

# Windspeaker

February 2000

AMMSA, Canada's largest publisher of Aboriginal news

Volume 17 No. 10

## WHAT'S INSIDE



**Buffalo Spirit**  
A Guide For The  
First Steps Of  
Your Journey.  
Inside  
Windspeaker

### MEMBERSHIP WOES

The Department of Indian Affairs decides membership questions without considering the most important issues — tradition and culture. So say several Aboriginal leaders who are on the forefront of the battle against the assimilation tactics of the federal government. ....Page 6 and 7.

### TAKE TO THE STAGE

Darrell Dennis of *The Rez* fame sees his first play, *The Trickster of Third Ave. East*, open in Toronto to an auspicious debut. ....Page 15.



BRAD CROWFOOT

## A helping hand!

The Napi Powwow at Peigan First Nation in southern Alberta was held Jan. 21 to 23. See photos page 2.

## Canadian cases affected

# U.S. court rules trust funds mismanaged

By Paul Barnsley  
Windspeaker Staff Writer

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Lawsuits seeking huge awards are front and centre in Indian Country these days. Those involved in the biggest cases say the government made huge mistakes in the name of assimilation or racism or politics.

The Samson Cree Nation will begin the trial phase of its civil action in Calgary this May, seeking more than a billion dollars in compensation for what it alleges was gross mismanagement of oil and gas monies held in trust by the federal government.

Six Nations of the Grand River is holding its action against the Crown — for an accounting of its lands and monies held in trust — in abeyance while Indian Affairs Minister Robert Nault tries to mediate the dispute. Billions of dollars are involved in this civil claim as well.

And Native leaders on both sides of the Canada/United States border say a Dec. 21 U.S. Federal Dis-

trict Court decision is a sign that the fallout of hundreds of years of irresponsible, unlawful government action can no longer be ignored or covered up.

Trial Judge Royce C. Lamberth ruled the U.S. government breached its fiduciary duty to more than 500,000 Native trust fund beneficiaries. The government has asked the U.S. Court of Appeals for leave to appeal. A decision is expected in February or March. The only step remaining in the U.S. justice system after the Court of Appeals is the Supreme Court.

The class action lawsuit, *Cobell v. Babbitt*, was launched at the urging of Elouise Cobell, a member of the Blackfeet tribe of Montana, who was elected as treasurer of the tribe in the early 1980s and discovered problems with the trust accounts. Cobell persuaded the Native American Rights Fund (NARF) to file the lawsuit.

John Echohawk, executive director of NARF, said the decision will force the government to explain its actions to the trust fund owners.

"We're don't think they're going to be able to do that because of the

bad condition of the trust records, so we'll be able to present evidence ourselves, based on some forensic accounting by our expert witnesses — the Price, Waterhouse, Coopers firm — and we think they will be able to demonstrate that the account balances that the government's representing are way below what they should be and that our evidence of the accounting will be accepted and then the government will have to adjust the account balances to meet the accounting that we would present. So then there will be an increase in the total account balances," he said.

There are two types of trust funds in the United States. *Cobell* involves only trust funds owned by individuals. Estimates of the amount of money the federal government owes those owners are close to \$10 billion. Tribal government trust fund owners are watching the case carefully and may be next to file suit.

As the case proceeded, it became apparent the government was trying to stonewall attempts to make it account for the money. Two of President Bill Clinton's cabinet

members were held in contempt by Judge Lamberth for failing to produce documents.

"The contempt proceedings occurred in February of '99 when the court held that the secretary of the Interior [equivalent to Canada's minister of Indian Affairs] and the secretary of the Treasury, [Canada's cabinet equivalent would be the Finance minister] together with the assistant secretary for Indian Affairs, were in contempt of court for failure to produce documents related to the trust accounts of the five main plaintiffs that they'd been under court order to produce for some time.

They'd represented to the court that those documents would be forthcoming and they never were produced and the misrepresentations that they made to the court then became the subject of the contempt proceedings. (They were made to pay the fees for the attorneys and the expert witnesses that we used to try and get those documents produced. A total amount of \$600,000 was awarded," Echohawk explained. (See Bands on page 12.)

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# Blackfoot Confederacy declares independence

By Paul Barnsley  
Windspeaker Staff Writer

## PEIGAN FIRST NATION

Members of the traditional Blackfoot Confederacy have issued a declaration that says they are rejecting Canada's and the United States' jurisdiction over their traditional territory and reverting to the state of affairs that existed before European contact.

Acting on the advice of University of Illinois international law professor Francis Boyle, the Blackfoot Confederacy now calls itself the Blackfoot Nation. Boyle advised the confederacy members that a nation can be a confederacy but a confederacy is not necessarily a nation, and nationhood is what the declaration is all about.

Two Blood Tribe members and a member of the Montana Blackfoot community travelled to Peigan (about a 40-minute drive west of Lethbridge) for a Jan. 21 meeting at the home of Sikapii-Whitehorse who is also known as George Gallant. He and his wife, Elizabeth Crow Flag, who prefers to be called Yellow Dust Woman, are the keepers of the Beaver Bundle, one of the most sacred objects in Blackfoot tradition. George Gooddagger and Ken Scout, members of Alberta's Blood Tribe, and Long Standing Bear Chief of Browning, Montana attended a meeting

that was heralded on various internet usenet groups (computer chat lines) as a momentous occasion in the history of the Blackfoot people.

These people, on behalf of the Blackfoot Confederacy, issued their three-page declaration on Nov. 29. They invited the governor general to attend the Jan. 21 meeting marking the declaration of independence. Governor General Adrienne Clarkson declined to attend because she had a previous engagement, but the letter sent to Sikapii-Whitehorse on her behalf congratulated the Blackfoot people and wished them well.

It's hard to imagine what Clarkson would have made of the conversation among the half-dozen Blackfoot people who sat around the dining room table in Sikapii-Whitehorse's home on the Peigan territory in southwestern Alberta on Jan. 21, but as the figurative head of state of Canada, she probably would not have been comfortable there.

Sikapii-Whitehorse interpreted the letter from Clarkson as an expression of support for the declaration from the governor general, but Rideau Hall press secretary Stewart Wheeler told *Windspeaker* that the governor general's staff receives hundreds of invitations each year and the standard procedure for dealing with each invitation is to first check to

see if the governor general already has something scheduled on the date in question. If that's the case, as it was in the case of the invitation extended by the Blackfoot people, then a letter is sent expressing regrets that Clarkson has a previous engagement and cannot attend.

Only when there is nothing already scheduled and there's a chance the governor general may accept an invitation does the staff research the invitation to see if it would be appropriate for Clarkson or her husband, author John Raulston Saul, to attend. Wheeler said the invitation extended by the Blackfoot people never got to that stage.

"The letter certainly shouldn't be interpreted as an endorsement," he said.

Each of the people around the table at the Peigan meeting told a story of being marginalized by the Indian Act or federally recognized government on their home territory. Each also made it clear that they don't support the elected governments and don't get along too well with the elected leaders of their communities.

Traditional councils in all parts of North America have similar complaints. Most of these councils — the Iroquois Confederacy is a typical example — have no means of raising money and thus are powerless and re-

duced to a role of criticizing the Indian Act governments in Canada or the federally recognized tribal governments in the United States. But many Indigenous people have a deep-seated respect for the descendants of the traditional, pre-contact chiefs or faith-keepers. In some parts of the country, the traditional councils work together with the elected councils. Those arrangements usually see the traditional (or hereditary) chiefs performing the political role while the elected chiefs perform an administrative role, managing government programs and looking after the roads, sewage treatment and other similar functions of a local government.

Projects which threaten the environment or are clearly unpopular with the majority of the community have been known to allow the traditional chiefs to pull the people together to disrupt the control of the elected councils.

Sikapii-Whitehorse said the traditional Blackfoot lands are immensely resource-rich and yet the elected council, a group he accuses of being an arm of the federal government, allows the majority of its people to live in poverty.

"Ralph Klein brags that \$12 to \$15 billion a year in resources is taken off our land every year and yet we don't see a cent," he said.

"Why are we beggars on our own land?"

He and Long Standing Bear Chief say they have uncovered a variety of illegal moves which invalidate the treaty covering their land (Treaty 7) and they say the elected councils are aware of these illegal actions but don't do anything about them because the elected officials are very well paid to look the other way.

"No man bites the hand that feeds him," said Long Standing Bear Chief. "Especially an ignorant man. But, since the government doesn't feed me, I'm not afraid to bite them."

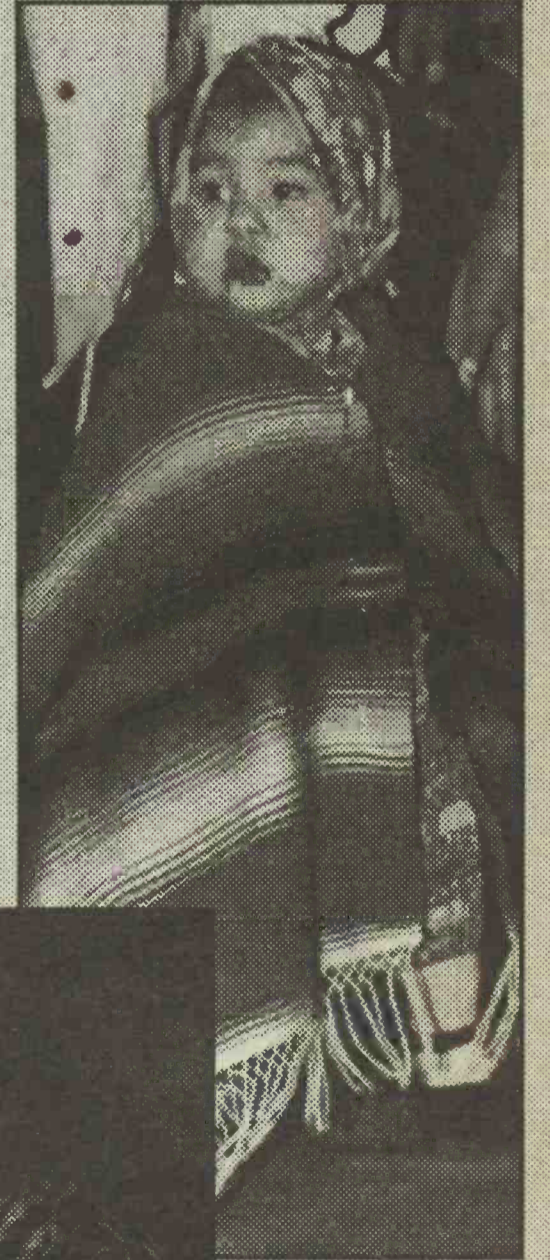
All confederacy members said that the money extracted from their lands should be available to their people so they can use the funds to re-establish their traditional government and throw out what they see as the corrupt colonizers' system.

Sikapii-Whitehorse said the movement towards independence is in its infancy and will require a lot of organizing and political activism if the goal of being recognized around the world as a sovereign nation is to be achieved.

So far, both federal governments and the local mainstream press have chosen to ignore the declaration, an indication of just how far the former confederacy members have to go.



*Napi Powwow  
in Pincher Creek, Alberta  
was held on  
January 21, 22 & 23, 2000.*



# Hawaii trip no "junket" bands insist

By Joan Black  
Windspeaker Writer

## KAMLOOPS, B.C.

First Nations who attend conferences in holiday resort areas can expect to come under the gun for wasting taxpayers' money, recent stories in British Columbia newspapers show. Two January articles by Suzanne Fournier in Vancouver's the *Province* suggest bands used federal health care or education money to pay for fact-finding or research missions to Hawaii, which are portrayed as an unjustified and improper expense.

Spokesmen for Health

Canada, the Canadian Taxpayers Federation and a provincial child and family agency director are quoted naysaying such trips, but no substantive evidence of misconduct seems to have prefaced an invitation to them to comment on Hawaiian trips by First Nations.

Fournier reported one trip in December included 13 B.C. and Alberta First Nations leaders, including "several Whispering Pines band members (Chief Richard LeBourdais, band manager Orla LeBourdais, community nurse Colleen LeBourdais and two councillors and their wives), Ahousaht band Chief Angus Campbell and councillor Louie Frank, and the Sto:lo Nation's Maureen Chapman, Debra Schneider and Patricia Charlie."

Medical Services Branch spokesman Yousuf Ali "admitted", according to Fournier, an audit of eight B.C. bands showed they had mis-spent health funds, but nothing in Fournier's article links those facts to the Hawaiian trips or the First Nations who went.

How much business versus how much pleasure is conducted out of the country is for the bands to know and is no one else's business, seems to be the attitude of the beleaguered First Nations. Most of the Native people quoted in Fournier's articles did not respond to *Windspeaker's* numerous requests to bring clarity to the issues raised. The

ones who did talk to us said the *Province* and other newspapers selectively present information in a way that is calculated to discredit First Nations.

For example, a Jan. 14 letter to the *Province* by trip organizer Dennis Josey takes issue with a picture of a beach that accompanied a Jan. 7 article by Fournier. The First Nations group for whom he arranged travel in December did not stay in a beachfront hotel, according to Josey. He also says the workshop fee for four

Fournier admitted to *Windspeaker* she had learned the room cost of \$95 to \$200 a night

the meeting with the chiefs Jan. 12.

Monture says he's frustrated that "nobody's interested" in substantive First Nations health issues.

He provided a breakdown of the cost for four Shuswap people to attend a Hawaiian conference Nov. 8 to 12. He said the November trip was the topic of the Jan.

November, they don't target the Alberta and Saskatchewan band members who also went, which caused one B.C. spokesman to ask whether putting B.C. bands in a bad light with the public was connected to the sensitive treaty negotiations underway there now.

On the other hand, a January press release provided by the Sto:lo Nation's Xyolhemeylh-National office (a child and family agency) on behalf of

Maureen Chapman, chief of Skawahlook First Nation and the portfolio holder for Xyolhemeylh, responds to what Chapman describes as "inaccuracies" in the Jan. 7 article by Fournier with rhetoric about understanding poverty and working for the betterment of her Nation without refuting much of what Fournier said.

The release does say Chapman and Debra

Schneider did not represent the Sto:lo Nation or Xyolhemeylh, but went to Hawaii as representatives of their Skawahlook First Nation. It also says Skawahlook does not receive federal or provincial funding of health or social services.

A woman in the Xyolhemeylh office said Chapman went "on her own band funds, okayed by her own members. And the one who went on our behalf, as our cultural advisor, Pat Charlie, to do cultural exchange with the Hawaiian Aboriginals."

Chapman responded to *Windspeaker's* request for an interview by saying she wanted to talk about the trip and would call back. Several telephone calls to her made over subsequent days were not returned, however.

The Montana First Nation (Hobbema, Alta.) and the Ocean Man First Nation (Stoughton, Sask.) confirmed they also sent delegates, two and five respectively. These people could not be reached at press time. Diane Meguinis from Tsuu T'ina First Nation in Alberta said she paid her own way and her son's and

took advantage of a seat sale to take 10 days' holiday. She said she did not visit Hawaii as a leader on behalf of her band.

## CHILD/FAMILY SERVICES

quoted by a hotel desk clerk and mentioned in her story was not in line with the \$65 group rate the bands paid, but otherwise she stands by what she wrote. She says all her information came from Native community members who are unhappy with what their leaders are doing. She provided one published letter, allegedly from a Sto:lo Nation member, supporting her claims. She says she has others.

Shuswap Nation Tribal Director Dave Monture counters that the *Province* doesn't print First Nations' letters giving the other side. He said the negative news stories have damaged his credibility and adversely affected his efforts to raise money for a local hospital.

He said he also met a wall of indifference when he talked to Fournier's editor. Both, Monture says, passed up his invitation to attend a press conference on Jan. 13, which

was supposed to inform all media about the results of "a recent Hawaiian fact finding trip as reported to the chief's council on Jan. 12th, 2000." *Windspeaker* received notice of the B.C. press conference Jan. 12.

When *Windspeaker* reached Monture on Jan. 21, he provided extensive information about Hawaiian Native people and their social, political and economic situation as well as Hawaiian contacts. He indicated he could not

speak about the December trip mentioned in Fournier's write-up, since he had only heard about it the day before

## JUSTICE

13 press conference too.

Monture said he would ask Leigh Ann Edwards, a Neskonlith councillor who went to Hawaii in November, to provide *Windspeaker* with information about her trip. She did not return our telephone calls.

Whispering Pines band manager Orla LeBourdais responded to requests for information about the

## HOUSING

Hawaii trip she attended with "We've been instructed not to talk to the press." When pushed, she said we had the option of submitting questions for consideration by their council.

Then on Jan. 21 Whispering Pines Chief Richard LeBourdais called to provide details regarding his 100-member band. He said six people went to Hawaii in November for seven or eight days and

## EDUCATION

he accompanied the health conference group on that trip. International trade between Indigenous nations and other forms of economic co-operation were prominent in his discussions with the Hawaiians. He did not explain his band's earlier reluctance to talk to *Windspeaker*.

Ahousaht First Nation Chief Angus Campbell and councillor Louie Frank did not return our telephone call. Band manager Joe Campbell said he knew nothing about the trip.

Although Fournier's ar-

## HEALTH

ticles make a big deal out of members of the Shuswap Nation and the Sto:lo Nation visiting Hawaii in December and

## NATURAL RESOURCES

days was \$395 U.S., not \$500 as Fournier's article states. In addition, he says he told her their delegation had a group hotel rate of \$65 a night not \$95 to \$200.

Josey's response points out that "Canadian First Nations and Hawaiians are in the process of assuming responsibility for . . . health, education, housing, economic development, justice, child/family services, natural resources and employ-

## EMPLOYMENT

ment." He says it is smart before doing this for First Nations here to consult with the Hawaiians, "who have succeeded in establishing and maintaining viable, cost-effective community programs."

A Jan. 7 press release issued by the Shuswap Nation Tribal Council states they have been studying and negotiating their takeover of health services from Health Canada and it defends their right to "compare how indig-

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

enous peoples from Hawaii are maintaining their language, culture and identity in the face of modern conditions."

Neskonlith Chief Arthur Manuel, chairman of the Shuswap Nation Tribal Council, said "We reject any suggestion that our staff or representatives went to Hawaii for a junket, or vacation. However, we cannot speak for any delegation other than our own."



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**Indian issues too complex?**

They say a little knowledge is a dangerous thing and we think Reform MP Jim Pankiw proved it this month. The 33-year-old chiropractor and acupuncturist who grew up on the family farm in Unity, Sask. was quick to jump in with his views on affirmative action when the University of Saskatchewan decided to try and make its workforce begin to reflect the population of its community. Pankiw's is a point of view that's been out there for awhile. There's no original thinking behind his declaration that affirmative action sometimes cheapens the accomplishments of minority people. There's some truth to what he says, although saying that reaching out to a much-discriminated against minority is even remotely similar to the hate-filled intolerance of the KKK is just plain blankety-blank stupid.

We even agree that there have been some spectacular failures created by the so-called Native

access programs. There's no short-cut to a law degree or a social work certificate or even a degree in journalism. You've got to do the work.

But in a province that actually elected a Klu Klux Klan provincial government in this century, (it's true, you can look it up), where community leaders like Mr. Pankiw have allowed a group that makes up 13 per cent of the population to fill only one per cent of the workforce, something's got to be done.

Pankiw said he's looking out for Native people, that regular folks in Saskatchewan will resent Native people who get jobs because of their race and it will foster racism.

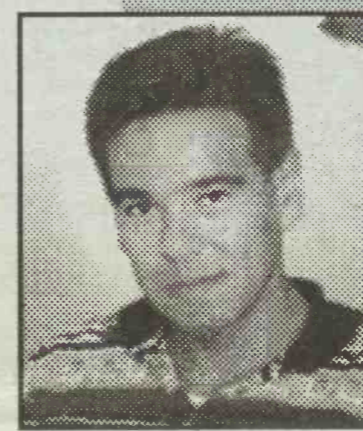
Hey, Mr. Pankiw. Instead of writing moronic, half-baked letters that argue that things should stay the way they are (a strange thing for a "reformer" to do, in any event), why not get to work on the real problem. Those regular folks you're so worried will react in a racist

manner could use a little educating. This hiring policy will be a good stop-gap measure to stem the suicide epidemic among young Native people. Right now they see no hope for the future until those prone-to-racism yahoos whose reactions you're so worried about are shown that it's OK to hire someone who looks or talks or dresses or acts a little differently from the boys at the lodge.

After all, you should know something about the troubles minority members have in getting and keeping a job. Wasn't it former Reform Party whip Bob Ringma who insisted he had the right to keep his visible minority employees in the back of the shop, away from his intolerant customers? Didn't Mr. Ringma end up on the political scrap heap because he felt blacks and gays and, probably, Indians should have been kept out of sight of the regular folks who were his customers?

**Solving the Indian problem**

By **Taiiaki Alfred**  
 Windspeaker Columnist



**To:ske**  
**It's true**

I wrote in an earlier column (*What about my human rights?* Sept. 1999) how I believe that it is our people's basic human right to determine their own membership. This is a basic belief that underlies the whole debate from an Indigenous perspective, and one which separates those of us who believe in true justice from those who adhere to its historically modified Canadian (read: colonial) form. Given some recent and forthcoming developments in Indian Country, I must return to this subject for the next couple of columns. But first, a cautionary note: all the compliant, complacent and Canadian "Aboriginals" who believe in the moral rightness of their country's laws, especially the principle that an individual's rights matter more than the survival of our nations, should stop reading now. You're likely to be spitting mad in a few minutes.

Let us understand that it is Canada's goal, advanced through policy and the co-optation of our own people, to undermine the strength and very existence of our nations by taking away — or having sell-out politicians sign away — everything that makes us unique and powerful. In addition to our languages and beliefs, these are also things like our tax immunity, our lands, our treaty rights and our independent jurisdiction. Historically and into the present day, it's clear that the Canadian government believes that by forcing or enticing us into the legal, political and cultural mainstream, every bit of distinction between us and them will gradually disappear. Then in the future, with all the differences erased, there will no longer be any moral and political justification for laws that support special rights and separate lands for Indian people.

Indian problem solved!

It's that simple. In effect, Canada wants to create Métis out of us all: to make us people with "Aboriginal heritage" (a necessary ingredient in the multicultural mosaic, after all), but at the same time just another

ethnic group with no specific legal, political or territorial rights.

A long time ago, Canada declared war on our right to be who we wanted to be; to this day Canada is dead serious about controlling us. Membership is a key battleground. In this battle, it is crucial that Canada win control of the right to answer the question, "Who is an Indian?" We all know that it has been Canada's long-standing goal to control our people by determining membership in our communities. We cannot concede to Canada's Parliament, to human rights tribunals or to the Supreme Court the right to answer that question for us. When we lose or give up the right to say for ourselves who we are, Canada will have won the war they declared on us. Through the imposition of Indian Act regulations, Department of Indian Affairs policies, entitlement clauses in self-government agreements or beneficiary clauses in land claims negotiations, the federal and provincial governments continue to deviously manipulate the issue of membership to their own advantage.

The techniques of this manipulation include portraying our stand for our heritage and against Canada as wrong, and the demonization of communities that challenge Canada's assumption that it can determine membership and reject the right of individuals to claim membership in opposition to community consensus. A notable case of demonization and legal persecution by Canadian authorities is my own community of Kahnawa:ke, where the people have defiantly enacted a membership law with strict provisions against marriage to non-Indians and membership criteria based on

lineage. Is it wrong to tell our people that they must marry an Indigenous person? To demand that people take up their responsibility to become part of our culture and participate in our community? Or that membership will be determined by us based on the strength of a person's lineage within our community? We believe that in light of Canada's long-standing policies and the ever-present threats to our existence, it would be wrong not to do these things.

The perversity of this situation is that it is the individual rights advocates and the Canadian Government who are the ones pushing a racist agenda. What else can we call Canadian policy and individual rights but racist? They are based on a notion of Indian status and membership that demands no community consent, no participation in the culture, no knowledge of language or history: no responsibility. Nothing is required but a biological relationship or descent from an Indian parent. Divorced from community control, people claim and are accorded the right to be called members simply because they have some Indian blood.

In the long run, these ideas will lead to a situation where our people are defined not by their relation to a living culture and community of people, but by their biological descent from an ancestor who was an Indian. We cannot continue to allow Canada to answer the question "Who is an Indian?" If we do, down the road we will be overwhelmed by people who have some Indian blood but no knowledge of the culture, no desire to participate in the community and no stake in the future of our nations: a country full of "Aboriginal" people.

Indian problem solved. It's that simple.



**A GUIDE ON THE  
FIRST STEPS OF  
YOUR JOURNEY**

Photo by Denis Okanee Angus

# BUFFALO SPIRIT



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## Our first steps on the journey, and we welcome you along

Oki! Welcome to *Buffalo Spirit*. The creation of *Buffalo Spirit* has been an interesting and fulfilling one. It's about a journey; a journey of self-discovery of one's cultural and spiritual roots.

*Buffalo Spirit* is for those individuals who are searching for who they are and where they come from. There is a lot of confusion in Indian country when it comes to these matters.

It is especially confusing for those individuals who grew up in the city and not on the reserve. I am one of those individuals. My parents wanted a better life for me and sent me to the city to live with a non-Indian family when I was 12 years old. The only time I came home was in the summer and I spent most of that time working for my father or local farmers.

I was never abused and was treated well by the non-Indian families, but as a result, I lost my culture. My father was Siksika (Blackfoot) and my mother was Saulteaux. English was the only language that was spoken when I was growing up.

I used to dance at powwows and was a craftsman, making Navajo jewelry and other handicrafts. I was doing cultural things, but I didn't feel it inside. Something was missing and I didn't know what it was.

Mainstream religion was not the answer I was searching for. What I was searching for was Indian spirituality.

I had so many questions and wasn't too sure where to go for answers. Here I was, a Blackfoot/Saulteaux, married to a Navajo, living in Cree territory. I was really confused and as I looked around, I saw many others who were also confused and were on the same journey that I was on.

I asked many questions and turned to my advisors, Joe Cardinal and Devalon Small Legs.

I asked them to meet with AMMSA staff and provide us with a cultural workshop. We had many questions for them and provided the questions to them the night before the workshop. We quickly discovered that the Indian way is not a question and answer session.

The answers we received came in the many stories that they told. We were also told that the most important thing was to be PATIENT and accept those things we don't understand.

Both advisors stated that they were not Elders and did not consider themselves worthy of the title of Elder. They were not perfect and were only human beings. However, they provided many answers that day.

Another area I searched was the Internet. I looked to modern technology to see what was out there. The one thing I noticed was the descriptions of the Sundance by non-Indian observers was very different than the writings of Indian writers like Ed McGaa.

Non-Indian descriptions included words like pagan rituals, heathen, savage, torture, etc. One only has to read the writings of Ed McGaa and how he describes the ceremonies to understand the Indian perspective as to what was happening. Indian people must be given the opportunity to tell their own stories.

Another thing adding to the confusion is how ceremonies have changed. I heard about a ceremony that somehow has changed over the years and is now done backwards. In the past, spiritual leaders were quick to correct these mistakes and ensure the purity of the ceremonies.

We have lost many of these spiritual leaders and with their passing goes that knowledge. What can be done to preserve this knowledge?

I don't agree with videotaping or photographing ceremonies, but the late Joe Crowshoe, a spiritual leader from the Peigans, once allowed a pipe ceremony to be photographed because he felt that it was important that the ceremony be preserved. Is this the answer?

Ed McGaa spoke of a documentary on Indigenous people of South America. These people were very



### Publisher's Statement

**Bert Crowfoot**

isolated and did not have contact with mainstream society. Their ceremonies were pure. A television crew came out and recorded their ceremonies. When they saw these ceremonies on television, they said that it was good. The ceremonies could be seen by future generations.

*Buffalo Spirit* was originally going to serve a geographical location and we had three different markets to choose from. As I journeyed to these different markets, it became clear that this was not the direction *Buffalo Spirit* was supposed to go.

When in Rapid City, South Dakota, I happened to pick up Ed McGaa's (Eagle Man) book called *Mother Earth Spirituality*. Eagle Man's writings fascinated me and I bought all four of his books. His words seemed to answer a lot of my questions.

I went to my first sweat this fall and prayed to the Creator, to the Grandmothers and to the Grandfathers for answers to the many questions I had. I spent time soul searching in the mountains around southern Alberta about whether or not it was right to publish stories on cultural and spiritual matters. The answer I received was that that was the purpose for *Buffalo Spirit* and the time was right.

You may not agree with it, but what is important is that *Buffalo Spirit* allows us an avenue to discuss these matters and allows us to share with others the beauty of what being an Indian is all about.

I want you the readers to participate in future editions by sending us your letters, emails and faxes concerning your questions, life experiences or your philosophies on spirituality. The more discussion we have the more we will learn by sharing. *Buffalo Spirit* is your publication and only you can make it fulfill its calling.

This first edition will concentrate on what is happening in the Northern Plains and, in future editions, we will expand to cover the rest of Indian country. As the saying goes, "The more we are different, the more we are the same!" However, you may notice as you are reading *Buffalo Spirit*, that some Elders hold very different views on how ceremonies should be conducted. For example, Ed McGaa believes men and women can go to sweat together. That is the Sioux way. Siksika Elder Tom Cranebear from southern Alberta says it is an "absolute no-no." That is the Blackfoot way. Both are right, according to their customs.

I know that AMMSA may be accused of trying to make money on Indian spirituality, but that is not the case. AMMSA believes strongly in the purpose of *Buffalo Spirit* and this first issue was produced without advertising or any outside funding.

If you feel that the message in *Buffalo Spirit* has touched you and you want to make an offering, we will pass your offerings on to the Elders and spiritual people who have contributed or will contribute in the future.

One of the other things that came out of the sweats was the need to learn and speak my language. English sometimes just does not describe things the way Blackfoot does.

*Buffalo Spirit* will be published quarterly and will be inserted in AMMSA's publications. I'm happy that AMMSA is taking a role in assisting people who are looking at beginning their journeys or who are on the journey already.

Being Indian is about sharing; sharing not only to feed our physical beings but to feed our spiritual beings as well.

May the Creator be a part of your life and may your journey be a good one.



# Elder Joe Cardinal

I don't know all the things that I am supposed to know, I guess. I will talk about myself first and that way you will know who I am and what I do in this kind of work that they call spirituality.

I don't want to call it Native spirituality because . . . it is Native spirituality but yet, everybody is made the same way — the mind and the spirit and the movement that we have.

I was born close to Fort Chipewyan. I'm a bush Cree, I guess, to start with, but I migrated to the Plains Cree — Saddle Lake. My parents were trappers. And I still remember them days when I was small, the work that I had to do as a small boy on the trapline.

At that time, all the family were on the traplines, mostly up in Birch Mountains, Muskeg Mountains, Athabasca River, Lake Athabasca. I belong to that country yet in my mind and in my spirit. I fly over it a few years ago and I saw it from the air in the summertime and I felt good about it. I felt good that that's where my parents started me in life — beautiful country, healthy country, healthy lifestyle.

I come from a fish culture. We eat more fish at that time than anything else. Oh, we'd eat rabbit, we'd eat muskrat, we'd eat beaver, we'd eat moose. But it was more fish — lake trout from Athabasca.

On the Athabasca River there is whitefish on that Athabasca River. They spawn like lake whitefish in the fall-time. And yet today, I eat a lot of fish. I can eat fish everyday . . .

I guess my parents wanted me to go to school. I guess there was a boarding school in Saddle Lake, called Blue Quill boarding school. It had no running water. It had an outhouse. We had a hell of a time there. I started out there in 1929.

I can't say I went to school, but I attended the building anyway. I lived in the building, but to go to school...

At that time they were industrial, residential schools. We had to raise cattle, pigs, chickens. That's the way we survived. So finally, they made a new building there, by St. Paul — Blue Quill. I guess maybe some of you have seen that building just on this side of St. Paul, off the route. And that's where I was for seven years.

It was a new land. They had to break and we clear the land of rock, roots. We had to milk cows twice a day. Sometimes we milked 24, 25 cows every day, twice a day. The work was meant more for that school than classroom education. So we had to go to classroom every Friday afternoon.

So, we used to tease the hell out of that nun there that used to chase us out. She didn't catch that idea right away. That's what we wanted is to get chased out of there. We didn't like that classroom. But after seven years when I was ready to go, I was graduated Grade 6! And I never went to school! I still think about it. How did I ever get Grade 6?

## Finally, it was time for me to get out of there, so . . .

Shortly after, the war broke out and I joined the army. I was with the Eastern outfit, Micmac, and the other tribes over there. I used to ask them, I says 'what Grade did you come out?' He said, 'Grade 6.' Everybody I met was in Grade 6. You know, I don't know what happened!

. . . . I was an altar boy for many years. Every morning I would serve. Many priests I have served, but I would never understand myself what I was saying. It was all Latin. I didn't understand. All them years, I didn't understand what I was saying, praying, you know?

So finally, growing up, I came back from the war. I didn't really know who I was. I was lost in this world when I came back from the army. When I was fighting over there I promised myself I would never be captured prisoner of war. I was scared of them white people over there. You know they'd kill me right away. But when I came back to Saddle Lake I was a prisoner of war. Them days you had to get a pass to get out of the reserve. I became a prisoner in my own reservation. Boy, it was hard. Over there in Europe I could drink beer, I could do anything in my free time. I was free. But then when I came back, it was hard. I got lost. I used to find myself staring at the sky, not knowing where I was. . . .

Finally, I start to fit in. Finally, they didn't issue any more passes. . . .

So, finally, I got married. That's 53 years ago now. Just imagine being with one woman all them years, 53 years! So, I had children. . . Two of them went to the boarding school. Then they closed the schools down. But we started talking about, we have to raise our kids. Raising kids we started to talk about a lot of things.

I don't know, at that time, I didn't understand the Catholic religion, because it was all Latin. And a lot of things there, after I went out of the boarding school, I

couldn't believe. And there was a fellow there that made sun dance, and we used to go to the sun dance and the feeling was better because I understand. The belief was in me all these years, I guess. It had to be woken up in me, wake it up. And that's what happened. I saw a lot of things back there on the trapline and with my own people and I start to see that.

And years later I started with a medicine man from Wyoming. He was well known around this area, Raymond Harris. I started working with him . . . I used to fast every year over there, in Wyoming. He taught me a lot of things.

We all believe there is a god, or whatever you call him — Great Spirit. . . . He doesn't talk to us like we talk to one another, but he put things in our being, the spirit, the heart, and the feeling. So when you do wrong you know, he's telling you, he speaks to you through the feeling, through the heart. This is a great area here for me [pointing to his chest]. People can heal themselves, if you do things right, if you know what is going on within you. And that's what this man taught me. But I knew we had it before.

The mind. You hear that expression, 'it's a long way from here to here' [gesturing first to his head, and then to his heart]. It's a long journey. Because, this mind is the one that goes. It's going all the time. That's your protection. And sometimes it goes into a negative area. And maybe that's where we are now in the communication system. A lot of it is negative areas.

Sometimes we talk about a person negatively, because this mind it wants us to do that. To protect ourselves. But this fellow here, [pointing to the heart] is the one that really puts things together for you.

I watch in the city here sometime, cars just going, going, going. I look up at the sky and the plane . . . who made that? The mind is the one that created that.

When that plane fell, recently, with over 200 people in the water, this guy says, 'these kind of planes can go down every day. Maybe five of them can go down every day.' That's the amount of people that have heart attack every day, because this mind is going. It's not keeping time with this guy [the heart]. This one [the heart] is the one that is left behind and having problems, and that's why it give out. And I believe in that, because I know a lot of people that have problems today. . . .

## This one old lady says, 'you guys are not using your heart, your kindness, your love.'

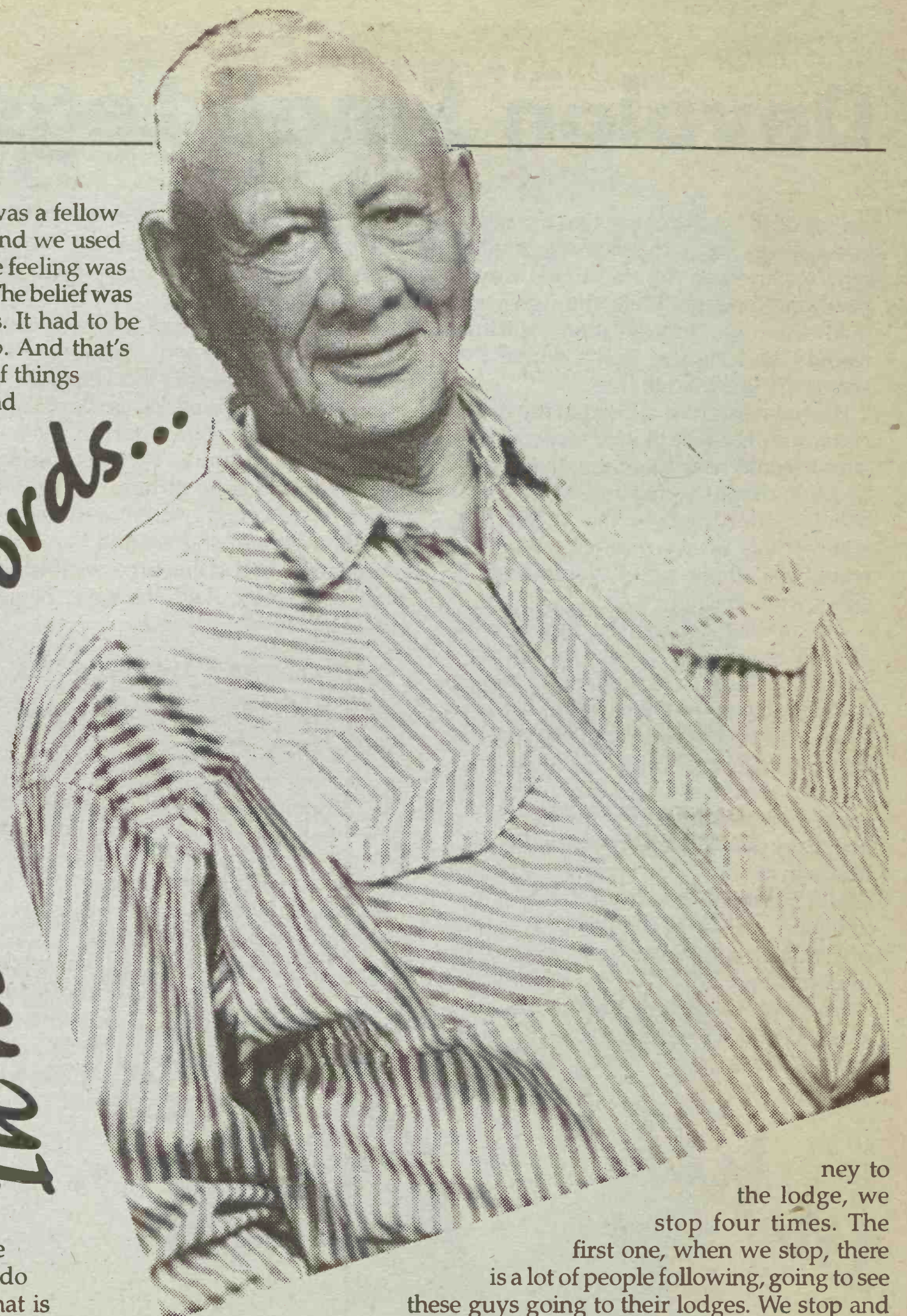
You don't develop your love, the love for your children, the love for your family, the love for your community. Just remember, when you were conceived in the womb of your mother, the first thing that was made was that heart start to pump, and life was built around it. But you guys are not using it.' Today we find people trying to come back to an area where they can understand that feeling too.

This Raymond Harris used to tell me, he says 'remember one thing, that you cannot heal anybody. They have to heal themselves. You are the one that's going to try and help them to heal. But I hear Elders say 'I healed many people,' and I look at them, you know. . . . This man told me you cannot heal, but you can help, you can tell them. . . .

So I put up a fast every year. Many people come to fast at my place. Many people ask me, to get them to be medicine man that they can perform a shaking tent or something like that. I says 'no, I can't do that. I want to help you. That's why you're going to go to fast.'

Before you go to that lodge, when you are on that jour-

*In his own words...*



ney to the lodge, we stop four times. The first one, when we stop, there is a lot of people following, going to see these guys going to their lodges. We stop and

we're supposed to think when we were small, growing up. How was it at that time? How do you feel when you look back to your childhood days? And then the next stop, you are now a teenager. How was it? You are the one to know, because you are the one to grow up. And then the next stop, you became a parent. You are now a parent. How was that? How are you raising your children? What are you doing to help your children? And there is a lot of things there. That is a big area. And then we go to lodge after. And then you start thinking about these. And you are the one to deal with them.

There's a lot of these people, alcohol is the problem, drugs. Some of them are healed. They don't drink any more. And they come to me, you know, he says, 'you healed me.' I says, 'I didn't. You were the one that healed yourself.'

In the sweat lodge after the fast, I tell them, I says the way Raymond used to tell me, he says 'tell them, you did not heal them. Tell them that the Great Spirit, the way he made you, the gifts that he has given you to use, these are the ones that healed you.'

## There is so much to a human being. There's so much.

May is the new year for our Indian world. It brings forth a new beginning, this year. Grass is coming out, leaves are coming out, the birds are laying their eggs, animals are born, everything . . . Even you have a different feeling and that's the time people come to fast. It helps them to have that feeling of belief in themselves. . . .

I cannot help people to be a medicine man, to be able to perform a shaking tent. Some things are given to people. That Raymond, it was given to him. He says, 'I grew up with it. At 21 years old' he says, 'I was told to start, to deal with that, the people. And I went to the priest,' he says. He was raised in a boarding school, and went and had a talk with the priest. He says 'if you start that,' he says, 'never come to this church.' So he didn't. But I was there when he died, and that burial, that funeral. . . . They brought him back to the church and the priest talking there, somewhere, he said, it was a misunderstanding. He said that. I didn't understand that, a misunderstanding. I couldn't understand that.

But yet, a lot of people that he worked with are still carrying on their way of life, the way he taught them. And that's the way I am trying to work too.

He told me, he says, 'you are a Cree. You will have your Cree understanding. You will be working as a Cree. So it happened. I'm still working with the Cree. But the thing is, we all have the same thing. There is no one that's made differently.'



# Devalon Small Legs, cultural advisor

First of all I'd like to say that I'm not an Elder. I'm many, many years from that. I have experienced the traditional way of life through many Elders, through many medicine men, through many spiritual leaders, and I guess that's where I've gotten my knowledge from. . . .

When I was a boy. . . I was in my mother's womb. I believe that was where I was. And I would hear these things rolling. I had this dream continuously 'til I was about 10. But I believe that dream was when I was in my mother's womb. I would see a light, and I would wonder about what this light was.

I'm not that old, too. I'm only 45 years old. When we were young, we still lived in the log home and horse and buggy days. That was just the tail end of them in 1954. The train was the main piece of transportation that went through the reservation, down on the Peigan. And when I was very young, I seen things. This is before my third and fourth birthday, I seen things in the bush that we lived in. And I didn't know if they were real and I didn't know if. . . I just thought they were part of the landscape. I thought they were part of everything. . . .

One day, me and my brother, he was a little older than I was, there was a fence in front of us

that separated us from what we call the bull pasture. We seen all these horses come running out. They ran along the fence. They ran back into the bush. We seen this Indian. He had a breech-cloth on, moccasins. He was running. Ran along the fence, chasing those horses. . . .

The next thing, we look up again and the horses come through. But him, he was riding on the last one. He was chasing them. We're looking at him. So, we figured he was a neighbor. We went in and we told my mom and we told her in the language we had at that time, we told her what we'd seen. And she says 'Never mind.'

**She didn't believe us, eh? But you know, it was that way.**

My life got hard when I was sent off to boarding school. I wasn't that old. I was six years old when I was sent off to boarding school. And I realized that there's another world out there. . . . Anyways, I went there, but I didn't go there long. . . . Day school started and I went to day school for a number of years.

. . . And then in 1966, my mom and dad came home one day and they were really upset. My dad was really mad. He re-

ally wanted to see us continue our education, but they were going to lock him up if he didn't allow us to go into the assimilation education program at that time. I was almost 12 years old at that time. So we went through the assimilation program so my dad wouldn't go to jail.

**That was the threat from the Indian agent at that particular time.**

Another significant event that happened in 1966 was we won our liquor rights here in Alberta. And that spelled the ruin of our people, from that day forward. I was too young to know what that was all about, but I knew. . . .

There was my brother and I, Nelson Small Legs, Jr. His nickname was Coco. Both of us got shipped off to Lethbridge and that was a world away from where we were. And we began to go to school, boarding in white homes, and going into the system.

In that time between 1966 and 1972, we were into the white system. And it was a rough system. We fought every step of the way. I didn't know how to fight. I thought the majority of people were friendly, but the prejudice was thick. And, you know, at that particular age you are very vulnerable to everything. Finally we learned how to fight back and we became rough and tough. . . . And I was always in trouble. But that formed something in me, that I should always fight.

Then, I believe it was in 1969 or '70 that the drinking age here in Alberta went from 21 to 18. . . . I would go home to the reservations and I would find at home there wasn't the same type of living arrangements for the people on the reserve as there was for people in the city. And I was kind of really disgusted. . . . Why are we living like this?

The whole reservation was drunk — I mean, literally. The whole reservation was drunk. We had people there that owned hundreds of heads of cattle that went from two, three hundred cows to inside a year they were broke. They sold their cows for drinking. The town of Fort McLeod just about shut down completely because of alcohol, because of people passing out in the streets. . . .

So those drinking years were really tough, and I decided in 1969 that I was no longer gonna be an Indian. . . . I went to the black people, and I said, 'I'm going to be a black person,' because I'd seen the Black Panthers the way they were doing things. And I started to write about black people, the slavery. And I did all the stuff that there was with the black people in trying to understand what they went through. And at the end of that part of my life, I found out I wasn't black.

So, that left me only one choice. That I should jump into the bottle, LSD, marijuana. I did it all. . . . I went into a depression. And in that depression I lost myself. I went into LSD too deep. I became schizophrenic. I was drunk for 18 months straight. It got to the point where my mother and dad would buy me a bottle of whiskey just to get rid of me. It was a tough time. But all along, somewhere along the line, these dreams kept coming to me. 'I have to fast. I have to be an Indian. I have to be who I'm supposed to be.' But I kept resisting it, resisting it. I didn't know what to do. I didn't know who to go to. . . . So in Aug. 23, 1973, I was at my Auntie's place. Between my Auntie's husband and I we had 12 quarts of whiskey. We were sitting there. For four days we drank. . . .

I went outside to change my Auntie's tire and I didn't know how to change it. . . . There's got to be a better life somewhere. So that night I got up and I walked home

and I went away. . . .

Previously to that, I had stayed in the mountains and I was just about going crazy. You know, that Dustin Hoffman, when he comes out of the bush and he's going to throw himself off the hill. That's where I was. I was just right loony. . . . I became totally obsessed with booze and drugs, anything. . . . It wasn't just me. There was a bunch of us.

**There was a whole generation of us that were in that mood. . . .**

A person was working with some individuals in southern Alberta. His name was Don Rider, and he was a medicine man from the Eden Valley Reserve. He was a Stoney. I'd gone to other Elders, but I'd never found a medicine man. I'd seen other people that had Indian religious rights and there was other people in the societies in the Blackfoot culture like the Horn Society, Buffalo Women's Society, Brave Dogs. All those, I'd seen them all and I'd taken part in their ceremonies, but I'd never got to see a medicine man, and I was still in the state that I was. I was still wrestling with who I was. . . .

So I went there. . . . When I got to his place, that's when I totally broke down. I couldn't look at him. I couldn't look him in the eye and I was deadly scared. And then we went into the sweat lodge. . . . and that's where Grandfather Creators, they touched me. They came into my mind. It was the first time in almost six, seven years that I was able to focus on who I was as a person. He took that feeling away, he helped me heal. And from that time on I've been working at this particular way.

I went back to him a few times. He had a great following. He had a lot of people going to him. . . . I've been a militant activist since high school, and I've been on issues throughout Indian country. I've made my positions known on various things, primarily because I've wanted, and I still want, to promote the Indian way of life and to help people, as I was helped. I believe I have something to give to other people, to help them in their lives.

My first marriage was part of the struggle. I lost my family because of my abuse with alcohol. . . . I have four children from my previous marriage. Libby [his wife] and I got together in 1987 and we decided to walk this path — we sobered up first — and we walked this path, our way of life. If it wasn't for her, I don't think I'd be here. She is a great part of my life. We have three beautiful children together. We have 11 children all together, seven grandchildren. This is the life that I chose. I understand that those things that were happening to me, many years ago in my youth, that the Creator had a trail for me. And I did experience some things in my life. . . .

The Elders and the spiritual leaders that I've gone to, they've all said that once you pick up the pipe to use as the instrument for the prayer you do not pick it up for yourself, you pick it up for all mankind. . . .

We have gone through many ceremonies. . . . eight Sundances. Each spring we go to the mountains to fast. Everyday there is something new that we learn and it's an ongoing process.

I'm not a perfect human being. I have my faults and I'm not a guru. I don't want to ever be taken in that light. I'm only a humble, human being that has been given a way to help people.





# A case made for UNUSUAL



# - provoking,

By Yvonne Irene Gladue  
Buffalo Spirit Writer

For 40-year-old Ivan Lord, his inspiration for the art he produces, which he calls *metallic mystique*, began two years ago when he made a metal clothes stand for his mother. Lord designs art made of steel pieces that he's welded together in the hopes of creating public awareness about Aboriginal issues.

A piece of Lord's work called *Steal 'n' Thunder*, caught the eye of the staff at the Aboriginal Multi-Media Society in Edmonton. The work, which resembles a dreamcatcher made out of barbed wire, has a buffalo skull adorning the centre of the piece. Lord claimed that some people who viewed the frame for the first time found the piece offensive.

To Lord, the steel and the barbed wire represents the fences that cattle farmers put up around their properties. He claims that this forced the buffalo to move away from their natural habitats to other feeding areas further north or south.

"My work has a powerful message," said Lord. "The changes that have been going on in the last 1,000 years regarding the steel and the mechanisms have changed the landscape, the buffalo's territorial areas and the Aboriginal people's hunting areas forever," he said.

Lord wants to make people think when they look at the work he does, the symbols of steel and machinery that changed Aboriginal people's way of life forever.

"The Aboriginal people had to start relying on cattle for food. They no longer hunted. They had to buy from the cattle farmers," said Lord who is of Mohawk ancestry and born in Fort Smith, N.W.T.

Lord grew up in northeastern Alberta around the Bonnyville area. A construction worker and a plasterer by trade, Lord worked on the Grande Prairie College, which was designed by architect Douglas Cardinal. This year he had the chance to create 11 animal designs on a



wall of the new sporting goods store in Lac La Biche.

"I got to do some mural type art work of animals found in the area," said Lord.

The other designs that Lord is working on won't be as dramatic as his *Steal 'n' Thunder*, but he stresses that they will be just as thought provoking. They will be

made to create public awareness.

*Editor's note: Shortly after this interview, Lord removed the buffalo skull from the centre of the barbed wire.*

## in response

When Ivan Lord brought his work to the Aboriginal Multi-Media Society, it sparked a discussion regarding the appropriate use of a buffalo skull and other spiritual material. Buffalo skulls are important to Aboriginal culture because they are used in Sundances and in sweats. There are two kinds of skulls - from the flesh and from the ground. Lord's was from the ground.

While we didn't want to dampen Lord's enthusiasm for his work, or for his interest in his new-found, Aboriginal ancestry, we thought it was an important teaching moment. Cultural advisor Devalon Small Legs, artist Dale Stonechild, and Elder Ken Gopher were invited to speak on the topic with AMMSA's Gloria Stonechild and Norman Quinney:

I understand that the statement he is making is a good statement, however, the usage of materials... When I looked at the picture, I got scared, having respect and consideration for this buffalo skull... I feel that this sacred object should not be displayed in such a, almost, gross form. The thing I have trouble with accepting is the usage of this skull. To me, I see these sacred buffalo skulls at the sweat lodge, at the Sundance and when I look at it in this context, it is totally absurd, because I know that the spirits of these magnifi-

cent animals they have a place in tradition society that is very highly respected and honored.

— Dale Stonechild, Cree/Sioux

When you find an object in this manner, first you get an Elder to put tobacco there... and have a prayer, and then you can remove it. That's what I was taught.

— Norman Quinney, Cree, Frog Lake, Eastern Alberta

To me, the buffalo is a spirit. We have to treat the buffalo with holiness, because he was created for us to be our provider on the mother earth... He's connected with the Sundance. He is really a holy thing, next to a thunderbird. It's their partner. All these things that's connected with the Sundance, the thunderbirds, the buffalo, we have to really respect that buffalo skull. We cannot abuse it, abuse it, like it's suspended with the barbed wire. You can't use that barbed wire for that. You've got to have a lot of respect for it. That is like trying to put barbed wire on a thunderbird, which could never be.

We should always have respect for God's creation because those were provided for us, to serve our needs every day. We pray to that buffalo, we pray to the thunderbirds. We pray to the sun and

all these things that are connected with the Sundances. And I myself, I'm really scared of stuff like this, we tend to abuse these... different tribes I see tend to play with stuff like this and these. They usually charge people just to sweat with them and that's wrong, because that buffalo is connected with that sweat lodge, the Sundance sweat lodge is what you call it.

— Ken Gopher, Chippewa/ Cree, Rocky Boy Agency, United States

In our teaching, we have a lot of respect for all of the items significant to the Sundance lodge. The two very sacred items that we have is, first off, the centre pole, which is an item that's taken each year, where the lodge is built towards, and people make pledges to dance toward the Sundance centre pole. The other most significant is the buffalo skull.

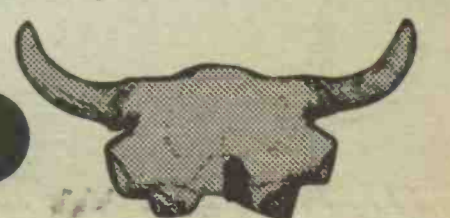
The buffalo skull is very sacred. It represents the buffalo grandfather that comes and helps us, gives us our food, gives us our way of life. That item, the buffalo skull, if the individual putting the Sundance up, doesn't have one, then he can't put up a lodge for the sun. If people understood the significance of these items that they do find, they would have a better understanding and a lot

more respect for the item itself. I'm not going to be critical of this person, primarily because he doesn't have the teachings with him and he went about doing this piece on his own. And then, only after that did he seek Native advice on how they felt about it.

If he'd done the opposite, and asked an Elder to come and look at the buffalo skull, he could have possibly got a different idea. Or if he understood how significant the buffalo skull was, I believe he would have gotten a different idea of how to put together the art piece... In this time where we're at, we have both traditional people who understand what the buffalo skull is, and then we have the other people that don't understand... It takes a protocol process, with tobacco. If somebody wants to find out about these things they have to come together and ask the questions that need to be asked, with tobacco... Our traditions, our culture, our way of life, our beliefs are alive and well. And there are people out there that understand the particular pieces that are significant to our way of life. People shouldn't take things into their own hands until they understand what those things are.

— Devalon Small Legs, Peigan, southern Alberta

(see Buffalo skull page 8.)



# Oglala Sioux man

## writes to set the record straight

By Marie Burke  
Buffalo Spirit Writer

Spiritual imagery, the six powers of the earth, father sky and mother earth, women as spiritual leaders and the inclusion of non-Native people in traditional ceremony are some of the topics explored by an Oglala Sioux writer who is not afraid to tell all in his books.

"I've read a lot and I didn't believe what the white man wrote about us. I thought they were lying," said Ed McGaa, author of several books about Sioux spirituality and their ceremonies.

McGaa was born on the Pine Ridge reservation in South Dakota. He is 63 years old and believes society hasn't given Native nations their due in history. Society does not acknowledge the efforts of Indians who greeted the first pilgrims and kept them alive or the help given run away African American slaves who were taken into tribes and each welcomed as one of the tribe's own, said McGaa.

A Vietnam veteran, McGaa writes in a pro-Indian voice because the positive aspects of Indian people were not recorded properly by many non-Native writers, he said. The Native people he knows have a good sense of humor and are kind-hearted people. That's what makes him write.

Take personal, spiritual experience and historical research, blend, and you have the basis for his books, he explained. It's also the importance of spirit for Native people that McGaa explores. He speaks and writes openly about ceremonies and rituals that are a part of his life.

McGaa has heard from non-Indian people many superstitions about Sioux ceremonies. He got tired of hearing about how Native people were worshipping the devil and putting marijuana in their peace pipes. It's about clearing up the falsehoods about Sioux ceremonies, he said.

In his first book *Mother Earth Spirituality*, McGaa wrote in support of non-Native people holding pipes and taking part in ceremonies. Some of that opinion changed in his following books, he said.

"The Sundance is for the Indian. I don't see where non-Indian people should be taking part in Sundance. As far as them watching, that's ok. I've been to a closed Sundance. It was beautiful, much like the old ones. I'm pretty touchy on that one. Sundance is tribal. I think the sweat lodge, vision quest and the beseeching to the four directions is universal. That's where I come from," said McGaa.

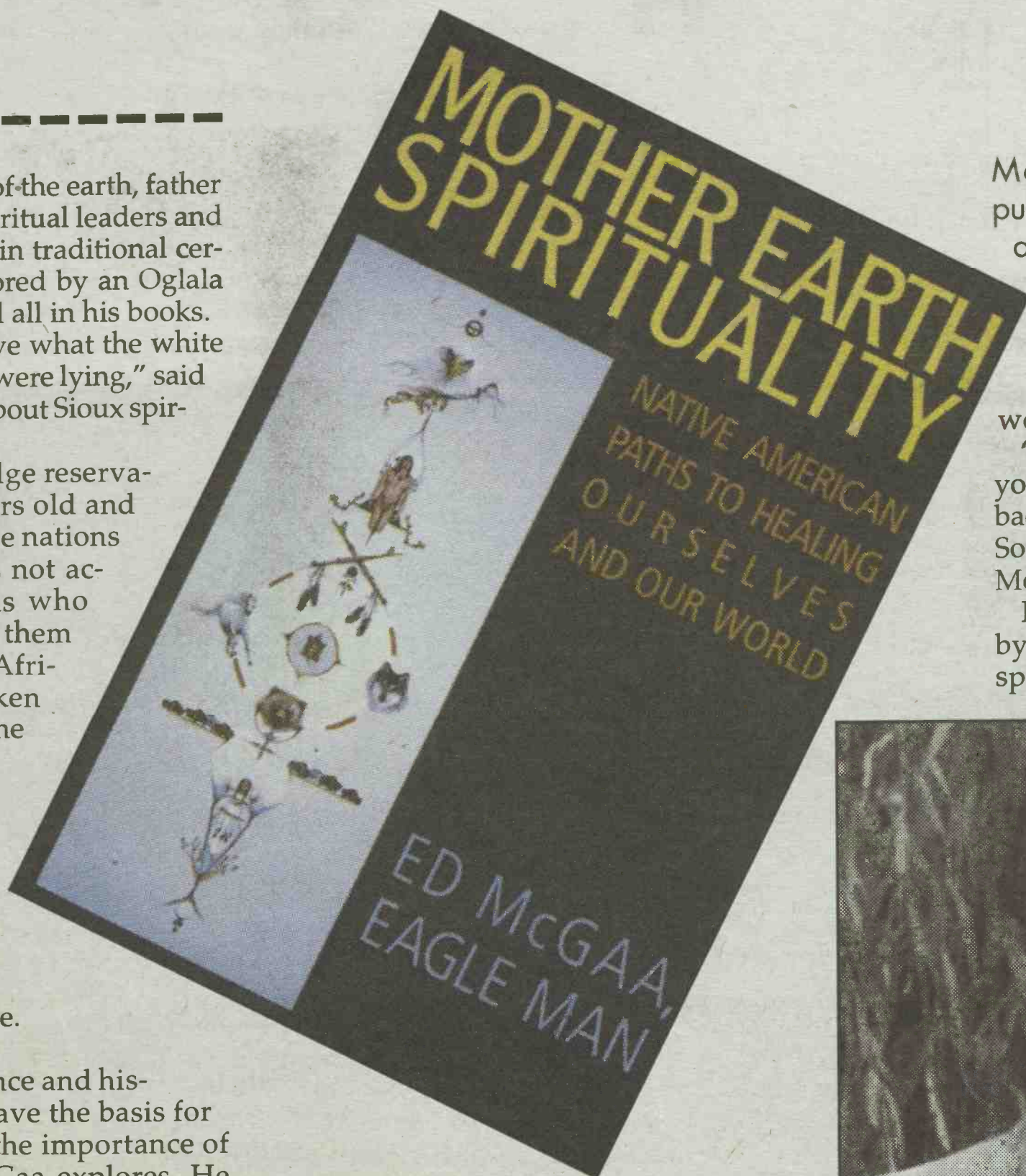
On the Pine Ridge reservation there are some holy men who thought that a lot of non-Indians were being pierced and being hauled up into the air, said McGaa. Rick Two-dogs, who is from Pine Ridge, thought the old Sundances were being forgotten. He was one of the first

Sundance chiefs who decided to bring back the old tribal Sundances where only card carrying Indians are allowed to dance, said McGaa, regarding the differences between open and closed Sundances.

There are other holy men who have open Sundances and that is their vision to allow non-Native people to dance. You can't argue with someone's vision, said McGaa.

Another reason McGaa describes Sioux ceremonies so openly is based on his belief that the real traditional Native people are very open-minded. The Sioux people are great adapters and that is why they have progressed so much and kept their ceremonies alive, said McGaa.

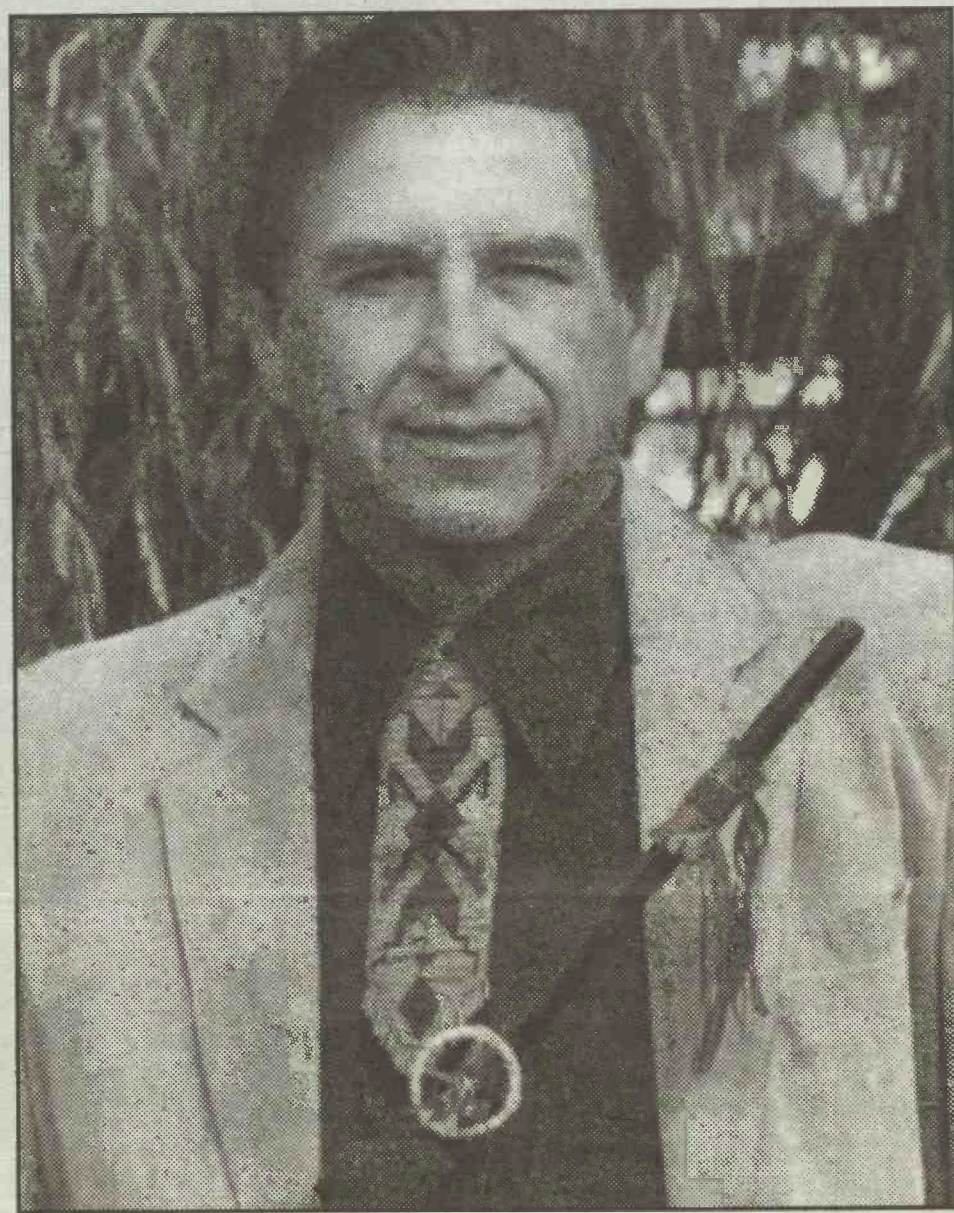
"We're not so much into secrecy as the tribes are that have been longer with the Christians. The Christians are real secret. They have secret orders. Their priests have secret things. I think a lot of Eastern Indians have picked up on that secrecy," said McGaa.



Mother Earth Spirituality is published by Harper San Francisco, a division of Harper Collins.

women out are not decent warriors, said McGaa. "Woman, rise up and be a leader. Be a leader because you are needed. Your wisdom is needed. Don't just sit back and be quiet. Your wisdom will balance out things. Some of us guys are just too much of a warrior," said McGaa.

For McGaa, who is a writer and a warrior recognized by his people, it's about time that all Native people spoke up about who they really are. He recognizes



there are those who have never fought in the wars or a Wounded Knee, but may have sat on a mountain and fasted or went to a Sundance for four days.

Full honors as a warrior means he is able to go anywhere he wants to go and say what he wants to

On the subject of women, McGaa points to the matriarchal system that the Sioux and many other tribes have followed. He thinks the system is still strong in his nation. He believes women are also spiritual leaders.

There are some tribes where women are not honored as leaders, but that is because they have been around the white man too long, said McGaa.

He looks at the woman's role as a spiritual leader from the point of having a balanced life. The Great Spirit made man and woman, fifty-fifty, said McGaa. The Native people who don't allow their women to be leaders are unbalanced, he said.

Men sweat lodge holders who are chauvinistic and who fail to honor women, do not receive spirits in their sweat lodges, he said. This is something that McGaa said he has seen over and over in some sweat lodge ceremonies.

"Half the spirits in the spirit world are women and I think you are very foolish to be chauvinistic and hold back women. They have equal power. If I do a sweat lodge, a woman opens up that ceremony. She is the first one to walk into that lodge. She is the one to take the tobacco and open up that ceremony and she says 'behold, let it be known this ceremony is open'," said McGaa.

Honoring women in his ceremonies is something McGaa learned from Bill Eagle Feather, one of his teachers. He was taught that the Great Spirit does everything in balance. When all the spirits like the ceremony, they come in, said McGaa. Those men who would be cruel to women or leave

say. If they let [Leonard] Peltier out of prison, they should give him full honors as a warrior. That's only common sense. The Indians don't put everything into a classification like white people do," said McGaa.

For the authors who have never been out there with their people, McGaa calls them armchair Indians. There are some authors like that, with cozy jobs that just criticize their people because they have not gone through ceremony and hard times with their people, he said.

"I'll probably continue to write. I wish more Indians would have enough guts to do that. . . I mean why leave it all to me and Chuck Ross. What are they, cowards or something? Are they afraid of what the white man is gonna say about them. Are they? It's time they get off their duffs and start writing."

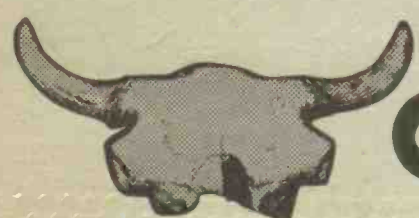
Write about the positive things in Native culture and prove that what the white man says about Native people isn't true, said McGaa.

"I wish more Indians would read *Black Elk's Vision, Black Elk Speaks*. I think that is a very powerful book. I think it will give them an idea about spiritual imagery, the six powers of the universe, the four directions, why we Sioux always utilize that pipe ceremony," said McGaa.

If you are Native, go back and look at traditionalism. It's in a Native person's blood and in their DNA. It calls out to your spirit, said McGaa. "Don't go back and try to set a bunch of rules or criticize anyone, but respect the mystery that Native people don't question."

**"The Sundance is for the Indian. I don't see where non-Indian people should be taking part in Sundance."**

**"We're not so much into secrecy as the tribes are that have been longer with the Christians."**



# Who do you go to for advice?

By Terry Lusty  
Buffalo Spirit Writer

Who is an Elder?

The question is often raised and usually provokes superb discussion.

The question cannot be simply answered, nor can any one answer be considered universal. While there are similarities across Turtle Island, there are many differences.

What is important is that one understands the Elder's place in society and acknowledges the fact that they have a considerable impact on the values, morals, ethics, attitudes and behaviors of the people in their circle. They serve as guides and role models for others to follow in their journey through life.

During the 1970s and 1980s, the Alberta Métis community looked upon Adrian Montrose Hope from the Kikino Métis Settlement as one of their most cherished and knowledgeable Elders. This highly respected man was an educated person of Cree/Scots ancestry who spoke fluent Cree and English, was a poet, orator, storyteller, philosopher and staunch cultural advocate. He became a mentor to many, including this writer whose future he influenced in terms of culture, history and media.

Hope was a fine storyteller and keeper of his culture. As such, he frequently shared his knowledge and promoted Métis culture at every turn. For him, that was one of his chief duties as an Elder.

He also served as a confidant, and counselled people with problems or issues that required his attention.

Hope was not an Elder simply because of his age. He was viewed and accepted as such by the Métis community at large because of the knowledge acquired and experiences lived over many years and

how that contributed to his wisdom.

The late Rik Yellowbird, a writer and cultural person, said he used to listen to Elders and they would say, 'You are your own teacher, your own healer and your own judge.' He believed that there are Indian Elders and elderly Indians, but they weren't one and the same.

Their behavior and actions, coupled with the knowledge and skills they possess is what counts, according to Cree Elder Alfred Bonais. He worked for years as cultural co-ordinator at Poundmaker Treatment Centre and Nechi Treatment Training Centre in St. Albert, Alta., and is often called on to conduct prayers and smudges. He says an Elder must have, "a clean spirit, a clean body, clear mind, good heart and good



Alfred Bonais.

behavior."

How one can tell whether an Elder is an Elder in this regard may be determined by other Elders who observe what and how things are done, Bonais explains. They look for accuracy in the kinds of information that is being passed along.

Bonais said Elders work together, respect each other, and support each other.

"It is up to us," to reach out and help the youth because they have lost so much of the traditional ways," Bonais said.

Blackfoot Elder, Tom Cranebear, takes the role of Elder a step further, saying an Elder has to walk the talk.

"They have to have outstanding con-

duct, understanding and patience, and be tolerant." They do not have to be a pipe holder or ceremonialist. There are other people who can do these things, he said.

Cliff Pompana, a Saulteaux originally from Manitoba, is a pipe holder and claims there are a number of self-appointed Elders, people who do not have sufficient experience, knowledge and wisdom to practice as Elders.

Cranebear points to many from the penal institutions "making like Elders." They no sooner get released from jail, he adds, "and they imitate Elders... get themselves a pipe" without going through the right procedures, without even having a ceremony with the Elders.

Cranebear himself was one Elder who received a headdress and pipe in the mid-80s from one of Alberta's most respected Elders, the late Joe Crowshoe of the Peigan First Nation in southern Alberta.

Still another concern he has is the mixing of men and women in sweats.

"It's a strict no-no," he said.

There are Elders too, he complains, who play bingo and drink in bars, then go out and talk to people the next day. It's just not right.

"They play Jesus one moment and are John Dillinger the next," he charges.

Cranebear explained that many Elders

help in communities without asking for something in return. Just one example he uses regards sweats. They are supposed to be "without strings attached. No fee. Just prayers and tobacco," he said.

As well, "young Elders should travel to many different tribes and learn from them." That is what he did and it was so valuable, he said. "I'm still spending a lot of time with them. You never stop learning."

The late Dr. Anne Anderson, a Métis Elder, author and educator who was often called upon because of her knowledge and wisdom, used to say that Elders are sometimes selected by their communities for what they have to offer. If, for example, they have become skilled



Anne Anderson.

at something in particular and have also achieved a lot of knowledge and wisdom, they may be accepted as an Elder. This applies even if they appear to be too young to be an Elder. There are young Elders who may have grown up and spent a lot of time around other Elders and met the requirements at an earlier stage than most. That can qualify them, even if they are only in their 40s or 50s.

Protocol should be followed when approaching an Elder. To obtain advice or direction from Elders, said Antoine Littlewolf, a Cree from Onion Lake, one should take a pouch of tobacco, offer a bit of it to the Elder. If one has no tobacco, it can be substituted with something else, like some cloth.

Like Bonais and so many others, Littlewolf is saddened by the fact that "today's generation are not learning [the traditions]," which is why he tries to transfer what knowledge he has to young people.

In closing, it is advised that Elders be given their due respect. Be considerate of their needs — comfort, company, food, gift, and acknowledgement.



Tom Cranebear.

## Listen and you will learn

An Elder is supposed to not go and talk, talk, talk all the time in a crowd, you know? I'm supposed to be somewhere, sitting, and people come and get advice. Maybe it's changing. It's a changing world. But I'm invited to places where I have to speak. So I do that. . . . This lady from Kahnawake, she says, 'you know, we have lost a lot of our value system. The grandparent, the grandfathers, our kinship, our relationships, we have lost the values, the family values.'

We used use to live on the land, live from the land. Like me, I came from the trapline. I know the values, had to work, had to hoof it. . . . Nobody wants to work anymore. Now we come to a crossroad. We are all sitting there at a crossroad, not really knowing the direction to go. And she says 'we are sitting there with a lot of sickness. Sugar diabetes is epidemic. We have cancer. We have AIDS. We have arthritis. Lack of education is a sickness. Alcoholism and drugs is a sickness.' She says 'we are all sitting there, maybe waiting for somebody to heal us. We're waiting, maybe, for our white brother to come and heal us. But they cannot heal us. We have to heal

ourselves.'

She says 'we have to send our children to school. We have to get them to get an education. Us grandparents,' she says, 'everyday we have to work on that. The parents especially'. She says, 'don't let your children miss a day of school.'

She says when we see them graduate to being a doctor or an educator, look at how happy we will be. And we will be going into a different set of value system where we will be happy that our children are getting this education.'

We will be happy, and we will feel better. Maybe that's the way we will be healed in this situation. And I think she was right. She says 'we have to do it ourselves. . . .' These are the Elders that are speaking this way. And I also want to speak that way to people.

I say again I cannot heal them, but I want to speak to them in a way that they can heal themselves. So to that lady, education is the key. But also, the best one is family. Good family, to raise a good family, a strong family. It will make a strong community.

And I guess, believing in all this, thinking about this . . . I think that's one of the reasons they call me an Elder.

— Joe Cardinal

## Make an offering to the Elder

Two o'clock after midnight there was a knock at the door, and a young man, he had a wife and a couple of kids, so I let him in and he was so doped up. He was crying. He says, 'I have nothing to give you, but I want to come and talk to you.' So I says, 'ok, go ahead.' Oh, he told me he just about got into an accident, and he got picked up . . . you know, a lot of stuff. So I finally told him, I says, 'sleep on this couch. You're not in shape,' I told him, 'for me to really talk to you.' But he had a good idea to come, I think. I don't think there could be an Elder that could refuse. But he told me, 'I have nothing to come and give you. But I want help.'

I says, 'ok.' But he didn't want to sleep, so he drove off. I saw him, about four or five days after. And I called him over and I says, 'you came to me the other night.' I says, 'I wanted to help you, so we'll have a talk. . . .' So we went in the sweat and I talked to him, and this other woman talked to him. But he gave me tobacco and prints [cloth] after. That's how that one went. . . . I cannot refuse a young man coming to me, but I tell

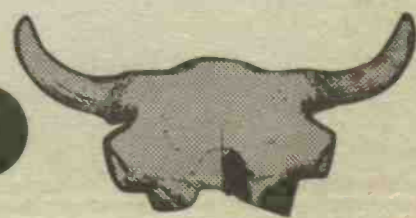
him. Bring something next time.

And sometime I counsel five of them at the same time. Sometimes we go to town and have coffee and talk and they talk with one another. . . . And then sometimes we go to church. If you want to go to church, we go to church. Sometimes they want to go to sweat, we go to sweat, and talk. Sometimes they want to come to the city here, and listen to a concert or something, a music festival or something . . . it's a lot of work. You have to give lots. And that way, they start to understand that protocol. I talk to them about it.

But the last big thing, is to go to the parents. . . . I tell the parents, listen to your son. Listen to him, and after you will get a chance and he will listen to you. The parents find it hard. Harder than the young men. . . .

I don't know if you understand what I am trying to say. I cannot refuse. Whether the guy have nothing. Later on the next session, I tell him 'Give something.'

— Joe Cardinal





# Sweetgrass

By Marie Burke  
Buffalo Spirit Writer

On a small farm in Stony Plain, Alberta, sweetgrass is being cultivated with the intent of bringing it back to its original state of abundance in North America.

"We're losing sweetgrass, and I've noticed that over the last 30 years. I remember being able to go to Kehewin [Alta.] and walk through it. Now in the same spots I can't do that. Our climate has changed dramatically and all those spots that were wonderful spots for sweetgrass are drying up," said Marilyn Cardinal.

Cardinal is the owner of Sweetgrass Farms. She has been growing the long, fragrant plant since 1995. She sells the plant, root and all, in pots to her customers. She also sells braids of sweetgrass, and other sweetgrass products.

"If we don't look after it, we won't have it. What we would really like to see is some kind of rehabilitation or restoration. I'm not so terribly interested in selling smudge bundles and braids. What I'd really like to see is that people get in touch with this plant," said Cardinal.

She believes the sweetgrass plant is very happy to have humanity as a partner, and it is important for people to reconnect with earth and plants. She believes people are coming back to reconnect with the essence of life, the spirit, and sweetgrass will help them. Life is a manifestation of the spirit, she said.

"I love the grass and I understand that it holds the spiritual frequency of this continent and there are plants that do that," said Cardinal.

Through agriculture, development, climate change and population growth, the land that had once supported excellent conditions for sweetgrass growth has been dramatically changed.

"There are people helping other plants and animals to survive these changes and sweetgrass needs help if it is to thrive again," said Cardinal.

She isn't worried that sweetgrass will become commercial, but it's not something she would like to see in a florist's shop. The sacredness of the plant is respected by the people that she sells it to, she said.

"If people want to come to a place where the grass is and they know the grass is good, they can come here. I've

**"There are people helping other plants and animals to survive these changes and sweetgrass needs help if it is to thrive again."**

got [the farm] open in July and August. By a phone call, if they want to pick it, or if they want me to pick, then, ok. But really I want to see people go away with plants," said Cardinal.

Cardinal would like to see organizations with land plant sweetgrass to bring it back. She thinks that

maybe there is some politics around the reasons why some people might think that transplanting sweetgrass is not right. She isn't concerned about it, but she recognizes that some Aboriginal people have concerns about transplanting it.

"I don't make a living off the grass. I mean, people have to pay some, but I'm not making a living off the grass. I'm a perennial specialist. That grass can sit and spread across my quarter section. I don't care if no one picks a leaf, but I'd like to share the restoration of this," said Cardinal. "For every person who condemns me there are the people out there who want to grow it and they contact me," said Cardinal.

For me, there is so much of it growing around. If you want to buy it, there's no harm. Of course, it's still sweetgrass. We like to pick it when it's ready. . .

The sweetgrass has a good message for us. Maybe I understand it a different way than you. Not different, but more feeling to it than some people that can understand. It has a good message. That's the way I take sweetgrass. We smudge the place when there is a big thunderstorm scaring people at night, and lightning, you light it up, and that's the way it had been, years ago. My grandfather, and great grandfather use it for sometimes you get scared or sickness or something that scares you, you light it. Try to easy that mind, that spirit within us. That's the way I believe it. Maybe the next guy believes it differently. . . We say we purify the mind and the spirit and I really believe in that. God speaks to us in here [the heart] we feel it here [the heart]. We do not hear his voice, but we hear through here [the heart]. Sometimes we don't feel right, we don't think right. We use the sweetgrass, so that it would be more meaningful. That message will be

more meaningful. I will understand it. I will deal with it the best way I can, something that I have to deal with. So my feeling is it's good sometimes. . .

— Joe Cardinal

There is all kinds of commercial stuff out there. I was in Sacramento, Calif., one time and I went into this Indian shop and they had everything there - sweetgrass, roots, sage, all kinds of stuff. In them days I used to be very upset with this. . . But then, I came upon some people that lived in the urban community. They wanted to get some sage, so it kind of dawned on me that those kind of places are needed. But my only comment is that if that person is growing that sweetgrass, he should be giving something back for being able to grow it. And that's the question you ask of that person.

— Devalon Small Legs



## Buffalo skull is used in the Sundance

(Continued from page 5.)

When you want to approach an Elder you have to take tobacco and cloth. There are four cloth colors the northern people go by -red, yellow, green and white, and matching ribbons -and you go to an Elder and ask him and he'll know you're after something and he'll advise you.

— Norman Quinney

There are a lot of people out here that are in traditional country, Indian country. They're available for talks, and they're available for advice. And the younger people shouldn't be afraid of going to ask for advice from the Elders. If an Elder doesn't know, it his or her responsibility to pass it on to someone who knows. . .

— Devalon Small Legs

When it comes down to the sacredness of the items [artists] use, then it becomes controversial. . . When they depict with these sacred items. Then there has to be an objection. There has to be someone to get up and speak and say, 'well, this

is wrong.' Go to that person and tell them, 'this is wrong and it needs to be corrected.'

— Devalon Small Legs

Some years ago when I got into this field of art, I went to older artists that were already doing art work. . . and I got some good criticism back in terms of subject matter. And I always recalled what I was told. . . Some of these things that I remember, and it comes from Ray Ahenikew, and he told me, he says, 'your work is very beautiful.' And he said, 'always know your subject matter.' I may have been critical in looking at this piece of work, I realize the statement is a meaningful statement, however, the object. I see this buffalo skull has to be taking care of. . . When you find an eagle feather or an eagle bone, something that is sacred, when you find an animal beside the road, my grandfather told me, 'take that animal further and set it free. Take it away from the road and put some tobacco down for it and let it go free where it belongs.' I see the spirit of the

buffalo captured inside this little frame and that is no place for him. He has a place to go. And to Ivan Lord, this is a teaching method for him to understand. He will learn something about choosing materials, especially sacred objects. They were not to be used to bastardize our spirituality. I don't mean to sound harsh, but these things I have been told and given direction in my career as an artist.

— Dale Stonechild

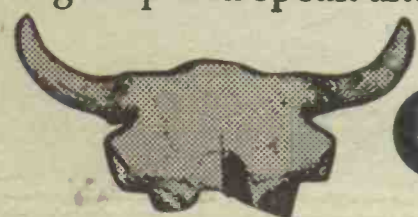
I was very fortunate to be living in Frog Lake where there was a lot of Elders at that time. I'd go to different houses and they would tell me about my culture. I was 14 years old when I left school and I was way out of touch with my culture. That's where I learned from the Elders, listening to them and also understanding some of their sacred things. And I used to go with my grandfather early in the morning. He used to wake me up, and we went to say a prayer while the sun was coming up. And in the evening also he asked me to come back in the evening as the sun was go-

ing down. And these are the things that I have learned. Every morning that I get up, I thank the Great Spirit that I am still alive and hope that I have a good day.

— Norman Quinney

With respect to the [buffalo skull] that is found in the ground, that's the one that is very sacred to us. That's the one that needs to be taken care of in a very, very respectful manner, primarily because that buffalo spirit is still there and it needs some tobacco, it needs some offerings. The one that's taken from the flesh, the ones that are slaughtered and those that are sold. . . they can be displayed. But then you have to look at the type of display that they can be put into. . . You have to use that protocol process. Individuals should go to the Elder with the tobacco and he could give the necessary advice regarding that. I think what we are trying to say here is the respect that you need when these types of items are being used. And then you will be guided by the spirit how to use them.

— Devalon Small Legs



# Advice from the powwow trail

Editor's note: This article was first published in *Windspeaker's Guide to Indian Country*, June 1998 and can be seen online at <[www.ammsa.com](http://www.ammsa.com)>.

By Boye G. Ladd

On several occasions I have been asked and given tobacco to address and comment on issues related to Elders, spiritual leaders and medicine men. First of all, it is with the utmost respect for the true and sincere people that are indeed respected as Elders, spiritual leaders and medicine men, that I share their humble teachings.

Elders, traditionally, are held in high esteem for their knowledge and experience. As teachers to the young, they set an example of carrying on the traditions of respect, love, honesty and sharing. Their infinite wisdom is based upon a common sense approach to everyday life.

A dilemma that many young people encounter when searching out an Elder for guidance and direction is that they will base their choice on age rather than experience.

An individual living in the city or away from his people for most of his life may not be the best person to provide a young person with traditional knowledge. When a person looking for help gives tobacco and the person receiving the gift, rather than show ignorance, creates some made up story, then from that day forward the person or people looking for help will believe that story. Tradition has deep roots and can be based on rights or on years of service to the people.

Many times I have seen individuals "showing off" their sundance scars, tobacco ties or amulets hanging around their necks — exposed. When a person carries protection and/or medicine, it should always be hidden and never be spoken about.

Spiritual leaders and medicine men should be considered in the same light. For the true and sincere, their reverence is based on humbleness, dedication and sacrifice. Anytime someone stands before you and claims to be a medicine man, do not believe him or anything he says, because he or she has desecrated their oath of humbleness. You will not find a true and sincere spiritual leader or medicine man teaching in a school or university, or seeking public attention.

It was said in the begin-

ning that the Creator gave a certain uniqueness, power and protector of a certain medicine to each nation and tribe. Certain individuals, clans and societies were gifted with this special knowledge and, most importantly, given the right to use the medicine.

Be careful of false leaders and pseudo-medicine men that charge money for their services, especially of those that take money before the ceremony even starts. To all faiths throughout the world, including those that are Native, consider money as the 'root of all evil.'

Beware again of those that steal your women and daughters. Those that violate women in sweat lodges and during other sacred ceremonies should be prosecuted and ostracized. There are some that have even run off with their adopted daughters and have given them children. This violates and desecrates one of the most respected bonds of our people.

There have been times that I have been asked to help a family that got 'ripped off' for thousands of dollars from people declaring themselves as healers. Who do you blame? The so-called medicine man that cons the people or the people that were naive enough to believe in the lies?

Many people search the world for, or think they can buy, happiness, when it can be found in one word — acceptance. Acceptance of one's self spiritually, brings harmony and balance to one's everyday life. Balance is essential to life.

Learn from the teaching of our ancestors. The Elders, spiritual leaders and medicine men are human and charged with the responsibility of preserving those gifts that the Creator has given them.

It is difficult to try and answer many of questions concerning the Native way of life in one short article. The essence of Native spirituality comes from the heart and works for those that believe. One piece of advice my late uncle would repeat every time I left home, was:

"Never try to be something you're not..."  
Ah ho!

## Abuse of sacred ways needs to stop

Dear Editor:

It was with great pleasure to read the [article by Boye Ladd published in *Windspeaker* online at [www.ammsa.com](http://www.ammsa.com) entitled *Advice from the powwow trail*.] I thank him and *Windspeaker* for these words of wisdom. I live in the Interior of B.C. I am from the Louis Bull band in Hobbema, Alta. I have been dancing for 30 years. Here in B.C., I have witnessed all of these things Mr. Ladd refers to. It is disgraceful, upsetting and makes my heart sad!

What is very upsetting is that many of these "Born again medicine men" are imitating my late Uncle Albert Lightning's spiritual practices... I know for a fact as told by my late uncle that he never passed on the rights to any ceremonies, yet I hear of them being imitated all over this province by self-professed medicine men and women who are charging outrageous amounts of money for their scams. It is pitiful when we use our sacred ways to abuse our own people who are so hurt already. It is hard to witness these events...

I practice Cree traditions I have learned as best I can, as I was taught. I will ask that *Windspeaker* print my comments. There are so many First Nations people in this province who have been hurt and are being hurt by these many imposters, and yet it seems their followers increase at every event.

I pray for a good change to this sickness.

There are many Indians here who try their best according to traditional protocols, do not get me wrong. However, they, as myself, do this privately. Those who prefer the public stage give all of us a bad name and create and enhance their world of deceit, mistrust and abuse.

As I tell my wife, "Indian way of life is a lifestyle in the prairies. Here it is an event."

These people owe it to our people to learn and practice these rites accordingly. As I write this I know of one man who claims to be a medicine man... who is and has sexually abused an underage girl who also dances. Another self-professed Elder is currently in jail for the same crime, and this is not the first or last offence!

Once again, thank you for the wisdom to print Mr. Ladd's strong message. Those people who are misusing this way will bring many sufferings upon themselves and unfortunately others.

Silence is consent! The more of us who were taught properly need to role model and speak up for these sacred ways. That is part of our responsibility to our ancestors and our people.

In friendship,  
Kahkakew Larocque



## Making the connection

Let me put some light on payment. A long time ago, we don't know how far back, everything was transferred all down the family line. That's how they lived. If somebody needed doctoring or help, and if this other person had the medicine, it just went that way. But somewhere along the line, a payment came in. Maybe it was because this person wanted everybody to know he was rich. This was during the horse culture. He wanted people to know he was rich. So he said 'I'm going to give four horses for that.' And that's where it started. And then it grew and grew and grew and it became what it is today.

When someone brings you tobacco, prints (cloth), or maybe a gift, something monetary, something blanket-wise, when that person brings you that stuff, it's a connection.

— Devalon Small Legs

I put up a fast every year at home. I don't go anywhere. People come. One thing I make sure is they have to have a feast before they go to the fasting lodge, and when they come out, they have to have a feast. Then I make sure to say to buy their own food, and buy what they want to cook. If a guy is going to a fast, he has to hire a cook, so that when he come out... They give me gifts, like a drum, blankets. Boy, you should see the blanket I have at home. But, you know, when somebody comes that comes from someplace else, we give them the blankets. We just pass them on. But, you know, that's what they can give.

My mother-in-law had a lot of medicines. When this guy wanted the medicines to carry on, because he was getting old, he gave three cows to her — and cows were worth a lot of money in those days — but to be able to carry that on. But that's the way it goes. I don't think you're buying.

I liked a song. James Cardinal at home, and I went to him, and I gave him some money, I gave him a rifle — a good rifle — and I gave him a lot of other things. I says, 'I want that song from you. I'm asking you.' I could never buy, if it had a price on it, I could never give enough for it. But I gave what I had and what I could give. But one thing he told me, 'just don't bring that money in here. Leave it outside.' The only thing he told me is he didn't want the money in the sweat. Leave it outside. You're not buying. I don't think you could ever buy.

I had 27 fasters last year in Saddle Lake, and then I went to... Fort Fraser, and I had about 13 over there. This guy invited me over there... he wanted people to fast over there on his land at the [River]. I told him, I says 'Art, don't give me anything. Just give me the chance to fish here and can fish. I brought quite a few of my grandchildren over there. And they were canning fish. And, holy smokes, that's lots, lots of thing to do to can fish. And there was a lady there that showed them how to cut it and smoke it. You know that's a fortune in itself. What more do you want? These are the things that is payment.

— Joe Cardinal

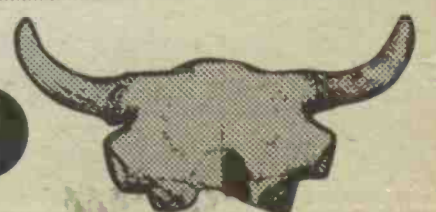
There are roots that we can't get down in southern Alberta. We trade for roots that we have there, medicines, for up here. There are some that are over the mountains in the Kootenay country. We have to go and trade over there, and we give money... Myself, I won't set a price. It's the person that's making the acquisition, he's the one that comes up with the particular payment, be that a blanket, be that a pipe...

— Devalon Small Legs

For me it's true. Any man that puts a price on it [ceremonies] for me I don't agree with a man that puts a price on somebody coming for help. I never put a price on anything. And sometimes I want to help them for nothing. But there is a protocol that you have to give something. Many times, I feel torn. I don't want anything. I mean, some of them people need help and they haven't got... because, in their mind, it's money right away, eh, to give... but I tell them you have to give something.

Even in dance, if you're going to dance chicken dance, or something, you have to give something, so that you'll be in that dancing circle. Different dances, like Sundance. You don't go there just... you have to give something. But I don't think the price tag, I don't think money. I don't think so.

— Joe Cardinal



# THE HEALING DANCE

## A view from the arena director

By Pamela Sexsmith  
Windspeaker Contributor

Every powwow poses its own challenges and needs someone well versed in protocol to smooth out the bumps, keep the momentum going, and help organize the flow. That is where the job of an experienced arena director comes in.

"It's my job as arena director to make sure that things go smoothly, that people are enjoying themselves and the dancers are happy," said Brent Dillon. "If things are going smoothly and people are happy, dancers often come up after a big dance-off and give the arena staff a pat on the back, say thanks. It's something that makes all the hard work worthwhile."

The first national powwow that was held in Edmonton last year was a good example of the kind of job an arena director faces. A joint effort by 36 bands in Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba, this indoor extravaganza presented some interesting problems.

"The hardest part was lining up the grand entries with so many dancers and so little space. There were also a lot of eagle staffs coming in. Our job was to make to make sure we had the right people to carry them, our headmen and chiefs.

"With so many dancers, we also had to split up the categories to give each dancer an equal chance to be seen by the judges. We solved problems as they came up and everything went very well," said Dillon.

Dillon, who took his BA in Education in the early 1980s, transferring from the classroom to Cree Curriculum Development for the Onion Lake band, has been an arena director for 15 years.

"I didn't start off with any plan to be an arena director, not in my wildest dreams. As a former powwow dancer, I had lost a brother I really cared for and admired. I was also married with babies at the time and because of these things, gave up dancing and singing. As my kids grew up, powwow was still there and my wife Cecilia and I started our kids dancing and competing. I got used to sitting in the stands, watching, and coaching the children.

"It was at a powwow in Beaver Lake that a respected Elder, Philip Cardinal, came up to me, gave me some tobacco and asked me to help him out. After four years of learning from him, he gave me my own stick in a little ceremony, gave me the right to be an arena director. That's where it started. He taught me about protocol, how to use the stick and I haven't stopped in all these years."

The job of arena director developed from the position of ceremonial whipman, who was usually an old man who had a great deal of knowledge of how things should be run, highly esteemed and totally respected by the children. With whip-stick in hand he would keep children from running around lodges and disrupting sacred ceremonies. The job survives today in some Sundance ceremonies and has taken on a fresh new life in the powwow arbor.

As a youngster, Brent Dillon, the son of Mary and Eric Dillon (a former powwow emcee), had grown up traveling the circuit with his family, through Western Canada and "across the line" to Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Washington and the Dakotas. Traditional powwow is not just in his blood. It's also in his heart.

"The essence of today's powwow is that it is a healing dance, something that was explained to me by an Elder I used to sit

with. An arena director is not just responsible for the all-over co-ordination of events and agenda throughout the day, there is also the safe keeping of correct protocol and ceremony, the proper handling of cultural ornaments like feathers and whistles, and the need to keep a sense of fair play, making sure that all drums and dancers are being treated equally and with respect."

Fine-tuning the whole layout of the powwow arbor is also an important part of the job.

"Things have to be done right, the laying out of the turf, making sure the lights are working, and that the sound system is in order. We make sure that the arbor is really clean so people don't get hurt or trip over things. We have to remember to keep Mother Earth clean. I don't mind picking garbage."

Another duty of the arena director is to try to please everybody. Not always an easy task, explained Dillon.

"We have to pick judges in competition powwow, trying not to get the same judge twice in the same dance, looking for expertise and lots of variety for the sake of fairness.

"As far as correct protocol goes, we have to deal with mishaps over cultural ornaments —

picking up fans, feathers and controlling whistles. There are currently two kinds of whistles in use, the Witickan [Warriors Society] healing whistle, and the Loon whistle of the Grass Dance Society. Someone usually offers the whistle blower tobacco and the whistle is blown four times to sustain the drum through a song. Good, respectable whistle blowers use the instrument sparingly. Incorrect usage must be controlled. If a dancer isn't behaving, the arena director must sometimes settle disputes, deal with protests and work as mediators. We try to make friends. They respect you that way. We have to make sure that all drums have their songs and are being treated equally. Sometimes we have to skip drums to find appropriate songs, especially in high level competition. I don't like doing that but sometimes dancers need to dance to certain songs. You have to make sure that the drummers know these songs," said Dillon.

Dillon also has to deal with subtle cultural nuances that differ from reserve to reserve and nation to nation.

"Lakota people value some types of feathers more than others and have different morning ceremonies. Even among my own people, the Plains Cree, customs differ from area to area. If I am not sure about something, I try to find someone who does know, give them tobacco and ask them to explain it to me, pass on the knowledge of their culture.

"As an arena director, I've had a few

people give me tobacco and ask me to show them how to arena direct, to help them to learn and understand the protocol and give them more experience. After a while they become more knowledgeable and, just like the Elder Philip Cardinal did with me, I continue to show them, teach them about ceremonies, how to do family specials, help open the doors for them."

Another important job for the arena director is that of cultural ambassador for non-Native visitors.

"More and more today, non-Natives are attending powwows, people from all over the world. They are told that at certain times their cameras must be put away, their tape recorders turned off when certain ceremonies are being done. I guess they must wonder, especially when everything stops at the powwow to pick up a feather.

"All birds drop feathers. Some people are entitled to pick them up. There are different interpretations as to why they fall. There has to be a prayer. The arena director goes to the fallen feather and guards it until it is picked up. Children, especially, shouldn't pick up feathers. If visitors want to know more about it, there are people they can ask."

One of the more recent developments in today's powwow is that pipe ceremonies, which used to be done inside the arbor, are now being held outside in a ceremonial lodge or tipi. This is partly because of the larger numbers of people coming to powwow.

"There are a lot of things that shouldn't be allowed near a ceremonial lodge: people drunk or on drugs, women on their moon time, children playing or fooling around. I do like to give the kids a chance, even those without dance outfits, encourage them to join in the intertribals and participate, as long as they don't run around."

Powwow, like any great culture or art form, is always evolving.

"Today we have the high profile, high pressure competitive powwow, as well as the more laid back traditional powwow where every dancer gets an honorarium. There are contemporary dance forms, as well as ancient and traditional, with new categories emerging all the time. It has been my experience that families putting on specials tend to want the old time dance forms. The grass dance is a good example. The old style grass dancer tries to move to the rhythm of the blowing grass on the prairies. The contemporary grass dancers are still imitating the grass, but on a much windier day. Part of my job as an arena director is to help maintain the respect and balance between the old and the new.... and get everybody involved."



Brent Dillon.



# The man who stands in two worlds

By Pamela Sexsmith  
Windspeaker Contributor

His Celtic parents call him Patrick David Sutton. His Cree parents call him Wapstikwanis (Little White Head). Adopted into two Cree families and named by Elder Bill Pechow of Frog Lake, Sask., after a hero that is part mythical, part mortal, Pat Sutton calls himself lucky to have landed in the Aboriginal culture.

His spiritual journey began 15 years ago while watching the soaring flight of an eagle. He was driving in his hometown of Lloydminster, Sask., when out of the blue, a powerful voice spoke to him, told him that he would never again cut his hair, would soon be wearing braids and spending time with Native people.

It was a strong message that left him badly shaken. A spiritual experience, said Sutton, that sent chills down his spine and hit him like a bolt of lightning.

Growing up, Sutton experienced a real duality in his upbringing, a big split between the Roman Catholic religion and his love of the natural world. It was his views on the natural world that would later dovetail with his respect for Native spirituality. Life carried on as usual until he began to hear that voice and experience a strange series of coincidences.

"The second time the voice came into my head, it told me that I was going to have a lot to do with the reserve out at Onion Lake," said Sutton.

All shook up after that experience and unable to go home, he headed to the lake at the local park where he saw a woman wearing fancy shawl regalia. She was part of an event at Cultural Heritage Days. Sutton, fascinated by the dancers and the drummers at the event, talked to a number of participants and was invited to come back after supper with his brother, Paul, who was friends with one of the drummers, to see more of the Native dance troupe.

Gordie Willier, a drummer with the troupe, also asked them to drop in at the local friendship centre, gave them a formal invitation to attend a sweat lodge and asked them to videotape a drum practice.

"We had been warned to stay away from the drum practice, uncertain of how we would be received. We were challenged by a grassdancer, asked why we had come. Out of the blue, one of the drummers said, 'Oh, you two must be those white guys we have been hearing about, wanting to sing and dance.'" [The drummer was well-known in Native cultural circles — Charlie Tailfeathers] and "much to the astonishment of the other Native people at the practice, he gave me a hand drum to play, and with a grin requested a morning song [it was night] and asked me what style I wanted to dance. I had seen an old fellow from Onion Lake dancing traditional grass. It spoke volumes to me. Our new friend graciously offered to teach me and introduce me to that Elder. He told me it was time to braid my hair, four-and-a-half wraps, just stubs. It's a good thing I was in the bathroom when I braided my hair for the first time. I started to cry, happy and sad, totally overwhelmed by a sense of destiny."

At home he had no music with which to practice dancing or hand drums to play. Later that week, someone in Manitoba sent the Suttons a package of powwow tapes. A local Native artisan had a set of hand drums for sale that someone had ordered but not picked up. Exactly what they needed.

"Then I met my Elder, Antoine Littlewolf." That was back in 1987.

"The first day we walked into that old man's house was like walking into a fresh meadow. He was like my own grandfa-

ther, the warmest, kindest gentleman I'd ever met in my life. It was a mutual thing. We really hit it off. He was ready and willing to teach us the old time chicken dance, the old ways and traditions. After a while, I came to realize that Antoine and his wife Mary were like many other Elders I had met, really appreciative of a genuine interest in what they had to say, the knowledge they had to pass on."

The Littlewolfs not only hit it off with Paul and Pat. They decided to adopt them, first as grandchildren and then as their sons, something that both honored and humbled them, said Sutton. Learning the ancient grass and traditional dance forms from a master, was also a humbling experience.

"We were taught that when you dance in a powwow, you pray to the Grandfathers and spirits and offer up your body for them to enter into, as a vehicle to dance in so that they can enjoy the physical world again. When my Elder taught me that, it made perfect sense. When I dance, I'm in the back seat. Within a few seconds of dancing, I lose control, something else takes over. I am not the dancer or the dance, there is no 'I' in there, just a witness. Sometimes moves come out of my body that just astound me and I'm just along for the ride."

Sutton, who cuts a flamboyant and unusual figure in the powwow arbor, says that the inspiration for his regalia is grounded in Plains Cree tradition, the animal-spirit world and his own Celtic heritage.

"All roads lead to the same place. We all meet in the Stone Age. I wear old-style stationary grass and traditional Plains Cree regalia, using images like the Sorcerer of Trois Freres [three brothers] from a cave in France, and combine brain-tanned leather, horn, fur, cloth, bone, cave bear teeth, mammoth ivory and Mongolian horse hair from the pre-historic horses at Al Oemings Polar Park [in Alberta]. My regalia reflects many influences from different times and cultures."

Sutton was given the right to make and wear this regalia by his Elder, Antoine Littlewolf, and his spiritual guide, the animal master.

"We were given the ways of making, what it meant and the right to wear it. Some people see it as plain, but every little knot and stitch has a meaning, an old pre-contact flavor. There's a natural beauty in the old outfits and materials. The newer styles look gaudy in comparison. The Native ancestors made beads, long before the white man came, using bone, shells and carved stones. . . . As far

as being a 'wannabe' goes, I've met a lot of dancers who don't know the first thing about the ancient traditions behind the dance, how to dance properly or make real regalia.

"Everyone appears to be a chief these days, according to their regalia, have appeared to have won all the war honors possible, achieved the highest official positions and loaded down with all the honors that can be won in a lifetime, according to the number of feathers they are wearing," said Sutton.

"No grassroots buck privates out there. And they start out dancing that way! I used to wear an eagle feather bustle. There was respect at first but then it became unsafe to wear one in the arbor, people bumping into it, little kids showing no respect. After talking to many Elders and learning what the eagle feathers meant, I realized that in all good conscience I could not wear something that I had not earned."

Earning eagle feathers in the old time warrior sense meant having hand to hand combat with the enemy, explained Sutton.

"The Cheyenne have recently started up the 'Black Legging Society', an ancient society from more than a hundred years ago, to commemorate the veterans from the First and Second World Wars. Some young guys returning from Vietnam figured that they were pretty hot stuff and had earned the right to join the Black Leggings. The Elders refused them flat out because they had never had hand to hand combat according to the old tradition, and had not earned the right to wear feathers in the truest sense. They had been fighting in the way of the white man."

As well as the sacredness of eagle feathers, Sutton also has strong beliefs about Aboriginal spirituality and what he calls the natural world.

"I believe that the natural world is filled with spirits. By the time we get to be five or six years old we are told that we can't have invisible friends. There is a weird duality in Roman Catholicism. We are taught that we are supposed to have a guardian angel to watch over us for life. I believe that the guardian angel is a more modern bastardization of the guardian spirit. I believe that each one of us has a guardian spirit, be it a bison, an eagle, a fish or a badger; that we can get in touch with these spirits and be taught by them and on a deeper level, get rid of the spiritual middleman. You don't need to go to someone else for this kind of learning."

Sutton says that he listens with humbleness and respect to his Elders, that they validate him and his shunning of the

white world for all the right reasons, and always tries to do as they say. But on a deeper level, he looks to his own guardian spirit as his guide in a different reality.

"I wear this buffalo horn head dress with antlers, given to me from Him. There is a spirit, an animal master used by the Shamans in ancient Europe over 20,000 years ago. The image on my shield comes from a cave in France called Trois Freres. He appeared to me on four successive nights in my dreams. Each night I thought I was awake when I saw him standing beside my bed and was terrified. The first night he had hooves for feet and hands, a muzzle for a mouth, completely animal with no eyes. He had empty eye sockets from which burned a bright yellow light. He seemed to beckon to me to follow him but I refused. Each successive night he appeared more human. The second night he had hands, hooves for feet, the muzzle and the yellow eyes. The fourth night he had human hands, feet and face with a body, a combination of different animal parts and yellow lights in his eyes. That night I agreed to go with him and his eyes turned human as he danced out the door. I followed him right through the door and we went places and did things I'm not allowed to tell anyone. He gave me my regalia and I wear it in honor of him."

As a stranger in a strange land, a white man standing in two worlds, Sutton has been called a lot of things, including a wannabe. But for him, seeing where the cultures connect is what it's all about.

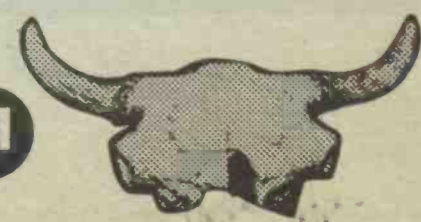
"Does anybody really have the right to call all the shots on spirituality? I know a lot of Natives are very prejudiced against white people and think that we don't have any inborn ability to make contact with the natural world, the spiritual world. I mean, that is a load of bunk. Every human being on every continent in human history has had this ability, we all bleed red. It's part of our rightful heritage — the spirit world — and if you are respectful and seek it out, it will respond to you and seek you out. You have to be totally humble. If you start hating people for one reason or another, then that is a cancer and there's too much of that around. We all have to learn to respect each other's differences, appreciate them for what they are, open our hearts and minds. You can learn things you never thought possible."

"I didn't ask to be here. It was like a whirlwind that swept me up. There was no way I was going to fight it. It was far too powerful for me. They used to think we were wannabes at Onion Lake, but it didn't take people long to realize we weren't, when they sat down and talked with us. We were just genuine human beings with a genuine respect and appreciation for nature. That's what drew me to the Aboriginal culture in the first place. I could see how much they respected Mother Nature in all her forms and they developed a rich culture to express their respect through ceremonies and dance."

"Heartstrings can be pulled both ways. It's harder for them to stand in two worlds than it is for me. I find it a great blessing that the Native community has accepted both me and my brother. My loyalty is Cree and that's why we were adopted by the Littlewolfs and the Cardinal-Moyah family."

"I try my best to pass on this understanding to younger dancers and friends. It thrills me to hear that they are making progress, starting to visit their grandparents more often, getting more grounded or more focused in their spirituality."

"Words are like pointing to the stars. It's hard for someone else to see exactly where you are pointing. Words can only point people in the right direction."



By Terry Lusty  
As told by Eleanor Brass

One day, a long time ago, there was an Indian chief who had six sons. All these boys, with the exception of one, were strong young men who were known far and wide for their abilities to hunt and scout. However, the youngest in the bunch, Day Dreamer, was tiny and frail, nothing like his hardy brothers.

Day Dreamer liked nothing better than to stay back at the camp whenever the others went hunting. Sometimes, he would go for days — just sitting and dreaming. That is how he came by his name. Why, even his own family would poke fun and tease him.

One day the brothers got together and sent him off to live with his grandmother, not realizing what an impact that would someday have on their entire tribe.

Upon arriving at his grandmother's house, Day Dreamer addressed her; "Nokoom," he said, "my family has sent me to take care of you and to live with you." He told her that his father and brothers constantly teased him and said he was useless because he couldn't and wouldn't do the things they did, and, what's more, he didn't really care to.

"Nosesim (grandchild)," said Nokoom. "I am so happy you have come to live with me. I know the things your family say are not true and that one day soon you will do something really good that will make the people sit up and take notice."

Day Dreamer sat and thought about that. "Nokoom, you know what? I believe there is a special reason why I am not bigger than I am and strong like my brothers. It could be that

I was meant to sit and think until I can figure out just how I can help our people to live an easier life. One particular idea that runs through my head is that there are some big animals out there somewhere. Perhaps they could be used for hunting and travel. They are larger than the dogs that we use, that's for sure."

"Good for you Nosesim," said Nokoom. "I have a lot of faith in you and I will do whatever I can to help you. You will need some things as you embark on your journey," she suggested. "So, I shall make you some moccasins and pack you some food. You will probably have to travel a long, long way to find those large animals. And, you will find them. I have every reason to believe that you will locate them. This difficult mission you are about to begin will require a great deal of stamina. Sleep, Nosesim, sleep. You will need your strength when the new light dawns on the horizon."

And so, once he had gone to bed, Nokoom sang and prayed to the Creator asking that he watch over the young man and help guide him. "His heart is pure and he only has the interests of his people in mind," she explained.

When Nosesim arose with the rising of the sun, Nokoom presented him with a beautiful new pair of hand-tanned moccasins. She also gave him food to take, then informed him that, "before the day is over, you will come across a tipi where another grandmother lives. Just like you did here," she said, "you will rest at her camp and she, too, will give you food and moccasins." The next morning Nosesim said farewell to Nokoom and was on his way.

All that day he travelled on and on until the black blanket of darkness descended upon the land. Still, with the bright light of

the nearly-full moon, he was able to spot the tipi way off in the distance, at the edge of the forest. By the time he arrived at the tipi, Day Dreamer found himself extremely tired.

"Astum (come) Nosesim," said the new and other grandmother. "Api (sit). You must be tired." Tired? Why sure he was tired. The old lady then offered him some food and drink.

Nosesim was so hungry he just wolfed down everything in no time at all. Then he was content and went to sleep. Once he had, the grandmother sang and prayed to the Creator just like Nokoom had done. And, like Nokoom, she also presented him with new moccasins and food for his travels. But, before he left, she advised him to move along in the same direction that the sun travelled.

This pattern of encountering "other" grandmothers each day for several consecutive days was to become standard. Sure enough, each evening, as his day of travel came to a halt, there'd be a new grandmother, new moccasins and food. As each day passed and as he encountered what was to be the last of the "other" grandmothers, he was informed by her that he was very close to accomplishing the first stage of his mission — finding the tipi by the forest. "Just one more day," she told him.

She then informed him he would also come upon the big animals that night and that he would also encounter a great white-haired chief. She cautioned him to approach the chief with respect and caution because he was known to be quite stern. "As well," she added, "he is the person who can offer the big animals to the Indian people, but only if he judges them to be deserving of such an important gift."

Day Dreamer grew excited. At last, his dream to help his people might come to a conclusion. Still, there was the matter of the great chief. He had some reservations about how the great chief would view and receive him, especially since he was small in stature.

As the evening wore on, he finally spotted the tipi. It had beautiful animal paintings on it and there were fancy, decorated bridles and saddles on racks that ringed the outside perimeter of the huge tipi.

When the great chief tossed back the tipi flap from its doorway and emerged from within, Nosesim could only stand and stare at the stately man with the long, flowing white hair.

"What is it you want," the chief demanded to know.

The young man spoke of his special mission for his people, and the need for the big animals that could be of such great value to his people for hunting and travel.

The chief asked Day Dreamer how he had found out about the big animals. He explained what his grandmother had told him, that he had worn out many pairs of new moccasins, that the grandmothers had sang and prayed for his mission, and that he had travelled a very long way to get there.

After all was said and done, the chief motioned for the young man to follow him to a lake beyond the tipi. When they got there, he pointed to it and said, "Look at the water." Nosesim first saw ripples, then small waves. As he continued to stare, the waves took on the form of horses' heads. Gradually, as they swam closer to shore, he saw their bodies. They were simply magnificent! He could not believe his eyes. And there were all kinds of them — white ones, black ones, bays, buckskins, greys, palominos, pintos, sorrels and roans.

Day Dreamer could not contain himself. What he witnessed was truly exciting and he could not thank the chief enough. Finally, once he had, the chief told him that the horses were a prized gift from the Creator, that they must be treated well and that they were never to be hit on their heads. He was then directed to take the big animals back to his people and repeat to them the words that he had.

And so it was that a happy young man gathered up one of the decorated saddles of which the chief had presented him, saddled up his mount and rode off with the herd of big animals for his people.

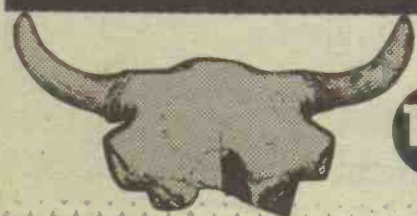
His return trip went quickly. In no time at all, it seemed, he was back at his people's camp. As he rode in with the herd of magnificent horses, his people stared in utter amazement and disbelief. There was a huge celebration by the people in camp and Day Dreamer was publicly acknowledged as a great leader.

Through all the excitement, Nokoom had silently stood to the side and watched and listened. Finally, she stepped forward to proudly state that her grandchild, Day Dreamer, may have been seen as a "great dreamer," but his dreams came true and all for the good of his people.

# The First Horses

A Legend

The late Eleanor Brass was a Cree, originally from the Peepeekeesis Reserve in Saskatchewan. Although she was best known for her storytelling and writing, she was also a puppeteer. Like many older Indian people, Eleanor was one who shared what she knew of the Cree language, culture and history with Native and non-Native people alike.





# Get back to basics for a better life

I sit here and smile to the memories of my childhood. Thinking of how happy I was to see my dad come home from the bush. He brought us treats if you can imagine, such as spruce gum, beaver and muskrat tail. The spruce gum was bitter for a while but you chewed it because you loved who gave it to you and it was given in love. Back then the men were the keepers of the fire and brought home sustenance to light our spirits. These memories were brought to mind due to my 17th anniversary of recovery. Yes I lost 12 years of my life living what I call in an unconscious world. In the new millennium I move forward to my 18th year on the good red road and new challenges.

I always thought I was a totally Cree. When I researched my family history I found I had Chipewyan and French descendants. Through and through I consider myself to be a Cree bush woman. I pursued wellness emotionally, spiritually, mentally and physically to become who I am today. I did not journey alone at first. On my path I met strong individuals who took me under their wings and taught me how to fly. I was reminded of the lessons my parents taught me and of their love. Now I would like to share with you some thoughts, perceptions and views of a bit of the world. No prejudice or disrespect intended.

Treaty 8 was signed due to the hunger of my great-grandfather Kinosayew, brother to my biological great-grandfather, Wittigo.

Maybe Wittigo ate all the pro-

visions, who knows (humor!) or were our people starved to prevent them from thinking and utilizing their gift of vision when Treaty 8 was signed?

When Treaty 8 was signed the vision of our leaders was short. I thought of attributing this to the hunger, but now looking at the way our values, lifestyles and traditions have been somewhat put on the wayside, the vision of our ancestors may be of a true vision.

I believe our treaties will become non-existent due to the change of First Nations values. Nature was one of the values, nature was our livelihood and our co-existent relationship to Her was valued.

Now we cash her in for economic reasons and are setting ourselves up for zip. Our treaty agreement is authentic only until the river flows, the sun shines and the grass grows.

What are we doing to ourselves? Look at the four elements — Fire, Water, Wind and Earth. These elements give us life.

Did you take an airplane ride recently to see how much of our trees have been cut? Where do you think our air is going? Is our traditional food going to move into a modern forest? Last year 85 per cent of our moose was ticked off. Is this caused by the disease and imbalance our Mother Nature is feeling caused by our need for economic reasons? I include myself because to say or do nothing is to conform, isn't it? Environmentally speaking, how do these elements provide us with life? Let's face it, we are too busy trying to understand politics, let alone

*Is it too late to stop and earnestly come to terms with each other, to teach our youth values they can be proud of. Building instead of tearing down, preserving instead of throwing out, honesty instead of deception, sharing instead of selling, caring instead of using, and most of all faith for the future.*

apply it, to really take a look at member First Nations who are homeless, hungry, excluded and uninformed. Who are the leaders leading? Isn't true leadership teaching others to lead? I believe this is true, too.

"The speed of the leader determines the rate of the pack." (Ralph Waldo Emerson).

If you really take a good look, most of our leaders are not First Nation. How far have we really come to take over self-government? Have we assimilated more than we know? When the treaty band lands become collateral to the banks, will repossession take place?

There is also a lot of time spent on negative feelings such as jealousy and giving in to anger to really take a look at who we are and where we come from. Family feuds still exist today. Some parents nurture dependency. Our adult children need to be believed they can take responsibility to make their dreams come true. The value of family is not what it used to be. Come to think of it, do we know what it used to be? Before the

residential school genocide came along, what were our family systems really like? I heard stories from my parents and of their experiences. I liked what I heard, but not all was ideal as we would like to believe. I believe families were more functional then. The messages "Don't trust. Don't talk, Don't feel" our children hear today were reverse back then to nurture growth.

We need to take pride in who we are and let go of the shame which was instilled in our spirits some time ago. I believe this the basis for a lot of our ill spiritual health. In whose service were the Europeans when they took it upon themselves to change us and make us better people? Whose birthday do we celebrate at Christmas?

Focusing on the present was another value. Now, in my opinion, the present is interpreted as "gift." I am disappointed to hear when our traditional healers or Elders sell their pipe ceremonies for hundreds of dollars and one has to give up their valuable possessions to get healed. I don't

know. I believe a true healer does not ask for anything. They receive their worth. After all, what goes 'round comes 'round.

We also take things too seriously or not too seriously enough. Our nation continues in constant agitation. We spend a lot of energy rebelling, denying, thus refusing to move positively together as our ancestors used to in unity.

On another note, whether we like it are not, we are paying for our brother's wrong doings in society. We are still stereotyped and going through peer pressure. We need to use consequential thinking. For us it is "one for all, not all for one."

Is it too late to stop and earnestly come to terms with each other, to teach our youth values they can be proud of? Building instead of tearing down, preserving instead of throwing out, honesty instead of deception, sharing instead of selling, caring instead of using, and most of all faith for the future.

One very important lesson I have learned is to use these values: pull your own weight, enjoy life's freedoms and don't focus too much on material things. After all, do you know of anyone who left this world with his worldly possessions? I think not. I believe their value of possessions took them. For the new millennium, let us dispose of our disposable world, be concrete and steadfast. Let us be keepers of all the positives we have and continue within our hearts to have the river flow, the sun shine and the grass grow."

Verna M. Wittigo  
High Prairie, Alta.

## It loses something in the translation

With the onslaught of political correctness in recent years, the term "Indian" has rapidly gone out of favor in referring to Canada's original inhabitants. Instead, a plethora of "colorful" terms such as Native, Aboriginal, First Nations, and even Indigenous, are currently used as both adjectives and nouns in the ongoing battle to properly describe us. Even when we talk about ourselves, there is some dissention.

But the English language, now used by the vast majority of Native people, and the words we have chosen for self description in these more enlighten times, are no better than "Indian", that ubiquitous term of by-gone days. In fact, many find the whole usage of the numerous Aboriginal-related terms quite questionable, and their correctness, definitely suspect. Unfortunately, it can be confusing being an English-speaking First Nations person.

The term First Nations, to me, is a political phrase, often used to describe what used to be called reserves. For instance, I come from Curve Lake First Nation. But personally, I am a little uncomfortable being called a First Nations person because I do not consider myself a political term. Therefore to say I



**Drew Hayden Taylor**

am First Nations limits me to a strictly political nature or definition. And who wants that? Cynics will argue that it is all political, especially being Native in Canada. But I would still rather be a person than a political designation. Call me a rebel if you will.

The other questionable description is the familiar expression "Aboriginal." Deconstructing the word, the prefix "ab", used in such other well-known words as abominable (as in the Abominable Snowman), abhorrent, absurd, abysmal, abnormal, abscess, abase, abject, to name a few, all have a negative connotation. They all seem to denote a certain pessimistic designation or flavor to whatever is being discussed. Thus, being an Aboriginal is not a flattering term. But it does beg the question: "Could the Inuit of the Arctic be called the Aboriginal

snowmen?"

In taking this issue a bit further, I was once sitting in the office of the Native student coordinator for a large university. I accidentally overheard the coordinator talking with a new student on the phone who was interested in coming in for a chat. I heard the immortal phrase being issued by this keeper of the office. "Are you of Native descent?" The immediate image in my mind was of a Native person taking an escalator to the basement. Descent makes me think of descending. Therefore, being of Native descent is a step downwards. I think we should take command of this language that has taken command of us because I prefer to think of myself as being of Native ascent. I think others should too. I, as well as our people, want to go up in the world, not down.

Above and beyond personal

definitions of our culture, the intermingling of Native and non-Native realities, as personified through English usage, never fails to amaze me. Several times a year I get invited to various Native Awareness Weeks across the country, usually at universities (no doubt with descending Native students). The irony of the term occurred to me one day as I was driving through a small town on my way to such an event. A large banner across the main street alerted the residents that this was also Cancer awareness week. In another town I visited recently, it was AIDS awareness week. Still others advertised Diabetes awareness week. And here I was going to Native Awareness Week. Perhaps, with enough money and research, there will be no need for these awareness weeks and these evil scourges will officially be wiped out forever. My donation is in the mail.

There also seems to be a noticeable gulf in the interpretations of certain words in both cultures. The most obvious to me occurred during the editing of a new book I had coming out. The publisher had written some promo material and asked me to proof it. I read it over several

times but found myself concerned with a certain passage, one word in fact that I felt was misleading and could possibly be construed as inappropriate.

I argued with the publisher for several minutes before the misunderstanding became quite evident. The line itself read "...big questions of heritage, family, cultural context and personal identity are ruthlessly stripped of their traditional meanings and become so much useless, embarrassing road kill on the highway of life."

It was the word "traditional" that threw us both. I was reading the word from a specifically Native perspective, and taking that into account the quote sounds somewhat harsh and provocative. Judge for yourself. But the publisher was using the term "traditional" in the context of what is generally believed or accepted. Once we both realized this, we merely changed "traditional" to "conventional", and we both went away happy little literary people.

English has been with Native people for just a few centuries now. And its no secret there has always been a communication problem in one form or another. Into the first months of the millennium, the battle still continues.

# Membership issues illustrate cultural differences

By Paul Barnsley  
Windspeaker Staff Writer

VANCOUVER

A weary collection of Manitobans, and one Alberta chief, arrived in Vancouver in time to catch the last couple of days of the Assembly of First Nations annual meeting last July.

They walked almost 2,000 km from The Pas to Vancouver to raise awareness of the fight that many Indigenous people are waging to secure status and/or band membership in the curious, bureaucrat-created, post-Bill C-31 world.

Bill C-31, as most Native people know, was the 1985 amendment to the Indian Act that the Government of Canada, under then-prime minister Brian Mulroney, enacted in the face of several Supreme Court of Canada decisions and international pressure to remove discrimination against Native women from the Indian Act. Before the law was changed, a Native woman who married a non-Native man lost her status but a Native man who married a non-Native woman did not. In fact, the non-Native wife of a Native man actually gained status under Canadian law. There are still many women who acquired status solely by marriage before 1985 who remain status Indians.

That bothers some Native people, especially those who have significant Native bloodlines but still can't secure status for themselves or their children. Native leaders say the bureaucracy has turned the whole process of deciding who is an Indian and who isn't into an exercise that has no foundation in common sense.

Nathan MacGillvary organized the walk from The Pas to Vancouver. He's desperate for help in a Federal Court of Canada case that could decide the heritage of his granddaughter, Dakota. Dakota's mom,

MacGillvary's daughter, was an unwed mother who chose not to disclose the name of the father to the federal government. Non-Native women in that predicament aren't even asked the question. But Native women who are asked the question — and refuse to answer — find that the government workers assume that the father is non-Aboriginal (whether that's the case or not). That arbitrary policy decision affects the status of the children and their children, increasing the chance that future generations will lose their status.

MacGillvary believes the regulations the Department of Indian Affairs has created to deal with deciding who is an Indian and who isn't are designed to eliminate Native people and the cost that Native entitlements impose on the federal treasury. He gives it about 50 years if something isn't done soon.



PAUL BARNSELEY

Viola Thomas

“A lot of people think they have a treaty number and they're safe. But that treaty number isn't good enough,” he said. “All these regulations are designed to eliminate First Nations and treaties and within 50 or 60 years, that's what they'll do if we don't wake up.”

Chief Richard Davis of the northern Alberta Swan River First Nation joined MacGillvary's long march because he feels his community's membership is threatened by the department of Indian Affairs' membership regulations.

“My grandchildren could be affected,” he said. “Bill C-31 is the most aggressively genocidal assimilation project the government has ever introduced. We've never been consulted about any of these government regulations and that's wrong. Our legacy is ours to determine. You can't determine culture through legislation and you can't extinguish culture through legislation but

that's what's going on.”

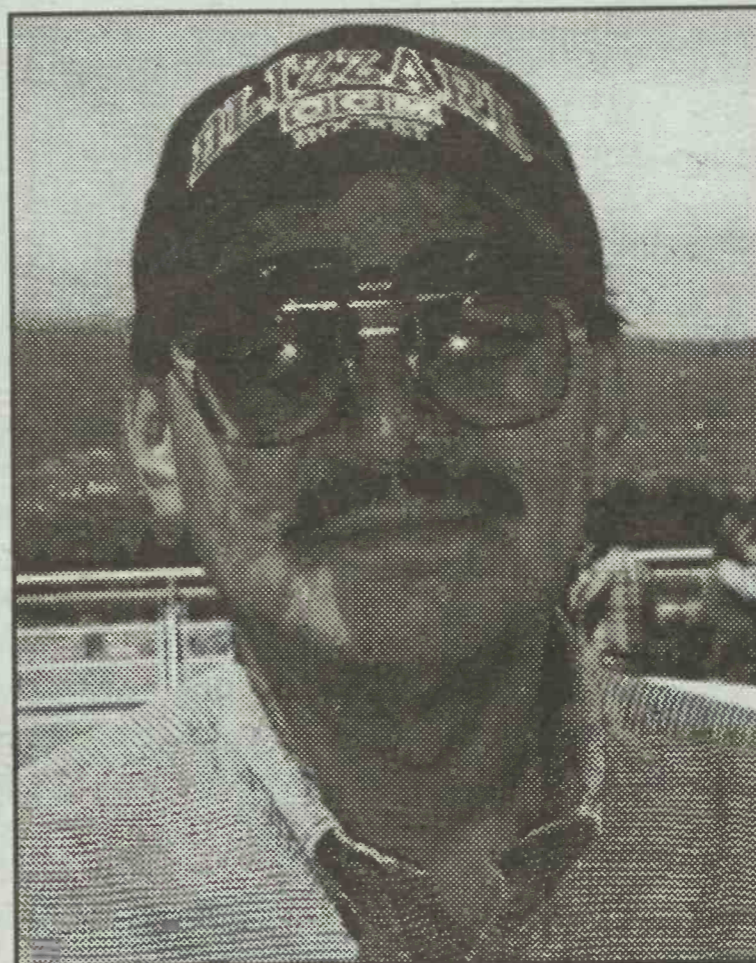
Another Alberta band located not too far from Swan River was in the national spotlight a few years ago when it tried to fight for the right to decide who belongs on the membership roll and who doesn't. The Sawridge band was widely portrayed as an oil-rich band whose small number of members wanted to make it impossible for others to join the band because they didn't want to share the wealth. Lawyer Catherine Twinn, a Sawridge member, went on the attack telling reporters that the real issue, the more important issue, is who decides membership. She argued that the band should have the right to decide who is a member of its community, not the federal government. The case is scheduled to return to court in the near future; examinations are scheduled for next month. But Chief Davis said it doesn't matter whether you think the Sawridge members are being greedy and exclusionary or not because they're right about the importance of controlling their own membership list.

“They knew C-31 was about extinguishment long before anybody else,” he said of his neighboring band.

Viola Thomas, the president of the United Native Nations in British Columbia, represents the interests of the off-reserve residents in that province. Since First Nation leaders believe that government funding has not kept up with the jump in membership that C-31 caused when it restored status to women and their children who had lost their status when they married non-Natives, the band council leadership has not been in a position to actively provide services to their off-reserve members. In many cases, reserve residents resent the newcomers who add more strain to already limited budgets. Thomas said that's one aspect of the issue that the women who fought for the Indian Act change didn't anticipate.

“Sandra Lovelace and the Native Women's Association of Canada never anticipated that the change in the discriminatory provision would create a bigger

headache than the provision itself,” she said. “They never, ever anticipated that when Bill C-31 kicked in, it would have these 27 legal categories. That's what has to be challenged — the right to



PAUL BARNSELEY

Nathan MacGillvary

self identify. I always use the analogy of immigrants who come to Canada. They agree to learn English and give up their identity, their right to self define. But for Aboriginal people that was imposed. The definition that eroded our right to self define was imposed. That process also destroys our matrilineal forms of identities. Historically, culturally, all first peoples were always recognized through their ancestors. With the erosion of that evolved a patrilineal definition that totally destroyed those rights to self definition. I think it's part of the White Paper policy. They still want to assimilate and disband their fiduciary obligation for Aboriginal people.”

A recent decision in a British Columbia court case has Thomas excited. She called the Wilson decision a “fabulous decision” saying the court recognized that the Indian registrar's insistence on documented proof of Native heritage was an unfair burden on many Aboriginal people.

“That was a very, very interesting case because it really affects a lot of our people, particularly Aboriginal people who, at the time the Indian Act kicked in and the registrar came on

stream, were excluded from the list because of their traditional activities like trapping or being a veteran. What that decision basically reaffirms was that, for those individuals who don't

have the adequate paper documentation for application for membership, the registrar now has to factor the oral history. It's a very interesting case because quite often the paper stuff is used against our people who are wanting to register,” she said.

And while Harry Daniels, president of the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples, the national organization that lobbies on behalf of off-reserve residents, angrily points out that there's no way to challenge a decision of the Indian registrar in court, Thomas warns that at least there's an internal appeal process within the Department of Indian Affairs.

“If you don't apply to the department for your application and you only apply direct to the band, you have no recourse for appeal if you appeal to the band unless the band has an appeal component within their band membership code and many of them don't,” she said. “We always tell people, ‘Don't go to your band, go through the registrar, because then at least you have that recourse for appeal.’”

Thomas sees all the problems caused by Bill C-31 to be the result of the government not keeping its promises to not impose greater hardships on First Nations by enacting the bill.

“The other thing that's got to be exposed is the broken promise from the Red Book that promised to enhance resources to deal with the needs of persons becoming reinstated. There's no doubt that part of the systemic attitudes that's been inherited by the some of the bands is that it's Bill C-31 or the urban Indians that's causing all the problems with our budgets, when in essence the problem rests with the federal government itself in underestimating the projections on reinstatement and secondly, capping resources to First Nations.

(See Decisions on page 7.)

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Still Time To Register!

# Decisions should protect culture, leaders say

(Continued from page 6.)

"By doing that, what you're effectively doing is cultivating a polarization amongst the Aboriginal community where you then get Indians blaming Indians when it isn't Indians that are the enemy here. It's how the federal government has chosen to prioritize their budget allocations."

Gerald Taiaiake Alfred, a Mohawk academic who teaches Indigenous governance at the University of Victoria, said there are a lot of very difficult issues involved in the question of who decides who is an Indian. He worked on the controversial membership code of his home community of Kahnawake and he believes tough measures are required to take back control of who decides status and membership. The new membership code in Kahnawake states that at least half of your family has to come from the community if you are to be welcomed as a member.

"It's easy to talk about things in the theoretical sense but when you are last representatives of your nation on earth and you are last of your blood line and you are last people holding onto last little bit of land you have, I don't think it's out of all reason to get a little defensive," he said. "If people want us to be entirely welcoming and entirely inclusive, it would need to be a welcoming and inclusive world where we would be allowed to live without persecution and we would have a land base where we could be who we truly are. We're like a trapped animal."

He points out that the first Indian Act, enacted in 1851, contained no discrimination against women marrying outside the community.

"The Indians complained," he said. "They didn't want white men coming into the community because the women have more of a responsibility within the culture regarding the land, there's more of a responsibility

to keep within the culture. So it's a weird mixture of what today seems like bias, sexual discrimination. It looks like men discriminating against women but at the same time it's putting more of a real traditional emphasis on the roles of the women, saying in essence the women are more important in the culture and there's a higher responsibility on them."

The fact that non-Native government employees make the membership rules has caused great cultural upheaval in Kahnawake and most other Indigenous communities, he said.

"They're unbending. They have absolutely no comprehension of the social and political reality in the community."

Alfred agrees with Thomas and Davis when they say that every new policy seems aimed at a making sure that there are fewer Indians.



PAUL BARNESLEY

Viola Thomas (right) regularly takes on chiefs over urban Native issues.

"In the long term, yes, that's what they're doing. But the irony or the paradox is that in the short term, they're adding people to our list against our will. It's kind of paradoxical because they don't want us to have control over our own identity which means they don't want us to survive as a people. They accomplish that by forcing this broad, meaningless definition of what it means to be an Indian upon us. So in the end, the idea of being a Mohawk will mean nothing because all it will mean is being descended from people who used to be Mohawks. Whereas we're looking to perpetuate this living cultural defi-

nition of what being a Mohawk is on our own decision according to our own criteria."

The uncomfortable question of distinction by race is always a part of the arguments over this issue. Alfred suggested that the Indian Act introduced racial issues into the question and Indigenous peoples would be foolish not to deal with them.

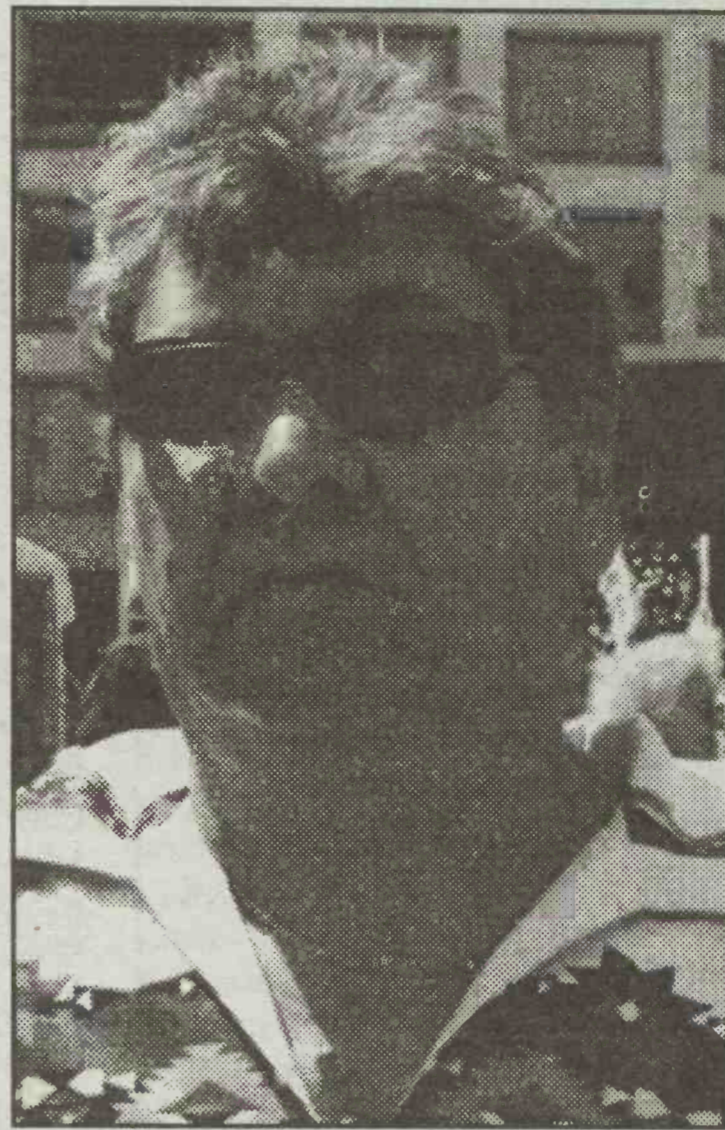
"The government has a criteria for membership which is devoid of any cultural meaning and is, strictly speaking, a racist criteria. We have a criteria which is racist in the sense that it's based on blood, but it's also cultural according to what our community determines is a Mohawk today," he said. "They're trying to impose this strict racist criteria

on us and we're trying to fight that and in the meantime what it means is that they want to add numbers of people to us who have no culture in the hopes that in the end our nation will be defined strictly by criteria that comes from the outside."

Alfred said the Mohawks have decided they don't want members added to their community who aren't in touch with Mohawk traditions, which are more important than blood quantum or other criteria for determining membership. He provided the example of a person with 100 per cent Mohawk blood who was adopted as an infant by a non-Native family and has no connection with the fabric of Mohawk life and culture.

"He's a candidate. He has the right, but he doesn't have the status yet. He hasn't done what needs to be done. In all of these traditions there's a great deal of responsibility. People think of it as an entitlement, now," he explained. "Even people who are born on the reserve, raised there and everything. They think of it as something that's owed to them. They forget that there's a lot you have to do, to sacrifice, in

order to be a member of that community. You have to do certain things. You can't go around claiming to be a Mohawk if you're going against the tradi-



PAUL BARNESLEY

Richard Davis

tion and the teaching of what it takes to be one. If you want to be really traditional about it. If you want to put real stake in the teachings, in the lessons of our culture, that's the conclusion you would draw. The problem is it's too harsh for a lot of people."

If a person never does the work of learning the culture so he can take his place in the Mohawk community or is judged to have too small a connection to the community, then he will probably not be accepted as a member, Alfred said. But that doesn't mean that person is not an Aboriginal as described by Canadian law.

"If someone is excluded based on our criteria, it's not like they go into this black hole of nothingness. They still have the identity that they can claim as an Iroquois in the cultural sense if they want and they still have their status as an Aboriginal person in Canada," Alfred said. "I'm perfectly comfortable with that because it has nothing to do with the Mohawk nation. It doesn't impinge on our rights to do whatever we want. It doesn't place an additional burden on

us if that person doesn't meet our criteria. But at the same time, as an individual in the principle of justice, it allows that person to still access the rights that that person has because of that one drop of blood. That is the Aboriginal within Canada and everything that flows from that obligation on the part of the Canadian government. So I'm not for the Canadian government giving that up. They've created this situation and they have an obligation to the people.

But that's not to say that simply by being Aboriginal that the person has a right to be a member of full standing of every nation. So I make a distinction between the two."

The intermingling of the races and the destruction of Indigenous culture — some of it intentional and some accidental — have created the situation where people of Indigenous ancestry have no connection to any one Indigenous community and Alfred argues that traditional cultures are based on a complex series of relationships that can't easily be entered into from outside. Tribal customs made a place for every member of the unit and every member of the unit knew and fulfilled his or her role. It is unfair and unnatural for the federal government to force new threads into this fabric without the consent of those people who already form the community, he said. The fact of European colonization means that there will be people of Indigenous ancestry who, for one reason or another, don't fit into any Indigenous community. Alfred believes they should still be accommodated as Indigenous people by Canadian authorities.

"There's going to be thousands of people who the Canadian government considers to be Mohawk but who are not accepted by the Mohawks. If I was working for the government, I'd put some thought into how to resolve that because it's the government's problem. Eventually the Mohawks are going to reassert themselves and say we don't want you calling them Mohawks. Call them whatever you want to call them but they're not Mohawks," he said.

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# Mohawk council ponders lawsuit

By Paul Barnsley  
Windspeaker Staff Writer

AKWESASNE, Ont.

If Canada wins its legal action against tobacco companies that have been accused of orchestrating the smuggling of Canadian cigarettes back into Canada to evade taxation, Akwesasne Grand Chief Mike Mitchell and his council feel a big chunk of any settlement should be re-routed their way.

The federal government announced at a Dec. 21 press conference in Ottawa that it is suing the RJ Reynolds tobacco companies, including Canadian subsidiary RJR MacDonald. Filed at the U.S. Federal Court in Syracuse, NY, the lawsuit alleges the companies defrauded Canadians by conspiring with distributors and smugglers to bring their products into the country illegally.

The government is seeking \$1 billion or more in damages for lost tax revenue from the tobacco companies. In addition, Health Minister Allan Rock said the lawsuit also asks the court to force the companies to turn over all profits made from the activity he alleges was illegal.

Mitchell said the federal government isn't blameless in this situation; the members of his community are the real victims. The Mohawk Council of

Akwesasne is seriously considering its own lawsuit against the federal government. In an interview last year with *Windspeaker*, Mitchell said he warned federal officials that the situation was growing out of control long before it reached crisis proportions. He said all attempts by his council to stop the smuggling were over-ruled by federal authorities who were more interested in limiting the Akwesasne council's jurisdiction.

"In February of 1987, the council submitted a detailed proposal to the minister of National Revenue for the creation of a Mohawk border patrol to work with Canada to protect our borders," Mitchell said. "We felt that no one is in a better position than we are to identify those who would abuse the border, and no one has better knowledge than us to enable effective policing of the border through the many islands and international corridors which make up our community. Canada rejected this offer and, in my view, this caused tremendous damage to our community and Canada's economy over the next decade."

"Akwesasne is the most aggrieved party in this situation," a council press release reads. "The health and safety of this community [was harmed] and our character and reputation were defamed."

Council sources say a de-

cision about whether to launch a lawsuit against the federal government is expected to be on the agenda in the near future.

The Mohawk council's press release also said that council members suspected that government officials were slow to confront cigarette companies about suspicions the companies were behind the cigarette smuggling "due to the terrific lobby effort of the cigarette companies and their position as powerful players in industry."

"Instead, for a number of years, the focus of the government of Canada was to blame the Mohawks of Akwesasne and other Mohawk communities for the problem. Canada and the cigarette industry knew that 90 per cent of the cigarettes exported found their way back into Canada. They were in a position to stop this at any time during the eight years of activity," the council statement claims.

Mitchell appears to be leaning towards launching the lawsuit.

"It is time to stop blaming the Mohawks of Akwesasne for all the problems of tobacco smuggling and loss of revenue. It is important that the damage to our community be acknowledged and that the responsible tobacco companies and government be held accountable for their actions," he said.

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# Racist letter sparks political debate

By Chris Tyrone Ross  
Windspeaker Contributor

## SASKATOON, Sask.

After having many powerful politicians criticize his view on the development of Aboriginal people in the workforce, Reform MP Jim Pankiw (Saskatoon-Humbolt) is standing strong by comments he made in a Jan. 6 letter to both University of Saskatchewan President Peter MacKinnon and Intergovernmental Affairs Minister Jack Hilson.

On December 22, 1999 the University of Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan's NDP government signed a partnership agreement to increase the percentage of Aboriginal people employed at the university. This fueled Pankiw to write the controversial letter that compared the partnership agreement to "modern day Klansmen," saying that it is a "racist hiring initiative" and hiring should be "based on merit and qualification, as opposed to race." He also wrote "the hiring policy being proposed and the inevitable consequences bear a resemblance to the former segregationist policies of the southern United States."

After the letter leaked into the mainstream press and into

the hands of many politicians, such as Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations Chief Perry Bellegarde and Jack Hilson, Pankiw found himself under a lot of pressure to explain himself to the Aboriginal community.

In a recent interview with Windspeaker, Pankiw talked about the letter and why he made the comments. "I don't think we should make race-based enquiries," said Pankiw. "When this program goes into effect they (U of S) will pre-screen applicants to discriminate against non-Natives; it's like them saying to Native employees... 'Since you can't do it on your own, we will give you special treatment.'"

"This is going to harm the Native community and promote racism. Natives in the workforce will be looked at in resentment. Non-Natives will say, 'he got the job because he's Native;' that's how people will perceive Native people in the workforce" stated Pankiw. "If, in the future, the employment rate of Aboriginal people remains at one per cent, so be it; we can't justify the potential of Native people in the workforce based on racist hiring initiatives." When asked about the future potential of today's Native youth as opposed to non-Native youth, he stated, "This initiative

harms their future; if it was the opposite, then everyone would be equal and have a fair chance. Native youth will find themselves struggling in the future because they may not be educated or experienced enough—I mean we need to promote harmony, we all want a society where we're all equal, right?"

Hilson's response was more public than MacKinnon's. Hilson went on television to send a clear message to Pankiw:

"I would like to meet with Mr. Pankiw and his people and challenge him to a debate and explain to him how wrong he is on this issue, and tell him that the partnership agreement between my party and the U of S is a positive move for the Province of Saskatchewan."

"The employment rate for First Nations people is only one per cent, and they take up only 13 per cent of the Saskatchewan's population. If that percentage remains the same, then the future of Saskatchewan is going to look very bleak," said Hilson. He added, "I think that his comparison to the Ku Klux Klan is silly, foolish, and childish. What baffles me the most is that I thought he was into helping people; obviously that is not what's happening here."

Just recently the two finally met on CBC News Hour in a

conference call debate, Pankiw was in Saskatoon, and Hilson was in Regina. The two debated endlessly over the partnership agreement and Pankiw's negative views. Hilson's main argument was the fact that Pankiw had no problem at all if the Aboriginal employment rate remained at one per cent. Pankiw continued to state his argument of the "racist-hiring initiative" being undertaken with the partnership agreement. Pankiw says he will not apologize to anyone, and will stand by his comments.

There were others who had a strong opinion as well, like F.S.I.N. Chief Perry Bellegarde. He went on APTN's Indigenous Circle to criticize Pankiw for his comments. "It's obvious that he doesn't do his own letters; he probably just signs them. This kind of stuff is breaking that bridge to the future for First Nations people," explained Bellegarde. "What we're (F.S.I.N.) trying to do is educate the non-Native people about treaties and the relationship we created years ago to co-exist with each other, and I guess we have to do a better job, because it looks like some people just don't understand, like Mr. Pankiw." Bellegarde also said, "I think that he needs to learn more about our

people before he criticizes our people. We're always working with the non-Native community, to build better relationships and better partnerships so we can all have a brighter future. Stuff like this really breaks that ongoing relationship, and it upsets me."

Many youth were interviewed as well, regarding the "K.K.K. Letter" as Jack Hilson would put it.

One native university student said, "Jim Pankiw does not realize the huge potential that Native students have; we are almost up there with everyone else. I mean the more we go to school, like University, and get a career, the more powerful we are as Native people; we have more university educated chiefs and lawyers these days. Finally here is a chance for Native youth to prove that we can succeed like everyone else. I'm proud to see this partnership agreement in stone, we can now make our people proud."

That is exactly what the partnership agreement is about, "making people proud, and making a difference in the community," says Jack Hilson, "I hope that in the future we can sign more agreements, and more relationships for a brighter future for Saskatchewan, involving Native people and non-Native people."

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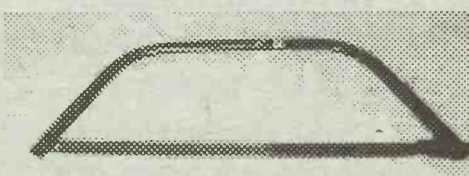
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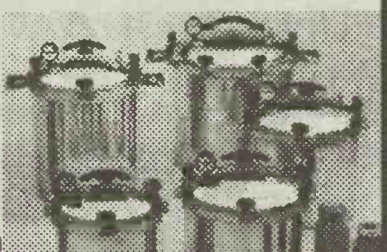
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# Grassroots acceptance is key to safety

By Joan Black  
Windspeaker Writer

EDMONTON

Events in Ecuador this past year, where seven Edmonton-area pipeline workers and a member of Utah's Montezuma Creek Navaho reservation, Leonard Carter, were captured and held 100 days for ransom until mid-December, have implications for First Nations who do business in the southern hemisphere.

Despite the hostage-taking, which they viewed as an aberration, businessmen with connections in South America portrayed Ecuador as a relatively stable country in conversations with *Windspeaker* before Jan. 20. Yet days later the country was in chaos, with a massive Indigenous people's revolt, a mutiny by the army which had previously backed the government, and a deposed president in hiding. What this suggests is northerners may not understand the dynamics of working in countries governed very differently from Canada, or they are downplaying the risks.

Ken Foster, general manager for United Pipeline Systems in Canada, was asked if the hostage-taking experience would change his company's way of doing business in South America.

"When we went down there originally we looked at that situation," Foster said, "you know, it's an operating oil field we're working in. There's five or six different operators in there and they hadn't had this type of problem before. When we went down there, we actually did meet with people down there,

talked to the owner. . . . and found out their experience and what was required and what the risks were. And quite frankly, the general

consensus at that point in time was it was a low-risk area. Now of course that's been proven incorrect."

City Investing Company Inc., a subsidiary of Alberta Energy Co. is the "owner" Foster refers to. City Investing subcontracted the pipeline relining job to United Pipeline Systems.

"We did have some security," Foster continued, "(but) when we got these 20 plus people who came out of the bush, fully armed, that changed the whole concept in that region."

Foster says companies have to look at the risks inherent in doing business in countries individually. He hesitated when asked if he would go back to Ecuador, but said "I think with the proper precautions, yes." With a bigger security force. "We had a (armed) security force before, but it wasn't as big as the guys who came out of the bush.

"The Ecuadorian government in that particular region is very concerned about this because that's a good source of foreign currency for them," Foster added. His firm had only been in the region two weeks into a two-and-a-half month, "one-off" project to "reline 80 kilometers of pipe and come

**"The key to health and safety is having strong local relationships"**

—Verne Bachiu  
Meadow Lake Tribal Council

home." United Pipeline doesn't have an office in Ecuador, but has a base in Santiago, Chile, where the company has worked for three or four years without incident. The pipe remains unlined in Ecuador, Foster said.

Foster told us he had not seen Leonard Carter for at least 10 days and did not know his whereabouts. *Windspeaker* left messages for Carter at a residence and with the tribal administration office but we could not locate him.

Dick Wilson, director of public affairs for City Investing Company, said "Not really" Jan. 19 when asked if the hostage-taking incident would change the way his company did business in Ecuador. City Investing explores for oil then ships it to coastal refineries for treatment or shipping out by Petro Ecuador. He said his company had no direct role in the hostage situation but provided "administrative support" as UPS worked to resolve it.

"Ecuador is considered sort of the island of peace in the sea of chaos. . . . What (this incident) does certainly do, it draws everybody's attention to being cautious," Wilson said then. He added no matter how large a security force you employ, poten-

tial kidnapping appears can come in with a larger force.

Wilson told us City Investing is part of a consortium of oil and gas companies work-

ing in Ecuador that previously discussed safety and security of employees with the Ecuadoran government. There are "nine or ten" such companies altogether. He said the president, Jamil Majhuad (who was toppled by his military chief and driven into hiding less than 48 hours after *Windspeaker's* conversation with Wilson) "is trying to implement a number of fiscal measures that will bring Ecuador out" of what Wilson then termed "a bit of an economic turmoil."

The measures Wilson spoke of included pegging Ecuadoran currency to the American dollar, which local Indians say would impoverish them even more than they already are. Several thousand Indians, who claimed to represent an estimated 44 per cent of Ecuador's 12.4 million population, stormed Quito, the capital, and demanded Majhuad's resignation Jan. 21. With some vacillating military support they also took control of the congress and supreme court in protest against government corruption that had resulted in their desperate living conditions.

In what now proves to be a major understatement, Wilson added "He (President Majhuad)

is not getting a lot of co-operation from the other parties in congress or indeed from some of the population sectors in Ecuador."

Wilson said oil and oil exports is one of the key ingredients toward Ecuadoran economic recovery and he felt Ecuador was "going to have to go through what Argentina went through" a few years earlier.

Wilson also told *Windspeaker* before the uprising he had no knowledge whether or not the hostage crisis had anything to do with Indigenous people in that country being opposed to oil company exploration. (It is not widely believed to be.)

And he had no knowledge of another member of the consortium, ARCO, having trouble with Native people in Ecuador. Yet ARCO had to evacuate oil workers from Ecuador in July 1998 when the Amazonian Quichua Indians detained pipeline employees of another company to draw world attention to their plight. Pollution and destruction of a supposedly protected land reserve containing sacred medicine plants were among the issues then. ARCO also has met steady opposition the past few years from the 4,300 member Achuar nation who are protecting two million acres of old-growth rainforest in their territory.

Wilson said when the hostage-taking occurred, an advisor to his company suggested the event reflected the mood of what he calls the "colonials" who lived along a different pipeline of theirs when it was owned by Pacalta Resources. City Investing bought Pacalta last May.

(See Meadow on page 11.)

## Indigenous identity offers no protection in South America

By Joan Black  
Windspeaker Writer

ITHACA, N.Y.

José Barreiro, editor of Cornell University's *Native Americas Journal*, said two days prior to the destabilization of the government in Ecuador last month the Indigenous people had been able to "shut down the country several times" through marches.

He talked about risks to resource-extracting companies, tourists and others in South and Central America and revealed an intimate understanding of complex and constantly shifting political systems. Systems that are sometimes lethal to the unprepared or arrogant visitor.

Barreiro related he is familiar with the case of Ingrid Washinawatok, a Menominee woman who was killed with Hawaiian Indigenous leader Lahe'ena'e Gay and environmentalist Terence Freitas last March while they were helping the U'wa Indians design an education project in the Colombian Andes. The Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC) has been vilified for abducting and murdering the three.

"Columbia is a whole other culture, you know, of violence. My advice would be to stay out of Columbia."

He said there is no special protection for North American Indigenous people working among Indigenous South American populations.

"You know, Aboriginal people from the North . . . are normally viewed as just North Americans," he said. "Unless you are working very specifically with Native organizations, so the recognition is more clear—people to people, organization to organization—working out clear lines of communication and a common mandate for work and so forth, Native people from North America are not even viewed as Native people by most folks in those countries.

"The situations are so different in terms of the economics for Indian people, especially in the Andean countries. The level of prostitution and poverty and the context of Indian people the lowest in the economic ladder makes anyone who is able to drive a pickup truck or fly intercontinental flights, or have credit cards in their pocket, or have fancy suitcases or cell phones—they're seen as just gringos, you know, from the North."

To illustrate just how great the political and class differences are, Barreiro said that just 20 years ago an Indigenous Ecuadoran could get his eyes gouged out for wanting to learn

to read.

"There are many people with Indian background," Barreiro says, "with pronounced ethnic and pronounced Indian features that don't even consider themselves Indians in those countries."

He's speaking of some in Mexico and the South American countries of Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia "who just don't like to use the term Indian or Native or Indigenous. They consider themselves Mestizo . . . you have people who are clearly American Indian people, who mentally refuse to accept that identity."

He further contrasts their situation with the North, where Native populations are much more identifiable, living in circumscribed areas and outnumbered greatly by non-Natives. He says there has also been a very strong identity revitalization movement of North American Native people in the past 20 years, exceeding South America's.

"What I'm saying is, people coming from the North, assuming that because they are Native people that have some other recognition, don't often get it. Because they're not seen as Native people by the Native folks themselves in South America. Often.

"But it makes all the difference in the world to have worked out all your contacts

ahead of time, and to be part of delegations which are clearly hosted by Native organizations and then there's a whole different dynamic.

"The other thing," Barreiro cautions, "is that the revolutionary groups, the guerilla groups . . . often view Native people . . . from their own countries as trouble. As people who are not very controllable, have their own agendas or their own tribal group. And so, the ones holding the guns—the ones in armed stances against their own government, the ones that are likely to conduct kidnappings and so forth—they're not Indigenous based. They may have a lot of Indigenous people in their ranks, but . . . most of them don't have any kind of positive position toward Native people. That is certainly the case in Colombia."

Barreiro says very often in Latin America, guerilla groups are in conflict with the poorest of the poor. "We saw that in Nicaragua with the Mesquitos and the Sandinistas going to war. . . .

"It's complex. It's very different," said Barreiro. "We saw that with the case of Ingrid, you know, and FARQ. When they were kidnapped there were immediate contacts made and immediate information transferred about who she was, and yet they still killed them. In fact,

I believe they killed them because they were there to meet Indians, partly. FARQ and the U'wa were at odds over the territorial integrity of the U'wa's land and so forth and FARQ's assumption that they had jurisdiction over that land because they had the guns.

"People have to be very careful. My advice," Barreiro said, "is really study the area. Take the time. Get to know who it is, what stances they take. Homework, homework, homework. Just because one has a dark face and the other one has a dark face does not mean that the mind is the same.

"In a place like Ecuador, for instance" he says, "you have a tremendous conflict between the Andean peoples, Quichuas for instance, moving into the Amazonian tribal lands. There's a whole lot more Quichuas than there are . . . different Amazonian tribes. And the Amazonian tribes don't even consider the Quichuas Indigenous. They say 'No, these folks are colonists, coming in, taking our land just like the white people would.'"

Barreiro sums up by reinforcing that delegations should not ignore the local politics. And if you are going to the southern hemisphere representing business concerns, you should know how that is viewed. Resource extracting industries are particularly suspect, he says.

## Meadow Lake shares knowledge

(Continued from page 10.)

Wilson says he discovered these were 260 "landowners" along the pipeline route, consisting of farmers and coastal people who had moved inland looking for a better living. These did not include any Indigenous people. Eventually they were compensated and 259 of them were evidently on-side with the pipeline, Wilson said. He said the one hold-out was the person who "jumped to the media" when the hostage-taking began. But Wilson defends Pacalta's efforts to work with the local, non-Indigenous landowners through the Nanpaz Foundation to provide job training opportunities to ensure their self-sufficiency and ongoing contentment with the deal. He says the foundation is also working with Indigenous people to help diversify their economy and help preserve native plants.

"It's my understanding," Wilson said, "that the Indigenous population is much more, I don't know if the word is recessive or much more reclusive in the rain-forest itself. I think where they're coming from is that they don't want any intrusions on their lifestyles. Period." He adds he doesn't think the colonials get along with the Indians because they "represent an intrusion on what was pristine."

He admits that oil companies' effect on the environment has been "terrible" too, but says in recent years his company is applying Canadian standards of environmental protection in their work in Ecuador.

Even so, that the public affairs director of a company doing business in South America

should be so out of touch with the mood and aspirations of a huge Indigenous population in the country they're extracting resources from suggests something or someone is missing from their profit equation.

A different approach to working in the southern latitudes is suggested by Contigo International, a non-profit organization of Meadow Lake Tribal Council (MLTC) in Meadow Lake, Sask. whose mandate is "to promote the integration of export ready Aboriginal firms and organizations into the mainstream of Canadian business and trade opportunities."

Contigo Director Siva Chidambaram, based in Ottawa, says Contigo was formed by Meadow Lake's nine First Nations in 1997 "to share their experience in export and economic development and to build the capacity of export-ready companies." Currently they are involved in development projects in Nicaragua and Mexico, and they provide ongoing practical support between Aboriginal companies here and disadvantaged Indigenous groups in Central America and elsewhere.

Verne Bachiu, director of policy and planning for MLTC, said Jan. 18 that Mesquito Indians from Nicaragua came to Canada during their decade-long revolution in the 1970s and expressed an interest in partnering with Canadian Native groups on forestry projects when they returned home.

Logging is still on hold because of local legal wrangling, but Bachiu says development possibilities look positive in

Nicaragua, which has had two democratic elections in a row. "The key to health and safety," he says, "is having strong local relationships." He says MLTC has personally visited minority communities and rolled up their sleeves to assist where invited.

"The Latino communities themselves are shareholders in the companies that we have, so they have a direct interest in what we're doing and we feel that is really the best protection.

Bachiu estimates the Mesquito Indians are only five to seven per cent of the Nicaraguan population, but in the isolated communities where MLTC works, they represent the majority. From other sectors, Bachiu says "there's always risk, but we think it's a manageable risk."

He says all their projects are in the development stage only, but they have met with cabinet ministers and the president and have made themselves known in Nicaragua. When they get to the point where they want to station Canadian talent down there "that is when the health and safety of Canadians in a foreign country would become more of an issue," Bachiu said. MLTC recognizes the need at that time to strike a balance between Canadian and local workers and interests.

"I think you have to be knowledgeable about the conditions. You have to use common sense. We were in touch with the Canadian consulate on a constant basis. And really our main protection is having a good relationship with local leaders and local communities, who will essentially look out on our behalf," Bachiu said.

## Nunavut art on display in Winnipeg

By Yvonne Irene Gladue  
Windspeaker  
Staff Writer

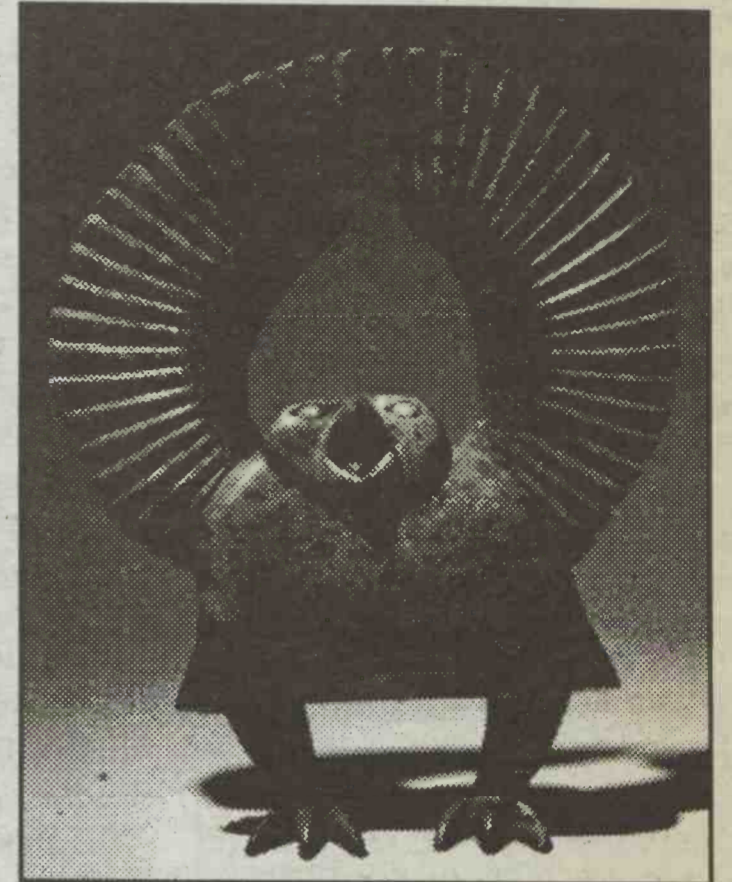
### WINNIPEG

Celebrating Nunavut: Art From a New Territory is an exhibit showcased at the Winnipeg Art Gallery that features carvings, prints, and drawings by artists from Canada's newest territory.

"As of April 1st 1999, the map of Canada was

changed. We now have a new territory," said Darlene Wight, curator of Inuit art. "This exhibition is celebrating art from the art-producing communities of Nunavut. It is a wonderful event. As a creation of the new territory, it seemed appropriate to mark this event with an exhibition of Inuit art. All the art was drawn from the Winnipeg Art Gallery's collection of contemporary Inuit art. We have a collection of over 10,000 pieces," she said.

There are works in the show that date from the early 1950s to 1999.



Pootoogook Qiatsuk

"As you walk through the exhibition you can see the differences of the stone work from the different areas of the north. The green stone from Cape Dorset, the grey stone from the Arviat and the whale bone from the Baffin region," said Wight. "On display we also have prints and drawings from Baker Lake and wall hangings from that area," she said.

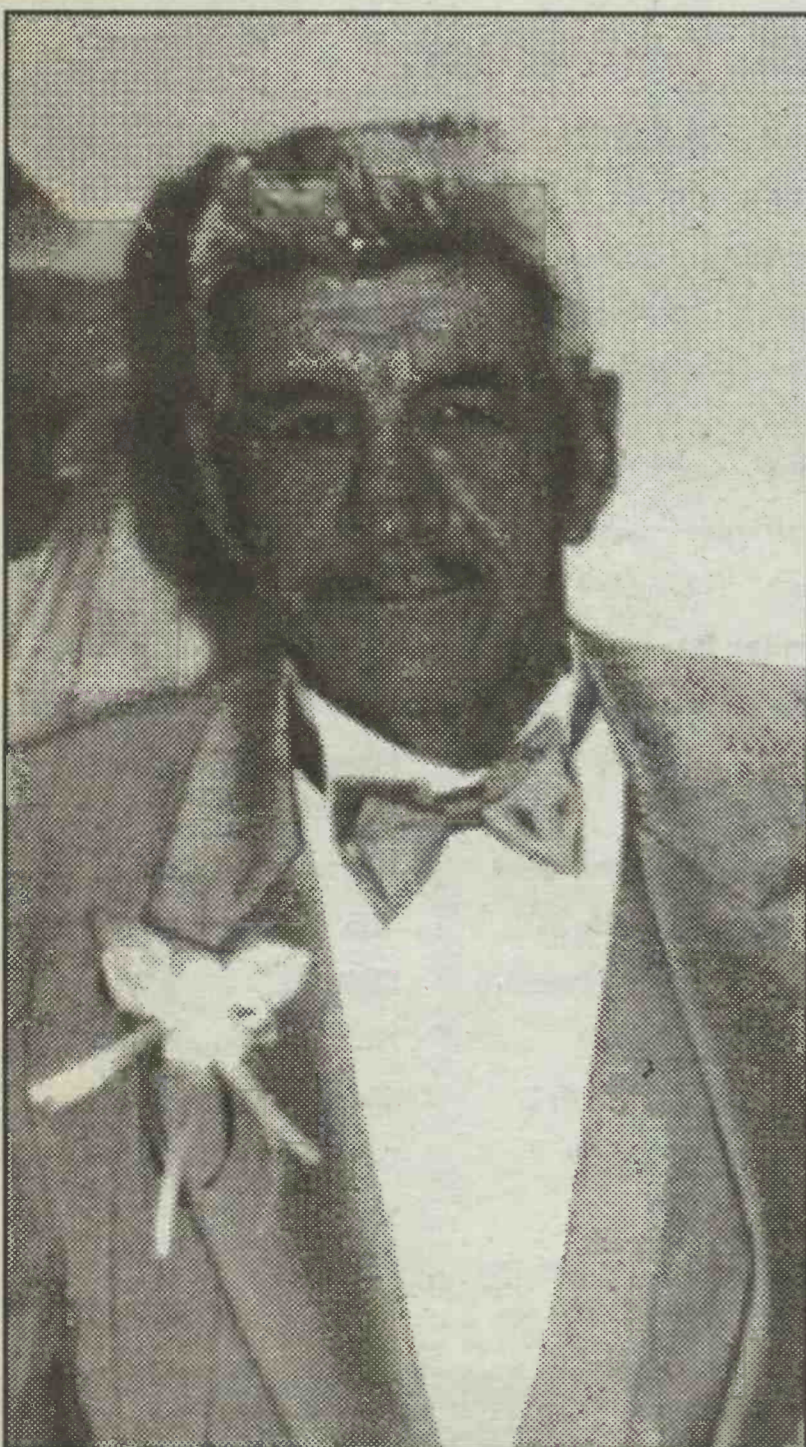
The show will run until May 7.

"We are getting a very, very, positive response from the people," said Wight.

## MISSING PERSON

Have you seen this person or heard of his whereabouts?

### RUFUS STANDINGRIBBON (PAYOU)



Born: April 4, 1946

Description: Native male, 5 foot 9 inches tall, approximately 146 lbs with grey hair and brown eyes, slim build. Rufus was last seen on October 26th, 1999 at approximately 10:00 am in Spirit River (northwestern) Alberta. Mr. Standingribbon is a Band Member of the Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation in northwestern Alberta.

Anyone who has knowledge of the whereabouts of this individual is asked to contact the Spirit River RCMP at (780) 864-3553 or the nearest police department.

*The friends and family of this individual appreciate your assistance in this matter.*

## Phoenix fair draws quality Native artists

By Yvonne Irene Gladue  
Windspeaker Staff Writer

### PHOENIX, Arizona

A celebration of vibrant Native art and crafts will be showcased at the Heard Museum's 42nd annual Indian Fair and Market on March 4 and 5 in Phoenix, Arizona.

Native American music, dance, children's activities and Native food will all be part of the two-day celebration.

"Last year we had an entirely new facility open. A brand new amphitheatre. It was available for a lot of the performances and changed the way the fair was laid out, made it much more acceptable for larger crowds, more room for the people to walk around and the artists had a bit more room while working. The tents were not as congested with people. It made it a much more fluid event," said Rebecca Murray, media contact at the Heard Museum. "We draw about 20,000 people over the weekend," she said.

This high calibre event

*"We draw about 20,000 people over the weekend."  
—Rebecca Murray*

draws nearly 500 of the nation's top Native American artists who display and sell their authentic arts and crafts.

"In terms of the feedback that we get from the artists at the fair, this fair is certainly one of the best," said Murray. "When it originally started in 1958, it was a smaller community event. Although it's grown in leaps and bounds, the quality and the community feeling certainly has not diminished. If anything it has grown," she said.

# Bands holding federal government responsible

(Continued from page 1.)

It has taken a lot of work by a lot of people to fund, research and argue the case, but the effort was always seen to be worthwhile, he said.

"We've always felt the law required the government to perform these trust responsibilities," he said. "So we finally had to go to court and involve the judicial branch in enforcing these laws we know require the government to fulfill these trust responsibilities. We've felt like we've had a strong case all along and the courts are vindicating that view, so far, and we expect to prevail no matter how far up we have to go."

The Six Nations of the Grand River (Ontario) council is involved in a similar action against the Canadian government. Six Nations' Land Claim Research Director Phil Monture has overseen the court fight since 1994. He told *Windspeaker* his council recently struck a promising deal with Indian Affairs Minister Robert Nault.

"On Jan. 13, Minister Nault was here. He's agreed that we'll investigate setting up an independent tribunal to negotiate resolutions to our claim. But we require it be cabinet approved, it can't be under the INAC mandate, and he agreed. It's got to have cabinet approval by June, by the summer break, or the court case will continue," he said.

The Haldimand Deed of 1784 set aside six miles on either side of the Grand River, from its mouth to its source, for the Six Nations as a reward for loyalty and assistance to the British Crown during the American Revolution. The deed covered close to one million acres; the current reserve is about 45,000 acres and Monture's staff has researched every plot of land

in the Haldimand tract. Six Nations claims that most of the alienated land was never surrendered and most of the money from the Six Nations trust fund (where payment for any land that was legally surrendered should have been deposited) is missing. Like NARF with the *Cobell* case, Six Nations has sued for an accounting of its assets held in trust by the federal government. Estimates vary. Former Indian Affairs minister Ron Irwin said several years ago that the Six Nations claim could cost the government close to \$30 billion if it's successful.

"No doubt the fallout's big if we win so that's why [Nault's] agreed to sit down and we're going to know in the beginning of February how we'll start setting up this mediation process or tribunal," Monture said. "We're not withdrawing our claim. Remember that was the minister's big one: we won't talk to you unless you absolutely discontinue your litigation. We agreed that putting it in abeyance is OK for now."

Nault's gesture to set this process up as a way of solving the Six Nations lawsuit is a significant step forward. Monture believes it's a sign the federal government realizes they have to deal with these issues.

"I think Canada's coming to grips with the fact that these are liabilities. These are not moral liabilities, they're legal liabilities," he said. "No matter how you try to fluff it off, it's still a debt that Canada owes. So to say you've got a surplus this year, that's only a half-truth."

"It's just a matter of when it's going to happen. The best way to resolve these issues is a negotiated settlement because there's a lot of win/win scenarios if people will get the chip off their shoulders and sit down and try to resolve things as

opposed to the adversarial approach that Canada and Indian Affairs has taken in the past where they said it's our money, it's our rules, you play our game or you go to hell," he said.

Montreal lawyer James O'Reilly is representing central Alberta's Samson Cree Nation in its \$1.4 billion lawsuit against the federal government. O'Reilly said he's convinced that old, racist, paternalistic notions were mixed with backroom political dealing to cause the breaches of trust and fiduciary duty that his client alleges. He said the money earned by oil and gas resources on Samson Cree land were used by the government while it was being held in trust but the government did not exercise due care when it came to protecting the assets of the band. Money was poured into Indian Affairs' consolidated revenue fund and was used as a government asset rather than a Samson Cree asset, he alleges.

"The problem with the consolidated revenue fund is that there's a national debt that's close to \$600 billion. That means that it's a deficit account. What this involves is essentially what can be described as a IOU or a simple credit to the band and then they make an accounting entry into what they call trust accounts. But there's no physical money that's credited to the trust accounts. It's a 'call' upon the so-called consolidated revenue fund, which means it's a call upon federal finances," he explained. "But then, instead of looking after it, they say the only thing you can do is pay interest. So the federal government says 'we will only pay interest and we will determine the rate of interest.' Then they do a sleight of hand. They say 'we will pay you interest

based on long-term government of Canada bonds.' But the trick is: the rates are not the rates that you would get if you bought a long-term government of Canada bond at a particular time."

Native trust account holders were always paid interest at the lowest possible rate, O'Reilly said, allowing the government to benefit from the investment income generated by money which belonged to the band. The Samson statement of claim alleges the Samson trust funds could have been two-and-a-half to three times larger than they are if government officials had invested the money prudently.

"We have to show that they didn't treat these monies as the normal, prudent person would treat them. You've got to watch the shop. Our main beef is that they weren't watching the shop and intervening when something damaging was happening."

O'Reilly said the government should have known the trust fund owners would have objected to how their assets were managed.

"The Indian Act was never designed for large amounts of money," he said. "Never. It's not meant to be a system that can properly manage large sums of money because no one is assigned to do this type of thing."

Up until about 1969, the interest rate on Indian trust accounts was frozen, he said. Then as the Trudeau government prepared major changes to the Indian Act, the government changed the way the monies were managed.

"This was all at the time of the White Paper, the famous Indian Act consultations, and part of this was they said, well, this is going to get out of our hands. The Indian Act's

going to be abolished and all the Indians are going to become white men. So, they didn't really look at it as anything long-term. So, they started with a system that made a bit of sense in the 1960s but made no sense starting in the 70s and the 80s in the years of high inflation and the world oil crisis when interest rates started to shoot way up," he said. "They had absolutely no system and they didn't consider it was necessary to have a system because, essentially, they said with Indian people... whatever we do with Indian people is a pure matter of our discretion. They should be thankful that we're helping them out."

O'Reilly believes he can convince a judge the department used money generated by band-owned assets to shrink the cost of its obligations to Native people.

"Personally, I think one of the great driving forces behind this was that the feds' ambition was to get Indian people to use their own monies, when they had monies even from resource development, and spend it on what would be normal program spending for the federal government. So, try to get the Indians to use their own money and save the feds from those expenditures and at the same time encourage a little bit of hostage mentality by saying we can make per capita distributions (PCDs) from resource development and the more we encourage that, the more we save money on programs and services and the more the people will become used to this," he said.

Monture, Echohawk and O'Reilly agree that the Crown's paternalistic, colonialistic attitudes towards Native people led to this situation, a situation that bureaucrats and politicians never thought they'd ever be called to account for.

## Fishery ban lifted

By Roberta Avery  
*Windspeaker Contributor*

WIARTON, Ont.

An Ojibway chief is claiming partial victory in a decision by the Natural Resources ministry to lift a ban that had effectively closed Ontario's largest Aboriginal fishery.

"We feel our intervention played a role," said Chief Ralph Akiwenzie of the Chippewas of Nawash on the Cape Croker reserve.

Last month, the Nawash band took the first steps to take the ministry to court over its ban on the purchase of fish—except commercially undesirable chub—caught along 200 kilometres of shoreline from Kincardine to Collingwood. Natives have fished the area almost exclusively since a 1993 court decision recognized their priority right to the resource.

The lifting of the ban is not related to the upcoming Ontario Divisional Court judicial review of the ministry's actions scheduled for the end of January, said ministry spokesman John Cooper.

"We're into a new season. We saw no reason to expand the ban," said Cooper.

That's good news for Cape Croker commercial fishermen, like Philip Jones, who depend on fishing for a living.

The ban took away his income

for six weeks, making it a miserable Christmas for his wife and children, said Jones.

"We should be compensated. All the fishermen feel the same way," said Jones as he docked his fishing tug after a cold morning out on Lake Huron.

While the ministry claims the lake has been over-fished and whitefish stocks are low, Native fishing tugs are each hauling in about 900 lb of whitefish a day, said Jones.

The ministry will start all over again in its monitoring process of Native fishing activity, said Cooper.

The ministry could issue bans on fish purchases again if the winter is mild and ice on the lake doesn't restrict fishing activity, said Cooper.

"Last winter we didn't have much ice, so a lot of fish had been taken by the spring," said Cooper.

Though the ban has been lifted, Akiwenzie believes the matter is ongoing. His band will continue its court action against the ministry. Meanwhile mediated talks aimed at settling the dispute over the fishing resource are to resume in early February.

The Nawash band issued fishing licences to more than 30 of its members in early January. Akiwenzie expects more than twice that number of licences will be issued by the spring.

"Fishing is a very important part of our economy," he said.

## Canada

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#### Public Consultations

Ottawa – January 31	Lansdowne Park
Victoria – February 1	Empress Hotel
Vancouver – February 2	Simon Fraser University
Calgary – February 4	Holiday Inn, MacLeod Trail
Edmonton – February 7	Coast Edmonton Plaza Hotel
Whitehorse – February 9	Westmark Hotel
Yellowknife – February 15	Explorer Hotel
Iqaluit – February 17	Royal Canadian Legion Hall
Thunder Bay – February 21	Lakehead University
Toronto – February 22	Westin Harbour Centre
Regina – February 28	Hotel Saskatchewan Radisson Plaza
Saskatoon – February 29	Sheraton Cavalier
Winnipeg – March 2	The Lombard Hotel
Charlottetown – March 6	Delta PEI
St-John's – March 7	Hotel Newfoundland
Fredericton – March 8	Sheraton Fredericton Hotel
Montréal – March 9	Guy-Favreau Complex
Halifax – March 13	Sheraton Halifax
Quebec City – March 15	Hilton Québec



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### February 2000 Schedule

Eastern Time	HONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	Pacific
9:00AM	Best of Takuginai	Takuginai (English)	Best of Takuginai	Takuginai	Best of Takuginai	Takuginai (English)	Takuginai	6:00AM
9:30AM	Me Ta We Tan	1 Tuktu/ Shiny Time Station	Légendes Indiennes (FR)	Tamapta	Qaujisaat	3 Best of Takuginai/Nanook	3 Best of Takuginai/Nanook	6:30AM
10:00AM	Legends of the World	Spirit Bay (FR)	Haa Shagoon	Storytime	Suangaan	Shiny Time Station	Shiny Time Station	7:00 AM
10:30AM			Indigenous Circle			Distant Voices	Spirit Bay (English)	7:30AM
11:00AM	Kippingujautiit	TNI Presents	Qimaivvik	All My Relations	2 Daughters of the Country	Qaggiq	From Spirit to Spirit	8:00AM
11:30AM	Health Show	Nunavimuit	Window on Nunavik	First Story		Labradorimuit	My Partners, My People	8:30AM
Noon			Aboriginal Voices			First Nations	Sharing Circle	9:00 AM
12:30PM	First Film Series (NFB)	Burned Bridge	Invitation Nunavik (French)	Indigenous Peoples Int'l	Nunavik Invitation	Dene Weekly Perspective	Aboriginal Voices	9:30 AM
1:00 PM						First Music & Art	Nedaa-YourEyeontheYukon	10:00AM
1:30 PM	Notre Peuple (FR)	Wawatay Presents	Première Série de Film (FR)	First Film Series (NFB)	Indian Legends (English)	Cooking w/the Wolfman	Greenstone	10:30AM
2:00 PM		Maamuitaau	Best of Takuginai	Takuginai	Legendes du Monde	Heartbeat Alaska		11:00AM
2:30 PM	Best of Takuginai	Takuginai (English)	Nunavut	Indigenous Circle	Best of Takuginai	Millennium		11:30AM
3:00 PM	First Film Series (NFB)	Le Voyage de Kiviu (FR)	Légendes Indiennes (FR)	First Story	2 Daughters of the Country		From Spirit to Spirit	Noon
3:30 PM		NCI Presents					My Partners, My People	12:30PM
4:00 PM	Medicine Wheel	Spirit Bay (French)	Haa Shagoon	Cooking w/the Wolfman	NCI Presents	Legendes du Monde	Native Voices	1:00 PM
4:30 PM	Notre Peuple (FR)	Wawatay Presents	Our People	First Film Series (NFB)	Nunavik Invitation	First Nations	Heartbeat of the Earth	1:30 PM
5:00 PM		Maamuitaau				First Music & Art	imagineNATIVE	2:00 PM
5:30 PM			Indigenous Circle				Nedaa-YourEyeontheYukon	2:30 PM
6:00 PM			Igalaag			Movie		3:00 PM
6:30 PM			Aboriginal Voices				Sharing Circle	3:30 PM
7:00 PM	Kippingujautiit	TNI Presents	Qimaivvik	Tamapta	Qaujisaat		Spirit Bay (Eng)	4:00 PM
7:30 PM	Health Show	Nunavimuit	Window on Nunavik	Storytime	Indian Legends (Eng)		Aboriginal Voices	4:30 PM
8:00 PM	Legends of the World	Burned Bridge	Invitation Nunavik (FR)	Indigenous Peoples Int'l	Légendes du Monde		Greenstone	5:00 PM
8:30 PM	Medicine Wheel				Suangaan	Cooking w/the Wolfman		5:30 PM
9:00 PM	First Film Series (NFB)	Le Voyage de Kiviu (FR)	Nunavut	Indigenous Circle	2 Daughters of the Country	First Music & Art	From Spirit to Spirit	6:00 PM
9:30 PM		Spirit Bay (FR)	Haa Shagoon	First Story			My Partners, My People	6:30 PM
10:00PM	Notre Peuple (FR)	Wawatay Presents	Première Série de Film (FR)	First Film Series (NFB)	Movie	Millennium	Greenstone	7:00 PM
10:30PM		Maamuitaau						7:30 PM
11:00PM			Northbeat					8:00 PM
11:30PM			Aboriginal Voices				Nedaa-YourEyeontheYukon	8:00 PM
Midnight	Kippingujautiit	Burned Bridge	Invitation Nunavik (FR)	Indigenous Peoples Int'l	First Music & Art	Dene Weekly Perspective	Nedaa-YourEyeontheYukon	8:30 PM
12:30 AM	Health Show					Légendes du Monde	imagineNATIVE	9:00 PM
1:00AM	Legends of the World	TNI Presents	Qimaivvik	Tamapta		Distant Voices	Sharing Circle	9:30 PM
1:30AM	Medicine Wheel	Nunavimuit	Window on Nunavik	Storytime	Suangaan	Heartbeat Alaska	Native Voices	10:00PM
2:00AM			Northbeat			Qaggiq	Heartbeat of the Earth	10:30PM
2:30AM			Indigenous Circle			Labradorimuit	Spirit Bay (Eng)	11:00PM
						Cooking w/the Wolfman	Aboriginal Voices	11:30PM

# Aboriginal women publish memories of home

By Yvonne Irene Gladue  
Windspeaker Staff Writer

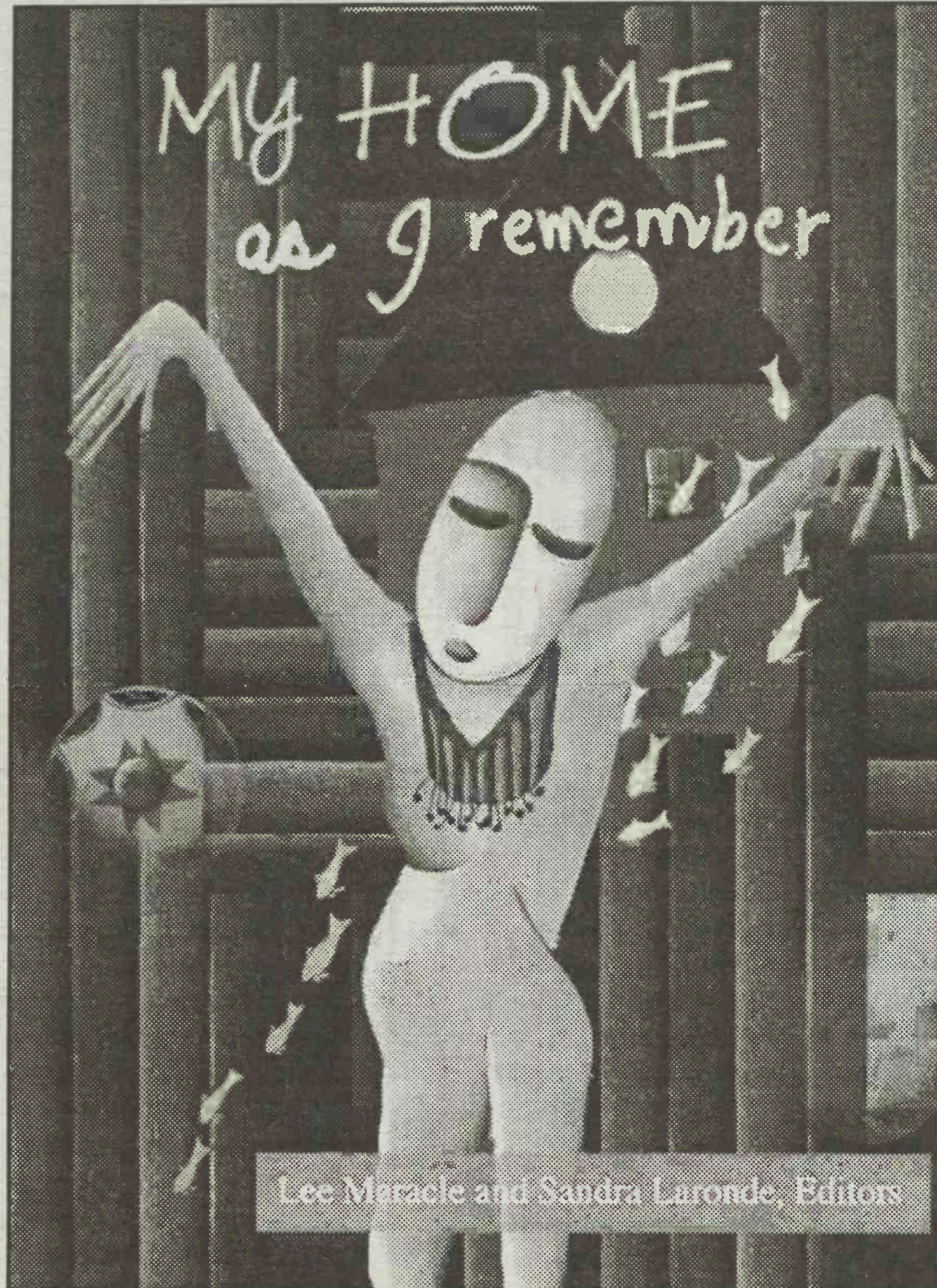
TORONTO

A book written, illustrated, published and edited by Native women, "My Home As I Remember" is based on their childhood memories of home. The book covers more than 60 women, young and elderly, from Canada's prairie provinces, New Zealand, Hawaii, Australia and Mexico. Through the process of writing their memoirs the women reaffirm their cultural origins and explore almost forgotten memories. The glossy covered book includes a collection of poetry, songs and illustrations.

It is published by Native Women in the Arts and edited by published writers, the founder of Native Women in the Arts, Sandra Laronde, and accomplished writer Lee Maracle.

"On behalf of Native Women in the Arts, I asked the contributors to write about anything on home. Anything from an account of their childhood home, to their meaning of home. Their connection to home, with their bodies, mind and spirit. The home we have always dreamed of, or whatever image "home" conjures up," said Laronde. "I believe that home is something that is carried with us everywhere, like the shell of a turtle. Home is at the centre of our lives, it is about people, land, culture and what we dream. The way in which we remember "home" is crucial, and how we dig up forgotten and buried memories of home is equally significant," she said.

Maracle, in her recollection of home writes, "Home. It shapes. No man assisted. My mother, none assists me now. No pictures adorned her wall. Mine are covered end to end. No matching plates. I'd rather not eat than not have matching dishes and silverware. No cur-



tains on the few windows. My windows have lace curtains that I made. Home. It shapes.

Laronde was also managing editor of "In A Vast Dreaming" and "Sweetgrass Grows All Around Her", which were the first two publications that the non-profit Native Women in the Arts was responsible for.

"Native Women in the Arts continues a unique and national role in publishing and promoting Aboriginal women's literature in Canada and throughout other indigenous communities," said Laronde. "Another book is already in the works. The next book we are looking at is dedicating a book to women role models. We are presently accepting submissions from women

who are leaders in their communities. We want to document who our women leaders are. Women who may not be out there in the spotlight, but are well known in their communities," she said.

Laronde is from Temagami, Ontario. She belongs to the Teme-Augama-Anishnabai people. She is co-artistic director at Native Earth Performing Arts in Toronto.

Two book launches for "My Home As I Remember" are scheduled to be held sometime in April—one in Toronto, the other in Vancouver. These events will include entertainment, guest speakers, a speech honoring women, a visual arts display and readings from some of the authors.

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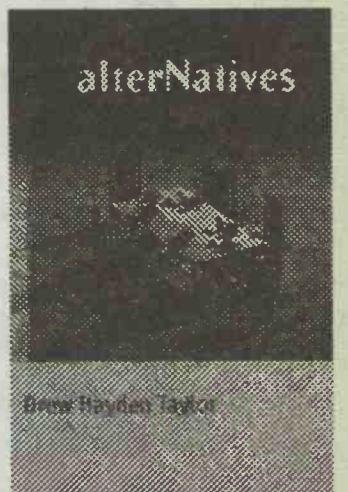
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## Two new plays make awesome theatre

By Kenneth Williams  
Windspeaker Contributor

TORONTO, Ont.

Two new plays opened within two days of each other in Toronto this last January, and epitomized the healthy state of Native theatre in Canada.

The first play, *The Trickster of Third Avenue East*, is an auspicious debut for first-time playwright Darrell Dennis, while the musical *Rose* is the long-awaited third instalment to Tomson Highway's *Wasaychigan Hill* saga that started with *Rez Sisters* and *Dry Lips Oughta Move To Kapuskasing*.

The *Trickster of Third Avenue East* is the debut play from Shushwap actor Darrell Dennis. If you want to put a face to the name, he played Frank Fencepost on the TV series *The Rez* and was the dancing Native guy in the *Out of the Blue* ad that parodied the Village People's "YMCA."

Like I said, this is his first play, and it's an awesome one.

*Trickster* is a tight, fast moving, three-hander that revolves around Roger, a chronically unemployed, alcoholic writer; Mary, his waitress/actress girlfriend; and the *Trickster*, who strolls into their lives and proceeds to screw around with them. The play is funny, tragic and, when the *Trickster* really wants to show his stuff, surreal.

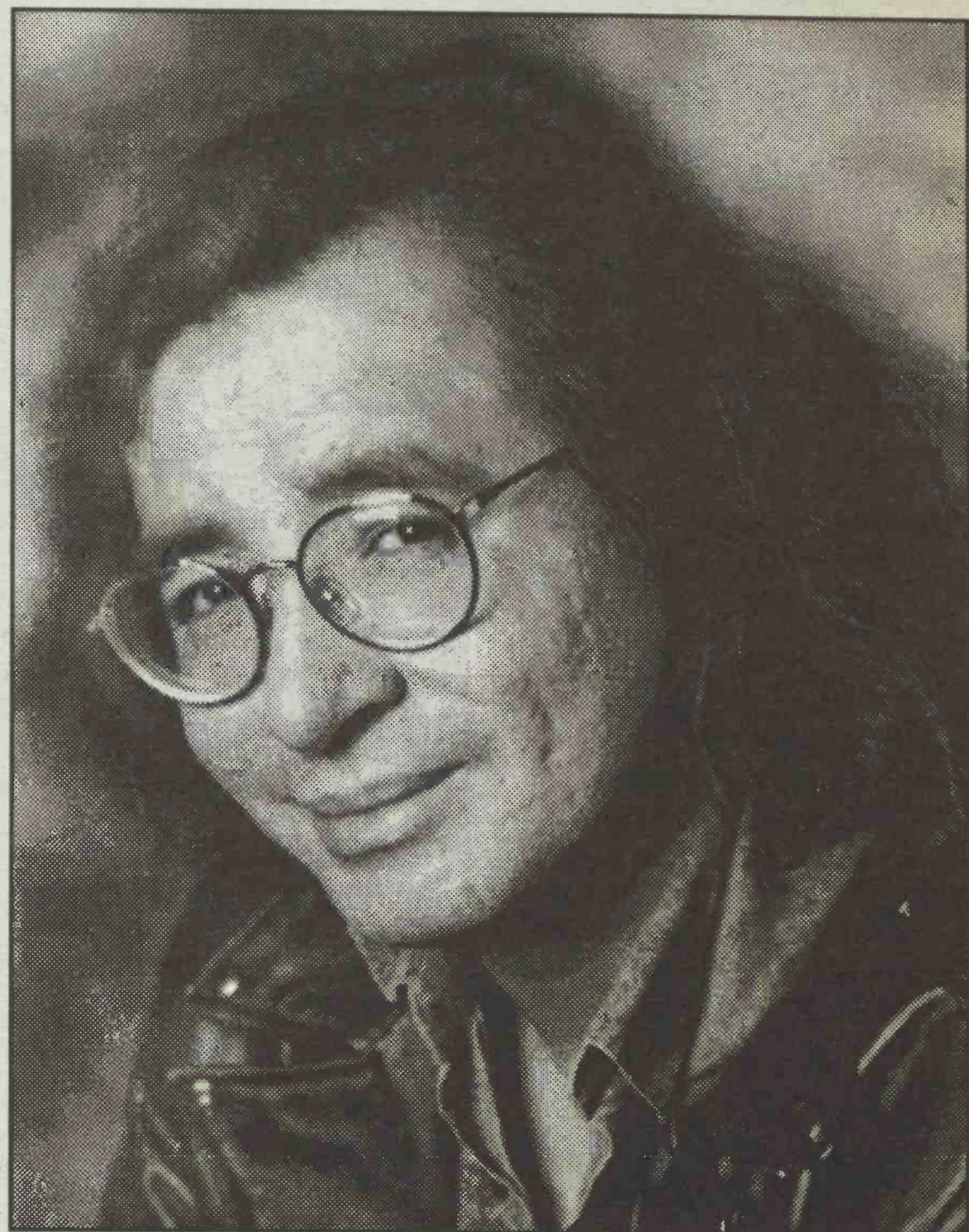
Ryan Black as Roger and Michelle St. John as Mary are gripping as a young couple clinging desperately to a failing relationship. Things are really tough for these two. Roger can't even get a job interview any more, his writing isn't selling, he's drinking too much and he's hawking anything that isn't bolted down just to put food on the table. Mary's acting career is over before it gets started, and, to top it all off, she's pregnant. But wait, it gets more interesting when Billy Merasty, as the *Trickster*, strolls into their lives.

The *Trickster* is full of promises, both real and fantastic, and the resulting chaos forces Roger and Mary to confront the ghosts of their pasts.

Dennis, however, doesn't go for the easy ending. Roger and Mary will not live happily ever after just because they've had cathartic moments, but you do know that their lives are now their own and they realize they can survive.

This is a very, very strong debut for Dennis and we can look forward to more good material from him in the future. It is fitting that we see the work of an emerging Native playwright just as a pioneer in contemporary Native theatre, Tomson Highway, is premiering his new play.

Even though he may disagree with this statement, contemporary Native theatre in Canada wouldn't be as



MICHAEL COOPER PHOTOGRAPHIC

### Tomson Highway

strong as it is without Highway. He founded Native Earth Performing Arts, and then wrote two hugely influential plays, *Rez Sisters* and *Dry Lips*, which made all of Canada take notice of Native theatre. Highway dreamed of a cycle of seven plays on and about the people of the fictional reserve of *Wasaychigan Hill*. It was a grand dream, but few people doubted him after the success of the first two plays left everyone impatiently waiting for the third.

They waited and waited. Highway had a new play, *Rose*, completed, but no one wanted to produce it, which was more because of the sad financial nature of Canadian theatre than because of problems with the play. Early readings proved that the play and the music were both very good. But it had 19 characters!

Most Canadian playwrights rarely write any script that needs more than four actors if they want to get produced in this country, and here Highway had written a grand opus that would test the financial courage of any Canadian theatre.

It would take the University College Drama Program of the University of Toronto to take *Rose* off the page and put it on the stage ten years after the premiere of *Dry Lips*. It was a long wait, but worth it. In this third instalment of the *Wasaychigan Hill* saga, Highway seamlessly blends satirical comedy with low-down brutal tragedy, and blends bopping, energetic songs with intense satire in an emotionally satisfying roller coaster. It is theatrical magic from beginning to end. The emotions swing from the extreme: an unborn baby screaming to be born while her mother is stomped repeatedly on the stomach, to

the surreal: dancing avocados and male swimsuit models waving huge phalluses. All of this, believe it or not, works so wonderfully that you don't realize the play has a running time of more than three-and-a-half hours.

*Rose* centres around two struggles: Emily Dictionary's struggle to lay the ghosts of her lesbian lover and her unborn daughter to rest; and a battle between the men and the women of *Wasaychigan Hill* over building a casino in the community hall. Some characters from the previous two plays are back: Big Joey, Zachary Jeremiah Keechigeesik, Pierre St. Pierre, Gazelle Nataways, Creature Nataways, Hera Keechigeesik, Philomena Moosetail, Annie Cook, Emily Dictionary, and Veronique St. Pierre.

The young cast, all but one non-Native, rise to the challenges of this script. Thirteen-year-old Alana Brascoupe, who plays the ghost of Rosetta Dictionary, Emily's unborn daughter, is the only Native cast member. Highway anticipates that this might be an issue, and is quoted in the program as saying "When I look at people, I see either kind people or unkind people. The color of their skin doesn't matter."

Normally I would agree, but not this time. Ironically, the fact that a mostly white cast is portraying Native people so well and so honestly intensifies the power of this play. It goes against my belief in casting according to race: that is, Native characters should be played by Native actors, but I can't deny what I experienced.

The *Trickster of Third Avenue East* runs from Jan. 19 to Feb. 12 at the Poor Alex Theatre, and *Rose* runs from Jan. 21 to Feb. 5 at the Helen Gardiner Phelan Playhouse.

## Buying life insurance makes sense at any age

By Joan Black  
Windspeaker Writer

PRINCE ALBERT, Sask.

Planning for retirement, for the time you cannot work because of injury or illness, or developing a contingency plan in the event of the death of your principal breadwinner makes sense, and so does starting early rather than late to save for the future. Many people, however, put off financial planning, sometimes until it is too late.

Stuart McLellan of First Nations Insurance Services Ltd., which provides group insurance and pension benefits to companies with Indian ownership, says it is a real challenge to persuade many young people to consider insurance.

"We have to convince people they require some sort of retirement savings," he said.

Company manager Helen Burgess adds, "As Indian people we really didn't give much consideration to our future at all with respect to putting money aside and planning financially for our retirement years. I think that was because traditionally we didn't have to worry about that because we had our extended family who would help us when we reached that age. But I think that slowly our lifestyle is changing, and in order to remain realistic, we do now have to plan."

McLellan says, "There's a lot of different service providers out there. There's financial planners, there's chartered financial analysts . . . but generally the first place to start would be with a life insurance broker. Explain to them what your current situation is, whether or not you're married, whether you've got children, what your plans for the future are," he said.

McLellan points out that insurance premiums increase markedly for even five or 10 extra years in age. If you purchase insurance early, you can obtain a locked-in rate for life, whereas, if you wait until you are older and certain health problems develop, you may never be able to buy insurance.

Burgess says her company's view is that although everyone should have life insurance, the need is greater when there is one principal breadwinner and several small children in a family.

"For example, if it were the husband that were the breadwinner in the family and something were to happen to him, if the wife had no skills and no experience in the workforce it would mean that she would have to then go out and pick up those skills in the event her husband passed away," Burgess said.

She explains this would drastically affect the homelife and there would be new expenses.

For instance, the children would have to be in some kind of daycare while the mother attended school. "I think most individuals don't realize what an all-encompassing situation it is if (something were to happen to) the major breadwinner in the family."

"It's one less mouth to feed, but the bills are all the same," is the way McLellan sums up losing a breadwinner.

Burgess says if you buy life insurance as an individual, the cost of your premiums will depend upon your health, age, occupation and other factors—and you will have to provide certification of your health status, even if you are young. Group insurance rates handled through your employer, on the other hand, may be set without you having to provide medical evidence you are healthy.

(See Buy on page 17.)

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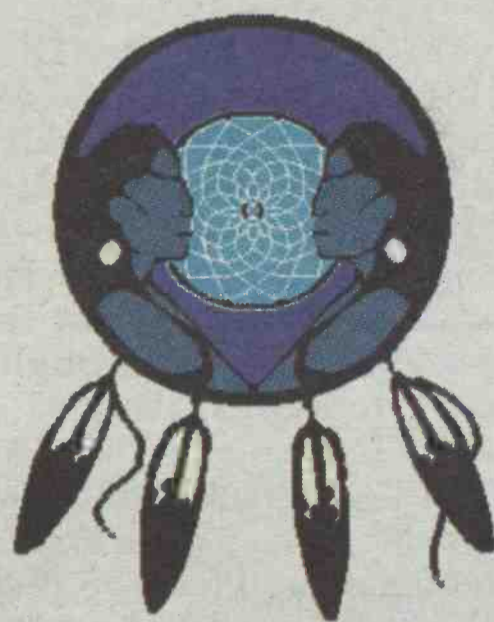
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## Buy life insurance early for rate break

(Continued from page 16.)

"The degree of danger in your occupation and whether or not you smoke are key factors in determining life insurance rates for individual policies," said Burgess. "An accountant would pay less for the same amount of insurance than, say, a firefighter would. . . . A younger person, a smoker, 30 years old could buy \$100,000 worth of life insurance for probably \$30 a month, and have those rates guaranteed for 20 years," said McLellan.

"They'd get it for substantially less than that if they were a non-smoker," he added.

A lot of people participate in a group insurance plan while they are employed, but they have no other insurance. Burgess and McLellan want them to know that usually they can continue their insurance coverage if they leave their job.

"Most group insurance plans have a conversion privilege," McLellan said. Apart from maintaining the peace of mind that insurance provides, another advantage in not letting your coverage lapse is that you won't face drastic rate hikes or be excluded from coverage later on. "So," says McLellan, "if when they're employed they become diagnosed with a terminal illness or with some sort of disease that may prevent them from buying insurance other than from the conversion privilege, they've got that option there that they always can purchase life insurance."

"The one stipulation," Burgess says, "is that they do it within a particular time frame."

She says usually when you leave a group insurance plan you have 30 days in which to exercise your option to convert to an individual policy.

McLellan says term life insurance is not an expensive benefit to purchase, but if you have a "whole life" policy with retirement or savings riders, it will naturally cost more.

"There's so many different options available to you . . . it's limitless just what you can buy with your insurance policy," he said.

To find the right kind of insurance, Burgess and McLellan recommend that people sit down with an insurance professional to discuss their personal circumstances, including finances.

"We would start with your annual income, we'd look at your spending habits, we'd determine the type of money you could set aside each month. The first thing we'd recommend is to build up a reserve, not necessarily insurance, but just savings—money put aside in case of an emergency," McLellan said.

Often, financial advisors tell people to set aside two or three months' salary in an account or in a low-risk investment. "I would think a couple thousand dollars for the average family, if set aside, would in most cases be sufficient," says McLellan.

After that, he agrees with Burgess that "insuring the breadwinner is probably number one." Starting a policy for a newborn is another good idea. The rates are very low, and you have something to turn over to the young person when they come of age.

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# Educators remember Ed Burnstick

By Joan Black  
Windspeaker Writer

EDMONTON

When Ed Burnstick Sr. began his journey in the Spirit World Dec. 26, 1999, he left many friends wondering how they will ever fill the spaces left by the loss of his wonderful contributions. Once a political activist who was instrumental in bringing the American Indian Movement to this side of the border, in recent years Burnstick focused on challenging and changing ideas through his words, as he was a fine orator. As an advisor to Grant McEwan College's Native Communications program's students, Burnstick left a unique and lasting impression with faculty and students alike. Some say his legacy is a blueprint for combining cultural revival and technological awareness in a new generation of Native leaders.

Jane Woodward knew Ed Burnstick well. Woodward is director of the Aboriginal Education Centre, a teacher, and the former chairwoman of the Native Communications program.

"He was so many things to me. He was a friend, he was an advisor, he was my support. He meant a lot to me, both personally and professionally."

She recalls Burnstick was one of the founders of the Alberta Native Communications Society (ANCS) who worked with Eugene Steinhauer on establishing a Cree radio broadcast in the late 1960s. "Ed was in radio then and I was in print," she said. They maintained contact and sometimes worked together over the years until Wood-

ward became affiliated with Grant McEwan's Native Communications program in 1991. She brought Burnstick in as an "Elder-in-training" to mentor students and he was still active in that role until his sudden death. At that time, too, the Paul First Nation member was also interim president of the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations.

"He was a spiritual and cultural advisor to the students and an academic," says Woodward. She said in the late 1980s, Burnstick went through the Native Communications program himself.

Every year, the first week of classes, Burnstick accompanied students to the Goldeye Centre near the Kootenai Plains, where they participated with an Elder in a sweat lodge ceremony.

Woodward relates that someone close to her described Burnstick's kindness as perhaps his greatest gift. "What a way to be remembered. You know, how many of us can be remembered for our kindness?"

"And I guess that's the

what he knew." Woodward said that he took seriously the responsibility to share what he knew with others. "He did that in the kindest way, without having anyone believe that they had to believe the same as him. He just had a way of 'this is what I know, this is what I've learned, and I want to share it with you. And if you want me to be your teacher, well then this is what I've got to tell you.'"

Woodward explains Burnstick's vast knowledge partly in the context of his being a world traveller. She said apart from Russia and "a couple of other countries," he had been "everywhere." Burnstick, she said, was called to share what he had and to go anywhere with it fearlessly, "just trusting in the Creator that he would be taken care of."

Woodward says Burnstick will be "horribly missed. Even now, I feel like I'm floundering, because . . . he's not there. He's . . . irreplaceable." Woodward says he had a local, national and international perspective on Aboriginal issues no one

enous peoples in the United Nations, was active in the International Treaty Council, the Coalition of First Nations, and other organizations.

Maggie Deranger, a member of Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation, met Burnstick when she was a full-time student in 1997 and has relied on him as a cultural advisor since. She says his life experiences, stories and travels are what she will remember most. What made him special, said Deranger, was his ability "to freely share his experiences" and that he "opened the world to a lot of students" from an Aboriginal person's point of view. At the same time, she says, Burnstick reinforced to

messages for him in three states, but were unable to locate Means by press time.

Gary Lachance, a teacher in the Native Communications program at Grant MacEwan since 1993 and currently acting chairman, says Burnstick downplayed his former political activism. "I think he became more of a social activist," Lachance said, "and I think

that his view then was that he had more of an opportunity to sort of make quiet changes by espousing what he really firmly believed in and having people listen to him. So he became quite the wordsmith. He went to a lot of conferences, he went to a lot of countries, and I think he dropped the concept of political activism versus individual and social activism. And he was really good at that. If you sat around with him as he spoke, you hung on every word. It was always great to listen to him speak about his pride in his own culture. And he always told great stories." Lachance adds Burnstick was one of the greatest influences on his own spiritual outlook.

Burnstick also "had a great sense of humor," said Lachance. "He cared so much, and he was so proud and was so confident in himself and his culture, that he had this great sense of humor. The students just adored him."

"When he spoke, he always spoke about respect, he always spoke about honor. He always spoke about what it means to retrace your past, to look for your language . . . so students were really affected."

**"When he spoke, he always spoke about respect, he always spoke about honor. He always spoke about what it means to retrace your past, to look for your language . . . so students were really affected."**

— Gary Lachance

thing that stays with me as well. The other things of course are his humility. He was a good person. He was just a good man."

She says Burnstick was both Stoney and Cree. He taught her much about both cultures and never belittled her lack of knowledge. "He was so good about sharing

else she knows has.

She says as a keeper of Eagle feathers and as a person who was given a sweat lodge, Burnstick was able to share his knowledge as far away as Guam, where beliefs are similar and a cultural revival is underway.

Burnstick also represented the working group on Indig-

she said.

The side of Burnstick that revealed his early political ideals perhaps could best be explained by his counterpart in the American Indian Movement, Russell Means, sources told *Windspeaker*. An assistant said she was sure Means would want to talk about Burnstick. We left

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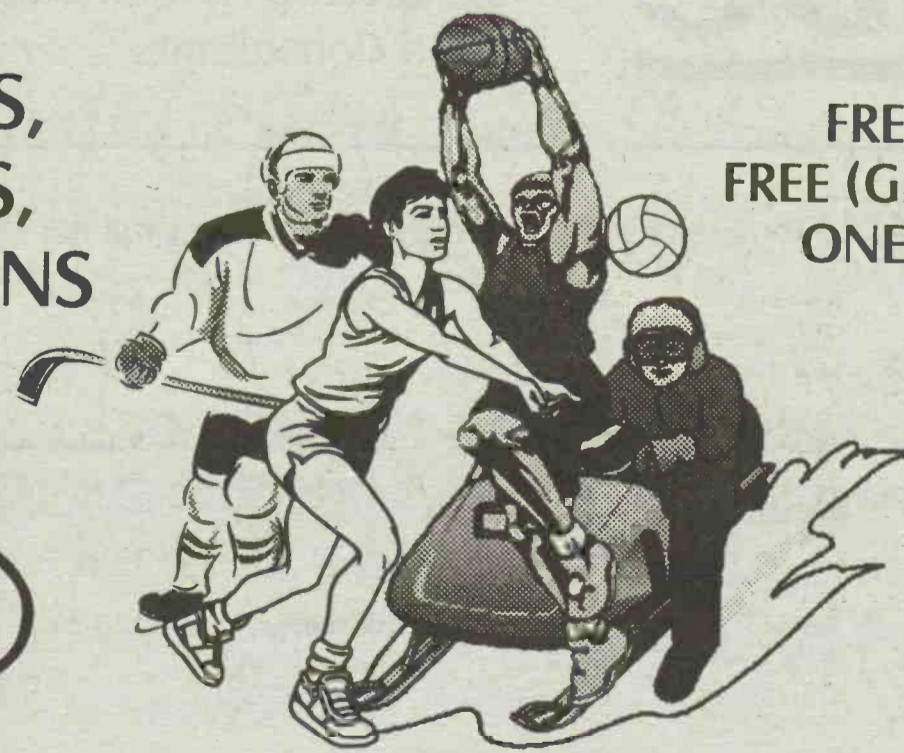
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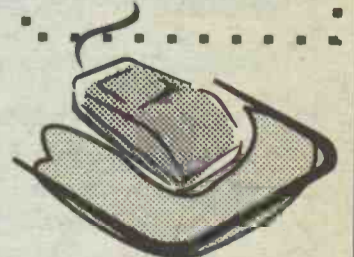
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# Alberta player taking the long way to the top

By Paul Barnsley  
Windspeaker Staff Writer

TSUU T'INA FIRST NATION, Alta.

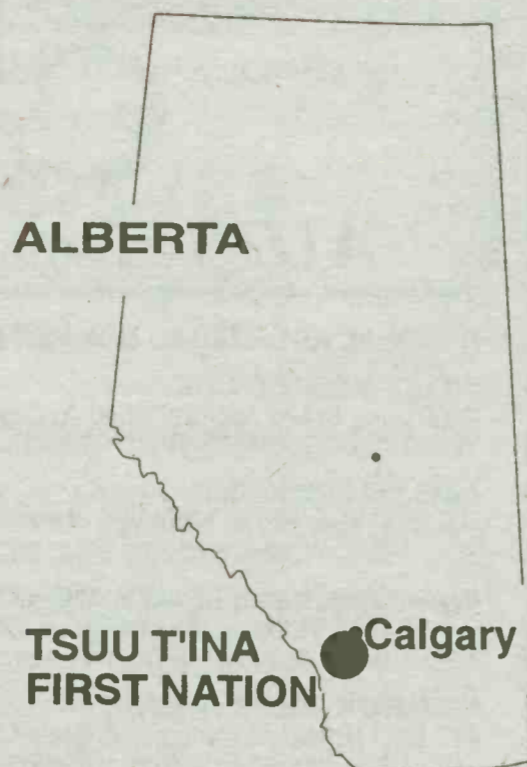
Saying dreams can come true and giving a lot of credit to traditional spirituality, Travis Meguinis reports he will be heading to Europe late this summer, hoping to crack the line-up of a professional hockey team in Berlin, Germany.

The Tsuu T'ina member was invited to attend training camp, which begins early this September, after he was spotted by scout Wilson Randall while playing Sr. A hockey in southern Alberta. The scout was there to watch another, younger, player but he saw something he liked in the 26-year-old Native forward with the soft hands and a knack for creating scoring chances.

"He told me I should be getting paid to play hockey, that I've got a lot of skills with the puck," Meguinis said. "That's what I'm known for in and around Indian hockey. People pick me up so I can create things on the ice and score goals. That's my game."

If he ever manages to get that first pro hockey pay cheque, it will be a notable accomplishment. The six-foot-one, 195 lb forward missed his chance the first time around and, in the competitive world of pro sports, there's nothing rarer than a second chance for a player who won't agree to fit into the system.

There's not a lot of room for individuality in the world of professional hockey where players are valuable assets that the corporate owners treat like commodities. Future pro players are



identified early and brought along carefully. Scouts talk of "projecting" a player's development and careers are made or broken based on the accuracy of those projections.

One sure indication that a young player has potential is the player's ability to skip a year (or more) of minor hockey and earn a spot on a Junior team's roster as an under-age player. Meguinis started playing tier two Junior A hockey as a first-year Midget at age 16 but, because of injuries and a few career choices he later came to regret, he went backwards, ending his Junior career at the Junior B level as a 20-year-old.

"At 21, I thought my hockey career was over," he admitted. "I did get an invite to go to Greensboro, (a professional franchise in the low minors) but I didn't go. I was more or less chicken when I was 19, 20."

Young players with potential are told to keep their noses clean and do what they're told; they're told that even one lapse can give

them a bad reputation among scouts and coaches. Because so few of even the best Junior hockey players ever get a chance in the professional leagues, the competition is intense and the desire to avoid being labeled as someone who doesn't fit the stereotype of a reliable, clean-cut, "character player" is almost overwhelming. By not putting his progress up the conventional Junior hockey ladder first among his priorities as a teenager, Meguinis was crossing his own name off of a lot of lists. He now knows that and it makes him appreciate this second chance.

"I thought I was going to go someplace when I was a young kid, but it didn't work out that way," he said. "But now that I'm 26, if I work hard enough, I might be able to crack a game in the pros because I look at TV and I honestly can tell you that I skate a lot better, more smoother, handle the puck better than some of these pros — most of these pros."

In hockey, unlike many sports, a top prospect can play in the big leagues as a teenager. Players who make the grade that young follow a well-worn pattern — every time they're expected to move forward in their development they do so; any backwards or even sideways step can be the kiss of death.

"They have a resume," said Meguinis. "Without a resume they really don't look at you. Plus, being an Indian, they more or less think that Indians are scared to leave home."

That's a stereotype that's common in the hockey world. Coaches and managers are wary about expending a high draft



"It's never too late," says Travis Meguinis of the Tsuu T'ina nation in southern Alberta.

pick on a Native player because they fear that player will get homesick, leave the team and not provide a good return on the team's investment.

That perception works against Native players. But, when Randall arranged for Meguinis to attend the training camp of the Abilene Aviators, a team in the southern United States' Western Professional Hockey League, Meguinis discovered that, in one way, being Native can help a player secure employment in the U.S. He said Native players, because of the Jay Treaty, are not required to go through the expensive and time-consuming bureaucratic process of obtaining a green card, the document that non-citizens must obtain in order to work in the U.S.

"Native players are an asset in professional hockey in the States because of green cards. Young players should know that," he said.

Almost as soon as he arrived in Abilene, the team ceased op-

erations. Meguinis returned home, uncertain what would happen next. Then came the call from Germany.

He sees this as his last chance. If he puts up some good scoring numbers and proves he can play at that level, he thinks there might be a chance for him back home in Oiler or Flame country.

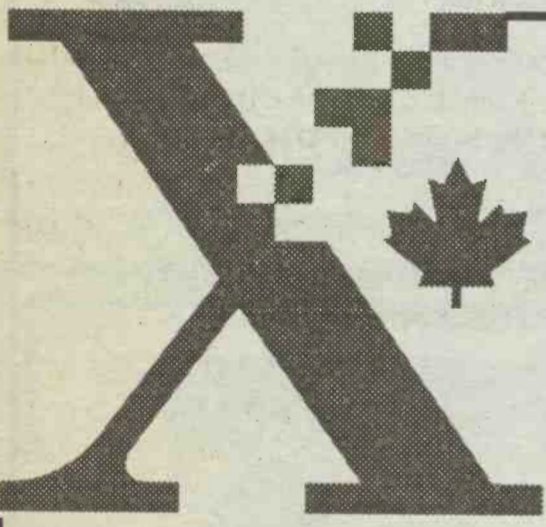
"That's what I'm hoping. I want to go over there and make some noise," he said.

Last year, Meguinis was dabbling in hockey, playing at the Senior level where, for the most part, players who were never quite good enough to make it to the pros, play for the love of the game. He wasn't in shape; he was playing and getting by while carrying 20 or more extra pounds.

"I gotta tell you, it was weird. Something was telling me to work out. I don't know if you're spiritual or not, but something told me to get in shape and I did and then this happened," he said.

Players in European professional leagues make between \$60- to \$120- thousand for a 45 to 50 game season. The style of play will suit an offensive player like Meguinis — who said his favorite player is Wayne Gretzky — and he believes he can make good in Europe before he gets too old to continue in a game where a 30-year-old is a grizzled old veteran. He thinks a lot about the players who will follow if he can open the door.

"I hope I can inspire a lot of young athletes — not just in hockey. I guess the message I'm trying to give to all the young First Nations people out there is that dreams do come true, you know," he said.



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# AIDS research developed the First Nations way

By Joan Black  
Windspeaker Staff Writer

## WHITEFISH LAKE FIRST NATION, Ont.

A conference emphasizing new ways to gather and use information about HIV and AIDS on reserves was held last month at Whitefish Lake First Nation near Sudbury.

The event went beyond the usual discussions about AIDS prevention and treatment. The host community recognized there is little research related to HIV and AIDS on reserves compared to the number of investigative projects and data collected off-reserve. They say until reserves are able to fill in the knowledge gaps, they will not be able to provide the best service to people coping with HIV and AIDS.

Joyce Helmer, who works at Whitefish Lake's Shawenekezhik Health Centre, said the Jan. 27 and 28 conference looked at "developing some research capacities around high-risk behaviors in our communities and to create a model that will help people to do that."

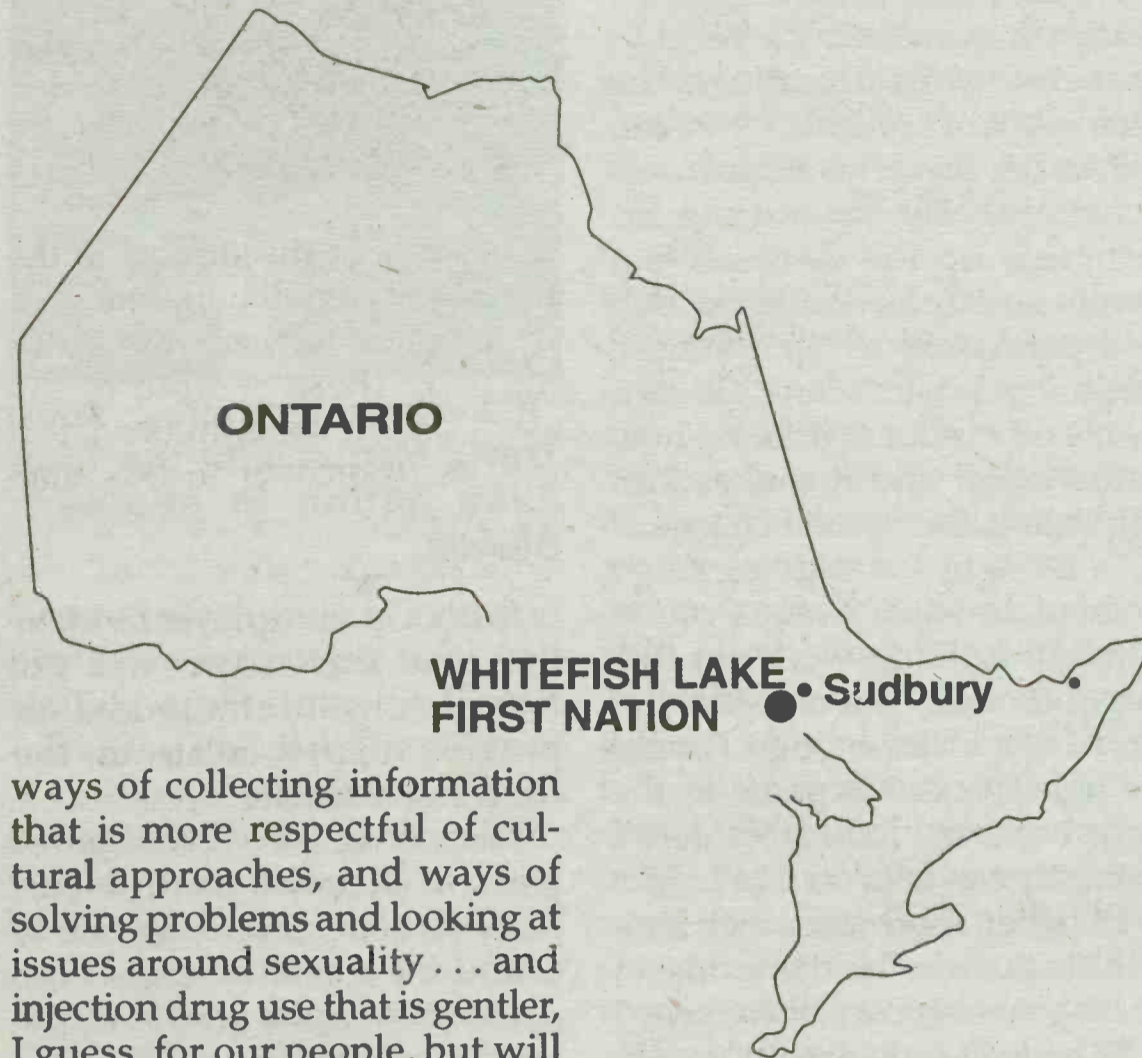
Helmer is the co-ordinator of the Modzawin Kwamdam Project, which was developed to work on Whitefish's HIV and AIDS issues and which sponsored the conference. As reserves complete health transfer agreements, they are becoming more assertive in designing health programs and services that work for reserve-based populations, she said.

The MK project is funded by the National Health Research Development Program. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada provided funding for the conference.

Delegates came primarily from Ontario and the Atlantic region, but there was also strong pre-conference interest from British Columbia.

"There's great gaps in mainstream research that doesn't meet the need for First Nations. Specifically, it's really hard to get data on high-risk behaviors around HIV, so the (MK) project has started looking at developing capacities to do research in this community," Helmer said.

Mainstream research models "are not as culturally based as we would need them or like them to be," added Helmer. "Specifically when you're talking about behavior change that is perhaps linked to colonization, residential school systems, historical traumas. They're not ever addressed in mainstream models. But what we can do as First Nations is to develop some



ways of collecting information that is more respectful of cultural approaches, and ways of solving problems and looking at issues around sexuality... and injection drug use that is gentler, I guess, for our people, but will give us the same answers.

Guest speakers at the two-day event were Carl Orr, a regional AIDS educator with the Union of Ontario Indians; Malcolm Saulis from the Tobique First Nation in Atlantic Canada and the Carleton University School of Social Work who has worked with the Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network; and Dr. Susan Snelling, a psychologist and social research consultant based on Manitoulin Island in Ontario.

On the opening day, Saulis explained research capacity building, Orr gave the regional HIV and AIDS picture including statistics, and circles discussed the gaps and barriers around these issues as well as brainstorming for solutions. The second day, Snelling presented her ideas for a community based service organization model. Suggestions and discussion around the topic came from delegates and a panel made up of all sectors of the community including a person with HIV/AIDS. The final circle invited participants to discuss possibilities, hopes and realities of providing care to their members living with HIV and AIDS on reserves.

Carl Orr, whose territory as an educator covers 43 First Nations, said 75 per cent of their communities have completed health transfer agreements. He explained barriers and gaps that contribute to what he calls "the AIDS/HIV epidemic."

He said some barriers in their region include a lack of money to go to Sudbury for treatment, and responsibility for transporting patients there, and "can [the transporter] they keep their mouth shut?" Most communities have at least one person who is HIV positive, said Orr, but often these people don't get

tested until "late in the disease" and their survival rate is not as good as in off-reserve populations.

Orr stressed the need for holistic treatment and for delivering health information in a way people understand. He is encouraged that bands are increasingly passing Band Council Resolutions supporting HIV-positive community members.

In addition, Orr enumerated "predictors" of who will get HIV or AIDS and he said mobility is a big factor in the spread of disease. Predictors include a young population with a high teenage pregnancy rate, ex-offenders with a history of drug use and prison tattooing, childhood abuse, low self-esteem, depression, unstable housing, low education, low income, STDs, and increasing drug use as a result of decreasing drug cost.

Susan Snelling has a strong interest in community based research and said she is interested in learning about culturally based research methods. She talked about a model for changing behavior developed by James Prochaska for cancer, which she applies to communities dealing with HIV.

The model says change happens in five predictable steps: First there is no awareness of a problem; then awareness and the intention to do something; then preparing to take action (e.g., holding a conference); taking action; and finally, maintaining the changes.

Snelling sees her role as giving people ideas, not telling them how to solve their problems.

"When people bring in outside experts," she said, "they need to make sure they learn something from them, so next time they will need them less."

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# Vasectomy should not be feared

Vasectomy is a safe and effective method of preventing pregnancy. This simple procedure is performed in the office by a family physician, GP, or urologist, and takes about 15 to 30 minutes to complete. There is minimal pain from the procedure and most men can drive themselves home or even return to work the same day.

The decision to have a vasectomy should be carefully considered and should include the spouse. Arrange an appointment with your doctor (that may include spouse) to discuss all aspects of the procedure, and your feelings or fears about it. The discussion should include a review of your health history and your readiness for the vasectomy, a description of the procedure and any risks involved, and time to answer any questions you may have.

### The Procedure

The goal of the procedure is to separate the vas deferens on both sides of the scrotum. The vas deferens is the tube that sperm travels to get from the testicles into the semen. It is the sperm that joins with the woman's egg in pregnancy.

The skin over the clean shaved scrotum is frozen with an anesthetic solution. One or two small cuts or a small puncture hole is made in the skin through which the tubes (vas deferens) are carefully lifted out. The tubes are cut and the ends are tied or sealed with a small clip or electric current. The incision is closed and may need a small stitch. Occasionally, there



**The Medicine Bundle**  
**Gilles Pinette,**  
**Bsc, MD**

is swelling or discomfort in the scrotum. Tylenol, lying flat, and an ice pack to the groin work well and these symptoms are usually gone in 24 hours. Most men fully recover in less than one week.

### Follow up

A semen sample should be tested for active sperm at about three months after the procedure. It takes 15 to 20 ejaculates to clear any active sperm left in the semen. A second sample is often tested to ensure sterility. If sperm are still present, a woman is at risk of pregnancy. Other forms of birth control should be used until the semen is sperm-free.

### The risks

Uncommon but treatable complications of vasectomy include infection, swelling at the incision, bruising, and possibly a small lump at the site. Vasectomy fails in less than one per cent of cases. This happens if a tube is not completely sealed off, if a new opening develops that sperm can pass through, or if there is a third tube present that is not divided.

### Common concerns

Men with vasectomies do not have increased risk of heart dis-

ease, prostate cancer, or other illnesses. Vasectomy is considered permanent. Reversals of the operation are possible but are difficult, expensive, and there is no guarantee of success. Vasectomy does not affect sexual function or sexual drive. A man is still able to get an erection, have a climax, and produces the same amount of ejaculate. Vasectomy does not affect masculinity (does not change hair growth, voice, or strength). Vasectomy does not protect you from sexually transmitted diseases and precautions such as condoms should continue to be used.


*This column is for reference and education only and is not intended to be a substitute for the advice of an appropriate health care professional. The author assumes no responsibility or liability arising from any outdated information, errors, omissions, claims, demands, damages, actions, or causes of actions from the use of any of the above.*

*Dr. Pinette is a Métis family physician in Manitoba. Send comments or suggestions for future health articles to Dr. Pinette care of this newspaper or email pinette@home.com.*

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# Healing centre opens at General Hospital

By Stan Bartlett  
Windspeaker Writer

REGINA

After four years of planning, hard work and the inspiration of "King Eagle" from Piapot First Nation, the new Native healing centre at the General Hospital was officially opened Dec. 10 by Regina Health District staff and members of the Aboriginal community. Even though it was a long time coming, the late Elder Emil Piapot of the Native Counselling Services would have approved.

"We had quite a shindig," said Lynda Francis, the director of Native Counselling Service, noting that traditional food was served to almost 300 guests. The healing centre was dedicated to Piapot who was the Elder when the counselling program first started 17 years ago until 1995.

The Wasakaw Pisim Native Counselling Services, which means "circle of the sun" in Cree, is located adjacent to the main entrance of the hospital. It will house a family lounge and the offices of nine full-time staff who will provide counselling, cross-cultural training and referrals to other agencies for Aboriginal people. Their work also involves follow-up with patients in the community.

"We've all been in places where we feel very strange and alienated. If you're sick and in

a hospital, it can be a very strange place. If you come in on an emergency basis, you don't know who to ask questions and sometimes the doctors are very busy. A lot of times the family member has to stay a few days — and they're wondering what's going on.

"We're there to try and cushion that."

Francis stresses that the counselling service is non-political and non-controversial, and has tried to maintain a low profile over the years. That's because the counselling services are client-oriented and a team approach focuses on building trust and respect with patients. Staff are trained to be sensitive to the needs of hospital policies and procedures, while at the same time to be knowledgeable and respectful of the traditional healing approach of Aboriginal culture.

The focal point of the new \$312,000 facility is an enclosed, circular healing room crafted with hardwood strip floors and rough concrete walls. A skylight at the apex of the structure, allows the interior to be bathed in natural light.

"We've had a lot of people come in and pray," said Francis, adding that all races and religions are welcome. "We have a lot of terminally ill patients so there's family who want to come in and pray. It's also used for feasts and talking circles. So,

it's been really well used."

The healing room may also be used for burning sweet grass and holding healing ceremonies. It also acts as a peaceful sanctuary and meeting place for staff.

A similar facility was opened in September of 1998 at the Pasqua Hospital, but there are no others like them in Canada, said Jim Saunders, interim chief executive officer of the Regina Health District.

"The unique program here will be of interest across Canada. All of the Aboriginal people in all of the other provinces have unique health needs and will be watching," said Saunders. "The healing center enables us to understand their culture and their health needs and it allows us to meet those needs much more effectively than in any other setting."

The Aboriginal staff also serve patients at the Pasqua Hospital, Wascana Rehabilitation Centre, and in the community assisting with tuberculosis patients.

The healing centre will be used by people from outside the Regina Health District. In recognition of that, Lena Clearsky and a delegation from Waywayseecappo First Nation in southwest Manitoba presented staff with a blue and white, handmade blanket. As well, the File Hills Tribal Council donated a painting by Simone McLeod in recognition of the occasion.



STAN BARTLETT

Lynda Francis, the director of the Wasakaw Pisim Native Counselling Centre at the Regina General Hospital, said the new \$312,000 facility was dedicated to the memory of Piapot First Nations Elder Emil Piapot. She praises hospital administration and the architects for being sensitive to the holistic health needs of Aboriginal people.



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Chuck graduated in 1970 from Duquesne University with a B.A. (Honor) in Psychology and Philosophy, followed in 1971 with a Masters in sociology. In 1977 he obtained his doctorate in Clinical Psychology from the United States International University, San Diego, California.

Chuck has practiced marriage, family and child counselling from 1982 to the present. He started leading workshops and giving lectures in personal development training in 1974. His books have been published in German, Japanese, Chinese as well as English.

Lency received her B.S. (Honors) and MS degrees in Rehabilitative Counselling in 1975 and 1976 from the University of Arizona. Together they have researched and developed the "Psychology of Vision" which they teach internationally.

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- **LEADERSHIP** - A responsiveness and willingness to answer calls for help and live a life beyond your own, experiencing a sense of teamwork and cooperation.
- **SPIRITUALITY** - We all have within us a connection to everything and an ability to reach out and bring in the guidance and assistance of a higher power.

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### MY PERSONAL HEALING AND GROWTH - Willie Blackwater, Director

Hello to all, this is a brief summary to what the Psychology of Vision Healing model has contributed to my personal and professional healing journey. As an individual who is in a leadership position it is very important to stay focused at all times. Which is what the Psychology of Vision healing model has helped me do. When one is doing his best to learn and bring various healing models into the surrounding communities there will always be criticism, due to the immense fear of change. Even when individuals, whether they are participants, community political leaders, or the facilitators who deliver this unique healing model question why I'm doing. It is a lot easier for me since I've participated in a few Psychology of Vision workshops to stay focused on the fact that the only thing is important within our organization, is that the healing gets out to our people in their respective communities.

This healing model has also been extremely helpful in me realizing the importance of keeping various issues separate, by tracking it, thus, causes less confusion. I can now track a deeper underlying issue with our clients, which they unknowingly hide with superficial acts and/or behaviors. As I study the Psychology of Vision model with more depth, it becomes more clearer to me, that this model is quite similar to the teachings of our grandparents and elders who have passed on. The most important aspect of this model is that all the healing revolves around the Creator, which brings about our traditional spiritual component that is very important in our healing journey. This model really works because it can always be modified to fit the needs of each individual during a process.

This healing model has proven to me that healing is a daily process that enables growth, wisdom, understanding, patience, courage and strength in each of our lives. This model has been very instrumental in me receiving criticism and negativity and turn them around as feedback in which I may continue to learn from. Learning to forgive myself, which enables me to forgive others, has been immensely beneficial as I continue to seek various healing methods that we can integrate also with our Seven Step Healing model as we've done with the Psychology of Vision model. Visually witnessing the immense changes and also hearing about these changes of various individuals in the communities we've reached is all the motivation we need. We as human beings need to network more frequently so that we can continue to bring effective healing methods and integrate them with our existing ones. The healing must continue to be of utmost importance, so the all human beings will soon realize that the material aspects of life "is not" as important as Life itself. The healing from the Psychology of Vision model brings about the transformation that I had been seeking, I now have a definite purpose in life, which is giving others the courage to initiate their own unique healing journey.

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# Artist rebounds from prison to corporate boardrooms

By Lissa Millar  
Windspeaker Writer

## KAMLOOPS

Some of the most memorable stories in literature feature characters that combine dramatic strengths with tragic weaknesses. Norman LaRue is just such a character in real life. His story twists from tragedy to triumph and back again — and as yet it has no end.

But things are looking pretty good right now.

As a youngster growing up in the British Columbia Interior, LaRue learned to carve himself toys out of wood — a whistle, a toy gun. Later, working seasonally in Northwest Coast logging camps, he developed an interest in the sculptural work of nearby Native communities. He took photographs and learned, trying to reproduce the totem poles in miniature.

When LaRue was sent to prison on a murder charge 10 years ago, he turned again to carving as a diversion. Working on small, portable items such as plaques and masks, he eventually discovered a market for the objects he carved. He also met Haida carver Freddie Yeltatzie, who helped him refine his carving skills. He spent three-and-a-half years in jail before mistrials and appeals resulted in his release.

"Don't let anyone tell you crime doesn't pay," said LaRue, his dark eyes glinting with mischief. Because it's not crime that's paying now. It's the craft he's been learning since he was a child.

Several of the Secwepemc carver's masks are in the Kamloops Art Gallery's permanent collection and are on display in several Lower Mainland private galleries.

LaRue also paints, but it is his Northwest Coast-style carvings that recently caught the eye of the Japanese market. Last fall, he was commissioned to create seven totem poles for Big Foot Log Home Industries. The largest has been installed in the president's

office in Salmon Arm, while six others will grace company outlets in Japan. And there have been discussions about creating a further 25 for other Japanese sales offices.

This month, Big Foot is taking LaRue on a promotional tour of Japan to promote their log homes and his totem poles.

Each pole takes about four weeks to produce. Working with helper and fellow Secwepemc carver Greg Sylvester, LaRue roughs out the design outside and moves indoors for the finer work. Totem poles and the necessary tools and debris have taken over part of the yard and the lower floor of his house, which is perched on a dry grassland terrace overlooking the South Thompson River near Kamloops.

"It's a very messy place, but it's my place," he said with satisfaction.

LaRue's totem poles and masks are done in Northwest Coast style, using symbols from that culture area. The classic profiles of Raven, Frog and Bear emerge, accentuated by the rich golden grain of the cedar.

"This kind of art is not something that was peculiar to the Shuswap people. However, according to [early ethnographer] James Teit, the use of carved objects was beginning to become part of the culture of the most westerly Shuswap people. They had skull masks and beaver masks that were used in their dance ceremonies and rituals. I consider what I am doing now as an extension of what was being done at the time of first contact.

"Most of what I create is meant to be aesthetically pleasing, rather than having any cultural significance," he said, adding that for him the spiritual value is in the creating, rather than in the symbolism.

"I want each one to be the most beautiful thing in the world so I put a lot of care and feeling into each piece."

Carving, and this contract specifically, has given LaRue a



LISSA MILLAR

**Norman LaRue has created a thriving business with his art. His carvings are turning up as far away as Japan.**

means to be self-sufficient.

"When you've lived on social assistance virtually all your life, it provides a fairly good way of eating," he said of his new income.

It is his hope that, in addition to providing a living for himself, he will be able to inspire others.

"I'm not the least bit afraid to say what I have done. I was a thief, an alcoholic, a drug addict, but I never did stop trying to get away from it — and look at me now."

Seated in his living room, the walls display his pride. Several of his masks and photographs of his eight children and seven grandchildren. When he gestures to them, introducing them, he exposes his tattooed forearms, evidence of a darker past.

He is candid about the problems that landed him in prison and on skid row numerous times in his life.

LaRue's life has been punctuated by extreme highs and lows, beginning with the murder of his mother when he was just an infant. His maternal grandparents raised him and his brothers and sisters at Nisconlith until he was removed to the Indian Residential School at Kamloops for his education.

(See Carving on page 29.)

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**For More Information Contact:**  
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# Queens University eases transition for Aboriginal students

By Yvonne Irene Gladue  
Windspeaker Staff Writer

KINGSTON, Ont.

In the middle of campus at Queen's University in Kingston, Ont. sits the Four Directions Aboriginal Student Centre. The Four Directions house at 72 Queen's Crescent has a library for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students who are interested in Aboriginal student issues. It houses some Aboriginal resource materials the main library on campus does not have. The centre also has computer labs, a kitchen, a television lounge and fax machines. Counselling services are available too. Wednesday is feast night, when all students are invited to share a meal.

"Right now from our count we have between 60 and 70 Aboriginal students on campus, in the graduate and undergraduate programs," said Tom Narini, Aboriginal liaison and cultural awareness advisor. The total university enrollment is around 15,000.

"We also have an admissions policy in place for Aboriginal students in both the law courses and in medicine," Narini continues. "We want to attract more Aboriginal students to get their education and go back to their communities to work. We also have an Elders' program where we bring in Elders at least a few times a semester, and we hold Native Awareness Week in March," he said.

Narini says a common problem that Aboriginal students face when they arrive on campus is the transition from an environment where it is safe and comfortable—a known environment that is familiar—to a place that is entirely foreign to them.

"The hardest part to deal with is realizing that it is OK to be different. That just because your goals, aspirations and expectations are different, it does not mean that they are wrong," said Narini. "That you can be successful. All you have to do is set your own goals. That you cannot live up to the goals and expectations that any other culture puts on you," he said.



Tom Narini

Narini, 41, is a Chicano who was born and raised in Phoenix. A Chicano is someone of Mexican descent who lives in what is now the United States. For the most part, Chicanos are descendants of Mestizos who were living in the part of Mexico that the U.S. conquered or purchased. Mestizo is a Mexican word for a person of mixed blood, normally Native American and Spanish.

Narini has been employed at Queen's University for the last two years. He says he still has to convince the general public on campus that Aboriginal students are not there because of a quota system. They are there because the university wants to provide all students quality learning by offering alternative approaches to education.

"The biggest battle I had was convincing the administration that they needed to have a commitment and that they needed to have a vested interest in Aboriginal students, because it was going to benefit everyone in the long run. It was also getting the people to realize that what we were doing was a good thing. That it was going to benefit everyone. That it was not just a quota thing," said Narini. "We are not making exception for the rules for the Aboriginal students. We are just looking at different factors in education," he said.

While working in Arizona, Narini encountered a situation where Native students almost failed a semester because of a swimming situation. The swimming pool had been previously struck by lightning and Native students did not

want to go into it until the pool had undergone a ritual ceremony conducted by an Elder. In the tribe's culture the ceremony's purpose was to cleanse the pool. Because of this situation the college administration was ready to fail the students.

"So we, as in the multicultural centre, had to intervene. We had to go into administration and say 'look, here is what has to happen: this is a legitimate cultural issue that needs to be resolved. You cannot punish the

students for not going into the pool. It is like asking somebody to go to school on Easter Sunday or on Christmas Day; you are not going to ask a Christian student to do that, so you cannot ask an Aboriginal student to forego their religious beliefs because it does not fit into someone else's schedule'. Those were just some of the issues I faced," said Narini.

"There was a personal interest for me to be involved in minority associations from day one. When I started at a univer-

sity in northern Arizona, I got involved with the Native students association there. With that, a spin off from the association was developed with the Chicano students on Campus. I got involved because I wanted to bring an awareness to the university, in terms of minority issues be it Hispanic, Black, or Native American. Also to increase the number of minority students. During this time I did a lot of work on the Navajo and Hopi reservations," he said.

(See Traditions on page 25.)



## Environmental Health & Science Program

The Saskatchewan Indian Federated College in partnership with the Faculty of Engineering, University of Regina are now offering a Bachelor of Applied Science degree in Environmental Health and Science.

The goal of this new degree is to provide the opportunity for Native people to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to give leadership and address the problems in the areas of environmental health and science, with a strong emphasis on traditions and culture.

### Application requirements:

The following chart gives an outline of the high school entrance requirements to the Environmental Health and Science degree program. Grade 12 students will be accepted with averages of 70% or higher. Those students with averages between 65% and 70% will be placed on a waiting list.

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- Algebra 30 or Math B30
- Chemistry 30
- Elective from approved course numbered 20 or 30 (recommend Biology 30)
- English or English Language Arts B30
- Geo-Trig 30 or Math C30
- Physics 30

Students not meeting all academic requirements may enter the SIFC University Entrance Program in order to upgrade their academic standing.

For more information on the Environmental Health and Science degree program please call or write:

Environmental Health and Science, Saskatchewan Indian Federated College,  
College West Building, Rm. 118, University of Regina, Regina, Saskatchewan S4S 0A2  
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To discuss applications and for other information contact:  
Saskatchewan Arts Board  
3rd Floor, T.C. Douglas Building, 3475 Albert St., Regina, SK S4S 6X6  
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Traditions blended

(Continued from page 24.)

Narini says his compassion comes from the history of the Mexican and Spanish conquest, the way the people were treated then. During this time the distinction between the tribes from the area was eliminated. When the Spanish conquered, they did not leave very many or any intact Native communities.

"There is still a lot of the Native traditions and the Native cultures there that sort of melted into the Spanish culture and kind of created altogether something kind of different. Still keeping close tabs with where my roots are from is important," said Narini. "I'm from the Yaquai Indian tribe that lives in northern Mexico and parts of southern Arizona," he said.

Narini says that to get to where he is was not easy.

He started out at a community college in Phoenix. He was not doing very well at the school, so he transferred over to another community college and finally graduated with his associate's degree. It took Narini four years to get a two-year degree. He then went to Flagstaff, Arizona and finished his bachelor of arts, psychology and history.

Narini went on and completed his master's degree in counseling in Arizona. He then met his wife who is from Canada. For a time he worked at Eastern Washington University, just outside of Spokane. Eventually he got a job in upstate New York at St. Lawrence University, co-ordinating a student minority program. Shortly after, he began to work at Queen's.

"I grew up in an urban area where nobody in the area had an education, which was in an inner city area in Phoenix. So I understand the kinds of trials and adjustments that a student has to make in order to be successful. First of all, just to make that decision to go away to school is hard. Especially when your parents are not open to letting you go away from home. You not only have to deal with that but also trying to explain to your brothers and your friends that you are going away to attend col-

lege and university. Getting their reaction was rarely positive," said Narini. "More often than not I was chastised for making this decision. So in that way I can identify with the students here. The kinds of paths they have to take to make a change in their lives. Just putting an idea in a student's head that an education is possible is important for me. I'm able to identify with what being a first generation university student is all about. In my family, going to university was not possible. It was not always easy for me. It took me seven years to get my four year degree. That's the way it goes sometimes," he said.

For Narini the only financial resources for education were the same federal moneys available for all students.

"Because of the history of the way that Arizona was conquered and the northern part of Mexico was conquered, first with the Spanish and then the Americans, when they came in, the Native people in that area had a choice to stay or leave," said Narini. "So the U.S. did not recognize us as Indigenous people, or as a First Nations group," he said.

As a counsellor at the university Narini is not one for giving people advice. He claims he does not tell them what they have to do.

"It is more like letting Aboriginal students understand that it is possible to get an education. As long as you go to school and if you decided that school was not for you, as long as you have that degree you can go back and do what you were doing before," said Narini. "Life is full of choices and the more options you have the better prepared you will be for life. So keep your options open. Go to school. Know that it is not going to be easy, that you are going to run into some trials and tribulations and some problems. We are here at the Four Direction Centre to help. We are kind of the students' home-away-from-home. This is where they can come to feel safe, to vent, and know that someone knows and appreciates what they are saying. A place to find someone who's gone through similar circumstances," said Narini.

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# Home away from home

By Shari Narine  
Windspeaker Contributor

LETHBRIDGE, Alta.

Frances Weaselfat can count the number of transition homes run by Native people primarily for Native people on one hand.

"I'm only aware of three Native-run transition homes in Canada," she said.

One of those homes is located in Lethbridge. Weaselfat has been executive director for the Native Women's Transition Home Society for the past two years. The transition home, nestled in a residential area of the city, began operating in August 1994 amidst protests from its neighbors.

"The neighbors had stereotypical concerns," said Weaselfat, who herself became involved with the project in 1994. "They were worried about drunken men dragging women down the street; about their property values going down; about too many people hanging around."

City council, on the other hand, was supportive of the venture.

"We had no trouble getting zoning," she said. "They held a couple of hearings with the neighbors and reviewed a petition signed by some of the residents within a 14-block radius of the house."

Once the home began operating, neighbors' fears were alleviated.

"It wasn't even a year before our neighbors had changed their attitude," said Weaselfat.

The home came about as a result of a study undertaken by Brenda Many Fingers, who was doing a course at the University of Lethbridge studying the needs of Native women in the city. Many Fingers determined there was a group of Native women that was not being reached. Abused women could access the shelter in Lethbridge (and now

one in nearby Pincher Creek), but women, who weren't abused but who couldn't make a go of it in the city, had no where to turn.

Many Fingers spearheaded a group that included both women who had had difficulties in Lethbridge and women who provided support and counselling. The transition home society was then formed. The report was completed in

1990, but it took four more years until the society had the transition home opened and ready to accept its first clients.

The home is set up for eight families, with the largest suite able to accommodate a mother with four children. Priority is given to mothers with children, but single women are also welcome and there has been the occasion where non-Native women have been housed in emergency situations. While many of the users come from the two nearby reserves, Blood and Peigan, Weaselfat noted that women from other parts of the province and even some from Quebec have stayed in the home.

As well, she pointed out, the transition home works closely with Harbour House, the women's shelter in Lethbridge, as the second step for women, who have left abusive situations.

Women can be self-referred, although most are referred through a service agency, such as Social Services.

The home not only provides an unlimited amount of time for shelter (the average stay is six months), it also provides services to help women get on their feet. Women can either be referred to counsellors in the community or resource people brought in to deal with such life skill issues as budgeting, housekeeping, health, personal hygiene, coping, discipline, and self-esteem.

(See Many Fingers page 28.)

## Aboriginal Studies

(with the)

## Anishnabe Education and Training Circle

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### Shki-Miikan Foundation Year

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For more information, contact

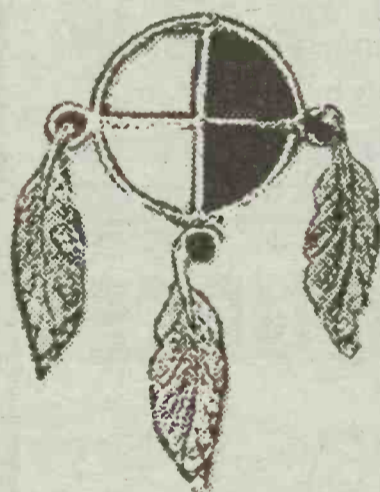
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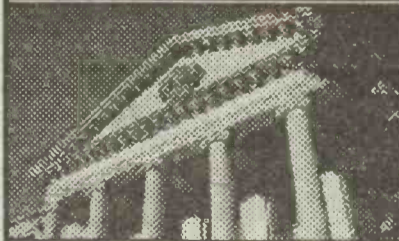
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## Book views violence through Black Eyes

### REVIEW

By Yvonne Irene Gladue  
Windspeaker Staff Writer

*Black Eyes All Of The Time*  
By Anne McGillivray  
and Brenda Comaskey  
University of Toronto Press  
200 pages (2c)

In the book *Black Eyes All of the Time, Intimate Violence, Aboriginal Women, and the Justice System*, authors Anne McGillivray and Brenda Comaskey explore justice reforms that were intended to reduce domestic violence in Manitoba's Native communities. This book chronicles 26 Aboriginal women and their experiences of abuse, first as children, and then as wives and as mothers. Through the accounts of the women's experiences the authors were able to conclude that the criminal justice system's negligent responses to intimate violence often put Aboriginal women and children at risk.

"*Black Eyes All of the Time* marks an important step in the process of recognition and action. The stories that are revealed here by the victims of abuse are compelling and instructive," wrote Judge C.M. Sinclair in the forward of the book. "No greater impetus for action exists than our realization that this behavior can no longer be tolerated," she said.

In the book, the term intimate violence means any form of mistreatment committed in relationships of intimacy, trust, and dependence. It is further defined as any act that violates physical, financial, sexual, psychological, emotional or spiritual integrity. It is a breach of trust between intimate partners or between caregivers and children.

The women in this book all share experiences of intimate violence, motherhood, poverty, isolation and violence in childhood.

"The average woman in this study was 33 years old, a woman of Indian status, born and raised on a prairie reserve, had not completed her high

school education, her annual income was under \$10,000, [and] was a victim of intimate violence since early childhood," said McGillivray. "She grew up witnessing the abuse of other children and women in her family, including her own mother. She went on to live with abusive partners. As a child, she experienced physical and emotional abuse at the hands of family members and neighbors and was sexually abused by male relatives. She told few, or, if any, people about any of these things. She even thought she deserved it. When she got older and was with a partner, she was often humiliated and severely assaulted by him. She did not contact the police until numerous acts of violence had occurred. Her partner's violence brought her in contact with the criminal justice system. He pleaded guilty and received a short sentence," she said.

"She went through racist and insensitive encounters with police and with lawyers, who did little for her. She believed that the justice system was there to protect the innocent and to punish wrong doers or give them counselling and treatment while in jail. She saw differently," McGillivray said.

"A lot of the women had very good experiences with the police and the lawyers, but some of them did not. As far as we could tell a lot of the abusers did not go to jail. And if there was a finding of guilt in the abusers, it was usually by the abuser admitting he was guilty, which was not very often," said McGillivray.

Laying charges, dropping charges and counter charges are often what police officers come up against when dealing with situations like this. Often women buy the abusers' pleas to accept their apologies, that they 'won't do it again,' so the women drop the charges. Often the victims would threaten to call the police so that particular beating could stop. However calling wolf too many times and not going through in court with the charges often gives the abuser more leeway," McGillivray concluded.

(Continued on page 29.)

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## Many Fingers

(Continued from page 26.)

Counselling can be carried out in the contemporary fashion or traditionally, with Elders available to help. The transition home also allows return stays.

For Native women seeking accommodations in Lethbridge, it's a double-edged sword. First there's the concern of knowing how to handle finances on her own and secondly there's the combination of racism and the shortage of affordable housing.

"There's not enough affordable housing for all," said Weaselfat, "not just Natives. But if an Indian is going to compete for a unit with a non-Indian, you know who's going to get the unit."

While Weaselfat isn't claiming 100 per cent success rate with her clients, she is proud to say that a lot of women who've been through the home have acquired accommodations

whether in the city or back on the reserve, and are attending school or working.

Plans to expand the transition home are in the works. In the unfolding year, Weaselfat, who's presently the only employee, will be joined on staff by a full-time program coordinator and part-time secretary. As well, daycare service on site will be provided when the Native Head Start program (aimed at culturally grounding pre-school aged children) relocates to its own building.

"The home is serving its purpose by meeting the immediate shelter needs of the family," said Weaselfat. "It'll take a while to assess the long-term benefits of the service in terms of how the past residents are doing out in the community."

A six month outreach program provides former residents with support and counselling.

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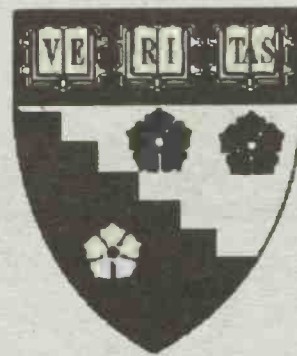
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#### Executive Director

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The successful candidate will have a Master's degree; proven planning, management and fund raising experience; demonstrated organization, communication and supervisory skills. Experience administering graduate academic programs preferred.

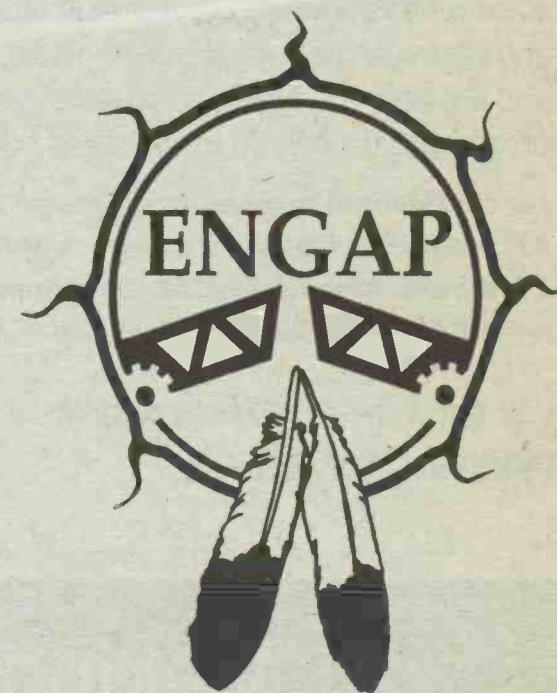
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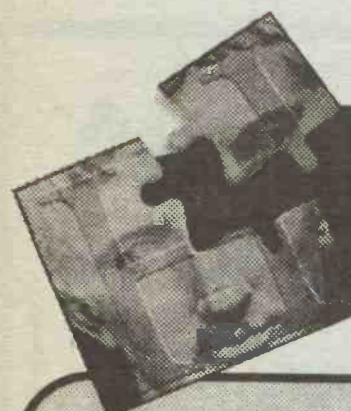


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Reporting to the Vice President, Marketing, the Sales Manager, Frozen Product is responsible to plan and coordinate the sale of all frozen fish product to customers in North America and Europe. This position works closely with an existing agent/broker distribution system to identify market opportunities, forecast demand for product and provide timely service to customers. The Sales Manager coordinates activities with the plant operations, field operations, quality assurance and finance to ensure all sales commitments are satisfied. As a key member of the Marketing and Sales team, the incumbent participates in strategic planning, new business development and product development.

Key priorities and focus for the successful candidate during the first year:

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- Identify and research alternative distribution channels to increase sales and market penetration.

This position requires an experienced sales manager with five years experience, preferably in food products. We are seeking someone with outstanding interpersonal skills, able to build and maintain relationships based on trust, accountability, open communications and decisive action. An imaginative approach to new business development is essential. Planning and communication skills must be well developed.

Individuals interested in learning more about this challenging opportunity should contact Russell May, CMC or Lori May, BN, by February 12, 2000, quoting Project #91020.

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## Carving out a life

(Continued from page 22.)

"I suffered the kinds of things that are talked about in the media," he said, adding that he is among more than 50 people named in a group lawsuit against the residential school system.

"I graduated from school right directly into the usual horsepile of alcoholism, poverty, skid row, prison, skid row, prison," LaRue said, gesturing wearily in a circular motion. "Like a lot of my people, I come from a background of alcoholism and prison and I've had to make the best of it."

The unusual thing about LaRue is that he broke out of the cycle several times to accomplish remarkable things. He worked as a freelance broadcaster for CBC radio for four years, took a poke at professional boxing, and was

instrumental in establishing a free medical clinic in Vancouver's downtown East side. He was even elected chief of the Kamloops Indian Band, although the election was contested. He did not run when it was reheld.

Between these high points, LaRue hit destructive lows.

"Each time I would tumble down into that ugly place again and everything would go helter-skelter for me again. There was always something there to knock me down. I didn't realize until recently that it was me. I was the problem."

This time, he said, he won't be making the same mistakes. With the help of AA, his work and a strong group of support people, he intends to avoid making that plunge into despair again.

## Black Eyes review

(Continued from page 17.)

"I was calling so often my common-law and his family were beginning to call me '911' just to make fun of me," said one of the women.

There is a mandatory zero tolerance charging policy the police can use.

"Manitoba, and I think Alberta, has a zero tolerance, sort of a mandatory charge policy for people who abuse partners. In domestic violence the police are required to lay charges," said McGillivray. There are actually two stages to this policy. In the early 1980s, between 1982 and 1984, there was a policy created within the provincial attorneys general offices requiring that police lay charges when responding to domestic violence. This policy also allows prosecutors to lay charges, and not drop them just because the victim says so.

"When the police finally came forward and said they were, that they were going to charge him, I felt relieved. Because a lot of the times when I did phone and they did come to my place, I always backed out of it... I understand that the police were firm in their decision that they wouldn't drop the charges," claimed one of the women.

Some of the women in this book were abused privately, away from family and friends. Others reported they were sub-

jected to public humiliation, isolation or financial control.

"For about five months, it was pretty good, it was really nice. And he did a lot of things for me that nobody had ever done, like cleaning my house and buying lots of groceries. He was generous with his money at the beginning. Then he started isolating me... It was pretty gradual... He became really demanding in the way he wanted sex... What he did was intimidate me," said another woman.

"I wouldn't go anywhere. I was too ashamed... At Safeway he'd have his tantrums and walk out and I would stand there like a fool, because he had the money. It was really embarrassing, in public places, you know... He started using the kids. It was nothing for him to give them a hundred bucks. When it came to me, I had to account for every cent, what bill did I pay or what did I buy? Did I use it on gas and stuff like that. He'd always be afraid, I guess, that I would try to save money to run away," said another woman.

According to McGillivray, the women interviewed in the study wanted McGillivray and Comaskey to do this study. Out of the interviews, a 120-page report was produced. It was used to make changes in the Winnipeg's justice system.



The University of Manitoba

## HEAD Department of Native Studies

The Faculty of Arts at The University of Manitoba invites applications for the position of Head, Department of Native Studies. This will be a full-time tenured or tenure-track position at the rank of Associate Professor or Professor. The Department of Native Studies is a nationally recognized program of excellence in Aboriginal studies. It offers three-year Major and Minor programs and a four-year Advanced Major program within the B.A. degree. It is also the centre of an interdisciplinary Master's program in Native Studies and for special Ph.D. programs. Salary and rank will depend upon the qualifications and experience of the chosen candidate. The appointment will begin on July 1, 2000 or soon thereafter.

The successful candidate must have a Ph.D. in Native Studies or a cognate field, or a combination of other degrees and equivalent experience working in government, the civil service or Aboriginal communities. Areas of cognate interest include Sociology, Political Studies, or Law, but candidates in other fields will be considered. A thorough understanding of Native governance and social issues in Canada is essential. Knowledge of an Aboriginal language would be an asset. The appointee will be responsible for administering the Department of six faculty members, fostering their successful teaching and research, and providing dynamic leadership in outreach activities with Aboriginal groups and Native communities. She or he will also teach both undergraduate and graduate courses, supervise graduate students, and do research. We seek a person with a comprehensive vision of Aboriginal studies, whose abilities, previous experience and dedication to excellence, will create a positive learning and working environment for students, faculty and staff. In that regard, the Head must possess excellent written and verbal communication skills. Under the terms of the University of Manitoba Faculty Association's Collective Agreement, the April 1, 2000 salary range for the rank of Associate Professor will be \$54,853 to \$83,903; for the rank of Professor \$70,882 to \$108,434.

The duties and responsibilities of the Head of the Department of Native Studies are governed by University Policy 1009, by various relevant policies of the Faculty of Arts, such as those concerned with Teaching Responsibilities, Faculty Development and Faculty Accountability, and by the terms and conditions of several collective agreements covering faculty, instructors, support staff, and graduate students. Policy 1009 is available on the University of Manitoba Website Home Page: www.umanitoba.ca under the heading: /administration/policyandproceduremanual.

The University of Manitoba encourages applications from qualified women and men, including members of visible minorities, Aboriginal peoples, and persons with disabilities. Candidates of Aboriginal origin are particularly encouraged to apply. In accordance with Canadian immigration requirements, this advertisement is directed to Canadian citizens and permanent residents.

Candidates should send a C.V. and a statement of teaching and research interests, and arrange to have three confidential letters of reference sent, to Dr. Robert O'Kell, Dean, Faculty of Arts, The University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 5V5. The deadline for receipt of applications is March 3, 2000, but the Advisory Committee may begin its review of applications before that date.

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## Tribal Council buys into construction

By Avery Ascher  
Windspeaker Contributor

### WINNIPEG

Hugh Munro Construction Ltd. has been a major player on Winnipeg's heavy construction scene for 40 years. The company employs about 70 workers full time, and up to 130 more during peak construction season.

The Interlake Tribal Council represents six reserves north of Winnipeg in the Interlake region between Lake Winnipeg and Lake Winnipegosis. The tribal council's buyout of Hugh Munro Construction is expected to be gradual, over the next three to five years.

This phase-in period is intended to allow the new owners to acquire the expertise and experience needed to successfully continue operating the company once the transition is complete. A key component of the phase-in period will consist of training workers to operate loaders, graders, backhoes and other types of heavy equipment. The first training course, a joint venture with Red River College in Winnipeg, is already under way.

Twenty Aboriginal students are taking the six-month

course. The first two months will be spent in the classroom, studying worker safety and proper handling of dangerous materials. The second part will concentrate on servicing and maintaining equipment in the shop at Hugh Munro Construction. During the final two months the trainees will get work experience at actual job sites.

Upon successfully completing the course, students will receive a certificate from Red River College. Job prospects for skilled workers, said Colleen Munro of Hugh Munro Construction, are very good right now.

"One of the main problems we face in heavy construction is that the employment group is getting older. We don't have a lot of young people coming in."

Munro adds the buyout represents a natural evolution of the company's activities. Hugh Munro Construction has done a lot of work in northern Manitoba over the years, and has consistently employed Aboriginal workers. Last summer the company did some roadwork, and drilling and blasting at Nelson House, Man. Currently the company is busy clearing for hydro lines near Gillam, Man.

(See Interlake on page 31.)



## THE UNIVERSITY OF REGINA EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The University of Regina is a comprehensive University which emphasizes excellence in teaching, research and public service. Student learning through practica and co-operative education opportunities as well as cross disciplinary teaching and research are strongly supported. Nine Faculties, three federated colleges (Campion, Luther and Saskatchewan Indian Federated College) as well as the Language Institute and University Extension help create a culturally diverse and vibrant community on campus. Opportunities for interaction in the local community as well as provincially, nationally, and internationally are readily available and encouraged. The University of Regina and its associated research park are situated in beautiful Wascana Park, one of the largest urban parks in North America. Promotion of research and development activities at the University is a cornerstone of the economic development strategy for Regina and Saskatchewan.

World Wide Web Site: <http://www.uregina.ca/presoff/searches>

The University of Regina invites applications and nominations for the following positions effective July 1, 2000, each for an initial term of five years. The University seeks candidates of national stature with records of high achievement in post-secondary education or professional practice, research and administration as well as the ability to exercise leadership and management skills within an academic environment.

### DEAN OF THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION

The Faculty of Education ([www.uregina.ca/educ](http://www.uregina.ca/educ)) offers undergraduate teacher education programs with strong practicum components. These programs include Elementary, Secondary, Arts Education, Baccalauréat en Education, Bachelor of Music Education, Human Resources Development, Vocational/Technical Education and four associated Aboriginal Teacher Education programs, as well as the University's largest graduate studies program offering master's and doctoral degrees. The Faculty was a founding member of the University Centre for International Teacher Education and the Saskatchewan Instructional Development and Research Unit. An active research program includes linkages with teaching practice, and the publication of two research journals. A particularly strong feature of the faculty is partnerships with professional organizations including the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association, the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation and the Saskatchewan League of Educational Administrators, Directors, and Superintendents, with the provincial Department of Education and with other faculties. The Faculty has 50 academic and 16 support staff, approximately 1100 undergraduate and 330 graduate students, and an annual operating budget of almost \$5 million.

### DEAN OF THE FACULTY OF ENGINEERING

The Faculty of Engineering ([www.uregina.ca/engg](http://www.uregina.ca/engg)) has 28 academic and 14 support staff, approximately 660 undergraduate and 90 graduate students and an annual operating budget of \$3.5 million. It accredited undergraduate programs include Bachelor of Applied Science in Electronic Systems Engineering, Industrial Systems Engineering, and Environmental Systems Engineering. The Faculty of Engineering has recently started a Petroleum Systems Engineering program and a minor in Software Systems Engineering is available. A B.A.Sc. in Environmental Health is offered with the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College. A feature of undergraduate offerings is the Co-operative Education Program. At the graduate level, M.A.Sc., M.Eng. and Ph.D. programs are available. Faculty research activities are enhanced by collaboration with the Telecommunications Research Lab, the Petroleum Technology Research Centre and the Information Technology Centre, all located in the adjacent research park. With several searches underway and many recent appointments (some jointly with industry) there is considerable opportunity for development and new initiatives within the Faculty. The successful candidate must be eligible for membership in the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Saskatchewan.

### DEAN OF THE FACULTY OF SOCIAL WORK

The Faculty of Social Work ([www.uregina.ca/socwork](http://www.uregina.ca/socwork)) programs include a Bachelor of Social Work (a generalist degree) and a Master of Social Work degree both of which are accredited by the Canadian Association of Schools of Social Work. The undergraduate program is delivered across the province with faculty located at Regina, Saskatoon and Prince Albert. It is also offered through collaboration with Yukon College and the Gabriel Dumont Institute. The Faculty benefits from close relationships with the Saskatchewan Association of Social Workers and the provincial Department of Social Services. Professionals within the province participate in teaching. All faculty are associated with the Social Policy Research Unit housed within the Faculty, and actively participate in research programs, some of which have a strong community base. The Faculty has 15 academic and 10 support staff, approximately 480 undergraduate and 80 graduate students, and an annual operating budget of \$1.5 million.

Please direct inquiries and send applications or nominations, including a complete curriculum vitae and names of at least five referees in confidence to:

Dr. Katherine Heinrich, Vice-President (Academic)  
University of Regina  
Regina, Saskatchewan S4S 0A2  
[kathy.heinrich@uregina.ca](mailto:kathy.heinrich@uregina.ca)  
(306) 585-4384

Review of complete applications by the search committees will begin in February. However, applications and nominations will be received until the positions are filled.

In accordance with Canadian Immigration requirements, this advertisement is directed in the first instance to Canadian citizens and permanent residents. The University of Regina is committed to employment equity. Canadian Aboriginal people, persons with disabilities, visible minorities and women are invited to identify themselves as members of these designated groups on their applications.

### Primary Worker

Correctional Service of Canada

#### Edmonton Institution for Women

Edmonton Institution for Women in Edmonton, Alberta is accepting applications for their recruit inventory. At this time, only casual positions are available; however potential does exist for permanent employment in the future. This position entails shift work.

**Salary:** casual - \$15.98 per hour

**Who Can Apply:** An exclusion order currently exists between the Correctional Service of Canada and the Public Service Commission of Canada; only female applicants will be considered for this position due to the responsibility for the direct care and custody of female offenders.

**Education and Experience:** High School Diploma or equivalent. Preference may be given to candidates with a degree in Social Services. This should be supported with experience in intervention with Aboriginal women.

**Additional Requirements:** Candidates will be required to successfully complete the General Competency Test Level 2 (GCT2), Personal Suitability Interview and the Correctional Officer Physical Abilities Test. A Security Clearance check will be conducted. A medical clearance by Health Canada will also be required. Prior to assignment to the Correctional Officer Training Program a candidate must have a valid Class 5 driver's license and Standard First Aid and CPR Level C certificates.

**Applicants Can Send Their Resumes To:**  
Edmonton Institution  
C/O Recruiting Officer  
21611 Meridian Street N.E.  
P.O. Box 2290  
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 3H7

Or Faxed To: (780) 495-6036  
General Inquiries: (780) 472-4945

Vous pouvez obtenir ces renseignements en français.

 Correctional Service Canada Service correctionnel Canada

Canada

The Closing date for acceptance of applications for the position of **NATIONAL COORDINATOR**, Aboriginal Justice Learning Network was **DECEMBER 17, 1999.**

*The Learning Network would like to thank those who applied and to wish them well.*



Canada

## EXPERIENCED POLICE OFFICERS



### Winnipeg Police Service

An Internationally accredited law enforcement agency

The Winnipeg Police Service is accepting applications from currently-serving officers who exemplify the high standards to which we are committed. Applications are being accepted from officers with a minimum of 2 years continuous police service in a force whose training and standards are comparable to those of the Winnipeg Police Service.

Applications will be accepted on an on-going basis however should applicants wish to be considered for the next selection process, applications must be received by February 29, 2000.

For further information, contact the Recruiting Office at (204) 986-6204 or check our website: [www.city.winnipeg.mb.ca/police](http://www.city.winnipeg.mb.ca/police)

"AN EMPLOYMENT EQUITY EMPLOYER"

ABORIGINAL PERSONS, WOMEN, VISIBLE MINORITIES, INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES AND BILINGUAL PERSONS ARE ENCOURAGED TO APPLY.

# Interlake bands will train new generation of workers

(Continued from page 30.)

Hugh Munro Construction Ltd. had been working with a consultant, SNR Energy, to identify options for the transition of the company.

"My father is getting near retirement age," Munro said, adding that he wasn't ready to hang the hard hat up quite yet. SNR Energy brought forward a proposal by the tribal council. "We looked at the proposal, and it seemed a natural

way for us to continue in the business that's new and innovative," Munro explained.

"I just believe in it so strongly," she said of the changeover in ownership. "It's a win-win situation for all the parties."

Buyout negotiations are under way. Hugh Munro Construction Ltd. currently holds 49 per cent ownership and the tribal council 51 per cent. Once the buyout is complete,

the tribal council will hold 100 per cent ownership.

Munro said the name of the company following the transition is still being discussed, but will likely be something along the lines of IRTC Inc. — Hugh Munro Construction Ltd.

Following the buyout, "we'll be available as need be for consulting," said Munro. "We have an interest in making sure this venture succeeds."

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Stoney Nation at Morley, in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains near Calgary, Alberta is currently seeking an individual for the following key position:

### DIRECTOR

#### Economic Development

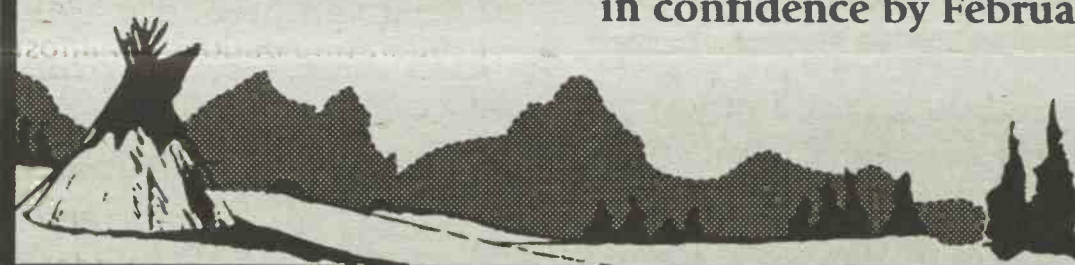
Reporting to the Stoney Tribal Council and tribal Administrator, the successful candidate will be a key senior member of the Stoney Economic Development Department. This challenging opportunity includes directing and supervising a multi-million dollar economic development program.

Applicants must possess a university degree(s) or equivalent experience of no less than 10 years working with First Nations. Specific involvement in integrated approaches, which address all stages of business, and community economic development from feasibility study to project implementation is essential. Direct experience in the development and expansion of commercial enterprises in conjunction with job training to obtain meaningful long-term employment is required.

Applicants must have a strong finance and accounting background with a thorough understanding of the socio-economic, political and cultural realities of First Nations community life.

Please forward complete resume and salary expectations, in confidence by February 28, 2000 to:

Stoney Nation  
Box 310, Morley, AB T0L 1N0  
Telefax: (403) 881-3585  
or (403) 881-3909



## IMMEDIATE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES



### Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society

**FOUR ARROWS ADULT EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM** is an Aboriginal employment program which helps adults secure and maintain employment in the field of their choice.

#### JOB DEVELOPER

Responsible for recruiting potential employers in Edmonton, job placements, transportation of clients to and from interviews and some case management.

#### CASE MANAGER

Responsible for tracking clients after job placement for a period of six months, mediation between employer and employee as necessary, job development, on-site visits and data entry.

**HEALTHY FAMILIES** is a Success by 6 Initiative focusing on first time moms with long-term support with visits throughout pregnancy and for five years.

#### FAMILY VISITOR

A temporary position where family visitor will be required to provide regular family visits, one-on-one counselling and support, problem-solving, resource sharing and share positive parenting techniques.

**RISING SUN SUBSTANCE ABUSE DAY PROGRAM** is a five month harm reduction based program for families involved in the Child Welfare System focused on the area of addictions; program is culturally based.

#### OUTREACH WORKER

Responsible for providing outreach support to those families involved in the Rising Sun Program, advocacy skills necessary, knowledge of Child Welfare Act, experience in addictions utilizing comprehensive model, harm reduction strategies.

#### All positions require:

- a CWIS check and a criminal record check
- a vehicle and a valid license
- a minimum Diploma/Degree in a related field or strong work experience in field

#### Please forward resumes to:

Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society  
2nd Floor, 10117 - 150 Street  
Edmonton, AB T5P 1P2

Fax: (780) 481-3509

Deadline: February 11, 2000

Clearly identify which position you are applying for.

Only those resumes selected will receive notification of an interview.



Council for the Advancement of Native Development Officers

Suite 200, 10404 - 66 Avenue  
Edmonton, AB T6H 5R6  
Phone 1-800-463-9300, Fax (780) 429-7487

## Webmaster

The Council for the Advancement of Native Development Officers (CANDO), a federally registered non-profit organization that is Aboriginal-controlled, community-based, and membership-driven, is seeking a motivated individual with a strong understanding of Aboriginal communities and economic development to build and maintain an interactive, user-friendly, and highly informative Web site.

#### Who we need:

The successful candidate will possess excellent organization and interpersonal skills, and a clear understanding of the following software: Microsoft IIS4, Microsoft FrontPage98 (prefer 2000), or Lotus Designer, Adobe Photoshop 5.0 or Macromedia Fireworks, Adobe Acrobat. Working knowledge of Lotus Domino R5 or 4.6 Knowledge Lotus Designer, Lotus Notes, Lotus Administrator, Lotus Script, Visual Basics and Java Script considered an asset. The CANDO environment is mixed Windows/McIntosh; the servers are Lotus Domino RS, Microsoft IIS4 and Linux.

#### The other team players:

Reporting to the Executive Director, the Webmaster will work as a member of CANDO's Communication team (Communications Officer and Graphic Designer) and be responsible for the day-to-day maintenance and management of CANDO's electronic equipment and Web site. You will play a key role in the creation of annual plans for Web site development and be a part of the planning and development team of CANDO's electronic communication and commerce infrastructure.

#### Salary and benefits:

Salary is commensurate with education, certifications, and experience. Closing date for the position is February 25th, 2000. CANDO thanks all applicants in advance for their interest; however, only those applicants selected for interviews will be contacted.

#### Please forward resumes and applications to:

CANDO (Council for the Advancement of Native Development Officers)  
#200, 10404-66 Ave  
Edmonton, Alberta T6H 5R6  
ATTN: Jason Gariepy, Communications Officer

## Portrait of Chelsey Dillon

## Fancy shawl dancer and beadworker

By Pamela Sexsmith  
Windspeaker Writer

ONION LAKE FIRST  
NATION

Life on the Pow Wow trail can be fun — especially when your dad is a well known arena director at some of the biggest powwows in Canada.

As a junior dancer, you also get to travel a lot in the summer, to see different towns and reserves and meet tons of other kids — kids just like yourself — out following the powwow trail with their moms, dads, brothers and sisters.

It's the kind of life she "wouldn't trade for anything," nine-year-old Chelsey Dillon said. A student at Chief Taylor School in Onion Lake First Nation, she is the youngest member a very traditional Cree family that lives, breathes and dances powwow.

Chelsey, who cuts a colorful and elegant figure among the young ladies in the junior fancy shawl dance category, is the first to admit that there is a lot of hard work and training behind her fast paced moves and whirling steps.

Her dancing, like her regalia, is part of a family tradition that spans more than five generations. Initiated into the circle at an early age, she has been dancing ever since she first began to walk.

"I learned my moves, fast steps and fancy footwork



PAMELA SEXSMITH

Chelsey at home doing loomwork

from my sister Cheryl, who was trained by my mom. Together, they also hand-stitched my beaded leggings, leather moccasins, dresses, shawls and vests," said Chelsey.

Her Old Plains style high top moccasins are hand-beaded with the "lazy stitch" technique creating geometric patterns that match the swirling ribbons on her shawl. Over her shawl, she wears a rare, antique cape that belonged to her great-great grandmother, Mary Fox. The cape is stitched and beaded in the Old Woodland floral style.

"Moccasins feel good, lighter, and very comfortable to dance in, better than joggers. I really like to dance in my great-great grandmother's cape and show off my long ribbons and flying moves. I dance harder when

I see my family watching me. I'm lucky because my brother and sister help me a lot, teach me new moves. My big sister likes to practice fancy braiding on my hair to give me my own special look. She puts soft white owl plumes in my braids along with beaded barrettes, ribbons and hair ties."

Chelsey makes her own chokers, bracelets and belts on a small beading loom. The bead widths vary in number and loomwork patterns can be simple or complicated. Sometimes she follows a traditional design and sometimes she creates her own, as she deftly weaves hundreds of rows of tiny glass beads through the warp and weft of the threads.

"She likes to wear her own hand-woven pieces at round dances. Traditional women and young girls wear formal dresses to round dances because they are cultural gatherings. She wears her joggers with a dress because it's usually too muddy or snowy for moccasins. "We don't put eagle feathers on her yet, she's too young," explained her mother, Cecilia Dillon.

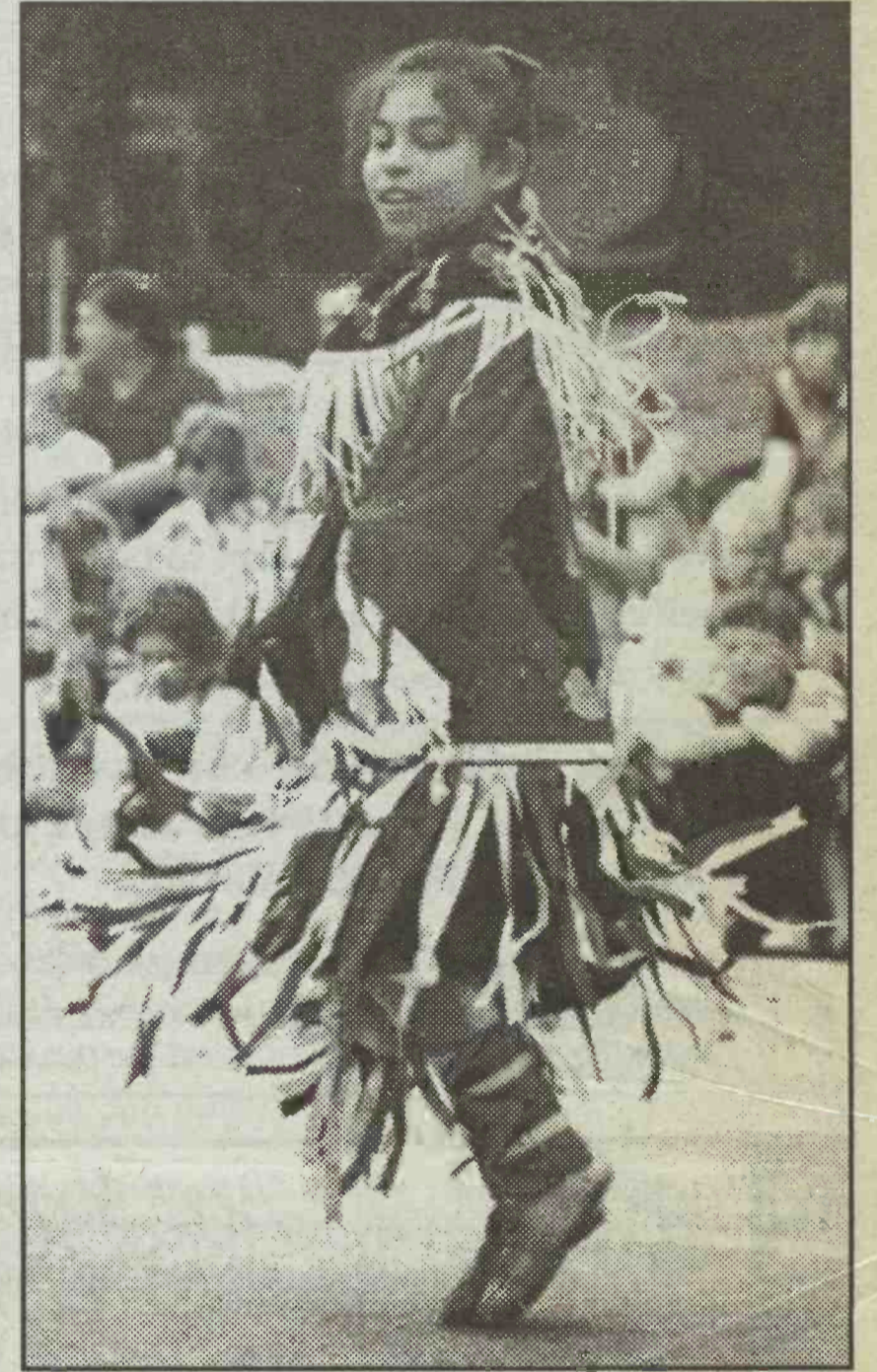
Chelsey keeps in shape for powwow by practicing figure skating and running in track and field. Her dancing style is "a good fast dance, with the best moves and fanciest footwork of all the women's dances," said her dad, Brent Dillon.

"Fancy Shawl is the hardest of all the women's dances, whirling and bouncing to the drum beats. Different First Nations have different interpretations of the steps, based on the dance of a butterfly. In existence as a contemporary dance for the last 20 or 30 years, it was preceded by a slower, more dignified shawl dance for women, but has just recently escalated into a really fast, really fancy dance. Times have changed and we have to change with the times," said the proud father. "On the other hand, we do plan to make an old time tradi-

tional leather outfit for her, decorated with crow beads, but it does take a lot of time to tan hides."

Chelsey feels very lucky to be a fancy shawl dancer and travel as much as she does.

"I see so many kids at powwows who aren't dancing yet. I feel very happy and lucky to be a dancer. It's fun to win a competition or two each year, but mostly I just like to dance."



PAMELA SEXSMITH

Chelsey dancing at the Aboriginal Day celebrations in Lloydminster — 1999 — she really wowed the crowd and drew the admiration of the children bused in to see the cultural celebrations.

## Aboriginal youth help fund their own programs

By Yvonne Irene Gladue  
Windspeaker Staff Writer

## EDMONTON

A culturally based program targeted to off-reserve young people and funded by the Department of Canadian Heritage is run by Aboriginal youth for Aboriginal youth.

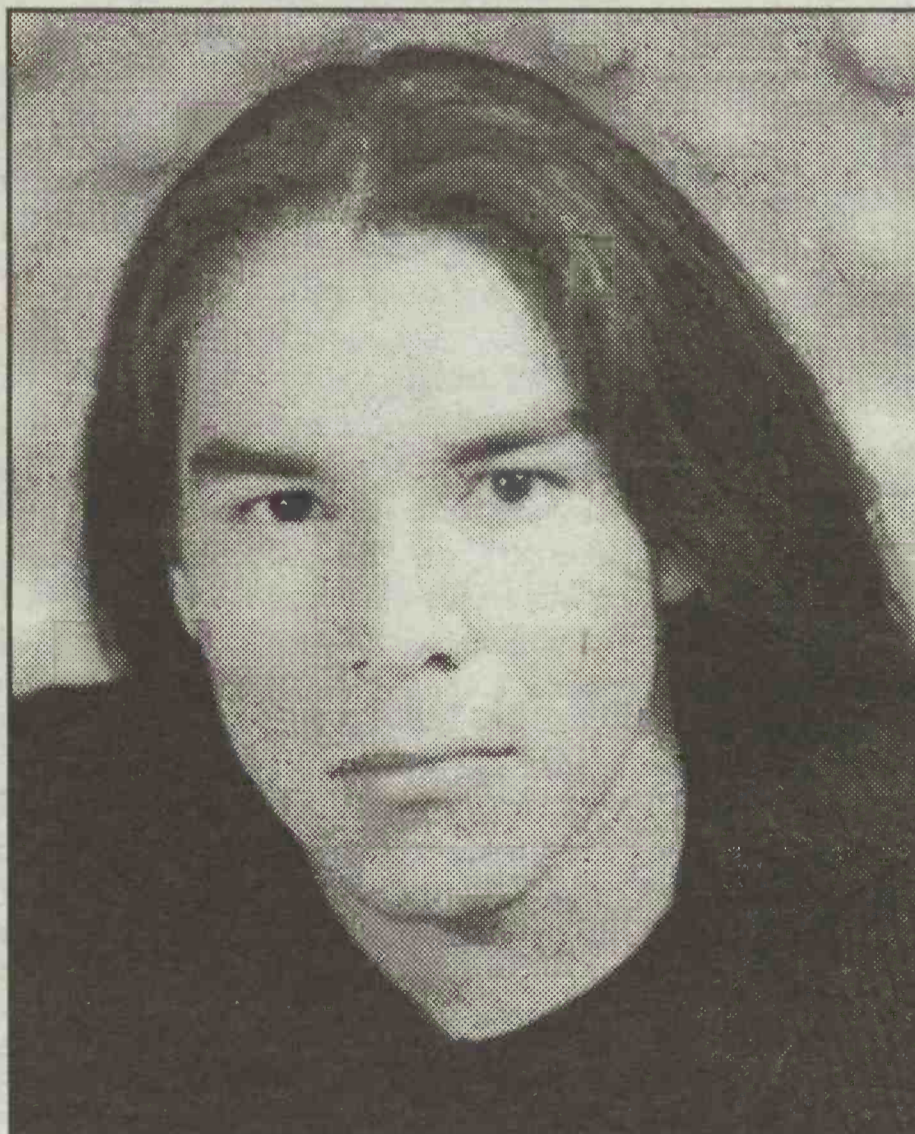
The Urban Multipurpose Aboriginal Youth initiative is a five year plan that started in 1998 and will run until 2003. The project is available for First Nations, Métis and Inuit youth. Organizations or individuals who want to get culturally based projects and activities off of the ground are encouraged to apply.

The National Association of Friendship Centres, the Métis National Council and the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada will play a major role in the management and administration of the initiative. The programs have to be beneficial for Aboriginal youth between the ages of 15 and 24 years who live in off-reserve communities.

The focus is on a wide range of Aboriginal youth issues, needs and goals. These in-

clude encouraging students to stay in school, increasing employment and life skills, development and training courses, career counselling and parenting skills. In Sept. 1999, 12 Edmonton young people, also 15 to 24, formed an advisory board committee. The committee will help select youth projects that were submitted by local organizations or individuals. The six male and six female members of the committee are Sean Mah, Darryl Belcourt, Charity Laboucan, Lana Whiskeyjack, Mark McKennit, Jennifer Chong, Jason Arcand, Carmen Severight, Keith Martin, Janice Makokis, Jonathan Potskin and Leah Chambers. They try to meet regularly.

"Basically we have a direct say, what programs we think



Sean Mah

are good for the youth; there are requirements that we look for. It means that we influence the programs they should have," said Sean Mah. "The programs have to be relevant to issues that are out there as in education, employment,

anti-drug or alcohol programs. So far, some of the programs we've approved are culture-based with a culture component attached to it. Which could mean that the program will have an ongoing sharing circle with an Elder advisor. A circle where the youth would get to talk about their problems or share their ideas on things. Other proposals that may be considered are regular programs such as employment or training programs. Most proposals we get are from organizations that send in their proposals outlining their projects," he said.

The project is available in Calgary, Vancouver, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Regina and Prince Albert and will carry out a similar plan.

Mah stated that he got involved on the committee when an announcement on a bulletin board caught his attention.

"There was this announcement on a bulletin at Canada Place, about a new initiative program through Canadian Heritage. It was advertised that they needed 12 youth to help fund youth programs and that there would be training involved. I wanted to help my community, and this was one of the ways I had a chance to do it," said Mah. "I applied, wrote a letter, got my references and I was chosen," he said. Mah, 22 is Cree from the Alexander and Kehewin First Nations in Alberta. He is a full time student at the Grant MacEwan Community College in Edmonton, studying in his second year in the bachelor of science program. An actor and a model, Mah has done some work in a movie in Italy with David Bowie and Harvey Kietel. He is also a model who appears on a Native Reflections male calendar.

"I enjoy helping my community," said Mah. "I also enjoy acting. I want to pursue it more after I get out of school. I will have my bachelor of science degree to fall on back if I ever need it someday," he said.