining your personal success story should include information about:

- the challenges you faced in school
- why you decided to leave
- how quitting school affected your life
- why you decided to go back to school
- how your life has changed since you returned
- any hardships or difficulties since returning
- your next steps and how you plan to accomplish them

Award Rules

- The selection jury will evaluate all submissions that meet the requirements outlined in the award description.
- Decisions of the selection jury are final.
- Canada Post reserves the right to use photographs or other such material in the award presentation for communication purposes.
- Winners agree to accept the award as presented and must sign an Award Acknowledgement and Release Form. By signing this form, the applicant agrees to these rules.
- All submissions, including support materials, become the property of the Canada Post Aboriginal Education Incentive Award Committee and will not be returned.
- The Canada Post Aboriginal Education Incentive Award Committee may publish or publicize information from any submission without compensation to the applicant.

APPLICANT SUBMISSION FORM

Complete and attach this Applicant Submission Form to your entry.

Your Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

Treaty or Membership Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

AWARD CATEGORY:

Secondary Education

School Name: _____

Location: _____ Year Completed: _____

Post-Secondary/Vocational or Trade Skills Training

School Name: _____

Location: _____ Year Completed: _____

ACADEMIC CONTACT (from your letter of reference)

Name: _____

Telephone (Day): _____

E-mail Address: _____

COMMUNITY CONTACT (from your letter of support)

Name: _____

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