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## FIRST NATIONS



### Second Thoughts?

CP(Ryan Remiorz)

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## Features

### Samson decision causes outrage 8

The judge hearing the first two parts of the Samson Cree Nation's \$1.5 billion lawsuit against the federal government has rendered a decision in favor of the Crown. Samson lawyer James O'Reilly speaks out about his disappointment in the decision and on the errors he believes the judge made in the case.

### One person, one vote 8

The report on the renewal of the Assembly of First Nations is in the hands of the chiefs who will decide if they have confidence enough in the grassroots membership to grant them the right to vote for national chief. A special assembly to discuss the Renewal Commission and the results of its \$2 million effort will be held in February.

### Reform or progressive influence 9

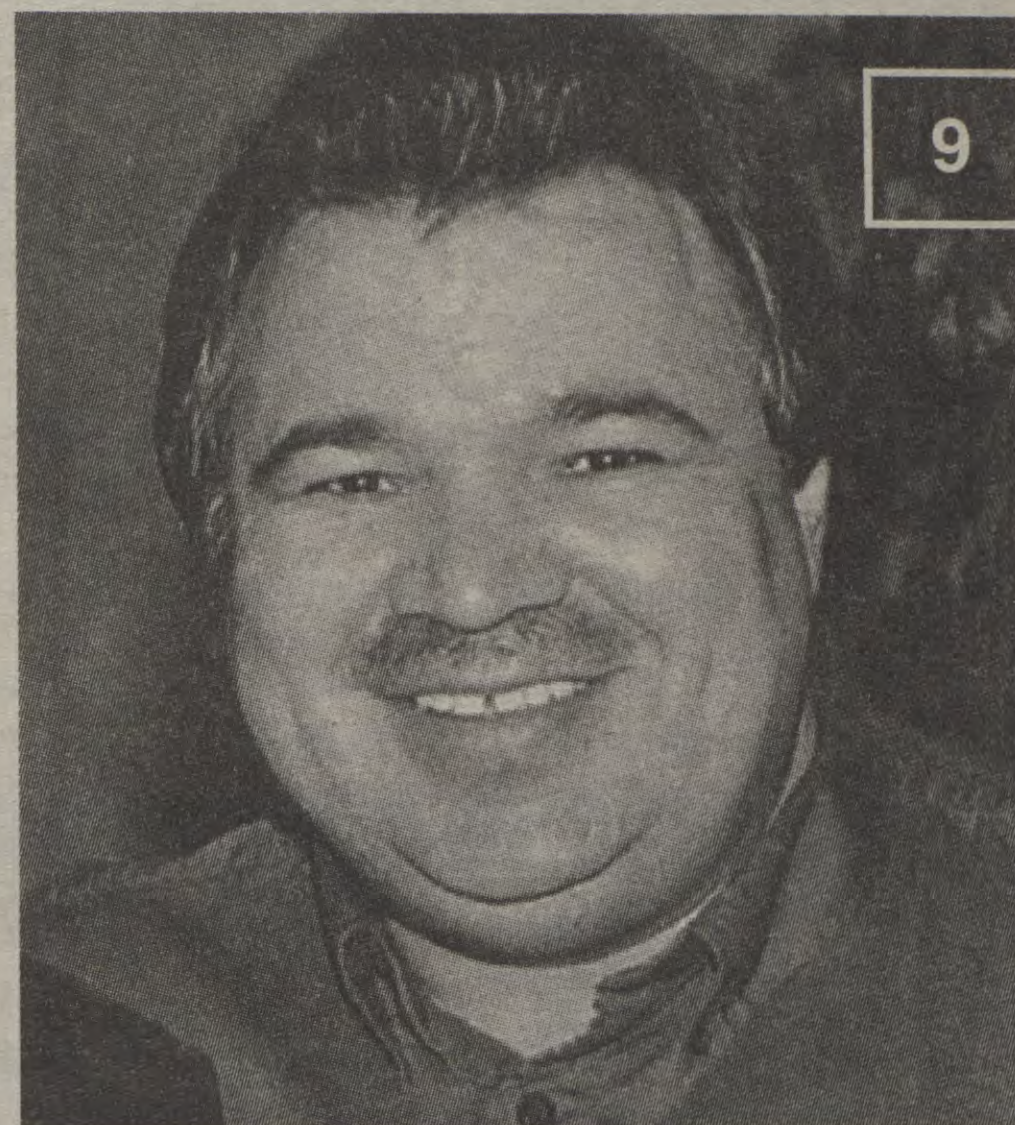
With the Conservative Party of Canada's win in the Jan. 23 election comes concerns that the old Reform party members within its caucus will have a profound influence on the future of Aboriginal-government relations. Conflicting statements in the party have Native leaders scratching their heads.

### Metis organization threatened by MP 9

What's the ethical difference between rewarding your friends, like the federal Liberal party has been accused of doing in Gomery, and punishing your enemies, like Conservative MP Inky Mark has been accused of doing to the Manitoba Metis Federation? Aren't they different sides of the same coin, asks president David Chartrand.

### Harper tough to pin down 11

The Assembly of First Nations National Chief Phil Fontaine is trying to get a straight answer out of the prime minister-elect on whether he will honor the agreement reached in Kelowna with the provinces designed to improve the lives of Aboriginal people, and a promise that he will keep from tinkering with the deal on the residential school compensation.



9



14

## Departments

[ rants and raves ] 5

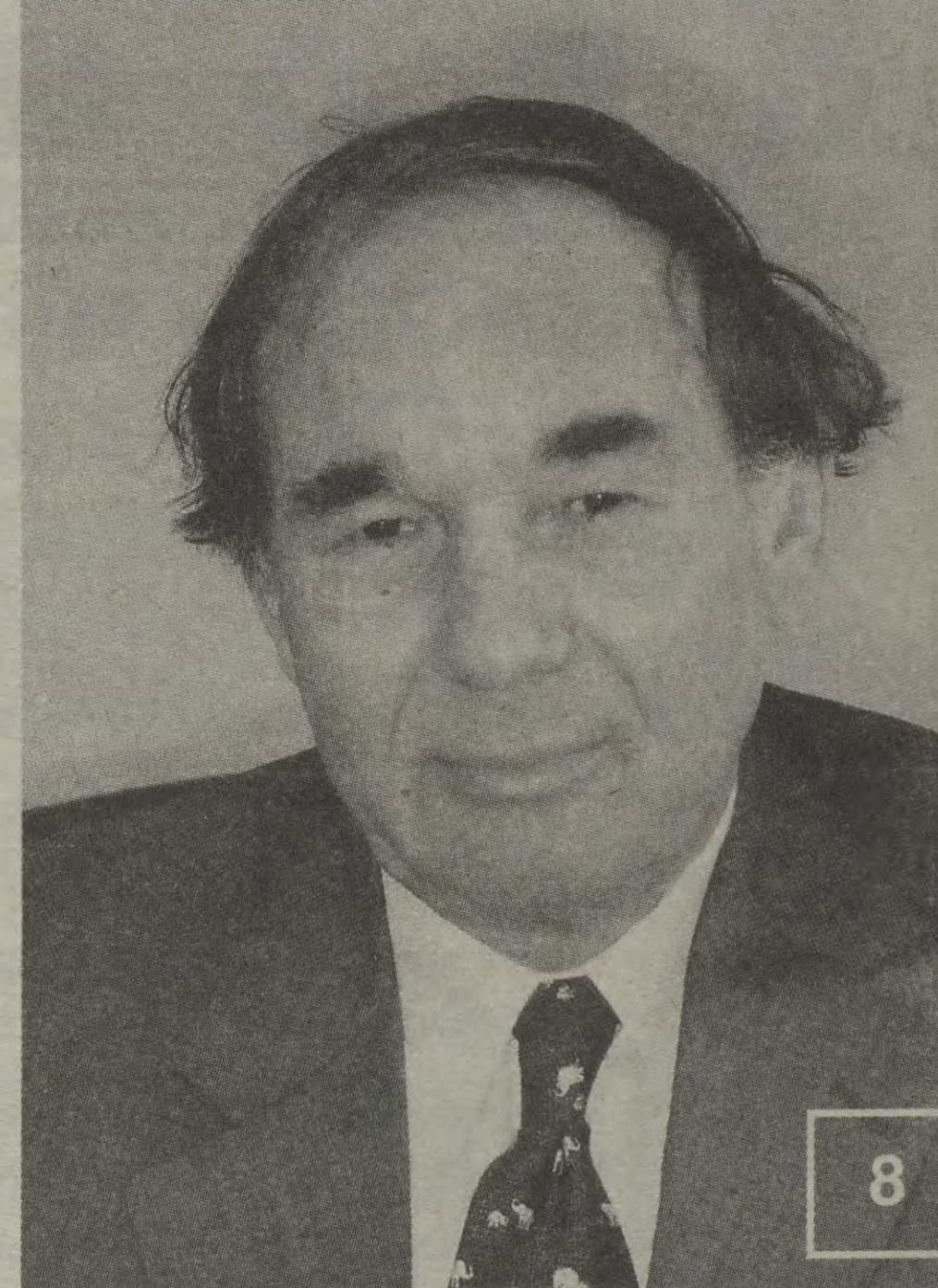
[ what's happening ] 7

[ radio's most active ] 14

[ strictly speaking ] 15

[ footprints ] 23

Dennis Franklin Cromarty put a career as a lawyer on hold to help open a court workers program. He never became a lawyer, but provided a lifetime of service to the First Nations people of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation. His support and promotion of higher education has inspired many. His goal of providing a culturally-relevant environment that would improve the graduation outcomes of Aboriginal high school students has been realized within a Thunder Bay school that bears his name.



8

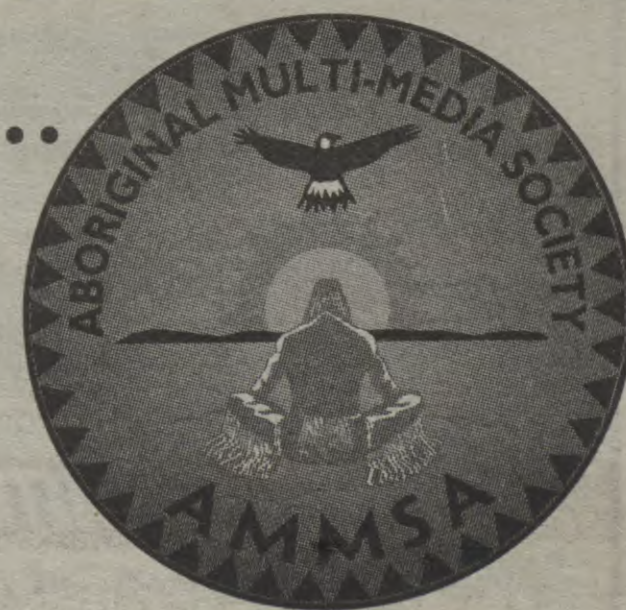
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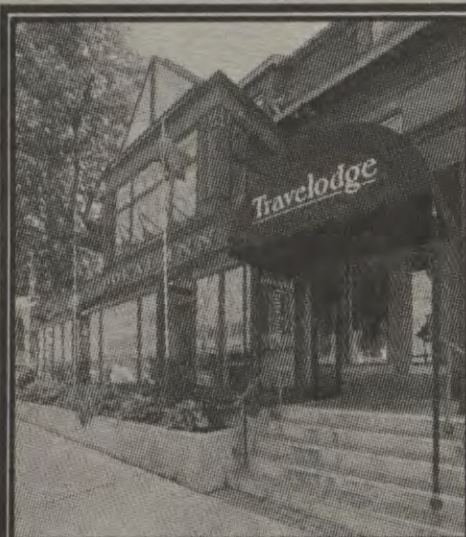
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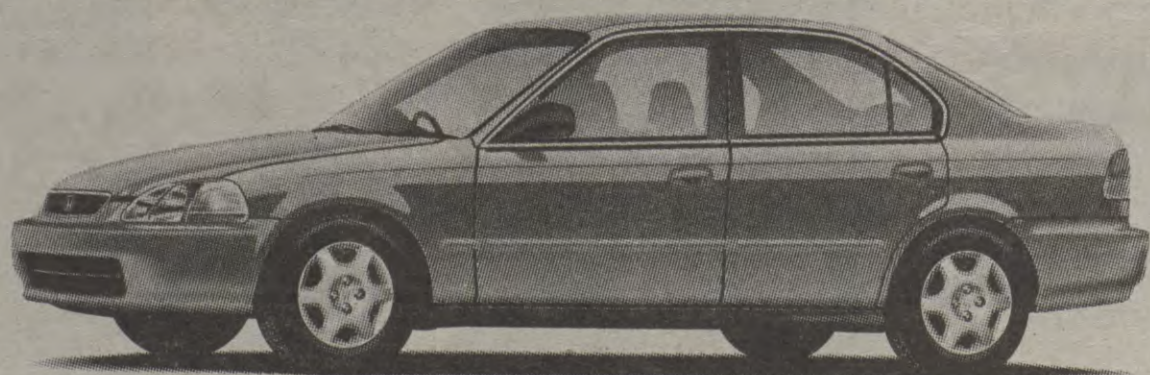
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Windspeaker



# Advice to the PM-elect

Liberal insiders in the country will recover from the shock of Jan. 23 eventually, and realize their ride on the entitlement merry-go-round is over and the circus has left town. The Canadian electorate has spoken. Stephen Harper will be sworn in as Canada's 22nd prime minister.

*Windspeaker* suspects that things are going to be very interesting in the foreseeable future. A lot of the people who may become central players in the new government are well known to us, and not because of their enlightened understanding of human rights, minority rights and—especially—Aboriginal rights issues.

We are trying not to prejudge this new government, but we must admit we are wary. That's the only responsible way to be. The Conservative Party of Canada is the choice of the Canadian voters, so we have to give them an honest chance.

There are a few questions left over from the campaign, however. And the party's reluctance to answer them before Canadians voted is, in and of itself, questionable.

First of all, we saw clearly that one of the Conservative's key strategies in the campaign was to hide the extreme views of many of its candidates from the public. Hiding opinions that could shape key policy directions because you know they will not be palatable to the electorate goes well beyond making the usual empty campaign promises. The moment those hidden values emerge, the new government will be open to the accusation that it lied by omission in order to get power. That accusation is pending. Here's hoping there's never a reason to level it.

We'll expect the Conservatives to govern according to the values they espoused during the campaign, not the ones they chose not to mention. That latter set of views is not included in their mandate to govern, simply because it was not mentioned. Any attempt to introduce those ideas is out of bounds and would be a violation of the electorate's trust that would surpass even the worst ethical shortfalls of the Liberals.

Those views are mostly related to neo-conservative, far right, religious fundamentalism. No one knows more than Canada's Indigenous peoples how dogma and evangelicalism can lead to hateful, ignorant and hugely harmful actions.

The pundits tell us that Mr. Harper has a reputation for being disdainful of political tricks and journalistic shallowness, that he is a true intellectual who only barely tolerates the excesses of politics because it's the only game in town. That's good news. A little clear-headed decision-making that isn't handcuffed by colonial era ideology can only improve the way things work on the Indian Affairs front.

We're told Mr. Harper plans to clean up Ottawa. Once again, we welcome that. Now if someone will explain to us how Conservative MP Inky Mark threatening reprisal against the Manitoba Metis Federation for supporting the Liberals is any different from the crimes detailed in the Gomery Report, we'd love to hear it. Punishing your opponents and rewarding your friends are just two sides of the same coin, we say. That's supposedly the old Ottawa.

On this point, a close relationship between the Assembly of First Nations and the Metis National Council had developed with the Martin Liberals. The MNC came right out and endorsed the Liberals; the AFN was subtler, but the end result was the same.

We're not going to start in on whether or not that was an example of smart, long-term planning on their part. That's another editorial for another day. But we do believe that a clear sign that political retribution will not be visited on those organizations because of their Liberal ties should be one of the first things we see from the new Conservative government. Reconciliation between the Indigenous and the other peoples in Canada is too important to be tossed into the blender of party politics.

We also noticed Mr. Prime Minister that the former Reform Party wing of your party (Monte Solberg) disagreed sharply with the former Progressive Conservative faction of the party (Jim Prentice) over the future of the Kelowna Accord and Aboriginal policy in general. We need a clear sign during your government's earliest days of which political approach is going to dominate. Canada did not elect the Reform Party, plain and simple. Over and over again it was rejected. We urge you to remember that at all times.

—*Windspeaker*

# Learn humility

Dear Editor:

For far too long has Mr. Jason Goodstriker has gotten away with comments that are derogatory to sensitive issues. We as powwow people have a way of life that exists for the purpose of preserving the way of life for all First Nations in North America. The powwow way of life is about song and dance of the proud First Nations people. I, however, find it hard to believe that an intelligent man like Mr. Goodstriker has forgotten his sole duty as a leader of the Alberta First Nation people [to] disregard a sensitive issue about the gang-related shooting.

Maybe it was done in haste to cover up dead air as the commentator. As for people that live and survive on the powwow circuit, we take this way of life seriously, help out friends as we travel and most of all respect one another.

Mr. Goodstriker in no way represents us, and the time has come that he learns about the humility of our people and all those of other cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

To further comment, Mr. Goodstriker has made other remarks that offended powwow dancers, drummers, Elders and respected leaders alike. Jason has been protected under the auspices of the Assembly of First Nations and I believe that he was not approached by anyone offended, respectively due to this fact of his AFN status.

*I remain,  
Oskya Star*

# Congress of who?

Dear Editor:

I would like to respond to the article published in the *Globe & Mail* Jan. 16 that claims that the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples represents us or anywhere near the number of people they claim to. How does anyone represent more Aboriginal people than one country actually holds? The only governing body that can lay claim to represent us is the Metis National Council and the Metis Nation of Ontario as their affiliate.

*Bonny Cann, Stephanie Cruise, Kim Sicker, Ken Morton*

# Speak for yourself

Dear Editor:

I am a Metis who can speak for herself. I do not support Stephen Harper and the Conservative party. Never have and never will. I make sure that I vote in every election.

I am writing because I have been informed that the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples has endorsed the Conservatives and stated that they represent all the Aboriginals off reserve. They do not.

*Sharon Cohan  
Nanaimo, BC.*

# Wants to know

I am a citizen of the Metis Nation of Ontario and there are about 500 other citizens within our local region, which is mostly of the Algoma area in Ontario, represented by our President Mr. Tony Belcourt and I want to know how the president of the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples supports the Conservative platform when it doesn't reflect the progress made and gives nothing tangible to the very people [Dwight Dorey] claims to represent? CAP does not represent all Aboriginals living off-reserve as they do not represent myself or any of my fellow Metis. Who has authorized them to speak on my behalf? I want to know.

*Tammy P. Webb*

# Talk it up

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# [ rants and raves ]

# The power inherent

Dear Editor:

In this time of renewed call for new treaties, treaty negotiations, and narrower interpretations of existing treaties, we, the First Nations peoples and First Nations leaders, should always remain mindful of the fact that the overall intent of the whole process has been and continues to be the acquisition of additional concessions to Aboriginal lands and resources and protection of the best interests of the non-Aboriginal population.

Before proceeding any further along this path, ask a few vital questions:

1. Do we need new treaties or do we just need to get our existing treaties acknowledged and reaffirmed by national and international levels of governments?

2. How can the elected leadership talk about new treaties when there's no clear understanding of existing treaties by the general membership and among political leaders?

3. Why can we not afford all the things that the non-Aboriginals are using to try to entice us to sign new treaties, if we maintain the ownership title to all our lands and resources?

The truth is that those who maintain title to the land and resources in demand will continue to derive benefit from those lands and resources for as long as they maintain title. Believe me, our land and resources are in demand. The non-Aboriginal population wouldn't be trying so hard to gain full control of what little else we have left otherwise.

We live in a global market, and as with any market, it's a matter of a guaranteed and sustainable supply and demand. This means that as long as we have the things that are in demand (land and resources) we can call the shots because there will always be somebody trying to take control and/or gain exclusive access to them.

Just because we are experiencing difficulty in getting our treaty rights recognized is no excuse to give up the fight. If we don't fight then we will truly be the defeated people who have nothing to look forward to, just waiting to die out.

The first fight over land and resources started long before 1492 with the arrival of Christopher Columbus. The fight started with the arrival of the Vikings in 1,000 AD in Newfoundland. Initially the Vikings were only interested in pillaging the new land of its material wealth (resources), but they eventually realized that it would be more profitable if they could gain full control of all the land and resources. This kind of mentality has never changed throughout history and is still the driving force behind the renewed call for new treaties.

Christopher Columbus, Vasco da Gama, the Portuguese African slave traders, John Cabot, Hernan Cortes, Francisco Pizarro, Jacques Cartier, Roberval, the Jesuits, the British, and the Acadians, were all driven by this same greed/need. If it was not for this need of resource acquisition, we probably wouldn't have gotten invaded in such massive numbers.

I strongly recommend that before any further talks or treaty negotiations take place, take the time necessary to review the events of recorded and oral history to relearn the reason why these Europeans see the need for treaties with the North American Indians.

If we accept the lure of a few million recoverable dollars (from the exploitation of our lands and resources) at this early stage, to enter into new treaty negotiations, then what we are essentially saying is we are ready to sell out our treaty rights to all our lands and resources forever to which there will be no turning back. This also means that the lands and resources will be under the control of the non-Aboriginals and that we, and all of the generations to come, will be under total control and at the mercy of these people and their laws.

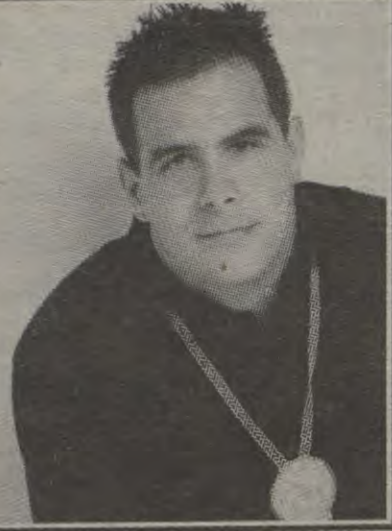
The worst that they can do to us now is to continue denying us our rightful entitlements, but at some stage in the future our people will be in a position to regain control of our lands and resources, as the non-Aboriginal population decreases and we finally get a chance at running the country.

We only need to be patient a little longer, prepare our younger people and always to remember that Mother Earth is not for sale at any costs.

Say "no" to additional land sales and surrenders, and to resource relinquishments and "yes" instead to land use and resource access agreements and to the protection and preservation of inherent Aboriginal and treaty rights and "yes" to our inherent responsibilities to protect Mother Earth.

*Alfred Sock, Elsipogtog First Nation*





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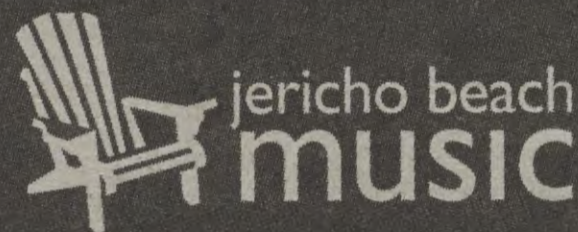
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Weekly Income \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Monthly\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Other sources of income \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (weekly)

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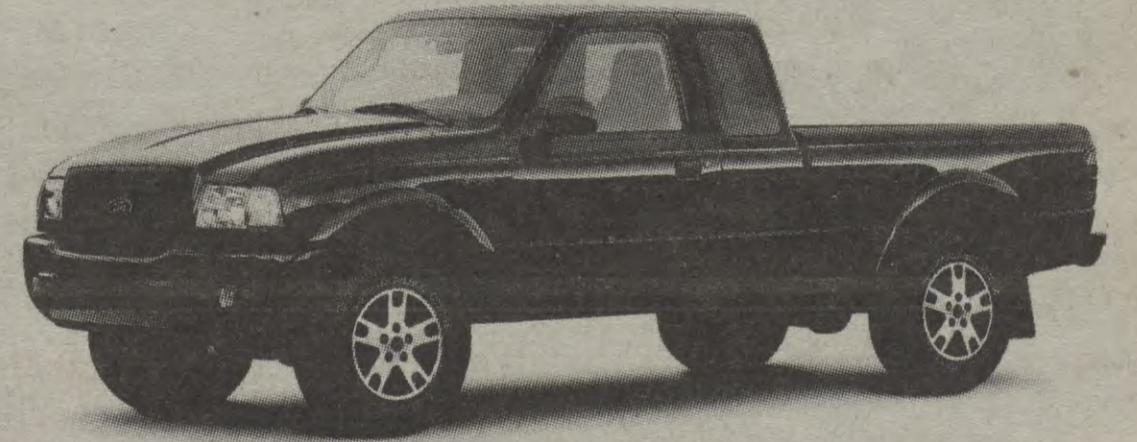
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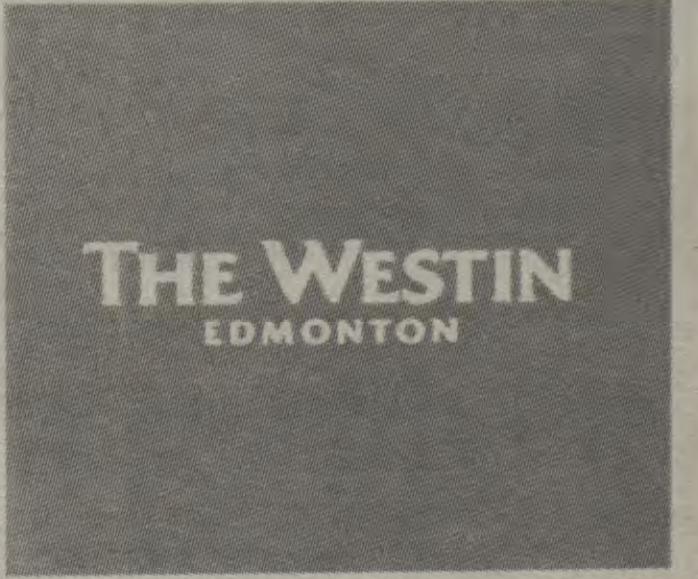
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# Samson decision causes outrage

By Paul Barnsley  
Windspeaker Staff Writer

## MONTREAL

The last judgement rendered by Federal Court Justice Max Teitelbaum will not be remembered fondly in Hobbema.

Two First Nations located around the central Alberta town — Samson Cree and Ermineskin Cree — filed suit in 1989 in what has become a gigantic legal action. The band councils are suing the federal government for approximately \$1.5 billion in oil and gas revenue that they allege was lost due to Crown mismanagement, discriminatory policy and breaches of Treaty 6.

The lawsuit is so large and complex it has been divided into several phases. After extensive pre-trial examinations of witnesses, the trial began in May 2000. Justice Teitelbaum spent the last six years hearing evidence on the first two phases of the trial. He rendered his decision on Dec. 2 and will soon retire from the bench. Another judge will have to get up to speed when the trial resumes. No judge has yet been appointed and no hearing dates have been scheduled.

Before that happens, the Federal Court of Appeal, and perhaps even the Supreme Court of Canada, will have to look over the judgement.

Samson Cree Nation lawyer James O'Reilly admits to being disillusioned and disappointed with Justice Teitelbaum's decision. *Windspeaker* spoke to the veteran lawyer by telephone from his

Montreal office on Dec. 20. The appeal was filed in Federal Court the next day.

"It hurts," he said. "It's very difficult to accept, not only as a lawyer, but as a person, and as a person who works for the treaty Indians. And I've tried to be in on the development of the fight for Indian rights for 40 years in 2006 and I say to myself, 'We're back before the days of 1969.' In a way it's worse. In 1969, we knew that people didn't make a pretense. They said Indian people don't have rights. They have privileges, and the treaties don't mean much. But now you've got the conventional wisdom, the residential schools, the royal commission that said they have the right to govern themselves and we should consider the treaties as something that was pretty essential in the building of this country and recognize that for what it is. There was supposed to be some kind of a partnership, even if one partner was far more powerful than the other: a partner's a partner, a brother's a brother. Now, it's paying lip service to recognition of basic treaty and fundamental rights and that's more dangerous because it's more hypocritical."

In order for an appeals court to agree to review a trial decision, the higher court must be convinced that the trial judge made errors of law. O'Reilly didn't think he'd have any problem meeting that requirement.

"We think there are over 100 errors at law that we're putting down as ground for appeal. We say he didn't follow the principles of interpretation for treaty set

*"It's very difficult to accept, not only as a lawyer, but as a person, and as a person who works for the treaty Indians. And I've tried to be in on the development of the fight for Indian rights for 40 years in 2006 and I say to myself, 'We're back before the days of 1969.' In a way it's worse. In 1969, we knew that people didn't make a pretense."*

—Lawyer James O'Reilly

down by the Supreme Court of Canada," he said.

O'Reilly said Justice Teitelbaum did not follow the Supreme Court's lead when it came to interpreting the treaty.

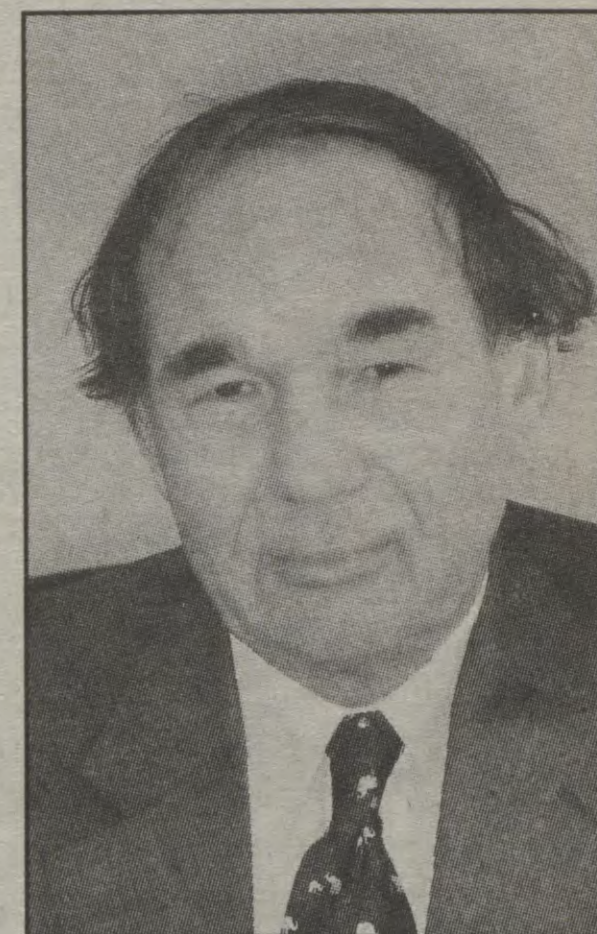
"The Supreme Court has been saying it's the common intention of the parties. It's not just what the white people understood. We're saying you have to go back to the very nature of the treaty. What was it? We're saying it's an oral and written treaty. It was an alliance. It was about how you're going to co-exist, how you're both going to live on the land," the lawyer said.

The written judgment focused on the surrender clause in the treaty. O'Reilly said the judge rejected his argument that Native people at the time would not have understood the significance of the legal language. Previous court decisions have created a standard that treaties should be interpreted liberally in favor of the Native people because of that problem.

O'Reilly suggested that didn't happen in this case.

"The judge put a lot of emphasis on this legalese clause. It's one thing to say that the Indians give up exclusive control—and I think they knew that—and that the white people would be coming in. It's another thing to tell them, 'you have no more rights from a legal perspective whatsoever on this land except what we give to you.' I mean, it takes a trained lawyer now to be able to explain to lay people even the beginnings of what is this thing called Aboriginal rights or Aboriginal title or sui generis rights and what does that mean in law," he said.

"There's no mention in even the written record of somebody having explained specifically, 'what does this written clause in the treaty mean: surrender, yield up, give up all their rights and title and interest to the lands?' So it's quite obvious that there



were very different intentions, very different understandings about what was to be done."

Writings at the time by the Crown treaty negotiator suggest that other Indigenous peoples who had previously entered into treaty would have explained the concept of surrender and complete loss of rights, and [that] the Plains Cree ancestors of the Samson Cree Nation knew what they were signing.

"Well, that's a tremendous leap of logic," O'Reilly said.

He said that reasoning just won't stand up to analysis.

"If you had today the Canadians and, let's say, the Chinese, neither able to speak the other's language and just going by interpreters and you say, 'Well, what is the exact meaning of a highly technical clause?' How much do you think either of them would have in the way of an absolute common understanding about some written text?"

(see Samson page 12.)

# One person, one vote for grassroots

By Paul Barnsley  
Windspeaker Staff Writer

## OTTAWA

If things work out just right, grassroots people could, for the very first time, cast their vote for national chief this July.

"That's what we're hoping is going to happen," said Assembly of First Nations (AFN) renewal commission co-chair Wendy Grant-John at a press conference held in Ottawa shortly after the report was presented to the chiefs in December.

"It's going to take a monumental effort to hold a national election. We have had preliminary discussions with Elections Canada. We have a model which we believe is workable and cost-efficient," added co-chair Joe Miskokomon. "We are suggesting that, with the exclusion of northern Canada, that every First Nation have their own polling station."

Off-reserve residents would be able to cast their votes at the local friendship centre, if an agreement can be worked out between the

AFN and the National Association of Friendship Centres.

"We're also talking about mail-in ballots. One of the greatest challenges we're going to have with that will be: how do we get people's actual addresses," Miskokomon said. "We look very much toward Elections Canada to give us ideas on that. It's not outside the realm of possibility that this could happen by next summer. After all, the federal government had 53 days to prepare for an election. We've got six months."

The chiefs all got a copy of the AFN renewal report when it was unveiled on Dec. 7 in Ottawa. A special assembly with the report, entitled *A Treaty Among Ourselves*, as the sole agenda item is scheduled to be held in February.

The chiefs will debate just how much of the \$2 million, 180-page report they want to see adopted. They will have 47 recommendations to consider.

Aside from allowing grassroots people to vote for the national chief, a number of other major changes have been proposed. The twice a year Confederacy of

Nations meetings would be scrapped under the proposal. Chiefs would gather for the annual general meeting, usually held in July, and for special assemblies as required.

To eliminate the regional differences that have paralyzed the organization at times, the renewal commission proposed the creation of a new body within the AFN. Grant-John said a body with clearly defined responsibility for national issues can help the AFN escape the political gridlock that comes when different regions require different approaches on basic issues.

The national agenda, she said, could continue under the stewardship of the nationally elected national chief while the regional chiefs could still take the approach required in their region on local issues. Critics of the assembly have pointed out in the past that regional chiefs have no national mandate, yet they sit on the national executive and make decisions on national issues.

"One of the recommendations we're making is that we have a national council," said Grant-John. "And that council will have a national agenda. One of the

issues is the idea of the regional chiefs having a priority driven by their chiefs that's more regional in scope other than to work with the national chief in a national agenda. So we're trying to address it from that perspective so that the national council does have that responsibility. And the national chief very clearly does have the authority to be the person at the lead for that national council."

She said that critics who say the charter requires that the national chief represent the chiefs rather than be their leader are missing the point of what the job entails.

"I think when you call it a spokesperson, it's a misrepresentation of what the responsibility really is. It's much more than just a spokesperson. That's a given by the chiefs themselves and so we've tried to change the charter to put a little more into that area for the national chief," she said.

The report also calls for the creation of a First Nation auditor general and a First Nations Ombudsman. There might be some confusion since the

agreement reached during the first ministers' meeting in Kelowna in late November 2005 also called for the creation of a First Nations auditor general. The national chief said having two plans probably won't present a problem.

"This is a recommendation and it's quite conceivable that these two ideas will become one idea," he said.

Talks with the defeated Liberal government were progressing on this issue. It's hard to say right now if those talks will continue under the new Harper government.

"The discussions we've had among ourselves and with the Treasury Board President Reg Alcock and the auditor general have been a more broadly based undertaking than is described in the [renewal] report," Fontaine explained. "We're going to proceed with further discussions. It'll be a First Nations' institution but completely independent from the Assembly of First Nations."

Grant-John said the First Nation auditor general would enforce the new accountability measures included in the report. (see Renewal page 19.)



Which will prevail?

# Reform or Progressive influence

By Paul Barnsley  
Windspeaker Staff Writer

OTTAWA

Prime Minister-elect Stephen Harper will soon get to sit at the big desk. What that will mean for Aboriginal people is still very much a mystery. But given the history of the Reform Party's approach to Aboriginal issues and the influence enjoyed in Harper's Conservative party by former Reformers, Aboriginal leaders are worried.

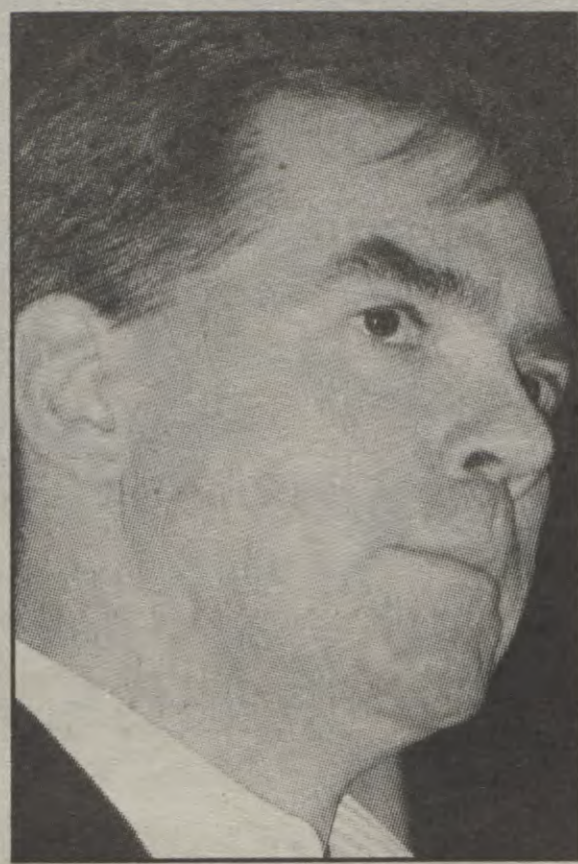
Monte Solberg, one of the many leftover Reform Party of Canada members in the new government's caucus, pried open the industrial strength cone of silence that the Conservative Party of Canada had imposed on its candidates for most of the campaign just long enough to throw everything into confusion.

In an interview with CJWW Radio in Saskatchewan, Solberg derided the agreement on Aboriginal issues reached at the first ministers meeting in November 2005.

"[The] Kelowna agreement is something that they crafted at the last moment on the back of a napkin on the eve of an election. We're not going to honor that. We will have our own plan that will help Natives a lot more than the Liberals."

The problem is, the Conservative's Indian Affairs critic, a former Progressive Conservative party member Jim Prentice, had already stated that his party supported the Kelowna agreement.

He did so when he addressed the



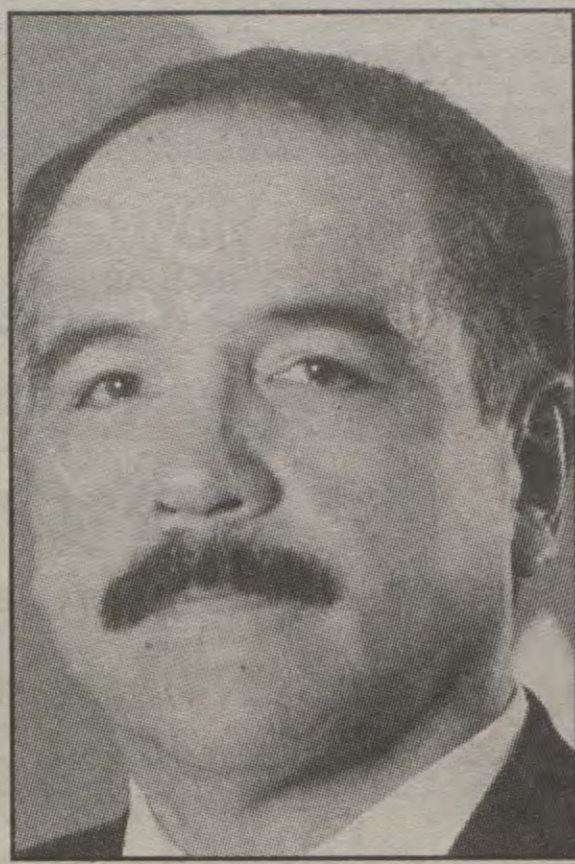
Jim Prentice

chiefs at the Assembly of First Nations special assembly in early December and he repeated that position in meetings with alarmed First Nation leaders after Solberg made his comments.

After that, the biggest question was—and will continue to be—which ideology will be applied to federal Indian policy: Prentice's or Solberg's? Reform or Progressive Conservative?

The First Nation and Metis leadership, seeing their world threatened by the Conservative party's rise, urged their members to vote. The AFN was cagey, telling their citizens to vote for the party with the best Aboriginal platform. Several Metis groups came right out and endorsed the Liberals.

The biggest concern was that Harper was not unreservedly endorsing the first ministers meeting agreement and the recently negotiated residential school compensation agreement.



Dwight Dorey

British Columbia chiefs issued a harsh rebuke to Solberg after he made his comments. In a press release with the title "Conservative Party Declares War on Aboriginal People," Penticton Indian Band Chief Stewart Phillip took aim at the Medicine Hat MP.

"I am completely shocked and deeply angered to learn that a Stephen Harper government would simply rip up the hard-fought historic agreement, which represents a \$5.1 billion investment commitment to Canada's Aboriginal population," Phillip said. "We take great offence to the arrogant notion that these comprehensive 10-year goals and objectives were scribbled on the back of a napkin at the last moment. Nothing could be further from the truth. The proposals discussed at the Kelowna first ministers meeting were the result of nearly two years of nationwide consultations and conferences."

Phillip, who has gone from a hard line chief to a key participant in the BC First Nations Leadership Council, warned that his people's hopes had been raised in Kelowna and there would be consequences if they were disappointed.

"In the event that the Conservative Party of Canada forms government and completely reneges on the commitments made at the Kelowna first ministers meeting, it will essentially represent a declaration of war on the Aboriginal people of Canada. Simply put, it will be 'back to the barricades.' Rather than enjoying a decade of respect and reconciliation, we shall be faced with the grim reality of a decade of conflict and confrontation," he said.

The best clue as to how the new government would approach Aboriginal issues is a letter written by Harper to Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP) leader Dwight Dorey. After reading the letter, Dorey surprised many by endorsing the Conservatives. He pointed out that it was an endorsement by the CAP national executive and was not binding on the regional affiliates. At least one of those affiliates, the United Native Nations based in Vancouver, publicly criticized the move. A number of Metis people wrote letters to this publication saying that CAP very definitely did not speak for them.

The eight-page response to CAP, signed by Harper, makes many commitments.

The leader said his party "agrees with the objective of reducing Aboriginal poverty within a five to 10-year plan, as was mentioned

at the first ministers meeting in Kelowna."

Harper added that his party intends to amend Section 67 of the Human Rights Act so that it will apply on reserves and to do something concrete about "the problems relating to matrimonial rights" on reserve.

He said the gray areas in provincial-federal jurisdiction will be more clearly defined.

"Canada needs policies and programs to alleviate Aboriginal poverty that are grounded in common sense and the acceptance of responsibility. It is time for the federal government to quit 'passing the buck' and it is time for everyone to accept their share of responsibility: the federal government, Aboriginal government, the provincial governments and individual Canadians—both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal," Harper wrote. "A Conservative government will acknowledge its jurisdiction for basic programs and services to 'Indians and lands reserved for Indians.' Legislation will be enacted in the main program areas. Ottawa will become responsible for results, ending four decades of service gaps and offloading costs onto the provinces. Legislation will provide a proper basis for accountability at departmental and First Nations levels. The existing financial transfer agreements will be replaced with ones that work."

Harper said his party "realizes that the treaties did not place all the obligations upon the Indians; the Crown took on obligations of its own."

(see Conflicting page 10.)

## Metis feel threatened by new government

By Paul Barnsley  
Windspeaker Staff Writer

WINNIPEG

The leader of the Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF), David Chartrand, received an e-mail from a Member of Parliament on Jan. 12.

"I am disappointed that you would take a partisan position in this federal election, as you have in the last one," wrote Inky Mark, the Conservative Party of Canada member for Dauphin-Swan River. "Speaking to Metis people in my riding, I am told that the MMF constitution demands that MMF stay neutral politically. As you know, taking sides will hurt you and your organization, sooner or later."

Chartrand took that as a threat. He said he's done nothing to violate the MMF constitution.

"He's wrong in his statement about my constitution. The constitution states it is my duty to advise and educate Metis people on the politics of municipal, provincial and federal. It is our duty and that's why we've challenged the parties to write



down their platform as it pertains to Metis issues," he told *Windspeaker* on Jan. 18.

The constitution does say that the MMF cannot affiliate with any mainstream party.

"He's trying to dance on the affiliation part. This is not affiliating with the Liberal party. I have not taken the federation to join the Liberal party. What we've done is endorsed the platform, which is the best platform. We evaluated and we rated them and, by far, the Liberal's came in first," he said. "The Conservatives, in the two

*"I think their plan is exactly what Thomas Flanagan has always said, that it was the biggest mistake to put the Metis people in the Constitution and we should just be assimilated into the rest of society and we should not even exist as a people. It's very clear the influence of Flanagan, although he comes from the United States and he's got a right-wing mentality that is a major influence on Stephen Harper, given their closeness."*

—David Chartrand

elections now since we've started this process, will not put anything in writing as it pertains to Metis people. They just won't."

Chartrand and other Metis leaders are extremely concerned about the Conservatives. They note that Prime Minister-elect Stephen Harper responded in detail to inquiries made by the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples, which advocates for the interests of off-reserve, non-status and some Metis people, and with less detail to the Assembly of First Nations, the organization of First Nation chiefs.

The leaders know that Harper depends upon the advice of University of Calgary professor of history and author Thomas Flanagan, who has written disparagingly of the Metis' status as an Aboriginal people. He has also written a scathing—to Metis eyes — biography of Louis Riel. Since the Conservative Party of Canada has not been forthright on its Metis policy, the leaders suspect the party has something unpleasant planned for them once it is in power.

"I think their plan is exactly what Thomas Flanagan has always said,

that it was the biggest mistake to put the Metis people in the Constitution and we should just be assimilated into the rest of society and we should not even exist as a people. It's very clear the influence of Flanagan, although he comes from the United States and he's got a right-wing mentality that is a major influence on Stephen Harper, given their closeness. That has a great influence on what's taking place where we're completely ignored," said Chartrand.

Once the local media took up the story, Mark, who did not respond to *Windspeaker's* attempts to reach him for comment, said his warning was meant to be a little friendly advice to the Metis.

Chartrand doesn't buy that for a second.

"If he's so concerned about the Metis, why didn't he raise the issue in Montreal at the Conservative convention when they were creating policy and in particular the Aboriginal policy. They completely left out the Metis. Here's an MP saying, 'I've got a lot of Metis in my riding. I'm concerned about them. I respect and support and fight for them.'"

(see Disgruntled page 11.)



# Harper tough to pin down on Native issues

By Paul Barnsley  
Windspeaker Staff Writer

OTTAWA

With the Liberals in opposition and Prime Minister Paul Martin about to hand over power and then step aside as party leader, the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) faces the prospect of having to construct a new relationship with the Prime Minister's Office and the federal government.

So far, AFN National Chief Phil Fontaine, whose greatest political advantage has been his access to and influence on federal Liberal ministers and the prime minister, has only been communicating with Prime Minister-elect Stephen Harper through open letters and meetings with Conservative party officials.

To be fair to Fontaine, he was not the only person having trouble getting a face-to-face meeting with

Harper. He scheduled his first press conference after being elected for Jan. 26 (after *Windspeaker's* publication deadline). For three days after the polls closed, Harper refused to speak to reporters. He huddled with his advisors, selecting his cabinet and preparing for the transition to power.

And the Conservative Party of Canada was very disciplined during the campaign, making sure that no candidate would say anything that might eat into their slim lead in the polls. There were several media reports of candidates with right-wing views on issues such as gay rights, abortion and other hot button issues being kept away from reporters. In one case it was reported that a journalist was physically restrained from approaching a Conservative candidate who had expressed hard line views in the past.

(see Relationship page 13.)

## Conflicting statements

(Continued from page 9.)

And Stephen Harper pledged to take a look at the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples.

"The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples was established to help restore justice to the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in Canada, and to propose practical solutions to structural problems. The Conservative Party of Canada will act on these recommendations."

He promised to review how off-reserve residents receive services.

"The Conservative Party of Canada believes that the ratio for funding on-reserve and off-reserve programs and services should reflect the needs expressed by Aboriginal communities. We believe that there needs to be a realignment of federal Aboriginal expenditures to include appropriate and adequate distribution of resources in order to accommodate the needs of off-reserve and non-status Indians. We are prepared to discuss the current ratio with the interested

parties in order to assure that this funding is directed towards the needs of Aboriginal communities."

Harper let it be known that his party will work towards improved governance and even raised the spectre of the First Nations Governance act.

"The election of Aboriginal governments, and the accountability of those governments to those who elect them, must be governed by an election code, a governance framework, and accountability obligations that are comparable to those enjoyed by other Canadian citizens under the rule of law," he wrote. "The Conservative Party of Canada will work in consultation and collaboration with Aboriginal Canadians to develop this framework. We support the efforts that have been made at the reform of Aboriginal affairs since the Canada-Aboriginal Peoples Roundtable in April 2004. In the past, the First Nations Governance act was a strong pillar to advance the important reforms and we strongly support this bill."

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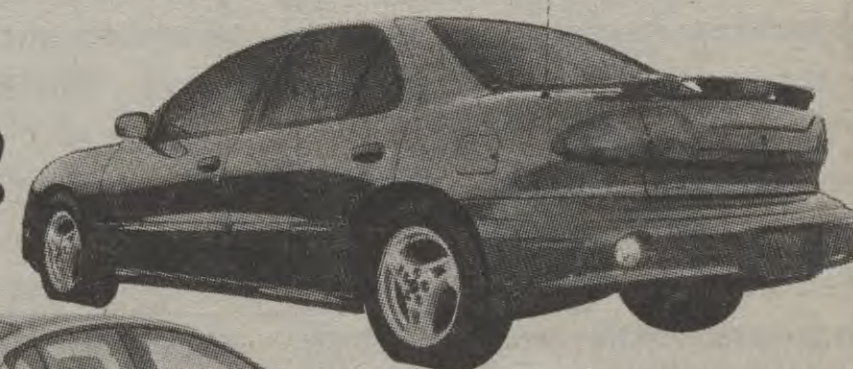


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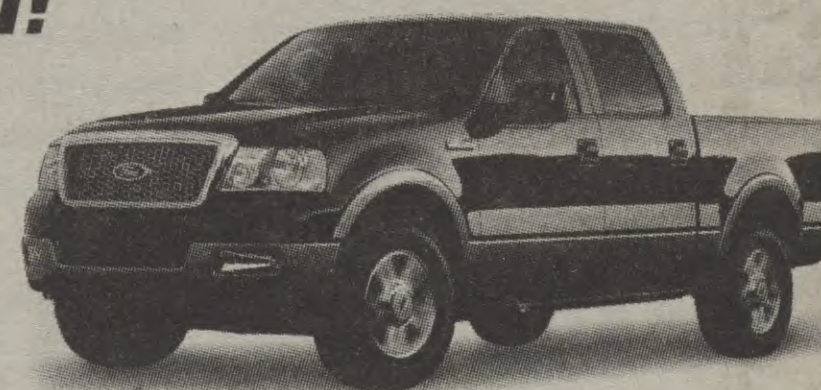


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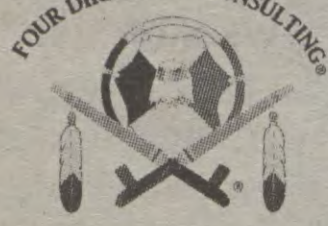
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## Disgruntled Aboriginal(?) leader

(Continued from page 9.)

Yet (Inky Mark) did not raise a whisper or send an e-mail to Flanagan or Harper or [Conservative Aboriginal Affairs critic Jim] Prentice saying, 'Wait a minute here. How come the Metis are left out? Why would we leave them out? They're in the Constitution of this country,' David Chartrand said.

Mark told CBC he was advising the MMF "don't bite the hand that feeds you," Chartrand said.

"What does that mean?" he asked.

The CBC reporter, Chartrand said, asked if an e-mail offering the same advice would be sent to the Congress of Aboriginal People who had just endorsed the Conservatives. He said, "No."

Chartrand said that punishing your political enemies is the same as rewarding your political friends, which is what got the Liberals into so much trouble in the sponsorship scandal.

"That's the missing link for Canadians. We've not seen really who these people are. They've been told to be silent, to lay low, lay quiet, wait till this election's over. Then you can speak. Meantime, don't say a word. Only Stephen Harper will speak. And when one of them comes out you can see how far-reaching their right-wing approach is and it's sometimes threatening," Chartrand said.

First Nation leaders were worried at the time that a split

between the Reform Party faction and the Progressive Conservative factions of the new Conservatives were showing after former Reformer Medicine Hat MP Monte Solberg differed publicly with former PC member Jim Prentice over the Kelowna first ministers agreement.

The Metis leader fears the Reform point of view will emerge victorious now that the Conservatives have been given a mandate to govern.

"I think there's going to be a major clash between the two sooner or later. The Reform, right now, have more of the power base. They proved that by electing Stephen Harper leader over traditional Conservatives," he said.

Many gains have been made by the Metis people recently and Chartrand worries that Flanagan will try to push back that progress in order to protect his own reputation.

"It's obvious that you have a person there who has a clear agenda to fight us with all his vigor to ensure that we will not exist as a people. If we continue on the path where we have been successful, through the courts and through negotiation, then everything he's written has been wrong. Flanagan doesn't want to admit that all his writings are basically smoke and mirrors. So I think that's probably something he's trying to back up and protect at the same time," he said.

Chartrand wanted to know if

Mark or any Conservative member gave mainstream groups the same warning or advice about allying with other parties.

We asked one of the most high-profile groups in the country, the Canadian Auto Workers Union (CAW), whose president Buzz Hargrove campaigned hard against the Conservatives, if they had received any similar messages.

"No one from the Harper camp has threatened us," said Jim Pare, director of communications for the CAW. "I don't think there's much they could threaten us with. They know we would go public with it."

The perceived threat bothered the MMF leader, but not as much as the lack of a Metis policy.

"I asked Inky Mark, 'Why don't you give me your Metis platform and I'll deliver it to my people.' But he didn't because they don't have one. According to them I don't exist and I shouldn't exist," he said.

An exchange he had with Prentice has him on alert now that the Conservatives have been elected.

"I challenged Prentice on Flanagan after Kelowna. He said, 'Flanagan doesn't write our policy, I do.' So I challenged him further. 'If you write the policy, why did you exclude us?' He said, 'I'm not responsible for the Metis file.' I said, 'I thought you're the Aboriginal affairs critic.'"

That leaves one other very important question, he said.

"Are they saying we're not Aboriginal?"

## Tourney's success sparks expansion discussions

By Sam Laskaris  
Windspeaker Contributor

### YELLOWKNIFE

The third annual First Nations Cup was staged Dec. 16 to 18, 2005 in this northern city, and following on another successful year of men's hockey, organizers have voiced their lofty aspirations for the tournament.

"Our goal is to grow on a national scale," said Greg Hopf, a First Nations Cup director. "Our goal in three to five years is to be one of the biggest tournaments in Canada."

The recent event attracted a total of 14 teams. Eight squads took part in the senior men's category, which featured players 17 and over. And an additional six clubs competed in the masters division, restricted to those 35 and over.

"It was a huge success, for all of the north, especially the Northwest Territories," Hopf said.

Organizers had expected about 1,000 spectators during the course of the tournament and were delighted that 2,000 people came out to watch the action.

It marked the first time teams from outside the Northwest

Territories took part. A pair of clubs from Alberta were among those that participated in the senior men's division. The Fort Simpson Thunder won in that category. The Thunder beat the Fort Providence Bulls 10-6 in the championship match.

The Bulls' roster included defenceman Clayton Norris, one of the former professional hockey players that competed in the tournament.

Though he was drafted by the Philadelphia Flyers in 1991, Norris never played in the NHL. He did, however, toil for various squads in the minor pro ranks in the American Hockey League, East Coast Hockey League and the defunct International Hockey League.

Norris concluded his pro playing days by spending three seasons in England.

Besides playing in the tournament, Norris also ran a coaches clinic held in conjunction with the event.

Former NHL player and coach Ted Nolan had operated the clinic at the 2004 tournament, but was not available to return to this year as he is now coaching the Moncton Wildcats in the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League.

Another former pro who

competed in the tournament was Brent Dodginghorse. After spending his junior days with the Western Hockey League's Calgary Hitmen, Dodginghorse played two seasons of pro in the East Coast Hockey League, suiting up for the Johnstown Chiefs and Pensacola Ice Pilots.

At the First Nations Cup, Dodginghorse played for the Gw'ichin Flames, a squad based out of Fort McPherson, N.W.T.

As for the masters' division, the East Three Rebels defended their crown by thumping the Diavik Denes 9-2 in their gold-medal contest. The Diavik club was a combined squad of players from Fort Resolution and Lutselke.

Hopf said organizers realize what they have to do to make their tournament even more attractive to clubs outside the Northwest Territories.

"It's so tough for teams to get up here," he said. "We're going to have to increase our prize money. Give us a few years and we should be able to do that."

At this year's event the total prize purse was \$18,000. The winning teams in both divisions took home \$4,000 each. Both squads also received a free entry (worth \$1,000) into next year's tournament.



# Samson lawyer critical of judge's take

(Continued from page 8.)

But Justice Max Teitelbaum rejected that line of reasoning in his written judgment.

"The judge just jumps and says they had an interpreter and he knew what he was doing and the missionaries said this and the Indian stories of what happened, the judge says it's implausible. What is implausible? It's a highly European driven notion to say that you don't believe the accounts of these people when it's mixed with the spiritual dimension and the whole Indian understanding," said James O'Reilly. "It comes down to a clash of philosophies too. For the Indian people, you can't own the sun and the moon and the stars and the land and you're only here for a certain time. Then you get the British coming in and saying, 'We can own a piece of property.' The judge is supposed to take the Aboriginal perspective into consideration. Instead the result is that he demeans the Aboriginal perspective and gives no real effect to what they had to say."

Samson Cree Chief Victor Buffalo issued an angrily worded press release after reviewing the decision. He felt the judge not only disregarded the testimony of Samson Elders but was insulting in how he did so. O'Reilly agreed.

"We're saying the judge simply went with the white man's side and in effect, I'll use the word 'disparaged,' was highly dubious about and highly critical about the Indian side. That's one of the grounds for appeal. He gave very, very, very little weight or credibility to almost all of the 38 witnesses that were called whether they were Elders or Plains Cree witnesses or Samson witnesses or experts called by Samson. Whereas the written accounts of the white people, their word was gold and they should be totally believed. It boggles my mind that you can get one side of the story and really he's dismissive of the other side of the story."

O'Reilly was equally as outraged about the decision rendered in the monies phase of the action.

"We said under treaty they have the right to the monies, to the resources, and the Crown, the federal government in this case, is the trustee. By simply taking that money and putting it into the consolidated revenue fund and borrowing that money without the permission of Samson and all the other Indians in the country and unilaterally setting a rate of interest, we say they're not acting either as a treaty

partner or as a trustee. We say it's supposed to be for the best interests of Samson and for their benefit. The Crown as a trustee has to act as a prudent person would in managing his own affairs."

O'Reilly believes the appeal court will see that he made the argument that the Crown did not fulfill its fiduciary duty.

"They just put this whole thing on automatic pilot and very few white people would accept that. The government itself changed a relatively similar system used to finance the pension funds in 1999. This judge finds the system is reasonable and therefore he doesn't have to consider the testimony. And it's reasonable, he finds, because the Indian Act says it's OK. So he bases his whole judgment on the Indian Act in regard to monies."

If the Indian Act is supreme then most arguments made in support of Indigenous rights in Canada are doomed to fail, O'Reilly said. But there have been a string of victories at the highest court in the land because that kind of thinking has been discarded, O'Reilly added.

"He's saying the Indian Act prevails over the treaties and that Indian rights really come as a function of the Indian Act and federal legislation. Well, we're back to well before the White Paper days. We tried to get the evidence by ministers about it being colonial, oppressive. That's all in there and the judge even mentions that."

Samson's legal team will challenge that part of the ruling as well.

"We say he's wrong — dead wrong — on his interpretation of the Indian Act," O'Reilly said.

While several former ministers of Indian Affairs and some of Canada's leading investment bankers and financial experts testified on Samson's behalf and criticized the way the Crown handled the Samson oil and gas revenues, the judge ruled that what the Crown did fell within the limits prescribed by the Indian Act.

"What this judge essentially said is the Indian Act is a reasonable way of handling the money. He doesn't discuss how it's reasonable. He just discards some of the most imminent financial people in Canada who testified on behalf of Samson," he said. "And he just says it's not necessary to judge the standards of a trustee because the Indian Act allows them to do whatever they want, gives them full discretion. Well, we're back in the days of the

colonial empire here."

Justice Teitelbaum refused to allow the report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples into evidence because it was "a political document." O'Reilly said the Supreme Court has relied on it.

O'Reilly said Justice Teitelbaum was visibly uncomfortable during the trial whenever the idea of inherent rights were raised. He argued that the judge's understanding of inherent rights is not consistent with how the federal government's position on the right to self-government has evolved.

"He comes down in his judgment and there's a part where he says there's no inherent right to control their own lands and resources," the lawyer said. "What do you hear in Ottawa? Have you even heard this in the last 15 or 20 years where Ottawa

is saying 'You don't have a right to control your own lands and resources?'"

O'Reilly also questions the weight the judge gave to some of the testimony from expert witnesses.

When he appeared for the Crown, University of Calgary history professor Thomas Flanagan was forced under cross-examination to admit that he used sloppy research methods to formulate his opinions on some of the First Nations issues the court was wrestling with. Flanagan is a man who has become a much talked about figure recently because he is an advisor to prime minister-elect Stephen Harper.

"We thought that a lot of his testimony was subjected to a lot of doubt and his credibility was compromised considerably by some of the cross-examination. Well, the judge does rely on him,"

O'Reilly said. "He relies on Flanagan. He [is critical of], in my view, one of the key witnesses and that is the Cree linguist. Now if you were a judge and you've heard about these differences of concept and perception between the Cree and English, well you'd want to know something about the Cree language wouldn't you? You'd want to know how do they think and how do they conceptualize things like land. This judge went after Professor Wolfart, who speaks a very high Cree. He's not fluent, but he speaks it and he can articulate the Cree words."

O'Reilly speculates that the judge's ruling might have surprised even the Crown, who made an offer to settle just before the judge completely dismissed the Samson claims.

"Why did they offer close to \$200 million just before?" the lawyer asked.



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The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) has issued an official Notice of Public Hearing, available at [www.nuclearsafety.gc.ca](http://www.nuclearsafety.gc.ca), that it will hold a one-day public hearing on the application by COGEMA Resources Inc. to extend the scope of its Mining Equipment Development (MED) Program at the McClean Lake Uranium Mine and Mill Operation in Northern Saskatchewan. The hearing will be held in the CNSC Public Hearing Room, 14<sup>th</sup> floor, 280 Slater Street, Ottawa, Ontario, on **March 30, 2006**.

Persons who wish to participate must file a request to intervene with the Secretary of the Commission by February 27, 2006. Hearing documents (submissions) are not available on-line and must be requested through the Secretariat at the address below. For more information, instructions on how to participate in this public hearing process or the complete text of the official Notice of Public Hearing, see [www.nuclearsafety.gc.ca](http://www.nuclearsafety.gc.ca), and refer to Notice of Public Hearing 2006-H-03, or contact:

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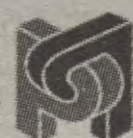
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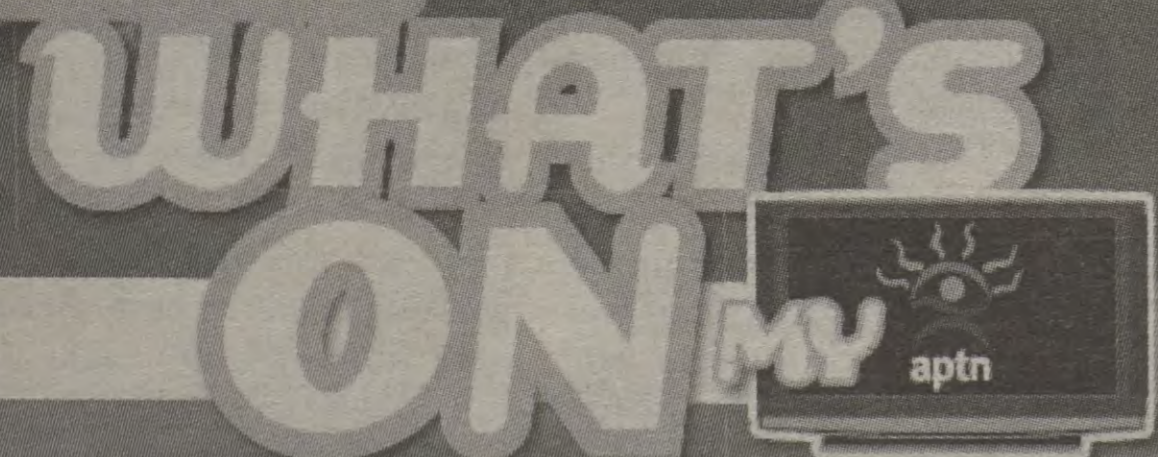
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## Windspeaker's Special Section Serving the Aboriginal People of Ontario

### Grassroots get a say at conference

By **CHERYL PETTEN**  
Birchbark Writer

#### THUNDER BAY

For three days in January, people from across Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) territory gathered in Thunder Bay to learn about Treaty 9 and to share their ideas about how to realize the rights guaranteed by the treaty document.

"Treaty 9 has two versions," explained NAN Grand Chief Stan Beardy. "One, the written text that was brought by the commissioners when they came to do a treaty with us, with explicit directions from Canada and Ontario not to alter it. So there was no negotiations whatsoever of that written text. However, a hundred years ago ... none of our people could read English, could not talk English, weren't familiar with the values of the outside world, the materialism of the outside world. And then they had to rely on their understanding of the verbal translations by the interpreters. So as a result, it

became very important 100 years later that we develop our positions on that treaty making from our perspective. And that's what we did ... to clarify that for our purposes right across the Nishnawbe Aski Nation."

The conference, Beardy said, was about helping NAN set its agenda for achieving the rights guaranteed not in the written version of the treaty, but in the First Nation understanding of the spirit and intent of the treaty. That involved looking at political and legal options, and trying to come up with ways to mobilize the Nishnawbe Aski people to begin to assert those rights.

The conference was well attended, with a wide cross section of people taking part—youth, Elders, women and chiefs among them. Those who couldn't attend the conference still had an opportunity to listen in on the first day of proceedings, which were broadcast live on Wawatay Radio.

(See Conference page 4.)



JEFF SPEED

The Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto held a ceremonial opening of its new Gallery of Canada: First Peoples on Jan. 18. The gallery, which opened to the public on Dec. 26, is the new permanent home of the museum's collection of more than 1,000 items showcasing the culture and diversity of Canada's Aboriginal people. Alan Moore, Norma Morgan, Mary Moore and Chester Moore of the Nisga'a Nation in B.C. performed traditional songs during the gallery's official opening.

### Aboriginal leaders ready to work with Conservatives

By **CHERYL PETTEN**  
Birchbark Writer

#### THUNDER BAY

It's out with the old and in with the new on Parliament Hill, as Stephen Harper and the Conservatives prepare to form Canada's next federal government. Across the country, Aboriginal leaders are also in preparation mode, gearing up to work with the new regime and hoping Harper will honor promises made by the Liberal government prior to the Jan. 23 election, most notably the compensation package for residential school survivors announced in November and the 10 year, \$5 billion plan to improve the lives of Aboriginal people that came out of the first ministers conference in Kelowna.

The election saw the Conservatives earning 124 seats, well under the 155 they would need to win to form a majority government. The Liberals won 103 seats, the Bloc Quebecois took 51 and the NDP were victorious in 29 ridings. One independent candidate from Quebec was also elected.

The Liberals remained the party of choice in Ontario, winning 54 seats to the

Conservatives 40. The remainder of the province's ridings were won by the NDP, who will be sending 12 MPs from Ontario to the House of Commons.

Some in the Aboriginal community had painted a Conservative win as a doom and gloom scenario during the election campaign. Now that it has become a reality, many Aboriginal leaders seem cautiously optimistic about the change in government.

Ontario Regional Chief Angus Toulouse said he wasn't surprised with the Conservative win, believing the Canadian people had a number of reasons to want a change in Ottawa.

"We've gone through the Gomery inquiry and certainly any time the government has demonstrated that kind of trust issue with the Canadian public, I think generally speaking you'll see a change."

What's unfortunate about the change, Toulouse said, is the uncertainty about what impact it will have on the progress made by Aboriginal people under the former government.

"I guess that's really the questionable part now, is how do they view those accomplishments. And I guess

what I'm referring to is the first ministers meeting outcomes and also the residential school agreement. And an earlier accord that was signed with the Liberal government back in May that speaks of a new way of doing business. Hopefully those aren't lost and the incoming government will recognize those as things that any government would want to accomplish with the First Nation leadership in Canada," he said.

"I'm certainly not going to prejudge the Conservative government. If they had a majority government I may have a different outlook. Seeing as it is a fairly close minority, I think there's the sense that people do have to find a way to work together and this is what I'm banking on, that they will want to work and they do recognize, I believe, that the Liberal government, along with the premiers, arrived at some of the outcomes of the first ministers meeting ... This showed some commitment on the part of the federal government to begin addressing the huge gap that's there between First Nations people and the Canadian people in general.

"I'm really hoping that they do see it as a priority, that they do commit to it in the budget and that we do get going on some of the initiatives that were spoken of. And certainly addressing the health issues of First Nations communities, the education, the infrastructure and those kinds of things that are really needed to be addressed."

During the election campaign, Harper and the Conservative Party spoke of their commitment to working with First Nations people, Toulouse said. Now that the campaign is over and the Conservatives are in power, he hopes they meant what they said.

"I sincerely hope that they are sincere in what they've said leading up to the election, that they do want to work with us. They do want to continue to consult with First Nations before they develop policies that are going to affect us and legislation that will affect us. So I hope they do mean what they say."

While the Metis National Council, the national association of Canada's Metis people, had urged its membership to throw its support behind the Liberal Party, portraying a Conservative win as a serious threat to Metis

rights, Tony Belcourt, president of the Metis Nation of Ontario (MNO) doesn't expect things to change much for the Metis people in Ontario under a Conservative government.

"I don't think we're headed to extreme change for a number of reasons. First of all, it's a minority government, so it doesn't have the kind of freedoms that it might have if it were a majority. It will still need to depend on the opposition parties to pass legislation and to remain in government. And both the Liberals and the NDP have been very supportive of Aboriginal issues, and for that matter so has the Bloc. So I don't think we're in for sweeping change, politically, because of that. But also, legally, there's a reality that Aboriginal peoples have constitutional rights and there's a special relationship that Aboriginal peoples have with the Crown. Or rather, to put it another way, special responsibilities that the Crown has for Aboriginal peoples. And it cannot ignore or cannot turn back the many, many decisions of the Supreme Court of Canada on Aboriginal rights since the Sparrow decision in 1991."

(See Minority page 4.)



# Workshops to help link youth and volunteer sector

By CHERYL PETTEN  
Birchbark Writer

OTTAWA

The First Nations Child and Family Caring Society (FNCFCFS) is looking for First Nations youth from across the country to get involved in Caring Across the Boundaries: Youth Focus, a two-day workshop designed to help create understanding and co-operation between youth and the volunteer sector organizations that are there to serve them.

The society is inviting First Nations youth 15 to 30 to apply for a chance to co-host a workshop in their community. With the assistance of FNCFCFS staff, the successful applicants will help organize the session, help run the workshop and help put together the list of individuals and agencies that will be invited.

The youth program is an adaptation of a series of workshops co-ordinated by the society in 2004 and 2005. Those workshops were aimed at building relationships between First Nations child and family service agencies and the voluntary sector.

Caring Across the Boundaries grew out of some research done by the FNCFCFS in 2003, explained Jacqueline Ramdatt, co-ordinator of the program.

"The main outcome was that there was very little collaboration between First Nations child and family service agencies and voluntary sector

*"What was really needed was mutual education because these voluntary sector agencies really didn't have a sense of what the issues were facing children and families on reserve and likewise, a lot of the First Nations agencies didn't know what the voluntary sector agencies did or what services they could provide and which ones even existed in their area."*

— Jacqueline Ramdatt

agencies on reserve. But what was also positive was that it was found that both the voluntary sector and First Nations agencies on reserve were really wanting to collaborate," Ramdatt said.

"What was really needed was mutual education because these voluntary sector agencies really didn't have a sense of what the issues were facing children and families on reserve and likewise, a lot of the First Nations agencies didn't know what the voluntary sector agencies did or what services they could provide and which ones even existed in their area. And so these workshops were developed as an opportunity to provide mutual education and networking opportunities and also a way to come together to identify ways to overcome some of the barriers that were brought up, such as time,

distance, lack of knowledge, that sort of thing. And also it's a place where people can start the preliminary development of collaborative initiatives."

The six workshops that were held in 2004 and 2005 resulted in a number of agencies developing closer ties. For example, Xyolhmeylh Child and Family Services and Scouts Canada in Vancouver have come together to talk developing a mentorship program for First Nations children and youth, and Scouts Canada in Dorval, Que. is working with Kahnawake Shaikotia'takenhas Community Services to arrange programming for some of the children the agency works with.

"I found that it's really been a powerful way to break down a lot of stereotypes or misconceptions that people have had on both sides. And just being able to meet

face to face has been a really powerful thing also. Like having First Nations service providers in child and family services meet their contemporaries in the volunteer sector and vice versa," Ramdatt said. "There's a lot of time within the workshop to talk and get to know each other and what each agency does. So I've found just providing that forum has been, right away, just breaks down that initial barrier of not knowing."

The youth version of Caring Across the Boundaries was created when two youth participants in those original workshops, Ginger Gosnell from the Nisga'a and Kwagiuluth Nations in B.C. and Melanie Ferris from Long Plain First Nation, Man. saw an opportunity for youth to benefit from the program, and worked with Maggie Kovach, an assistant professor at the University of Victoria, to adapt the curriculum, incorporating a youth focus.

"The impetus really came from the young people saying, 'OK, this is a great program, but we really need one that's also targeted to young people that really talks about the value of volunteering and how that can support community and how we as young people can get involved with that,'" said Jordan Alderman, an instructor with the program. The goal of the revised curriculum, she said, is both to explain to volunteer sector organizations what its like to be a young person on

reserve, and to help First Nations youth find out more about the voluntary sector, what volunteering has to offer and how they can get involved.

The youth focus workshops will follow the same format as previous workshops. On the first day, First Nations youth will spend half a day learning about the voluntary sector and voluntary sector representatives will spend half a day learning about First Nations youth. On the second day, the two groups will get together for a collaborative workshop.

A train the trainer session will also be part of the youth focus program, coming at the end of the year. Through that session, it's hoped that the youth who acted as facilitators for the four previous sessions will attend and then go back to their communities with the skills and experience they need to co-ordinate and hold additional workshops.

"It's really about building capacity in the community and providing the resources and tools to do that," Alderman said.

In addition to the four youth focused workshops, the society has also received funding to hold another six workshops for First Nations child and family service agencies and is inviting inquiries from agencies interested in co-hosting an event.

For more information about Caring Across the Boundaries visit the FNCFCFS Web site at [www.fncfcs.com](http://www.fncfcs.com), or call (613) 230-5885.

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# Math and science focus of education conference

By LAURA STEVENS  
Birchbark Writer

## NIAGARA FALLS

Effective Schools—Lifting the Spirit of the Child—Abinoojii doombinaan odaainjichaagwan is the theme of the ninth annual Partnerships in Success Education Conference, presented by the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation Education Department and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC).

Preschool and elementary teachers, education assistants and representatives from education authorities and boards of education are invited to attend the two-day national conference, being held at the Double Tree Resort and Spa in Niagara Falls from Feb. 22 to 24.

Participants can expect to attend a variety of workshops, such as effective school literature, environmental education for First Nations, making the Ontario curriculum work, leadership and empowered schools, learning through the arts, culture in the

*"We hope everyone comes away really believing that you can make your school and the delivery of your programs more effective than what you had before."*

—MAX KING

classroom, treaties and treaty rights, and math and robotics.

Through the introduction to environmental education for First Nations workshop, participants will be introduced to the environmental issues of the Great Lakes region and will have a chance to learn about the environmental philosophy of the ethics of balance that resembles traditional Native Canadian thinking.

Although this conference is aimed at educators and various authorities and boards, "our true focus is on the kids," said Max King, education director for the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation (MNCFN).

"We hope the participants leave this conference renewed to face the rest of the teaching year," said King. "If they are

there as an administrator-type person such as a board member or council member, we hope they come back with a better understanding and more enthusiasm for school programs. We hope everyone comes away really believing that you can make your school and the delivery of your programs more effective than what you had before. Therefore, we are trying to give them the tools so they can accomplish that."

According to King, within the two to two-and-a-half-hour time slot for each session, the facilitators are asked not to lecture, but to provide interactive activities for the participants.

"We try to limit the number of participants in each group to

approximately 20 so there is more of a chance for interaction," said King.

The exploration of traditional games, song and lifestyle through the culture in the classroom workshop is an example of how the participants can interact and learn through facilitator Dan Secord, who will share ways of capturing the attention of students, from preschool age children to youth. For a registration fee of \$410 per person, participants can learn and explore new ways to make school more effective for both the teacher and the student. This fee includes accommodation and meals for two nights and the conference material.

"This is an all-inclusive fee and it's very reasonable as compared to other conferences," said King.

King said each year the MNCFN education department seeks new and interesting topics to attract participants to the conference but they try to revolve around three fairly broad ideas—culture, curriculum and governance.

"We try to make sure that we have a strong cultural

component within the choices of sessions," said King. "We also try to target workshops that would allow for governance and an improvement of their governance model. We also try to target the delivery of the curriculum, in other words improving the teaching methods and so on."

Each year they try and target particular topics, King said. For example, last year they targeted illiteracy and issues surrounding illiteracy in terms of the actual curriculum concerned. This year they are targeting the numerical or the science side in terms of the curriculum issues.

"We've been doing this for nine years, therefore we assume that we will be successful again," said King. "We think that we put a quality conference together and our feedback from the participants has been very positive and that's why we continue to do it."

For more information about the conference and how to register contact Valarie King at (905) 768-7107 or by e-mail at valconference06@yahoo.ca.

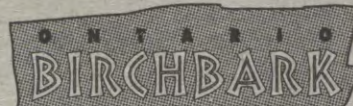
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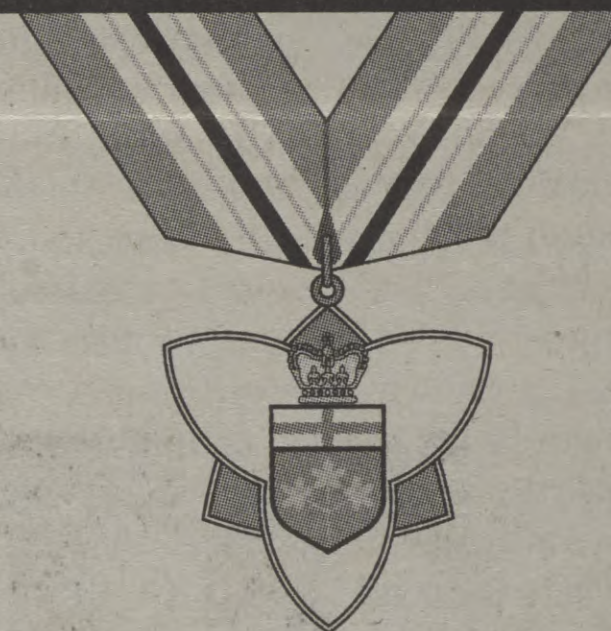
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Nomination deadline is **February 28, 2006.**

*Paid for by the Government of Ontario.*



# Cambrian student to receive provincial award

By LAURA STEVENS  
Birchbark Writer

## SUDBURY

She has been president of the Cambrian Native Student's Association (CNSA) at Cambrian College in Sudbury for two consecutive terms and has developed many innovative initiatives to improve the quality of student life for Aboriginal students, but second year nursing student Cheri Corbiere has never been presented with a provincial award before.

The 34-year-old from Sheshegwaning First Nation located on Manitoulin Island will receive the Student Innovation Award through the Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario (ACAATO). Introduced in 2001, awards recognize individuals, organizations and volunteers who have made an outstanding contribution to the advancement of Ontario's colleges of applied arts and technology. The award will be presented to Corbiere on Feb. 20 at the 2006 ACAATO conference in Sudbury.

"I'm very honored mostly because I think that it's very important that the college recognizes our efforts and what we're doing as CNSA for the Aboriginal students," Corbiere said.

"I view this award as a compliment and a credit to the ways of the Anishinabek people because that's where I get all my values and beliefs from, so that's how I guide myself as the president of CNSA. I think we play an important role here at CNSA to make sure that the rest of the students have a successful academic and social experience while attending Cambrian."

Corbiere said most Aboriginal youth lack the confidence to attend college or university, primarily because they are not encouraged to do so. Once the students arrive at the post-secondary level, they seem to struggle either academically or socially.

That's why Corbiere will make herself available when she is not in class to address the needs of the students.

"If I make myself available and I'm approachable to the students then they feel comfortable with me then it's kind of like role modeling the teachings that I learned from my mother and grandmother of respect and humility and really taking the time to understand them," said Corbiere. "I try to role model positive behaviors."

Her values and beliefs obtained from her family have led her to organize and establish many events, activities and initiatives. She worked to create a First Nation student food bank, introduced cultural teachings on campus and developed a sacred medicine protocol. The college board of governors passed the protocol in the fall of 2005, enabling CNSA and students to practice the use of medicines within the college.

"With this protocol in place, it kind of sets the future for all Aboriginal students that come here," said Corbiere. "The college board of directors and the executive are in big support of the use of sacred medicines. They endorsed it and they encouraged me to continue with it."

Corbiere is also involved in the student services division of Cambrian College and with the Wabnode Institute, another organization within the college that assists students with employment and academic needs. She is also a member of the Anishnaabe Affairs Advisory Committee and assists in many other events such as the annual Native Awareness Days.

Corbiere's dedication to supporting and encouraging Aboriginal students goes beyond the walls of Cambrian. During last year's March study break, she visited the high schools in Wikwemikong and M'Chigeeng on Manitoulin to share her college experiences as well as to encourage the students to strive for higher education.

"I remember when I was in high school, all I heard was, 'You can't do that,' and they made college sound like this big scary place," said Corbiere. "I talked to the students about what to expect at the post-secondary level and how they can be successful and that there are different support systems to make this happen for you."

Corbiere admitted that she wasn't the best student in high school.

"I struggled through high school because I got mixed up in the wrong peer groups," said Corbiere. "I tell students about my experiences in school just to give them maybe a sense of hope. I tell them that if you struggle through high school or if you walked down the wrong road, there is still hope for you. You can get back."

Corbiere stressed that if students are struggling through secondary school or even through post-secondary, they should know that there are services available to them and they should access them.

"Some students may struggle with addictions or learning disabilities but I make it a point to let them know that if you work hard and you try and reach out for help then you can be successful," said Corbiere. "I think sometimes they just try one or two people and then give up, so I really encourage them to look around."

Corbiere believes that it was her efforts to reach out to high school students in particular that helped in the nomination process.

"Through her visit to Manitoulin, it really told me that I was dealing with an outstanding leader and an outstanding student," said Betty Freelandt, vice-president of student services and strategic initiatives at Cambrian, who nominated Corbiere for the Student Innovation Award. "I think it takes a risk to be sharing your own stories with others, especially when your stories have some trials and tribulations along the road. And she was willing to



Cambrian College student Cheri Corbiere

do that because she's continuing to advocate for the students to be successful on campus."

One of Corbiere's current projects is advocating to have an Ojibway Elder on campus. There is currently a Cree Elder on campus, but the Cree and Ojibway teachings are a bit different, "so we are trying to meet the need of everybody," Corbiere said.

"We are trying to create more awareness about the Aboriginal culture within the college for faculty and students. We also worked to bring in a lot of non-Aboriginal students into our area to come and learn about our culture and there is a visible increase. We really try to create awareness and to let them know that they are welcome here. We want them to come and to learn about us and we want to share."

According to Freelandt, Corbiere is always coming up with suggestions and ideas related to student retention and improving services that the college administration had not considered.

"She challenges not only

administrative practices and policies that we have on campus but she challenges another student council that we have here, Student Administrative Council (SAC)," said Freelandt. "She shares resources with them, she continues to work cooperatively with them but also challenges them in some of their thinking, and I think that's important."

The choice to nominate Corbiere wasn't a hard decision, Freelandt said. Her efforts on behalf of Aboriginal students also impressed the panel of judges whose job it was to select this year's award recipients.

"It came across very clearly, that they see her as an outstanding student who had come up with a lot of innovative ideas and that's what makes her an exceptional leader," said Freelandt. "I think I've been very fortunate to get to know and work with Cheri as the president of our CNSA."

Upon graduation of the four-year nursing program from Cambrian College in Sudbury, Corbiere plans to move back to her hometown and continue her work as a health representative.

## Conference a success

(Continued from page 1.)

That first day included an overview of Treaty 9, a session on Aboriginal and treaty rights, and information about the impact recent court cases will have on NAN's efforts to have its treaty rights recognized.

Day two featured group discussions about the treaty, with participants talking about the benefits gained from the treaty, shortcomings in treaty implementation, historic interpretation of the treaty and what should be done to realize implementation of treaty rights.

On the third day of the conference, a draft treaty statement was drawn up, incorporating the input received from conference participants. That statement will be fine-tuned, then presented to NAN chiefs in assembly in March.

Participants, particularly the young people, were excited by what they learned at the conference, Stan Beardy said.

"I think people were amazed that we have so many rights and yet we've never been in a position to begin to implement those rights. And that's what we're trying to do here, is reaffirm amongst ourselves what those rights are and inform and educate our own people as well as the general public that those are rights, legal rights that are recognized in the Constitution as well as reaffirmed by the Supreme Court rulings recently. It's us, then, it's our responsibility as First Nations people to begin to implement them. They cannot be done for us. It's something that we have to take responsibility for."

## Minority government softens blow

(Continued from page 1.)

"These are decisions that now obligate government to consult, obligates government to take a positive, proactive position where Aboriginal rights are concerned. So we're fine there," Tony Belcourt said.

"We also have many long-term multi-year contracts that we've signed for the delivery of programs and services. I don't expect the Conservative government will want to get in there and tinker with those."

Belcourt is also optimistic that Harper's victory won't have a negative impact on the agreement reached at the first ministers meeting held in Kelowna in November.

"That agreement is one that involved all governments. It's not a partisan agreement and I think that the Conservatives will take

that approach," he said.

"I don't, and I never have, considered the Conservatives to be sort of mean-spirited people who don't care. Canadians by and large do care about others, especially those in need and those who can make a good case. Conservatives are business-minded, business-oriented. They're going to see the value in supporting our aspirations for self-sufficiency. They will, I'm sure, want to work with us in what we are doing to try to stabilize and enhance the economies of our communities. Once they're in power and they're actually doing business as a government, they will see us in a different light, I'm sure."

While Belcourt is optimistic about life under a Conservative government, he made it clear he is personally disappointed Paul

Martin won't be returning as prime minister.

"I deeply regret the loss of the potential of another Paul Martin government," Belcourt said.

"There is no prime minister I know of that has done more for the Metis people than Paul Martin. We've had others who have been very supportive of us ... but Paul Martin stands head and shoulders above the others because he recognized the Metis Nation for the first time in a very positive way. In the kind of way that in all of my years I was hoping we could be recognized by the government of Canada—as a people, as a government of our proud nation that has constitutional rights and the constitutional right and inherent right of self-government—and was prepared to deal with us on that basis."



# Relationship building or confrontation?

(Continued from page 10.)

In the latter days of the federal election campaign and in the days right after the Conservatives were handed a mandate to form a minority government by the Canadian electorate, Phil Fontaine sought to get Stephen Harper to clarify his position on a couple of hugely important issues. Those issues—most notably the first ministers meeting agreement and the residential school compensation agreement—are as important to Fontaine politically as they might be for Aboriginal people across the country.

The national chief found himself following up on a letter penned by Harper to Dwight Dorey, a man who calls himself the national chief of the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP), much to the consternation of AFN insiders, for information about the Conservative's plans.

Fontaine saw within Harper's answers in that letter the possibility that the leader might back away or modify both agreements. Harper also hinted, in his letter to CAP, that the Conservatives might bring forward its own version of the First Nations Governance act, Chretien-era legislation that was shelved by outgoing Prime Minister Paul Martin shortly after he was sworn in.

Fontaine, regional vice-chiefs Rick Simon and Angus Toulouse and AFN Chief of Staff Bob Watts sat down with Conservative Indian Affairs critic Jim Prentice and Conservative party officials just before the election.

Prentice told them the governance act was not being contemplated.

Given the confusion, Fontaine sent a letter to Harper asking for clarification. The letter was dated Jan. 19.

The AFN executive met in Vancouver to discuss these latest developments and other matters. Since the national chief is the chair of the executive board and was not available, regional Chief Simon spoke to *Windspeaker* on Jan. 25.

The AFN had still not received a response to the national chief's letter, Simon said, but the meeting with Prentice and party officials at the Ottawa airport was "pretty frank."

"We haven't seen anything in writing yet as far as an official response. I didn't really expect it. You have to take into consideration that they're in 'overjoy' from getting elected. They're trying to get themselves organized," said Simon. "We did have a commitment from Jim Prentice that they would have somebody at our executive meeting here in Vancouver this

week, either today or tomorrow, but we haven't got any firm commitment on that unless somebody's going to show up and we're not aware of it."

The regional chief for Nova Scotia and Newfoundland said AFN officials watched the election campaign closely and noted that some of the more extreme candidates were strangely silent.

"But our biggest concern was mixed messages," he said.

The AFN leadership was very concerned about the apparent split between the former Reform and Progressive Conservative wings of the Conservative party. The subject came up during the airport meeting.

"We had discussions on whether Prentice had any clout or not. He gave us the impression he did, that he was the spokesperson on the file on Aboriginal issues and he was the one that we should be speaking to," he said.

But they didn't really pin Prentice down on whether Harper would be most influenced by Reform-minded advisors or those with a more moderate viewpoint.

"Not really. Our focus was more on trying to educate them," he said.

Since Fontaine has been personally involved in the very

complex residential school compensation agreement, Simon said the national chief was able to score points with Prentice by making the argument that the Conservatives should learn more about the agreement before they say they plan to make slight changes to it. Fontaine has maintained from the start that the agreement is such a delicate arrangement of competing and diverse interests that any "tinkering" might bring it all down.

"Prentice started to see more clearly the dangers of doing that," the regional chief said. "We made the point that, if anything, that would be playing into the lawyers' hands."

Simon said lawyers are already trying to convince their clients to take the costly litigation route rather than buy into the compensation deal.

"We know a number of the firms are actively trying to engage the survivors to reject it," he said. "In my view, that's in the lawyers' best interest because there's more money in it for them."

As for the mixed messages from Prentice and MP Monte Solberg (see story page 9), the AFN delegation tried very hard to get crystal clear commitments from Prentice that he was the party spokesman and they could expect the party to honor his word.

"I guess the way we left the conversation with Prentice, basically we asked each other two or three times, 'Are we clear in what our understanding is here?' And the first priority was the residential school agreement and they had no intention of tinkering with it if they thought it was going to unravel," he said.

The AFN leadership has enjoyed a very good relationship with the Paul Martin Liberals. *Windspeaker* asked Simon if the AFN executive's and the national chief's effectiveness have been limited or reduced by the change in government.

"On the surface, that would be the first thing that people would like to think. But if you scratch a little bit deeper, you've got to take into consideration that the shelf-life of this new government is maximum two years," he replied.

"That being said, whether they like us or not, the way we left the conversation with Prentice was this: we said, 'What kind of relationship do you want?' Do you want a Robert Nault-Matthew Coon Come kind of relationship? If that's the type of relationship you choose to engage us in, come 18 months or two years down the road, if you think First Nations people are actively engaged politically now, how do you think they're going to be then?"

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Artist—The Wolfpack  
 Album—Family Thang  
 Song—Keep It Fair  
 Label—Independent  
 Producer—The Wolfpack

## Singing the blues makes hearts soar

The members of The Wolfpack are still singing the blues, despite taking home an award from the Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards held in Toronto in November.

The Six Nations based band took home the award for Best Blues Album, the second time they'd claimed that honor. The 2005 win was for the group's third album, *Family Thang*, while their first win in 2003 was for The Wolfpack's debut album, *Every Lil' Thing*. The band also took home a CAMA in 2004 for Best Group or Duo.

The title of the latest album is an apt description of The Wolfpack, which is undeniably a family thang. Five brothers—Darren, James, Chad, Jason and Troy Martin—make up the core of the band, with little sister Faith joining in to provide backing vocals on the album. Three of the brothers—Jason, Darren and Troy—provide vocals on the album. Darren is also the band's bass player, while Troy joins brother James on guitar and Chad does the drumming.

All the songs on the CD are original, with all but one written by the members of the band. That song, *Nothing Better to Do*, was written by longtime collaborator Doyle Bomberry.

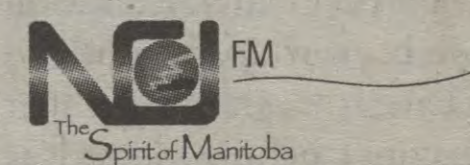


The Wolfpack

# ABORIGINAL RADIO MOST ACTIVE LIST

ARTIST	TITLE	ALBUM
Ray Villebrun & Red Blaze	Make Our Mama's Proud	Been Awhile
Tracy Bone	Games	Single Release
Kimberley Dawn	Woman To Woman	Healing Jane
Freddie J. Martin	Pretty Girl	Ma Te Wa
Gabby Taylor	You're the One	Single Release
Tango Sierra	Great Big Hole	This Is It
Just The Boys	Shotgun Rider	Shotgun Rider
Mike Gouchie	Somethin' Bout A Bad Boy	Bad Boys & Angels
D.L.O.	Northern Hillbilly	Single Release
Shane Yellowbird	Beautiful Concept	Single Release
AA Sound System	Take It As It Comes	Lily Plain... You're Hardly Poor
Donny Parenteau	The Great Unknown	Single Release
Crystal Shawanda	Maybe Someday	Cutting Room Floor
Heritage	Designated Man	Evolution
Don Constant	Northern Lights	Two Mending Hearts
Les Shannacappo	From Dusk 'Til Dawn	Single Release
Billy Simard	Now That You're Gone	20 Aboriginal Hits 4
Dominique Reynolds	The Rifle	Coming Home
Nadjiwan	Aambe	Begin
Priscilla Morin	Already Gone	Single Release

CONTRIBUTING STATIONS:



## Sierra Noble [ windspeaker confidential ]



Manitoba's teen fiddling sensation Sierra Noble had a very busy year in 2005, recording her first CD, *Spirit of the Strings*, performing during the Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards and travelling to Belgium and France with the Aboriginal veterans for the Aboriginal Spiritual Journey and Calling Home ceremony. Noble, who will turn 16 on Feb. 20, spends much of her time promoting Metis music, dance and culture, and also volunteers her time to efforts to have the use of landmines banned around the world.

**Windspeaker:** What one quality do you most value in a friend?  
**Sierra Noble:** I think it would have to be loyalty ... To me, real friends are always there and they are who they are to you when you really know them.

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

**S.N.:** The effects alcohol can have on a person not only hurts them, but just as much hurts their loved ones and everyone around them. An Elder once told me that with every drink a person takes, their spirit moves further and further away from them and after a while they are not who they truly are, that things like drugs and alcohol only draw in bad energy and spirits into your life ... Unfortunately, all throughout my life I always seemed to be hit in the face with the hurt and tears that alcohol can bring, being one of the loved ones having to watch the spirit of someone I care about disappear with each drink.

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

**S.N.:** I think there's a few times, but I think definitely when I've had a really good show, just right after getting off stage. Nobody's said anything to me yet ... I guess when I'm on stage I'm just in a totally different state of mind and it's just like the best thing in the world to me.

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

**S.N.:** I guess uncomfortably

quiet. Because normally I'm a pretty, I guess, upbeat, open, happy person, but when I'm not in a good mood or sad or something is bothering me, yeah, I'm definitely not that.

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

**S.N.:** You know, I think it would have to be my mom ... She's been a single mom for, I guess, 15 years, over 15 years. But that's never stopped her from being, like, the best mother in the world. And she's given up a lot for me and my sisters, ever since they were young. So I guess she's always given us the best life that she possibly could and it's the best life ever. We never had much, like we were not a rich family, but we have the love of our mom and she works harder than anyone that I know ... she's always doing research and planning things for me and how to get me farther in my career and stuff. If it wasn't for her, there'd be no way I'd have done half the things I've done so far in my life.

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

**S.N.:** I actually can't think of anything so far in my life that has been notably difficult ... but I do know one moment that will be extremely hard for me when it does decide to come, and that is finally meeting my father. Growing up without a dad and not ever meeting him was very

hard at times, and brought on a lot of challenges for me and a lot of pain. To think of how I would react to seeing him face to face is totally in the unknown, and I know whatever happens won't be easy, but I do know that there are people all around me all across Canada and the world that are and always will be there for me. It's like I've gained a whole huge global family and that if all else fails with my dad they've got my back.

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

**S.N.:** Being chosen to travel to Belgium and France to participate in the Aboriginal Spiritual Journey. I learned so much about who I am inside, spiritually I suppose. Having the honor of being able to listen to all of the stories and the teachings from the veterans, Elders and spiritual leaders was a truly life-changing experience in my life and awoke things inside of me that I never knew were there.

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

**S.N.:** I don't know. I guess it's hard to say for me because I guess I'm a bit of a dreamer ... I guess that's kind of what keeps me going is not believing anything is out of reach.

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

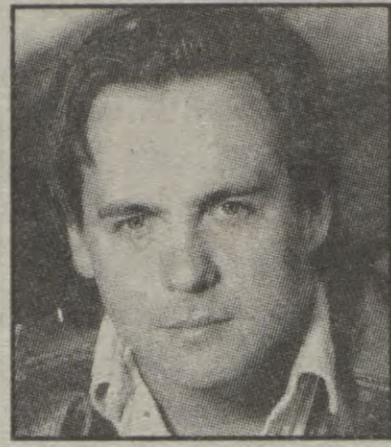
(see Confidential page 18.)



# There is much to be found in a name

I've been studiously word-processing away on my first novel. My working title is *A Contemporary Gothic Indian Vampire Story*. I know what you're thinking. "Oh God, not another Indian vampire story!" In the last little while, I've done a lot of investigation into the topic and the most important thing I've come away with from all that research is that when I go out on a date with a woman, if for some reason there should be hickies involved at any point, I can write off the whole cost of the date as a legitimate tax expense. You can do stuff like that as long as it's research. Darn clever those white people and their accountants.

The other thing I've been contemplating lately is how to come up with the right title. Titles are very important and have a lot to do with whether you will pick that book up. They have to catch



## THE URBANE INDIAN

Drew Hayden Taylor

your interest, describe the book, and be memorable. Having spent the last 35 years reading extensively I've discovered that there are basically four types of titles, be they for books, plays or movies.

First on the list is what I call the "on the nose" title. As the name suggests, it's a title that basically tells you what the book, play or movie is about. No great leap of logic there. For instance, *The Handmaid's Tale*. Gee, I wonder what that movie is about? I wonder who the main characters

are in *Cats*? *Death Of A Salesman*... what could that possibly be about? *Hamlet*... three guesses who the central character will be. *Night Of The Living Dead*. I wonder what that movie is about? And when it happens?

The other kind of title is the "hint" title. It refers to what at first appears to be an obscure title, but in reality relates in some way to something that happens within the work making you pay attention when you actually read or view the thing. Some examples are *To Kill A Mockingbird*. There

are no actual mockingbirds hurt or killed during the reading of the novel. But there is a reference to them that if you aren't on the ball, you'll miss and remained confused. Same with *The Glass Menagerie*. *Green Grass Running Water* also comes to mind. *The Silence of the Lambs*, and *Atlas Shrugged* too.

There's also the metaphoric title. It relates to titles that have no direct mention within the book but the overall themes of that work of art can be viewed in a broader context. *The Outsiders*, for example. There's *Apocalypse Now*, though those words are briefly glimpsed in the film painted on a rock. *Crash*. *Body Heat* and so on.

The fourth and most confusing (or the most fun, depending on your imagination) are titles that, off the bat, have absolutely no mention or obvious relationship

to the contents of the work. If you're like me, you're just left there trying to find the correlation. Then it becomes a game to figure out the connection. Or if you are not like me, you probably don't care. The movie *Brazil* is an example. The play *Olleanna* too. The novel *Neuromancer* comes to mind. *The Crying Game*.

It's the same with the work of Native writers. There does, however, tend to be more concentration on titles in the first two categories? *Halfbreed*. Class, who and what is this book about? *Drylips Oughta Move To Kapuskasing*. Class, where does the author get this reference and what does it refer too? *The Rez Sisters*? Anybody have the vaguest idea about who the characters might be? *The Almanac of the Dead*. No surprise there.

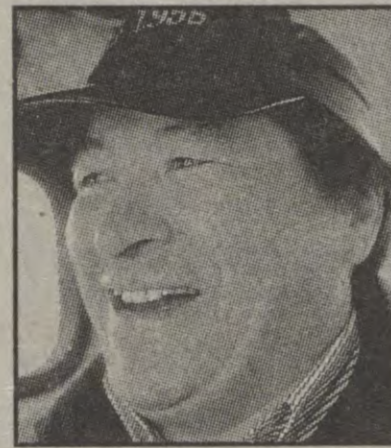
(see Titles page 20.)

# Time to get out of the begging business

By the time we read these words, another federal election will have been wrapped up, and we will have counted the number of Aboriginal people elected as MPs on the fingers of one hand. This election's results should unite the Indian, Inuit and Metis people of Canada in one great drive to persuade this particular Parliament to tackle a major reform in its make-up: That of getting the nation's Aboriginal peoples properly represented in Parliament.

The concept of Aboriginal MPs more numerous than the digits of one hand is in a strange place in the nation's political timeline. If left to the natural process of political evolution, it could well take another 100 years for Aboriginal population levels to cross the thresholds required of it by present electoral laws for Aboriginal people to attain a real presence in the national legislature.

Sparking a More-Aboriginals-in-Parliament revolution is highly unlikely. Imagine convulsing Parliament sufficiently to do



## NASIVVIK

Zebedee Nungak

something greatly un-natural to itself: Willingly making room for the original inhabitants of the lands "discovered" and "settled" by immigrants from other lands. With such a revolution a non-starter, other ways to get the desired result with minimal agony have to be explored, discovered, and implemented into reality.

When the government of Canada started a program of funding Indian, Metis, and Inuit organizations in the 1970s, a new dynamic was initiated. Native people, as they were then called, started making direct and frequent presentations of their communities' and peoples' needs to various organs of government. Out of these interactions, a new relationship was forged.

This relationship, though, was a lop-sided one. It could be summed up in the phrase, "Fund us so we can lobby you for benefits for our people." Nevertheless, one of the new dynamic's by-products was a generation of Aboriginal representatives quickly acquiring expertise in "lobbying."

Parliamentary committee rooms became as familiar as walrus-hunting grounds for Inuit political operatives engaged in another level of "hunting" for programs that other Canadians took for granted. Many an appointment with a minister was "harpooned," and pulled in for all it was worth in pursuit of favorable consideration for benefits in housing, education,

health or transportation subsidies.

A lot of dignified begging was done. The country's political masters were met more than half way as Inuit operatives did this in English as a second language. Inuktitut hardly ever jarred the ears of the government bosses on whose turf most meetings happened in.

Furthermore, the framework in which all this was taking place was a Benefactor/Beneficiary relationship, fraught by its very nature with inherent uncertainties and traps. Variables included things such as: Which party is in power? What are their policies? Who is the minister of Indian Affairs? Who is the prime minister? Do any of these factors positively favor the issue at hand?

Eventually, processes to negotiate land claims were instituted, and Inuit in four distinct regions of the country signed agreements with governments of the land, which, in the minds of those who governed the country, settled these constituencies' niches in the

country's political structure.

However, a closer look at this patchwork quilt of land claims agreements will reveal that they are based on a legal imperative imposed by the governments: The surrender and extinguishment of Aboriginal rights and title to the lands in question, in exchange for enumerated sets of rights.

Their respective negotiation durations also reveal an incongruous asymmetry, which should have attracted righteous attention in Parliament. The James Bay Agreement was finalized in two years; the Inuvialuit Agreement in eight years; the Nunavut Final Agreement in 17 years; and the Nunatsiavut (Labrador) Agreement in 27 years.

Governments did not have a battery of Inuit Members of Parliament breathing down their necks asking questions like: "Who else in this country is forced to agree to such pre-conditions, simply to have their rightful place in Canada acknowledged and respected?"

(see Seats page 20.)

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# Six Nations tackles housing problem head on

By Cheryl Petten  
Windspeaker Staff Writer

## SIX NATIONS, Ont.

Like many First Nation communities across the country, there is a housing shortage on Six Nations of the Grand River Territory. But the situation would be more severe if the First Nation hadn't started working on ways to help address the shortage on its own, instead of waiting for government to fill the breach.

Providing housing for everyone living on reserve is especially challenging for Six Nations, which boasts the largest population of any First Nation in Canada. The membership, drawn from the Mohawk, Cayuga, Tuscarora, Oneida, Onondaga and Seneca Nations, sits at around 24,000, about half of whom live on reserve.

"We've got, I know, for our new construction waiting list alone, we have 654," said Shelda Johnson, director of housing. "And we have waiting lists for an apartment, for a rent to own home in a subdivision, for renovations. We have waiting lists galore, because of the big population ... I think there's like

1,200 people waiting all together."

According to Johnson the First Nation has been running a revolving loan program on reserve since 1968 that helps members build their own homes.

"At first we were loaning out \$7,000, which was the amount of the subsidy we got from Indian Affairs. They were to contribute \$125,000 a year for five years to run this program. And as our repayments increased, the amount that we were able to loan out increased. So today, we loan out \$105,000 at seven per cent simple interest."

While the initial money to run the program came from INAC, and the department still contributes about \$200,000 a year, the program is now more or less self-sustaining, thanks to the \$2 million or so a year that comes in through loan repayments.

Six Nations issues Certificates of Possession to its members, which allow them to possess land on reserve. In order to qualify for a loan through the First Nation-run program, members must own at least half an acre of land on which to build their house, Johnson said.

While the loan program provided members with an

option, more needed to be done to try to reduce the waiting lists for housing. In 1995, Johnson approached the Royal Bank located on reserve to see if they could play a role.

"Before that, we were into the Section 10 loans where the individuals could go to a bank and we would have to apply for a ministerial guarantee," Johnson said. "Well, I wasn't happy with that process. It was too complicated and it took too long because we were involved with CMHC and Indian Affairs and the banks, you know? So I just cut all that out and I went right to the Royal and asked, because they were located on reserve, and asked them if they would consider allowing our membership to obtain a loan through the bank with council providing the guarantee. And it took about a year to research everything and they finally came back and said yes they would, so we started that then."

A few years later a similar arrangement was made with the Bank of Montreal, Johnson said, "So the members have two different banks they can go to and council will guarantee their loan against default.

Today we've guaranteed like

\$18 million to both of the banks combined. But we still have this horrendous waiting list."

Part of the problem is that, although they have an option to get financing through a bank, a number of people would rather wait and get their financing through the program run by the First Nation.

"A lot of people are waiting for our program, because it is simple interest at seven per cent. You know, you can't beat it. It's written that your down payment is five per cent, but we allow two-and-a-half per cent as sweat equity. So you only have to pay down two-and-a-half-per cent of the loan amount."

While the terms of the program run by Six Nations housing may be more favorable, financing through a bank has one obvious advantage, Johnson explained. The wait is a lot shorter.

"With our programs, they're waiting over 10 years for a new construction loan, where if they go to the bank, they can have that completed within a month. So it's a good option."

Having these options available have certainly made a difference on Six Nations, where Johnson estimates about 95 per cent of close to 3,000 homes on reserve

are owned by individuals.

Johnson knows support for on-reserve home ownership isn't universal, but she sees it as a positive thing for First Nations and their members.

"I know a lot of First Nations don't feel that their members should be paying rent or paying a loan, but I think if we didn't have it, I don't know where we would be, because there's simply no money coming from the government to help everybody. I look at it as the community helping ourselves. They make a payment and those dollars go into another pot and they're used to help someone else. So, you know, it's a good way to help with the housing situation."

Home ownership loans, whether through the First Nations or through the banks, aren't the end of the story on Six Nations, where efforts are also focused on such things as supporting renovation projects and creating rental options for low income families. Still there are so many people waiting.

A decision by INAC to focus its funding on upgrading infrastructure on First Nations, rather than funding expansion projects is part of the problem. (see Housing page 17.)

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# New mortgage option available through CMHC

By Cheryl Petten  
Windspeaker Staff Writer

OTTAWA

The Nak'askli Band in B.C. has become the first community to take advantage of a new Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) pilot project designed to help address the shortage of available housing on reserves across the country.

In November 2005, Nak'askli Chief Leonard Thomas announced the band had signed an agreement to take part in the On-Reserve Homeownership Loan Insurance pilot project. The project is designed to give people living on reserve an opportunity to access insured mortgage financing to buy, build or renovate a home.

With the launch of the new pilot project, CMHC now has two mortgage insurance options it offers to people living on reserve. The other is the Loan Insurance Program On-Reserve

with Ministerial Loan Guarantee, explained Steve Mennill, director of product and strategic direction with CMHC.

"Under that product, the band council indirectly is taking all of the liability. So if there's a default under the mortgage, the department of Indian Affairs indemnifies CMHC. So CMHC pays the lender the claim, the department of Indian Affairs pays CMHC the claim, and then they in turn recover any loss from the band. So the band is in theory 100 per cent responsible for any losses under that product," he said.

"Under our new product, CMHC is taking the insurance risk, or most of the insurance risk, and we're being compensated for that by a premium, just like we are for any insurance product that we have. What we do is, in the event of a claim, we pay for 30 per cent in all cases. No matter what, we pay 30 per cent. Which in most cases, we're quite confident, will cover all of the loss, and more than the loss,

because really all the band then has to do, the band gets the real estate assets. So they get the house, because they can hold security against the mortgage, whereas CMHC or a private lender cannot because of the way the Indian Act works. So they can sell the house, and as long as they sell the house for at least 70 per cent of the loan balance, which is normally going to be quite possible, they don't lose any money either. So basically the result is that their liability is significantly reduced."

Before someone can benefit from the On-Reserve Homeownership Loan Insurance pilot project, their First Nation council has to enter into a special trust arrangement with CMHC. The Nak'askli Band is the first and only community to enter into such an agreement but, Mennill said talks are currently underway with other First Nations from across the country and it's hoped more announcements will be made soon.

It's estimated there's an on-

reserve housing shortage of between 20,000 and 35,000 units, and that number is growing every year. The new CMHC pilot project can be part of the solution to the problem, Mennill said.

"Basically we're looking for mechanisms to try to provide market housing solutions on reserve that are close, as close as we can make them, to the off-reserve situation," he said. "This isn't intended to solve every housing problem on reserve by any means. It's just a tool we use, or one option of hopefully many, that will eventually be available to people living on reserves."

It's anticipated that 10 members of the Nak'askli community will qualify to take part in the pilot project over the next two years. Homebuyers that qualify can get a CMHC loan with a minimum down payment of five per cent. If the loan is for a renovation project, a 10 per cent down payment is required.

For more information about the On-Reserve Homeownership Loan Insurance pilot project, visit

the CMHC Web site at [www.cmhc.gc.ca](http://www.cmhc.gc.ca).

## Housing

(Continued from page 16.)

The funding source that helped Six Nations in the infrastructure for its residential subdivisions in the past has dried up.

"So we haven't been able to develop another subdivision. If we had a subdivision we could again access CMHC's Section 95 program and build more homes or apartments," Johnson said.

Johnson would like to see a change in the way INAC provides funding for housing. Under the current system, the housing money is included in the minor capital funding received by First Nations, and that money must be divvied up amongst all First Nation's departments.

"I think housing, it's such a basic need. It should be a separate allocation every year that every First Nation gets to try to address the housing needs in their community," she said.

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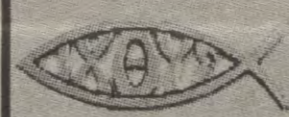


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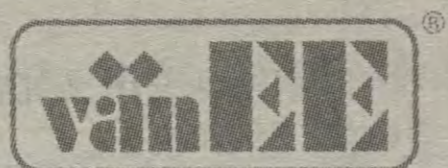
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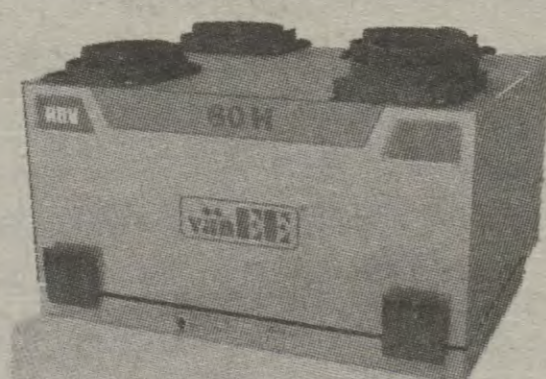
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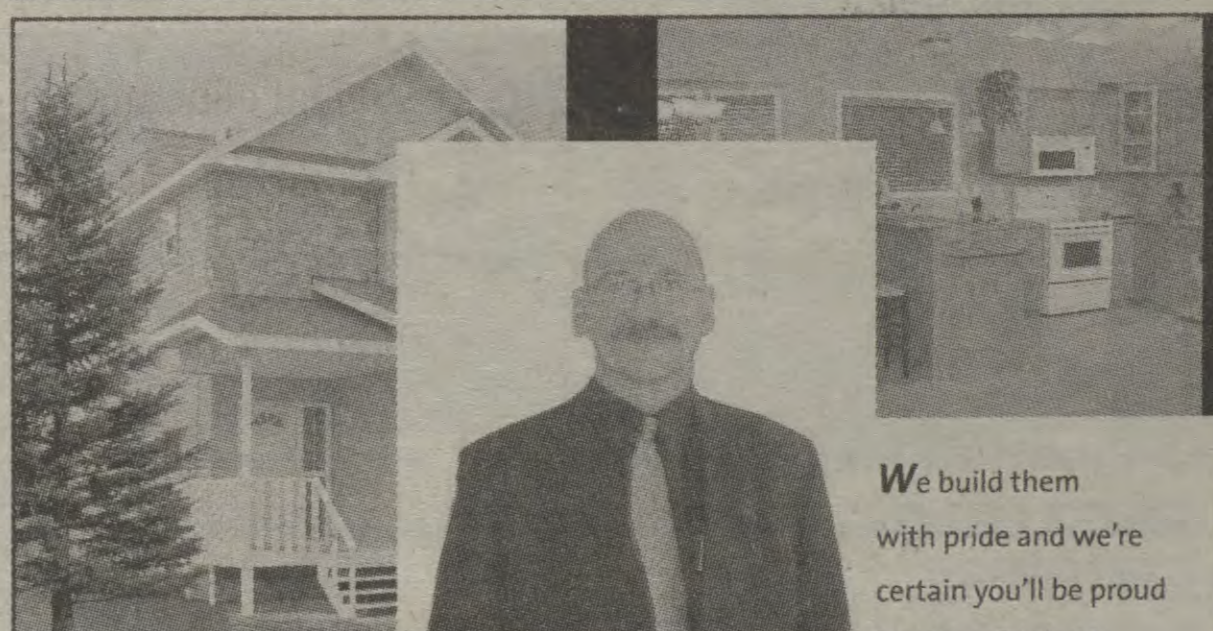
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Our association with Canada's Aboriginal communities including all First Nations, has been a long and rewarding one. The business relationships developed have lead to a life long partnership with First Nations communities across Canada. On behalf of Kevin Owczar and the staff of Triple M Housing, we congratulate the National Aboriginal Achievement Award recipients.

With factory direct pricing available, there is no better time than now to call Kevin Owczar to discuss your housing needs.



# Confidential

(Continued from page 14.)

**Sierra Noble:** I might be a dancer. I don't know. Both of my sisters were dancers and so I might have followed them in that route, I guess, maybe. But I might have followed again in music in a different way, like singing or something.

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

**S.N.:** One thing that I was told by an amazing friend of mine ... my friend Al Henry, he's a guitarist that I love playing with ... I guess he saw a lot of things happening around me that I didn't quite understand or I wasn't noticing yet. And he pulled me aside one time and he said, 'You'll eventually realize who your true friends are.' And so I always remembered that and it's always something that, I guess, every once in a while I've thought about and thought about the people I know, and it's true. There's a lot of people that, especially being in a business like music, there's a lot of people that are going to say that they're your friends and they're going to help you and whatever that you want to do, make your dreams come true and stuff like that. And you get let down a lot with people like that. But I guess there's those friends that are truly loyal and really honest and are only there to totally back you up in whatever you do, good or bad.

**W:** Did you take it?

**S.N.:** Definitely.

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

**S.N.:** I guess I have to kind of look at the three aspects of my life and there's always been these three kind of sections. Humanitarian work, and I guess that kind of involves me as a role model to youth, and also the cultural side of my life and my music and performance side. With the humanitarian/role model, I just think of all of the youth that I've talked to, all of the kids that I've talked to since I was 10 years old. And just remembering all the hope that was left in their hearts for the world ... when I go talk to youth and they really feel kind of hopeless, but by the end, they tell me that they actually believe that they can make a difference in the world. And that's all I want to accomplish ... All I want to do is leave the message in young people's hearts that they have a voice ... And I guess with the cultural side of my life, my main goal as a Metis musician is just to preserve my culture, every aspect of it. The stories that I hear from the Elders, just the quirky little memories that they have. And of course the really old fiddle tunes that nobody else knows anymore and the jigging steps and the songs. I guess I'd love to be remembered as somebody that had a passion for history, and making sure that it doesn't get lost, that it doesn't remain as history, that it's still alive.

## MANITOBA FIRST NATIONS EDUCATION RESOURCE CENTRE

8th Annual  
Call to  
Convention

# Lighting the Fire

"Keeping the  
Fires Burning"

First Nations Education Conference

**MAY 10-12  
2006**

**WINNIPEG, MB**

Victoria Inn 1808 Wellington Ave.

The Lighting the Fire conference is a time for educators to get together, to network, to raise awareness of current methods and to discuss challenges and solutions of working within First Nations schools. This year's focus will be on personal or physical wellness, community based wellness strategies or school based initiatives that promote wellness in the early years, middle years or senior years. Presenters should consider submissions which can be specifically targeted to early years, middle years or senior years.

For more info on the Tradeshow or Call for Abstracts

Contact: Joy Keeper, Conference Coordinator

Phone: (204) 940-7020

Fax: (204) 942-2490

Toll Free: 1-877-247-7020

E-mail: joyk@mfnerc.com

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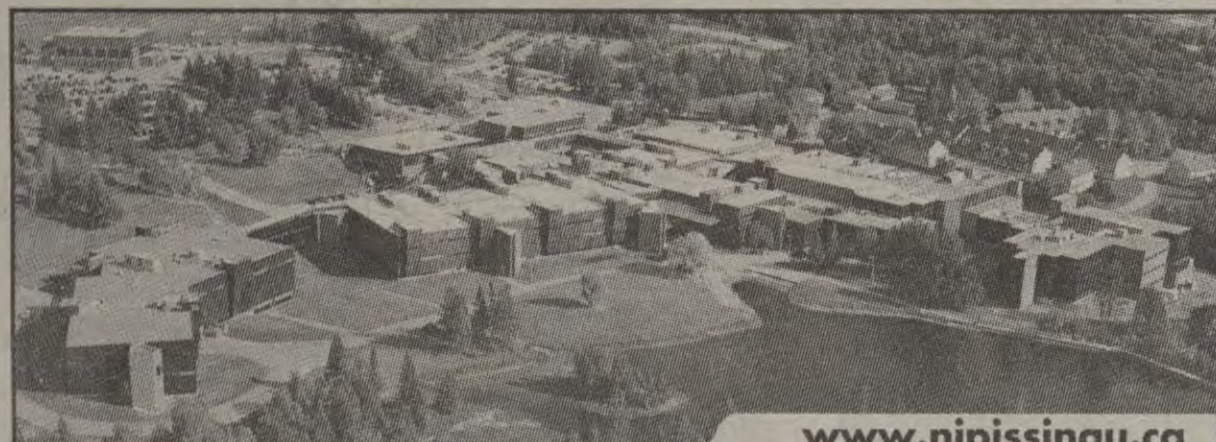
Employment and Human Rights Lawyer, Kingsley Laurin, a First Nations member and former Band Administrator is committed to providing quality legal services for First Nations communities and individuals.

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### SERVICE LEARNING OFFICER - ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY (5 YEAR CONTRACT)

Reporting to the Executive Director of Student Affairs, the Service Learning Officer is responsible for the management and operation of Community Based Service Learning. The Officer will represent Nipissing University in the Aboriginal community to establish and maintain effective, mutually beneficial partnerships. These partnerships seek to strengthen communities while improving and promoting literacy and numeracy for northern youth. Working in conjunction with the Service Learning Officer - Community, the Officer proposes and helps to establish strategic direction, policies and priorities for the Office of Service Learning. The Officer will be responsible for the recruitment, orientation and training of students. The Officer will develop Service Learning opportunities for students in conjunction with Aboriginal communities, agencies and organizations as well as University faculty. In addition, the Officer will assist with all aspects of the office of Community Based Service Learning including annual fund reporting. To build effective partnerships, the successful candidate must possess excellent interpersonal and negotiation skills as well as superior communication skills. Preference will be given to candidates with Aboriginal heritage.

The minimum starting salary for this position is \$46,171. A University degree in psychology, social work, or education as well as a minimum of six months experience is required. A comprehensive group benefits and pension plan is offered. Please submit your letter of application and resume, indicating the position of interest, by 4:30 p.m., Friday, February 17, 2006, to: Human Resources, Nipissing University, 100 College Drive, P.O. Box 5002, North Bay, ON P1B 8L7. E-mail: hrinfo@nipissingu.ca. For a complete position description and more information about Nipissing University, please visit our website. The Selection Committee would like to thank all applicants for their interest in Nipissing University; however, only those selected for interviews will be contacted.

**NIPISSING**  
UNIVERSITY

Nipissing University is an equal opportunity employer.

## MacEwan

### EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Inspiring and enabling individuals to succeed in life through career and university studies

#### Student Advisor

MacEwan's Aboriginal Centre, located at the South Campus, requires a Student Advisor. This position is responsible for coordination of the South Aboriginal Education Centre, providing direct services to students, liaising with the Student Resource Centre and facilitating and planning cultural programming and events. This is a part time term position working three days a week and seven hours per day.

Applicants must have a two-year post secondary diploma (degree preferred) supplemented with two to five years experience working in the post secondary education system. Combinations of work experience and education will be considered. Experience working with Aboriginal learners and the Aboriginal community is essential in this role.

Salary Range: \$24,505.00 to \$27,380.00 per annum

Closing Date: Friday, February 10, 2006 at 4:30 p.m.

Quote Competition No. 06.01.013

Grant MacEwan College thanks all applicants for their interest in employment; however, only those selected for interviews will be contacted.

Apply to: Human Resources Department

Grant MacEwan College

City Centre Campus

7-105, 10700 104 Ave

Edmonton AB T5J 4S2

Fax: (780) 497-5430

Phone: (780) 497-5434

E-mail: careers@macewan.ca

MacEwan College employment opportunities can be viewed by visiting our website at [www.macewan.ca](http://www.macewan.ca). Click on Jobs at MacEwan.



## [ careers & training ] Renewal commission

(Continued from page 8.)

"The commission proposes creation of the office of the First Nations auditor general who will be independent and operate at arm's length from the AFN executive, the AFN secretariat and the national chief's office. First Nations in assembly shall appoint the auditor general," she said. "The responsibilities will be to monitor, investigate and review AFN operations, performance and implementation of AFN mandates, resolutions and policy [and] review and monitor AFN leaders' compliance with the oath of office, code of conduct and conflict of interest declarations [and] monitor, investigate and report on the operations and accounts of First Nations institutions that have as a condition of receiving the support of the AFN for their establishment and ongoing operations."

The auditor general would report to the chiefs in assembly on results of any investigations, she added.

The commission held 27 public hearings from coast to coast to coast and also conducted three separate focus groups that included traditional leaders and Elders.

Miskokomon pointed out that there have been 24 studies conducted on AFN renewal in 25 years. He said 24 per cent of the participants in the public hearings were chiefs, eight per cent were councillors, three per cent were representatives of tribal councils, 15 per cent from political territorial organizations.

A full third of the more than 1,000 participants were grassroots people, he added.

"Public interest is high," he said. While some of the meetings

were sparsely attended, Miskokomon said his commission fared well when compared to others.

"On a per hearing basis, we had 17 presenters. When we compared to the royal commission, they had 21. The Manitoba Justice Inquiry had 15 people per hearing. I think we had a very successful turnout," he said.

Speaking to the chiefs, some of whom have expressed concern that their influence will be undermined by grassroots participation, Grant-John let it be known that the chiefs will still be in charge.

"There are 47 recommendations for AFN renewal contained in the commission's report. The recommendations provide for changes in the AFN's structure, processes and assembly rules. And they will make the AFN more accountable to First Nations leadership," she said. "Most First Nations have established procedures and organizations for the management, administration and/or direct delivery of programs and services. The AFN will maintain its advocacy and support role in this regard. However, working as equal participants in Confederation and backed by assembly resolutions, the AFN has an essential role to play as an advocate on such issues as education, housing, self-determination and the entire continuum of social issues facing First Nations people. The recommendations throughout the report have been designed to help the AFN advocate in a more representative, responsive and effective way than has been possible in the past."



## Communities on the rebound

You know the bad news. Communities are struggling with unemployment, poor housing, bad utilities, and poor health. But do you know the good news?

Communities across Canada are *on the rebound*. They are linking business development to good jobs and a cleaner environment. They are getting local people involved in community planning. They are finding ways to work effectively with outside firms. They are building the local capacity to handle complex responsibilities.

Want more details? Check out *making waves* magazine. It has been tracking some of the best practices in community economic development (CED) since 1991.

*making waves* lets the people who are actually *doing* the work give you the straight goods: what works, what doesn't, and why. There's case studies, tools, reviews, debates, and success stories. What's more, *making waves* will connect you with people right across the country who share your challenges, values, and approach to local revitalization.

There's nothing else like it in Canada. To find out more, point your browser to [www.cedworks.com](http://www.cedworks.com) - "making waves." While you're there, go to "The CED Digital Bookshop" for 100s of articles from past issues (and many other CED resources).

Like a closer look? Phone us toll-free at 1-888-255-6779. We will be happy to send you a complimentary copy.

# making waves

canada's community economic development magazine ~ [www.cedworks.com](http://www.cedworks.com)

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Canada Magazine Fund of the Department of Canadian Heritage toward our project costs.

Canada



## Western Canada First Nations Education Administrators Symposium and Cree Language Symposium

February 8, 9 and 10, 2006, Fantasyland Hotel, Edmonton, Alberta

Hosted by Treaty Six Education and the Maskwacis Cree Nation.

For further information visit our website at [www.miyo.ca](http://www.miyo.ca) or call Sandy Belrose at 1-780-585-2118  
Email: [sandy\\_belrose@miyo.ca](mailto:sandy_belrose@miyo.ca)



First Nations Training & Consulting Services Presents

### 4th Annual Aboriginal Youth, Violence And Changing Times Conference "Empowering Our Youth Through Effective Decision Making"

March 10-12, 2006

Best Western Richmond Hotel & Convention Centre  
Richmond (Vancouver) BC

Crystal Meth is the new street drug of choice for young people - it's cheap, it's addictive and it's deadly. This conference will examine the issue and problems and identify solutions, alternatives and potential strategies for dealing with the problem in our communities.

Over 30 inspiring and relevant workshops and plenary sessions for Youth, Youth Workers and those who work or live with youth. The conference will include speakers, workshops, entertainers, a career fair/trade show and a banquet & entertainment evening.

First Nations Training & Consulting Services  
Mailing Address: PO Box 69 Saanichton BC V8M 2C3  
Courier Address: 1164 Stelly's Cross Road Saanichton BC V8M 1H8  
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Email: [fnctcs@telus.net](mailto:fnctcs@telus.net) Website: [www.firstpeoplescanada.com](http://www.firstpeoplescanada.com)

**Keynote Speaker:** Dr. Richard Littlebear speaks about why our youth seek out urban gangs to give them a sense of identity and belonging. He is actively involved in revitalizing language and culture throughout the U.S.  
**Entertainment:** Hip Hop Artists 7<sup>th</sup> Generation are recipients of various awards. Their music and workshops share their life experiences and touch on topics such as teen suicide, culture and addictions.

**Early Registration**  
(until February 24, 2006): \$195 + \$13.65 GST = \$208.65 (under 20)  
(until February 24, 2006): \$395 + \$27.65 GST = \$422.65 (over 20)

**Regular Registration**  
(after February 24, 2006) \$295. + \$20.65 GST = \$315.65 (under 20) (after February 24, 2006) \$495. + \$34.65 GST = \$529.65 (over 20)



# Titles

(Continued from page 15.)

*Medicine River*. I need a location and a community. *Reservation Blues*.... in that situation, you get both an approximate location and the kind of atmosphere it generates. *Indian Killer*. What is this book about... don't be so quick to answer that one, young man!

My personal favorite (though written by a white person) is *How A People Die*. That certainly sets the tone, doesn't it?

On the more obscure side, *House Made of Dawn*. It won a Pulitzer, so it must mean something.

Be that as it may, I'm still sitting at home trying to figure out if *A Contemporary Gothic Indian Vampire Story* says what I want it to say as a title. Is it gripping? Kinda. Is it eye-catching? Could be. Will it force a person to grab it off the shelves and run screaming from the bookstore (after properly paying for it of course)? Possibly.

I've also given my book a traditional Indian name. Amongst my people it's known as Drew's-sad-attempt-to-cash-in-on-the-Harry-Potter-craze.

Maybe I should put that on the cover.

# Seats for Natives in House

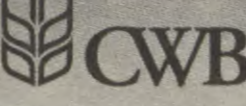
(Continued from page 15.)

"What on Earth is taking so long?" (In the case of Labrador) "Why is duress being applied here?" (In the case of Nunavik)

All this is to say that Canada's Aboriginal people should get collectively determined to get out of the dignified begging business. Their leaders should drive hard for electoral reform, and cause Parliament to accommodate 20 to 25 Aboriginal seats in Parliament.

They would then straighten out the federal government's tendency to design "one size fits all" policies for Indian, Inuit, and Metis, each of whose distinctness deserves tailor-made accommodations from government. Mind you, there will be occasions for "pan-Aboriginality" for some major issues. But these would be determined by Aboriginal MPs' realistic assessments of their collective interests, and not by others.

Assembly of First Nations National Chief Phil Fontaine could then appear, post-electoral reform, with Canada's Chief Electoral Officer Jean-Pierre Kingsley, encouraging Aboriginal voters to vote in federal elections!



**The Canadian Wheat Board**  
**La Commission canadienne du blé**

We are seeking an experienced individual to fill the following position:

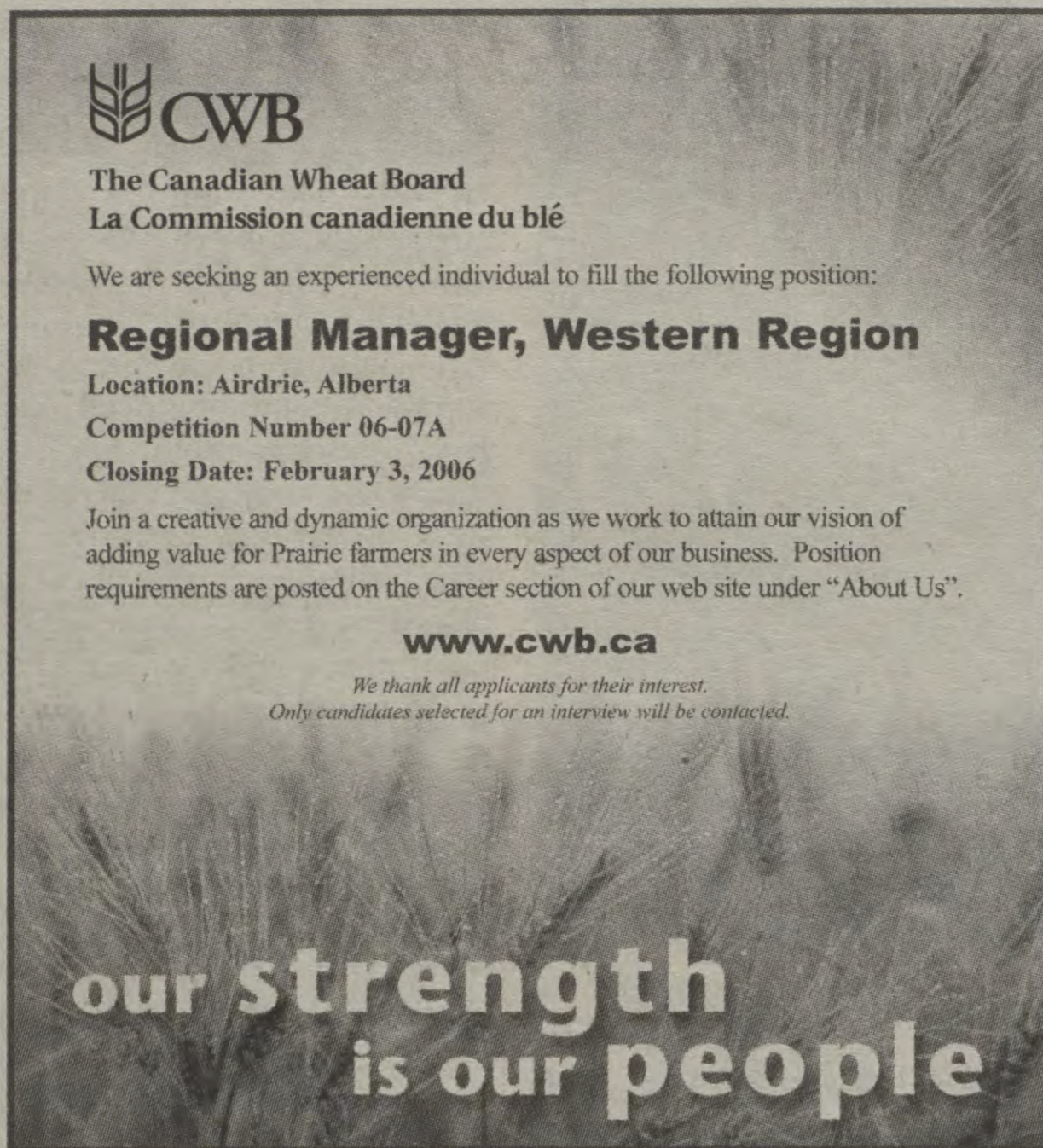
**Regional Manager, Western Region**

Location: Airdrie, Alberta  
Competition Number 06-07A  
Closing Date: February 3, 2006


Join a creative and dynamic organization as we work to attain our vision of adding value for Prairie farmers in every aspect of our business. Position requirements are posted on the Career section of our web site under "About Us".

[www.cwb.ca](http://www.cwb.ca)

*We thank all applicants for their interest.  
Only candidates selected for an interview will be contacted.*



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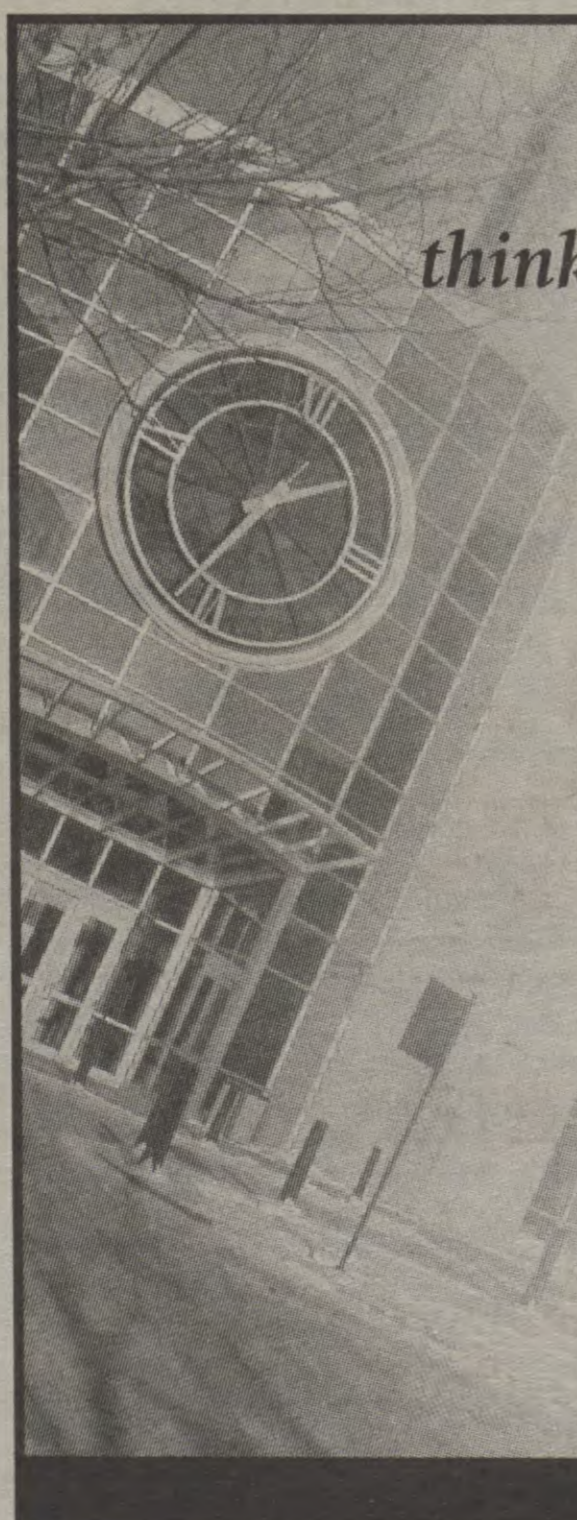


**ALBERTA EDUCATION AND ADVANCED EDUCATION**  
**ATTENTION POTENTIAL CONTRACTORS**

A number of Branches of Alberta Education and Advanced Education are seeking individuals and organizations interested in providing contract services. Parties that are interested may complete a response package in one or more of the categories listed below:

RFQ# AE-05-01	Education Consultative Services
RFQ# AE-05-02	Writing and Developing Services
RFQ# AE-05-03	Editorial Services
RFQ# AE-05-04	Illustration Services
RFQ# AE-05-05	Graphic Arts Services
RFQ# AE-05-06	Review Services
RFQ# AE-05-07	Presentation Design Services
RFQ# AE-05-08	Translation/Adaptation Services
RFQ# AE-05-09	Facilitation Services
RFQ# AE-05-10	Videography Services
RFQ# AE-05-11	Educational Multimedia Services
RFQ# AE-05-12	Desktop Publishing Services
RFQ# AE-05-13	Digital Audio/Sound Services
RFQ# AE-05-18	Psychometric Services
RFQ# AE-05-19	Examination Services
RFQ# AE-05-24	Performance Measurements and Planning Consultative Services
RFQ# AE-05-34	Management Consultative Services
RFQ# AE-05-36	Photographic Services
RFQ# AEHRS-05-01	Human Resource Program Services
RFQ# STB-LTR-001	Research Services

A resource list of pre-qualified vendors will be developed from the successful response packages that are received and will be used in the selection of contractors as projects are initiated. Interested candidates can view the full Requests for Qualifications freely at the Alberta Purchasing Connection website at [www.purchasingconnection.ca](http://www.purchasingconnection.ca) or call (780) 415-2227. Please check the Alberta Purchasing Connection website for other procurement opportunities that will be posted in the future.



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Now accepting applications for September enrolment. Space is limited.

For more information, visit us on the web [www.MacEwan.ca](http://www.MacEwan.ca).

[www.MacEwan.ca](http://www.MacEwan.ca)



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*Aboriginal Peoples Television Network is sharing our peoples journey, celebrating our cultures, inspiring our children and honouring the wisdom of our Elders.*

Aboriginal applicants encouraged to apply.

**MANAGER OF ACCOUNTING WINNIPEG**  
Competition Number 05/06-17

Reporting to the Chief Financial Officer in Winnipeg, we have a career opportunity for an experienced individual; who will be responsible for the overall integrity of Aboriginal Peoples Television Network's financial data and reporting requirements. You must have an accounting designation, with previous experience in a similar management role; and a true and comprehensive understanding of the mission and mandate of Aboriginal Peoples Television Network.

Closing Date: January 20, 2006, 5 PM (CST)

Please e-mail your résumé, in confidence, quoting Competition Number 05/06-17 to: **Debbie Isaak, Manager of HR Administration & Recruitment** at: [disaak@aptn.ca](mailto:disaak@aptn.ca), or fax to 204-947-9307.

**MANAGER OF LABOUR RELATIONS WINNIPEG**  
Competition Number 05/06-18

Reporting to the Director of Human Resources in Winnipeg, we have a career opportunity for an experienced individual; who will compile, maintain, and process information relating to staffing, recruitment, training, labour relations, performance evaluations and classifications as it applies to unionized employees. Additionally this position is responsible for the investigation of unionized employee complaints, grievances, and preparation of information to support arbitration proceedings and collective bargaining. The incumbent is a member of the APTN Management bargaining team.


**Requirements:**

- A university degree in Human Resources or a certificate in Human Resource Management is highly desirable. A minimum of 3 years previous experience in all facets of Labour Relations is essential.
- Excellent verbal and written interpersonal, and communication skills, due to the sensitive, confidential and personal nature of this position.

Closing Date: February 17, 2006, 3 PM (CST)

Please e-mail your résumé, in confidence, quoting Competition Number 05/06-18 to: **Ken Earl, Director Human Resources** at: [kearl@aptn.ca](mailto:kearl@aptn.ca), or fax to 204-947-9307.

For detailed position descriptions visit: [www.mbjobs.ca](http://www.mbjobs.ca). Search Keyword: Aboriginal Peoples Television Network.



**JOB POSTING**  
**DIRECTOR OF ADULT EDUCATION**

Urban Circle Training Centre, Inc. is seeking a visionary and highly motivated individual to fill this full-time position effective August, 2006. The successful candidate will be qualified to fulfill the responsibilities of Director of Adult Education and will be part of Urban Circle's leadership team which reports directly to Urban Circle's Board of Directors and to the Adult Learning and Literacy Branch of Manitoba Advanced Education and Training. Urban Circle is an established community-based, non-profit Aboriginal Adult Learning Centre currently in its 16<sup>th</sup> year of operation with over 120 students enrolled annually. Urban Circle delivers holistic education and training ranging from Stage 3 Literacy to College certificate programs in partnership with Seven Oaks School Division and Red River College.

The Director of Education will be responsible for the administration of the accredited literacy and high school programming, curriculum development and implementation and coordination of certified Red River College programs. The successful candidate will be mentored in Urban Circle's holistic model of education and share in the decision-making, human resource management, public relations and share in the responsibility for the overall direction of the organization with Urban Circle's Acting Director.

**QUALIFICATIONS**

- Masters Degree in Education or completion of M.Ed. by May, 2007 with focus on Adult Education
- Applied knowledge of Aboriginal customs, values, beliefs and in-depth knowledge of Aboriginal cultural and social issues
- Experience in curriculum development
- Demonstrated academic leadership and supervisory experience
- Understanding of and commitment to holistic education
- Commitment to and experience in creating, managing and maintaining collaborative education partnerships
- Strong team-building skills
- Strong interpersonal and public relations skills
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Effective problem-solving and decision-making abilities
- Proficient in computer applications, email, internet

**DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2006 at 4:30 p.m.**

Please forward resumes to: The Selection Committee - Norma Spence, Chair  
Urban Circle Training Centre  
519 Selkirk Avenue  
Winnipeg, Manitoba R2W 2M6  
Fax: (204) 582-6439

For questions please contact Eleanor Thompson at (204) 589-4433, Ext. 224.  
*Only those selected for an interview will be notified. Aboriginal candidates are encouraged to voluntarily self-identify as being of Aboriginal descent.*

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"The strength of Many Nations protecting our future"

[ careers & training ]

# Canadian Forces calls

Interested in a challenge? The Canadian Forces offers three programs for Aboriginal youth that are intended to encourage consideration of the forces as a part-time or full-time career option.

The first two part-time programs are Bold Eagle and RAVEN. They are designed to allow youth to enroll in the Primary Reserve and complete basic training during the summer months of July to August. Not only do participants gain valuable skills and training within the Canadian Forces, they also experience working alongside Aboriginal youth from

across Western Canada.

There is also a culture camp component as the course culminates with a feast and powwow. After the summer training, there is an option to continue serving part-time in a Reserve unit. The Army Reserve runs Bold Eagle whereas the Navy conducts RAVEN.

The third program is the Canadian Forces Aboriginal Entry Program or CFAEP. This program is designed around the Pre-Recruit Training Course (PRTC) whereby Aboriginal youth can experience and adjust to life in the forces without

having to enroll in the organization. The three-week PRTC during the month of September introduces candidates to the forces as they complete activities similar to what they would encounter on an actual basic training course. It is hoped that by their experiences on PRTC, they would consider joining the Regular Force as a full-time career. Like Bold Eagle and RAVEN, there is an integrated Aboriginal culture component.

Anyone interested in any of these programs should contact the Canadian Forces Recruiting Centre at 1-800-856-8488.

Find more careers online at:  
**www.ammsa.com**



## BRING STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TO THE WORLD'S MOST DELICIOUS HEALTH FOOD

In this uniquely co-operative buying, processing and marketing organization, you will whet the world's appetite for outstanding taste and quality. Based in Winnipeg, Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation (FFMC) is a \$60 million Crown Corporation with strong domestic and niche export markets particularly in the U.S., Finland and France. You'll take the brand and the business to the next level as . . .

# PRESIDENT & C.E.O.

Maintaining an established reputation for quality, service and customer value while maximizing returns to fisher stakeholders will be the cornerstones of your forward planning and leadership vision. With a state-of-the art processing plant, an experienced and dedicated staff and 40-50 million pounds of catch annually, FFMC is fully integrated and well-positioned to expand its presence in the freshwater fish marketplace. Working with an engaged Board, you'll ensure that the business is on course for developing new products/markets, producing cost-effectively and keeping close relationships across its diverse stakeholder groups.

An accomplished food industry executive in an export-focused, marketing-oriented business, you will see the next generation potential of FFMC and inject the excitement, team-building and governance it needs to expand its leadership position. All responses to The Caldwell Partners are confidential. Please indicate your interest in Project 8228 through the Opportunities section of www.caldwell.ca, by email to resumes@caldwell.ca, or in writing to Suite 2110, 360 Main Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3C 3Z3.

## THE CALDWELL PARTNERS

TORONTO · CALGARY · HALIFAX · OTTAWA · VANCOUVER · MONTRÉAL · WINNIPEG

The Mobile Diabetes Screening Initiative (MDSi) is an interdisciplinary health professional team serving Aboriginal and remote communities in Northern Alberta.

We currently have two job openings:

### MDSi Field Nurse MDSi Field Team Member

Salary and comprehensive benefits will be offered. Travel is required.

Submit resume by February 16<sup>th</sup> to:  
Hiring Committee, 8308-114 Street Suite 4100  
University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB T6G 2V2

For detailed job descriptions  
please go to  
[www.ammsa.com](http://www.ammsa.com)

Email: [mdsi@ualberta.ca](mailto:mdsi@ualberta.ca)

Telephone: (780) 407-1627 • Fax: (780) 407-1715



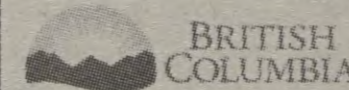
COME FOR  
YOUR CAREER,  
STAY FOR THE  
COMMUNITY.

Teamwork. Clinical expertise and evidence-based practices. These are the tools you will bring to the new **British Columbia Child and Youth Mental Health Plan (CYMH)**. This unique Plan and your participation in it will be instrumental in the change and growth of mental health services for the children, youth and families of this province.

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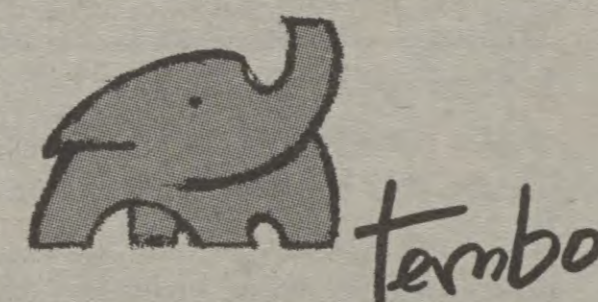
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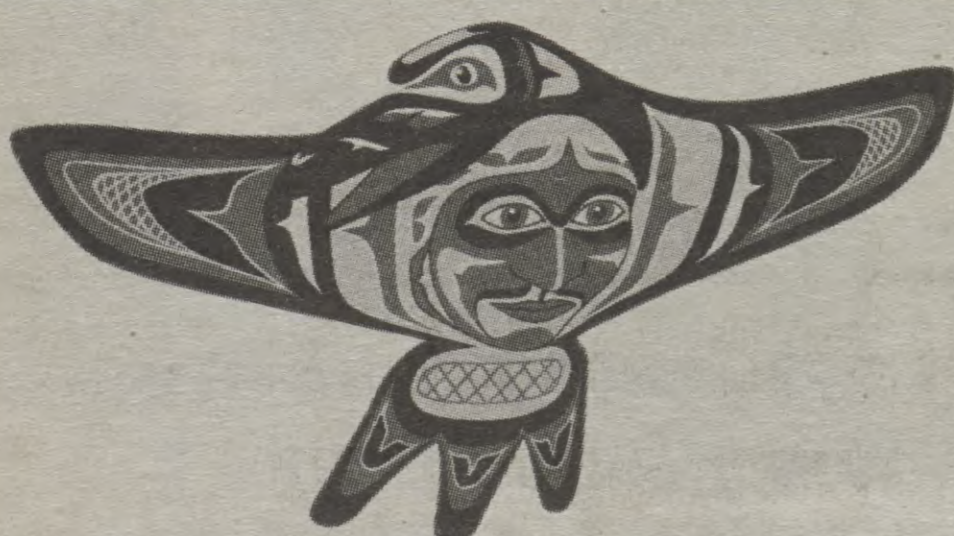
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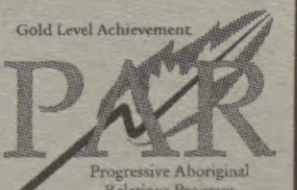
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# The betterment of his community inspired might have been lawyer

By Cheryl Petten

Dennis Franklin Cromarty was born on Dec. 2, 1947 in Pickle Crow, Ont. a now non-existent mining town where his father, Isaac, worked in the gold mines. Both his parents were from the north. His father was from Big Trout Lake, his mother, Eila was born in York Factory but grew up in Big Trout. The couple had nine children. Dennis was the second youngest.

Times were tough in Pickle Crow, and became even more so when Dennis' father passed away, leaving his mother to raise her children on her own. Dennis' childhood home was not much more than a tarpaper shack. Living in those conditions, he knew there had to be a better way of life, for himself and his family, and for all First Nation people.

Living in poverty in the shadow of a gold mine, Dennis recognized the inequity. The provincial government was making money from the resources but the Anishnawbe people, whose land the resources were being taken from, were getting nothing. He saw the inequity, and he wanted to help change it.

Dennis attended Pelican Lake residential school, located near Sioux Lookout, then went to high school in Sault Ste. Marie. From 1967 to 1972, he was at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay studying economics. Midway through his studies, the federal government tabled its White Paper on Indian Policy, which outlined the government plan for the assimilation of Canada's Aboriginal people. That document, and the strong reaction it elicited from Aboriginal leaders across the

country, further raised Dennis' awareness of Aboriginal rights.

Though education was important to Dennis, so too was

working to improve the lives of First Nation people. A friend who worked with the Indian Friendship Centres of Ontario approached him, asking him to help set up a court worker program to assist Aboriginal people who were in trouble with the law. The high number of First Nation people entering the justice system concerned Dennis, and he left school to dedicate himself to the project.

Dennis was also considering entering law school at around this time, and even travelled to Winnipeg to write his Law School Admission Test. But faced with a choice between fulfilling his own goal of becoming a lawyer or working to help his people by establishing the court worker program, Dennis chose the latter, seeing it as a more urgent priority.

Once the court worker program was up and running, Dennis went to work for Grand Council Treaty #9, the forerunner to today's Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN). He worked there from 1974 to 1976, during which time he helped the council establish its community and economic development program. He served as director of the community development program from 1976 to 1979, and also stepped in when needed to act as interim grand chief.

He was elected as grand chief in 1979 and held the post until 1981.

It was in this role that Dennis travelled to Holland in November 1980 to make a presentation during the Fourth Russell Tribunal on the rights of the Indians in the Americas on behalf of the people of Grand Council Treaty #9. He told the tribunal that the federal and provincial governments were violating the treaty and Aboriginal rights of his people. After the presentation, the tribunal ruled that the actions of both levels of government put

them in violation of international law.

After his term as grand chief, Dennis was appointed commissioner of the newly renamed NAN. His role was to examine the issues affecting the people of NAN, be they economic, environmental or rights-based. From 1983 to 1984, he was NAN's constitutional advisor and worked with other Aboriginal leaders during the first ministers conferences on Aboriginal rights.

In 1984, he was again elected as NAN grand chief, serving for two terms. During his time in office he negotiated the Memorandum of Understanding between NAN and the provincial and federal governments, designed to pave the way for negotiation of Native self-government.

Dennis went into business as a private consultant in 1989, and was soon appointed to the Osnaburgh/Windigo Tribal Justice Review Committee, which was struck to examine past and present services provided within the Windigo Tribal Council's member communities in the areas of policing, justice and social services. The committee tabled its report, *Tay Bway Win: Truth, Justice and First Nations*, in July 1990.

It wasn't long after his departure from NAN that Dennis found himself back again, this time as president and chief executive officer of the Nishnawbe Aski Development Fund (NADF), created to help NAN members wanting to start their own businesses and working to assist NAN communities to improve their economies and quality of life.

As part of his duties with the NADF, Dennis became involved in the Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce where he worked to create a bridge between First Nation and non-Native

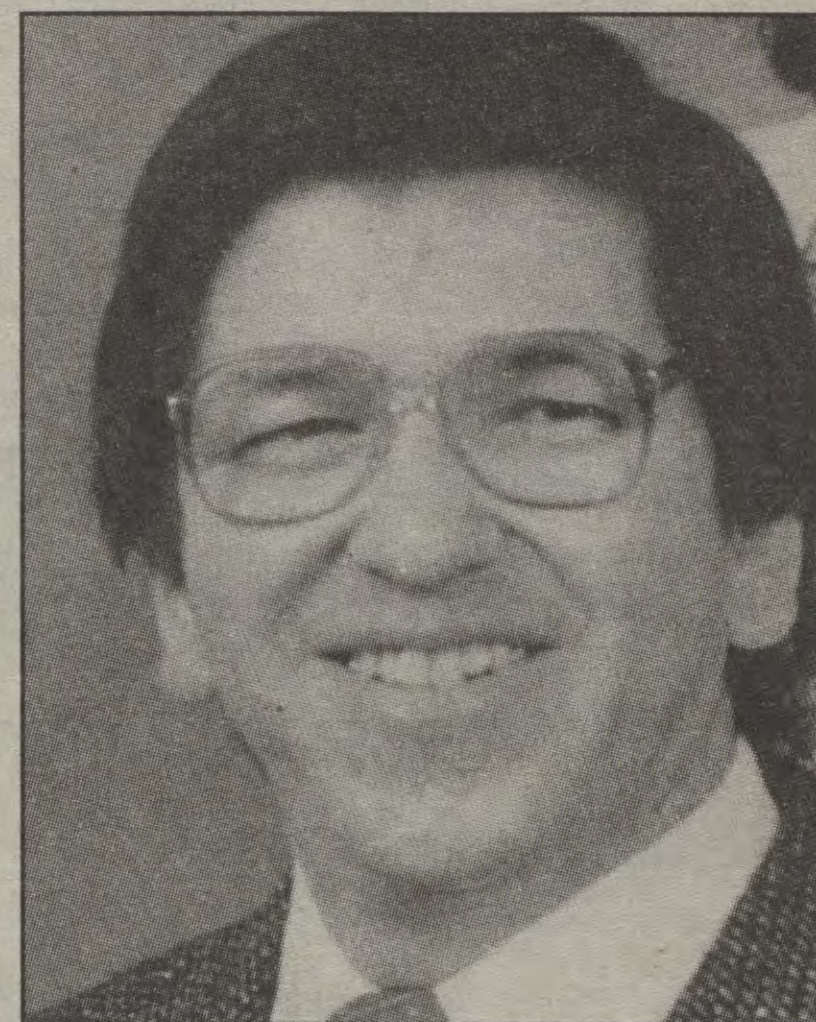
businesses. The results of those efforts can still be seen today in the close working relationship that still exists between NAN and the chamber.

In 1991, Dennis took on another role on top of his work with the NADF, that of NAN's chief negotiator in discussions on self-government with the provincial and federal governments.

Throughout his career, in whatever role to took on, Dennis had a reputation for being an easy person to work with. He was very approachable and always ready to provide direction. He expected everyone he worked with to put in their best effort, and under his leadership, they were inspired to meet his expectations.

He was also known as a man of compassion, and as someone who could reach out to youth and have them open up and accept him. He respected the traditional role of women in First Nation society and always tried to ensure that women were involved in any discussion processes. He had a great sense of humor, and never hesitated to laugh at himself whenever things didn't turn out as planned.

Those who knew him also remember him as a man of vision, providing ideas for others to build upon into the future. He spoke of ways to give First Nations youth opportunities not available to past generations by setting up First Nation learning institutions in larger centres like Thunder Bay and using technology to bring the



Dennis Franklin Cromarty put his career plans to become a lawyer on hold to help open a court worker program for his community. He never got back to law school, but he achieved greatness.

learning opportunities available there out to northern reserves. He also provided the vision for creation of Oskki-Pimache-O-Win, the post-secondary institute that provides training in northern Ontario.

On Feb. 3, 1993 Dennis suffered a fatal heart attack. But though he is gone, others continue to be guided by his vision and inspired by his dedication to his people.

In 2000, one of his visions was realized when a high school opened in Thunder Bay to provide educational opportunities to First Nation students from across Northwestern Ontario. The school, which has as its goals the improvement of the graduation rate among First Nations students while helping them develop a sense of identity and pride in their First Nations heritage, was named the Dennis Franklin Cromarty high school.

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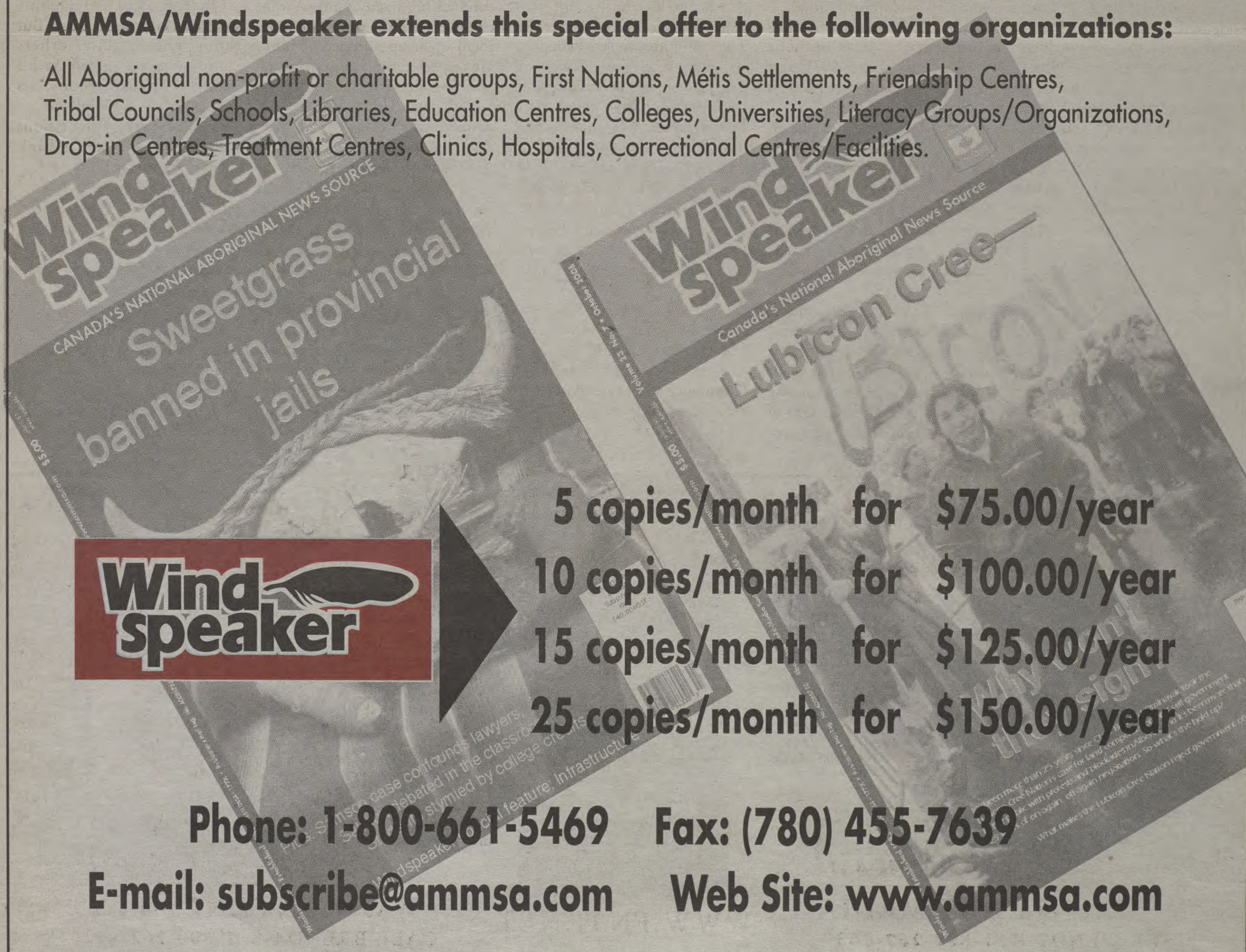
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