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For more on the Tour turn to page 16

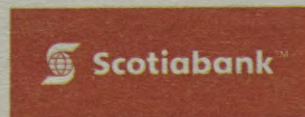
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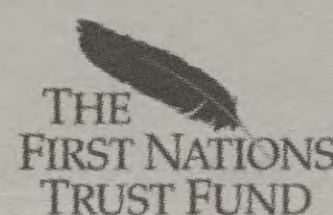
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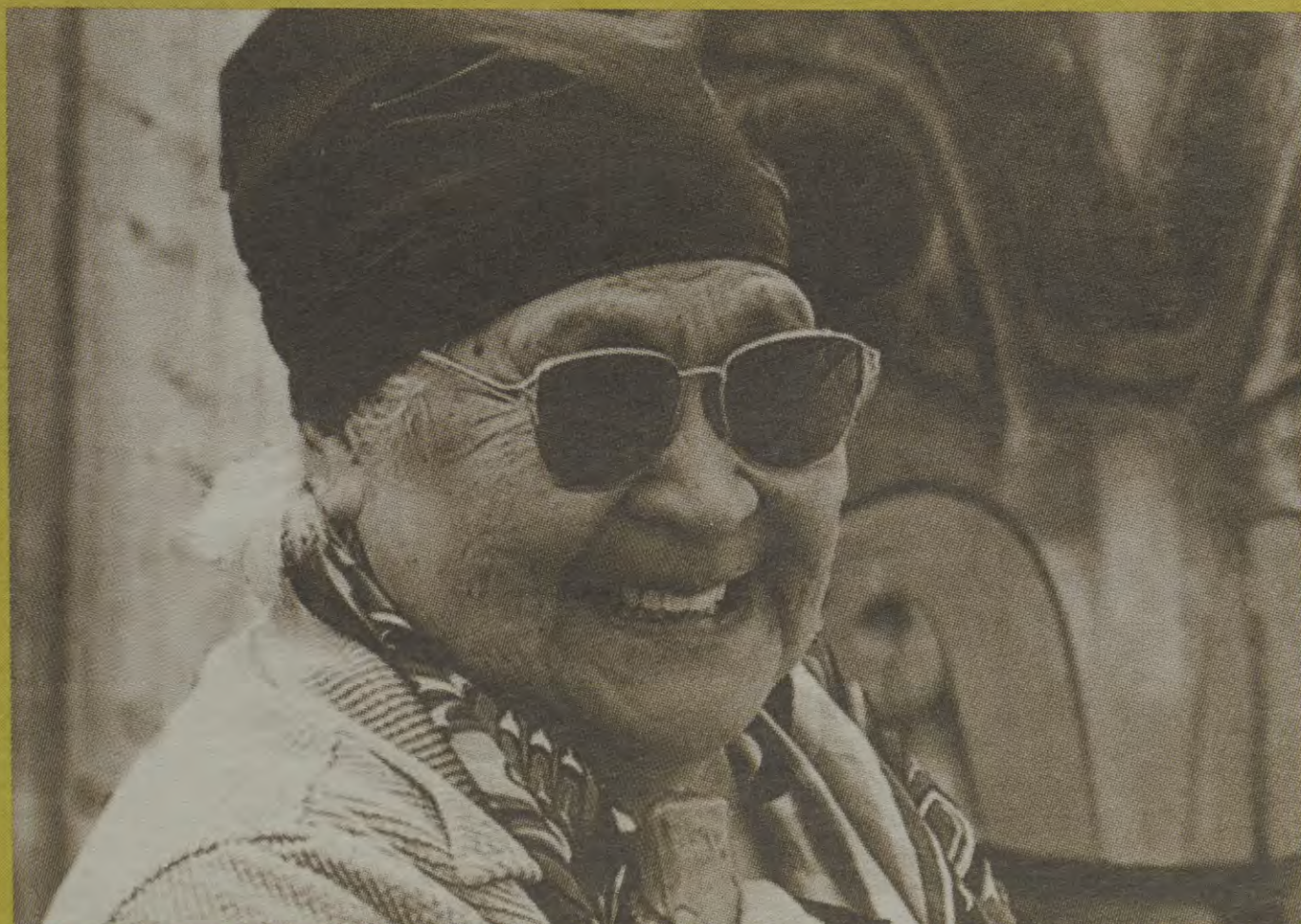
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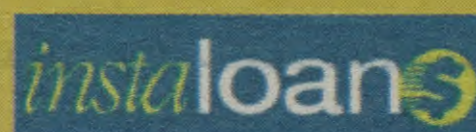
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Canada

Features

Caledonia calls for government action 8

The end of February marked two years since protests by Six Nations members stopped the building of a subdivision on disputed lands in Caledonia, ON. The passing of the anniversary has sparked a new round of public discussion and calls for action.

KI members jailed for protecting their land 9

First Nations leaders in Northern Ontario were sentenced to jail after refusing to back down in their fight for rights to their traditional lands. On March 17, Ontario Superior Court Judge Patrick Smith sentenced Chief Donny Morris and other council members of the Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug (KI) First Nation — located about 1,000 kilometres north of Thunder Bay — each to six months in jail for contempt of court.

AWFT program assists women through partnership 14

The Canadian Executive Service Organization (CESO) and the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on March 14, to jointly deliver workshops for Aboriginal women across Canada in the Aboriginal Women for Tomorrow (AWFT) program.

Steinhauer excited about new position with NAAF 15

As an esteemed scholar and Cree educator, Noella Steinhauer acknowledges that supporting Aboriginal identity in mainstream education is a crucial need. She is armed with knowledge as she enters her new position as Director of Education for the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation.

Departments

[publisher's message] 5

[what's happening] 7

[strictly speaking] 12

[25th anniversary] 17

[provincial news] 18 to 21

[windspeaker confidential] 22

[radio's most active] 23

[health] 22 & 23

[education] 26 & 27

[careers & training] 28 & 29

[footprints] Floyd Red Crow Westerman 30

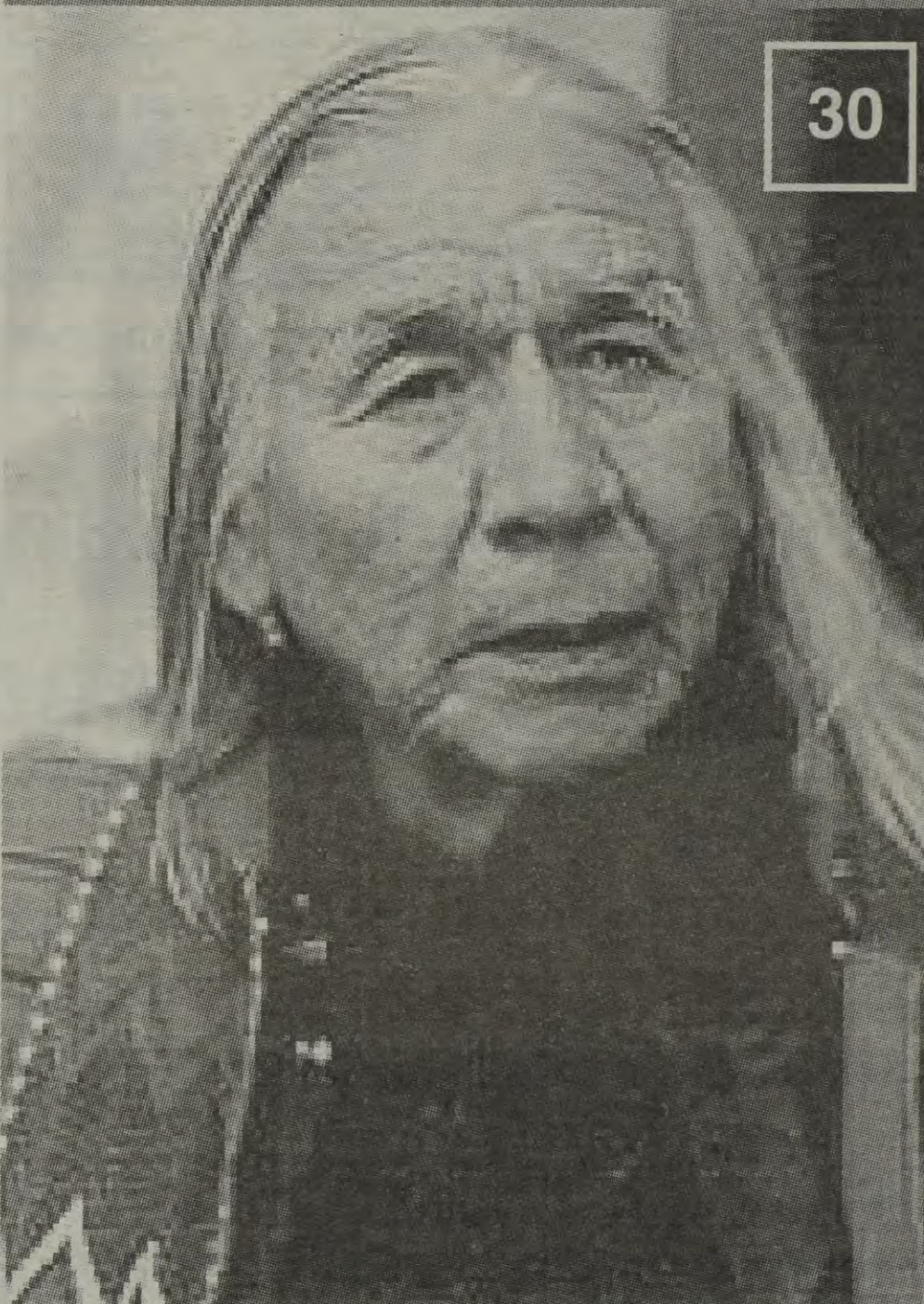
One of the most recognizable Native Americans of the 20th century was Floyd Red Crow Westerman who died at the age of 71 on Dec. 13, 2007. The musician, activist and actor was living in Los Angeles where he died of leukemia.



17



14



30

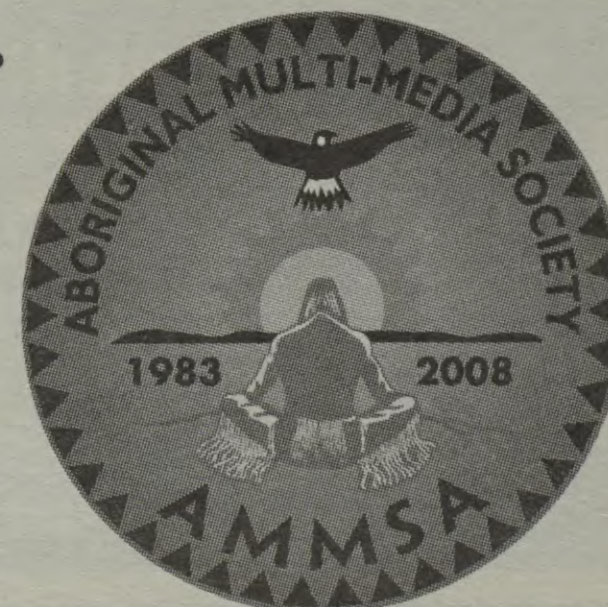
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Twenty-five years old! It seems just like yesterday that we were submitting our proposal to establish the Aboriginal Multi-Media Society (AMMSA) and its fledgling newspaper - later to be named *Windspeaker*. AMMSA was fortunate to have a board of directors and management that had the foresight to plan for the future and begin a journey towards self sufficiency and financial independence.

That started with a goal setting workshop in 1987 to be self sufficient in five years. This goal was prompted by the announcement that the Alberta provincial government was phasing out their funding for Native media and we were given three years notice. We were three years into that goal when we received word that all funding for Native Communications Program was cut in the 1990 federal budget.

The 1990 federal announcement caught us off guard and we only had seven weeks to become financially independent. I still remember that day when I had to notify half of our 24 employees that they no longer had jobs.

It's been eighteen years since the demise of the Native Communications Program which funded eleven Aboriginal newspapers. Today, only *Windspeaker* and *Wawatay News* (Ontario) remain.

Windspeaker and AMMSA have not only survived but have prospered and expanded despite the onslaught of so-called Native newspapers in the early 90's which were just get-rich-quick schemes by non-Native publishers and salespeople. At one time there were eight of these publications operating out of Edmonton alone.

The poor quality and low standards of these publications tarnished the image of all legitimate Aboriginal media, particularly in Alberta. Quality matters and in the last few years many of these publications have ceased publishing.

Despite all of this, *Windspeaker* has continued to thrive. *Windspeaker's* relentless pursuit of excellence, objectivity and independence have shaped into an acknowledged and respected authority of the news and issues that impact lives and communities throughout Indian Country.

AMMSA is more than *Windspeaker* — we also have *Alberta Sweetgrass*, which was developed to fill the void when *Windspeaker* was transformed into a national publication. Since 1994, AMMSA has also added *Saskatchewan Sage*, *British Columbia Raven's Eye*, *Ontario Birchbark* and *Aboriginal Business Quarterly* to our family of publications. AMMSA also owns and operates CFWE-FM radio. Alberta's first and most extensive Aboriginal broadcaster since 1987. We are presently serving more than 75 Alberta Aboriginal communities via satellite. An extensive and ambitious expansion plan has been developed to broadcast CFWE throughout Alberta. As we continue to increase CFWE's coverage area our plan is to include every First Nation and Métis Settlement in Alberta as well as Edmonton, Fort McMurray and Calgary in the next few years. We are converting many of our low powered transmitters into more powerful 10 to 30 kilowatt regional transmitters in the next few years.

The past twenty five years have seen many faces come and go. All who have been with AMMSA during these years, have had a role to play in our reaching this incredible milestone. Your contributions to the Aboriginal Multi-Media Society and the evolution Aboriginal media have been invaluable. I thank you for helping to make AMMSA what it is today — a recognized leader in Aboriginal communications in North America.

In 1983, we were young and chasing that dream of things that were not possible at that time. We took risks and made things happen. We were riding a young horse, called enthusiasm. Today we are 25 years older and it's time to start training a few younger horses that can take up the cause. We used to say from "Smoke Signals to Satellites". But we've gone beyond satellites to the world wide web. We are changing our focus to the web and you will see many great changes in the coming years to focus on delivering the news via the web, pod casts, etc.

This year promises to be very exciting for *Windspeaker* and AMMSA. On behalf of our Board of Directors, management and staff, I want to thank our readers, listeners, loyal subscribers, advertising clients friends and supporters who have been instrumental in our success in the last 25 years. We look forward to serving you for at least another 25 years.

More awareness needed about Gladue Decision

By MARIE BURKE
Windspeaker Staff Writer

TORONTO

The 1999 landmark Supreme Court of Canada case called the Gladue Decision is what legal experts from across the country will meet about in Toronto on April 19.

"One of the issues is that Gladue is not really being considered to the extent it should be by the courts when Aboriginal people are being sentenced and that is not only true in Ontario, but in the rest of the country as well," said Jonathan Rudin, Program Director of Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto.

Rudin will be co-chairing the National Conference on Aboriginal Criminal Justice Post-Gladue jointly presented by the Ministry of the Attorney General Ontario, Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto and Osgood Professional Development.

Rudin hopes the conference will raise awareness about the Gladue Decision and how judges, lawyers and other legal advocates can implement it in their communities, said Rudin. Organizers are expecting more than 100 participants from all parts of Canada for the one-day meeting.

"The decision could have far reaching implications for the way in which Aboriginal offenders are sentenced by the courts and presents real challenges for defense counsel and Aboriginal justice service providers in terms of work that they must do to make the decision meaningful for their clients," said Rudin.

For those who can't make it to Toronto, there will also be a simultaneous live webcast available. Experts presenting include judges, Crown Council, defense lawyers, academics and social workers.

Rudin will be facilitating a workshop called *Sentencing the Aboriginal Offender: Myths and Realities*.

Aboriginal people are not seeing much of an impact from section 718.2(e) of the criminal code and the Gladue Decision and it's important to look at why, said Rudin. Critics of the section suggest there are two types of justice; one in favor of Aboriginal people and one for everyone else, but Rudin sees a reality that is much different.

"One of the things I want to talk about is why is it that despite decisions like Gladue and despite what the criminal code says, why is it that Aboriginal rates of incarceration are still going up? You'd think that wouldn't be happening," said Rudin.

The decision is named because of one young's Aboriginal woman's appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada more than ten years ago. In winning her appeal, the judge clarified a how sentencing an Aboriginal person in Canada according to Section 718.2(e) needs to be applied. What resulted is now known as the Gladue Decision.

Jamie Tanis Gladue is a Cree woman and was only 19 years old when she pled guilty to manslaughter for the killing of her common law husband. At her trial, the judge did not consider her circumstances because

she was Aboriginal person living in an urban area. She was sentenced to three years in prison and by the time the Court of Appeal heard her case she had already served her sentence. The Supreme Court didn't alter the length of Gladue's prison term, but said the trial judge erred in not giving weight to her Aboriginal background.

Since the 1999 Supreme Court of Canada landmark decision, the courts continue to hear how they must now take into account background and systemic factors for Aboriginal offenders whether they live on reserve or in an urban area. At the Gladue appeal, the court stated that alternatives to prison were especially necessary for Aboriginal offenders and the need for restorative justice approaches in sentencing should not be restricted to non-violent offences.

Section 718.2 (e) of the criminal code came out of the sentencing reforms passed in 1996 as Bill C-41. The section states that when imposing a sentence: "all available sanctions other than imprisonment that are reasonable in the circumstances should be considered for all offenders, with particular attention to the circumstances of Aboriginal offenders".

Generally, the purposes and principals of sentencing are set out in detail in section 718. Stressing the importance of quantity and fairness, the role of aggravating and mitigating circumstances, and mandates the use of imprisonment as a last resort; this section is applied to all offenders in Canada.

Since the sentencing reforms that happened over 10 years ago, more Aboriginal offenders have been sentenced to prison terms than non-Aboriginal offenders.

Rudin was an intervener in the Gladue Appeal with Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto and has been working since to have the principals of the Gladue Decision applied to sentencing hearings for Aboriginal people. He is also an intervener in many test cases across the country.

At ALST, Rudin supervises three Gladue (Aboriginal Persons) Courts in Toronto. The Court hears cases from Aboriginal people who have charges, accepts guilty pleas, and does bail hearings. Three Gladue Caseworkers write reports at the request of defense counsel, the Crown Attorney or the judge, on the life circumstances of an Aboriginal offender. The reports give recommendations that the court can consider in sentencing in light of the circumstances of the offender. It doesn't mean that the offender doesn't go to jail, said Rudin.

When a conditional sentence is given it is often difficult for the offender to carry out its requirements than a jail sentence, said Rudin. The person who has broke the law has to make amends, heal what is wrong in their life and be accountable to their community, he said.

"I think the conference really happening at the right time because I'm really getting the sense that there are going to be some more initiatives starting up in the near future," said Rudin.

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Windspeaker news briefs

First Nation woman regains Indian status

An Ontario Superior Court ruling on March 5 ruled that a Matachewan First Nation member, Laura Flood, should have her legal status granted back under the Indian Act after she lost it under a 1952 enfranchisement policy.

During the 1950's, the Government of Canada policy had her surrender her legal status as an Indian to become a Canadian citizen so that she would have the right to hold land in fee simple. The enfranchisement application she signed was prepared by an Indian agent, given to her to sign by the Chief of her community, and submitted to the Government of Canada.

She challenged her 1952 enfranchisement together with her daughter Dorothy Flood and her granddaughter Angel Larkman. Their case — which has been ongoing since 1996 — asserted that Flood did not speak or read English at the time and therefore did not know what she was signing.

"This is an important decision for all those that have been denied 'status' because (of) their ancestors' enfranchisement," said Aboriginal Legal Services Toronto Executive Director Kimberly Murray, in a news release. "Enfranchisement was an oppressive policy designed to assimilate Aboriginal people and, in this case, was used by the Government of Canada to deprive the Flood family of their identity." Murray represents the Floods' in court.

An estimated 7,000 Aboriginal Canadians lost their legal status as Indians through enfranchisement during the 1950's and 1960's stated a media release issued by the Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN), a political territorial organization that represents 49 First Nations within James Bay Treaty 9 territory and the Ontario portions of Treaty 5.

NAN points to a central Indian registry in Ottawa that defines "Indian" as a legal term and "status Indian" as a person registered on a band list. At several points in Canada's history, status Indians were struck off that list by Indian Affairs Department officials with women losing their status under the Indian Act if they married non-Indians.

"The case opens the door for First Nation people, not only within NAN territory, but across Ontario, who may have lost their Indian status in a similar fashion," said NAN Deputy Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler. "I encourage all NAN members and First Nations across Ontario in this situation to request copies of the enfranchisement records from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada to confirm their validity. If one community member was stripped of their status without their knowledge and consent, others likely have been too".

UPSG finalizes joint venture with Lil'wat Nation & T'musta7 Services

United Protection Security Group Inc. (USPG) has signed a three-year formal joint venture agreement with the Lil'wat Nation and T'musta7 Aboriginal Consulting Services.

The agreement allows UPSG to explore new business opportunities that involve provisions for security officer training, deployment, housing of security personnel and other business opportunities that may arise before, during, and after the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics. It also establishes the roles of UPSG, the Lil'wat Training and Employment, Recruitment and Training Service (LTERTS) and lead negotiator, T'musta7 Aboriginal Consulting Services, while addressing responsibilities and the equal distribution of revenues and profits.

Don Allan, chief operating officer of the wholly owned subsidiary of UPSG, United Protection Services Inc., points out that the joint venture is only the first of several anticipated in the future.

We believe that the many business opportunities associated with the 2010 Olympics will provide short and long term meaningful employment to members of the Lil'wat Nation, he said in a March press release.

As part his company goals, Allan intends to work closely with the Lil'wat Nation to ensure that all parties of agreement benefit both financially and through the creation of sustainable businesses for its members long after the Olympics are over.

UPSG is a security protection, Canadian-based company that focuses on high impact, high visibility, and high-risk security situations. It is coupled with one of the industry's broadest ranges of traditional private security services.

Caledonia calls for government action

BY JOE COUTURE
Windspeaker Writer

CALEDONIA

The end of February marked two years since protests by Six Nations members stopped the building of a subdivision on disputed lands in Caledonia, ON.

The passing of the anniversary has sparked a new round of public discussion and calls for action.

Federal Liberal Aboriginal Affairs critic Anita Neville called on the federal government to take action and bring a resolution to the dispute as quickly as possible.

She singled out, local MP and cabinet minister, Diane Finley, and said Finley along with the Minister of Indian Affairs and the Prime Minister "should be ashamed of themselves for allowing the dispute to go on this long."

"Land issues are the responsibility of the federal government, and this government has been very absent from Caledonia. People in the community, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, can't continue living this way."

Finley's office did not return calls or emails requesting comment on the matter.

Neville recently visited the community of Caledonia, and said she heard a lot of frustration from both sides.

"What I heard the most that really saddened me was that it was a community that worked together in the past very well and were now at odds with each other," she said. "And whatever the outcome from the standoff, there's going to be a lot of healing to do."

Ontario's premier Dalton McGuinty also spoke out following the anniversary of the dispute, but his call was for the federal government to contribute more money to help cover the millions of dollars the province has spent, much of it on policing.

Neville noted she was "absolutely" in agreement with McGuinty and felt the provincial government was bearing too disproportionate a share for the "financial burden of keeping the peace."

Connie Kidd is a retired educational researcher and a member of Canadians for Aboriginal Rights, a national network of non-Aboriginal supporters for the rights of Indigenous people.

In a 2007 report she outlined some of the history and background surrounding the dispute.

The Haudenosaunee (also known as Iroquois) Confederacy spans the border between Canada and the United States and includes Six Nations of the Grand River Territory.

"After the American War of Independence, during which Mohawk warriors fought as allies of the British, the Haudenosaunee were persecuted in their New York territories and so moved north to ancestral territories along the Grand River, which were reserved for them in the Haldimand Proclamation of 1784," Kidd explained. "The land was gradually taken out of their hands through a variety of sales and surrenders currently in dispute."

Kidd's piece describes a presentation by Six Nations leaders and a McMaster university professor, who explained that treaties and agreements recognized by the constitution have not been honoured historically, leading to the loss of the land, a 385,000 hectare parcel known as the Haldimand Tract.

The current dispute was sparked when members of the Six Nations protested on the construction site in Caledonia on Feb. 28, 2006. The Ontario Provincial Police tried to remove them in April, but were unsuccessful. Negotiations began in May and are currently in progress. Despite this, the summer of 2006 was marked by clashes and confrontations between protestors, non-Aboriginal community members and police.

In an interview with *Windspeaker* following the anniversary, Kidd noted she agrees with Neville and feels there is a bigger role for the federal government to play.

"The government needs to step up to the plate and resolve the land claim issues themselves a little more quickly," she said. "I know that what Six Nations is looking for, and they've said this repeatedly (is) — tell us how you came to this number, what was your formula, what are your rules for calculating the amount of compensation. And I think that really is the key. And that is something that our federal government has never been willing to do."

"They want to treat each individual claim as if it's a whole brand new issue instead of applying the rules that have developed over time in government policy itself but also in supreme court rulings," she continued.

"There are supreme court rulings that lay out some of the rules that have to be applied, one of them being the compound interest issue. So I think if our federal government was willing to use the rules that exist, they could be resolving these actual land claim issues a lot more quickly than they are."

But Kidd said the provincial government perhaps has a more important role to play.

"To be honest, I think the most important thing for people to understand is the role that Ontario should be playing right now," she said. "Ontario has a legal responsibility to consult and accommodate Six Nations regarding the use of all of the land in the Haldimand Tract that is their traditional land. Regardless of land claim or not, Ontario has that responsibility."

Basically, the federal government must develop and apply a formula for Native land claims that will speed them up. And the province must consult with the First Nations when their traditional lands are involved.

Kidd said she feels people won't be surprised to know that governments are dragging their feet on the issues, and feels that all Canadians need to push governments to resolve the issues despite the financial implications.

After Marie Trainer, mayor of Haldimand County made comments the protestors considered inflammatory in 2006, Haldimand County Council voted to replace her with deputy mayor Bob Patterson as its spokesperson on the issue. Following the two-year anniversary, Trainer agreed to comment to *Windspeaker* on about the ongoing dispute.

Trainer noted that the community has seen many negative financial consequences over the past two years, contributing to the frustration. "The situation is sad considering both sides lived and worked together well for hundreds of years," she said. "There seems to be little progress and the wedge between the people is widening."

"Now, it's really difficult and when you are still friends you just try to talk about everything else but not that," she said.

"We won't talk about the land claims or anything because it's just a small radical group that's causing all the trouble and the pain and the hurt and making it bad for everybody."

"A lot of people are now just shutting up and boiling inside," she continued. "They don't know what to do. They feel abandoned by all governments. We've asked for some simple help and we haven't received it from either level."

Trainer also commented that much needs to be done to clean up the mess left by two years of protesting because the eyesores abound in the area.

She also showed a lack of understanding of Aboriginal issues, by listing numerous things she perceives Aboriginal people receive for free.

(See Two on page 9.)

KI members jailed for protecting their land

BY JOE COUTURE
Windspeaker Writer

KITCHENUHMAYKOOSIB INNINUWUG FIRST NATION

First Nations leaders in Northern Ontario were sentenced to jail after refusing to back down in their fight for rights to their traditional lands.

On March 17, Ontario Superior Court Judge Patrick Smith sentenced Chief Donny Morris and other council members of the Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwig (KI) First Nation — located about 1,000 kilometres north of Thunder Bay — each to six months in jail for contempt of court.

The leaders had ignored a court order to stay away from an area near Big Trout Lake that they claim is traditionally theirs, and into which the government recently allowed junior mining company Platinex to begin exploration.

In the days following the sentencing, leaders across the country expressed outrage. Ontario NDP leader Howard Hampton was particularly vocal, as he called on Ontario's Aboriginal Affairs Minister Michael Bryant to resign.

"The far north of Ontario probably has some of the best unexplored mineral potential in the whole world because there was a moratorium placed on further mineral development north of the 51st parallel in the mid-'70s," he explained, noting there have only been two exceptions.

The population north of the 51st is largely represented by First Nations and many of those are in Bryant's constituency, he said.

"Given the price of minerals, international mining companies are chomping at the bit to get into the far north of Ontario," he said. "First Nations are not opposed to mining, but First Nations insist on an agreement with the Ontario government, very similar to the agreement that the Cree in Northern Quebec have with the Quebec government.

"That is an agreement that First Nations will have a say in environmental protection; that First Nations will have a say in a co-operative and consultative basis

over land use planning; that there will be revenue sharing; that there will be a strategy for education, training and business development for First Nations."

Basically, the First Nations want overarching ground rules that all have to play by, and a guarantee in advance of how their share in mining deals will work.

"And representatives of First Nations have been very consistent over the last six years in saying, 'We're not prepared to allow helter-skelter, one mining company here, one mining company there — we want the government of Ontario at the table and we want legislation and an agreement that establishes the ground rules,'" Hampton said.

How have things got to the point where First Nations leaders are in jail, asks *Windspeaker*? The background, Hampton explained, is that Ontario for many years has accepted the idea that First Nations have traditional lands on which they were active.

On the land in question, KI has a land claim it wants addressed.

Platinex has tried to begin operations within that traditional territory after the government of Ontario gave the firm a permit without having consulted KI.

When KI stood in opposition of the Platinex operations, the company sued the First Nation for billions of dollars, Hampton said. According to its chief, KI has gone bankrupt because of the \$500,000 they say they have paid in legal fees defending that lawsuit.

Bryant said an offer from the provincial government is still on the table — the province would pay \$200,000 to KI for their legal fees and Platinex would make some concessions.

But overall, the government seemed to be missing in action, Hampton said.

The provincial government has failed to meet its legal and constitutional obligations to meaningfully consult with the First Nation, added Connie Kidd of Canadians for Aboriginal Rights, a national network of non-Aboriginal supporters of rights of Indigenous people.

"I think our governments, both of them, do a very good job of confusing issues to make it very difficult for people to sort out what's right and what's wrong," she said. "And the reason that they do that, frankly, in my opinion and the opinion of a lot of lawyers, is because the governments are not doing what they should be doing. And they are, in the case of province at least, engaging in illegal evasions — they're evading the law."

"I think, in part, the government wants to see mining activity move ahead as quickly as possible and thinks that a series of one-off agreements will give them something to announce this month, next month. So I think part of it is a rush," Hampton added.

"I think part of it is a desire to avoid giving northern First Nations some control over what happens north of the 51st parallel. We're talking about billions of dollars of mining potential here. And, unfortunately, greed exists in our society and, unfortunately, I think that's part of this equation, too."

Hampton thinks there is still a opportunity in northern Ontario to accomplish "something positive, something long-lasting, and something very important for First Nations," he said.

"First Nations have got together, have thought about this, have had very thorough discussions and are quite open to working with governments and the mining industry. But they're not prepared to accept back-door, lowest-common-denominator deals, where someone else gets all the economic benefit and First Nations are left with a few token jobs and then left to deal with the environmental issue afterwards. And I think that's what is really at stake here."

Despite having some of its leaders behind bars, KI isn't backing down.

On March 20, Thunder Bay's *Source* newspaper reported that KI members are "fighting back" by not allowing mining companies, and federal and provincial MPs, on KI lands. Its leaders are also calling for the Assembly of First Nations to sever ties with the mining industry and for Ontario to establish a joint panel on mining with First Nation lands.

whose had everything and now they can't think of anything else they want. They just want more." Trainer said the ball is in the Six Nations court. She said

that they have no right to complain, as they haven't accepted one offer made by the government on one claim and are holding out for more money.

Windspeaker news briefs

New agreement to help strengthen Yukon's economy

The governments of Canada and Yukon have signed a new Framework Agreement worth \$242.91 million that is expected to address Yukon's public infrastructure needs and priorities through environment-friendly initiatives.

The agreement operates under Building Canada, the Government of Canada's new long-term infrastructure plan, and gets \$60 million of its total funding support from the Gas Tax Fund Agreement.

The Gas Tax funding is available to local governments for environmentally sustainable projects that lead to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, cleaner air or cleaner water.

"The signing of a Framework between the Government of Canada and the Government of Yukon will result in significant infrastructure initiatives that will strengthen Yukon's economy and communities, and contribute to a cleaner environment," said Minister of National Revenue, the Honourable Gordon O'Connor, at the March 17th announcement, which was attended by several government representatives.

"The support for municipal infrastructure improvements in Whitehorse announced is a concrete example of our collaborative approach in our desire to modernize public infrastructure in Yukon and across Canada. Further, these investments support the Canada's Northern Strategy," said O'Connor.

The Canada-Yukon Framework Agreement outlines how the Building Canada Plan will be one of the investment priorities. They will work together to address infrastructure priorities such as water, wastewater, green energy, regional and community airports, and safe roads. Through the agreement, the two governments will also report to Canadians on the results of these investments.

The governments of Canada and Yukon also announced that the City of Whitehorse will invest in nine infrastructure projects thanks to the \$16 million from the Canada-Yukon Gas Tax Agreement. Projects range from a water sampling station, upgrades to sidewalks, to compost program improvements.

Through combining the Building Canada Fund and \$25 million per year in Base Funding, an allocation of \$182.91 million will be available until 2014 to help address core infrastructure priorities at both the territorial and community level, including First Nations.

Through its new \$33 billion Building Canada infrastructure plan, the Government of Canada allots long-term, stable and predictable funding to help meet infrastructure needs across Canada.

Musqueam Band receives settlement for land dispute

The Musqueam Indian Band have signed an agreement with the Province of British Columbia to settle three outstanding court cases in which the band will get a \$20.3 million cash payment and ownership of lands surrounding the University Golf Course, Bridgepoint Casino, and Pacific Spirit Regional Park areas.

The landmark Reconciliation, Settlement and Benefits Agreement was announced in Victoria by Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation Minister Michael de Jong and Musqueam Indian Band Chief, Ernest Campbell on March 11.

"The Musqueam people have ratified a fair and honourable agreement, which validates the New Relationship as well as a new level of co-operation between the Band and the Province that is built on respect and rightful consultation," said Chief Campbell in a news release. "This agreement allows the Musqueam to achieve even greater independence for our people and for future generations."

The Musqueam Indian Band represents roughly 1,200 Coast Salish people who belong to the Hun'qum'I'num linguistic group and has three reserves in Greater Vancouver. Under the agreement, the Musqueam band agrees to affirm 7.3 hectares of the University Golf Course lands and 1.2 hectares of Block F in the Pacific Spirit Regional Park as parkland and ensures the university golf course area remain a golf course until 2083.

The agreement — a full and final settlement to three outstanding court cases — was supported by ninety-eight percent of members of the Musqueam Indian Band at a general band membership meeting on March 10, 2008. It resolves all legal issues related to the sale of the University Golf Course lands, the relocation of the River Rock casino to Richmond's Bridgepoint lands, and remediation for environmental damage to the Celtic Lands in South Vancouver.

Two years later and still no resolution to land dispute

(Continued from page 8.)

Trainer also notes that some people in the community are starting to think that First Nations are "almost like a spoiled child,

Wet'suwet'en want MacKay removed

By DEBORA STEEL
Windspeaker Writer

MORICETOWN, B.C.

The Office of the Wet'suwet'en demands the immediate removal of Liberal backbencher MLA Dennis MacKay as a member of the province's Standing Committee on Children and Youth, and wants him to resign as the government representative for the Bulkley Valley-Stikine constituency.

MacKay lobbed a verbal hand grenade into the centre of the Wet'suwet'en community of First Nations in the Smithers/New Hazelton area when he spoke to the standing committee on March 12. The committee works to improve the lives of British Columbia's most vulnerable children through legislative programming. Aboriginal children make up about half of the child welfare cases in the province.

In a discussion on education outcomes of children in care, there was an exchange between MacKay and Mary-Ellen Turpel-Lafond, the province's independent representative of children and youth. In it, MacKay managed not only to offend Canada's residential school survivors by saying that many of the children forced to attend those schools "benefited greatly" from the experience, but he also struck at the core of the First Nations parents in his constituency when he said they lacked the required skills to raise their children adequately.

"I have a daughter that teaches at an Indian reserve," MacKay said. "It's called Moricetown. She comes home some days and she's in tears because of the lack of parenting skills of these people who have had these children."

When Turpel-Lafond tried to explain that the challenges facing some First Nations families today are rooted in the legacy of the residential school system, MacKay said: "I don't believe for a moment that every child that

went to a residential school was abused. I think a lot of Aboriginal people benefited greatly from the residential school system, but we never hear from them."

Response to MacKay's comments was swift. In his capacity as Opposition critic for the Children and Families portfolio, Nicholas Simons, the NDP MLA for Powell River-Sunshine Coast, wrote to Premier Gordon Campbell asking that MacKay immediately be replaced "with a member who does not threaten the integrity of the committee."

Simons said MacKay's comments reflect a degree of ignorance that ignores the systemic nature of abuse suffered by First Nations people in the residential school system.

The reputation of the committee "must be held to a standard that not only promotes confidence in its work, but also one that promotes reconciliation and understanding between the committee and First Nations community," said Simons. "The comments made by this member are such that they bring the reputation of the committee into disrepute."

But Liberal MLA Ron Cantelon (Nanaimo-Parksville), chair of the standing committee, accused Simons of taking MacKay's comments out of context and implying slurs for political gain.

"I thought it was a cheap, political trick," he told a reporter from the Times Colonist.

MacKay, however, stood by the comments and added insult to injury in interviews with reporters in the following days.

"I've had a lot of native people tell me that residential schools weren't all bad; that a lot of Native people benefited from the residential schools. All we ever hear about are the negative side, but there's a lot of positive and I've had a good number of Aboriginal people tell me about the positive aspects of the residential schools."

When asked to enumerate those positive aspects, MacKay said "they had warm beds, they had food and they had safety with the schools themselves."

MacKay did say that he didn't mean to imply that all First Nations people are bad parents. "But there are a lot of young native children today—the people who are raising those children don't have adequate parenting skills, in my view," he said. "A lot of native kids come to school not fed. They come to school not having adequate rest."

In a letter to Premier Gordon Campbell, Chief Councillor Ron A. Mitchell of the Moricetown Band said MacKay's comments were insensitive, misinformed and threatened the trusting relationship built over 21 years between the parents and teachers at Moricetown elementary school where MacKay's daughter Laura works.

Debbie Pierre, the executive director of the Office of the Wet'suwet'en told *Windspeaker* that MacKay's comments were a slap in the face to the people in the territory.

"There is definitely a lot of anger and frustration," said Pierre. She even went so far as to accuse MacKay of waging a campaign to divide the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities in the constituency.

"It's been extremely strained," said Pierre, describing the ongoing relationship with their provincial representative. "Dennis MacKay has not been a strong supporter or [ally] to the First Nations within his constituency. As far as we are concerned, this is just one of his veiled attempts to pit First Nations against non-First Nations."

Chief Mitchell also described MacKay as never being a supporter of the Moricetown band or its community initiatives.

"The Moricetown Band Council is very offended by [MacKay's] remarks," Mitchell wrote. "MacKay has only visited

our community once in the past six years. How many times has he visited other First Nations communities in his riding?"

He described MacKay's comments on residential schools as based on a lack of knowledge about the system's historic roots as a policy to assimilate and destroy First Nations communities.

"Children were forced to attend residential schools and suffered emotional abuse for being First Nations, were forced to eat food not worthy of feeding to animals and were punished for speaking their traditional languages," Mitchell wrote to the premier.

Tom Happynook, president of the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council on Vancouver Island, said MacKay's comments were "despicable."

Many First Nations people from MacKay's constituency were sent as far away as Edmonton to attend residential school, and to the island to attend the Alberni Indian Residential School in Port Alberni, one of the most notorious for abuse in all of Canada.

Taking generations of children from their homes and sending them off to be raised in institutions by strangers, said Happynook, was a harmful and abusive act that left deep scars on First Nations people, "just as did the mental, physical, emotional and sexual torments suffered by children in those government- and church-run schools."

MacKay's statements about the positive aspects of residential schools clearly shows "his misguided perspective and ignorance regarding the realities found within the walls of those institutions."

MLA Scott Fraser, (NDP Alberni-Qualicum) the Opposition critic for Aboriginal Affairs, said MacKay doesn't get it. "This is just the worst type of stereotyping. If he thinks residential schools were a good thing, he doesn't see them for what they were, an attempt to

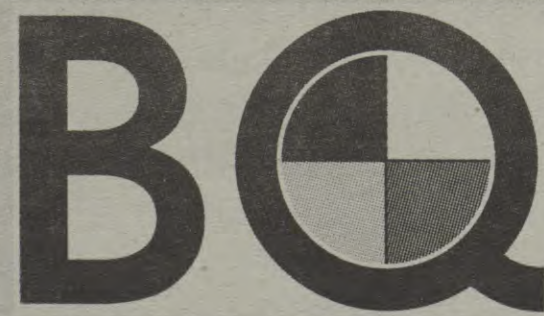
exterminate culture. He shouldn't be an MLA, but he sure shouldn't be on a children's committee... There may be appropriate committees for MLAs with that attitude, but it shouldn't be one to actually adjudicate children. No way. Maybe he should be on a snowmobile committee or something."

Fraser said he was jumping to the defense of his colleague, Simons, who was accused of taking MacKay's comments out of context. Not only were they not out of context, said Fraser, they were repetitive. MacKay said the same sort of thing about residential schools in the provincial legislature in 2006.

"[O]ur Aboriginals in the province of British Columbia who were taken from their families and placed in residential [schools], it wasn't done out of meanness or to punish those children," reads the Hansard transcript during MacKay's part in a debate on what was called the Apology Act. "It was done out of what I believe was the right thing: to educate those young people."

"Yes, there were some unfortunate consequences from those residential schools, but there was also a lot of good that came from those residential schools. So for those children that were abused while they attended the schools, they were a small number when you look at the total number of Aboriginal kids, but the intent was not there to punish those children. The intent was to educate them and not punish them, not to punish their parents."

Nathan Cullen, member of parliament for Skeena-Bulkley Valley whose federal riding overlaps MacKay's constituency in northern British Columbia, said the MLA's comments "drags us back to a time when the experiences of First Nations in residential schools was of some debate and the government denied that people ever went through any kind of pain at all." (See MLA on page 11.)




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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 (EA Screening) regarding Atomic Energy of Canada Limited's (AECL) intent to proceed with the decommissioning of the Heavy Water Upgrading Plant located at the Chalk River Laboratories (CRL) in Chalk River, Ontario. The hearing will be held at the Ajax Convention Centre, 550 Beck Crescent, Ajax, Ontario on May 15, 2008.

The public is invited to comment on the results of the EA Screening. Requests to intervene must be filed with the Secretary of the Commission by April 14, 2008 at the address below and include a written submission; a statement setting out whether the requester wishes to intervene by way of written submission only or by way of written submission and oral presentation; and the name, address and telephone number of the requester.

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 2008-H-05, or contact:

L. Levert, Secretariat
Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission
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Tel.: 613-996-9063 or 1-800-668-5284
Fax: 613-995-5086
E-mail: interventions@cnsccsn.gc.ca

MLA on the hot seat for inappropriate comments

(Continued from page 10.)

Cullen said MacKay owes people an apology. He said the residential school experiences of the Wetsu'wet'en, Gitksan and the other Aboriginal peoples of the area were tragic.

"The stories are so painful and the effects are still being felt today across the communities. It's real, it's tangible, and it's a real shame that someone that is supposed to be representing them does not know that."

Cullen said MacKay had a "blaming the victim" mentality.

"I don't know if they (the provincial Liberal Party) show up to the scene of traffic accidents and blame the people that got hit for having been in the way of the car."

Cullen said MacKay is a former police officer and coroner.

"You would think that there would be an awareness and sensitivity to the rights and perspectives of victims, but I guess that wasn't a lesson learned."

Cullen said MacKay's comments about First Nations'

parenting skills was the most worrisome statement he's heard from any elected official in the last 20 years.

"To put it down racial lines, I just didn't think that that type of thinking went on, but I guess that was wrong."

He said MacKay is representing a view that is completely out of touch with his constituency. "It's representing a view that makes the problem worse rather than helps us get to solutions. I don't know why the premier would choose someone like this to represent him on this committee, and then expect First Nations people not to be upset about it."

Cullen said there may be "some racist people out there that think First Nations people can't raise their own children, and maybe Mr. MacKay thinks he's defending those interests, but that is not the majority in Bulkley Valley-Stikine. And Debbie Pierre agrees. She said the Wetsu'wet'en have a great deal of support in the area. MacKay just doesn't happen to be among that

support.

Windspeaker asked Cullen about his use of the word racist. Was he accusing MacKay of being a racist?

"I don't know what to say about somebody who makes statements about a people based upon their race and makes those negative comments," said Cullen. "I've known Dennis for years. I don't know if he is a racist, but if you were to replace all of those words in that statement with 'Jewish' or 'Black' or 'Asian,' what would the reaction be?"

Cullen said the more he talks about the issue, the angrier he gets.

"I'm angered by this. It seems to just set us back and, Lord knows, we need more progress forward: not to go backwards."

The premier's response to MacKay's comments will be most telling, said Cullen, especially if Gordon Campbell "is going to pretend that he is interested in a better relationship with First Nations communities."

"Is he a leader or not? I think a leader is somebody who takes

responsibility for the people on their team and stands by his commitments."

On March 20, *Windspeaker* called the Office of the Premier and asked communications officer Doug Brown if there had been any reaction to MacKay's comments from Premier Campbell. Brown said that the premier was taking some personal time away from the office. He said there would be no response expected before our press deadline.

The hereditary chiefs of the Wetsu'wet'en are hopeful that the premier will handle the situation in a way that will satisfy them, but are looking for support from other First Nations that are equally dismayed with MacKay "so that this doesn't fall on deaf ears," said Pierre.

"I'm sure we are not the only First Nations that have faced these types of stereotyping from their political leaders, but I think what's going to be very important is we're going to develop alliances to ensure that these things are addressed and addressed properly,


so I'm strongly encouraging that the First Nations in B.C. and throughout Canada back the Moricetown band in their efforts to have [MacKay] removed."

Ironically, while one member of the Campbell Liberal government was perceived to be entrenching stereotypes about First Nations people, other members were unveiling an initiative to encourage school-aged children in British Columbia to make it their personal responsibility to prevent racism.

On March 14, Wally Oppal, attorney general and minister responsible for Multiculturalism, along with Shirley Bond, Education minister and deputy premier, announced Make A Case Against Racism, marking the International Day for the Elimination of Racism on March 21.

The plan "encourages young people to take action, within their schools and lives, to help prevent racism by being aware of and responding respectfully to people from other cultures," reads a press release.

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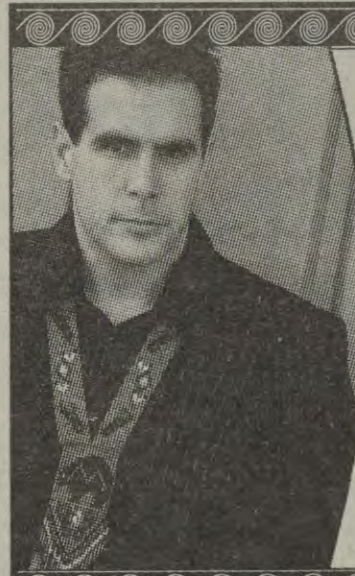
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Matrimonial real property reform overdue

By MARGO LITTLE
Windspeaker Writer

M'CHIGEENG FIRST NATION, ON

There's no doubt that the Canadian government persists in projecting an image of Canada as peacemaker and protector of human rights, both at home and abroad. Recently, however, more and more citizens are stepping forward to challenge that perception.

For instance, former United Nations Human Rights Commissioner Louise Arbour has openly criticized Canada for its outmoded and self-congratulatory stance on human rights issues. Her remarks were inspired by Canada's opposition to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples which passed in September 2007. When Canada voted against the measure, Justice Arbour suggested that Canadians have "an unduly romantic vision" of their country.

This outdated self-image has been particularly apparent in the never-ending battle to reform antiquated matrimonial property laws (MRP) affecting Native communities. Because legislation

has not kept up with the times, many First Nations women and children are forced out of their homes after separation or divorce.

Since the inception of the Canadian Human Rights Act in 1977, governments of the day have conceded that certain sections perpetuate unfair treatment of people living on reserve. A succession of Indian Affairs ministers have insisted that the inequities built into the legislation were only "temporary." They repeatedly pledged to move forward with reforms to the Indian Act itself. Despite lip service to reform, Section 67 of the human rights code has been problematical for the past thirty years. It stipulates that "nothing in this Act affects any provision of the Indian Act or any provision made under or pursuant to that Act."

In effect, Section 67 exempts the Indian Act from the federal human rights code. Decisions or actions of band councils are shielded from applications of the Human Rights Act. Aboriginal women, above all, have been disproportionately affected by inaction on the issue, since they are unable to file complaints with the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC).

First Nations people continue

to grapple with a complex web of overlapping, conflicting and debilitating regulations. According to the Constitution Act of 1867 Indian reserve lands are held by the federal government in trust for bands. The Indian Act (section 20) allows band councils to allot land to band members by issuing certificates of possession.

Most of these certificates are in the husband's name and Native women cannot take advantage of provincial MRP laws which call for the equal division of property.

Matrimonial property is defined as the property owned by one or both spouses and used for a family purpose. This includes the land and anything permanently attached to the land such as the family home.

As Manitoulin Island attorney Susan Hare has observed, many Aboriginal women have been adversely affected by land codes dating back to colonial times.

As a member of the Law Society of Upper Canada, she has been a staunch advocate for redress. In her M'Chigeeng First Nation practice, she has represented many clients dispossessed by the current MRP system.

"This problem keeps arising," Hare points out. "The cases that



Manitoulin Island attorney Susan Hare

were brought to me were historical cases. They were important because they involved our Elder women and they were also important in that they put the spotlight on discrimination against Aboriginal women. The sad thing is that the Elders were

reluctant to sue the government or to sue the band.

Back then women didn't speak out and challenge authority."

Over the past thirteen years she has listened to many heart-wrenching stories of dislocation. (See Hare's on page 13.)

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Brian Tuesday NSI New Voices 2007 graduate
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Hare's clients fear losing their home and security

(Continued from page 12.)
 In confidence, the dispossessed women describe the day-to-day uncertainty they face at the prospect of losing their home and security. In many of these situations, Hare blames the actions of inept Indian Affairs bureaucrats combined with "patriarchal attitudes" for perpetuating the unfair treatment.
 "The agents might 'forget' that the woman was the owner of the land and not the husband," said Rolanda Manitowabi. "Mistakes were made and these errors were compounded by more mistakes. The one common element in all these cases is the overall sloppiness of the record-keepers."
 Like other First Nations lawyers and women's organizations, she has been growing impatient with the slow pace of change. In her view, the imposition of the Indian Act in 1876 essentially "violated all human rights acts" by its very nature.
 An attempt to repeal Section 67 failed in 1992 because many Native leaders stand by the principle that First Nations are sovereign and should not be governed by any federal or provincial laws.
 The matter has resurfaced on the federal agenda many times in

recent years. For instance, in 2002 INAC released a document entitled "After Marriage Breakdown."
 Then in June 2003, the Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights conducted a study of MRP rights on reserves. They reiterated that people on reserve have fewer rights regarding their matrimonial home when a relationship ends than do people living off reserve. The remedies found in Canadian law are not available to people living on reserve, they confirmed.
 The committee's report (Walking Arm-in-Arm to Resolve the Issue of On-Reserve MRP) was not published until June 2005.
 The Harper government introduced legislation to repeal Section 67 in December 2006 and spent several months gathering input from national Aboriginal organizations.
 Then in November 2007, the Harper government reintroduced Bill C-44 and renamed it Bill C-21. On December 13, 2007 Chuck Strahl, INAC minister, acknowledged that the pace of reform is unacceptably slow.
 "First Nations reserves are the only place in Canada where there is no law governing division of MRP. Yet these laws have existed

for decades for Canadians who are not living on reserve," he said. He announced that the Harper government was "serious" about resolving the long-standing MRP issues.
 Meanwhile, the Liberals demanded amendments, including a three year delay in implementation.
 They insist bands need more resources to handle the expected flood of complaints about discrimination. They also support an interpretive clause that gives direction to administrative or judicial bodies to ensure collective rights and individual rights are balanced.
 In addition, they call for a derogation clause to make it clear the human rights act must be applied in a way that it does not undermine Aboriginal constitutional and treaty rights.
 At the end of January 2008 the House of Commons finally wrapped up its study of the bill to repeal Section 67.
 As so often happens with a potential federal election looming, deadlock and stalemate have followed.
 Debate has centred on suitable mechanisms to respect indigenous sovereignty while protecting individual and collective rights.

Some observers fear the reforms will exacerbate the problems already facing First Nations. (CHRC) has not been silent on the urgency for reform. They issued a report entitled "A Matter of Rights" (2005) and that was followed up by "Still a Matter of Rights" (2008).
 The CHRC told Parliament, "First Nations citizens are still denied the protection from discrimination that other citizens take for granted. That is unacceptable in a free and democratic society that values fundamental human rights."
 Getting rid of section 67 will not be an instant panacea for existing MRP problems. Many stumbling blocks remain, according to Hare.
 Once Section 67 is repealed, she predicts that many Native bands will have to defend themselves against policies over which they have no control. In the process, she also anticipates that many long-simmering women's issues will be brought to the forefront.
 "We'll see how it pans out," she said. "Hopefully, women will be strong enough to use the legislation to their benefit. If nothing else, it will put the feet of the leadership to the fire."
 Although she backs women's

MRP rights, she sympathizes with the untenable position created for bands.
 She points out that the practice of administering land on reserves is based on policies from a hundred years ago.
 "The bands try hard," she said. "But they are limited by policies of Indian Affairs. They are not unfair people; they don't want to be in that position, but Indian Affairs is in control."
 As with all complex social and legal issues, it helps to put a human face on the hardships involved.
 Previous generations of Aboriginal women have been somewhat cautious in asserting their rights, according to Hare. Many cultural and religious barriers discouraged women on reserve from speaking out about injustices in their daily lives. But slowly this reticence is changing as more contemporary First Nations women articulate the reality of MRP inequities.
 Rolanda Manitowabi of Wikwemikong Unceded Reserve knows first hand that the world can turn upside-down overnight. Her personal revelations illustrate many of the common threads running through stories told by those left in limbo.
 (See Aboriginal on page 24.)




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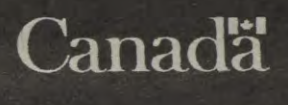
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REVISED PUBLIC HEARING ANNOUNCEMENT

The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) has issued an official Revised Notice of Public Hearing, available at www.nuclearsafety.gc.ca, announcing that Day Two of the public hearing (May 14, 2008) on an application by Ontario Power Generation (OPG) to renew its licence to operate the Pickering Nuclear Generating Station B will be held at the **Ajax Convention Centre, 550 Beck Crescent, Ajax, Ontario.**

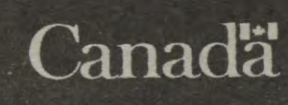
The public is invited to comment on the application on Hearing Day Two. Requests to intervene must be filed with the Secretary of the Commission by April 14, 2008 at the address below and include a written submission; a statement setting out whether the requester wishes to intervene by way of written submission only or by way of written submission and oral presentation; and the name, address and telephone number of the requester.

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 2008-H-02 Revision 1, or contact:

L. Levert, Secretariat Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission 280 Slater St., P.O. Box 1046 Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5S9	Tel.: 613-996-9063 or 1-800-668-5284 Fax: 613-995-5086 E-mail: interventions@cnsccsn.gc.ca
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Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission
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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 (EA Screening) regarding Atomic Energy of Canada Limited's (AECL) proposal for the construction and operation of the Fuel Packaging and Storage (FPS) facility located in Chalk River, Ontario. The hearing will be held at the Ajax Convention Centre, 550 Beck Crescent, Ajax, Ontario on May 15, 2008.

The public is invited to comment on the results of the EA Screening. Requests to intervene must be filed with the Secretary of the Commission by April 14, 2008 at the address below and include a written submission; a statement setting out whether the requester wishes to intervene by way of written submission only or by way of written submission and oral presentation; and the name, address and telephone number of the requester.

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AWFT program assists women through partnership

BY CHRISTINE FIDDLER
Windspeaker Staff Writer

OTTAWA

The Canadian Executive Service Organization (CESO) and the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on March 14, to jointly deliver workshops for Aboriginal women across Canada in the Aboriginal Women for Tomorrow (AWFT) program.

"They (NWAC) have been part of it in the past, but by signing the MOU it formalizes our partnership with them," said CESO's Director of Operations Vicki Hill. "And we've provided training for the employment counselor of NWAC, so they'll be involved ongoing and I think there has been one or two of the employment counselors who have actually delivered some of those workshops in AWFT."

The workshops are delivered in five modules: Building Personal Skills, Communication, Starting Your Own Business, Governance-Skills Development for Boards, and Budgeting/Financial Management, all facilitated by experienced CESO volunteer advisors.

The workshops are designed to help women build skills in public speaking, written communication, job searching, operating a business, managing finances, and governance.

AWFT has been used by organizations and communities for two years through CESO and has served First Nation and Métis communities in the Atlantic region, Quebec, Ontario,

Saskatchewan, Alberta, and the Northwest Territories by targeting the specific labour-market and pre-employment needs of Aboriginal women.

"It was started in the CESO Saskatchewan office because the woman who was the regional manager there, Audrey Ahenekew, recognized the need for it," said Hill.

"She worked with some of the volunteer advisors to start putting some materials together and developing it. It was doing well there, we had success in one region, so it was decided that CESO would get funding to be able to deliver it across the country."

The focus of AWFT is to encourage business and leadership skill development for more economic and political participation in the community and the overall Canadian economy.

The workshops offer a culturally sensitive approach through training developed specifically for Aboriginal women with sessions offered in both English and French.

Furthermore, the process for bringing the program to an Aboriginal community or organization is basic.

"Whoever is requesting and organizing it, they don't have to do all five modules," said Hill. "We have situations where we might have a request just for one of the modules. So sometimes the modules might be delivered together and the group might decide to do other ones at another time, just because it takes quite a number of days," said Hill.

"CESO has regional offices across Canada so if a community



President of the Native Women's Association of Canada Beverley Jacobs (right) poses with Clare Beckton, co-ordinator for the Status of Women Canada and Bob Dickson, vice-president of the Canadian Executive Service Organization during the signing of the memorandum of understanding on March 14.

or group is interested in the program, they contact their closest regional office and they arrange it through that office," she said. We have delivered it to groups in urban areas, as well as in First Nations, so it just depends on the request. We can just connect the request to the closest CESO office and then they would arrange for one of our volunteer advisors who was based in the area. They would try to find volunteer advisors closest to where the workshop is to be delivered and then they would send the volunteers out to deliver the workshop. But it can be requested from anywhere."

According to a March media release, a program evaluation for the fiscal year 2006-2007 showed 93 per cent of participants were

either satisfied or very satisfied with the overall workshop and 92 per cent agree or strongly agree with the information they received will influence decisions or actions they choose in the future.

"CESO's partnership with NWAC is truly valued and its investments into the working lives of Aboriginal women will bring about many promising opportunities," said NWAC president Beverley Jacobs, who signed the MOU on behalf of NWAC. "Skills training can change one's fortune and outlook in life."

"Women are the cornerstones of our families and by improving job prospects this will strengthen families and the communities they live in," said Jacobs.

NWAC empowers Aboriginal women by striving to develop and change legislation and involving them in the development and delivery of programs that promote their equality.

Funding for the AWFT program comes from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and the Status of Women Canada, who have just recently joined as a financial partner by agreeing to fund \$450,000 for three years. This amount is expected to support 210 individual workshops until November 2010. For more information about the AWFT program call the Manager of National Programs Delia Scribleac at 1-800-268-9052 or 416-961-2376 or go to the CESO Web site at www.ceso-saco.com.

Conference prepares women for economic success

BY CHRISTINE FIDDLER
Windspeaker Staff Writer

ST. JOHN

"As nurturers and caregivers Aboriginal women are the backbone of a community, so when the women are supported, the whole community benefits," said Judy White, the facilitator and steering committee chair of the third Annual Aboriginal Women's Conference held in St. John's Newfoundland from March 12 to 14.

The theme of this year's conference was 'The Path to Economic Prosperity.' It focused on the value of leading more Aboriginal women to greater economic success.

The conference was geared towards Newfoundland's Innu, Inuit, Métis and Miq'Maq women and was a joint initiative between the Women's Policy Office and a steering committee of seven women from Aboriginal groups across the province.

Conference organizers received support from the Women's Policy Office, from the Honourable

Joan Burke, Minister of the Status of Women who provided funding and administrative support for the Aboriginal women planning the conference.

"We wanted to give Aboriginal women in the province a forum where they can speak about issues that are relevant to Aboriginal women," White said. "The provincial government here is doing a lot of work on gender-

based analysis and promoting women's rights. But the Aboriginal women wanted a specific forum and a focus on Aboriginal women because obviously there are distinctions and distinct differences and uniqueness when you compare Aboriginal women to non-Aboriginal women."

The conference brought together forty Aboriginal women

from across the province along with representatives from the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, Aboriginal governments, community groups and business leaders.

It provided participants with a forum to come together, voice their concerns, and listen to presenters speak about economic development for women.

"This year there were several recommendations made by various Aboriginal women. They've made some recommendations to government, both provincial and Aboriginal governments, in respect with how to deal with issues around economic development for Aboriginal women," said White.

One of the issues talked about was that Aboriginal women need support in the sense of voluntary administration, a need to be able to do it our own way, White added.

"We need the governments to understand that there has to be a special emphasis and a special focus for Aboriginal women. Before the government

implements any kind of programming or policies, (delegates) felt that there should be a consultation mechanism for Aboriginal women so that they get input on the specific policy or program that's being developed by government at that time."

"The other thing, I pointed out earlier, is that we want to stress to both governments, the provincial and the Aboriginal governments, is that women are the backbones of the community and if you provide supports to women, you're actually providing supports to the community. So those were some of the messages that the delegates wanted to get out loud and clear."

The guest speaker at the conference was the Honourable Patty Pottle, an Inuit woman and now Minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

"She was just appointed in November, so we were really excited to have her as the very first Aboriginal women minister in our province," White said. "In the last three years we've seen Aboriginal women grow.

See Women on page 15.)



The Nippik Drummers an Aboriginal drumming and throat singing group out of St. John's performed during the Aboriginal Women's Conference on March 13.

Steinhauer excited about new position with NAAF

BY CHRISTINE FIDDLER
Windspeaker Staff Writer

TORONTO

As an esteemed scholar and Cree educator, Noella Steinhauer acknowledges that supporting Aboriginal identity in mainstream education is a crucial need.

She is armed with knowledge as she enters her new position as Director of Education for the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation (NAAF), where she will help Aboriginal students from across Canada succeed in their educational pursuits.

Until recently, Steinhauer has worked as the Director of the Aboriginal Teacher Education Program at the University of Alberta. She also has experience as a teacher and as a principal.

NAAF is a national non-profit organization that raises funds to deliver programs and provide tools for Aboriginal youth.

Since 1985, the foundation has given more than \$27.3 million in scholarships and bursaries to First Nations, Inuit, and Métis students across the country in all disciplines including law, medicine, education, psychology, fine arts, business and computer sciences.

"I am confident Noella will enrich NAAF's service to Aboriginal youth throughout Canada greatly," said Roberta Jameison NAAF's chief executive officer in a press release.

"NAAF continues to strive for excellence in its programs and services and with the addition of Dr. Steinhauer I'm confident the education department will lead NAAF into a flourishing and innovative future."

Steinhauer who speaks Cree fluently grew up on the Saddle Lake First Nation until she left home to attend high school. She said growing up on the reserve provided her with a strong sense of community and an understanding of what community is about.

She starts her part-time term in

March and after which she will continue full-time in June.

"I'm delighted to be part of the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation and I look forward to continuing to expand the already great work in the education department," she said about the new position. She first decided to work for the foundation because she saw how it would allow her to help so many different students across the country.

"They've got their various programs targeted at Aboriginal students, so I liked those projects because I think they're important. Not only are they a foundation that gives that amount of scholarships to Aboriginal students but also their commitment to exposing the various career opportunities. So those are the two main things," she said.

One of her responsibilities is to oversee the process of giving scholarships to students who need them and to ensure a jury made up of representatives from across the country making the selections.

Steinhauer trained in social studies and did her Master's thesis and PhD in the area of education. She has given presentations on topics relating to education in many settings, including at the World Indigenous Peoples' Conference on Education. She has also written several articles for academic journals, along with a Master's thesis that studied the factors that impact the academic achievement of First Nations secondary students.

"My biggest findings were that students didn't leave school because of the lack of educational achievement," she said.

"They left school because of other factors and the biggest factor was racism. And it wasn't the overt kind of racism, it was



Noella Steinhauer

all the subtle things in their school like not seeing themselves in textbooks, not feeling like their worldview was validated, not feeling like they were a part of the system. So those kinds of issues were what students saw as affecting why they didn't do well in school."

She believes that if educators expose students to the opportunities available to them and at the same time reinforce their identities, than students will be more successful in school.

"I think we need to train our teachers to teach our students well, reinforcing and respecting their identity, respecting that people have different perspectives. And to honour them, honour the knowledge that they come to school with and the way they view the world," she said.

"A lot of what really enforces success is having students believe in themselves and having them exposed to other learning opportunities. So really that is the kind of thing that would guide the work that I would do with the foundation," she said, adding that she realizes there is a lot of opportunity for growth.

"The foundation has grown a lot in the last few years and I just want to be part of that and help it to continue to grow."

[women] APWA founder dedicated to the success of women

BY DIANNE MEILI
Windspeaker Staff Writer

EDMONTON

It's 8 am and Claire Clark is where she is every morning at least three days a week, huffing and puffing on an elliptical cardio machine at her local gym.

Two years ago she was told she'd have to start taking medication for high cholesterol, but her concerted effort to exercise regularly has put that health issue to rest.

"There was no way I wanted to take drugs, so I hit the gym and it's reversed the problem. My doctor is amazed," Clark said.

Her determination to stick to a workout program and take responsibility for her well-being is indicative of Clark's personality. She's become well-known amongst Edmonton's professional circles as someone who is reliable and motivated to help other Aboriginal women reach their goals in the professional world, relying on her own skills and experience to nurture them.

Those attending an Aboriginal Professional Women's Association (APWA) event of which Clark is founder and president, rest assured she will have looked after every detail to make it a success.

The slight, personable businesswoman has come a long way from Desmarais, in northern Alberta, to the office towers of Edmonton she feels comfortable in now.

She contracted tuberculosis at the age of six, and spent a good portion of her childhood in the hospital. When she was finally discharged her father, who worked on the railroad, moved the family to small town called Pickardville.

"I had just managed to learn to speak English in the hospital, after being taught only Cree by my grandparents, and then I had to learn French in this town we

moved to. Then I had to start school again after being away for so long and it was a lot for a little kid to handle."

Clark managed the changes in her life with relative ease, and eventually graduated school. She took a position with Alberta Government Telephones (now Telus) and stayed for 26 years, working her way up the ladder into a management position.

"For the last 15 years before I left, I worked in management. I have to say I was really impressed with the company because they encouraged me to develop myself. They paid for any course I wanted to take."

Clark said it was rare for an Aboriginal woman to have such a high-ranking position at the time, but she was well received because she had gained confidence through training.

"There was no resistance from employees I was overseeing. I became really involved with Toastmasters, a club that helps you learn to communicate effectively, and that really helped me to be a leader."

Clark went on to develop a Toastmasters Club in St. Albert, and a club for Aboriginal people; for years she also worked with the Spruce Grove club in the city she call home now.

At the age of 50, Clark decided to return to university to obtain an education degree after which she then opened her own consulting company. Five years ago she noticed a gap in the resources available for Aboriginal women who wanted to obtain professional careers, and decided to form the Aboriginal Professional Women's Association.

"I don't want our women to be stuck behind Tim Horton's counters forever. There is something better out there, and it comes with gaining education and networking with others to find meaningful employment."

(See Clark on page 28.)

Women voice their concerns during gathering

Continued from page 14.

I think that was evident in having our guest speaker being an Aboriginal woman who was now the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs for the province of Newfoundland and Labrador."

"The opportunities and possibilities for Aboriginal women are growing every year," said Pottle about the annual conference in a press release. "By meeting and discussing ideas and issues that concern us as Aboriginal women, we will be on the path to more fulfilled and richer lives."

The idea for the conference

came about after a tour of the north coast of Labrador by the Honourable Danny Williams, Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador and Minister Burke in 2004, when they saw the complexity and diversity of the issues facing Aboriginal women.

"A big part of the conference is a cultural component because there's six unique groups. We all share a part of our culture and during the lunch hours we have 'Real Women, Real Stories', and various women from the different groups would give a story about how being a women in this community is," White said. As

another part of the cultural component, each year one nation — either Innu, Inuit, Métis, or Miq'maq — will bring a part of their culture to share with other conference participants. "This year it was the Inuit culture that we focused on. We looked at their gains and their ceremonies. So we learned a bit about that."

Every morning of the conference began with a cultural ceremony, followed with comments from speakers. Towards the end of the day women came together as a group to voice their concerns.

"On the very last day we took

a couple of hours and each group went to their respective nation, than we further took the recommendations that we had as a group to see how that would specifically apply for us because we're all with the view that it's not one size fits all as Aboriginal women: Innu, Inuit, Métis, Miq'maq. We all have different priorities and different needs, so we further took it to apply to our own respective nations," she said.

White is optimistic that another conference will be held next year.

"I think we'd certainly be looking at another conference

next year, we're certainly recommending it from an Aboriginal women's perspective. I guess that remains to be left to the government to fund," she said.

The Williams Government has advanced a number of recommendations made at the previous conferences. It was announced in the 2007 Budget that funding for violence prevention grants to Aboriginal communities was doubled to \$200,000 annually and funding for the annual conference was increased from \$30,000 to \$60,000 annually.

Saskatoon remembers the residential school children



JOE COUTURE

Church and Aboriginal leaders respond to questions from the media at a news conference following the Saskatoon stop of the "Remembering the Children," tour. The purpose of the tour is intended to support the upcoming work of Canada's Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

By JOE COUTURE
Sage Writer

SASKATOON

In an emotional and momentous display of repentance and forgiveness, church and First Nations leaders gathered in Saskatoon to remember the atrocities committed in some residential schools and to discuss ways to move forward in solidarity.

The Saskatoon stop of "Remembering the Children" — a multi-city tour intended to promote the work of Canada's upcoming Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) — happened on Sunday, March 9.

The event brought together at the Western Development Museum hundreds of members of the public, including church representatives and residential school survivors.

The tour also made similar stops during March in Ottawa, Vancouver and Winnipeg.

"As key participants, along with the federal government, in the operation of Indian Residential Schools, the Anglican, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic and United Churches have committed themselves to full participation in the TRC process," the Web site for the tour (www.rememberingthechildren.ca) explains.

The afternoon in Saskatoon began with introductions and a song, and words of welcome and prayer.

Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations Chief Lawrence

Joseph took to the podium to reflect on the experience of residential schools.

The schools were run for decades across the country, largely by churches, under the supervision of the federal government.

In many of the schools, children suffered as a result of being removed from their families and cultures and forced to abandon their own languages. Many children were physically and sexually abused.

Each of the leaders from the four Christian denominations represented discussed his church's involvement in residential schools across the country and particularly in Saskatchewan. Hans Kouwenberg of the Presbyterian Church described treatment of students in some residential schools as being "beyond any Christian maxim of care and discipline" and such that left "lives deeply scarred."

Then, in a segment of the afternoon referred to in the program as "The Healing Walk", the same church leaders apologized for the roles of their churches and went on to give examples of "healing work" currently happening with First Nations people.

The leaders also called for greater education of the general public.

"One of the biggest blocks of healings is because there's no acknowledgement of the wrong that's been done," Joseph said after the event, noting that he'd like First Nations people to find hope in it.

"We heard every one of the

speakers say we did something wrong and we apologize. It's been acknowledged. And they can also create alliances with us so we can compel the Government of Canada to formerly apologize in front of the rest of Canada to Aboriginal people for the atrocities that occurred," said Joseph.

On behalf of all the churches, Kouwenberg committed to full co-operation with the TRC. He described the event as a "historic and sacred moment for our nation" and encouraged all to "experience the grace of telling the truth."

The church leaders also committed to moving forward with and supporting First Nations. They demanded that the federal government issue an official apology for its role in residential schools, and called for expediency in the process of appointing commissioners to the TRC.

National Indigenous Anglican Bishop Mark MacDonald spoke the final words and intoned the final prayer of the event. Afterward, he reflected on its significance.

"We appear to be in the beginnings of a spiritual movement, a movement of truth, a movement of justice and a movement of accountability that is more than just a program or a media presentation," he said. "It's a people kind of thing that's more than just a sum of the parts. I really believe that what we're seeing is something that has real power to transform people's lives and ultimately societal structures."

In an official informational brochure on the TRC, it is explained that a TRC is an "official body that investigates a pattern of abuses over a period of time in order to create an accurate and public historical record of the past."

Its legal roots can be traced back more than a decade, culminating in 2006 when the government announced the approval of the negotiated Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. The TRC is a component of that settlement agreement, and is scheduled for launch in "early 2008." The TRC will function for a total of five years and will be comprised of three commissioners, all "persons of recognized integrity, stature, and respect" and at least one of whom is Aboriginal. These individuals have yet to be appointed.

In an "inclusive and transparent" manner, the TRC will provide an opportunity for former students to give statements on their experiences. Seven national events will be hosted in regions across the country. Neither locations nor formats have been announced.

In addition, smaller community events are supposed to occur to facilitate healing, and historical documents will also be made available to the TRC. The TRC will provide a final report on its findings and a "National Research Centre will be established," the brochure explains.

MacDonald said those without a direct connection need to realize that the legacy of residential schools is "a reality that was

created by systems and ideas that still have some life and currency in Canada today."

"The critical thing is to realize that we are all involved in a system that is still creating a lot of mayhem for people, and the (TRC) is going to unleash some truth and spirit that will challenge some systems that are still very much with us today," he said. "And so I would hope that people understand that this isn't about just trying to soothe a few aggrieved citizens. It's really about the need for us to transform our society, not only to make sure that nothing like this ever happens again in this nation, but also to make this nation a better place for our children," MacDonald continued.

"The responsibility of everybody here is to actually pass on the words to the people that they represent," Joseph added. "Also, the clergy within these denominations need to tell their congregations every Sunday not to forget about the atrocities that occurred in residential schools. We ask everybody to pass the word along, not for the sake of pity, but for understanding and acknowledgement. And also not for the sake of tolerating us, but accepting us as a very damaged race, so through that process we can heal together."

"It's up to each and every one of us to understand where it came from and then latch onto partnerships, not only individually, but also with corporate Canada, to get out of that dependency on government. That's what I hope will happen," Joseph said.

AMMSA celebrates 25 years of communication



LAURA SUTHERS

From left to right: Bert Crowfoot, Windspeaker Publisher; Chester Cunningham, Treasurer; Harrison Cardinal, President; Jennie Cardinal, Board Member, Rose Marie Willier, Board Member; and Carol Russ, Finance Director welcomed guests to the Windspeaker and AMMSA's 25th anniversary held on March 14.

By HEATHER ANDREWS MILLER
Windspeaker Writer

EDMONTON

When the Aboriginal Multi-Media Society came into being under the Alberta Societies Act in 1983, it was formed to be a communications society committed to serving the needs of the Aboriginal people of northern Alberta with *Windspeaker*, a monthly newspaper.

Today it is the model for Aboriginal communications throughout North America and can tell a remarkable story of survival and growth which is unprecedented in the industry, with a network of national and provincial newspapers stretching across Canada and an ever-expanding radio broadcast audience.

Bert Crowfoot has been there since AMMSA's first beginnings in 1983.

"I was working with the Native People newspaper in 1982 when it lost its funding. We incorporated the society in January 1983 and made a proposal to the secretary of state in the federal Native Secretariat office. We had the staff and the skills so we were accepted. A board of directors was formed who were knowledgeable and anxious to work with us, and when we were given approval in March, we were ready to go and produced our first issue in a week," said Crowfoot, publisher

and chief executive officer.

Using borrowed equipment and office space, the fledgling publication joined other multimedia organizations across Canada in bringing news to Aboriginal people.

Eventually rented space was acquired in central Edmonton, and after three years a building was purchased in the west end which became home for the next 17 years of outstanding growth. Five years ago, larger accommodations were acquired at the present location of 13245 - 146th Street where 30 staff and a battery of freelance writers keep the news coming in.

In 1985 there was a Northern Native Access Broadcast Program which helped organizations branch out into radio transmission.

"We set up CFWE in Lac la Biche when the former police station became available and renovated the cells to become radio booths," he recounts.

In 1990, the federal government cut the Native Communications Program, giving the publications six weeks to secure alternative funding. "There was a lot of lobbying, and the funding was eventually extended for another three months, but nine out of 11 newspapers ceased to exist," he said.

AMMSA survived by immediately cutting staff numbers in half, and cutting back from a weekly to a monthly.

"In 1987 we had held a retreat

with board and staff members where we'd set ourselves on a path to become self-sufficient in five years, so when the federal funding disappeared, we were already three years into our plans, and that helped to carry us through the transition," he said adding that it was a time to pursue the dream of having an Aboriginal publication that was both financially and politically independent.

With the demise of the other publications, the time seemed right to launch *Windspeaker* as a national publication in 1993, and create a provincial paper for Alberta called *Sweetgrass*. *Saskatchewan Sage* followed in 1996, *Raven's Eye* began publishing in British Columbia and the Yukon in 1997, and *Birchbark* premiered in Ontario in 2002. A quarterly business magazine was created a few years ago as well.

"We were going to expand into Manitoba, but it's already well covered by local publications," he added.

A Web site was launched that continues to evolve and expand as well, following an industry trend that sees more publications going to an online version in addition to print.

In the meantime, the radio satellite distribution was increasing. CFWE-FM expanded its hours of broadcasting from 12 to 24 hours a day with an audience of 2000 to 3000, to include 75 communities with over 100,000 listeners.

In 1993, it moved into the administrative offices in Edmonton. Along with several other

Aboriginal communications societies in Canada, it shares programs, music, culture, and information, making it truly a national electronic link for the country's Aboriginal broadcasters.

"Plans are to begin broadcasting into Edmonton and Fort McMurray with the signal this year and we expect another 100,000 listeners, and Calgary will be added within a couple of years as well," said Crowfoot, noting that with the urbanization of more and more Aboriginal folks, it's important to have a presence in the major cities.

In the more remote areas of the province the station truly is the centre of the community, with friends and family gathering to play radio bingo as a social event, and listeners learning about local events and news from around Indian country.

"The bingo brings in revenue every year which we reinvest in distribution," says Crowfoot. "We have a 100,000 watt transmitter in the St. Paul area which carries the signal over 200 kilometres as well as other smaller ones in other areas of the province. We plan to install stronger transmitters in some areas which are now only getting coverage in small communities."

A recent pilot project has launched AMMSA into television as well. "It's called *Quest of Buffalo Spirit*, and it's four one-

half hour segments. Well-known film maker and director Marie Burke did an awesome job of the production and the programs will be shown in the near future," he said. "We're touching on some pretty sensitive areas as it addresses preserving culture with modern technology. Initial showings to young people have been positive."

Crowfoot credits the remarkable staff which has been a part of AMMSA over its 25 years as being part of its success. "They've all left their mark on the organization and I'd like to acknowledge their contribution. We have been able to get more done with less staff, and they're all great people. Many of our present employees have been with us for several years," he said.

He also credits his volunteer board of directors with guiding the organization to its present successful status.

"Most of them have also been with us since almost the beginning. They are dedicated and loyal and they let management go and do the work, but they support us wholly and give us the freedom we need," he added.

Today, AMMSA looks ahead to an exciting future, with expansion plans giving it a feeling of revitalization and rejuvenation, concludes Crowfoot. "I see nothing but great things for us for the next 25 years."

For more about AMMSA and its publications go to www.ammsa.com

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

The Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia hosted an awards gala on March 5 in Vancouver to honour exceptional leaders in B.C.'s emerging tourism industry.

This year's winners were: Paula Cranmer Underhill of the Sto:lo Tourism Commission, Coast Hotels and Resorts Ambassador Award; Douglas Green of Cariboo Chilcotin Jetboat Adventures, Inspirational Leadership Award; Deanna Lewis of the Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre, Young Adult Achievement Award; Stewart Nahanee of Cedars Us, Power of Education Award; Kitsela Canyon National Historic Site, Cultural Authenticity Award; Tin Wis Resort, Strength in Marketing Award; Haida Heritage Centre, Tourism Conservation Award; Mascot Gold Mine Tours and Snaza'ist Discovery Centre, Excellence in Customer Service Award; and Destination Osooyoos, Industry Partner Award. The ATBC is a non-profit organization committed to growing B.C.'s Aboriginal tourism industry. The company is a resource for Aboriginal entrepreneurs and communities who already operate or want to open a tourism business.



The Sna7em Dance Group performed during the Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia awards on March 5.



Paula Cranmer Underhill, Sto:lo Tourism Commission (middle) was the recipient of the Coast Hotels and Resorts Ambassador Award. She is pictured with Her Honour Gwendolyn Point (right) and Shuhachi Naito, executive vice-president of Coast Hotels and Resorts.



Douglas Green of Cariboo Chilcotin Jetboat Adventures (middle) received the Inspirational Leadership Award. Pictured with him is John Walker, president and CEO of Cariboo Chilcolin Jetboat Adventures (right) and Chief Clarence Louis of the Osoyoos Indian Band.



National Energy Board
Office national de l'énergie

NATIONAL ENERGY BOARD

Notice of Public Hearing Westcoast Energy Inc., carrying on business as Spectra Energy Transmission (Westcoast) South Peace Pipeline Project (the Project)

The National Energy Board (the Board) has scheduled an oral public hearing on an application from Westcoast under the *National Energy Board Act* to construct and operate the proposed South Peace Pipeline Project. The hearing will also consider matters required by the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*. The public hearing will start at 9:00 a.m., local time, 26 August 2008 at a location to be determined.

Copies of the application are available for viewing on the Board's Internet site at www.neb-one.gc.ca (click on "View or Submit a Regulatory Document", then on "Browse the Regulatory Document Index (Regulatory Document Index application)" and on "Quick Links" and scroll down to the Westcoast South Peace Pipeline Project application). Hard copies can be viewed at Westcoast's Calgary, Alberta office (BC Pipeline and Field Services Divisions, Fifth Avenue Place, East Tower, Suite 2600, 425 - 1st Street SW), at City Hall in Dawson Creek, British Columbia (10105 - 12A Street), at the Dawson Creek Public Library (1001 Mckellar Avenue) and at the Board's library in Calgary (1st floor, 444 Seventh Avenue SW, Calgary).

Project Details

The proposed pipeline facilities would be designed to transport sour natural gas, with an anticipated hydrogen sulphide content of five percent, from a proposed producer receipt point south of the Peace River to the McMahon Plant near Taylor, British Columbia. Further details about the Project may be found in the Hearing Order.

Public Participation

Any person wishing to participate in the hearing process, including providing input into the CEA Act environmental assessment, should review the "Public Participation" and "Draft Scope of the Environmental Assessment (EA)" sections of the Hearing Order for details on how to participate and the scheduling of activities.

Hearing Order

You may access the Hearing Order through the Board's Internet site at www.neb-one.gc.ca (click on "View or Submit a Regulatory Document", then on "Browse the Regulatory Document Index (Regulatory Document Index application)", then on "Quick Links" and scroll down to the Westcoast South Peace Pipeline Project application. Click on "Hearing Order" at the top of the screen). You may obtain information on the procedures for this hearing or on the National Energy Board Rules of Practice and Procedure, 1995, as amended, governing all hearings (available in English and French) by writing to the Secretary of the Board, contacting Louise Niro at 403-299-3987 or Lynda Roy at 403-299-2795 (Regulatory Officers) or toll free at 1-800-899-1265. You may also go to the Board's Internet site and click on "Acts and Regulations" to access the Board's Rules of Practice and Procedure and other legislation.

Claudine Dutil-Berry
Secretary of the Board, National Energy Board
444 Seventh Avenue SW, Calgary, Alberta T2P 0X8
Facsimile 403-292-5503 (toll free 1-877-288-8803)

Canada

Alberta Sweetgrass: Special Section providing news from Alberta

Improvements underway to make filing complaints easier

By **AMBER GILCHRIST**
Sweetgrass Writer

COLD LAKE

The RCMP and the Commission for Public Complaints (CPC), want to improve the general Canadian view of the RCMP by making reforms to its processes.

An extensive review is underway by the CPC to find ways to improve the process for filing complaints and to raise public awareness of their program.

In a study conducted by the CPC, only 60 per cent of persons in Canadian communities policed by the RCMP feel comfortable making a complaint at the local detachment.

The Commission is beginning many pilot projects in response to an investigation as a result of public interest in the fairness of "Police investigating Police."

This is an effort to maintain accountability in the RCMP and to improve the public opinion of the institution.

An Independent Observer Pilot Project in British Columbia, gives CPC access to RCMP records and evidence to investigate "sensitive cases" such as in-custody deaths and abuse.

The Observer Pilot Project will

determine whether RCMP have complied with the appropriate policies and procedures and whether the policies themselves are enough to ensure that impartial investigations are conducted.

They will also observe Canadian and International models, how other institutions conduct investigations involving the police.

The hope is to implement a formal Observer Program across Canada.

The CPC is an independent Federal Agency that was established in 1988 to review complaints about the conduct of RCMP members, to ensure they are acting in a fair and impartial manner.

Paul E. Kennedy is the Chair of the Commission. In May of last year he issued the "Chairs Message" on efforts to be made by the CPC which included to, "conduct pilot projects, such as our efforts to foster greater access for Aboriginal communities in regards to improving access to the complaints process."

Kennedy said that complaint intake forms, brochures and posters, as well as services and published materials will be provided in a wide variety of languages.

"Most people don't even know

about the CPC", stated Kate Mcderby, spokesperson for the Commission.

Complaints filed against the RCMP are usually done in the detachments, but they can also be filed through the CPC, which ultimately makes people more comfortable with the process.

The Commission does not act on behalf of the victim or the RCMP, however provides an impartial investigation into complaints.

This is why the Commission has teamed up with the National Aboriginal Friendship Centers to collaborate on an Outreach Pilot Project.

The project is targeting six Friendship Centers across Canada that covers a wide area of First Nations demographics.

Vice Chair of the Commission, Brooke McNabb is touring Yellowknife, NWT, Prince George, B.C., Cold Lake, Alta, Portage la Prairie, Man. and Happy Valley Goose Bay, NL.

The project is designed to improve communications and build relationships between the CPC and First Nation communities.

The third session is to be held in Yellowknife and so far the CPC feels that the information has been well received.

The RCMP and First Nations

of Canada have many historic and modern day disputes that have tarnished efforts for a cooperative relationship.

The hope is to ultimately improve relations.

The project has not yet reached Saskatchewan, but the hope is that the success of this six-nation tour will pave the way for similar programs in all of Canada's 120 Indian and Métis Friendship Centers.

The projects are part of a review into the concerns about police investigating police and of RCMP accountability among the Canadian public.

The Commission intends to collect the views and thoughts of a wide demographic in Canada from every source possible.

Half of all the complaints against RCMP are received and has resulted in the call for submissions issued by the CPC in Feb. 2008.

Officials hope to obtain public views of the RCMP so that the greater interests of our communities can be reported and they can ensure that a broader scope can be included in their findings.

The public is invited to share their opinions by mailing in their submissions to the CPC in Ottawa or by email to org@cpccpp.gc.ca before March 31.

Mom plans to appeal daughter's sentence

In Calgary this February, a jury convicted Natalie Pasqua, 27 of second-degree murder in the death of Gage Provost, 17. The conviction carries an automatic life sentence.

The Court of Queen's Bench Justice John Rooke decided Pasqua would not be eligible for parole for 12 years.






Rooke cited Pasqua's criminal record and that in the eyes of the law she was an adult who killed a child.


Pasqua's mother, who declined to give her full name out of fear of for her safety, says systemic racism worked against her daughter in the courtroom. The second-degree murder charge was too harsh, stated her mother and she plans on appealing the sentence her daughter received.

The jury heard that Provost and Pasqua were fighting over a \$10 drug deal for crack cocaine. Provost pushed Pasqua onto the empty Calgary light rail transit track on August 1, 2007. Witnesses testified she climbed back onto the platform and struggled with Provost before pushing him twice into the oncoming train.

Pasqua maintained in court that she didn't mean to kill the teenager.

(See Pasqua on page 29.)



**FIRST NATION
CONSERVATION AND
PROTECTION STEWARDSHIP
PROGRAM (FNCPS)**

First Nation Conservation and Protection Stewardship Program was created in conjunction with Environment Canada under the Species At Risk program initiative. FNCPS aims at raising awareness on conservation, protection and stewardship actions and issues in First Nation communities across Alberta. In order to engage First Nations in Species At Risk, TSAG initiated the Species At Risk Pathfinder (SARA Pathfinder). The SARA Pathfinder assists in identifying potential conservation or stewardship projects and programs on reserve.

Specific to the FNCPS Program goals and the SARA Pathfinder is:

- ◆ Raise awareness on Species At Risk in Alberta on reserve lands
- ◆ Promote current and potential future Recovery Strategies, Action Plans and Critical Habitat for Species At Risk
- ◆ Engage First Nations in Species At Risk management, which includes education programs, building local capacity, and identifying, facilitating and deploying projects & programs that meet the needs of the community
- ◆ Promote tools and techniques that improve the potential for implementing conservation, protection and stewardship strategies for species preservation or recovery projects.

For more information about the First Nation Conservation and Protection Stewardship Program or Species At Risk, please contact:
First Nations (Alberta) Technical Services Advisory Group
at 780-483-8601 or go to www.tsag.net

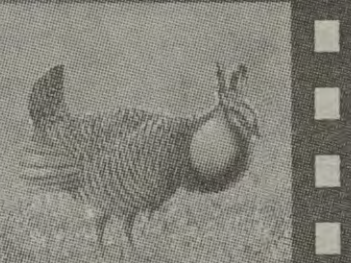











PHOTO CREDITS: Dr. Gordon Court (KODAK)



The Aboriginal Newspaper of Alberta

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Saskatchewan Sage: Special Section providing news from Saskatchewan

SNTC and Legal Aid develop play for students

By Marie Burke
Sage Staff Writer

Saskatoon

Bullying, marijuana use, assault, gangs, murder, break and enter, robbery and shoplifting are the topics explored by a Native theatre group in partnership with Legal Aid of Saskatchewan for high school students.

"Legal Aid started going directly to communities here and began asking them how can we make it known to your children and your community members what Legal Aid deals with," said Alanis King, artistic director, Saskatchewan Native Theatre Company.

What came out of that consultation was the need to produce information about what Legal Aid does in the Aboriginal oral tradition of storytelling, said King. That led to SNTC being contacted and a commission by Legal Aid to produce the play called "Pathfinder: The Choice is Yours".

After the preliminary meetings with Legal Aid and SNTC, the

play was written, in workshops by actors and writers, rehearsals and a tour schedule set over a period of a year, said King.

The play will tour in Saskatchewan wherever there is a Legal Aid office.

"The idea in this play is that there will be an actual lawyer representative from Legal Aid at the play so they become part of the forum theatre aspect so that they can define to the students exactly what that section of the criminal code entails," said King.

Forum theatre uses an interactive approach to educate and entertain the audience.

At different points during the play, the protagonist has to make a choice, then a moderator "freezes" the actors and asks the audience to vote for which choice should be made.

The play then resumes and the audience will see the consequence of their choices.

"It's all about youth and it's young people taking responsibility for some of their bad choices," said King.

According to King, everything was dictated to them by Legal Aid

because of their common caseload which is 40 per cent of the Aboriginal youth population.

"SNTC is hoping that young people who see the play are impacted by the performance of the young professional actors in Pathfinder who themselves deal with issues facing all youth today," said King.

"Legal aid is in 12 different communities across Saskatchewan, and we wanted to build connections with our communities and not necessarily through our work," said Julian Demkiw, Director of Planning and Administration, Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission.

The response is very good and at least 60 students attend each performance, said Demkiw.

The project itself targets Aboriginal young people.

The selection of communities where Pathfinder would play is based on what each Legal Aid office in the province describes as crucial issues that have the greatest impact, said Demkiw.

The prevention educational tour targets Grade 9 and higher

students, their parents and their communities, he said. The distinct advantage of the partnership is the unique nature of SNTC being a community-based company who employ youth from the community. It's important to have youth speak to youth, said Demkiw.

Legal Aid also sees itself as a community based organization, he said.

The topics are based on real world, common incidents that Legal Aid representatives see every day in their client's experiences. The tour of Pathfinder will make 15 stops in 13 communities, focusing on communities where Legal Aid offices are located.

Teaching guides and other materials will be provided to teachers to maximize the value of the presentations.

The writers of the show are Arron Naytowhow and Suzanne Paschall.

The actors are Jennifer Bishop, Mitchell Poundmaker, Krystle Pederson and Arron Naytowhow. Pathfinder is directed by Rob Roy with stage manager, Damien Bartlett.

Funding cut for Oyate home

The File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council (FHQTC) questions the Saskatchewan Party's commitment to working with First Nations after funding cuts to the Oyate Transitional Care Home in Regina is forcing the centre to close down permanently.

"We feel we are being punished for not supporting the Saskatchewan Party's position on this issue when it became public in 2006," said FHQTC chair Edmund Bellegarde of the Regina-based six-bed facility for 12 to 15 year old at-risk females.

The board of directors voluntarily suspended the home's operation in April 2006, and soon after, the provincial government suspended funding in October 2007.

The Oyate board then mutually agreed to meet on numerous recommendations by both the Provincial Auditor and the Child Advocate's Office.

(See Support on page 29.)

Book Review: Kinship Wheel – Wahkowitzin (Cree Language "TH" Dialect)

Robin McLeod has been researching, compiling and writing about kinship systems of the Woodland Nehithawak (Cree) for several years. His interest in kinship systems evolved from extensive consultations with Elders and the teachers of Aboriginal languages in northern Saskatchewan. He has presented his work to various First Nations schools and organizations accepting feedback on how to teach this important and vital component of

Woodland Cree and their social organization.

Prior to contact and to some extent today, the Woodland Cree have applied traditional ways of teaching to recognize relationships between members of kinship groups. Since the Cree language was used in everyday life, the people did not encounter difficulties with the terminology and the application on the ways of belonging and relating to their members. The Cree

language embodied a value system of how people related to each other; it gave a name to the relations the kin had with each other and the respect accorded to certain individuals.

With five centuries of colonization and the attempts to assimilate the people, the Woodland Cree language began to deteriorate. The English language was used to substitute the kinship relationships people had with each member of the Woodland Cree kinship group. Since there are no English equivalents for some of the Woodland Cree kinship terminology, aspects of the relationships became confused or forgotten with the younger generations. The natural laws predetermined by a relationship system were not taught and recognized. Recognition of kinship terminology is important to how people relate to each other, particularly with the practice of teaching and learning related to roles and responsibilities associated through kinship systems.

Indigenous educational philosophy is about the education of the whole child surrounded by many types of learning styles and teachings. A child will learn about themselves through the teachings and how they

will fit into the community as a member of a kinship group. Robin McLeod's kinship wheel offers a way of thinking about kinship which emphasizes wholeness. The basic framework calls upon a person to be introspective, learning about those who are and will be the younger generation. This model also presents the older generation based on how an individual is related to the kinship members of succeeding generations. The holistic framework provides a learner with a pattern and the order to learn about the Woodland Cree kinship system.

The kinship wheel provides a number of visual diagrams towards understanding how individuals are related to others within their kinship group. It is of interest to all Aboriginal people concerned with kinship and the concept of the circle in traditional teachings. I would recommend this work to be read by all educators and teachers of Indigenous languages. It offers new insights and further thought on the development of Aboriginal traditional kinship systems.

Ray Smith
Cree Language and
Indigenous Studies Instructor

Robin McLeod
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Odjig exhibit a statement of identity

By SUZANNE KEEPTWO
Birchbark Writer

WIKWEMIKONG UNCEDED RESERVE

Artists cry the softest, for they create works of beauty out of pain. Whether in longing for the past, escaping from the present or sighing in hope for the future, it takes sensitivity to create the breadth of work Daphne Odjig has contributed to Canadian Fine Art.

She's ever quick to smile and brims with a readiness to laugh. Whether or not Odjig's art comes from the inner processing of soft pain, she has definitely created beauty. Characteristically with colour, form, versatility and creative vision.

The Canadian Museum of Civilization, located in Gatineau QC, across the river from Canada's capital city, is hosting an impressive collection of the *Anishinaabe kwe's* serigraphs on paper entitled Daphne Odjig: Four Decades of Prints.

Themes of works winding within the gallery range from the *Jerusalem Series* (1975-76) through to *Tales from the Smokehouse* (1974). Both series from commissioned works, the latter from an invitation by El Al Airlines, the former from author

Herbert T. Schwarz' exploration of the erotica – a gutsy challenge Odjig admits.

The body of works in-between offer glimpses of the personal Daphne Odjig: *Childhood Memories; Homage to Grandfather; Prayer Series; Love Series; Motherhood Series* and the celebrative *Pow Wow Series* – serving to unify the reminiscent artist.

The collection, organized and circulated by The Kamloops Art Gallery, reflects, predominantly, the purity and innocence of life's most tender aspects from a woman born in 1919 on the Wikwemikong Reserve.

A forty year snapshot of 95 works from an expansive volume the 88 year-old has committed her life to.

Circles, ovals, curves and colours prevail - reminding us of our cyclical patterns, celebration of life, harmony, wholeness and our interconnectedness to all things - especially highlighted in Odjig's more recent, *In Tune with the Infinite* (2004).

In earlier works, *Indian Day School* and *Classmates* (1980s), the circles interconnect tighter as if in protection from the harsher reality of an imposed education system. And, with a swift stroke *Husking Corn, Bundled and*

Ready, and *Old Swimming Hole* (also from the 80s) portray family unity, security, community.

Her vivid subjects often give the impression of being shy about being viewed by an admirer or curiosity seeker.

Those with eyes wide open seem wary of what they see, as illustrated in *The Medicine Dream* (1974) whose figure is both Sleeping and Awake.

The Elders, painted in 1981, noticeably depicts faces without oval contours. *Birchbark* asks why her work has been embraced by mainstream population.

She laughs saying she was just having fun and did not consciously decide to paint square heads.

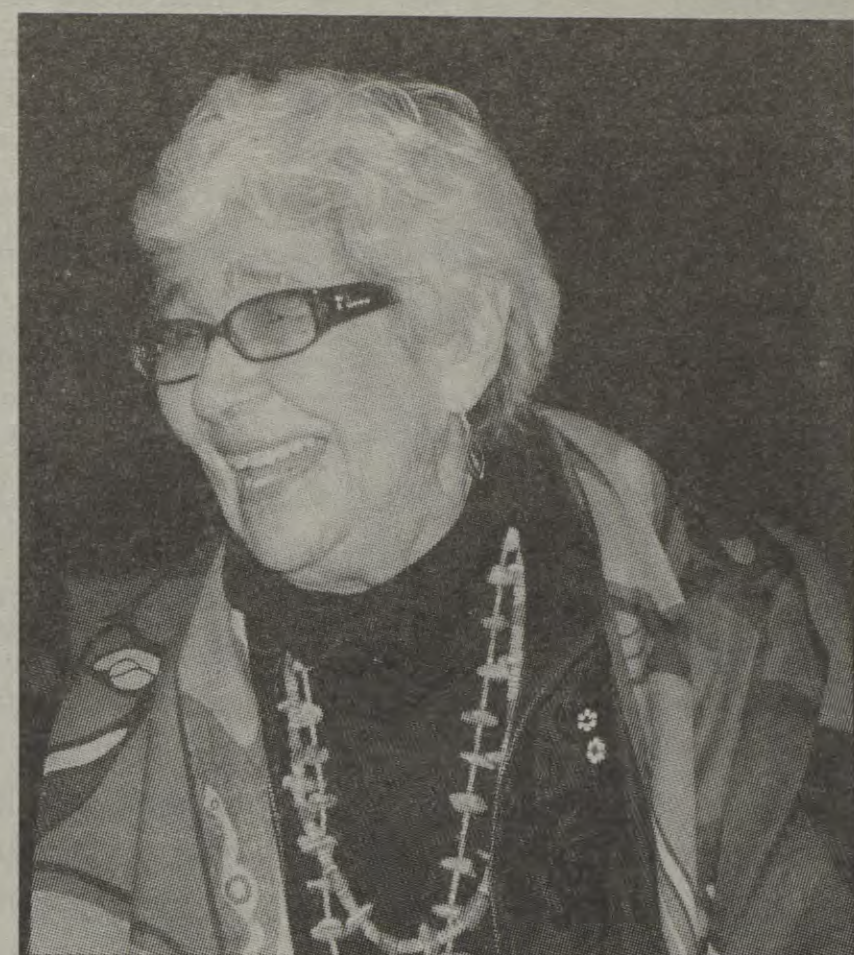
Then, adding with a glint in her eye, "Except perhaps, it came from somewhere in my spirit," tapping her chest to indicate her very heart and soul.

Odjig has inspired many as one of the co-founders of the "Indian Group of Seven" (Professional Native Indian Artists Association); participant in the very first exhibition of Native artists in a Canadian public gallery (Winnipeg, 1972); publisher; subject of a stage play and documentary film; book illustrator; gallery owner; inductee to the Order of Canada;

recipient of more than one sacred eagle feather and-in her eighties - fashion designer! (Odjig is stunning in her shawl designed from her *Indian in Transition* (1978), a permanent installation at the Museum of Civilization and appropriately greeting at the entrance to the artist's current exhibit.)

Odjig is her own Indian in transition, from humble beginnings on the Wikwemikong reserve on Manitoulin Island to commissioned works and five honorary doctorates in recognition of this internationally acclaimed Aboriginal artist. Coming full circle, in spite of a long lifetime of achievement bringing her as far away as Japan, France and Israel, her visual voice speaks perhaps most strongly to the spirit of her cultural community.

Although Odjig is renowned for bringing Aboriginal political



Daphne Odjig

issues to the forefront of contemporary art and launching an Aboriginal cultural revival, this collection of prints is primarily a gentle statement of Aboriginal identity – softening our own sadness of the oppressive experience. And Odjig is not sad because she has the courage to unabashedly express her self, and her culture, through her gift of art. The result of Odjig's perseverance presents a sense of happiness.

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[windspeaker confidential] — Kateri Akiwenzie-Damm

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

Kateri Akiwenzie-Damm: Compassion. Someone who embraces and enjoys life yet has compassion is gold.

W: What is it that really makes you mad?

K.A-D.: A lack of reciprocity can really anger me because, at best, it's egocentric and thoughtless. At worst, it can be very disrespectful, exploitative, oppressive, and extremely destructive.

W: When are you at your happiest?

K.A-D.: I'm a happy person. What makes me "happiest" depends on my mood. Sometimes it's being at the rez, sitting on Jones Bluff, kayaking at Little North Bay, hearing the sound of the wind rushing across the escarpment, or watching a full moon rise above the escarpment, traveling, going to the Odawa and Cape Croker pow.wows, hanging out with family and friends. I love spending time with the children in my family. Generally, I'm happiest when I'm with people I love, in places I love, or setting out on a new adventure.

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

K.A-D.: Neurotic.

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

K.A-D.: There are so many people I admire and have learned from including my grandparents Joe and Irene Akiwenzie and Anna Damm, my mom Julie Damm, some of the women in my community like Lila Johnston, Erma Akiwenzie and Doris Pedoniquott, and friends and activists like Haunani-Kay Trask. If you asked me again tomorrow or next week my answer would probably change. I'm surrounded by so many amazing people. Right now, one of the people I admire tremendously is my friend Adam Beach. He has faced great adversity, had so many disadvantages, experienced so many setbacks and he's overcome many of them in pursuit of his dreams. My observation is that when something doesn't go as he hopes, he lets it go, and keeps moving forward toward his goals. It's not just about financial success or fame - it's about spiritual growth and happiness. Adam's been through so much in his life and, like all of us, he's not perfect, he makes mistakes, and he continues to experience disappointments, but instead of letting them weaken him, he seems to use them to find greater confidence and strength. I really respect and admire that. We could all achieve so much if we could let go of our disappointments and

keep our vision on our goals.

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

K.A-D.: The most recent was a few months ago - I had to have my dog Otis euthanized. I had him for 16 years and because I was either a student or self employed for that entire time, he pretty much went where I went. Otis was always at my feet or by my side. He loved and trusted me completely so at the animal hospital I stayed with him, petted him, and held him until he was gone because I didn't want him to be afraid - but it was heartbreaking.

W: What is your greatest accomplishment?

K.A-D.: It's yet to come.

W: What one goal remains out of reach?

K.A-D.: I don't believe any of my goals are out of reach. I intend to achieve every one of them.

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

K.A-D.: I don't know! Maybe I'd have a husband, a houseful of kids, and do work related to Traditional Knowledge. Or I'd travel around the world doing things like building homes for Red Feather or Habitat for Humanity, working with disaster relief agencies, teaching in Third

World countries, tree planting in the north, going to spiritual ceremonies and retreats - that sort of thing. I love to learn and to challenge myself and I get great satisfaction out of working to improve the world in whatever ways I'm capable of doing. I could do anything, but actually, I do pretty much what I want right now.

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

K.A-D.: My friend Patricia Grace, the Maori novelist, once told me: 'when in doubt, do it.' I'm not sure it's the best advice I've ever received but I remember it and have acted on it. Maybe I received better, ignored it, and have forgotten all about it! I do think it was great advice for me. I'd rather live with the consequences of taking action than with the burden of regret for not having followed my heart because of fear or indecision.

W: Did you take it?

K.A-D.: Yes, I did. At the time I was trying to decide whether or not to go to Aotearoa (New Zealand). I did go and it was the right decision. That piece of advice has helped me to make decisions many times over the years.

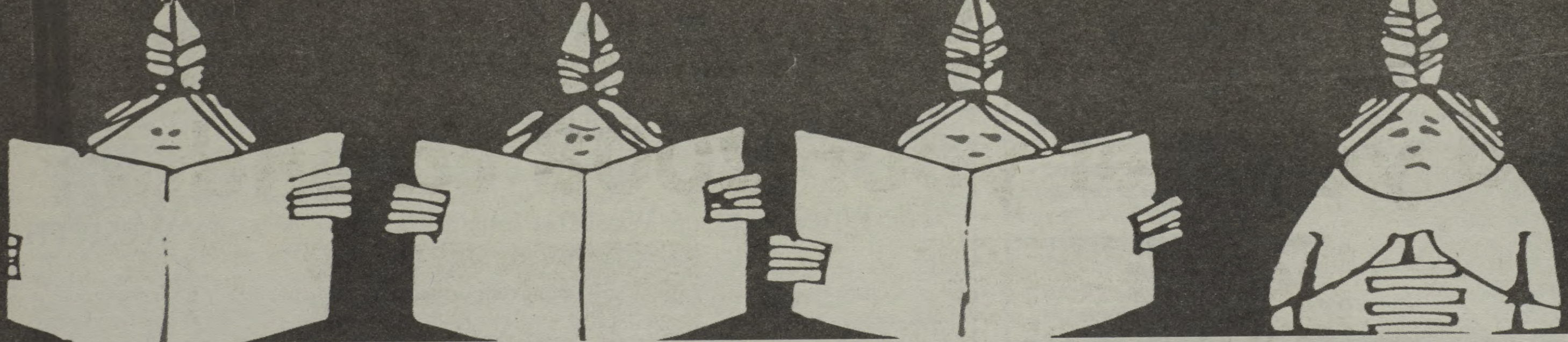
W: How do you hope to be remembered?

K.A-D.: The usual -

monuments, streets named after me, national public holidays, festivals in my honour, you know, someone whose death caused an outpouring of grief unseen since the death of Princess Diana! And, of course, I hope to be remembered as really good looking! Actually, I think it would be great to be remembered at all. What's that line in Hamlet? "There's hope a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year." Honestly, I would consider my life well lived if I was remembered as a loving, compassionate, and joyful person who helped to make the world better in whatever ways she could.

Kateri Akiwenzie-Damm, of the Chippewa of Nawash First Nation on the Cape Croker Reserve in Ontario, is one of Canada's best known Indigenous writers. She is also a producer, and owner of Kegeponce Press. Her first foray into writing resulted in the poetry book *My Heart is a Stray Bullet*. Since then, she's produced numerous performance pieces and literary works, often working with other Aboriginal artists, including a CD called *Standing Ground*, a collaborative spoken word/poetry album. Her passion is making Indigenous literature available to audiences everywhere.

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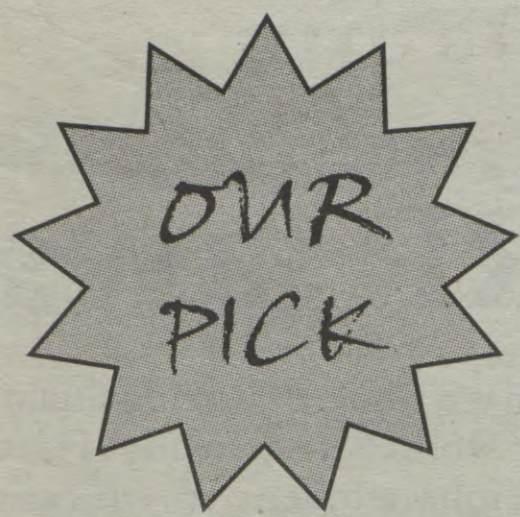
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Artist—Tracy Bone
 Album—No Lies
 Song—Reality
 Label—Arbor Records
 Producer—Phillippe Deschambault

Tranquility and love best describes Tracy Bone's album, No Lies

Reality is something we tend to try and escape when our lives are too hard to bare. We often dream of a better life and a greater outcome of our future. When we are single and alone and like any normal human beings, we often fantasize of our ideal partner. Someone to satisfy and gratify are lonely hearts with eyes you can stare at for the rest of your life.

Winnipeg recording artist Tracy Bone has done just that. It is from her debut album "No Lies", which is an album that deals with the pains of wanting, finding and losing love. You can hear her musical inspirations with a hint of country, pop, R&B and rock. Her musical inspirations Patsy Cline to Melissa Ethridge flare like an open pit fire of flaming talent. 'Reality' is about dreaming of what we all search for, 'the perfect partner for life'. 'You held me close, oh; you calmed my soul, never thought someone could make me whole', are words taken from the song. It is beautifully written and sung with such love and desire, the strumming of the guitar and beats of the bongos are exceptionally tasteful.

Like the sweet and indulging scent of perfume on a cool spring day, so are the lyrics and the melody to match! If you had the chance to live your life like a storybook romance would you? Or would you let the constellations of the heavens define it for you? There comes a point in our life when we realize that life is what we make it.

Bone has not let the overwhelming lesson of life and love hold her down. She has risen above it all with the talent, strength and determination that any person in this world holds on too and appreciates it as

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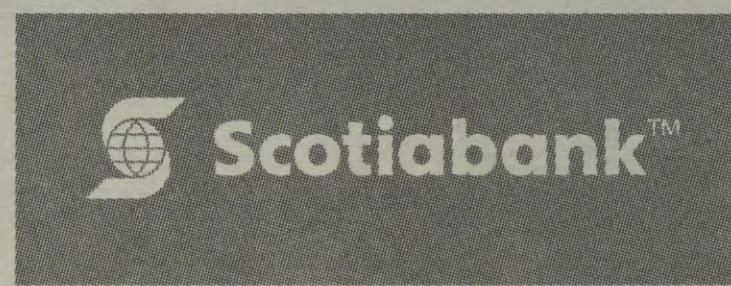
ARTIST	TITLE	ALBUM
Crystal Shawanda	You Can Let Go	Single Release
Little Hawk	Bottle Drinks From You, The	Home & Native Land
Tracy Bone	Soldier Of Love	No Lies
Hector	Die For Me	Rain Dancing
Mykal Gambull	I'm Your Man	Volume 1
Mike Gouchie	Childhood Friend	Let It Rain - Steve Rain & Friends
Lester	Let Me Love You	Day One
Farrah Meade	I'll Be Gone	Single Release
Shane Yellowbird	Drive Me Home	Life Is Calling My Name
Segweh	Feels Like Rain	Single Release
Ron Loutit	Molly	Mine To Discover
Holly McNarland	Mermaid	Chin Up Buttercup
Desiree Dorion	I'm Gonna Love You	Single Release
Derek Miller	Devil Came Down Sunday	The Dirty Looks
Sandy Scofield/Kinnie Starr	Faith	Nikawiy Askiy
Guy Chaput & Sci-fi	That Girl	Awakenings
Derek Maurice	Forgive	I Am Derek Maurice
Fred Moose	Come On In	Once & For All
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New Horizon	Woman In The Picture	Single Release

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Aboriginal women entrapped by MRP laws

(Continued from page 13.)

Because she had a substantial investment in her family home, she hesitated to abandon the premises despite an intolerable domestic situation.

When she was ultimately driven out of her home in January 2007, she encountered many of the recurring obstacles inherent in the current MRP system. Although she had endured abusive behaviour and had been forced to seek refuge in a women's shelter, some community members criticized her for leaving. When she sought assistance in her time of crisis, she ran into roadblocks.

"My safety had certainly been compromised and I could not remain in the home," said Rolanda Manitowabi. "It was not safe for me and my child to remain there. I contacted the housing department; no one called back. I approached the program office for an application for housing only to be told that the capital housing selections had already been completed. I interpreted these actions to mean that they would rather not help me."

Even though Manitowabi had shouldered all the expenses related to maintaining the matrimonial home, her ex-partner was allowed to stay on the property. He changed the locks on the doors and barred her from her possessions.

"I contacted the police only to be told that if the male partner in this case did not hit me, then they cannot remove him from the home," she said.

She reports that her spouse only worked one out of the six years they were together and "took no responsibility for the home or other expenses." During that time she was responsible for vehicle payments, insurance, food, hydro, water and sewer bills.

In the aftermath of the break-up, she continued to take care of loan payments and took on a line of credit in order to keep up with the bills.

The on-going struggle to regain her home left her debt-ridden and frustrated.

"I am still paying the bills," she said. "I incurred more than \$114,000 in actual expenses directly related to the building of the house and I have the receipts to show it. Not paying results in jeopardizing my credit rating which would affect our future. I did everything I could to protect my investment in the house."

In addition, she feels the band misled her and duped her about the amount of land attached to the house. In 2002, she sought sole ownership of the house and requested that the land be transferred to her. Her ex-partner assured her that everything was in order.

"In September 2005 it was finally agreed to transfer the

house and loan to me solely. However, the band housing representatives decided it was not in our best interests. I wanted to protect my investment in the house, however, this barrier was there even though the quit claim was signed by the ex-partner. The quit claim was never processed by the band which would have transferred ownership of the house and loan to me. It was also at this time that I learned that it was only half an acre (literally only the land that the house sits on that was transferred to me previously.) I had understood that it was a few acres of land. I was lied to. The decision was not to the benefit of the female partner nor the child in this case," she said.

Her story echoes the testimonials of many other women who find themselves entrapped by archaic MRP laws. With the realization that she had been cheated came a wave of mixed emotions.

"What I did experience was total silence and humiliation, being totally displaced," she said. "I had to tell my child that we had no place to go after six years of living in a home that we constantly told him was for him. This was extremely humiliating and devastating."

As stressful as family upheaval is for adults, it is even more traumatic for children.

"The children have a place to

call home one day; then it changes the next," she said. "The children suffer the lasting impacts of being displaced, of being uprooted. It really hurts and angers me to see the impact on my child. I am doing what I can to make healthier decisions, to live in a stable and secure environment and to enjoy life while still being responsible."

Although there has been some discussion in her home community about creating bylaws to address MRP problems, Manitowabi believes more must be done to address the injustice.

"In my opinion, we, as a community ought to adopt our own laws to protect children and their primary caregivers," she said. "Processes should be established to assist in division of assets based not only financial contributions, but also other equitable contributions."

Like other women negatively impacted by the MRP laws, she has hesitated to express her feelings in the past for fear of censure. But today she courageously advocates for fairness when relationships dissolve.

In her view, reforms are necessary to provide stability and security for children.

"I need to challenge (the current system) on behalf of myself and my son," she said. "I have to express what happened because it is not fair; it is not just.

And it is wrong. It is so important for women, especially First Nations women, to educate themselves on protecting themselves and their children."

As major MRP conflicts such as the Manitowabi case unfold, Hare believes powerful lessons will be learned.

"Individual land owners on First Nations, especially the men (since it is mostly the men who are the land holders), have to realize they have to be transparent and fundamentally fair about how they hold their land and how they treat it," she said.

In addition, she suggests that leaders on reserves need to avoid stalling tactics.


"The lands administrators on First Nations have to step up to the plate and be clear and firm and avoid politics. What they are administering is important to families so they have to have the courage to be firm."

She is confident that the inaccurate and haphazard documentation used by INAC will work in her favour.

"I will take advantage of their sloppiness in record-keeping," she pledges. "I will take advantage of the fact that women keep better records. And I will also push INAC to do what's technically and legally correct."

As always, it becomes the role of the women in the community to "keep pushing for change," she concludes.


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Rheumatoid arthritis common amongst Aboriginal people

BY SHARI NARINE
Windspeaker Writer

MANITOBA

The most at risk people in the world for developing rheumatoid arthritis are Aboriginal people, who are immediate family members of someone who already has the disease.

"Aboriginal people have a two to three times higher rate than anyone in the world," said Dr. David Robinson. "Rheumatoid arthritis is an ancient North American disease. It's been hanging out in North America for a long, long time."

Robinson is a rheumatologist at the Health Science Centre at the University of Manitoba, in Winnipeg. He has teamed up with Hani El-Gabalawy to study the causes and effects of arthritis in Aboriginal Canadians.

A Statistics Canada survey released in 2003 indicated that 19 per cent of the Aboriginal population living off reserve had physician-diagnosed arthritis. With an age adjustment (because the Aboriginal population is much younger than the overall Canadian population) that number jumps to 27 per cent. It's a stark contrast to the one in six non-Aboriginals that has arthritis. There are no on reserve figures.

"That data has not been collected and that's something that really needs to be addressed," said Quincey Kirschner, joint health projects director with Arthritis Consumer Experts, in Vancouver.

The high prevalence of arthritis in the Aboriginal population can be linked to a gene that is present in 60 per cent of the population. "Not everybody who has these genes gets rheumatoid arthritis," points out Robinson, "but lots do."

Elaine Alec, of the Okanagan and Shuswap nations, is one of those people. Diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis when she was 22 years old, Alec fought a battle that included attempted suicide. "The first part, after the diagnosis, I had a lot of frustration, anger and

depression," she recalls. In those days she could neither brush her hair nor attend pow wows because she couldn't bare to shake hands.

But this gene is not the only trigger for arthritis in Aboriginal people. There are other genes that may predispose the population to arthritis and Robinson notes that First Nations people who do have rheumatoid arthritis also have rheumatoid factor and anti-CCP antibodies in their blood.

Smoking also puts Aboriginals at a high risk of developing rheumatoid arthritis and poor dental hygiene may also be a link to the disease.

Robinson points out that rheumatoid arthritis is high with women immediately after childbirth.

"Rheumatoid arthritis settles down during pregnancy and then flares again right afterwards. The onset is frequently a few weeks after delivering a child."

As the number of pregnancies is higher in the Aboriginal population, young Aboriginal women are impacted at greater numbers than their non-Aboriginal counterparts. As well, women get rheumatoid arthritis at a two to one or three to one ratio to men.

Since 2005, Robinson and his team have been studying the Aboriginal population in Norway House and St. Theresa Point in northern Manitoba. They have applied for funding from the Canadian Institute for Health Research to extend their project another five years. In that time they are hoping to have 700 immediate family members (children, brothers and sisters) of arthritis patients signed on. "We expect in five years, five to 10 per cent of these relations may develop rheumatoid arthritis."

Through the study in which blood samples and other pertinent information will be collected, Robinson is hoping to identify more of the triggers that cause the disease. By reducing these triggers, he hopes that rates of rheumatoid arthritis can be reduced.

"We may be able to find

markers that put people at a higher risk and to start to treat them early," said Robinson. "We know that (with) people in the general population who have rheumatoid arthritis that the earlier we treat them the easier the disease is to treat."

But identifying the triggers and treating them early is only one concern with the disease.

Kirschner notes that for many Aboriginal people, biologic response modifiers, which are classified as gold standard level of drugs and which can help fight arthritis, are not available through the federal non-insured health benefit drug reimbursement plan. "A really big problem in treating inflammatory arthritis in Aboriginal communities is that non-insured health benefits simply doesn't make available the medication that are proved to treat the underlying causes."

To access that medication, Aboriginal people, the majority of whom do not have private insurance, must dig into their own pockets to pay the expense and most cannot afford the cost. There are close to 100 types of arthritis with inflammatory arthritis accounting for 90 per cent. While one per cent of the non-Aboriginal Canadian population lives with inflammatory arthritis, five per cent of the Aboriginal population is inflicted.

Rheumatoid arthritis is one of the more common types of inflammatory arthritis for Aboriginal people, but ankylosing spondylitis (an inflammation in the spine highly prevalent in Inuit) and psoriatic arthritis (associated with psoriasis) are also high. Ankylosing spondylitis is "highly related to the genes," said Robinson, even more so than rheumatoid or the other group of arthritis, osteoarthritis, which has a "wear and tear" effect on the joints.

While not all arthritis needs to be treated with gold standard medications, "the most seriously affected people need these medications," said Kirschner.



Elaine Alec (second from the right) took part in a half marathon in support of The Arthritis Society in Jamaica of Dec. 2007.

"We know that when Aboriginal people get arthritis they tend to be more debilitated by it."

NIHB does not reimburse for biologic response modifiers needed to combat psoriatic arthritis or ankylosing spondylitis. First Nations and Inuit people covered under NIHB have some of the worst access to medications in the country.

However, Enbrel, which Alec refers to as a "miracle drug" that helped turn her life around is covered under NIHB. But it's been a long journey for Alec to qualify for the expensive medication.

Alec began noticing stiffness shortly after giving birth to her son. Her initial steps to deal with the pain included talking with her Elders and using natural ways. When neither had an impact on how the disease was progressing, she met with a rheumatologist. That relationship has spanned eight years. "At first, I rebelled against him. I didn't like anything he had to say – and every now and then, he reminds me of that!"

The major turning point came three and a half years after she was diagnosed. She was hospitalized after arthritis in her chest walls caused what seemed like a heart attack. Returning home, she concluded she could no longer live like that and overdosed on her medication. She realized what she had done and called her husband for help. In the hospital once more, Alec's rheumatologist met with her and this time she was ready to do what she could to fight the pain and the disease. However, before she could switch

to Enbrel, she had to remain for one and a half years on a medication that was offering her little help; the results of this lesser medication was documented by her rheumatologist. Once she started Enbrel in December 2005 the changes were almost immediate. "I'm completely pain free. I've had three flare-ups, but I can take Ibuprofen to deal with it."

Alec is employed by the B.C. Ministry of Children and Family Development in the Aboriginal Youth Internship program.

In mid-February, ACE launched an awareness campaign of the drug coverage offered by NIHB.

"We're definitely writing a lot of letters and trying to set up more meetings with various elected officials," said Kirschner, noting that the organization is also in the process of replacing First Nations representative Joyce Greene, who recently stepped down for personal reasons.

As ACE works to raise awareness around the medication issue and the seriousness of the disease, Robinson's team works to raise awareness through call-in radio shows in Norway House and St. Theresa Point about the importance of maintaining a healthy weight, refraining from smoking, and practicing proper dental care.

"It is about education to some degree," said Robinson, who is optimistic that as his research team becomes clearer on the triggers that bring about arthritis, they will be able to discover ways to prevent it.

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Education achievements celebrated at conference

BY JOE COUTURE
Windspeaker Writer

MUSKODAY FIRST NATION

Successes and innovations in First Nations education across the province of Saskatchewan were recognized and celebrated during a conference organized by the Muskoday First Nation Community School in early February.

The "Celebrating Innovation in First Nations Education, New Paths - Best Practices Conference" was held Feb. 7 and 8 in Saskatoon. The sold-out conference was sponsored by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) and attended by more than 200 guests connected to education.

The conference focused on four areas: language and culture; literacy; partnerships; and, curriculum and teachers, explained Sharon Laflamme, principal of Muskoday Community school and organizer of the event.

"The purpose of the conference was to first of all showcase First Nations education in Saskatchewan, and it was also a gathering where we could highlight all the projects that have been developed or created at First Nations schools. It highlighted connections to educators, it developed networks, it celebrated partnerships that are taking place,

it was a catalyst for new ideas and change and it was a time that we celebrated," Laflamme said.

"So often we are introduced to things that have been developed outside First Nations schools, perhaps at provincial level, but for the first time we're introducing things we've been doing at the First Nations level," she added, noting the conference was hosted and attended almost exclusively by First Nations.

Laflamme explained that her school was selected by INAC to organize the conference. The idea was to highlight some of the successful proposals for INAC's "New Paths - Best Practices" funding, which had been granted to more than 100 education-related projects across the province.

Laflamme's school had previously successfully applied for funding in relation to a project that highlighted teachings of the tipi pole.

A committee headed by Muskoday selected dozens of other projects from those that had received funding to be showcased in workshops at the conference.

"As a principal, I was quite elated and honoured," Laflamme said. "I quickly grabbed at the opportunity.

Muskoday Community School is in its third year of operation, so it's one of the newest schools that has been developed by INAC and First

Nations communities. That's something to celebrate as well, and I thought this would highlight Muskoday even more, and it did."

Laflamme, who is originally from the Beary's Okemasis First Nation and has been principal at the Muskoday school since it opened its doors, was also the keynote speaker at the conference. She described how her generation was among the first to be allowed into provincial schools. Although she didn't attend residential school, she described the racism and ignorance as equally damaging and rarely as recognized as the abuse that occurred in those institutions.

"First of all, the teachers didn't know how to teach the Indian in the classroom," Laflamme said. "They didn't know how to integrate Aboriginal materials. I was taught to be ashamed of who I was as an Indian child.

"By high school, I was Chinese, I was Japanese, I was Hawaiian, I was anything but an Indian, because to me Indian was a dirty word. In the books I was given in social studies or math or reading there was nothing to celebrate who I was as an Aboriginal person. And I kind of pushed my heritage away until I went to university."

Laflamme entered the Indian Teacher Education Program

(ITEP) and was surrounded by Aboriginal classmates and instructors whom she could consider role models. She also learned to have a voice for Aboriginal people, something that in part later led her to take the job as principal of the Muskoday school after having formerly been a principal in Saskatoon.

"We all need to be empowered within us to really wrap around Aboriginal education and be inclusive in our classrooms no matter where we're teaching," she said, noting the Aboriginal population in schools across the province is growing.

"We all need to get on board and look at ourselves and see how we need to integrate Aboriginal materials in our classrooms, in our everyday delivery, not only to help Aboriginal children discover and be proud of who they are but also for those around us who are non-Aboriginal to celebrate with us who we are so we can continue to grow together and we can all become better citizens in the future. Because right now our prison system, our health system, everything is not working. And to me, it comes down to education, No. 1."

The conference was a success, and much interest was expressed in holding one again, Laflamme said. She isn't sure what the plan for the future is, as the funding

arrangement for New Paths - Best Practices has changed, she explained.

"Sadly, it was almost like a celebration to say goodbye to the funding that is no longer available," she said. "It has a new form of being dispersed to the First Nations communities. It's no longer grant-based from the First Nations schools; it's now only available at the tribal-council levels. So it's really taken a twist, which is kind of sad, but still at the tribal-council levels there are wonderful initiatives taking place, and they need to be celebrated."

The school on the Muskoday First Nation (located between Prince Albert and Birch Hills) has 138 children enrolled in pre-kindergarten through Grade 9. Laflamme works with a staff of eight classroom teachers and two special education teachers, one specialized in behaviours and the other specialized in academics.

The staff is trained in innovative practices focused on the students, and the school has embraced many unique partnerships with organizations such as the University of Saskatchewan.

Through those, students have been involved in special projects designed to provide opportunities for learning in areas such as archeology and health care, incorporating traditional and community-based components.

Retreats bring youth back to their roots

BY CHRISTINE FIDDLER
Windspeaker Staff Writer

SASKATOON

Empowering at-risk youth through traditional teachings, music and sharing circles ensured the successful outcome of the ninth annual Aboriginal Youth Leadership Retreats, according to organizer, Raul Munoz of the Indigenous Peoples Program at the University of Saskatchewan.

"It was an opportunity for kids to come in there to listen," Munoz said. "It gave them basically a way of thinking about these issues that came from a non-academic, non-textbook way."

The two retreats were an initiative of the Indigenous Peoples Program.

Organizers arranged to have two gender groups - Napewak (Men) and Iskewak (Women) - gather for separate three-day programs at the Ancient Spiral Retreat Centre, which is twenty minutes out of Saskatoon.

Munoz said initial consultations with Elders led to the decision to separate genders.

"It made it more comfortable

for the girls to be around girls and the guys to be around other guys," he said. "And a lot of the issues that we do touch upon are gender specific, so (youth) would probably be hesitant to open up if we were to make it into the co-ed thing."

The first retreat took place in late January with topics specific to the thirteen female youth participants. The second retreat was in February from 6 to 8 and focussed on topics geared to the seventeen male participants.

The three-day program trained youth in areas such as confidence building, public speaking, traditional knowledge, and community building.

Organizers strived to include workshops that fit into the four areas of the Medicine Wheel in an effort to help youth achieve balance in the physical, spiritual, mental, and emotional areas of self, Munoz said.

"A lot of them were coming from situations where issues of suicide, issues of depression and being marginalized are something they have to cope with everyday," Munoz explained. Therefore, it was highly effective to have Elders

"It brings them back to their roots. We get to provide the youth with a blueprint for how to not necessarily manage their lives, but give them a sense of who they are and where they come from."

—Raul Munoz

Judy Bear and Sid Fiddler on hand to give spiritual guidance, as well as to facilitate the sharing circles, he added.

Some of the objectives of the retreats were to help divert youth from at-risk activities to healthier lifestyle choices, reconnect them to traditional Aboriginal teachings, and give them a sounding board to voice some of their concerns.

According to Munoz the main goal was to get youth participating.

"I think a lot of the youth gravitated towards putting a lot into it at every session and they did open up quite a bit after the first day, so it was very

encouraging," he said. Workshops ranged from healing through the arts to treaties, language, identity, self-image, and drug awareness.

Lindsey Knight, otherwise known as Eekwol, used hip hop in her workshop as a medium to get her message across to the female youth.

"She talked a little about her life, how she grew up, and some of her trials and tribulations as an Aboriginal woman," Munoz said. "How she learned to hip hop and continues to (use it) as a method of healing."

One workshop for the young men was facilitated by Joe Naylor, who used

drumming and storytelling to get his message across to the youth. "A lot of the work he does is through the drum and finding your vocals with the drum," Munoz said.

"Youth learned that music plays a very important part in terms of healing. They got the message of finding their voice, that sometimes things are so repressed in society that when you sing you're letting all that go," he added.

Youth at this year's retreats came from the Battleford area, mainly from the Moosomin and Saulteaux First Nations. Facilitators conducting the workshops were Aboriginal role models, University of Saskatchewan graduates, current students, and youth mentors.

Munoz said the annual retreats benefitted youth from an educational, cultural, and linguistic point of view.

"It brings them back to their roots."

"We get to provide the youth with a blueprint for how to not necessarily manage their lives, but give them a sense of who they are and where they come from."

The Aboriginal Scholarship Guide - coming in the May issue of *Windspeaker!*

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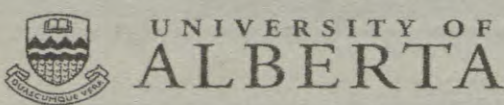
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The Aboriginal Scholarship Guide – coming in the May issue of *Windspeaker!*

Clark encourages women to access AWPA's services

(Continued from page 15.)

Clark is quick to state she would never advise a person who has children to leave motherhood in order to become a professional.

"I encourage women to remember their priorities, but when they're ready, we have resources to help them enter the professional world, be it information about babysitting, education, or jobs," she explained.

Any woman who has left her support system in her Métis or First Nations community can also find companionship through AWPA.

"We help women find housing, if that's what they need. And if she's taking courses and has fallen behind, we can even bring in an Elder to support and encourage her. All our programs are based on the medicine wheel; education is important, but we help women look after spiritual and health-related issues, too."

A recent partnership with Edmonton's Women Building Futures organization has added to

the range of services AWPA provides.

Clark said she is excited that AWPA will now be able to establish an office "as a place for women to find us and access our services."

As the word about AWPA spreads, more and more women are accessing its services.

"Last year we held a speaker series, and at the final one, we had more than 80 women attend. This year we're offering mentorship programs and a "job shadow" opportunity for any Aboriginal woman who wants to work in the field of education, business, health or politics.

We chose these fields because we have partners in these fields," Clark said.

Being able to help others is Clark's greatest satisfaction and she said that not a day goes by when someone isn't calling or emailing her to ask advice about an issue they're trying to resolve.

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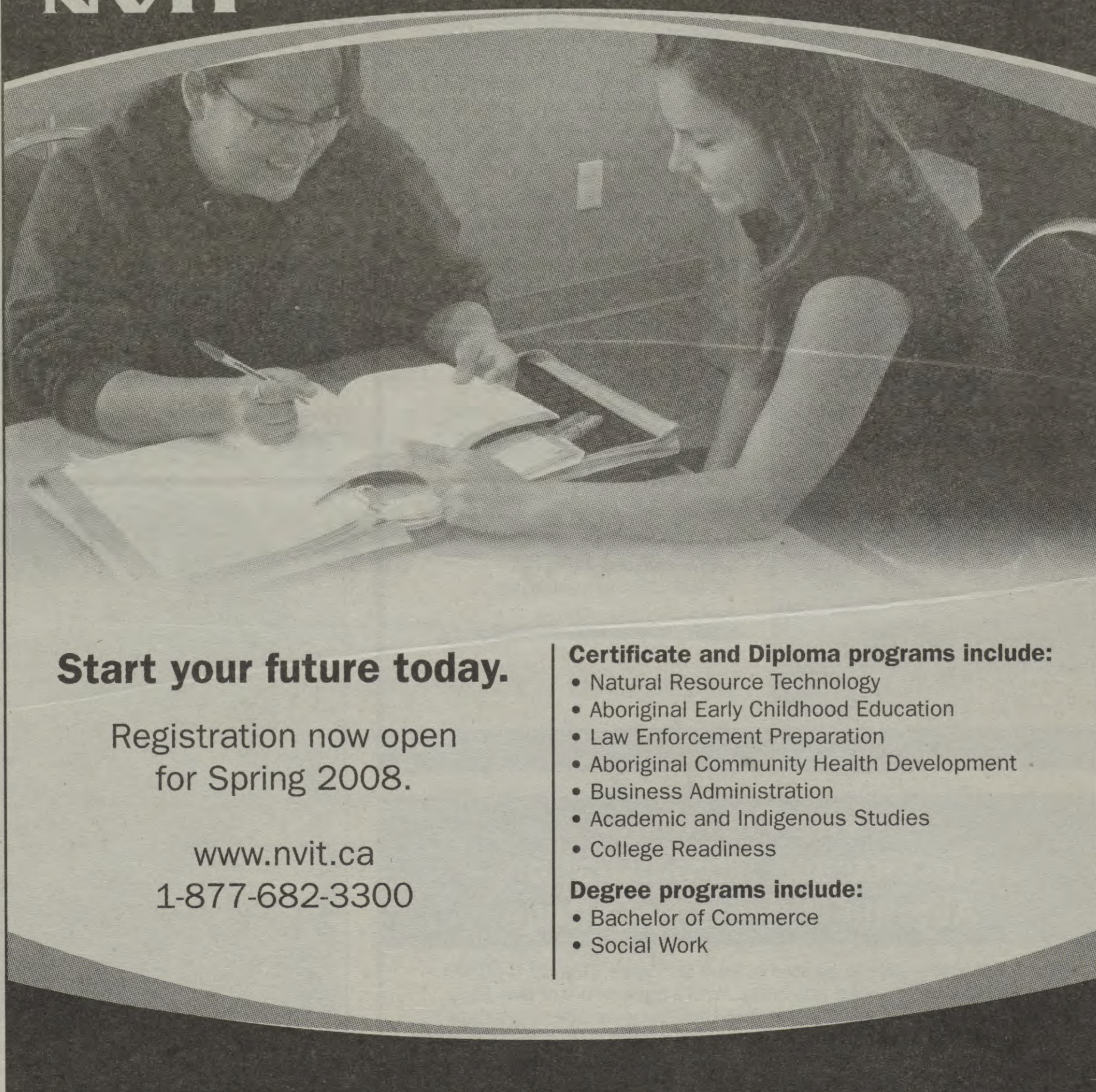


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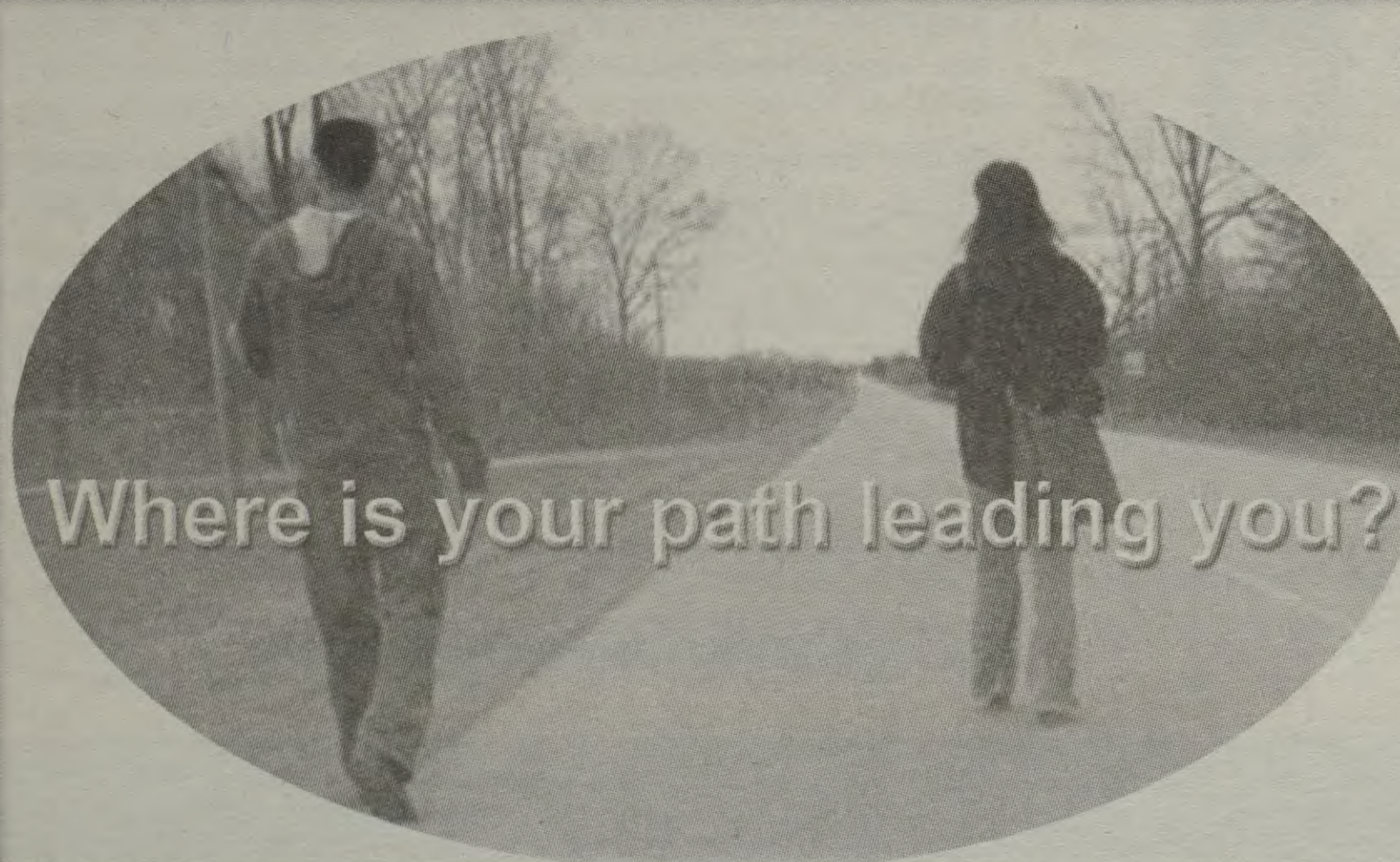
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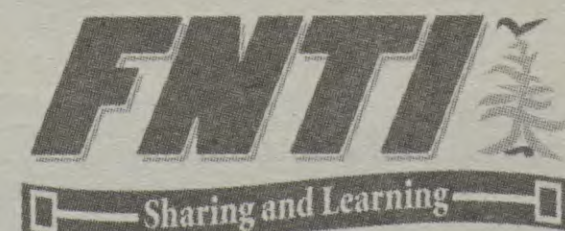
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Pasqua to serve life sentence for death of Calgary teenager

(Continued from page 19.) Evidence entered in court showed that Provost had a blood-alcohol reading of more than three times the legal driving limit. He also had cocaine in his system

when he died. Provost's father rejected Pasqua's apology to the family in court saying they received justice in the court's decision. Pasqua is originally from

Muskowekan First Nation. John Rooke recommended that Pasqua serve her sentence in Saskatchewan so she could be closer to her two children as well as her family.

A home for at risk girls forced to close its doors

(Continued from page 20.) Despite letters of recommendation from both the Provincial Auditor and the Children's Advocate stating that Oyate had either met their recommendations or the intent of the recommendations, Donna Harpauer, Minister of Social Services announced on March 6,

2008 that the province would no longer fund the home. The Oyate board of directors was issued a letter stating funding was cancelled only half an hour before the Ministry released a statement to the media on March 6. "(The program) not only meets the needs of the children, it

exceeds all of the recommendations of the Provincial Auditor and Children's Advocate," stated Marie Anne DayWalker-Pelletier, chair of Oyate's Board of Directors in a press release. "We must question the rationale of the Minister's decision."

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The Aboriginal Scholarship Guide – coming in the May issue of *Windspeaker*!

[footprints] Floyd Red Crow Westerman Creating awareness about Indigenous issues was important to Westerman

By Dianne Meili

One of the most recognizable Native Americans of the 20th century was Floyd Red Crow Westerman who died at the age of 71 on Dec. 13, 2007. The musician, activist and actor was living in Los Angeles where he died of leukemia.

Most recently seen by Canadian television audiences as the traditionally dressed, sincere spokesperson for "Lakota" brand topical pain reliever, more indicative of his immense talent was his portrayal of 'Ten Bears' in the 1990 Kevin Costner movie *Dances With Wolves*.

Though he became a familiar face in films and on television, friends said his identity as an Aboriginal person working to bring awareness to indigenous issues mattered most to him. He saw his work as an activist in promoting peace and protecting the environment as part of his cultural inheritance.

"He was really, really politically conscious," said his son, Richard Tall Bear Westerman. "He said the Iraq war is just another land grab, like they did with Oklahoma and the Midwest in America. Back then it was about land and gold, and now it was about oil."

Born in Veblen, South Dakota in 1936, Westerman was raised on the Lake Traverse Reservation. Orphaned as a child, by the age of 7 he was enrolled in the Wapehton Boarding School. While other students went home to their families for the summer, he stayed to clean and help out year-round. He filled the lonely hours playing his guitar.

That instrument would see him on his way to a music career, playing in coffee houses and lounges in Denver, Colorado, after a stint in the marines and college. His first love was music – country music – and his deep voice was well suited for it. In fact, he put that resonance to

good use on his 2006-released album, *Floyd Red Crow Westerman – A Tribute to Johnny Cash*.

"I had the great honour to meet and be on the same bill with Johnny Cash. It was a night to remember," Westerman was quoted saying from a Web site.

The tribute album won him a Native American Music Award.

He released his first album in 1969, titled *Custer Died for Your Sins*, based on the "Native injustice" topic of a book by the same name, penned by the late author and activist Vine Deloria Jr., a close friend. Music from the album became the 'theme music' of the Red Power movement of the time.

"We lifted songs out of (the book) chapters," Westerman is quoted as saying in the *Washington Post*.

American Indian Movement (AIM) activist Dennis Banks, an old school friend, influenced Westerman to play a part in the deadly standoff at Wounded Knee in South Dakota, the historical site where, in 1890, the United States Army massacred men, women and children. In 1973, two FBI agents were killed following a 71-day siege; AIM organizer Leonard Peltier languishes in jail over the deaths.

"We saw injustice going on and we wanted to stop it," Westerman is quoted as saying.

Westerman's second album *The Land is Your Mother*, released in 1982, revealed his ever-growing connection to his own Sisseton-Wahpeton Dakota heritage and concern for the plight of indigenous peoples worldwide and the earth itself.

He joined singer Harry Belafonte in his fight against nuclear power and even battled the practice of naming sports teams. He became an activist in the American Indian Movement (AIM), traveling the world championing social justice for his

people, and toured in the 1990's with Sting to raise money to preserve rain forests.

He performed with countless other musicians in his life, including Buffy Sainte-Marie, Willie Nelson, Kris Kristofferson, Jackson Brown, Bonnie Raitt, Joni Mitchell, John Trudell and Don Henley in large benefit concerts for Native American self-determination, human rights and environmental protection.

Caustic lyrics critical of American history in society contributed to the fact Westerman seemed to achieve greater popularity outside of the USA, making more than 60 foreign tours.

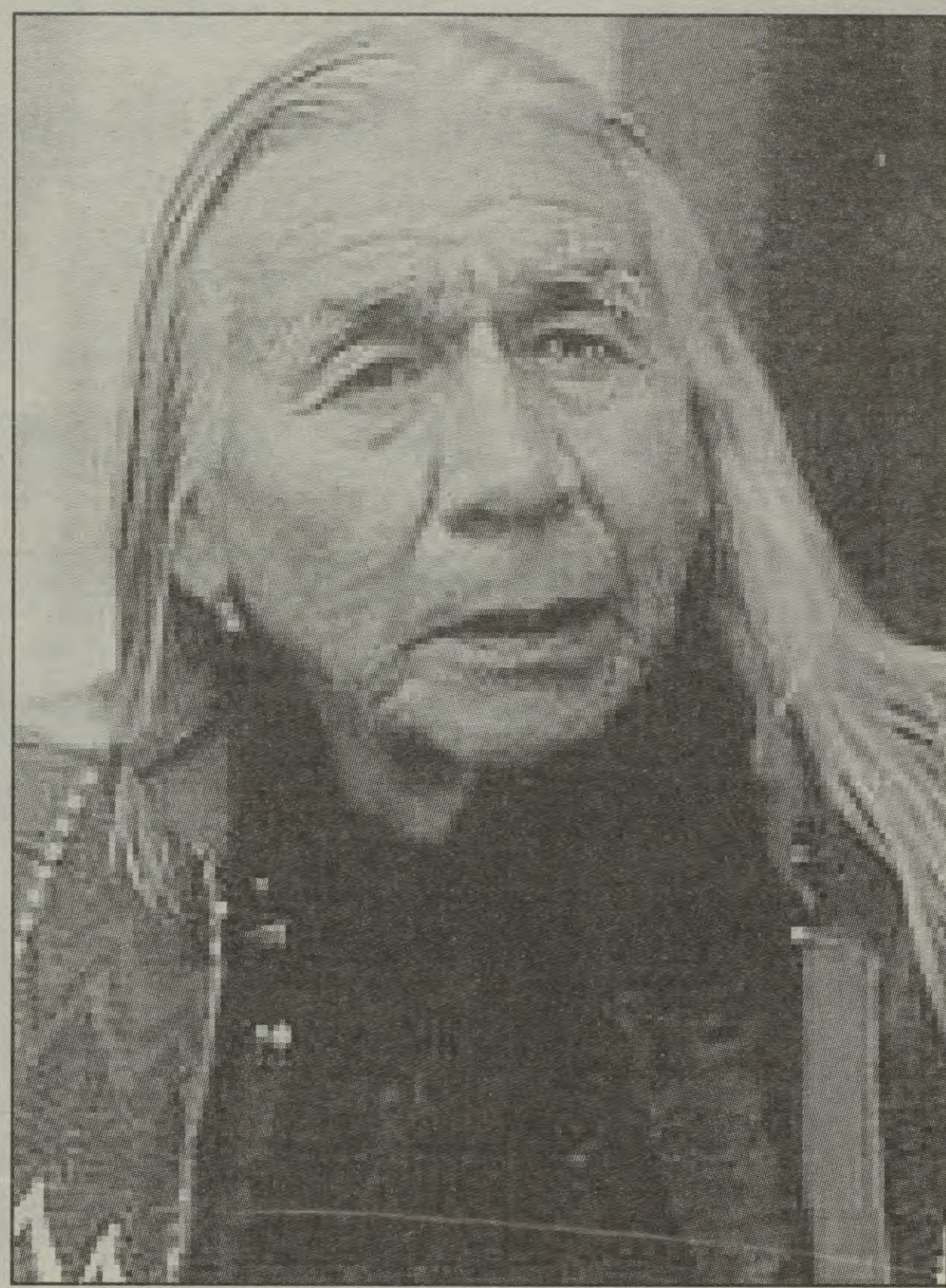
His musical success led to acting and in his fifties he started playing small roles in television shows like *MacGyver*. He made his movie debut in 1989's *Renegade*, playing the father of Lou Diamond Phillip's character.

In 1990 he played the pensive, wise Sioux chief Ten Bears in the Oscar-winning *Dances with Wolves*, a leader who realizes his people are in danger of invasion. He followed up the memorable performance playing Jim Morrison's spiritual guide in Oliver Stone's *The Doors*.

Likening his career to that of Will Sampson, and before him, Chief Dan George, Westerman played roles that upheld the quiet contemplation and wisdom of his ancestors.

Westerman had recurring roles in a number of television series, including *Northern Exposure*, *Dharma and Greg*, and as the code breaker Albert Hosteen in *The X Files*, a Navajo character fond of reminding his audience that "something lives only as long as the last person who remembers it."

He sought to bring complexity and not 'stoic Indian stereotype' to his roles, founding the nonprofit Eyapaha Institute to



Floyd Red Crow Westerman known to most as the spokesperson for "Lakota" died at the age of 71 of leukemia. The musician, activist and actor was also well known for his portrayal of 'Ten Bears' from the 1990 movie *Dances With Wolves*.

further, in part, his goal of encouraging and training young Aboriginal actors to bring integrity to their roles in the film industry. Westerman devoted his time and energy to bring honour to his people, going so far as to act as the co-chair of the Coalition Against Racism in Sports, campaigning to change the names of American teams such as the Redskins, Indians and Braves.

In the weeks preceding his death, his friend Darrell Standing Elk joined in a spiritual ceremony

for Westerman.

"Floyd was such a good man. He couldn't stand injustice, and he never condemned anyone. He just wanted to help wherever and whenever he could. It was hard to see him the way he was – in pain and all – but he's in a far better place now, with his mother and family and all those who have gone before him," said Standing Elk in an article from *Indian Country Today*.

Surviving Westerman are his wife Rosie, four daughters, a son, and ten grandchildren.

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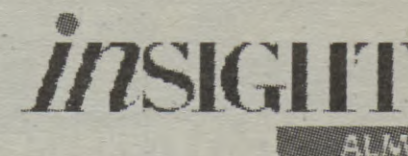
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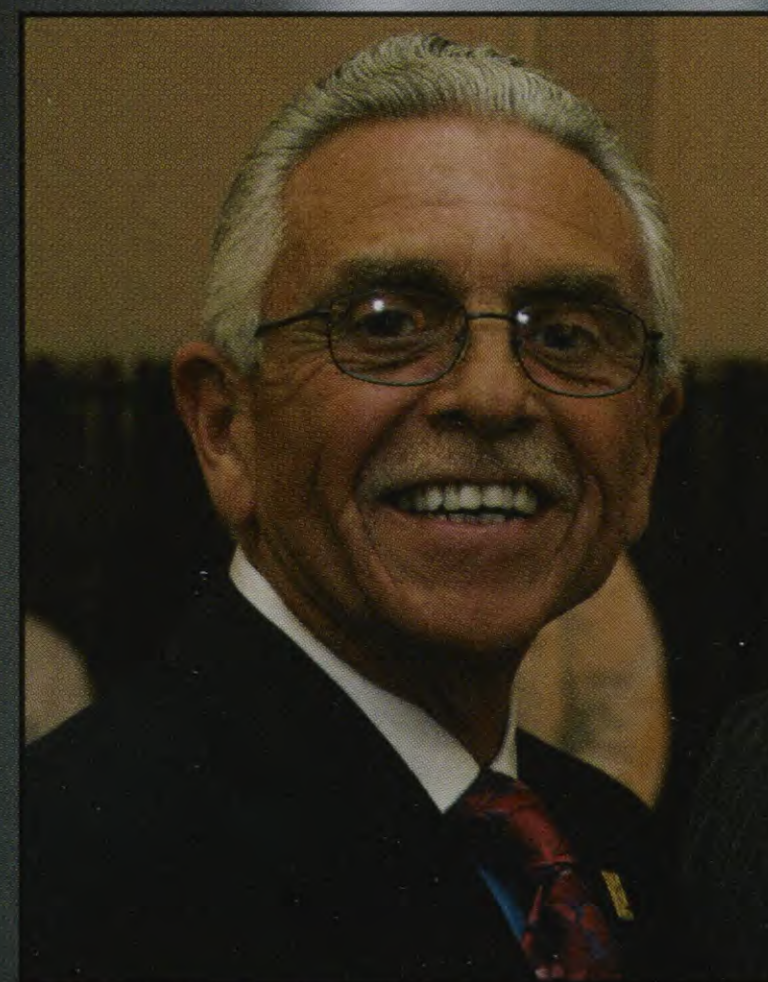
Celebrating Aboriginal Business

CCAB/PAR Coverage

Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame



2008 ABHF Laureate,
Nellie Cournoyea



2008 ABHF Laureate,
Ron Jamieson

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First Quarter – Spring 2008

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Cape Breton's **Aboriginal Workforce**

Cape Breton's five First Nation communities have established a unique partnership to maximize the economic benefits resulting from major construction projects such as the Sydney Tar Ponds Clean-up Project. The goal of this partnership is to expand the long-term expertise and economic capacity of Unama'ki (Cape Breton) communities and businesses.

To ensure success, the communities have established the Unama'ki Economic Benefits Office in Membertou First Nation, Nova Scotia. This Office acts as an advocate for First Nation businesses and is meant to be a liaison between Aboriginal communities and businesses, non-Aboriginal businesses and the Sydney Tar Ponds Agency.

Three local Aboriginal companies are now working on the Sydney Tar Ponds Clean-up Project and are gaining valuable experience, especially in the Stabilization and Solidification process. The expertise that these local Aboriginal construction companies now have has positioned them to play a significant role in future contracts and other major construction projects.

▶ www.unamaki.ca



On The Agenda

March 26-27

AFN Canada Treaties Implementation Conference (Saskatoon)

The conference represents the first of its kind hosted jointly by First Nations and the Federal Crown. This conference was borne of the work and principles enshrined in the First Nations-Federal Crown Political Accord of May 31, 2005.

Registration contact: Angie Dione at (613) 241-5808 Assembly of First Nations.

April 2-3

Canadian Minority Supplier Council Diversity Procurement Fair (Toronto)

The Diversity Procurement fair offers a chance to meet innovative and competitive suppliers Aboriginal, Minority and Women-owned suppliers from across Canada who will be exhibiting in a broad range of sectors. Information packed workshops with corporate executives and business advisory experts.

Registration contact: Lynette Davis at (819) 827-1237 CAMSC

April 8-10

2008 Nunavut Mining Symposium Theme of this years symposium: Let's Talk (Iqaluit, Nunavut)

The 11th Annual symposium's theme will include sessions and presentations geared toward bringing industry representatives and service providers together with politicians and bureaucrats for an open and frank dialogue on the issues.

Registration contact: Brenda Mercer (613) 477-2919 Mercer Business Support Services

April 9-11

Aboriginal Financial Officers Association of BC Spring Conference: Band Management and Economic Development (Vancouver)

This conference will focus on issues including Aboriginal capacity building, understanding the practical and financial impact of case law developments and much more.

Contact the Canadian Institute toll free at 1-877-927-7936 for more information.

April 23-24

National Aboriginal Human Resource Conference 2008 Advancing Aboriginal Inclusion (Montreal)

The 2nd annual conference is about recruitment, retention and advancement conference. Over 250 human resource and Aboriginal diversity professionals will come together for learning and networking within the private, public and Aboriginal sectors fo Canada's diverse workforce sectors.

Registration contact: Sophie Courchene (819) 595-8598

April 28-29

7th Annual Aboriginal Oil and Gas Forum (Edmonton)

The 7th annual program: Insight Information is an up-to-date program concerning key matters related to Aboriginal oil and gas information. Leading experts in their fields will share their knowledge and current experience with this business sector.

Registration contact: 1-888-777-1707

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Advertiser Directory

Syncrude – pg 2

Unama'ki Economic Benefits Office – pg 3

Beisel Law – pg 5

Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB) – pg 6

BMO Financial Group – pg 8

ESS Support Services – pg 9

Manitoba Lotteries – pg 10

Casino Rama – pg 11

Red River College – pg 12

IBM – pg 13

Canada's Credit Unions – page 16

CIBC has donated \$100,000 to the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation's (NAAF) education program of annual bursaries and scholarships for students of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis descent,

"We are especially proud to fund this program to help Aboriginal students pursue their educational goals and to reach their full potential," said Gerry McCaughey, CIBC's president and chief executive officer in a press release.

The donation is part of CIBC's community investment strategy that focuses on youth and education and aims to make a difference in communities through corporate donations, sponsorships and the volunteer spirit of employees.

"These bursaries and scholarships make a very real and meaningful difference in the lives of the students who receive this support," said Roberta Jamieson, NAAF's president and chief executive officer.

"It assists them in attaining the knowledge and skills needed to realize their career aspirations. This in turn makes a positive difference with their active participation in the Canadian economy. We are very grateful to CIBC for their continuing support of our education program."

Applicants for NAAF bursaries and scholarships are assessed by juries of First Nations, Inuit or Métis professionals using criteria such as financial need, academic performance, connection to the Aboriginal community, and the student's commitment to the field of study.

The scholarships are allocated to students of health sciences programs and any other health field in which a study of the hard sciences is a prerequisite. The donation brings CIBC's total support of the program to \$800,000.

United Protection Security Group Inc. (USPG) has signed a three-year formal joint venture agreement with the Lil'wat Nation and T'musta7 Aboriginal Consulting Services.

The agreement allows USPG to explore new business opportunities that involve provisions for security officer training, deployment, housing of security personnel and other business opportunities that may arise before, during, and after the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics.

It also establishes the roles of USPG, the Lil'wat Training and Employment, Recruitment and Training Service (LTERTS) and lead negotiator, T'musta7 Aboriginal Consulting Services, while addressing responsibilities and the equal distribution of revenues and profits.

Don Allan, chief operating officer of the wholly owned subsidiary of USPG, United Protection Services Inc., points out that the joint venture is only the first of several anticipated for the future.

"We believe that the many business opportunities associated with the 2010 Olympics will provide short and long-term meaningful employment to members of the Lil'wat Nation," he said in a March press release.

As part of his company goals, Allan intends to work closely with the Lil'wat Nation to ensure that all parties of agreement benefit both financially and through the creation of sustainable businesses for its members long after the Olympics are over.

USPG is a security protection, Canadian-based company that focuses on high impact, high visibility, and high-risk security situations. It is coupled with one of the industry's broadest ranges of traditional private security services.

Savanna Energy Services Corp. announces Dividend

The Board of Directors for Savanna Energy Services Corp. has declared a dividend payment of \$0.025 (Cdn.) per share to holders of Common Shares in accordance with its quarterly dividend policy.

According to a March 12 press release, it states the date of record as April 2, 2008, the payment date as April 16, 2008, and the ex-dividend date as March 31, 2008. This dividend is an eligible dividend for Canadian income tax purposes.

The company's principal operations are based in Canada and headquartered in Calgary, Alta. However, company operations are also carried on in the United States.

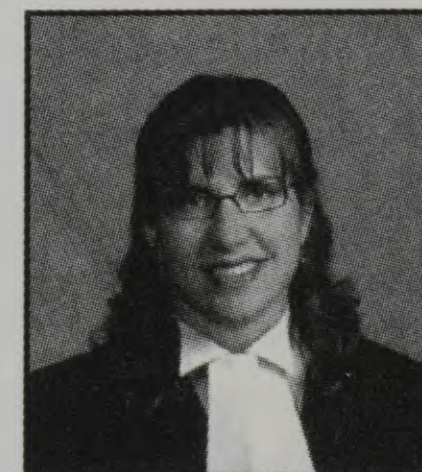
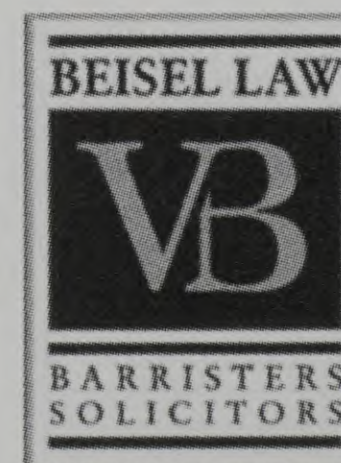
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CEO of CCAB – A dream job for Davis



Clint Davis, the new president and CEO of CCAB.

Clint Davis is a Dalhousie-trained lawyer. He's worked in a private practice, and as a personal advisor to two federal cabinet ministers on Native land claims.

He has a master's degree in business administration from Harvard University, and for the last five years he's been with the Bank of Montreal, one of the top financial institutions in the country. He served as the director of Aboriginal banking services until recently taking on his new job with the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business in late January.

So what's a guy like that doing working for a non-profit organization like the CCAB? The answer is simple, he's working in his dream job where he can immerse himself with the issues facing Aboriginal business.

In taking on the position of president and CEO of the CCAB, Davis saw an opportunity to work on a more "macro" level in business development than he could from within the banking industry. CCAB has been in operation for 24 years and is fully funded by corporate Canada, with a mandate to increase Aboriginal participation in the national economy.

Davis a member of the Nunatsiavut nation of Labrador said he is thrilled to have the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of a wide range of business sectors. "It's exciting to be able to expand your mind beyond financial services," he said.

Davis has worked within both the private and public (government) sectors, which are key players for CCAB as well as to his commitment to Aboriginal people and their economic aspirations.

"Academic achievement is a small thing," he said. "The real work comes through experience - the things you learn when you fail and pick yourself back up."

When the CCAB was established in 1984 by Shoppers Drug Mart founder Murray Koffler, "it was set up purely as a philanthropic exercise" Davis said. With the recent re-affirmation and entrenchment of Aboriginal rights in the Canadian Constitution, "he (Koffler) believed it was necessary for corporate Canada to try and do something to break down barriers with an entire segment of Canada, to give a hand up to some of the individuals who were wanting to participate

Help us to honour Aboriginal business leaders

Their success is a beacon, lighting the way for a new generation of young Aboriginal entrepreneurs. Every year, the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business welcomes new laureates into the Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame.

Please send in your nomination by August 29 for the inspirational individuals who will join the Hall of Fame at our Circle for 2015 National Gala Dinner in February, 2009.

They will be in excellent company, joining our most recent laureates: Ron Jamieson from Six Nations of the Grand River, Ontario, and Nellie Cournoyea, from Inuvialuit, Northwest Territories. Watch their video profiles at www.ccab.com/abhf.

If you know an Aboriginal business leader who deserves to be recognized, let us know. Download a nomination form at www.ccab.com/abhf, or call us at 1-866-566-3229.

ABORIGINAL BUSINESS HALL OF FAME 2008 LAUREATES



Ron Jamieson
Six Nations of the
Grand River, ON



Nellie Cournoyea
Inuvialuit,
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(in business).”

This belief resulted in the development of core CCAB programs, such as PAR (Progressive Aboriginal Relations), which recognizes “mainstream” businesses that have made substantial efforts to increase Aboriginal participation in their companies. The Foundation for the Advancement of Aboriginal Youth was also established, a scholarship and bursary program that the CCAB’s Web site describes as helping to bridge “the gap between the reality which kids confront in their communities and the opportunities available to those with higher education.”

Over the last two decades, the economic climate has shifted, to the extent that Davis

feels he has come on board the CCAB at “one of the most unique moments in Aboriginal history, (and in) Canadian history.”

The global economic climate is changing, with an increasing appetite for energy and the perception that Canada is a major source for that energy - and the recognition that much of it (oil, gas, uranium) is on traditional Aboriginal land.

As a result, corporate Canada no longer views the Aboriginal community as a charity case, but as a key to success. Not only are mainstream businesses looking to form strategic partnerships and work with Aboriginal businesses, they are also “looking at the fact that (corporate Canada) is facing a shrinking

labour force. (The Aboriginal community) is truly a source of top talent for large companies,” said Davis.

So, with the CCAB’s original mandate being to give “a hand up” to Aboriginal people, where does that leave Aboriginal businesses - and the CCAB? First of all, Davis said, “we’ve built a strong relationship and work quite closely with corporate Canada. So for Aboriginal busi-

nesses, they look at us as a conduit to build a customer base or to provide (mainstream) companies with resources.” The CCAB has also begun offering low cost memberships in order to attract Aboriginal business owners, many of which are small- and medium-sized.

At the same time, the CCAB is poised to make a subtle but important shift from encouraging Aboriginal participation in mainstream businesses, toward supporting and advocating on behalf of established and upcoming Aboriginal entrepreneurs, while maintaining their core mandate. For example, because of companies such as the Lac La Ronge Indian Band’s Kitsaki Management Limited Partnership and the Prince Albert Grand Council’s Prince Albert Development Corporation that are “having an impact with their wallets,” the CCAB “is strategically placed to really have an impact on government decision-making.”

Under Davis’ leadership, efforts such as the Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame, which began in 2005 and the annual Circle for 2015 networking banquets will continue. New initiatives will include the development of a communications technology-enhanced idea exchange network, to open up dialogue between Aboriginal entrepreneurs across the country, and a positioning of the CCAB as a focal point for cutting-edge research into issues facing Aboriginal business in Canada.

“I would like us to be the voice for Aboriginal business,” said Davis. “I think it’s incredible to be part of something that benefits everybody.”

By Carmen Pauls Orthner



Clint Davis (left), speaks with Nellie Cournoyea (centre) and Tony Belcourt.



(Left to right) Clint Davis of CCAB, speaks with Doug Ford of Xerox, Gary Knox of Sodexo and former Prime Minister Paul Martin.



Education a key to success for Jamieson

Ron Jamieson a recent laureate to the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame accredits education for his success as an accomplished businessman. Jamieson along with Nellie Cournoyea was honoured for their lifetime contribution to Aboriginal business in Canada.

“Education is the secret to success in the entrepreneurial world,” said Jamieson. “It seems the first 30 or 40 years of my life I was taking some course or another to understand finance and financial matters.”

Jamieson said he was taken back when he first learned of his induction, “especially to be recognized with Nellie Cournoyea whom I have a lot of respect for.”

Born in 1948 on the Six Nations of the Grand River Jamieson, a Mohawk who now lives in Oshweken recalls struggling to raise enough money to finance the building of his home on the reserve.”

“The thing I have tried in particular over the last 15 years is trying to make housing more readily available to our people who live on the

reserve.”

This resulted in BMO making loans available to people who live on reserves. “It’s made (buying homes) much easier. I’ve seen the results and it’s gratifying to see.”

Having a home is as important as having an education, Jamieson maintains and that base of stability provides young people with a proper place to study and a place in which meals can be made.

“The whole concept of shelter, is first on everybody’s list. If young people have a place to live, they tend to do better in school,” he said. “And education is paramount. “You must be educated and trained in the area you choose to make your work in. A good education is a launching pad for so many opportunities. If you don’t have a certain level of education, many employers won’t even talk to you even if you’re a good person. You have to have the credentials in order to achieve and be successful.”

Jamieson initially trained as a chemist. He didn’t stay in the profession too long moving from the laboratory into sales. In the 1990s, he



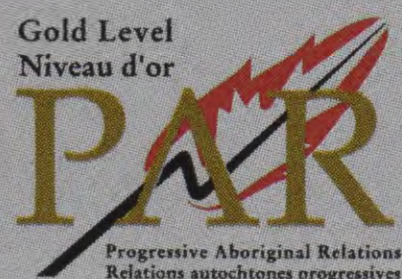
was approached by the Bank of Montreal and hired on as vice-president to establish BMO’s Aboriginal banking unit. He became Canada’s first Aboriginal senior executive at a major bank. In this position, he helped make loans available for on reserve home purchasing.

Jamieson also marks his time as chair on the Royal Commission on economic matters that affect Aboriginal people as a highlight of his work.

“It marked a breakthrough to getting more non-Aboriginal businesses and people involved in some of our issues and trying to partner up more directly with Aboriginal people, and it just seemed to mark quite a turning point between the Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal people.”

Continued on page 11.

BMO Financial Group
congratulates laureate Ron
Jamieson on his induction
into the Aboriginal Business
Hall of Fame.

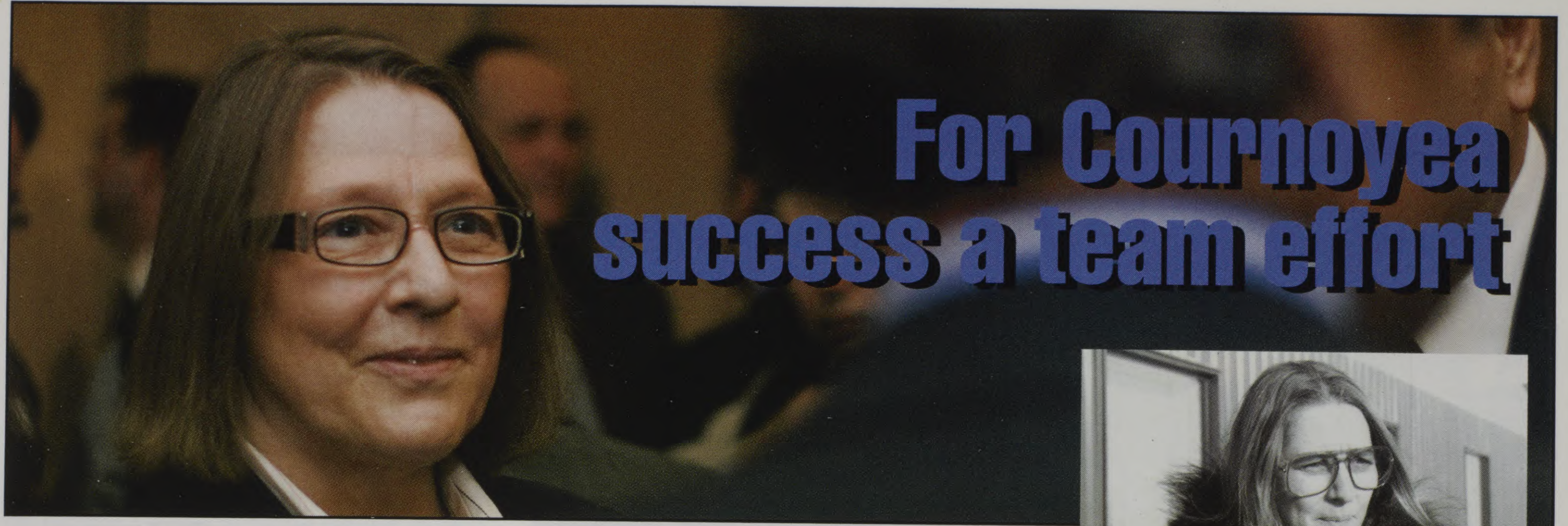


BMO Financial Group is working to build mutually beneficial, sustainable relationships with Aboriginal communities and to foster and promote educational and employment opportunities for Aboriginal youth.



*Registered trade-mark of Bank of Montreal

For Cournoyea success a team effort



Nellie Cournoyea is quick to say that her two most recent recognitions were team efforts. "We work as a team, as a group to build our strengths," said Cournoyea, who was recently inducted as a laureate for the Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame and was awarded the Governor General's Northern Medal.

"It's a recognition of the work the Inuvialuit are doing to advance the Aboriginal agenda."

Cournoyea said the two awards, the announcement of the northern medal coming in January and the hall of fame laureate following in February, complement each other. "The venue I'm in is working with people, not just individual accomplishments and individual goals."

Cournoyea presently serves as chair and chief executive officer of the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation (IRC), which has the mandate of managing the lands and financial compensation resulting from the 1984 Inuvialuit Final Agreement, which she helped to negotiate. Cournoyea also served as govern-

ment leader for the Northwest Territories in 1991.

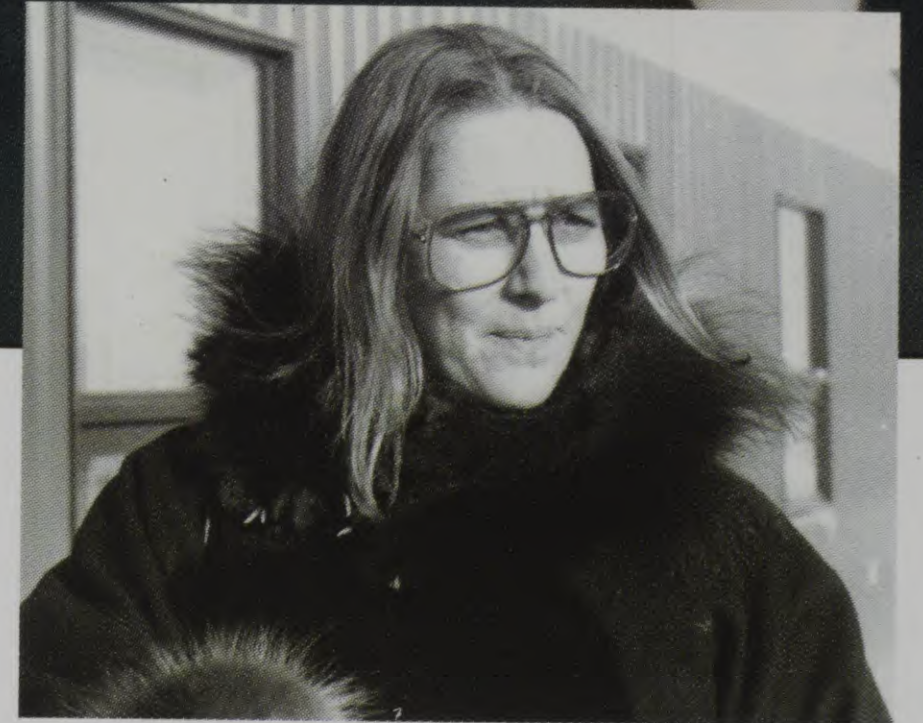
"We're very proud of the business we do with the IRC," said Cournoyea, noting numerous accomplishments of the IRC among which are Canadian North Airlines and the Northern Transportation Company Ltd. (barge services). The IRC has assets of over \$400 million, ranging from transportation to oil and gas production to heavy equipment manufacturing.

"I'm equally proud of the individual businesses that have been able to thrive by using the institutional rules and procedures we've put into place," she said.

The Inuvialuit Business List was created in 2000 by the IRC with the intent of promoting economic development within the north by encouraging oil and gas industry to use local businesses.

"Businesses need to meet certain criteria to be on the list," explains Cournoyea. "It keeps the legitimate businesses out in front."

Cournoyea's career has spanned over 30 years. "Most of my life I've worked with other



people," she said. "I believe we have to work as a team. We try to build depth and capacity and sustainability. We won't accomplish our goals with individual effort."

"But the Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame goes beyond her induction, it proves to the national government and Canadians as a whole that Aboriginals can be successful. "Aboriginal institutions always have to prove themselves," said Cournoyea. "They do a lot of good things but government bodies and government institutions always look at Aboriginal institutions and Aboriginal businesses as short term. When we're able to survive over a good number of years, that's an accomplishment. It shows we're healthy. It proves that Aboriginal people can do it and can be successful."

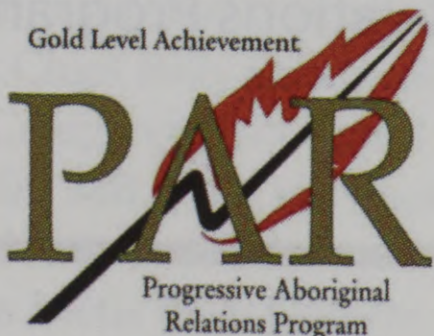
Continued on page 11.



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Manitoba Lotteries a winner

The Manitoba Lotteries Corporation hits gold with its third Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) award with another win as first Crown Corporation in Canada to receive gold-level status.

"It makes good business sense. It's a win, a win for everyone involved. The PAR program really allows us to advance MLC from a business perspective, it's not only the right thing to do, it's a requirement of business," said Donna Dagg, sustainable development coordinator.

Dagg is part of the working group that meets on a monthly basis to brainstorm and come up with initiatives that can be put into practice to match the PAR program goals. Dagg said her role is to support and add environmental and social value into the business decisions of MLC. She said the PAR program makes her work with MLC and the Aboriginal community that much more exciting and challenging.

"At Manitoba Lotteries, we believe that the provincial government is recognized for its foresight by incorporating a strategic plan that recognizes Aboriginal relations and initiatives as one of our important goals of the corporation," said Dagg.

The internal structure that supports the PAR program is important to the goals MLC sets for itself, she said. A working group consisting of people from various MLC departments meet regularly to discuss opportunities to enhance Aboriginal relations within the organization. That working group includes people from the human resources department, food and

beverage, casino management, and community support and entertainment.

"We brainstorm on ways that we can interact and enhance Aboriginal relations within our corporation and then that working group reports to an executive committee that reviews our opportunities and strategic plans and then approves the initiatives," said Donna Dagg.

PAR is part of the mission of the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business to increase Aboriginal participation in the Canadian economy. Its purpose is to help organizations improve their commitment to Aboriginal relations, and the right to use a hallmark to demonstrate their achievement.

"The corporate structure is integral to enhancing progressive Aboriginal relations," said Dagg. "Some of the strategies MLC includes in their diverse workplace are training initiatives that include Aboriginal teachings, diversity training and opportunities for mentorship programs that lead to advancement at MLC. The education development program helps employees continue with their academic learning, while providing support through the employee assistance program."

MLC is committed to the value of diversity in the workplace and Dagg is proud to say that 13 per cent of MLC's employees are Aboriginal. With an Aboriginal director on the MLC

board of directors, the interests of the Aboriginal community at large is also being represented, said Dagg. Their commitment to working with the Aboriginal community doesn't stop there.

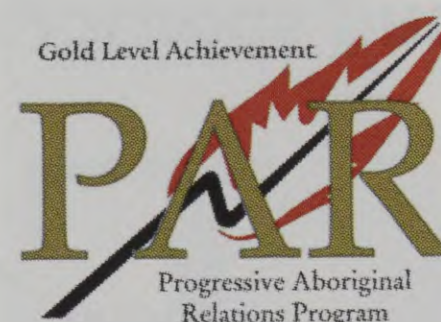
MLC sponsors many Aboriginal events including the Manito-Ahbee Aboriginal festival, and the Aboriginal Music Awards. Dagg said one of the biggest events celebrated and promoted through the MLC is National Aboriginal Day with Aboriginal entertainment at the Casinos of Winnipeg. The festivities make it a big day, said Dagg.

"We enhance our business by participating and at the same time we are supporting the economic community," said Dagg.

By Marie Burke



Representatives from Manitoba Lotteries accepting the PAR Award.



Proud to have achieved Gold Level standing in the Progressive Aboriginal Relations Program.



Continued from page 9.

When asked what words of wisdom she would share with young Aboriginal entrepreneurs, Cournoyea said, "the only key to success is a lot of hard work and dedication to what you're doing."

"Stubbornness is also required, understanding that success can't be accomplished overnight (unless you win a lottery, she laughs) and there are peaks and valleys in any business. "If you go in with your eyes wide open, then you have a much better chance at succeeding."

Cournoyea joins Ron Jamieson, chair for the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business, as the fourth set of laureates to be inducted into the Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame. The Governor General's Northern Medal, created in 2005, is awarded annually to a citizen whose actions and achievements have contributed to the evolution and constant reaffirmation of the Canadian North as part of Canada's national identity.

By Shari Narine

Continued from page 8.

Over 500 people attended the recent award ceremonies in Toronto on Feb. 19, which coincided with the tenth annual circle for 2015 national gala dinner.

"It was a very broad cross section of Aboriginal leaders and also mainstream business leaders."

"Awards like this, opens the eyes of non-Aboriginal people, helping them understand the accomplishments of Aboriginals. "They get to see that (Aboriginal people) really are achievers. That's the benefit I think to the broader public."

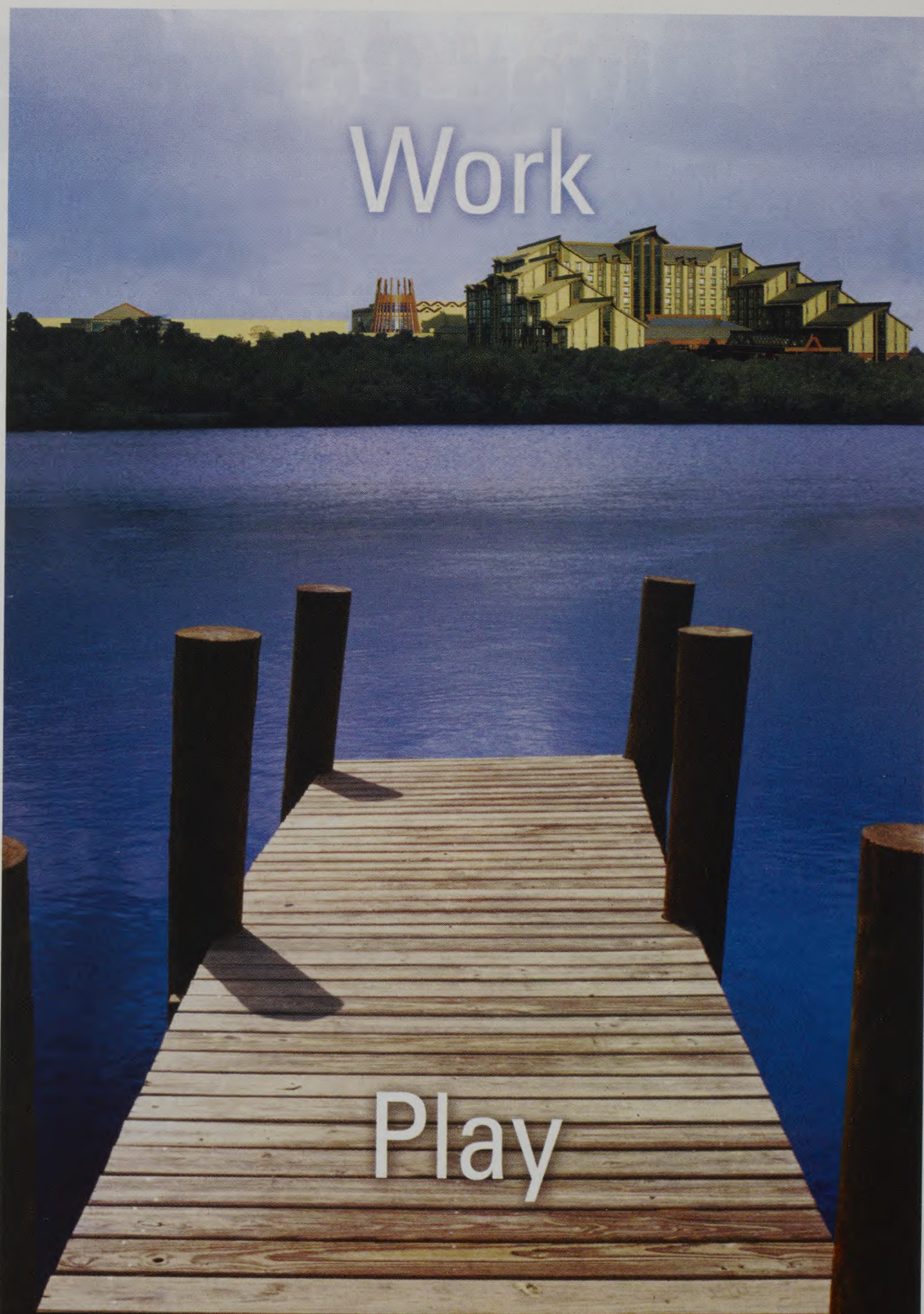
He stresses that all his accomplishments would not have been possible without the support of his family. His wife Rebecca stood by his side as did his sons, his brothers and sisters. "I've been fortunate that during my entire career I've been surrounded by supportive people."

Presently Jamieson serves as chair for the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business and is a director on a number of boards including the Nuclear Waste Management Organization of Canada and the Denendah Investment Corporation in Yellowknife. He also does consulting work primarily in Aboriginal areas which relate to financial issues.

This is the fourth year that people have been inducted into the Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame. Jamieson and Cournoyea join ABHF laureates Chief Billy Diamond, a northern Québec Cree; Irvin Goodon, a Métis from Boissevain, MB; Fred Carmichael, a Gwich'in from the Northwest Territories; Suzanne Rochon-Burnett, a Métis from Ontario; Chief Victor Buffalo, a Cree from Alberta's Samson Cree First Nation; Harry Cook, a Cree from Saskatchewan's Lac La Ronge First Nation; and Garfield Flowers, an Inuk from Hopedale, NL.

By Shari Narine

Windspeaker Business Quarterly



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Red River College PAR a First

The Red River College of Applied Arts, Science and Technology is one of four companies to be recognized for demonstrating leadership in the Progressive Aboriginal Relations program (PAR).

"We are pleased that we are the first post-secondary institution in Canada to be acknowledged at the PAR bronze level which is a milestone for us, and it's always nice to be first at something," said Jeff Zabudsky, President of Red River College.

To receive PAR accreditation, organizations must demonstrate success in four areas including, employment of Aboriginal people, conducting business with Aboriginal businesses, offering services that assist individual capacity development for Aboriginal people and demonstrating strong relationships with the broader Aboriginal community.

Red River College established themselves as an institution that has been making significant contributions, which secured them at the bronze level. The bronze level represents the good beginning on the PAR path, which then leads to the silver level representing a major accomplishment. The gold level doesn't represent first place but instead the gold of leadership and sustainability.

"We are excited about it, it's something that we have been working on for a couple of years now and when we started this journey it was a process of educating ourselves and it allowed us to recognize that what we were already doing was very progressive," said Zabudsky.

Red River College has developed some new

academic programs tailored for Aboriginal students. They have recently introduced new support services, which include the Elders in Residence program, a Medicine Wheel Garden, and an Aboriginal Student Support Centre.

The college is pleased to use the hallmark of PAR in their communications with the communities at large, but it goes beyond that, said Zabudsky. He said the college wants to be recognized as an employer of choice for their community and move towards a better reflection of staffing for their students.

"Our future and the future strength of this province is our youthful Aboriginal population. We have the second youngest population in Canada and so for us, it's an opportunity for young people to be making the choice to come to our college," said Zabudsky.

Increasing the Aboriginal student population is a key area that Red River College continues to work towards, affirms Zabudsky.

The curriculum design model incorporated into college academic programs is a large part of reflecting their dedication to diversity and meeting unique needs.

"White society has a certain way of thinking and some traditional learning models that has not respected the unique and valuable characteristics of Aboriginal learning and PAR allows us to celebrate that," said Zabudsky.

"A strong group of people from the college deserve the credit in getting the accreditation of PAR. It proves what can be achieved together, he said. The college will continue to

develop their strategies to engage Aboriginal people as employees, partners and businesses

"Some areas that we want to move into that will help us with our PAR accreditation is doing more business with Aboriginal companies and there is a lot of opportunity there," said Zabudsky.

With Manitoba being the first province to have an Aboriginal Chamber of Commerce, Zabudsky sees the college more involved with it to reach their goals. The work anticipated will also include having more Aboriginal instructors at the college to provide role models for their students.

By Marie Burke



Dr. Jeff Zabudsky (right), president of Red River College accepts the PAR Award from Gary Knox.

Going Places Together.

Red River College is proud to be the first post-secondary institution in Canada accredited by the Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) program.

Sponsored by the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business, PAR helps organizations measure and improve their commitment to Aboriginal employment, training, business development and community relations.

 **RED RIVER COLLEGE**
OF APPLIED ARTS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Identifying a need was key for Higgins

Recruiting and placing Aboriginal professionals in positions of influence is what Higgins International Inc. of Winnipeg is all about.

For over two decades Higgins has been dedicated to promoting qualified Aboriginal candidates and that is one of the reasons they achieved gold standing within the Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) program.

Brenda LaRose, the guiding force and Principal of Higgins started working in human resource consulting in a mainstream environment.

She remembers identifying a need for services to recruit Aboriginal professionals at a time when her employer was not fully convinced of the benefits.

"What happens in the Aboriginal community is we work mostly by word of mouth, you have to build trust and respect," LaRose explained.

"If someone came into the office, even if they weren't a potential recruit, I'd get them a coffee and meet with them."

Higgins International Inc. began because the firm LaRose was working for told her she shouldn't have all those 'Native' people sitting in the waiting room. "I quit," said LaRose.

"I thought I would see if I could make it on my own. We saw it coming years ago. We knew there was going to be a huge shortage of skilled people and that the Aboriginal community was the solution to a lot of the economic issues around the workforce. The government knows that, corporations know that."

LaRose said the progress companies like Manitoba Lotteries and Syncrude are building a new social conscience into their corporate environments; paving the way to change. "We have to do this for all the right reasons, not just socially, but to ensure it makes economic sense," she adds.

She commends those who have helped the Aboriginal community from the corporate side, noting Charlie Coffey who recently retired from the Royal Bank and Kerry Hawkins, retired CEO of Cargill as prime examples.

Forty years ago there were few qualified Aboriginal candidates to fill senior level positions but now Higgins can find candidates for almost any business looking for executive and senior level employees.

"There are not enough people in the workforce," said LaRose. "I can now stand up in front of kids in our community and tell them

that although my parents and uncles were discriminated against and years ago you didn't let your employer know you were Aboriginal, now employers don't care about that. You just have to have the skills to do the job. Stay in school and don't stop at just one degree, keep going, get some experience."

With offices in Winnipeg and Ottawa, serving national and international clients, Higgins places qualified Aboriginal professionals in a wide variety of occupations.

"Corporations are realizing they need to engage the Aboriginal community, through employment, consultation and strategic alliances."

LaRose and her Higgins colleagues recognized the need to recruit Aboriginal representatives for corporate boards.

"Boards are seriously looking at diversity issues. In order for us to really make a difference, we have to have a seat at the table. And, why not recruit a First Nations or Aboriginal person?" she questioned.

"We have the people with the education, the skills, knowledge and abilities – not as a token, but to make a real contribution."

By Linda Ungar



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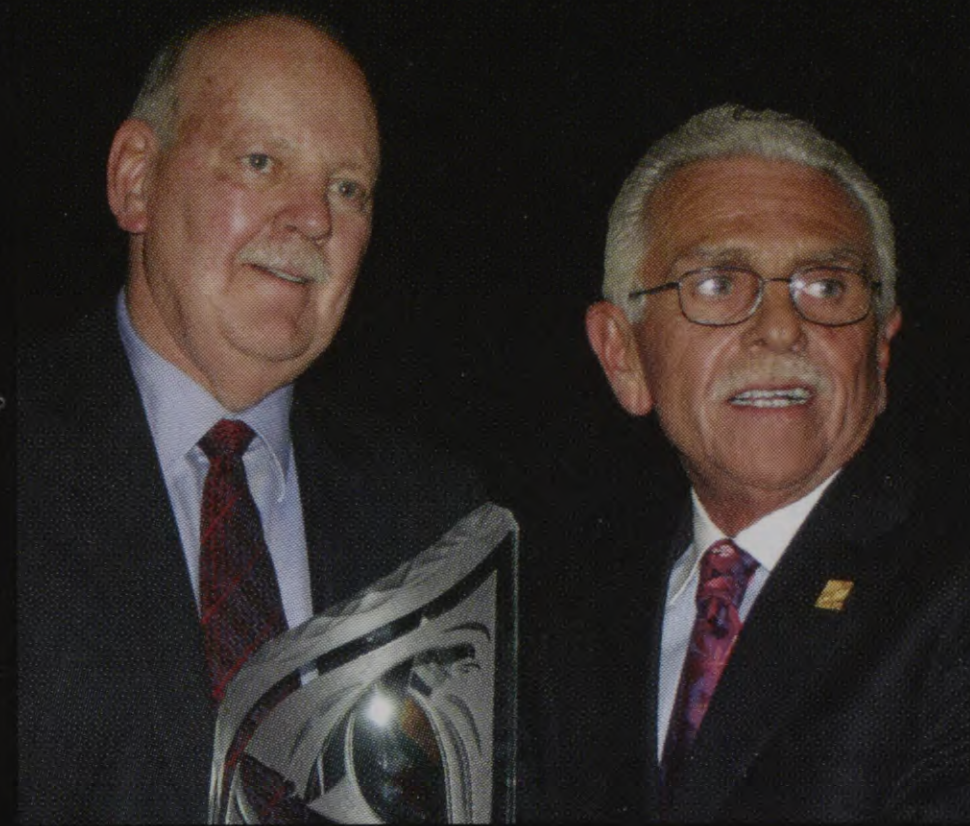
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Susan Aglukark (centre) introducing (left to right) former Prime Minister Paul Martin, Ron Jamieson, Nellie Cournoyea and Doug Ford.



Jack MacDonald (left), from Compass Group of Canada inducts Ron Jamieson into the Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame.



Steve Bolduc (left) of Aboriginal Printing Corp. and Sgt. John Sideris with Canadian Forces Recruiting.



Ron Jamieson (left) is warmly greeted by Gary Knox of Sodexo.



Clint Davis, new president and CEO of CCAB welcomes everyone to the Gala Dinner.

16th Annual National Gala Dinner

Feb. 19, 2008 — Toronto



Jack MacDonald (left) inducts Nellie Cournoyea into the Hall of Fame.



Roberta Jamieson, National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation.



(Left to right) James Eetoolook, Duane Smith and Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame laureate Nellie Cournoyea.



Garry Knox (left), presents Dwayne LaMontagne representing Savanna Energy Services with their PAR Award .



(Left to right) Chief Paul Gladu, Chief Pierre Pelletier, Chief Wilfred King, and Chief Yvette Metansinine.



Gary Knox (left) presents Brenda LaRose (centre) and Brock Higgins with the PAR award for Higgins International.



Jocelyne Soulodre, past president and CEO of CCAB (left) with Tony Belcourt, MNO.



Paul Martin (left) shares a word with Mary Simon.



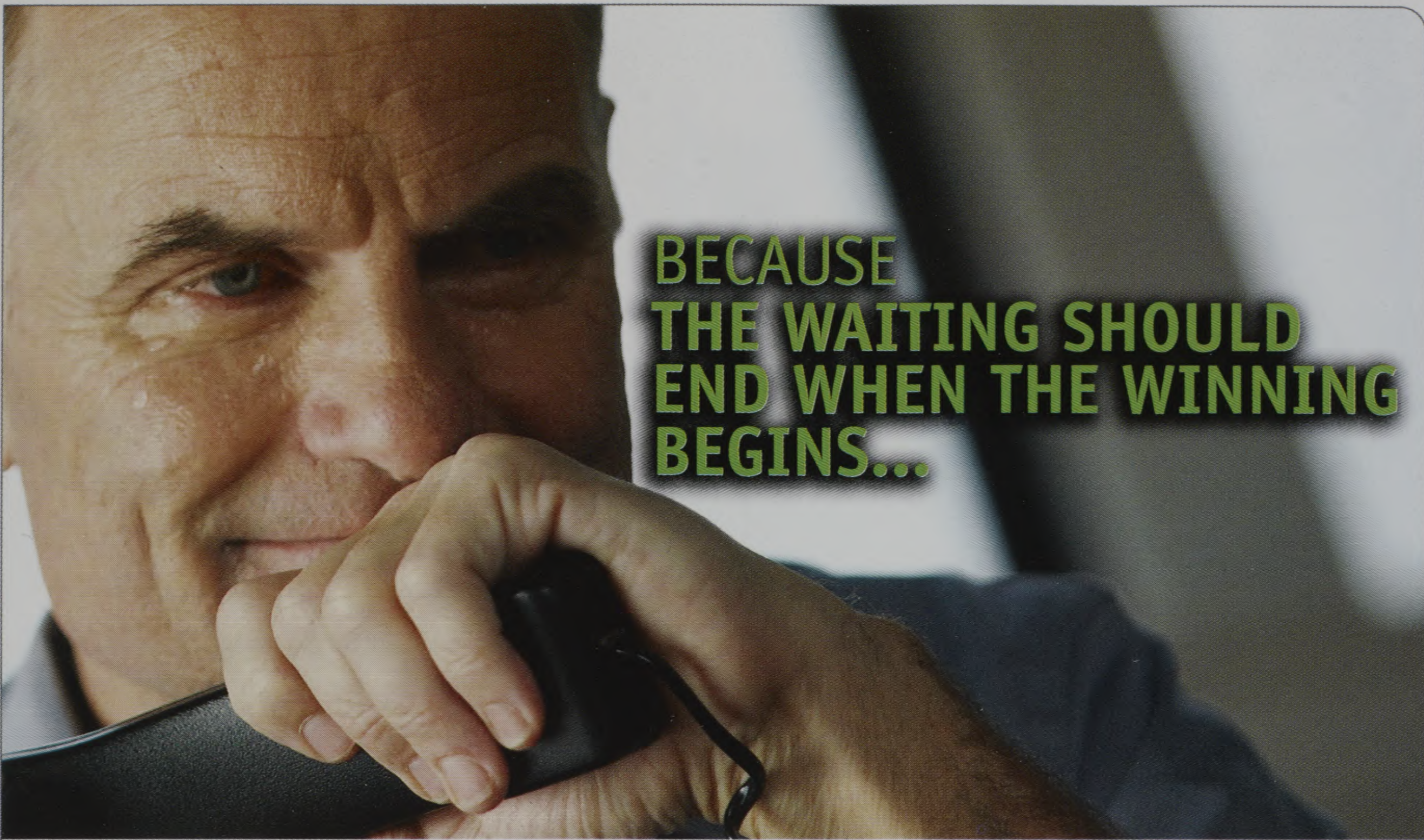
The evenings's Master of Ceremonies, Susan Aglukark.



Brenda LaRose, Higgins International (left) with Mary Jane Loustel, IBM Canada.



Elson (left) Pat McDougald, Savanna Energy Services.



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