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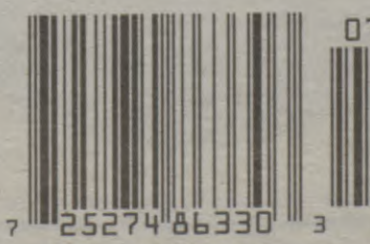
Chief Gibby meets the Governator

California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger was welcomed to British Columbia by Squamish First Nations Chief Gibby Jacob with an Aboriginal ceremony of drumming, singing and dancing. During his May 31 visit, Schwarzenegger and B.C. Premier Gordon Campbell signed a memorandum of understanding on climate change. In a fight against global warming, the agreement sets out a commitment to build a hydrogen highway along the West Coast by 2010, which would create a chain of hydrogen gas stations from B.C. to California.

Inside: Business Quarterly

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Tim Hortons.

Tim Hortons Letter of Apology

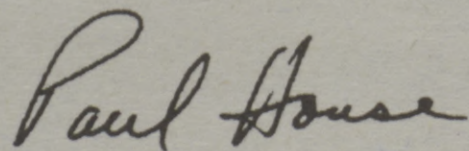
I wish to personally apologize for the offensive sign posted by a young staff member at a Lethbridge store. This type of behaviour is not tolerated, and is absolutely not reflective of Tim Hortons.

I would also like to publicly apologize to Chief Charles Weasel Head of the Blood Tribe and to Chief Reg Crowshoe of the Piikani (Peigan) Nation, and to all of the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada. I have contacted both Chiefs, and we are meeting so that I can express my extreme regret in person, with respect to this incident.

To demonstrate the seriousness of the matter, the employee was immediately disciplined and suspended. The employee understands the severity of what has happened and has expressed remorse and since personally apologized to the Aboriginal staff members at the location.

Tim Hortons will continue to reinforce the importance of its Workplace Harassment policy and use this incident as an opportunity to educate and communicate the importance of respect in the workplace and in the community.

Sincerely,



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CEO and President

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Bert Crowfoot

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Canada

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Claims plan has limits 8

Prime Minister Stephen Harper booked the Railroad Room at the House of Commons on the afternoon of June 12 to announce his government's new plan to deal with the backlog of specific claims.

Ipperwash Inquiry report lauded 8

Sharon McIvor is a full 6 (1) again, and her son finally gained his Indian status at the age of 35, after a ruling against the Indian Registrar by British Columbia Supreme Court Justice Carol J. Ross late last year.

Small turnout endorses huge resolution 9

Roseau River (Manitoba) Chief Terrance Nelson was praised by his fellow chiefs on May 23 as the political language that would give life to his December resolution in favour of the national day of action (NDOA) was debated and passed.

Play provides sex education roadmap 13

What if you learned all you knew about cars from watching flashy car ads on TV, hearing one or two dull lectures about steering wheels and brake pedals, and getting mumbled warnings from your parents about driving off a cliff—and then one day someone asked you if you wanted to drive?

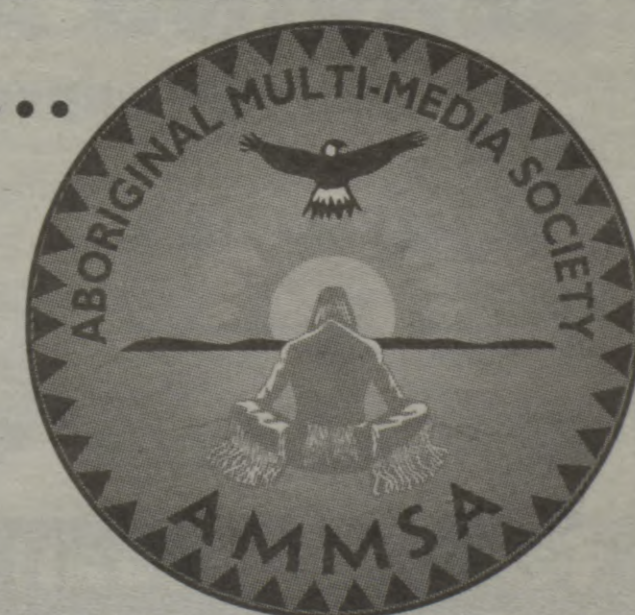
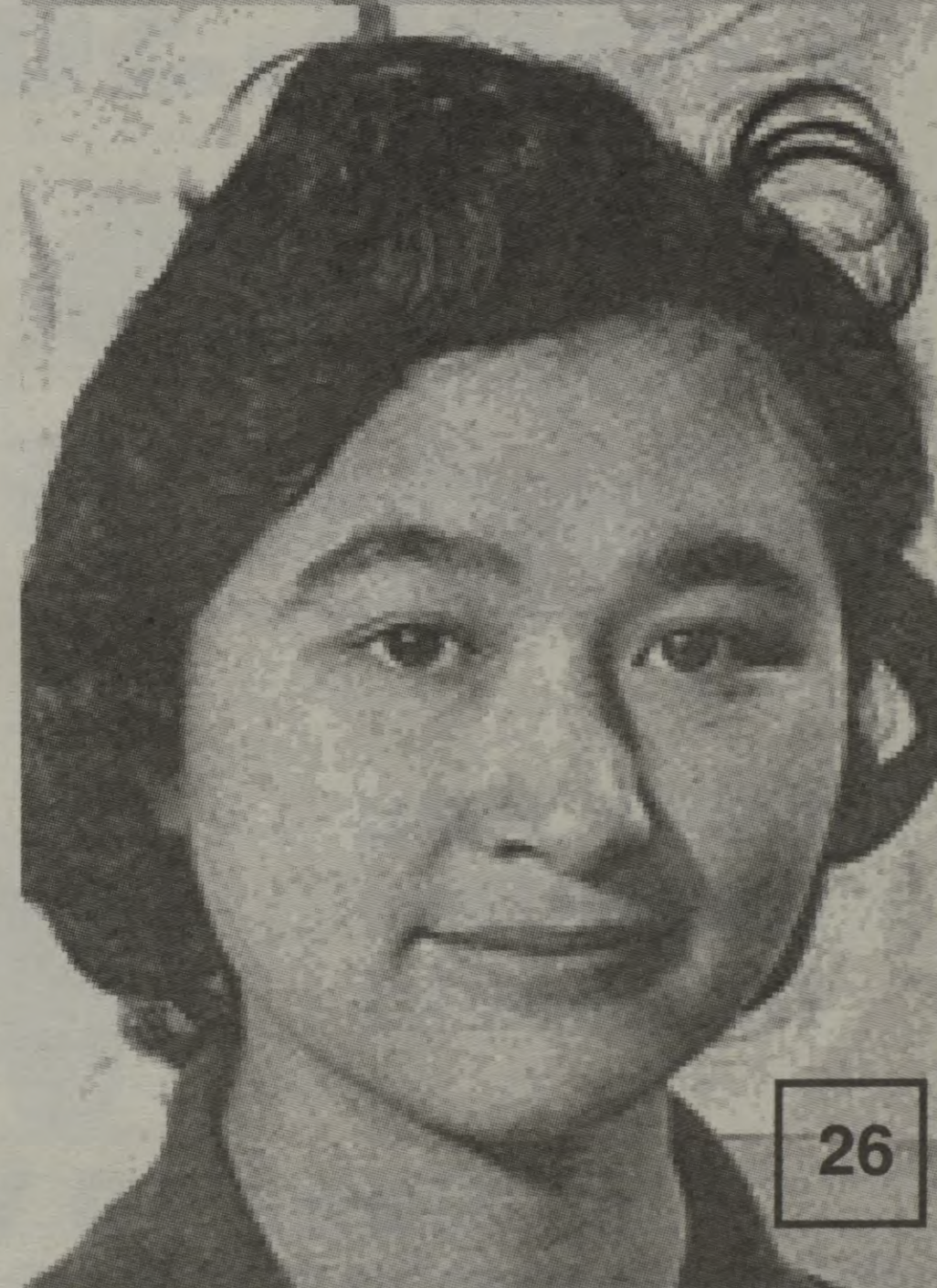
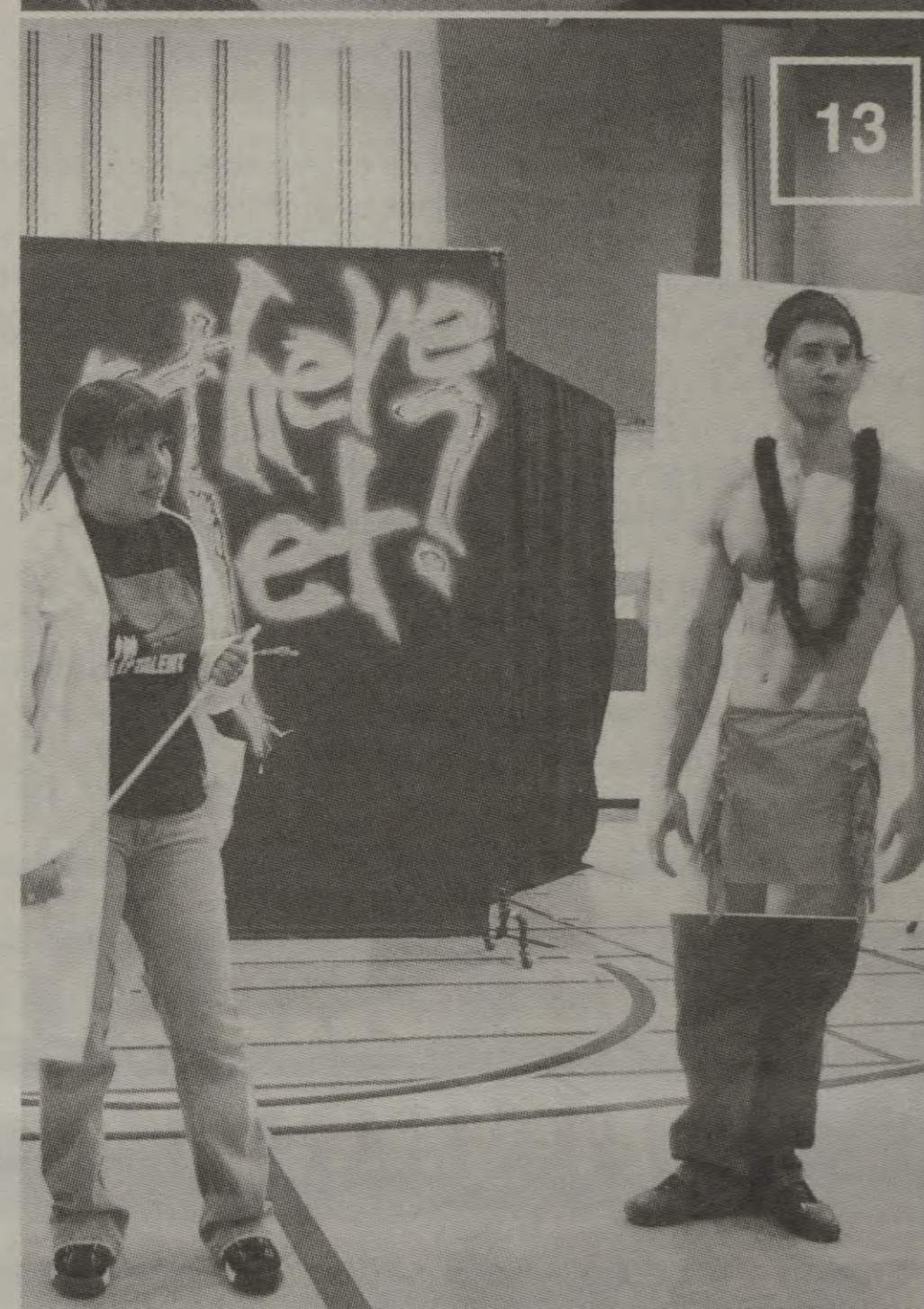
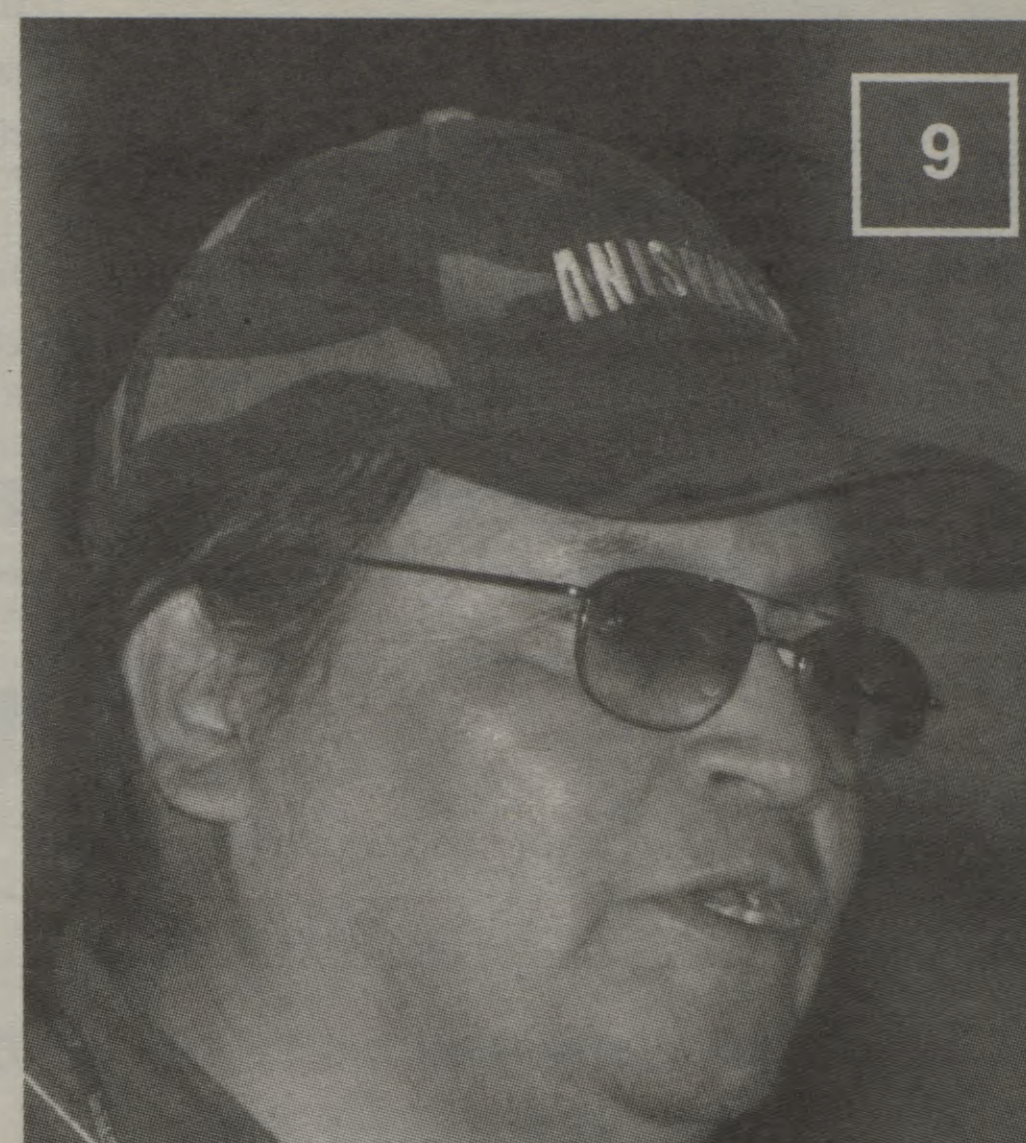
Saving Languages 22 & 23

A paper released by Statistics Canada in May paints a bleak picture of the future of Aboriginal languages in Canada, reporting that more than 75 per cent of Aboriginal people in the country are unable to conduct a conversation in an Aboriginal language.

Departments

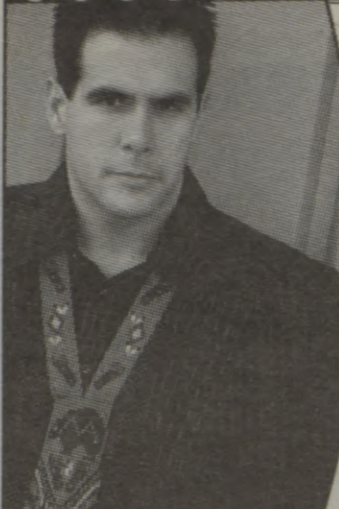
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Throughout her life, Mary Cousins wore many hats. She was a devoted daughter and granddaughter and a loving mother. She was a nurse, a teacher, a journalist, an ambassador for the North and an Inuit rights activist.



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Connecting the dots

The long-awaited report from the chief commissioner of the Ipperwash Inquiry, Justice Sidney Linden, was released to great — and well-deserved — fanfare and accolades.

And in British Columbia, a less experienced jurist struck down Section 6 of the Indian Act as unconstitutional. If the federal government can't convince an appellate court to overturn Madame Justice Carol Ross' trial level decision, it will obliterate the federal government's precariously jury-rigged system for dealing with the question of who gets Indian status and who doesn't.

In both cases, the decisions took a lot longer than usual to emerge.

Veteran Aboriginal legal observers noted that in both cases, powerful people were watching very closely.

We suspect the delays were an indication that the jurists were aware of that scrutiny. Lawyers often joke nervously about career-limiting moves by judges and other public officials; moves that offend the sensitivities of the protectors of the status quo. So to see both jurists agonize over their important tasks and then do the right thing is encouraging, even inspiring.

There's no way to know for sure if the two members of the judiciary really were feeling the heat, because it is not considered seemly in Canadian society to question judges. They are above the fray, immune from the kind of public accountability to which other public servants are subjected.

But it seems that whenever a judge is asked to hear a case that will deal with the challenges that Indigenous peoples in Canada pose to the Canadian establishment, the tension goes up. The two judges in question chose integrity and courage over going along and getting along, and that is expected from people who've risen to such high stations in their lives and careers. But it's not something that you'll see everywhere you look as you survey the daily actions of public servants in this country.

During final arguments last summer, lawyers representing former Ontario premier Mike Harris told Justice Linden that he did not have to deal with the question of whether the former premier uttered a racial slur and then repeatedly lied when he denied it. He was told he didn't have to go there; that it wasn't part of his mandate.

Lawyers representing the Ontario Provincial Police told him that he didn't have to deal with questions of racist words and acts by the police. They gave him plenty of suggestions on how to avoid the issue.

He had an out. But he chose not to take it.

Madame Justice Ross was urged by federal lawyers to turn away Sharon McIvor's application to strike down Section 6 of the Indian Act. The Crown argued that McIvor suffered no injury when she was prevented from passing on Native status to her son. The Crown argued there is no right to transmit status. It's only a matter of statute and therefore no rights have been denied. The Crown raised a number of ingenious, if self-serving, arguments. The judge could have allowed herself to be persuaded and taken the safe way out.

But she did not.

And Prime Minister Stephen Harper says he has a solution for ending the Crown's conflict of interest in deciding specific claims against itself. In this plan a so-called "independent tribunal" is to be made up of "federally-appointed" retired or sitting judges.

Despite the admirable actions of the two judges mentioned above, "federally appointed" is, by definition, not independent.

Politicians appoint judges and those judges are part of the Canadian establishment against which land claims are filed. We've seen too much evidence of what is wrong with that approach over the decades with too many court decisions that dismiss the Indigenous perspective out of hand. That's one of the reasons why the actions of Justices Linden and Ross are so noteworthy. They went beyond that. The very fact that the specific claims process is so dysfunctional is proof that government wants to maintain ultimate control.

If the government is solely responsible for appointing members of an "independent" tribunal, then there is no acceptable check or balance to ensure that judges who ignore the pressure to go along and get along won't get skipped over when appointment time comes.

Only a truly independent tribunal with equal influence from both First Nations and the government of Canada will get the job done.

Everything else is a charade, something the national chief, the minister and prime minister know full well.

We say go back to the drawing board gentlemen.

Dudley George remembered

Dear Editor:

Part of my job is to maintain a fairly strong awareness of current events and issues with regard to First Nations, Aboriginal policy, treaty issues, land claims, etc. As such, I decided to read the commissioner's statements from the release of the Ipperwash Inquiry findings, May 31. In it, he gives an overview of the issues that were at play that fateful day when Dudley George was shot by Acting Sgt. Kenneth Deane.

In reading Commissioner Linden's articulate but careful and respectful words, I was brought to that sandy parking lot that day and was overwhelmed with the feelings and energies that certainly must have been percolating and escalating.

I contemplated the backroom meeting that the premier called and how that insensitivity trickled down to the front lines through the chains of command, thereby blurring the judgment and objectivity of the people on the ground and further defining the lines in the sand.

I also shed tears for the late Mr. George who made the greatest sacrifice in bringing these issues to the fore of Canadian consciousness. Not so much tears of sadness and regret as tears of gratitude for Dudley as he succeeded in what he set out to do that day: raise awareness and increase understanding of First Nations' issues, specifically Stoney Point's struggle for the return of Aazhoodena — their traditional land.

The understanding and sensitivity displayed by Commissioner Sidney B. Linden in this simple overview of the inquiry and its findings, as well as his own personal views on the subject, are inspiring in that they fill me with hope. As I felt Commissioner Linden's commitment to understand our people and our relationship with the land and the dysfunction of the government and police actions that week, I am inspired that change is indeed possible.

I am ever hopeful that in the work we do to ensure our children's futures, that we do not have to belittle, judge, demean or disrespect those that would stand in the way of our progress. That we might learn from the loss of Dudley George, who was only doing something to show his belief of the silent, unbroken and intrinsic relationship that each of us as Aboriginal or First Nations peoples has to the land.

His loss spurred a government to seek change, a police force to begin a process of building community relationships and heal the wounds. The loss of Dudley George and the principles for which he gave his life should be a testament to us all as we near the National Day of Action.

In our actions, let us be respectful and proud of whom we are. Let us not stoop to rake those who would oppose us through the mud. Let us stand instead, together and proud, and think not on our stewardship of the land as a ticket to riches or resource exploitation. Let us remember our sacred past and present day spirituality, which encircles Mother Earth as she circles the sun.

Let us remember that it is our intentions, our thoughts that drive our actions. As we prepare in our various ways to bring attention to our struggles, let us remember the late Dudley George and those others who have gone on before us. In our sacred ways of invoking the grandfathers and grandmothers, let us ensure that we walk as they would have us walk this June 29.

Sheldon Hughes,
Edmonton

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[rants and raves]

Stepping forward

Dear Editor:

I am encouraged by the work of our Canadian prime minister, Stephen Harper, and German Chancellor Merkel for their efforts to shoot for absolute carbon dioxide (CO₂) reduction targets.

The G8 leaders have taken a necessary, if tentative and informal, step forward. The world's citizens will be looking to them to apply all their skills and energies to ensuring that, with the UN's help, a firm and reliable program of climate change action is put in place before the end of this year.

Inuit would have preferred full commitment to move on the German chancellor's proposals (50 per cent reduction in emission levels by 2050, keeping projected temperature increases to no more than two degrees Celsius).

In the absence of that commitment, we welcome the fact that the United States government is acknowledging that climate change is real. But that is only a start: real problems require real action, and sooner rather than later.

It is true that the entire global community must participate in helping to solve this problem, but it is important that the most industrialized and most wealthy countries show leadership, and leadership through commitments and action, not just words at a high level of generality.

The Canadian government has recently shown some positive movement on the issue of climate change, and we welcome that, but there is an enormous amount of further work to be done and we have to get on with it: tomorrow begins yesterday.

This issue of climate change eclipses in its importance the fractious, insular and partisan dimensions of many aspects of international and domestic politics, and Inuit people appeal for the putting aside of narrow or convention-bound thinking.

Climate change is happening now in the Arctic. In some regions we are moving buildings because of melting permafrost or eroding shorelines. Inuit Elders find it more difficult to predict the weather because it is so erratic, and the changes are increasing the dangers and incidences of hunters falling through the ice while travelling. Arctic terrestrial and marine wildlife is being dramatically affected in different ways. The Northwest Passage may soon be ice-free and navigable in the summer, affecting Canadian sovereignty. Inuit are asking the Canadian government to engage them in a meaningful way to help them not only mitigate, but adapt to climate change.

Mary Simon, President
Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami

Making a house call

Dear Editor:

During question period, government House leader Peter Van Loan called on the Liberals to "stand up for democracy," this in reference to goings on in the Senate.

Whatever one thinks about the Senate, or the Liberals, ought not this "new government" first focus on cleaning up its own house in the Commons? Van Loan's dissembling protests aside, the joint seems as messy or worse than ever.

We have a prime minister that won't allow many of his cabinet ministers to answer questions; a government House leader who is apparently single handedly running Canada, given how frequently he stands up for questions directed at others; a defense minister that can't even defend himself; a best-selling book, *How to Disrupt Committees for Dummies* which needs no further comment; and a prime minister who quite willingly and frequently runs roughshod over democracy whether it's kicking out progressive conservatives with principles, or appointing to cabinet the unelected and Liberal turncoats who are bereft of them.

The depth of Van Loan and his leader's sanctimony appears bottomless.

Michael Watkins
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NWAC, INAC disagree over MRP

The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) is calling for a review of the current Matrimonial Real Property Solutions initiative (MRP). NWAC has attempted to contact Minister Jim Prentice of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) with their complaint, and have received no response.

NWAC is concerned that MRP legislation has been developed without their input. Prentice promised that NWAC would be fully engaged in the MRP process, but the women's group says that they have been "completely excluded."

NWAC president Beverley Jacobs said this has resulted in current MRP legislation that lacks the vital NWAC perspective.

"The department of Indian affairs has said to us that they are drafting legislation, and we were not included in that drafting process ... they said that we were no longer involved in drafting up the legislation"

A spokesperson for INAC said that NWAC hasn't been contacted for consultation because the MRP process hasn't yet begun.

Employment Web site cancelled

CareerPLACE, a site that connects Canada's Aboriginal community to jobs in businesses across the country, will no longer exist as of June 28.

The only thing that is certain right now is that the site is shutting down and no one seems to want to explain why. Industry Canada and Human Resources Development Canada were the two government ministries that funded the site. Spokespeople for both departments said that the decision to shut down the Web site was a result of cuts to the 2004 budget.

The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC), another partner in the initiative, was not informed of the decision to shut down. NWAC staff learned about the closure by chance on June 8, three years after the official budget cut for the site was made. Government departments generally make fiscal plans for the next three years.

SkillsNet, a larger Web site providing job postings for the Aboriginal community, will also see its funding end as a result of the 2004 budget cuts.

The government representatives refused to comment on the rationale behind the 2004 decisions, saying only that similar services are available through the Inclusion Network Career site and through the Aboriginal Human Resources Development Council of Canada (AHRDCC). The AHRDCC still has a link to CareerPLACE on its Web site, describing it as "The foremost national Aboriginal employment site, recently upgraded and now with excellent capabilities."

Repeated attempts to contact CareerPLACE administrators were unsuccessful.

First Nations not included

Industry Canada announced its intention to release frequency bandwidths for auction in a public notice Feb 16. The frequencies, also known as spectrum, are electromagnetic fields that allow the transfer of radio signals.

A similar auction occurred in 2001 where Canada successfully auctioned 52 licenses for spectrum, earning \$1.4 billion through the sale. This time the spectrum being auctioned falls on the Nlaka'pamux nation in British Columbia, territory of the Boston Bar First Nation.

"Allocation of spectrum within a traditional territory is no different than the allocation of land, water, timber, minerals, fish and all other natural resources. The need to meet the criteria defined by the Supreme Court of Canada also applies to spectrum," said John Warren, spokesman for the Boston Bar First Nation.

The band is asking to be involved in the decision-making process and that a percentage of the spectrum be allotted to them, similar to the system in the United States.

In response, Industry Canada said that the First Nations have been included.

"There has been a submission from a First Nations organization in the [Advanced Wireless System] AWS consultation. Policy consultations on spectrum issues, including the current consultation on AWS spectrum, are open to all interested parties in Canada and all views are taken into consideration," an Industry Canada spokesperson said.

"Being consulted is one thing, but being acknowledged as having a stake in our resource is something else," said Warren.

The spectrum is to be auctioned early 2008, and there is no news on whether the First Nation will be allowed to keep a percentage of the airwaves.

Claims plan has limits

[news]

By Paul Barnsley
Windspeaker Staff Writer

OTTAWA

Prime Minister Stephen Harper booked the Railroad Room at the House of Commons on the afternoon of June 12 to announce his government's new plan to deal with the backlog of specific claims.

Indian Affairs Minister Jim Prentice and Assembly of First Nations National Chief Phil Fontaine were on hand, smiling broadly as Harper unveiled the new plan. A press release from the Assembly of First Nations praised the new plan.

"This is a historic announcement, and a day to applaud the federal government on its commitment to resolving the growing land claims backlog," said Fontaine. "First Nations have been calling for a fair, independent, binding, and just approach to resolving specific land claims for decades now."

The next morning Prentice, without the prime minister, spent 28 minutes on a conference call with members of the Aboriginal press. He said there are 793 claims in the system right now and close to 50 per cent of those are from British Columbia. Most of those are smaller claims. One way of

speeding up resolution of the claims would be to "bundle" claims that are similar, he added.

Prentice said the current process is too expensive, using as an example a recent claim settled "in Quebec where the amount of the settlement was \$400,000. It took 13 years to resolve and the process costs were \$800,000. It simply doesn't make sense to be processing, analyzing and negotiating claims with that kind of inefficiency."

The minister said the June 29 national day of action had nothing to do with the government's decision to set this plan in motion.

"I think it's important for June 29 but this is not being done because of June 29. It's being done because this government, the prime minister and myself in particular, are committed to seeing justice in the claims process," he said.

The biggest criticism of all previous land claim processes is that Canada is in a conflict of interest when its own appointees rule on claims against Canada. Former minister Jane Stewart worked closely with the AFN in the late 1990s, trying to create a body that would have had members jointly appointed by the government and First Nations. But that process was

rejected by the central agencies of the federal government.

The tribunal that Prentice and Harper propose to create is still a federally-appointed body. But the Indian Affairs minister defended that move.

"Well, the individuals who are appointed are going to be judges, which is a step no one has ever taken before. They are people who have distinguished themselves sitting on the bench as superior court judges," he said. "The rationale behind that is that the judiciary has been very fair to First Nation interests and, I think everyone agrees, has shown enormous integrity of protecting the interests of all Canadians, including Aboriginal Canadians. These are the kinds of people that should be making the decisions and the system will be set up so they are."

Prentice hopes to have legislation ready for debate in the House of Commons by September and have the law passed by Christmas. He said he expects to have the first cases before the tribunal early in 2008.

The AFN appears to have the inside track on this process amongst the national Aboriginal groups. Prentice was asked if there'd be a role for the other organizations.

(See Claims page 12)

Ipperwash Inquiry report lauded

By Paul Barnsley
Windspeaker Staff Writer

FOREST, Ont.

Observers spent the last few months worrying that Justice Sidney Linden would avoid the most contentious issues in his final report on the Ipperwash Inquiry into the police shooting of Native land claim protester Dudley George. They were, however, delighted with the chief commissioner when his report was finally released on May 31.

Linden dealt head on with the issues of former premier Mike Harris' role in events leading up to the raid on Ipperwash Provincial Park in September 1995, as well as his now infamous, offensive comments about the Native people occupying the land there.

Harris era Ontario Natural Resources minister Charles Harnick shocked the inquiry last year when he said he heard the premier say he wanted "the fucking Indians out of the park" during a meeting of cabinet ministers in the premier's private dining room at Queen's Park, the Ontario legislature. Harris denied, during his testimony at the inquiry, that he said those words.

During his remarks as he formally released his report, Linden said "I have found that both the former premier and minister of natural resources made racist comments, in what has

become known as 'the dining room meeting,' although both denied making these offensive comments."

The Ontario judge also said "there is no doubt that the premier [Mike Harris] wanted the occupiers out of the park as soon as possible and the occupation ended, but the evidence does not support the claim that he interfered with the OPP's operation," later adding, "the speed at which the premier wished to end the occupation created an atmosphere that unduly narrowed the scope of the government's response to the occupation."

And Linden found that there is no doubt that police racism played a role in the tragedy.

"Cultural insensitivity and racism on the part of some of the OPP officers involved were evident both before and after Dudley George's death and created a barrier to establishing effective communication and to developing a level of trust with the occupiers which, in turn, made a timely, peaceful resolution of the occupation more difficult," he said.

Linden said the OPP response to "offensive coffee mugs and T-shirts containing racist imagery to commemorate the OPP's actions at Ipperwash ... was insufficient."

"Officers were either subject to internal, informal discipline or not disciplined at all," he said.

"Several incidents were not discovered or dealt with until years later when they were 'discovered' in the lead up to, or during, this inquiry. These circumstances call into question the disciplinary regime for this kind of conduct and the internal mechanisms for reporting it that were in place at that time."

But he reserved his harshest criticism for the federal government and pointed to federal delays in resolving land claims as the biggest factor in the fatal confrontation.

"Successive federal governments must bear the primary responsibility for the occupation," he said.

Linden made the point that many people shared the blame for the death.

"There is no doubt that OPP Acting Sgt. [Kenneth] Deane shot and killed Mr. George and nothing in this inquiry challenges or undermines this conviction. However, Acting Sgt. Deane should not have been in a position to shoot Mr. George in the first place," he said.

The commissioner made a number of recommendations in his four-volume report, among them the creation of a treaty commission of Ontario and a provincial ministry that deals only with Aboriginal Affairs.

Sam George spent 12 years pushing for the truth about the actions leading to his brother's death.

(see Ipperwash page 12)

Small turnout endorses huge resolution

By Paul Barnsley
Windspeaker Staff Writer

GATINEAU, Que.

Roseau River (Manitoba) Chief Terrance Nelson was praised by his fellow chiefs on May 23 as the political language that would give life to his December resolution in favour of the national day of action (NDOA) was debated and passed.

The adoption of the statement that framed the Assembly of First Nations' stand on the NDOA was about all the public business that was done during the special chiefs assembly at the Hilton Lac-Leamy in Gatineau, Que.

What is normally a three-day event was boiled down to one day, this year. Delegates arriving on the morning of May 22 to register were informed that the scheduled third day of the meeting had been scrapped and that the first day's activities would not begin until 1 p.m.

The first day was not called a "special assembly" as all Confederacies have been called since the AFN national executive members sought to embrace the letter of their charter after a long period of not doing so. Day 1 instead was called a "policy forum." No grand entry was held and the usual procedures were not followed. The time instead was mostly filled by presentations from members of the head table.

National Chief Phil Fontaine

started things on the first day. Fontaine began his remarks at 2:10 p.m., with an apology for the late start. He later said he and the executive members had been meeting that morning.

Fontaine's focus was clearly on the upcoming NDOA. With media attention rising, and focusing on the potential for violence and lawlessness, the chiefs saw it as necessary to issue a very carefully worded statement that clearly outlined the goals of the NDOA.

The debate on that matter happened on the second and final day of the gathering.

"What we're looking for is to leave here with a statement that clearly reflects all the diversity of our communities. The second thing we want to do is to reach out to Canadians so that they can know the true story of our people in this country," Fontaine told the chiefs as he welcomed them for Day 2.

"This is a special day for us. The decision we make here today can lead to a positive transformation of this country."

From the moment the chiefs arrived, they were urged to be unified and follow the executive's lead on this delicate political matter.

"It is time to speak with one voice, a clear and unified voice. And let's be very, very clear. There are people out there that are suggesting, very strongly in

some cases, that we are out for confrontation, that we are advocating violence, that we want to hurt people. We've never advocated confrontation or violence. I've never heard one of our leaders say that we want to hurt other people just because he has hurt. We're bigger than that," Fontaine said.

The national chief detailed a long list of complaints against the Conservative Party of Canada government, mentioning the refusal of the government to support the United Nations draft declaration on Indigenous peoples' rights, its decision to not go ahead with the Kelowna agreement, the refusal to apologize for the residential school system and many others.

"It shouldn't be a surprise to anyone that our people are as frustrated as they are," he added.

Fontaine pointed out that farmers regularly park their tractors on Wellington St., at the foot of Parliament Hill to demand better government assistance. He added that the transit strike in Montreal and the strike of bus drivers in Ottawa going on as he spoke had all led to public demonstrations.

"No one is suggesting that what they were doing was illegal and that they should be prosecuted. There isn't one voice that said these people don't have a right to do that," he said.

During the debate, a number

of interesting ideas were put forward by chiefs. Chief R. Donald Maracle of the Mohawks of the Bay Quinte (Ontario) suggested that the AFN executive lobby the government to allow the national chief to address Parliament.

As the morning progressed a consensus developed amongst the chiefs that the first draft of the statement being debated was too technical and "too wordy."

A two-hour lunchtime adjournment allowed the technicians and interested chiefs to boil it down into something more accessible. And when the assembly reconvened, the chiefs seemed to be happy with their work.

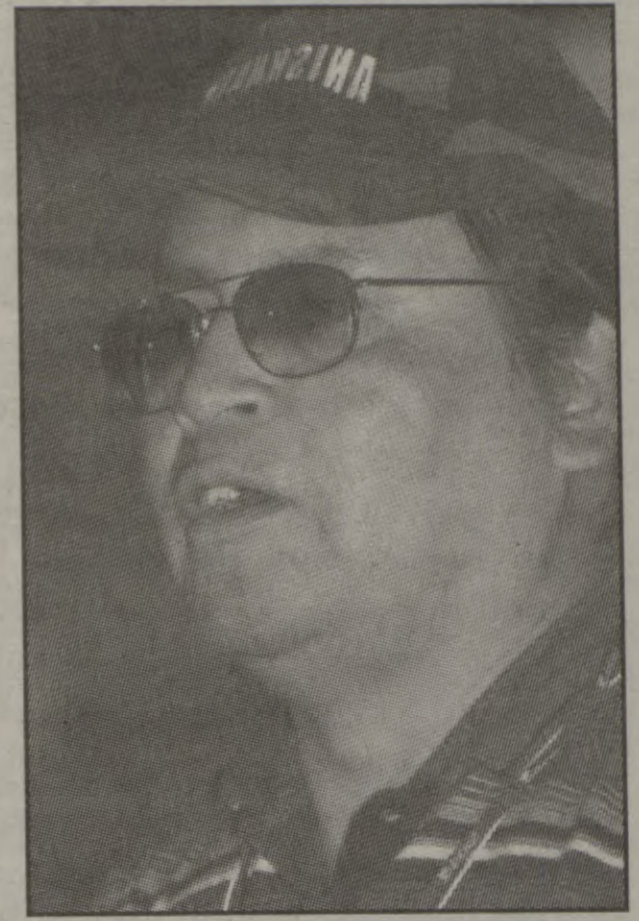
But Pine Creek First Nation (Manitoba) Chief Billy Jo Delaronde had one concern.

"We have over 600 chiefs in this country," he said. "We have less than 100 chiefs here."

He also was concerned that if he directed his people to engage in civil disobedience and they were arrested and charged, he'd be hard pressed to find money to help them pay legal fees. Eventually, he was the lone vote against approving the statement for that reason.

"Who is going to defend us if we land in jail?" he asked, later adding, "I won't put my people in harm's way and I hope nobody else does."

Other chiefs did not share his concerns. Penticton Indian Band



PAUL BARNSELEY

Chief Terry Nelson

(British Columbia) Chief Stewart Phillip said he was "honoured" to have the opportunity to second Nelson's resolution.

Sto:lo (British Columbia) Grand Chief Doug Kelly heaped praise on Nelson, who was attacked in the press for his straightforward manner of addressing the issues and his promise to disrupt rail traffic on the NDOA.

"I appreciate the way you talk," Kelly said to Nelson. "It's from the heart. You're direct. You're honest. You're straight up. Even though we're a couple of provinces away, you won't be standing alone and neither will the national chief."

The statement approved by the chiefs is entitled "First Nations call on all Canadians to stand with us on June 29."

Manitoba region questioned

By Paul Barnsley
Windspeaker Staff Writer

WINNIPEG

The management practices at the Manitoba regional office of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) are being scrutinized.

The region has rated below department-wide and government-wide standards in the Public Service Employee Survey in recent years.

The survey of federal government employees asks approximately 150 questions related to workplace conditions. A total of 105,839 employees across the federal civil service were surveyed in the most recent poll for 2005.

INAC had 2,754 responses across the country and Manitoba region had 130 employees respond. In more than 30 of the questions, Manitoba region employees' responses varied significantly from those offered by other departments of INAC and the federal government as a whole. The major complaints are in areas related to communication with management and staff/management relations.

An e-mail memo shows that Clair Dansereau, INAC's senior assistant deputy minister, who is

responsible for the regional offices, informed Manitoba Regional Director General Mary Blais in mid-May that INAC's new Chief Audit and Evaluation Executive, Anne Scotton, a former Privy Council official who recently joined the department, had hired Ottawa consulting firm Hallux Consulting, Inc., to conduct a "management practice assessment."

Among a number of specialties listed on the Hallux Web site is "value for money audits."

Management at the Manitoba office were "informed" that the process was about to begin in the e-mail, a choice of wording that bureaucratic sources say could be seen as an approach that lets the regional office know it has no choice in the matter.

"The project will include the current processes, practice and decision-making relating to human resources management, grant and contribution funding recommendations and internal financial management processes," Dansereau's e-mail stated.

Dansereau also informed Blais that, "A small committee composed of Anne Scotton, Marielle Doyon, Jim Quinn and myself will review the

results of the work."

All four members of that "small committee" are very senior managers based at INAC's headquarters in Hull, Que.

Doyon is the departmental director general. Her office deals with conflict resolution and corporate labour relations within the INAC bureaucracy.

Jim Quinn is the department's chief financial officer.

On May 22, an e-mail from Blais and Martin Egan, the region's associate regional director general, announced the upcoming review to their staff.

Windspeaker e-mailed Scotton with a number of questions but received no reply.

We asked what factors led to the decision to conduct a review of management practices in the region at this time. We also asked if similar reviews are underway for other INAC regional offices and if INAC would provide a copy of the statement of work for the consultants' contract.

Scotton is the third outsider to be asked to take a look at the regional office in recent months. Dansereau herself visited Winnipeg for a personal look at things on the ground.

That was followed by a 10-day visit by recently retired senior Ontario regional office official Bob Howson in May.

Citizen wants answers

By Paul Barnsley
Windspeaker Staff Writer

WINNIPEG

Alan Isfeld lives in Winnipeg, but he is a citizen of the Waywayseecappo First Nation, located about a four-hour drive from the Manitoba capital. He sees signs of trouble in his home community, but says he can't get the regional office to provide any answers or any assistance.

He provided this publication with hundreds of pages of documents that he said were sent to him by band members living on reserve who were afraid to speak out for fear of retribution. The documents included Manitoba Court of Queen's Bench records that show more than 40 court cases where chief and council — or Chief Murray Clearsky as an individual — are either plaintiffs or defendants.

Other documentation suggests more serious problems. Manitoba Liberal Leader Dr. Jon Gerrard was presented with some of the documentation and, on April 17, attended a meeting with Isfeld and other band members at the RCMP Winnipeg offices.

Gerrard said what he saw convinced him that the police should be made aware of potential issues in the

community.

"When somebody comes forward, in this case Alan Isfeld and other members of the Waywayseecappo First Nation had come and presented some very serious allegations. As an MLA when you're presented with some potentially criminal allegations, it's important that these be handed over to the RCMP," he told *Windspeaker*.

Isfeld has pestered government officials locally and nationally for months in an attempt to get some answers. Not impressed with Indian and Northern Affairs Canada's (INAC) response to his concerns, he wrote a letter to the prime minister in March after getting nowhere with INAC. And he contacted a controversial figure in First Nation country for assistance in getting Prime Minister Stephen Harper's attention.

A letter dated April 5, addressed to Isfeld on official letterhead from the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), thanks him "for your correspondence of March 11, which was forwarded to our office by Dr. Tom Flanagan."

One sentence in Isfeld's letter to the prime minister stands out. "Does the federal government have any fiduciary responsibility to the Waywayseecappo band membership in the tri-party relationship?" he asked.

Tribal council to pull out of treaty process

By Paul Barnsley
Windspeaker Staff Writer

PRINCE GEORGE, BC

There'll be some action in British Columbia eight days before the national day of action.

The First Nations that make up the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council (CSTC) have announced they are withdrawing from the British Columbia Treaty Commission (BCTC) process on June 21, National Aboriginal Day.

CSTC Grand Chief David Luggi has persuaded his fellow chiefs that it's time to call a halt to what he sees as a pointless and endless struggle with provincial and federal negotiators. He's been sending letters to all the other chiefs in the province encouraging them to follow his council's lead. He said on June 6 that he didn't yet know how many others would join the eight First Nations in his tribal council.

"Every nation in B.C. got a letter, one saying to drop out and the second asking for support," he told *Windspeaker* during a phone interview. The letters were hard-hitting and blunt.

"My people have decided that the BCTC is a dead-end for our nations, he wrote in one, adding, "We say it is time to kill the BCTC process so that our people can survive. We believe it is time to

walk away from this process as there is no possibility of achieving a just reconciliation within the current framework."

Luggi wrote that the Unity Protocol, recently issued by the leadership in B.C., has the same basic message about what is wrong with the BCTC. But the Unity Protocol is advocating a very different strategy.

"The Unity Protocol does not call for withdrawing from the BCTC, because the Unity Protocol is led by First Nation negotiators who have a large personal, financial, and political stake in keeping the BCTC process going. Yet there is common ground for action. The only difference between our alliance and the other groups is that we believe the chiefs should show leadership and be courageous in taking action against the real problem, instead of waiting around while the process does more harm and steals more land from our people," he wrote. "The First Nations Summit task group has tried to get the provincial and federal governments to move from their position at the principles level; they failed."

The CSTC represents First Nations that occupy 76,000 square km of land in the central interior of B.C.

In a letter addressed to the Indian Affairs minister, Luggi

compiled a scathing six-page critique of the treaty process.

"Crown negotiators are sent to the table with unilaterally predetermined formulas and models, and negotiation consists merely of their defense of these so-called mandates," he wrote.

"Where agreements are signed, the Crown achieves the certainty that it seeks, but First Nations find that commitments made are for minimal legal requirements, and not for actual outcomes. The government wants to hear nothing about a fair compensation package in exchange for certainty," he added.

"What is known as the 'five per cent land selection model,' has been rejected by our communities. With the more recent treaty ratification votes being contemplated in Tsawwassen and Maa-nulth, those percentages are between one and four per cent. We are aware that this formula is not legislated."

He attacked the lack of "interim measures" that could prevent or regulate the removal of resource wealth from Indigenous lands while negotiations are proceeding and called the governance model proposed in all BCTC negotiations "municipal-style."

He noted that Canada claws back "own source revenues," money generated by First Nation-owned or based businesses, from

any financial provisions contained in potential BCTC agreements at a rate of 50 per cent, thus keeping federal and provincial expenditures at a minimum even while the governments seek to gain concessions that will have great benefit to their treasuries. And he noted "governments refuse to negotiate compensation for past infringements of Aboriginal rights and title."

"You say the process is 'forward-looking' not historical. At the same time, the governments demand a full release from First Nations for all past claims," Luggi told the minister.

He also wrote that the governments have required First Nations to borrow millions of dollars to finance the negotiations.

"Many of our members have questioned ... the fairness of requiring First Nations to borrow money to negotiate the surrender of our own land. CSTC has accumulated considerable debt to participate in negotiations that are stalled due to the government's archaic policy framework," he wrote.

He called on the government to "immediately and unconditionally write off all the accrued liability that was forced upon us in your loan funding program."

During the phone interview, Luggi said the leaders who are sticking with such a flawed system

are taking the wrong approach.

"The Unity Protocol won't disengage from the process, even though it has all these barriers that have been there for years and years and hasn't changed. So they're technicians protesting against the government. We need politicians protesting against the government. We can't have the leaders sloughing off or abdicating their duties. The technicians should come in after the political artillery shells have gone off and cleared the way for the technicians," he said.

One high profile leader with the First Nations Summit, Grand Chief Edward John, is a citizen of a CSTC community. *Windspeaker* asked Luggi if he'd discussed the pullout with John and if John was in favor of it.

"I would say that he's holding out hope for it, but after 13 years of, I guess, our feasibility study, we've concluded that that's not going to be the case. Looking at the proposals from Tsawwassen, the one that's been rejected by Lheidli T'enneh, and Maa-nulth, those are all in the same vein of what we don't like. So the longer that we stay in the process the more encouragement we're adding to more of these types of deals. They create a template for the rest of BC's First Nations. I'm calling it BCTC death row," he said.

A call to John was not returned by press time.



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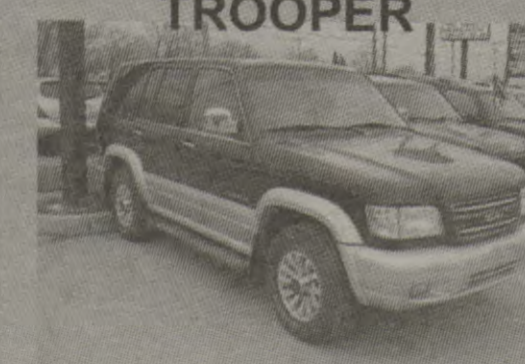
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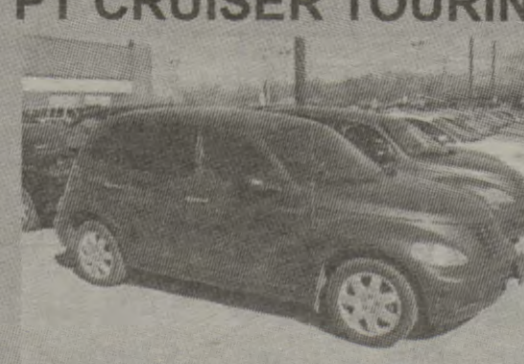
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Section 6 of Indian Act unconstitutional – B.C. court

By Paul Barnsley
Windspeaker Staff Writer

VANCOUVER

Sharon McIvor's victory over the Indian Registrar is now complete, at least for the time being. On June 8, after an eight-month wait, British Columbia Supreme Court judge, Madame Justice Carol Ross, declared Section 6 of the Indian Act to be discriminatory and, therefore, unconstitutional.

It was the second part of the judge's ruling on a number of applications made by McIvor's legal team. Last November, McIvor was successful in getting the court to declare that she had full Indian status and her son was entitled to partial status under Section 6 (2) of the act. But Justice Ross reserved judgment on the most explosive aspect of the case: whether or not Section 6 is contrary to the equality provisions of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The provincial court in B.C. is called the Supreme Court. The next step is the British Columbia Court of Appeal and then the Supreme Court of Canada. It's expected the highest court in the land will eventually decide this case.

McIvor was driving from the B.C. Interior town of Merritt, where she resides and teaches at the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, to Vancouver to meet

with her lawyers when contacted by *Windspeaker* on June 10.

"Pretty nice, wasn't it?" she said, when asked for a reaction to the ruling. "I couldn't believe that we had actually won. I looked through the decision thinking, 'OK, where's the negative here,' because we always have a negative. It's total disbelief; absolute total disbelief that what we thought should happen, what we thought was right to happen, actually happened."

In her application, McIvor asked the court to either throw out Section 6 or fix it by adding a few words. She said the act discriminated against people who traced their Native heritage through their mothers or through parents who had never formally married.

The Crown argued that striking down or changing the section "would constitute an impermissible retroactive or retrospective application of the Charter in that it would require the court to apply the Charter to pre-1985 legislation;" that "the plaintiffs suffered no injury. The only difference between the plaintiffs and Indians entitled to registration ... is in relation to the status of their children. There is no right to transmit Indian status, which is purely a matter of statute. Accordingly, there has been no denial of the plaintiffs' rights;" and "any infringement of the plaintiffs' rights is justified in light of the broad objectives of the

1985 amendments to the Indian Act."

Justice Ross dismissed each of those arguments.

"I have concluded that the registration provisions contained in Section 6 of the 1985 act discriminate on the basis of sex and marital status contrary to Sections 15 and 28 of the Charter and that such discrimination has not been justified by the government," she wrote.

She ruled that granting the application "requires neither a retroactive nor a retrospective application of the Charter. It is rather an application of the Charter to the present registration provisions of the Indian Act."

"Although the concept of 'Indian' is a creation of government, it has developed into a powerful source of cultural identity for the individual and the Aboriginal community. Like citizenship, both parents and children have an interest in this intangible aspect of Indian status," she wrote. "The registration provisions of the 1985 act did not eliminate discrimination. The registration provisions ... continue to prefer descendants who trace their Indian ancestry along the paternal line over those who trace their Indian ancestry along the maternal line and continue to prefer male Indians who married non-Indians and their descendants, over female Indians who married non-Indians and their descendants."

Justice Ross noted that the Crown had asked for a two-year delay in implementing her ruling because an immediate declaration of invalidity would "deprive deserving persons of benefits without providing them to the applicant."

The Crown also argued "a suspension would enable the registration process to continue and afford Parliament time to seek input from Aboriginal groups in its development and implementation of a scheme consistent with the court's ruling."

The judge agreed with the second argument but added "further delay for these plaintiffs must be measured against the backdrop of the delays that they have already experienced."

She noted that the Crown had delayed the case interminably and unreasonably and then dropped its resistance to McIvor's demands for status for herself and her son just before trial as a tactic to avoid having a court rule on Section 6.

"The defendant's concession with respect to the plaintiffs' registration status was made shortly before trial. It was based on an interpretation of the legislation and in my view could have been advanced at any time following the 1989 decision of the registrar. Having made the concession, the defendants immediately applied to strike the plaintiffs' claim," the judge wrote. "Against this backdrop, I conclude that the plaintiffs should not be

told to wait two more years for their remedy."

The judge then declared that Section 6 "is of no force and effect insofar, and only insofar, as it authorizes the differential treatment of Indian men and Indian women born prior to April 17, 1985, and matrilineal and patrilineal descendants born prior to April 17, 1985, in the conferring of Indian status."

The judge left it up to the parties to come to an agreement on how to proceed, saying that she would remain "seized" of the matter and ready to intervene if an agreement cannot be worked out.

The next step is unclear. It's expected the Crown will soon file an appeal and the matter will be on hold pending the result of that appeal.

"I know the judge said no two-year delay and made a very strong finding. I don't know what will happen once the appeal is filed," said McIvor.

But in the meantime, the message seems to be that every single decision made under this section was always been unconstitutional, even though a court has only now recognized it.

"That's the point that we've been trying to make for a long time. But we're only at the Supreme Court of BC level and the government probably won't even take it seriously until we get up another level or two," McIvor said.

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Claims to move

"The process that's going to be followed hasn't been totally finalized. I would add that the consultative process will carry on while the bill is in front of the House of Commons for the three months this fall as well," he said.

Prentice made it clear that sovereignty is not on the table.

"These will be Canadian superior court judges. They'll be distinguished Canadians who are respected for their independence, their impartiality, their fairness. And they will apply Canadian law to the specific claims process," he said. "This is a Canadian specific claims process so the law of Canada will have to apply in that process as it does in all land claim issues in Canada. This tribunal will not have the authority to negotiate sovereignty."

When he was asked about the limit on the money the government will spend each year settling claims, he said that it is better than previous governments have done.

"For 2005-2006, the total amount invested by the Paul Martin government to resolve specific claims was \$1.9 million," he said. "So we have allocated more than 100 times that amount on an annual basis

for 10 years. So if you compare what this government is doing to resolve claims versus what that government did to resolve claims, I think it's a pretty clear picture."

The government has decided the process will not deal with claims larger than \$150 million. It has also decided that land and resources, punitive damages or cultural and spiritual losses will not be part of the discussions.

"There are a small number of claims that are outside the system. If claims are more than \$150 million the tribunal doesn't have the jurisdiction to deal with them," he said. "Those large claims . . . will be negotiated by the minister of Indian Affairs under specific mandates from Cabinet which is the same process we follow for comprehensive claims."

Congress of Aboriginal Peoples leader Patrick Brazeau was left out of the announcement. It looks like it's only the AFN and the government involved in this so far.

"Unfortunately, that's what it sounds like," he said. "But we're developing our position on land claims and we will be forthright to ensure that the process has consultations with the off-reserve population."

Ipperwash book closed

(continued from page 8)

"After the inquiry was called, [family lawyer] Murray [Klippenstein] said to me, 'You don't seem happy.' I told him, 'Oh yeah, I'm happy, but it's not time to say wow yet.' I told him after the report: 'It's time to say wow.' It felt really good after I heard the report. My family were smiling. We're quite happy with it. The commissioner did a great job," he said.

He was disappointed that former premier Harris didn't acknowledge the role he played in the tragedy.

"The commissioner, he didn't call Harris a liar, but he said he believed Charles Harnick when he said he misled the legislature. He was right. The man got away with nothing," he said. "The report said he clearly did not direct them but I still hold him partially responsible. He needs to apologize to my family. His lawyer said there's no apology needed. He didn't do nothing. At that time he was the most powerful man and he could have pulled together the people needed at that time, when we asked him in the beginning, and we could have gone into a room a talked this out."

George said his family knew all along that Deane, a tactical officer, was not the only guilty party.

Klippenstein told *Windspeaker* that was a very important point.

"The family has always said that

Deane pulled the trigger, but he probably should not have been there in the first place. The riot squad should not have been there that night. In other words, Dudley didn't need to die."

After spending 12 years battling the most powerful people in Ontario, digging out the vital information that would allow his client to get to the truth of that tragic night, the lawyer said one crucial matter is still unresolved.

"Given the commissioner's findings, it probably would be helpful and appropriate for Mr. Harris to say a few words of apology," he said. "I think, as the family thinks back to that night and those days when nobody would tell them what went on and Dudley and his friends were portrayed as gun-toting, police-shooting crazies, now it turns out that Dudley was unarmed and was standing on treaty land when he was shot. He will now be remembered for better things."

For years, before newly elected Liberal Premier Dalton McGuinty called the inquiry in 2003, Klippenstein was preparing a wrongful death lawsuit against the police and the government on behalf of Sam George. He worked ceaselessly on the case, even when his client had no money to pay him. After years of long hours and financial hardship, he had a hard time disguising the emotional

impact of the case. But he was caught slightly off-guard by a question that had nothing to do with the law.

As a man, not as a lawyer, *Windspeaker* asked, what will you take away from this chapter in your life? There was a long pause.

"I'm choking up a little, I guess," he said, taking a moment to regain composure. "I look back on a lot of polar opposites. On the one side, there's some terrible injustices where the legal system failed miserably and the legal profession failed miserably and innocent First Nations people were trampled all over. But when I look on the other side where I met some wonderful people like Sam and the family and a lot of the legal community came through and a lot of good-hearted Canadians stepped forward and I see a lot of hope. I feel like this is a case where just about the worst kind of things happened but a bunch of people refused to be overwhelmed, so a lot of really good things came from a lot of bad things."

Sam George said his brother's sacrifice is now a part of history.

"He'll never be forgotten now. Everybody will always remember him on that night of Sept. 6. Now it's up to us to learn how to work together in a good way, to communicate and listen to each other."

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Play provides sex education roadmap

By Carmen Pauls Orthner
Windspeaker Writer

LA RONGE, Sask.

What if you learned all you knew about cars from watching flashy car ads on TV, hearing one or two dull lectures about steering wheels and brake pedals, and getting mumbled warnings from your parents about driving off a cliff—and then one day someone asked you if you wanted to drive?

That's the spin a play called *Are We There Yet?*—developed in Alberta and newly adapted for Aboriginal audiences by the Saskatchewan Native Theatre Company (SNTC)—takes on sex education: teaching kids the practical "rules of the road" of sexual relationships so they can make the choices that are right for them.

"When I was in school... it (sex ed) was so sterile. I learned how to put a condom on a wooden penis," said actor Arron Naytowhow, a member of the SNTC troupe that performed the play at three schools in Saskatoon and La Ronge in May as part of a pilot tour. "With this show, you learn how to protect yourself physically... and emotionally. Being emotionally prepared for sex, or becoming sexually active. We never really got a chance to talk about that (as teens), and it's interesting seeing these kids speaking up, saying, 'This is what I think.'"

Although SNTC's productions always deal with issues facing youth, and their casts are made up of young Aboriginal actors who can relate to the kids they perform for (and vice versa), this production is unique in two ways: the interaction with audiences, and the collaboration with outside partners.

For several years, *Are We There Yet?* has been performed for Edmonton school audiences in partnership with Planned Parenthood. Through a grant provided to the University of Alberta by the Canadian

University Research Alliance, several adaptations of the play are being tested across Canada, including the SNTC's version. The research component—the chance to prove statistically that theatre can be a powerful educational tool—was a major attraction for the SNTC, said the theatre company's project manager, Deneen Gudjonson.

Throughout the show, teen characters dealing with sexual scenarios will call "time outs" to get advice from audience members, and then those ideas are incorporated into the scene. The audience also helps "sculpt" the ideal boy or girl, who then meet, and they hear the individual stories of characters caught in tough spots - a boy who pushed his girlfriend into having sex, a girl who became the school slut as a way to get attention, another who was date raped.

"They really got us in the audience really involved, like they were asking questions and we kind of made up the play by us telling what they should do next," says Grade 9 student Dana Hudson, who saw the play at La Ronge's Churchill school. "It wasn't boring at all. You're really into it—you're attached. You didn't take your eyes off the actors."

"At times I felt it was sort of embarrassing when they wanted you to give a personal answer, but in the end it felt comfortable because everybody took part," added Grade 8 student Jordan McPhail. "It would definitely make an impact on everybody, Grade 6 and up - anybody who'd understand, it would make an impact on their (handling of their) sexuality."

After the play, the health partners do workshops with the audience, helping to "de-brief" them and reinforce the messages, and creating connections with the health partners so kids know where to get information or seek help. In La Ronge, that role was played by Heather Jansen, a public health nurse with the Lac La Ronge Indian Band, and Wendy



CARMEN PAULS ORTHNER

Actor Kristin Friday (centre) explains the "parts of the vehicle", complete with live "showroom models" played by Jennifer Bishop and Mitch Poundmaker, in the opening scene of *Are We There Yet?* The play, put on in La Ronge in May by the Saskatchewan Native Theatre Company, draws a parallel between driver's ed and sex ed in an attempt to get teens talking about sex.

McPhail, the Mamawetan Churchill River Health Region's sexual wellness co-ordinator.

According to McPhail, the interactive approach is what really helps the kids learn from the play. "They can be reassured that they do have some knowledge... they actually get to practice and see what their advice does and how it plays out. It's almost in a sense seeing themselves outside of themselves, being acted out, and OK, what would happen if I made choice A or choice B?"

In a sense, the play's respectful, attentive approach and the emphasis on personal responsibility for your choices combats the "learned helplessness" that results in so many social problems for Aboriginal people, including the high rates of teen pregnancy and sexual-transmitted diseases. It also shakes up teens who are used to thinking, "No one understands me," when part of the problem is they haven't been taught how to communicate.

"They know we're listening ...

and they really appreciate that, and sometimes they're thrown aback when you ask them a question," said actor Jennifer Bishop. "It's like, 'Oh, OK—we've never been asked this before.'"

Parents also struggle with how to communicate with their kids about sex, As Wendy McPhail points out, not only do adults think they must have the right answer—forgetting that in matters of sexuality there is rarely such a thing—"as a society... we have just said that it's not acceptable to talk about it." Parents worry about condoning sexual behaviour by giving their kids information, but they miss out on a chance to pass on their own values about sexuality, and also risk kids buying into the media's version of normal sexuality, which can be very dangerous.

One way that the SNTC adaptation has dealt with that struggle is to incorporate a community information night, which not only explains the play and introduces the health

partners, but also includes several scenes—written for this adaptation—in which a parent character asks for the audience's advice about explaining the contents of a soft porn magazine to his teen daughters, or coaxing information from a potentially suicidal son who has contracted a sexually-transmitted infection. This component came from input from Elders who saw draft versions of the script.

"A show like this is important for (Aboriginal teens) to start thinking these things, to start sharing... and that's why the community pieces are so important too, so the parents can stop to think and watch their kids, and really listen to what's being said," said Naytowhow.

With the pilot tour complete, feedback will be compiled and a full touring production of SNTC's *Are We There Yet?* will be mounted next spring. Depending on interest, the tour could travel across western Canada. For more information, contact the SNTC's office at (306) 933-2262 or visit their Web site at www.sntc.ca.

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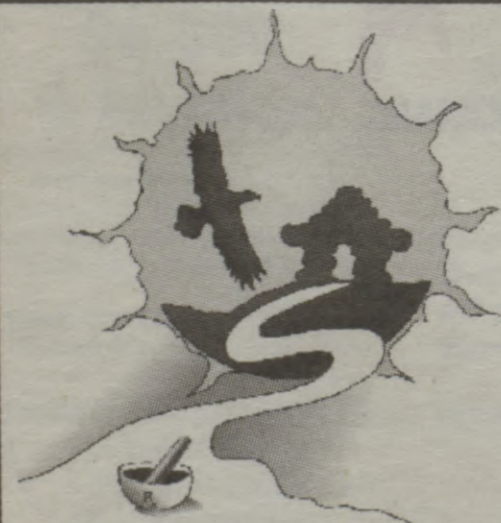
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Diana Blackman — [windspeaker confidential]

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

Diana Blackman: Kindness

W: What is it that really makes you mad?

D.B.: When I see people driving around with their pets. I'm sure that dog or cat would much rather spend time with their owner going for a walk or being at home. That really drives me crazy. Also, when our fellow Aboriginal people show internal racism towards each another.

W: When are you at your happiest?

D.B.: When I'm with my family sharing stories, laughing and just being together. The laughing part is very important.

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

D.B.: Distant. I don't like showing people that side of me.

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

D.B.: Ted Nolan, Jonathan Cheechoo. I admire these two because of hockey. But seriously, I would have to say Mountain Woman, Lorraine Sinclair. She had such integrity. A very strong woman that taught me so much. I miss her.

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

D.B.: Letting my kids experience on their own tough life lessons. It was very, very hard not to come in and save them, because that's what I needed. Those experiences have led them to become stronger and be independent as young adults.

W: What is your greatest accomplishment?

D.B.: Melissa and Darryl, see above answer.

W: What one goal remains out of reach?

D.B.: Doing the front stroke, back stroke, dog paddle ... you get the picture! I still can't swim. That's still on the list of things to do.

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

D.B.: Owning an "Aboriginal theme" bed & breakfast business. Not just yet though. I still feel like I have so much work to do with students and I love my job.

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

D.B.: I see, I feel, I think, I do. This means whatever you experience you should go through all of this to make a better decision.

W: Did you take it?

D.B.: It's hard to do because I react to feelings then act on it without really thinking things through or react without going through the emotions.

W: How do you hope to be remembered?

D.B.: For being kind, having a sense of humour and being loyal to family and true friends.



Diana Blackman, Aboriginal liaison co-ordinator at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT) in Edmonton has been awarded for her outstanding commitment to the students, receiving the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development's Excellence Award for her work at the EnCana Aboriginal Student Centre. Blackman has been helping students and planning events since August 2004. Elders Day is a monthly regular event that Blackman has organized, which brings in a cultural advisor to talk to the students over soup and bannock. She is currently creating an Aboriginal alumni chapter at the institute, which will make NAIT only the third post-secondary school in Canada to have such an organization. She is also working on providing Aboriginal awareness training experiences for staff.

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B.C. gov't and Métis mark anniversary

The Province of British Columbia and the Métis Nation of British Columbia celebrated a year of co-operation on May 28. The celebration marked the one-year anniversary of the Métis Nation Relationship Accord that was signed, May 12 2006.

Through the accord the Métis Nation and the province agreed to address issues including health, housing, education, economic opportunities, renewal of the tripartite process and Métis identification and data collection.

Among the reasons the accord was developed was to close the

gap in the quality of life between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.

To meet this goal both parties have jointly developed a five-year plan.

Both the province and the Métis Nation of B.C. have appointed an official to sit on the Métis Nation Relationship Accord Secretariat. These representatives have been charged with overseeing the progress of the accord.

Over the past year, both parties have seen positive movement towards meeting their goals.



The Campbell River Indian Band, opened the first ever Aboriginal themed cruise ship port on June 5. The Wei Wai Kum Cruise Ship Port saw its first cruise ship, Regent Cruise's Seven Seas Mariner dock at the port. The day was rounded out with a pole raising and site blessing and a performance by the Wei Wai Kum traditional dancers.

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BRITISH COLUMBIA
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Alberta Sweetgrass: Special Section providing news from Alberta

Blackfoot dancers will join China tour

By Dianne Meili
Sweetgrass Staff Writer

SIKSIKA

"The prairie chicken dance has been one of the main dances of my people ever since," explained Blackfoot storyteller and author Tref Deerfoot, who has been invited to perform the chicken dance in China this August.

After watching Deerfoot and his Blackfoot Medicine Speaks performance group on stage at the opening of the Smithsonian Museum in Washington, D.C., last summer, the Ukrainian Cheremosh Dancers asked them to join their China tour. "We were down there as part of a contingent promoting Alberta tourism and when we performed, people were overwhelmed. The Cheremosh dancers noticed the public interest and invited us to be a part of their tour this year," Deerfoot explained.

He and seven fellow performers will showcase Aboriginal dance in 10 shows to be held around the country during a 20-day tour.

"Our show has a theatrical theme," Deerfoot said. "All of the dancers are accomplished in their own right. And we have Julius Delaney and Herman Yellow Old Man who are well known in terms

of knowing their traditional songs. But our show passes on oral history, too, like the Blackfoot creation story told through dance and music."

Deerfoot is not new to the international scene, having travelled throughout Europe as a spokesperson for Canada's national parks and Canadian Pacific hotels.

"It's all been positive," said Deerfoot. "In Italy, you have people yelling, Indiano! when they see you perform. We let them know about our vital culture, that we didn't just come into existence when Columbus discovered North America 500 years ago. People need to know we have a much longer history in North America."

"They're always fascinated to learn about our early lifestyle how we hunted, how we fasted and prayed and painted our faces before going into battle to ensure we would be coming home."

Having danced the chicken dance for more than 40 years, Deerfoot has watched it grow from being a ceremonial dance to being performed in powwows. As one of the dance's biggest promoters, he notes 25 years ago there were only five chicken dancers in Alberta.

"At a (recent) powwow in

Billings, Montana I counted 70 chicken dancers. My sons and nephews are dancing this way the old style—it's nice to see the dance being passed on in the way it was handed down.

"There's so much contemporary dance in powwow today. I like to keep the genuineness of the culture. Living a traditional lifestyle starts at home. I remember when I was a kid, I saw my father Sundancing for four days. He was in his 50s and here he was with these other dancers, younger than him, and he was energized out there. I never forgot that. It was an image of who I could be."

Deerfoot enjoys sharing other aspects of Blackfoot culture beyond dance and has immortalized the legend of Scarface, who brought the sweatlodge to his people, in one of four books he's written for publication.

He's approachable at powwows, too, insisting "if someone likes the way I dance, I'll show them how I do it. We'll go for a coffee and we'll talk about it. Tobacco is the great communicator, so just give me your offering and I'll share with you."

He supports young people sitting at the drum, as well, and is amazed at what today's youth



Tref Deerfoot

are picking up.

"Where do they get that talent? My nephew looks exactly like my grandfather did when he was five years old, and you know, we Blackfoot do believe in reincarnation," said Deerfoot.

"The old ways are mystical and often transcend ordinary life. When I visit Elders, they will

only share a song with me once. But you know, those songs come to us when we need them. I'll be driving home and there it is.

"And in the Sundance, that is very powerful. It's as if someone else is using your body and you say to yourself 'this is not me dancing.' You come to a completely higher level of being."

Historical online database beneficial to users

The Métis National Council (MNC) in partnership with the University of Alberta (U of A) has introduced a new Web site that will be beneficial to Métis people in terms of learning about their ancestors. The Métis National Council Historical Online Database is an informative tool that contains various archival documents and high-resolution digital photography that pertains to the historical Métis Nation.

"The main objective of this Web site would be to provide the public with access to historical

documents," said Erin McGregor, special topics and research coordinator.

All of the information on the Web site came from Library and Archives Canada in Ottawa, formerly known as the National Archives of Canada. The information from these archives was only available on microfilm, however the MNC and the U of A digitally photographed the microfilm images.

"We did this so people can actually not only see the records containing the information on a

particular historical person but could also see a digital image of the original document with the old hand writing and that kind of stuff," said McGregor.

The documents found on the Web site are specifically catered to Métis individuals, which means, "the hits that come up would be limited," McGregor added.

"If you were to type in a specific name into the database, like Morin, you'll get a bunch of hits coming up for that last name, however if you typed that into the

Library and Archives Canada Web site, you're going to get everything under the sun that has to do with Morin. So our Web site is a way of narrowing down the searching but also being accurate in the searching for people who are looking up their family tree."

This database will also enable researchers to access valuable information and reconstruct their genealogies but also provide non-Métis with a wealth of history.

"Primarily, this Web site is for Métis people doing their own

genealogy but we've really developed the Web site so that it's usable by the general public so that they can learn more about the roles that Métis people played in the history of Canada because that's often a very overlooked piece of history," said McGregor. "So, we're trying to rectify that by providing a bunch of contextual and background information on the documents that are actually in the Web site."

The new Web site can be found online at <http://metisnationdatabase.ualberta.ca>.



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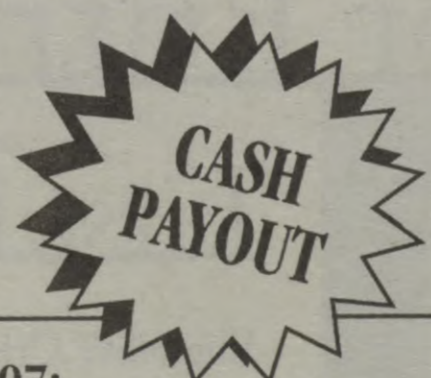
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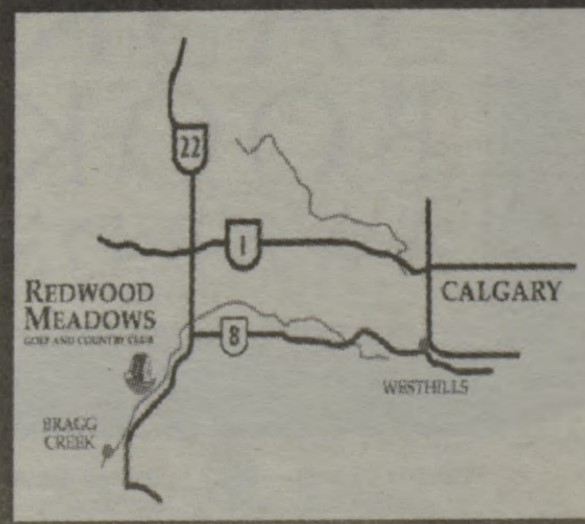
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Saskatchewan Sage: Special Section providing news from Saskatchewan

Loved ones remembered

By Cheryl Petten
Sage Staff Writer

SASKATOON

The family members of many of the Aboriginal women from Saskatchewan who have gone missing or have been murdered gathered together in Saskatoon at the end of May to share their stories, their pain and their hope.

Lori Whiteman was one of the organizers of the gathering. She understands what these family members are going through because she is going through it herself. Her mother, Delores Whiteman, has been missing for two decades. She was last seen in Edmonton in 1987.

The Saskatchewan Sisters in Spirit 2007 Family Gathering was held at the Best Western Inn in Saskatoon on May 26 and 27. Whiteman expects the event will be the first of many organized by Saskatchewan Sisters in Spirit, the newly formed grassroots organization made up of the family members of the province's missing and murdered Aboriginal women.

The group takes its name from the national Sisters in Spirit campaign launched by the Native Women's Association of Canada to address the high incidences of violence being perpetrated against Aboriginal women across the

country.

The goal of the family gathering was "to try to bring families together to build a network of support and healing and to determine what some of the needs are from people who are experiencing this first-hand," Whiteman said. "We really wanted to focus it on families finding their voice and talking about and sharing their story. And expressing what their needs are; what their hopes are for the future."

The inspiration for creating Saskatchewan Sisters in Spirit, and for organizing the family gathering, came while a number of families from Saskatchewan took part in the annual Women's Memorial March held in Vancouver on Valentine's Day.

Among those taking part in the gathering in Saskatoon were family members of 23-year-old daughter Danita Bigeagle, who has been missing since February 11 of this year; Amber Redman, who was 19 when she went missing on July 15, 2005; and Dalene Bosse, who was last seen on May 18, 2004.

"I heard this echoed around our circle, that it felt like we have created a family, a community of support. And so that's, I think, a sign that it was a positive coming together. Everyone shared their story. Everyone talked and

everyone contributed and that to me is a positive sign that people are willing and that the need is there to have an outlet where people can come together and talk," Whiteman said.

While it may be difficult for family members to talk about their missing loved ones, Whiteman believes sharing these stories is important.

"I've been talking about my mom now for a while and each time I do, I can't say that it gets easier, but being surrounded by other people who understand and who aren't judging and who aren't simply listening with pity is really helpful; it's healing, because I know that when I share this, it's a tribute to the woman who gave birth to me, who gave me life. "But the reason I'm doing this is not just for her, but it's for all of those who are lost. It's to bring recognition, public recognition, to the reasons why it's Aboriginal women, it's Aboriginal people, who are more often victimized and who are most often in these circumstances," she said. "Every time you speak out about your loved one and share your concern ... it's also a way to keep it in the public consciousness and to help people remember that these people are missing; that our loved ones are missing and that it's our responsibility to try to bring them back home."

History made in File Hills First Nations

By Cheryl Petten
Sage Staff Writer

OKANESE FIRST NATION

History was made on May 25 when, with the stroke of a pen, the first police agency in Saskatchewan to be self-administered by First Nations communities was officially created.

The new File Hills First Nations Police Agency will provide police services for the five File Hills Agency members Little Black Bear, Okanese Peepeekisis, Star Blanket and Carry the Kettle First Nations. The policing agreement that sealed the deal was signed by Saskatchewan Justice, Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada, the RCMP, the File Hills Board of Police Commissioners and the chiefs of the five First Nations.

According to Saskatchewan Justice Minister Frank Quennell, the seeds for creation of this new police force were planted in 1991, then the federal government unveiled a new First Nations policing policy. Two years later, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations signed an agreement with the provincial and federal governments that gave First Nation communities in the province the right to choose a police force such as the RCMP to provide their policing services.

The cost of operating the File Hills police agency will be covered by the federal and provincial governments, and the police service will fall under the provincial police act, Quennell said. The Saskatchewan Police Commission will continue to have a supervisory role, and any complaints about the policing service would continue to go through the province's independent public complaints

commission.

Ralph Martin, the police chief for the File Hills First Nations Police Agency, comes to the position with more than 32 years experience as an RCMP officer, including six years spent working out of the nearby Fort Qu'Appelle detachment.

"So I was pretty familiar with what was going on at File Hills before I joined the service," he said.

The shift from having the RCMP police the five communities to having a First Nations administered police agency in place was a gradual one, Martin said. Each time an RCMP officer would leave the detachment, he or she would be replaced with a File Hills officer. Martin was the final addition to the team, coming on board just over a year ago.

Having a self-administered police force will mean that members of the File Hill Agency First Nations will have more of a say in how the police service is administered," Martin said.

The police service has its main office on Okanese First Nation, with a community office on Carry the Kettle, both staffed by support staff during regular working hours. There's money in the budget for seven officers, although there are currently only six on staff. It also employs a cultural liaison person, who works to help the police agency to build stronger relationships with the communities it serves. The liaison will work to keep File Hill police agency members informed about the cultural practices of each of the five communities and will provide them with information about proper protocol," Martin said.

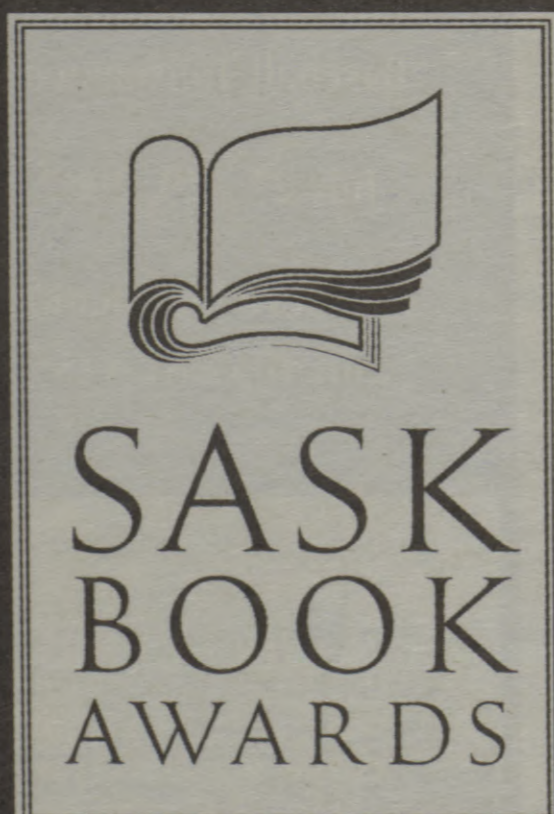
"Just being a link between the police service and the community and the community's cultures."



LINDA UNGAR

Alec Stonechild was one of 175 students taking part in this year's Regina Regional Heritage Fair, held May 4 at the MacKenzie Art Gallery. Stonechild chose to do his Heritage Fair project on the bison. His grandfather, Alvin Stonechild, seen here stopping by Alec's booth for a visit, runs a bison ranch on Okanese First Nation, where Alec often gets a chance to help out with caring for the animals.

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Windspeaker's Special Section Serving the Aboriginal People of Ontario

Collection celebrates spirit of the people

By Margo Little
Birchbark Writer

SUDBURY

As a unique Anishinaabe art exhibit nears the end of its Ontario tour, organizers are pleased with the public response. The Manitou Collection featuring 38 original acrylic works by nine artists started its historic journey in May 2006.

The purpose of the touring exhibition is to promote a popular but seldom-seen group of First Nations painters. The show

is also meant to symbolize the spirit of unity between cultures in northern Ontario and across Canada.

Art lovers have enjoyed a rare opportunity to see paintings on loan from 26 different United Church congregations throughout northeast Ontario and western Quebec. The project was spearheaded by Dr. David Humphreys and his wife, Mollie Petryna of Timmins.

As a United Church member and strong supporter of Anishinaabe artists, Humphreys donated the works to

demonstrate the significant contribution made by First Nations artists to the cultural, social and economic fabric of society.

Most of the canvases on display were created in the early 1980s. Wikwemikong artist Leland Bell has contributed several of his celebrated works including, "Cleansing of the Spirit," "Gift of the Sacred Colours," and "Prayer to the Four Winds."

Bell emerged as a professional painter in 1976. He has endorsed the travelling exhibit as a mechanism for helping two

From left to right are artists: James Jacko, Leland Bell, Melvin Madahbee, Stanley Panamick and Doug Fox.



cultures communicate.

"As we make contact with each other, a mutual respect will develop and good things will

come for all," said Bell.

Joining Bell in the show are Don Assinewai, Blair Debassige, Doug Fox, James Jacko, Melvin Madahbee, Stan Panamick, Randy C. Trudeau and Tim Trudeau.

According to Teresa Jones, coordinator of the Manitou Collection, last year marked the 20th anniversary of the United Church of Canada's first official apology to the First Nations Peoples. The Manitou Conference of the United Church initiated the tour to serve as a catalyst for building respect and understanding between the First Nations and other cultures.

In 1986, moderator Bob Smith acknowledged the church's role in dismissing Native spiritual beliefs.

"We imposed our civilization as a condition of accepting the gospel," said Smith. "We tried to make you be like us and in doing so we helped to destroy the vision that made you what you were."

Rev. Bill Steadman, the United Church of Canada's executive minister of financial stewardship, said, "the church sought forgiveness for the ways the church, in earlier times, had sought to deny the spiritual and linguistic traditions of our Aboriginal people."

After experiencing the show, he reiterated the importance of the Manitou Collection.

"An apology is not so much about the words used as it is about the actions taken. Forming this touring exhibit of Aboriginal art was a small step in truly living the affirmation of the spiritual traditions of our founding people," said Steadman.

Carol Germa, co-ordinating committee volunteer, said there are many benefits to the joint exhibition.

"These works have never been shown together before this," she said. "When you see the paintings all together in a beautiful setting, it contributes to the overall impact."

For Germa, the Manitou Collection is an encouraging symbol in the reconciliation process.

"This exhibit is another step the church is taking to follow through on the apology and to help build bridges between cultures," she said.

For more information log on to www.manitouconference.ca

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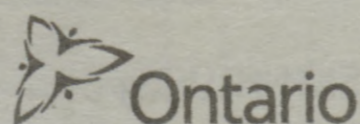
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Gerry McIvor	My Lady	Old Friend
Cheryl Bear	Your Joy	Cheryl Bear
Leela Gilday	One Drum	Sedze
Northern Eagles	Run	Send Me Home
Ron Loutit	Bar Stool	Mine to Discover
Weaselhead	She's Still the Same Girl	Refuges of Romance
Star Nayea	Into the Depths	Single
Jared Sowan	Broken Wing	Eclectically Yours
Fred Mitchell	Don't Wanna Be Lonely	Single
Teagan Littlechief	Once an Eagle	Single
Eagle & Hawk	The Way	Life Is ...
Jackie Tice	In These Bones	Second Skin
Carl Quinn	Meena	Nimosom
Art Napoleon	Mystics	Miyoskamin
Terri-Anne Strongarm	Anymore	Anymore

CONTRIBUTING
STATIONS:



Artist—Carl Quinn
Album—Nimosom
Song—O Kistin
Label—Pisimoyapi
Productions Inc.
Producer—Carl Quinn

Quinn continues to promote Cree language through new CD

Carl Quinn, a singer and songwriter from Saddle Lake Cree Nation in Alberta, has cleverly created a 10-track CD, Nimosom, which promotes the Cree (Nehiyó) language while also focusing on tradition, teachings and values.

Each song is crafted with a rock and roll feel, brushed with techno impressions and fused with a traditional and powwow sound that gives the CD a unique but captivating finish.

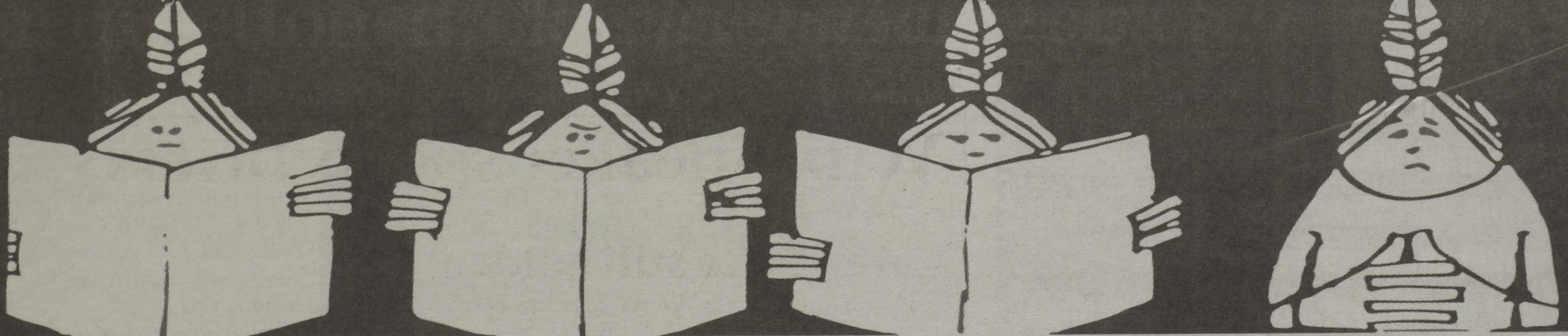
Over the years, Quinn has worn many hats—hunter, trapper, construction worker, human resource consultant, curriculum developer, translator, and chief. He has a passion for the Cree language and dedicates himself to helping future generations of Cree children learn their language. One of the ways he works to accomplish this is through his music.

Quinn is also a traditional dancer and sings with the Pisimoyapi drum group. In his spare time he can be found volunteering with the boy scouts and organizing cultural events.

Quinn's past musical efforts have been positively received by fans and critics alike. In 2003, his album Nehiyó earned him a Best Traditional Album, Contemporary Award at the Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards (CAMA) in Toronto. In 2005, his album Ni Ototem earned him two CAMA nominations—one for Best Rock Album and one for Best Songwriter—and a win in the Best Songwriter category.

More information about Quinn's new CD can be found online at www.pisimoyapi.com.

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Iroquois Nationals settle for second

By Sam Laskaris
Windspeaker Writer

HALIFAX

The Iroquois Nationals men's lacrosse team came within one goal of winning a world championship, but the club had to once again settle for the silver medal at the world indoor (box) lacrosse tournament, held in Halifax from May 14 to 20.

Canada edged the Iroquois Nationals 15-14 in overtime in the gold-medal contest. Canadian forward Jeff Zywicki, who plays professionally in the National Lacrosse League with the San Jose Stealth, was the OT hero. Zywicki's game-winning goal came just 28 seconds into overtime.

"We went there with a goal of

taking home the gold medal," said Kevin Sandy, general manager of the Iroquois Nationals' squad. "We just fell one goal short."

The Canadians had also defeated the Iroquois Nationals in the championship final of the only other world indoor tournament that has been staged, held back in 2003 at various southern Ontario locations.

At the inaugural world indoor tournament, the Iroquois Nationals had a rather veteran-laden roster. But this time around the club's brass opted to go with a more youthful side. Sandy said the average age on the team was 24, possibly making the Iroquois Nationals the youngest entry in the eight-team tournament.

"With our youth, speed and discipline, we felt we could win

the gold," Sandy said. "And it was a great effort from everybody involved."

Though he was not thrilled with it, Sandy refused to blame the Iroquois Nationals' loss on a late-game officiating call.

The Iroquois Nationals were ahead 13-12 with just over four minutes left in the fourth quarter. Following a skirmish in front of the Iroquois Nationals' net, Sandy said some pushing and shoving ensued. He thought both clubs would be assessed penalties on the play. But as it turned out, the Iroquois Nationals received two minors while the Canadians were not given a penalty.

"That's part of the game," Sandy reasoned. "I thought there should have been offsetting penalties. We were disappointed, but I can't control what happens on the floor."

Canadian star forward John Grant capitalized on the ensuing powerplays, scoring goals 55 seconds apart to give his team a 14-13 lead. For Grant, those markers were his fourth and fifth of the match.

The game was forced into overtime when Dean Hill scored for the Iroquois Nationals with just 56 seconds left in the final quarter.

Iroquois Nationals' coach Duane Jacobs was obviously not thrilled with the late penalties to his side.

"I thought it was a bad call since there was so much at stake," he said.

Jacobs is uncertain whether his charges would have hung on for

the victory had they played the rest of the game at even strength.

"I don't know if we would have (won)," he said. "But we had the lead. And we had the momentum. And time was running out."

For Jacobs, this marked his second consecutive silver medal at the world tournament. He was a player on the Iroquois Nationals' roster at the inaugural championships. Jacobs and his teammates, however, were soundly defeated 21-4 by Canada in the '03 gold-medal contest.

"This one is a bit more satisfying," Jacobs said, comparing his second-place finishes. "We weren't even in the game in the final the first time around."

But, he added, coming so close to the gold medal this time was rather disappointing.

"That's the one we were there for," he said. "But once you get over all the disappointment and that, it will turn out to be a success. I'm getting over it but it will still take a bit longer."

Jacobs estimated the average age of the Iroquois Nationals' lineup four years ago was about 30. And he believes the right moves were made to go with a more youthful side this time.

"The decision was made to go younger, to be faster, to be quicker and to have something left at the end of the tournament," he said. "And quite frankly, the younger players are the better players out there."

The Iroquois Nationals handily won all three of their round-robin

contests at the tournament.

After a convincing 27-8 opening victory over England, the Iroquois Nationals hammered the Czech Republic side 24-4. That was followed by a 19-4 triumph over Scotland.

The Iroquois Nationals then earned a berth into the gold-medal game when they defeated the United States 14-4 in a semi-final match.

The Americans recovered from that setback, however, and went on to beat England 17-10 in the bronze-medal contest. The U.S. had also won the bronze medal at the '03 world championships.

Since the Americans are a world field lacrosse power, some observers of the sport are surprised they have not had more success at the two global indoor tournaments.

"They have a hard time putting the resources and time into their (national) box team," Sandy said.

Like the Iroquois Nationals squad, Canada also had a relatively easy route to the final.

After pounding Ireland 25-1 in their opener, the Canadians beat Australia 24-4. Canada then beat the Americans 18-5.

The Canadians then cruised into the gold-medal game with a 24-8 decision over England in their semi-final outing.

Though an official decision has yet to be made, Jacobs said there is some speculation the Iroquois Nationals will play host to the 2011 world tournament at an unspecified location. Czech Republic officials are reportedly also keen on hosting the event.

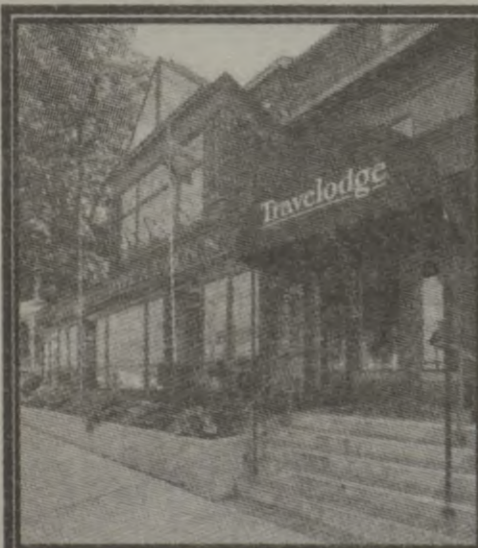
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Windspeaker sports briefs

By Sam Laskaris

Carey Price still golden

What started off as a golden year for Carey Price has gotten even better.

Price, a native of Anahim Lake, B.C., backstopped Canada to a gold medal at the world junior hockey championships, which concluded in Sweden in early January.

Fast forward six months and Price has already added a pro championship title to his resume.

Following the world tournament, Price, a Montreal Canadiens' draftee, returned to his junior club, the Tri-City Americans of the Western Hockey League. But the Americans didn't have much playoff success, losing their best-of-seven opening round series 4-2 against the Seattle Thunderbirds.

For Price, however, that didn't mean the end of his 2006-07 season. That's because he moved up to the pro ranks, joining the American Hockey League's Hamilton Bulldogs, the Canadiens' top affiliate.

Though he appeared in just two regular season contests with the Ontario-based Bulldogs, Hamilton's brass turned to him come playoff time. And Price did not disappoint. In fact, he excelled.

He ended up leading the Bulldogs to the Calder Cup, the AHL championship. Hamilton defeated the Pennsylvania-based Hershey Bears 4-1 in the best-of-seven final, which concluded with a 2-1 Bulldogs' victory on June 7.

Price, who had an impressive 15-6 record during the post-season, was presented with the Jack Butterfield Trophy as he was chosen as the most valuable player in the AHL playoffs.

Rabbit ends season on a high note

It was certainly an up and down year for Wacey Rabbit.

The 20-year-old, who is from the Blood First Nation near Lethbridge, Alta., got a taste of professional hockey. After four years in the Western Hockey League with the Saskatoon Blades, Rabbit made the jump to the pros as he began the season with the American Hockey League's Providence Bruins.

Rabbit, however, saw limited playing time with the Bruins. As a result, he only picked up three points (one goal, two assists) in 22 games with Providence. So Rabbit was no doubt thrilled when his junior playing rights were acquired by the Vancouver Giants in a trade with Saskatoon this past January. Though he was being returned to the junior ranks, Rabbit could console himself with the fact the Giants were playing host to - and thus had an automatic berth into - the Memorial Cup. The annual four-team tournament is held to determine the top squad in the Canadian Hockey League.

Rabbit and his Vancouver teammates ended up winning the Memorial Cup. The Giants downed another WHL club, the Medicine Hat Tigers, 3-1 in the championship final staged on May 27. Rabbit contributed three points, including two goals, during the Giants' five matches at the tournament.

Knowledge of Aboriginal languages in decline

By Cheryl Petten
Windspeaker Staff Writer

OTTAWA

A paper released by Statistics Canada in May paints a bleak picture of the future of Aboriginal languages in Canada, reporting that more than 75 per cent of Aboriginal people in the country are unable to conduct a conversation in an Aboriginal language.

According to *Aboriginal Languages in Canada: Emerging Trends and Perspectives on Second Language Acquisition*, only 24 per cent of the people who identified themselves as Aboriginal in the 2001 Census indicated they could speak or understand an Aboriginal language, a drop from the previous Census numbers in 1996, when 29 per cent of those declaring themselves as Aboriginal indicated they could converse in an Aboriginal language.

The picture is even more discouraging when the number of Aboriginal people declaring an Aboriginal language as their

mother tongue is examined. In the 1996 Census, 26 per cent of Aboriginal people reported the first language they learned was an Aboriginal language. Figures from the 2001 Census indicated only 21 per cent of people declaring themselves as Aboriginal reported having an Aboriginal language as their primary language.

The paper, released by Statistic Canada on May 15, was prepared by Mary Jane Norris, a senior research manager with Indian and Northern Affairs Canada's research and analysis directorate.

"Aboriginal peoples ... are confronted with the fact that many of their languages are disappearing, an issue which may have profound implications," Norris states in the paper. "Over the past 100 years or more, at least 10 once-flourishing languages have become extinct."

One bright spot among Norris' findings is that, while the number of Aboriginal people whose first language is their traditional Aboriginal language is in decline, a growing number of Aboriginal people are learning Aboriginal languages as a second language.

According to 2001 Census figures, the number of Aboriginal people indicating they spoke an Aboriginal language was slightly higher than the number indicating an Aboriginal language was their mother tongue. Norris interprets the difference between the two numbers represents people who have learned an Aboriginal language as a second language.

These second language learners may mean the difference between survival and extinction for some Aboriginal languages, Norris points out. For example, fewer than 200 people currently claim the Tlingit language as their mother tongue, but the number of people who have learned to speak Tlingit as a second language is about twice that. Some of the Salish languages are experiencing a similar resurgence—although the number of people speaking some of the smaller Salish languages as their first language declined five per cent between 1996 and 2001, the number of second language speakers increased by 17 per cent during the same time period.

"In fact, among some of the most endangered languages,

second language speakers account for over half of the speaking population ... Similarly, among practically all of the endangered languages, as well as many languages considered to be 'not quite viable, approaching endangered' or 'uncertain', a minimum of a third of all speakers are second language speakers," Norris stated.

"Learning an Aboriginal language as a second language cannot be considered a substitute for learning it as a first language," Norris writes in the paper. "Nevertheless, increasing the number of second language speakers is part of the process of language revitalization, and may go some way towards preventing, or at least slowing, the rapid erosion and possible extinction of endangered languages. Indeed, the acquisition of an Aboriginal language as a second language may be the only option available to many Aboriginal communities if transmission from parent to child is no longer viable."

A number of factors have come into play that have prevented many Aboriginal people from learning an Aboriginal language

as their first language, Norris said. Traditionally, Aboriginal languages were passed from generation to generation, with parents teaching their language to their children. The residential school system, where students were often forbidden from speaking their traditional Aboriginal languages, played a role in disrupting the intergenerational transmission of language, Norris explained, as did the growing prevalence of English and French in the daily lives of Aboriginal people, linguistic intermarriage, and the increase in migration of Aboriginal people between Aboriginal communities and urban centres.

"These pressures and demographics increase the likelihood that a significant share of the next generation of Aboriginal language speakers will be second language learners," Norris concludes. "Most importantly, though, it will be the desire and interest in learning Aboriginal languages today that will help shape the growth of future generations of Aboriginal language speakers, both first and second language learners."

Gathering to celebrate Cree language and culture

By Laura Suthers
Windspeaker Staff Writer

GRAND RAPIDS, Man.

From Aug. 13 to 17, the Mispawistik Cree Nation in Grand Rapids, Man. will welcome members from the largest Aboriginal nation in Canada when it hosts the 2007 National Cree Gathering.

"The purpose of the 2007 gathering, or any Cree gathering, is to strengthen the Cree Nation and bring it together in unity," said Michael Hutchinson, marketing coordinator for the gathering. "Our people have been damaged. Our nations have been damaged."

The theme of this year's gathering is Proclaiming our Nationhood through our territory, language, culture and traditions.

"Those things are all very important because a nation is people who share a common history, common language and a common land base," said Hutchinson.

A lot of the same events held at last year's national gathering are planned for this year's event including sweat lodges, traditional events and tours of the area and local landmarks.

"Grand Rapids is known for their caves, orchids and flowers that are unique to the area," said Hutchinson.

"It's also an amazing hunting and fishing spot. There will also be more modern activities such as a dry social and many youth events like baseball games."

This gathering will provide the host community an opportunity to showcase the heritage and history that is unique to their people. It's also a chance to share and strengthen historical, cultural, spiritual and political ties while promoting the unique traditional ceremonial practices and knowledge that will benefit the next generation of children, grandchildren and generations to come.

"There's five dialects of Cree and so bringing all these people together has been an important thing for us all to do," said Hutchinson. "This isn't a political

thing but we hope people will be there talking about best practices in their communities. Maybe they can share strategies for things that have been successful for them or dangers that they have come across. It's definitely going to be a time of sharing. We hope our people are going to get together and talk about things that affect their lives, their goals and hurdles and that's always something that's a little political."

A big focus of the gathering is the youth, to ensure they have a sense of who they are, where they come from and to be proud of who they are as Cree people. All of these aspects are easily passed along in the unity run.

"That run is about our young people coming together," said Hutchinson.

The participating youth will carry a torch from Moose Factory, which hosted last year's gathering, to this year's host community, Grand Rapids.

"The Cree Nation gathering, bringing in the unity and sharing in our nationhood, it doesn't mean anything if our youth aren't involved because our young

people are our future and it's so important they take pride in being Cree and take pride in their language and take pride in their culture and that's a very important part of the unity run," Hutchinson said.

"It's good to see young people who are willing to get up on their own two feet and I guess make a positive statement about who they are and that's a big part of the Cree gathering."

The second essential aspect of the gathering is bringing the Elders and youth together.

"I guess the Cree gathering itself, and bringing those young people and those Elders together, would be completing the circle and strengthening our nation and that's what the gathering is all about," said Hutchinson.

Of course all of the elements that make up the gathering are beneficial to the participants, but Hutchinson said that language is the most vital element of all.

"I think there's such an important aspect to language that there are certain ideas that exist in Cree that just can't be spoken in English," he said. "The English

language is created by straight line thinkers so it's very hard to talk about ground concepts and fuzzy concepts in such a straight line world. Language carries a crucial part of who we are. When you start looking at the Cree language you learn what our people were really like because you're learning the concepts that they dealt with everyday."

There will not only be language sessions on site at the gathering, but workshop areas will also be set up where participants are restricted to speaking English and Cree only.

"There are generations out there of families that are lost—lost without their culture and traditions—and if we want to bring those families back into the fold, we've got to help them repair themselves and that's part of the Cree gathering, getting those families and everybody together," said Hutchinson.

For more information about the 2007 National Cree Gathering go to www.nationalcreegathering2007.com or call the Mispawistik Cree Nation at (204) 639-2219.

Legislation introduced to promote Inuit language

On June 5, the Nunavut legislative assembly gave first reading to two bills designed to promote use of Inuit languages within the territory—The Official Languages Act and the Inuit Languages Protection Act.

If passed, the new Official Languages Act would grant official language status to Inuit, English and French. The new act would replace the Official Languages Act in currently in

place in Nunavut, which became law in 1988, 11 years before Nunavut officially came into existence. That act lists Chipewyan, Cree, Dogrib, English, French, Gwich'in, Inuktitut and Slavey as the official languages of the Northwest Territories, which then included the territory that is now Nunavut.

It if comes into force, the Inuit Language Protection Act will support protection, use and

promotion of the Inuit language. The bill proposes establishing new language rights and duties for both public and private sector organizations. The bill also calls for expanded roles for the Inuit Language Authority, the minister of languages and the Nunavut language commissioner. Under the new act, the language authority would make decisions and recommendations regarding language development, use and

standardization, the minister of languages would take the lead in establishing policies and programs aimed at promoting Inuit language use, and the languages commissioner would work to ensure organizations that would fall under the act comply with its requirements.

Under the new act, services to the public would continue to be made available in all three of the territory's official languages,

however all employees of the government of Nunavut would have the right to perform all of their duties in the Inuit language, with a goal of making Inuit the working language of government by 2020.

Now that they have been given first reading, the two bills will be referred to the Ajaugtiit Standing Committee, which is responsible for reviewing legislative proposals in the territory.

GDI turns to Elders to help preserve Michif

By Cheryl Petten
Windspeaker Staff Writer

SASKATOON

For the past several years, the Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) has been doing its part to help revitalize Michif languages.

Incorporated as a non-profit corporation in 1980, GDI is the educational arm of the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan, and works to meet the educational and cultural needs of Métis and non-status Indians in the province of Saskatchewan. As part of that role, the institute provides post-secondary programs and works to preserve and promote Métis culture and traditions.

Working to preserve and promote Michif languages is an integral part of preserving and promoting Métis culture, explained Darren Prefontaine, a curriculum developer with GDI's publishing department.

"What's unique about Michif, yes it's a complete mix of French and Cree, has some Saukteaux and English, and maybe even some Dene, depending on where you're at. But it's more than just a haphazard mix. It's a perfect balance; it's a perfect system. And it's really a microcosm for who Métis are because it's a mixed language but it's a unique language ... The Métis have taken these heritage languages, Cree and French, and they've made them their own," Prefontaine said.

"Michif encompasses a world view. It's just like Cree or any other Aboriginal language, or any language, whether it's English or French, Russian or Chinese, Mandarin, Cantonese. We all have world views attached to our language," he said. "It's not just a language, it's a world view, and when you lose your language, you really lose your culture, and I think that's an important point to remember ... We have to really work hard to preserve these languages because they're the essence of people's culture."

For its Michif language programming, GDI focuses on the three Michif languages that have historically been spoken in Saskatchewan—Michif Cree, Isle-a-la-Crosse or Northwestern Saskatchewan Michif, and Michif French.

According to Prefontaine, Michif Cree is the language most people think of when they think of the Michif language—a mix of Cree verbs and French nouns. Isle-a-la-Crosse Michif,

"We all have world views attached to our language ... and when you lose your language, you really lose your culture, and I think that's an important point to remember ... We have to really work hard to preserve these languages because they're the essence of people's culture."

—Darren Prefontaine

he said, is predominately Cree with a few French words, and Michif French is a type of Métis French commonly spoken around the Batoche area of Saskatchewan and in Manitoba.

While the three languages are different in a number of ways—for instance, the Cree component of Isle-a-la-Crosse Michif is based on a Woods Cree Y dialect, while the Cree component of Michif Cree is more of a Plains Cree dialect—they also share many similarities. All three are oral languages, and the world views of the three Métis groups that speak them are pretty much the same, Prefontaine said.

One of the ways GDI works to promote and preserve the Michif languages is through creation of resources, including books, audio-visual products, and its Web site, the Virtual Museum of Métis History and Culture, an online resource chronicling the history and culture of the Métis people.

Reaching out to younger generations is an important part of any efforts to revitalize a language, and it is something GDI has attempted to do through the many children's books it has published.

"Every children's book that we produce, we make sure that we have a Michif language component, usually Michif Cree," Prefontaine said. "It'll be written out in Michif, and then we'll have a narration component with it so the kids can hear what the language sounds like."

Very few
GDI staff

members can speak Michif, so the institute relies heavily on Michif speakers in the Métis community to help create the various language resources, Prefontaine said. GDI also works alongside these community members, coordinating grassroots efforts to help preserve Michif languages.

"By this I mean working with Michif speakers themselves, organizing Michif speakers forums, working with other Métis institutions such as the Manitoba Métis Federation's Louis Riel Institute; Pemmican Publications, another Métis book publisher; and working with the community people themselves to have these forums and these venues where people can discuss issues on how to preserve the language and how to see that it's going to survive in its transmission between the generations."

There are no hard and fast numbers as to how many Michif speakers there are across the Métis Nation, Prefontaine said, but he estimates there are fewer than 10,000, spread out across Western Canada, Ontario, the Northwest Territories and into Montana and North Dakota.

"So our task is to organize the community, work with Elders, since they're the main language speakers ... to help preserve the language."

Part of the challenge in preserving Michif is taking a traditionally oral language

and creating a standardized written version. Two individuals in Manitoba, Norman Fleury and Rita Flamand, are working on that very thing, Prefontaine said, putting together orthographies that will outline the rules for structure, syntax and spellings within the Michif languages.

Another challenge that must be overcome by attempts to preserve and promote Michif, is finding a way to bring the languages into the 21st century without compromising their cultural integrity. How do you come up with an acceptable Michif word for computer? And what about words that have been part of the language traditionally that haven't stood the test of time?

"Some of the older words are really old fashioned," Prefontaine said. "For instance, First Nations might be called Savage, which might not have a very nice connotation to English ears, although in the French and Métis context it's not quite so bad. So how do you update words? ... How do you keep the essence of the language but also modernize it as well without ensuring a huge add mixture of English, because English is all around us."

Creating language resources and engaging Michif speakers in efforts to preserve the languages are important parts of GDI's work, but the key to promoting use of the language is finding ways to pass on this knowledge to younger generations of Métis people, Prefontaine said.

"So one of the things I think we're going to have to work on with the old people is to find a way to have them instructed in how to teach a language, because you can speak the language, of course, and you know the culture, but to relate that to young people who don't know it is a very difficult task."

Some attempts to build bridges between Michif-speaking Elders and young Métis people are already being made in communities across

the Métis Nation, Prefontaine explained. Some involve providing Elders with the training they need to teach Michif, while others involve bringing Elders into the classroom to act as a resource for teachers who are working to teach their students about Métis language, culture and history.

While GDI is working hard to help preserve and promote the Michif languages, Prefontaine admits the institute can't do it all alone. What's needed, he said, is for more co-operation between Métis organizations across Canada and beyond.

"There's a lot of like-minded, hard working, compassionate and passionate people across the Métis homeland who want to see their languages preserved, and I think we're going to need more co-operation between the Métis in the various provinces, and going into the United States, to help preserve the language. Because nobody can do this all on their own in a vacuum. There has to be more co-ordination," he said.

"In our own little way, we're trying to do our best to preserve Michif languages for future generations, and GDI welcomes the opportunity to work with anybody who is willing to preserve Michif languages. And we're looking forward to building initiatives with other Métis institutions ... we're always looking to build partnerships, because I think once you build partnerships, this is where the work gets done."

"We do our own little initiatives here but the broader picture means partnerships interprovincially, maybe even internationally with our Métis friends in North Dakota and Montana. We can work harder to help preserve the languages that way."



Intergenerational transmission of language—children learning their traditional Aboriginal language from parents or grandparents—plays an important role in helping to ensure languages can thrive or, in some cases, even just survive.

PHOTO PROVIDED COURTESY OF THE BRITISH COLUMBIA MINISTRY OF ABORIGINAL RELATIONS AND RECONCILIATION.

University offers supports for Aboriginal learners

By Leanne Flett Kruger
Windspeaker Writer

KAMLOOPS, B.C.

In 1970, Cariboo College's first classes were held at the Kamloops Indian residential school in Kamloops, B.C.

Now known as Thompson Rivers University (TRU), over the last four decades this educational institution has made the transition from a community

college to a full university. TRU claims to be a different kind of university, with one of the largest Aboriginal student populations of any of British Columbia's post-secondary institutions.

Based on traditional Aboriginal pedagogy, students can complete their courses in a learning environment that makes efforts to accommodate Aboriginal students culturally, socially and academically.

The university boasts a co-

ordinator of services for Aboriginal students, an Aboriginal cultural centre and a First Nations Student Association.

In the fall of 2003, The Gathering Place was opened. It is a resource, information and support centre for Aboriginal students and was established to empower the cultural values of the diverse Aboriginal population that attends TRU.

(See Services page 25.)



Joanne Brown, TRU's co-ordinator of services for Aboriginal students, poses with her mother Christine Jack on campus.

BDC

(Business Development Bank of Canada)

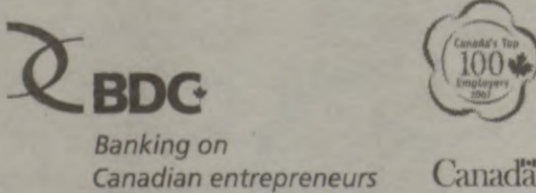


Wilson Neapew

BDC is pleased to announce the appointment of Mr. Wilson Neapew to the position of National Director, Aboriginal Banking. As such, Mr. Neapew will be responsible for the development and implementation of a national BDC strategy catering to aboriginal markets, the promotion of the aboriginal banking profile as well as the maintenance and development of strategic business alliances with the Aboriginal community. He will be based in Winnipeg.

Mr. Neapew, a band member of the Pine Creek First Nation in Manitoba, joined BDC in 2002 as Manager, Aboriginal Financing Funds in Winnipeg. In 2005, he was appointed Area Manager, Winnipeg Entrepreneurship Center. Prior to joining BDC, he worked in the Commercial Lending Division of the Royal Bank.

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Services provided to Aboriginal students

(Continued from page 24.)

In July 2006, Nathan Matthew, former Simpcw chief and tribal chief of the Shuswap Nation Tribal Council, was appointed as First Nation advisor to the president of TRU. Previously an educator by profession, Matthew, has helped the university to better respond to the Aboriginal community's needs by functioning as an advisor and liaison between the TRU president and the university's Aboriginal services systems.

Joanne Brown, TRU's Aboriginal student services co-ordinator, feels things have "come alive" since Matthew took on the advisor role. "He provided the shot we needed to go ahead and get things accomplished," she said.

Support for Aboriginal students

is available from a variety of sources. Brown is available to act as liaison between students and their bands and other agencies. She is also there for the students in many other capacities, such as providing assistance with the transition from public school or on-reserve schools to the larger community campus. The First Nations Student Association has an office and a student lounge in the campus activity centre, and plans are in the works for an Elder in residence program that will provide a traditional approach to providing support for Aboriginal students. Students can also take advantage of the open learning option available at the school, which allows students to complete some or all of their desired courses without attending on campus classes.

Capital Health in Edmonton is Canada's largest health region and is affiliated with the University of Alberta, providing integrated health services to one million residents in Edmonton and the surrounding area. Capital Health acts as a referral centre for central and northern Alberta, the North and the Prairies, providing specialized services such as trauma, burn treatment, organ transplants, high-risk obstetrics and paediatric heart surgery.

REGISTERED NURSE (ABORIGINAL NURSE COORDINATOR) Regional Aboriginal Health

Reporting to the Director of the Regional Aboriginal Health Program, the Nurse Coordinator is an integral member of the patient care team providing liaison and case coordination for Northern Alberta Aboriginal (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) patient referrals to Capital Health for medical services. The incumbent will be responsible for ensuring that the health care needs of Aboriginal patients from Northern Alberta referred to the Royal Alexandra Hospital are met through appropriate case management, patient advocacy, and discharge planning activities as specified. The Nurse Coordinator also acts as a single point of contact for both CH staff and Aboriginal patients and communities for information and connections that facilitate smoother and more appropriate patient care and successful responses to treatment.

Requirements:

- ▶ Graduate from an accredited nursing program, current registration with the College and Association of Registered Nurses of Alberta (CARNA) and CPR (BCLS) certificate
- ▶ Baccalaureate Degree in Nursing is preferred
- ▶ Knowledge and respect of Aboriginal Culture & experience in working effectively with First Nations
- ▶ Ability to work in a cross-cultural environment and demonstrated understanding of the needs of patients from northern communities
- ▶ Ability to understand and speak Cree is preferred
- ▶ Preference will be given to candidates of Aboriginal descent
- ▶ Demonstrated computer skills an asset

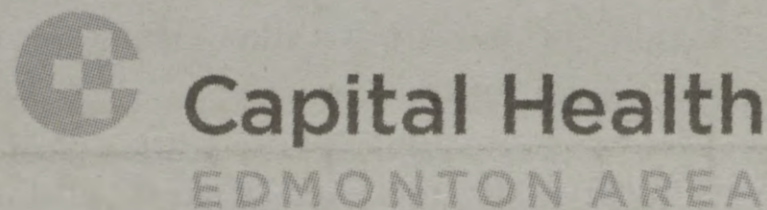
This position is a joint initiative between CH, North Peace Tribal Council, Kee Tas Kee Now Tribal Council, Lesser Slave Lake Indian Regional Council, and Métis Settlements General Council.

Apply online at www.capitalhealth.ca or submit an application quoting competition number MA-12643-RA to:

Human Resources
Royal Alexandra Hospital Site
10240 Kingsway
Edmonton, AB T5H 3V9
Fax (780) 477-4960

Interested applicants are encouraged to contact the Aboriginal Health Program at (780)735-5326.

This competition will remain open until a suitable candidate is found.



INDIVIDUAL, FAMILY AND GROUP THERAPIST: RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL HEALING PROGRAM

Funded by The Aboriginal Healing Foundation, Kaska Traditional Territory – Watson Lake, Yukon

Reporting to the Executive Director LIARD ABORIGINAL WOMEN'S SOCIETY

GENERAL DESCRIPTION: To facilitate and support individuals, families, and community in revitalizing Kaska culture and healing from the violence and humiliation inflicted on the Kaska First Nations in residential schools. This will be a deeply challenging and equally rewarding position that will require a high level of maturity, patience, commitment and skill. The person will contribute to understandings and responding to family violence, suicide prevention and intervention and assist Kaska Dena to build safer communities.

The successful candidate will provide counseling and workshops focused on healing and support, developing knowledge and teaching needed skills to Kaska people who participate in the program:

- facilitating healing groups focused on trauma recovery and support counseling services for families and individuals
- professional development training for FN staff
- clinical supervision and a resource for staff

EDUCATION:

- Masters degree in a relevant discipline (e.g., Social Work, Child and Youth Care, Education, Psychology)
- Licensed and insured by a credible professional association

EXPERIENCE: at least 5 years experience in work of this nature

QUALIFICATIONS:

- knowledge of First Nations cultures,
- knowledge of the Canadian Government's historic and current practices and policies regarding First Nations, including the operations and consequences of mission schools,
- experience and success working with First Nations who have been subjected to violence and other forms of violence,
- working knowledge of a variety of treatment methods, including collaborative approaches that honor individuals' existing strengths, convictions, and cultural knowledge,
- ability to work effectively with individuals, couples, families, or groups as the situation demands,
- ability to work respectfully and cooperatively with other resource people and community members despite possible differences in philosophy and methods,
- openness to learning from individuals in the community,
- willingness to receive guidance from Liard Aboriginal Women's Society and Kaska communities,
- willingness to travel to remote Kaska communities,
- criminal records check.

NOTE: This is a term position until March 31/2010. Salary is negotiable.

CLOSING DATE: September 30, 2007

Please submit your resumé and covering letter to:
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[footprints] **Mary Cousins**
Educator and activist worked to improve lives of Inuit people

By Gauri Chopra

Throughout her life, Mary Cousins wore many hats. She was a devoted daughter and granddaughter and a loving mother. She was a nurse, a teacher, a journalist, an ambassador for the North and an Inuit rights activist.

She was born Mary Panigusiq on Feb. 22, 1938 in Saattut, an Inuit camp in Navy Board Inlet on Baffin Island, to parents Lazarosie and Letia Kyak.

When she was five, Mary's father was hired by the RCMP as a special constable. Because of his job the family left Saattut and moved to Pond Inlet.

In 1944, the St. Roch, an RCMP schooner, arrived at Pond Inlet. The ship's commander, Sgt. Henry Larsen, needed Inuit people to supplement its crew, as the schooner was about to embark on the return leg of its historical journey across the Northwest Passage, Larsen hired Mary's uncle, Joe Panikpak, and his family. Mary's grandmother was to go along as a seamstress, but she and Mary had a very close relationship and she refused to go on the voyage without her granddaughter. So, at the age of six, Mary stepped aboard the St. Roch with her grandmother and other family members and they set off on their journey, leaving Mary's parents behind in Pond Inlet. Her father had placed his daughter in the care of the ship's commander. Over the years, the two men would become great friends, and Larsen would continue to play a role in ensuring the well being of his one-time charge.

The schooner sailed the Northwest Passage, docking at Herschel Island in mid-September 1944. While the St. Roch still had further to go on its journey, the additional help of the Inuit crew members was no longer needed, so Mary and her

family were left on Herschel Island until the ship would return for them in the spring. It was to be a cold winter, but Larsen left them well supplied and encamped at an abandoned police post on the island.

After a two-year absence, Mary returned to her family in Pond Inlet. She was now eight, and was ready to begin her formal schooling. She attended the Anglican missionary school until she was 11, gaining a good knowledge of the English language in the process. But her years in school weren't over yet. Mary's father was posted to Craig Harbor, and he moved his family to the community, where they lived for the next five years. Then came another move for the family, this time to a location near Grise Fiord, but Mary was not to accompany them. Her father had decided it was best for his daughter to remain in one place and complete her education rather than following him from posting to posting. Through the help of his old friend Larsen, Mary's father made arrangements to send her to school in Hamilton.

In 1953, Mary moved to Hamilton, where she lived with the McAndrews, a white family. While she was there, she made regular trips to a local hospital, visiting and encouraging the many Inuit patients who were there recovering from tuberculosis.

At school, Mary had planned on taking nursing, but she soon changed her mind, deciding to become a teacher instead. But her brief nursing experience opened yet another door for her. After completing a couple of years of schooling in Hamilton, Mary set out aboard the C.D. Howe, a medical ship, planning to go home to Pond Inlet to visit her family. With Mary's knowledge of

medicine, English and Inuktitut, she was soon called into action as an interpreter, and eventually became the chief medical interpreter on the C.D. Howe, a position she held for five summers while medical staff on the ship travelled to various Inuit communities to conduct tuberculosis screenings.

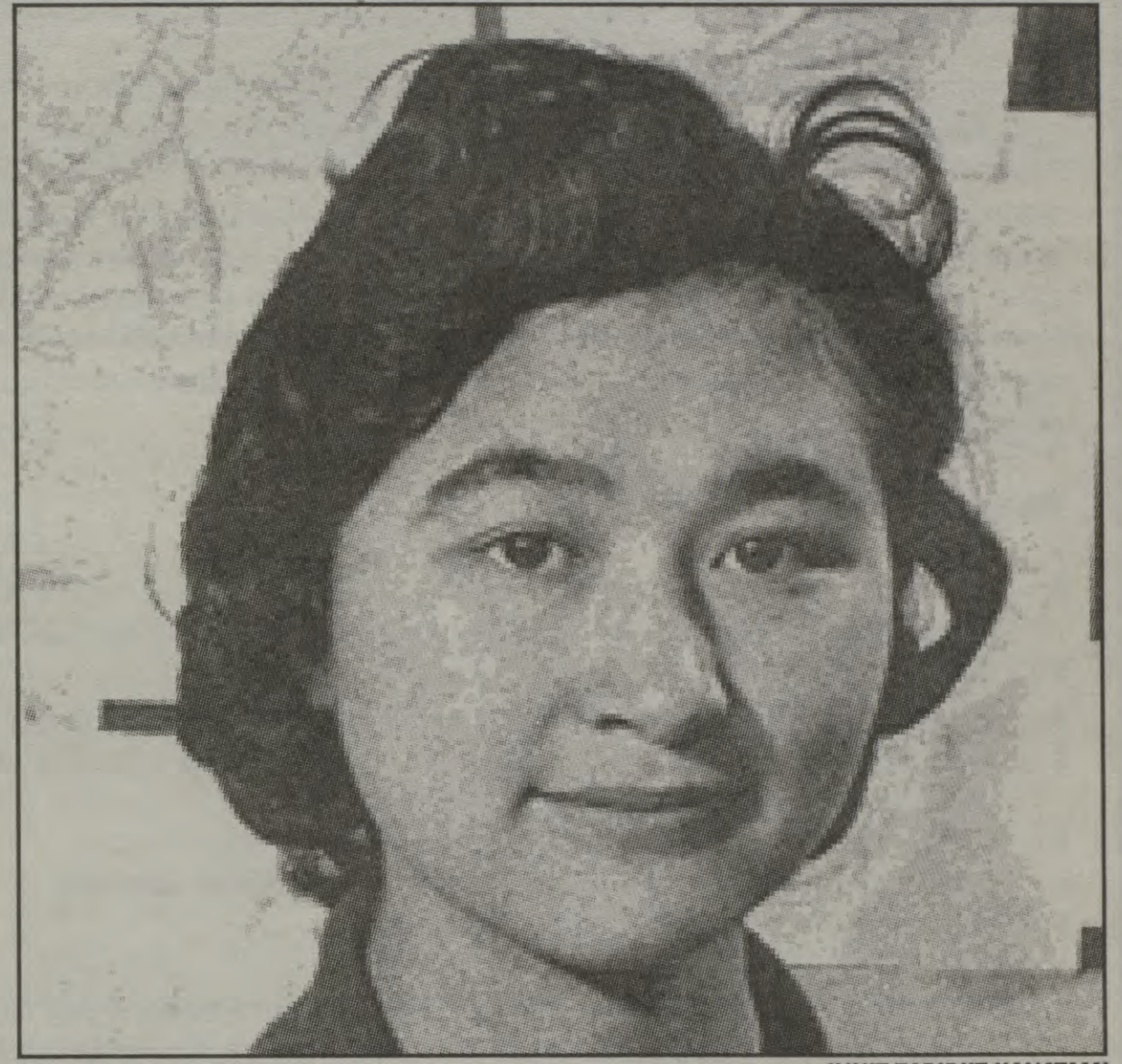
In 1958, at the age of 20, Mary went to work for the Department of Northern Affairs, and for the next four years, she edited Inuktitut, the department's Inuit-language magazine. In addition to editing the publication, she also wrote articles and provided illustrations. Through her work on the magazine, she played a large role in bringing information to isolated Inuit communities in the North.

In 1962, Mary made a long overdue trip back home. She was reunited with her family during her brief visit, and saw her grandmother for what would be the last time.

The following year, Mary was in Ghana, West Africa, educating the local people about life in the Canadian North, when she got news of her grandmothers passing. Mary once wrote in a poem "Grandma cares for me, and our family needs nothing more..." She was deeply saddened to hear of the loss and rushed home.

In 1964, Mary married Roger Cousins, a teacher from Saskatchewan. A year later, the couple welcomed their first child, and the new family made the move from Ottawa to the North. They lived in Grise Fiord, then in Frobisher Bay, with Roger teaching school in each community.

In 1969, Mary was appointed to the Vanier Institute of the Family, a charitable organization that works to promote the well being of Canadian families. Soon



INUIT TAPIRIIT KANATAMI

Mary Cousins

after, she became politically active in Inuit issues and help found the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), an organization that to this day continues to represent Inuit people at the national level.

Mary once explained the reason she felt groups like ITK were important.

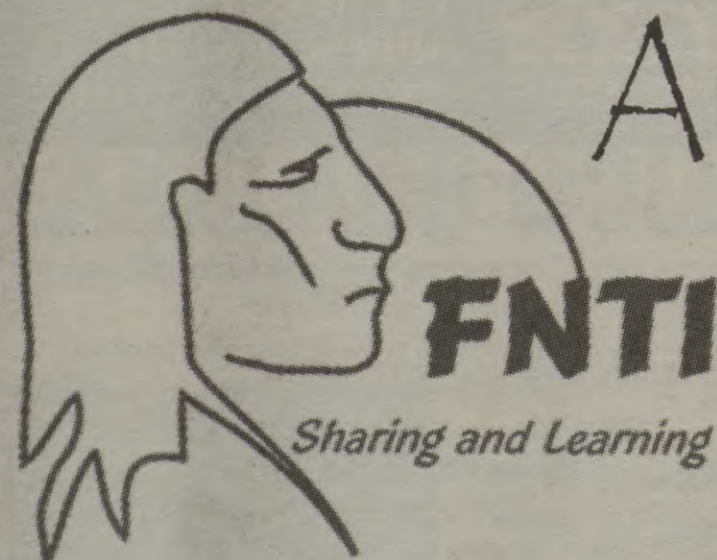
"The government will only sponsor Inuit meetings if it is acceptable to the government; in other words, which the government is in favour of. It is all very well that the government sponsor meetings of Inuit on what the government likes, but we Inuit have to meet with our fellow Inuit and make our own plans also," she said at the first meeting of the ITK, then called the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, held in Toronto in February 1971.

Through her struggle for Inuit rights Mary began to notice that there were very few Inuit people who were able to speak their own language. Fearing that this would lead to the death of the Inuit

language and culture, Mary began to teach Inuktitut in schools.

She taught the language at Gordon Robertson Education Centre in Iqaluit for almost a decade before returning to school herself and earning a teaching certificate from the Eastern Arctic Teacher Education program. She then resumed teaching, this time at Nakasuk school in Iqaluit, while continuing her own studies through McGill University in Montreal. In 1992, she earned her bachelor of education degree at the age of 54.

In 1993, Mary's husband, Roger, died of cancer. In 2000, Mary, too would be diagnosed with the disease. She continued to teach until her retirement in 2005. Mary died of cancer on April 22, 2007 at the age of 69, but the work she accomplished during her lifetime will continue to benefit the Inuit people for generations to come.



An Aboriginal Approach to Learning

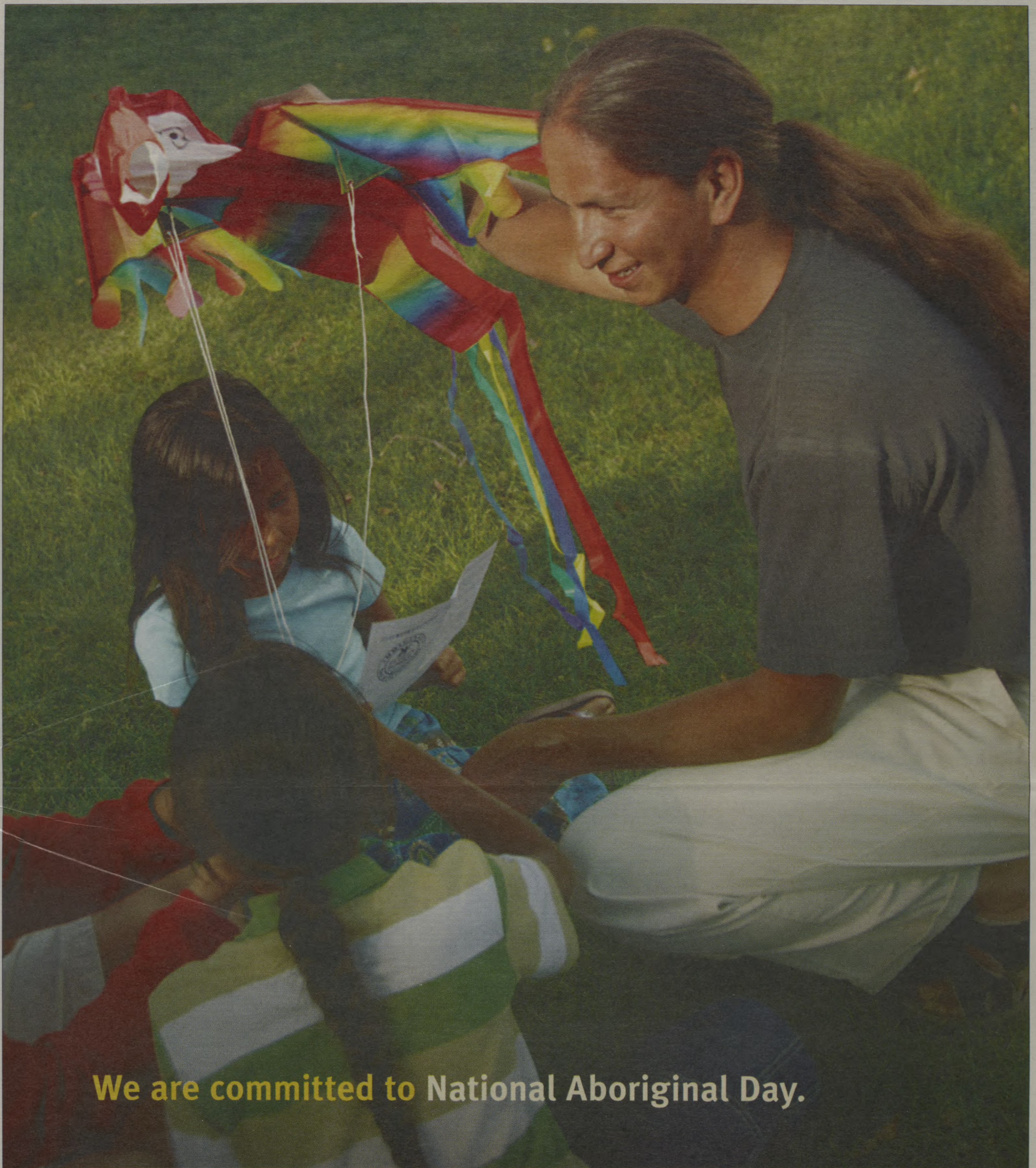
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**The Business of
Aboriginal Tourism**

Second Quarter – Summer 2007

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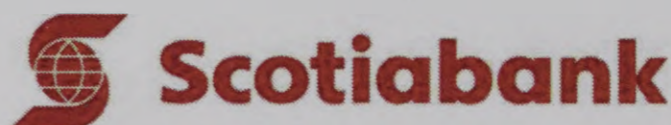
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ENTRY INSTRUCTIONS

Entries may be colour slides or prints (no Polaroids, please), not larger than 8" x 10". Subject of photos must be Aboriginal. A maximum of four (4) photo entries per person. Photographs that have been previously published or won a photographic award are NOT eligible. By submitting the photo(s) you confirm that you are the exclusive rights holder of the photo(s). Each entry must be labeled with the entrant's name. This information should be printed on the back of the photograph or on the slide frame (a grease pencil works best), or on an attached label. Hint: To prevent damage, do not stamp or write heavily on the back of your prints. Package your entries carefully in a protective cardboard sleeve. Entries must be accompanied by a list of the pictures enclosed. The list should include your full name, address and daytime phone number. Entrants under 18 must enclose permission of a parent/guardian. Sorry, submitted entries and photos cannot be returned. Windspeaker and Scotiabank are not responsible for lost or delayed entries. The selected winning photos shall become the property of Windspeaker. Professionals and amateurs may enter. Photographs will be judged on creativity and technical excellence and how they best capture the contest theme. A panel of judges will select the prize winners. Their decisions are final. Winner will be notified by phone. Photo contest rules are also available online at <http://www.ammsa.com/snap>

Pick out your best photos and send them to Windspeaker. Two photos will be selected and awarded \$1500 each. In addition, the two selected photos will grace the 2008 Aboriginal History Wall Poster sponsored by Scotiabank and to be distributed in Windspeaker's December 2007 issue all across Canada!

Your picture should show a portrayal of Aboriginal culture and people.



Help us to honour Aboriginal business leaders

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

Please send in your nomination by September 1st for the inspirational individuals who will join the Hall of Fame at our Circle for 2015 National Gala Dinner in February, 2008.

They will be in excellent company, joining our most recent laureates: Chief Victor Buffalo from Hobbema, AB, Harry Cook from Lac La Ronge, SK, and Garfield Flowers from Hopedale, NL. Watch their video profiles at www.ccab.com/abhf.

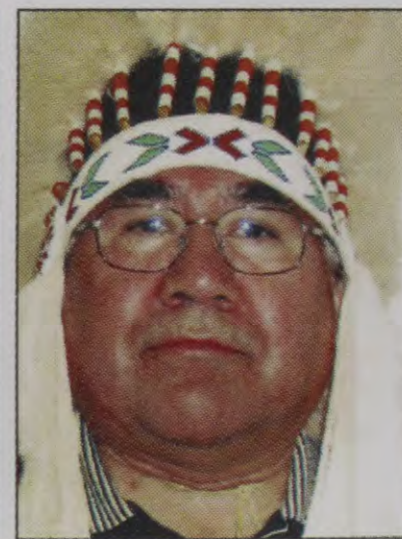
If you know an Aboriginal business leader who deserves to be recognized, let us know. Download a nomination form at www.ccab.com/abhf, or call us at 1-866-566-3229.

ABORIGINAL BUSINESS HALL OF FAME 2007 LAUREATES



Chief Victor
Buffalo

Hobbema, AB



Harry
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Lac La Ronge, SK



Garfield
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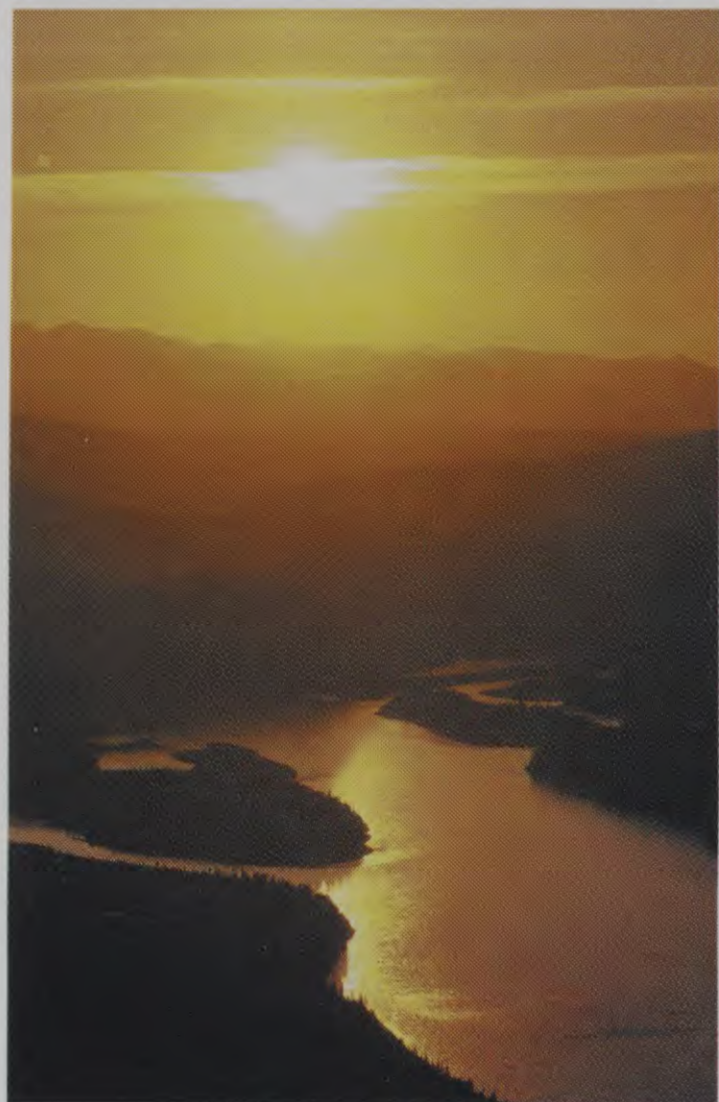
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Jeffery Alatypko
with his Uncle Harry

Typpo Wood Products Ltd. was built on a collective dream. While working as a firewood technician, Jeffrey realized he could start a Calgary-based firewood production business with his family and sell wholesale to firewood retailers in Alberta and British Columbia. Through encouragement, guidance and a strong belief in his success, the community made his dream possible.

If you are an aspiring young entrepreneur, Jeffrey has something to share with you. "Surround yourself with positive people. Accept the support you receive from your mentor and role models and always remember that anything is possible if you put your heart and soul into it," says Jeffrey.

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START-UP FINANCING MENTORING BUSINESS RESOURCES

On The Agenda

July 8-10

National Youth Forum (Victoria, B.C.)

Youth between the ages of 14 and 24 are encouraged to attend the 18th annual forum, which will be held at the Victoria Native Friendship Centre. Participants will learn more about the Friendship Centre Movement and the Aboriginal Youth Council (AYC).

For information contact Jocelyn Formsma, 1-877-563-4844 ext.332.

July 9-12

Fifth Continental Meeting of Indigenous Women of the Americas (Kahnawake, Que.)

The Quebec Native Women Inc., will host this international gathering that will bring together Indigenous leaders and organizations from North, Central and South America.

Call Joanne Ottereyes at (450) 632-0080 ext. 222 for details.

July 9-13

General Assembly of the Metis Nation of Ontario (Thunder Bay, Ont.)

All ages are invited to the 14th annual assembly to be held at Chippewa Park with many workshops, fine arts and entertainment to enjoy.

Call (613) 764-1077 for more information.

July 10-12

Assembly of First Nations 28th annual General Assembly (Halifax, N.S.)

Network with other First Nations organizations and professional businessmen and women as you compete in the AFN Peter Gzowski Invitational (PGI) Golf Tournament on Monday, July 9.

Contact 1-866-869-6789. Go to www.afn.ca for details.

July 13

Metis Settlements Annual Golf Tournament (Sherwood Park, Alta.)

This networking event will be held at Legends Golf and Country Club.

For more information call (780) 822-4096 or 1-888-213-4400.

August 1-4

Reach Out! Speak Up! Global Youth Assembly (Edmonton, Alta.)

This event will be held at the Shaw Conference Centre. Participants will network and engage together to address a number of issues including racism, bullying and many other underlining issues that affect youth on a daily basis.

Go to www.youthassembly.ca or call (780) 453-2638 for information.

August 13-17

National Cree Gathering (Grand Rapids, Man.)

The gathering will provide opportunities to strengthen the historical, cultural, spiritual and political ties of the national Cree Nation.

For more information go to www.nationalcreegathering2007.com.

August 20-24

First International Circumpolar Conference on Geospatial Sciences and Applications (Yellowknife, N.W.T.)

The conference will focus on a number of infrastructures, data, development and information relating to the environment and science.

Go to www.ipygeonorth2007@NRCan.gc.ca for more information.

August 24-25

First annual Youth and Elders Conference (Winnipeg, Man.)

This conference is an opportunity for Aboriginal youth and Elders to come together with a focus of bridging intergenerational gaps in cultural understanding and teachings. They will also address important concerns, issues and priorities.

Call (613) 747-6022 for details or go to www.abo-peoples.org for

Sept. 24-28

Symposium 2007—Preserving Aboriginal Heritage: Technical and Traditional Approach (Ottawa, Ont.)

This international conference will provide Aboriginal people with opportunities to learn about traditional, technical, ethical and intangible aspects of the conservation of Aboriginal material culture. Information go to www.cci-icc.gc.ca.

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Second Quarter – Summer 2007

On May 9, NaiKun Wind Development Inc. announced it has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Haida Nation regarding Phase 1 of a proposed offshore wind farm project in Hecate Strait.

The MOU is subject to the project receiving an environmental assessment that determines the project can proceed without material adverse effect on the region's environment as assessed by the Council of Haida Nation, Canada and British Columbia. The region is particularly rich in crab and seabirds. (NaiKun and the Haida Nation have established a framework to govern the relationship during the construction and operation of the project, which is expected to begin construction in 2009.) The agreement also establishes a formal commercial relationship in which the Haida Power Authority will participate in the subsidiary, NaiKun Operating Company ("Opco"), the entity that will be responsible for providing operating and maintenance services to the wind power project. "We have invested several years in educating ourselves about this project and energy development, as well as educating these developers about the concerns for Haida Gwaii," said Arnie Bellis, vice-president of the Council of Haida Nation. "Provided this project meets our conditions, we look forward to a long and fruitful relationship with NaiKun."

David Emerson, the minister of International Trade, and Jim Prentice, minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, announced the launch of the Aboriginal Business and International Trade Web site.

"Canada is home to many successful Aboriginal exporters," said Emerson. "This Web site will provide new and expanding Aboriginal businesses with the tools and information they need to tap into global commercial opportunities." The site provides a source of information for Aboriginal entrepreneurs seeking to export their products and services. It was developed by Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada in partnership with the Aboriginal International Business Development committee to respond to a growing demand for export development information. According to 2001 census data and the Aboriginal Entrepreneurs Survey (2004), conducted by Statistics Canada, there are more than 27,000 self-employed Canadians of First Nations, Métis and Inuit heritage who are creating economic opportunities in their regions. Among those surveyed, a significant proportion (13 per cent) have begun to export a portion of their goods and services to other countries. The government hopes to build on this momentum. The Aboriginal Business and International Trade Web site can be accessed at www.aboriginaltrade.ca.

On May 11 in Edmonton, the federal government announced a refocused Urban Aboriginal Strategy that concentrates on job training and entrepreneurship for Aboriginal people living in urban areas.

"Canada's fastest growing Aboriginal communities are in cities like Edmonton, and it is so important that we invest here to ensure Aboriginal peoples can integrate successfully and take full advantage of the economic and community opportunities that exist here," said Edmonton Mayor Stephen Mandel. "We look forward to working with Aboriginal communities and the provincial and federal governments to make this long-term commitment of dollars a success."

The refocused strategy is a five-year investment of \$68.5 million and is a partnership with various federal, provincial and municipal partners, local Aboriginal and community organizations, and the private sector. The projects approved will focus on improving life skills, promoting entrepreneurship and employment skill development, and support for Aboriginal women, children and families. Twelve urban centres are designated as participants in the Urban Aboriginal Strategy—Vancouver, Prince George, Edmonton, Calgary, Lethbridge, Regina, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, Winnipeg, Thompson, Thunder Bay and Toronto.

Elaine Cardinal-Baker of Edmonton's Marriot at River Cree won a tourism award on May 15 for outstanding administrative services. The Marriot at River Cree is part of the casino and resort development that opened in October 2006 on the Enoch reserve west of Edmonton.



Photo: Rouse Photography



Elaine Cardinal-Baker

Cardinal-Baker was just one of 17 front-line stars of the greater Edmonton's hospitality industry honoured at Edmonton Tourism's 7th Annual You're Welcome Edmonton Awards at the Winspear Centre. "Service excellence is vitally important in Edmonton's competitive labor market," said Ken Fiske, Edmonton Economic Development Corporation's vice-president of Tourism, Events and Motion Pictures. "Front-line staff play a vital role in creating a positive visitor experience. And a growing number of tourism employers see You're Welcome Edmonton as an integral part of their employee recognition and retention program."

Appointments

Celine Auclair, Leslie Brochu, Lester Lafond, Kenneth Robert Marsh, William McCue, Randy Price and Ann Shaw have been appointed to the First Nations Tax Commission.



Manny Jules

The commission's mandate is to support and regulate First Nation property tax regimes to ensure they are administratively efficient, harmonized with property tax regimes across Canada, and fair

to on-reserve taxpayers.

The commission is one of four institutions created through the First Nations Fiscal and Statistical Management Act.

The appointments "bring together a unique team of professionals with recognized expertise in the field of on-reserve property taxation," said Chief Commissioner C.T. (Manny) Jules, who was appointed on Nov. 24, 2006. "This marks the beginning of a new era of economic growth and opportunity for First Nation governments."

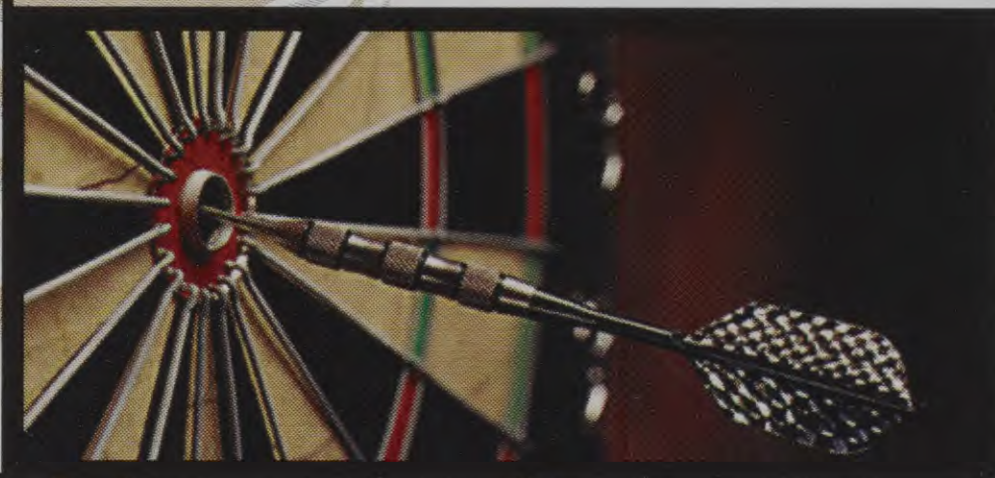
Elona Ewing, Ricky Fontaine, Gary Nott, Jim Prodger and Barrie Robb have been appointed to the First Nations Financial Management Board, which assists First Nations in strengthening their local financial management systems and provides independent financial management assessment services.

The board is one of the four institutions created through the First Nations Fiscal and Statistical Management Act, which came into force on April 1, 2006. The Act established an institutional framework to provide First Nation governments with the tools available to other levels of government for modern fiscal management. These tools include an independent financial management assessment service and a bond financing regime.

"With these appointments, the development process draws to a conclusion and the operational phase begins," said Harold Calla, board chairperson. "The benefits that will be realized will allow First Nations to compete in the private sector and attract private sector investment, which will improve the lives of our members."

On May 3, Dr. Mark S. Dockstator was appointed as the chairperson of the First Nations Statistical Institute and will lead one of the four First Nation institutions created through the First Nations Fiscal and Statistical Management Act.

The Institute will assist First Nations in meeting their information needs and work with Statistics Canada to better represent First Nations in the national statistical system. It will provide First Nations with the statistics necessary to assist in community planning, and work with First Nations and government to improve the accuracy, utility and relevance of data. Dockstator is a member of the Onyota'a:ka (Oneida) Nation of the Thames and is currently a professor of Indigenous Studies at Trent University, located in Peterborough, Ont.



Chief Clarence Louie of British Columbia was appointed as the chairperson of the National Aboriginal Economic Development Board in April by Jim Prentice, minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

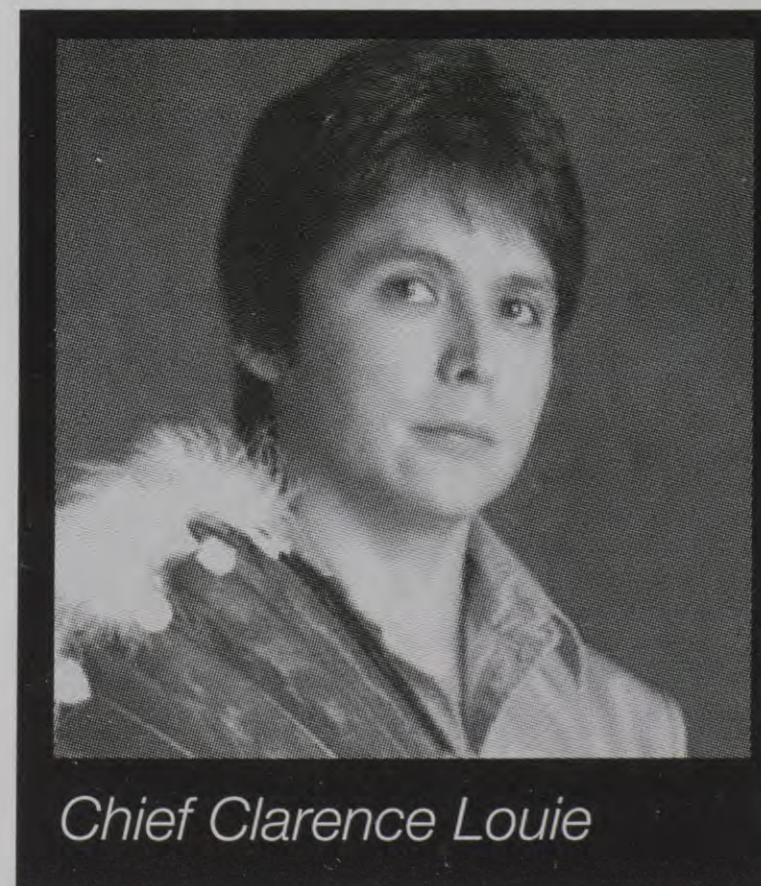
"There is no Aboriginal leader in Canada today who is better known for his commitment to Aboriginal economic development," said Prentice. "From his own experience as chief of the Osoyoos Indian Band, and as a visionary for the economic potential of all First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples, Clarence Louie is exceptionally qualified to guide the work of the board in its forward agenda." Louie has been elected chief of Osoyoos 11 times since 1985. He founded the Osoyoos Indian Band Development Corporation in 1998, and serves as its president and chief executive officer. The First Nation manages 10 business ventures and administers its own health, social, educational and municipal services, including Nk'Mip Cellars, the first First Nations-owned winery in the world, Nk'Mip Desert Canyon Golf Course, and the Nk'Mip Desert and Cultural Centre.

Minister Prentice also announced the appointments of Nellie Cournoyea (Northwest Territories), and Chief Jim Boucher (Alberta), who will serve as vice-chairpersons of the board. Other new

members announced are Chief Victor Buffalo (Alberta); Grand Chief Matthew Mukash (Quebec), and Dale Booth (Ontario). The appointments take effect immediately and continue for three years.

"This is an outstanding group of individuals whose experience and achievement in business, community development, public service, finance, and other fields, allow us to create a renewed and re-energized national board. I look forward to working with Chief Louie and his colleagues to pursue economic development measures that will benefit all Aboriginal peoples, and Canada as a whole," said Prentice.

The National Aboriginal Economic Development Board is mandated by federal cabinet, and members are appointed by order-in-council. The board's role is to advise ministers on policy, programming and program co-ordination matters related to Aboriginal economic development.



Chief Clarence Louie

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unique partnership has given rise to creation of a world class geotour that combines the adventure of the Yukon's unspoiled wilderness with a journey of personal discovery.

The Great River Journey is enjoying a good response to its first year of operation.

Great River Journey is a corporation jointly owned by a consortium of four Yukon First Nations Development corporations, and Great Northern Journeys Inc., a group of private sector investors.

The First Nation owners are Ta'an Kwach'an Council, Kwanlin Dun First Nation, Tr'ondek Hwech'in and Selkirk First Nation. All are located in or near Whitehorse. The government of Canada also contributed, with Indian and Northern Affairs Canada providing one million dollars, and the Yukon government kicking in \$500,000 in implementation funding.

It is hoped assistance will continue from all levels of government, including Yukon Tourism and the Canada Tourism Commission as the project is marketed internationally in the months to come.

Claire Festel, director of marketing and sales for Great River Journey, explained that George Asquith, the corporation's president, saw the potential in the area as a wilderness tourism operation. Based on his many years in the tourism industry, he inspired a shared vision, passion and commitment of the First Nation and private sector partners who joined in the

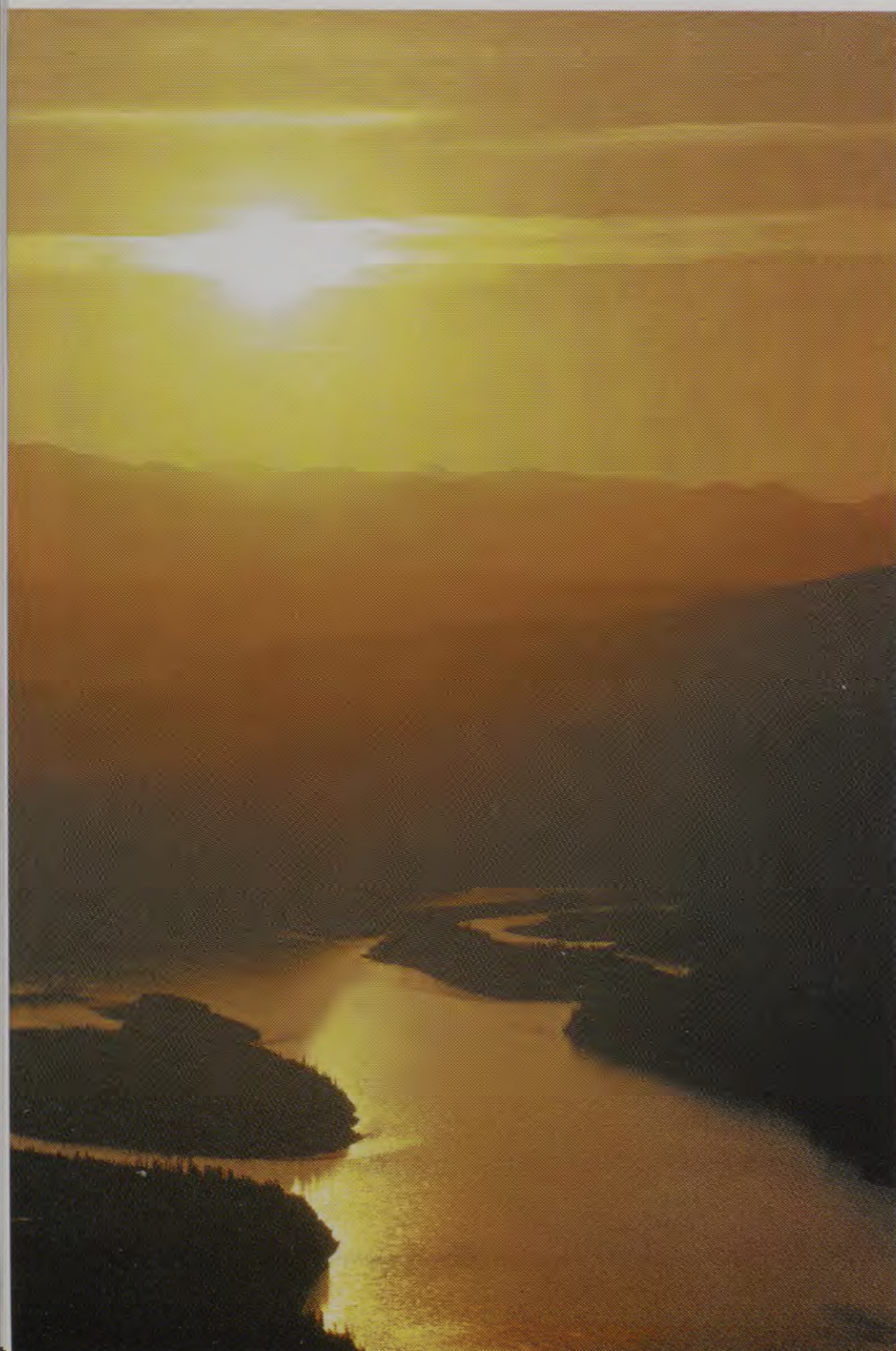
project.

Implementation costs for development, facilities construction, marketing, staffing, training, and familiarization tours have been expended and the program is now up and running.

"This year we'll have two piloted riverboats, which will carry groups of 10 people, accompanied by an experienced local guide, on an eight-day journey through the traditional lands of the four First Nations partners, who are the very people who will be hosting, guiding and caring for guests," she said. "Frequent landings are made to view wildlife, explore the wilderness and historical sites, rest and relax."

The small group size and wide variety of Yukon attractions permit each tour to be personalized to accommodate special interests, such as nature photography, bird watching, and participating in cultural and interpretive programs, she said.

Continued on page 13.



Photos: Great Northern Journeys Inc.



Aboriginal Tourism – A business primer

Each year millions of people around the world pack their luggage and head out for a bit of relaxation, a unique experience, a place to explore and discover, or to rejuvenate. They go on holiday, and they spend billions upon billions of dollars doing it; \$463 billion (US) dollars, according to figures for the year 2001.

Almost 20 million international tourists visited Canada that year, making the country the ninth most desirable destination in the world.

Tourism is the world's largest growth industry and in this country it is the 11th largest resource industry, representing about three per cent of the gross domestic product.

The world tourism organization predicts that by 2010, earnings from tourism will grow to \$1,550 billion (US), and Aboriginal communities are looking for a piece of that pie.

But it's not as easy as "build it and they will come," the saying made popular by the Hollywood film, *Field of Dreams*. To compete in the tourism market, you must have a unique product, reach the people you wish to attract to your business, persuade them to come, and then satisfy or exceed their expectations so they will tell their friends about you.

Get started with the "four Ps" of marketing, says Tourism British Columbia: Product, Place; Promotion and Price.

Product

You don't have to be big to compete. In fact, the majority of tourism businesses are small. In 2000, more than 90 per cent of tourism-related businesses had less than 50 employees, and more than 40 per cent were companies that employed one to four people. What is a necessary element for a successful business is a service that is in demand. And being prepared to make adjustments to that product, because what's hot today may not be hot tomorrow, and your business will have to roll with these market fluctuations to remain successful.

Place

You have to know where tourists are travelling now and where the trends are and their changing requirements. For example, Vancouver, Whistler and Vancouver Island are popular tourist destinations now in British Columbia. They are "icon" products; places people would know if your walked up to someone in a far off land and asked them to name a place in Canada that they would like to visit. These anchors of tourism are places the majority of visitors would want to include on

their travel itineraries. Calgary is an anchor in Alberta, for example.

You don't have to be in an anchor area to attract tourists, but you will have to understand what might motivate a person to come to your business when they have limited holiday time. Your business doesn't stand alone. Are there other areas in your community that are appealing that would make the journey to your region attractive?

Promotion

So now that you have a product and a good location, how do you let people know about this great experience? There are four types of promotion activities meant to inform, persuade and influence: advertising, sales promotion, publicity or public relations and personal selling.

Remember, you can't market to all consumers identically, and not all consumers will be interested in your product. You must know which consumers you are targeting and get to know how they are purchasing their mix of products.

One tool is advertising or direct mail. This is beneficial because it is a targeted approach, but comes with a high cost.

Prepare a key message that you will use throughout all of your marketing efforts. They will be messages that will reflect what you'll want your audience to think about when they are thinking about your business or service. These messages will focus on the benefits to the consumer, not just your features.

The Internet is also becoming an important tool in reaching consumers. If you are going to use this tool, however, having a Web site just isn't enough. You have to direct people to the site, and make it a valuable experience once they have landed there.

A Receptive Tour Operators (RTO) is a tour operator who represents Canada as a whole, and many offer almost all products in regions across the nation. RTOs contract with Canadian suppliers who become part of a catalogue of products and services they then sell as a unit, including accommodation, transportation, meals, activities, attractions and experiences.

Trade shows are another way to allow

tour operators to learn about your business. But before you invest the time, energy and money it will cost to take part, know where your clients will originate and calculate the potential return on your investment. Often it takes about three years of business behind you to start to reap the benefits of these relationships.

Price

Know the true cost of running your business. This is not the price that you will expect someone to pay for the product, but what it will cost you to deliver the product. Then add your mark up, or the margin you need to make a profit. It could be about five to 10 per cent over cost. Then evaluate if this is what people will pay for the product. If not, go back to the drawing board, finding where you can trim the fat.

There is no secret formula for success. Much of it is as it has always been; a combination of ingenuity, hard work and plain old luck. Those who have kept an eye out for opportunity have become the role models in the tourism industry.



Students hone their entrepreneurial skills through BDC E-Spirit competition



How many high school students have you met who know how to write a business plan? If you'd been at the Halifax World Trade and Convention Centre on May 16, you would have had an opportunity to meet more than 200 of them.

The students travelled to Halifax from all corners of the country to compete in the seventh annual E-Spirit Business Plan Competition. E-Spirit was created to expose Aboriginal high school students to the entrepreneurial possibilities that exist for them within the business world. The initiative is coordinated by the Business Development Bank of Canada, a financial institution owned by the federal government that works to support the development and growth of small and medium-sized Canadian businesses. Other sponsors of this year's event included the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Aboriginal Business Canada and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

Seventy-six teams from 40 schools took part in this year's E-Spirit competition, a three-day event that had the student teams manning trade show booths and presenting their business plan to their fellow competitors and the E-Spirit judges.

For 16 weeks prior to the competition, the students involved in E-Spirit give up their free time at lunch hours, after school and on weekends to dedicate the hours to their projects.

At the beginning of the preparation process, each participating team is provided with a new computer and is paired with an Aboriginal mentor who can be contacted via e-mail. The entire business plan preparation process is Web-based, with almost everything the students need found on the E-Spirit Web site, from the modules that must be completed, to advice from business professionals, to information about how the final business plans will be judged. The 16-week preparation process is divided into segments. With completion of each segment, the team reaches a milestone and receives a reward for their success.

The competition culminates in an awards gala, where the top three teams are named and presented with their gold, silver and bronze awards. Awards are also given out in nine additional categories—Most Original Product/Service, Best Team Spirit, Most Innovative Marketing Concept, Most Original Name, Best Utilization of Technology, Best Trade Show Display, Best Logo, Best Video and Best Oral Presentation—with a first place team and a runner-up team selected in each.

This year the gold award went to Kate Russell and Allanah Kenoras-Schwandt of Grand Forks secondary school of Grand Forks, B.C. for their business concept for Ding Dong Delicious, an environmentally-friendly online delivery service that would provide fresh, locally grown produce and other food products to its client base, all delivered in a recyclable "Green Box" using fuel-efficient vehicles. The Grand Forks team was coached by teacher Anna Groenveld.

The silver award went to John Woodhouse, Angela Franklin and Amanda Anderson of R.B. Russell vocational high school of Winnipeg, Man. for their business concept for The North End Youth Program, which would provide local youth with a safe learning environment, after-school sports and other educational activities. The team was coached by teacher Cora Bell.

Myriam Volland, Jean-Sebastian Volland and Marie-Claude Gregoire-Vachon from Ecole Manikanetish of Sept-Iles, Que. earned the bronze award for their plan for an Innu culture education program that would provide area youth with an opportunity to learn about their Montagnais heritage from local Elders. The team was coached by teacher Guylaine Turbis.

Russell, one of the members of this year's top place team, is no stranger to the E-Spirit program, or the winner's circle. Russell was one of the members of her school's E-Spirit team last year, when she and her teammates Cassandra Lum and Naomi McLeod won the bronze prize for their business concept, a Web portal that would allow Aboriginal artists to market their work globally.

Groenveld, who also coached her school's bronze-winning E-Spirit team last year, believes students taking part in the annual competition get a lot out of the experience that will serve them well in the future.

"I think they get a tremendous number of really important life skills and skills they can take with them to any area that they chose to pursue," she said. "They have to learn to work as a team, making accommodations for each other's strengths and weaknesses. They have to learn to manage their time, because it involves a lot of time to work on the project. They have to develop the idea of commitment to an idea and following something right through to the end.

"They learn a lot of practical skills in terms of doing research, in terms of writing and speaking ... all kinds of communication skills. They learn the steps that are necessary, really, to develop a business plan and how an actual business might function."

Another skill the students gain that they'll be able to put to good use in the future is the mastering of technology, including how to use the Internet to do research and to develop power-point presentations.

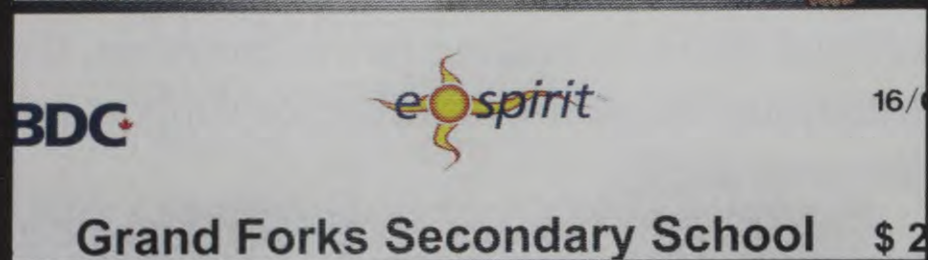
Grand Forks secondary school is very committed to continuing its involvement with E-Spirit.

"Just for the number of skills that the students are able to develop by doing the project," Groenveld said.

"And it's a wonderful thing for anybody to have on their resume, that they've participated in something like this as well, because it encompasses so many different aspects valuable to both the business world or if they were going on to post-secondary training ... And it's just a real eye-opener, because business is what's going to generate a lot of jobs in the future. It's like getting in on the ground floor of something like that ... how would I go about coming up with an idea and actually making something that could benefit me and benefit my community?"

More information about E-Spirit can be found online at www.bdc.ca/espirit.

By Cheryl Petten



The E-Spirit Gold Award was presented to Allanah Kenoras-Schwandt and Kate Russell from Grand Forks Secondary School of Grand Forks, British Columbia. Their business project, Ding Dong Delicious, would offer an eco-friendly, web-based delivery service of fresh produce, out-of-season produce and other food items from local and international suppliers.



The E-Spirit Silver Award was presented to John Woodhouse, Angela Franklin and Amanda Anderson from R.B. Russell Vocational High School, of Winnipeg, Manitoba. Their business concept, The North End Youth Program, would provide a safe learning environment for Aboriginal youth from the area.



The E-Spirit Bronze Award was given to Jean-SÉbastien Vollant, Myriam Vollant and Marie-Claude GrÉgoire-Vachon from ...cole Manikanetish, in Sept-CEles, QuÉbec. Their winning business idea is an Innu culture education program aimed at youth from the area.

First Class, First Nations

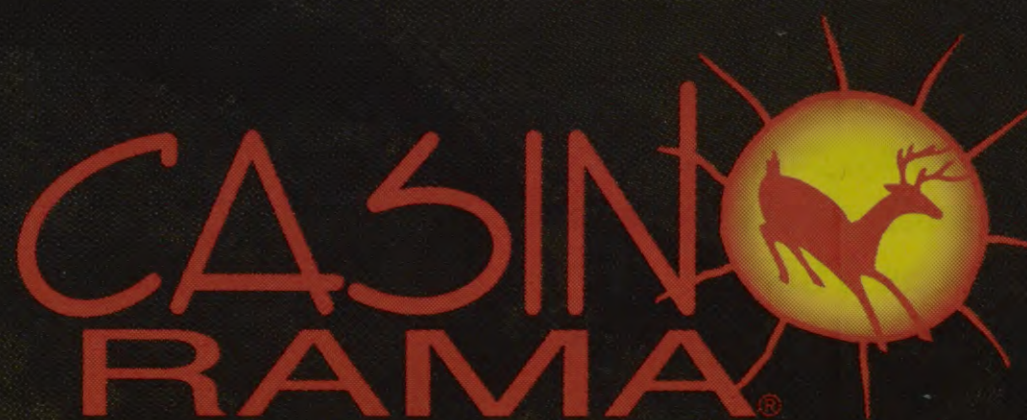


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Entrepreneur opens business despite the odds

There was a time when Lyndon Lerat thought he wouldn't live to see another joyous occasion. There was a time when his body was paralyzed and he was sick and it looked like the end.

He had selected where he would be buried and picked out the song that would be played at his funeral—a tune called *Lacey's Song*, chosen in honour of his young daughter named Lacey. He was basically waiting to die.

After years of debilitating pain and surgery and of never really being quite sure what was wrong with him, Lyndon overcame incredible odds and recovered. He has begun to live the dream he had of opening his own restaurant, specializing in his own bannock recipes.

On April 30, Lyndon's Aboriginal Cuisine opened in downtown North Battleford, Sask.

He attributes much of his physical recovery to a combination of things: being given the Indian name Medicine Bear, as well as to modern medicine.

Lerat, 41, of Cowessess First Nation, said it all started back when he was about 19 years old. After playing hockey from a very young age and doing a lot of very hard body checking, he started to experience head pains or migraine headaches. This was the start of a long, grueling struggle with a condition that he had to live with because no one could figure out exactly what his problem was.

He started getting attacks where he would suddenly lose consciousness and would fall on the ground and thrash about for a second or two.

"I got pretty sick or started to get sick. I had lost feeling in both of my arms, which led to me being in hospital for a few months," said Lerat.

He was sent for neurosurgery where he said something unforeseen occurred, because the surgery was supposed to be five hours long,

but instead was eight.

"I'm sure I had passed into the spirit world for a short time. After that I was taken to rehabilitation where I was wheeled into a room in my wheelchair and was introduced to the staff as 'This is our miracle man, Lyndon, here.'"

There he had to relearn how to do many things again, like walk, swallow and more. He was still having severe head pain after the surgery. He was placed under powerful pain medication for quite some time.

"I was sure that I was going to die, and I had even asked my brother to make arrangement for me to get into a sweat lodge so I could get an Indian name, because I had seen obituaries where Indian people had their Indian name in there and that's what I wanted. So I dragged myself into a sweatlodge and I was given the name Medicine Bear that night. I was already near death by then. I came out of that, and it's amazing, but two weeks later I was walking around."

"Opening my own business or getting my own business running is truly a miracle after the shape that I was in. I work a lot of hours, but I don't have a problem with that. I love working for myself and helping other people by hiring other people to work for me. It's just an amazing feeling to be doing what I'm doing today."

Lerat said a lot of people, in the community, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, in the community have given him a lot of support to get his business going and he is very appreciative. Lyndon's Aboriginal Cuisine is already attracting all sorts of people, including those from cultures other than Aboriginal who come and try out his food.

"In my restaurant I specialize in bannock and other Aboriginal foods. I work mainly with buffalo and elk meat. I make 18 different



flavours of bannock, which I developed when I was sick, because that was all that I could do. I couldn't do anything but cook because I was so weak all the time."

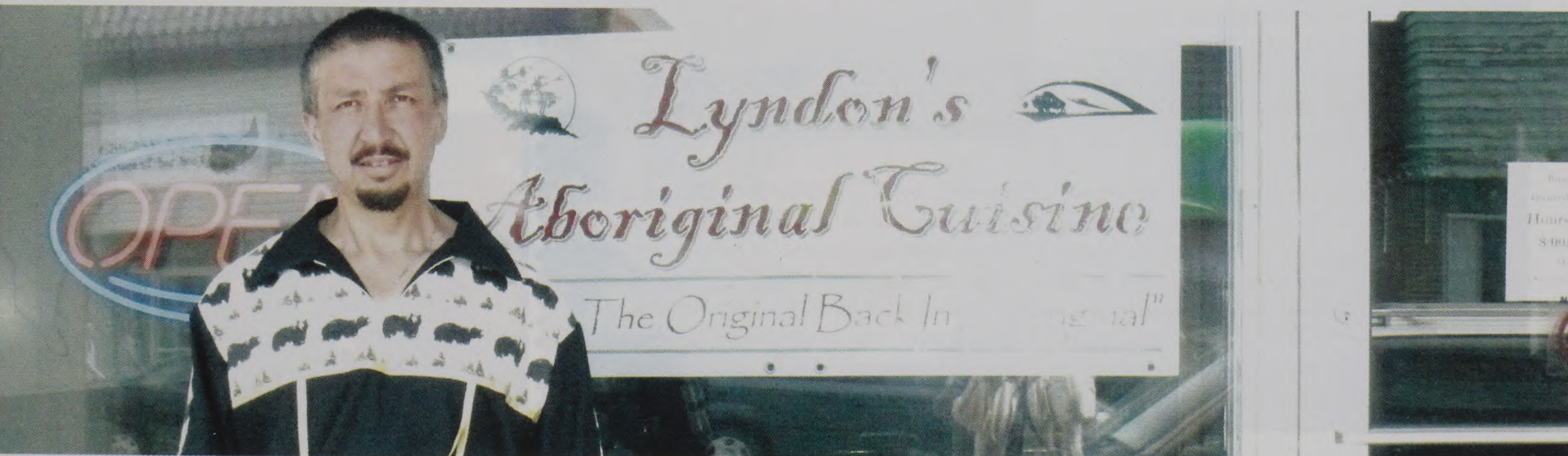
He married Tina Spyglass of Mosquito First Nation in a traditional wedding ceremony on May 27, 2006.

He spends much of his time cooking and managing his restaurant where his specialty foods can be tasted at extremely reasonable prices. He also finds the time to cater local events.

He hopes to move into a bigger space eventually and maybe even open up a shop to sell his bannock.

Lyndon's Aboriginal Cuisine will be having a grand opening in the very near future.


By Lillian Blackstar







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Official Court Notice

The Indian residential schools settlement has been approved. The healing continues.

The Indian residential schools settlement has been approved by the Courts. Now, former students and their families must decide whether to stay in the settlement or remove themselves (opt out). This notice describes the settlement benefits and how to get them for those who stay in, and it explains what it means to opt out and how to opt out.

The settlement provides:

- 1) At least \$1.9 billion for “common experience” payments to former students who lived at one of the schools. Payments will be \$10,000 for the first school year (or part of a school year) plus \$3,000 for each school year (or part of a school year) after that.
- 2) A process to allow those who suffered sexual or serious physical abuses, or other abuses that caused serious psychological effects, to get between \$5,000 and \$275,000 each—or more money if they can show a loss of income.
- 3) Money for programmes for former students and their families for healing, truth, reconciliation, and commemoration of the residential schools and the abuses suffered: \$125 million for healing; \$60 million to research, document, and preserve the experiences of the survivors; and \$20 million for national and community commemorative projects.

You won't have to show you were abused to get a common experience payment, and you can get one even if you had an abuse lawsuit, and even if you won, settled, or lost.

Eligible former students who stay in the settlement can get a payment

from it. Family members who were not students will not get payments. However, former students—and family members—who stay in the settlement will never again be able to sue the Government of Canada, the Churches who joined in the settlement, or any other defendant in the class actions, over residential schools.

Your Options Now

Request a Claim Form

If you are a former student and you want a payment from the settlement, and you never want to sue the Government of Canada or the Churches on your own, do not opt out; instead, call now to register and a claim form will be mailed to you after August 20, 2007. When it arrives, fill it out and return it.

Remove Yourself (Opt Out)

If you don't want a payment, or you think you can get more money than the settlement provides by suing the Government or the Churches on your own, then you must opt out by submitting an Opt Out Form postmarked by **August 20, 2007**.

Do Nothing: get no payment, give up rights to sue.

1-866-879-4913

www.residentialschoolsettlement.ca

If you want to stay in the settlement and receive a payment from it, call 1-866-879-4913, or go to the website, and request that a claim form be sent to you as soon as it is ready.

If you opt out from the settlement you will not get any payment from it. However, former students or family members who opt out will keep any right they may have to sue over residential schools.

To opt out, you must complete, sign, and mail an Opt Out Form postmarked by **August 20, 2007**. You can get the form at the website below, or by calling 1-866-879-4913.

You don't have to hire a lawyer to opt out, but you may want to consult one before you do. If you stay in the settlement, you don't have to hire and pay a lawyer to get a common experience payment. Of course, you may hire your own lawyer and pay that lawyer to represent you with an abuse claim.

Call 1-866-879-4913 with questions, or go to www.residentialschoolsettlement.ca to read a detailed notice or the settlement agreement. You may also write with questions to Residential Schools Settlement, Suite 3-505, 133 Weber St. North, Waterloo, Ontario N2J 3G9.

The impact of world views on decision making

By Lee Ahenakew

A boriginal people and societies of European descent have different world views. The differences in community values and societal structure create a different approval process for decision making. When Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organizations are doing business, it is important to recognize world views in order to successfully negotiate agreements.

Mainstream government and business is structured in top down hierarchies. In Europe it has been this way for thousands of years. The person at the top of the hierarchy has the authority to make decisions that are not questioned.

Traditionally, Aboriginal leadership is representative of the whole community. For example, traditionally First Nations have a chief and leaders who represent each large extended family in the community. The titles and genders of these leaders vary between cultures and between matrimonial and patriarchal societies. In patriarchal societies, chiefs and headmen are common. In matriarchal societies chiefs and clan mothers are common.

Aboriginal leadership values consensus and community buy-in when making decisions. The traditional approach to decision making requires the council to talk around the council fire until consensus is reached on a decision, even if it takes all night.

The community may also be involved in decision making. For example, the headmen of families will be consulted on various decisions to represent the view of the family. These traditions affect the way Aboriginal communities make business decisions today.

Consensus decision making is valued in the boardroom of modern Aboriginal community-owned business. Board decisions are often made based on consensus. The issues are discussed until everyone is in agreement. Consensus from the community is also desired on many business propositions. This is particularly true when there is an impact on community land and resources that will affect many generations to come.

The Aboriginal method of decision making is in sharp contrast to corporate practices. In the corporate world decisions are made quickly by the people in charge. Input of subordinates is typically not valued. A good leader is one who takes charge and makes decisive decisions based on their own best judgement.

Aboriginal communities should study the

corporate hierarchy carefully when conducting business. Always determine who the final decision maker is and try to meet with them. There is also politics in corporations. However, normally there are a small number of people to consider in corporate politics. It is prudent to carefully study the corporate structure and see who else you should be talking to.

Mainstream corporations should ensure they understand how the Aboriginal community they are dealing with will arrive at a decision. Decision making may take longer in an Aboriginal community-owned business because more time is required to create consensus between board members or between councils and the community.

Volatile Aboriginal politics create cautious decision making. There is little separation between council, administration, and the community. Decisions made at the leadership level are communicated quickly through the communities through the moccasin telegraph, and judged accordingly. A community political or business leader can protect their integrity and future prospects by ensuring their decisions have consensus.

First Nations may also have two councils; a traditional council and an elected council. The Indian Act has created this situation on many First Nations by requiring the community to elect a council, rather than being governed by hereditary traditional councils. In these communities the elected council may have the

official decision making power, however, the traditional council will influence support in the community.

The struggle between traditional and elected councils can be seen today at Six Nations where community members are reclaiming land from a developer in Caledonia. The developed piece of land is called Douglas Creek Estates. The traditional council is at the table with the elected council for the negotiations with the provincial and federal governments. It is Six Nations members reclaiming the land, not the elected or political council. Moving forward in negotiations requires consensus from the community, elected council and traditional council.

A non-Aboriginal business can't be expected to figure out the complexities of an Aboriginal communities' politics. However, it is good to keep in mind the extreme political sensitivities in Aboriginal communities.

World views should be considered from angles other than decision making. For example, corporations will make profit a priority, whereas an Aboriginal community is more likely to make employment a priority. World views will impact what people feel is important in many business situations.

Lee Ahenakew is the principal of 4Sight, a management consulting firm that helps Corporate Canada do business with First Nations. www.4sightconsulting.ca



Lee Ahenakew

ESS shares its success with Aboriginal partners

ESS is a division of Compass Group PLC, the largest food and multi-service company in the world. Through ESS, Compass Group provides support services to defense, offshore and remote sites clients around the globe, offering services ranging from designing and building camp facilities to providing house-keeping and catering services once the camp is up and running.

In Canada, many of the remote site locations served by ESS are in close proximity to Aboriginal communities, and, according to Don Kallusky, ESS director of Aboriginal affairs for Canada and Alaska, the company has made it a priority to ensure these communities are given an opportunity to share in the wealth being generated by these remote operations.

Currently, ESS has 24 joint venture partnerships in place with Aboriginal communities, with another five or six expected to come online in the coming year, Kallusky said. These joint venture partnerships allow Aboriginal communities, companies or individuals to partner with ESS on specific projects, giving the Aboriginal partners a chance to learn the ropes from experienced ESS personnel.

"To me, it's a win-win situation for both partners," he said.

The biggest benefit Aboriginal communities draw from these joint venture partnerships are the opportunities for employment and training for community members, Kallusky said. But the joint ventures also help to build the capacity of the community partners. With the profits from their business venture with ESS, Aboriginal communities are able to set up trust funds for future generations and sink more money into education. And ESS procurement policies, which are designed to provide "barrier-free access" for Aboriginal companies, also ensure Aboriginal communities have access to a wealth of opportunities for local entrepreneurs, who establish businesses that

provide goods and service that ESS needs.

Partners also get a chance to benefit from the relationship ESS has with the CCAB. Kallusky has taken representatives from each and every one of its Canadian Aboriginal partners to a CCAB event, and this year will be taking one of the company's Alaskan partners to the CCAB's gala in Vancouver in September. This helps not only to strengthen the relationship between ESS and its Aboriginal partners, but it also provides another capacity building experience for the partners—a chance to network with all the other business people taking part in the CCAB event.

But the relationship between ESS and the CCAB doesn't end with PAR. ESS is the founding sponsor of the CCAB Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame, which celebrates the achievements of outstanding Aboriginal business leaders, and is involved in CCAB's Foundation for the Advancement of Aboriginal Youth, a scholarship and bursary program that helps young Aboriginal people to continue their education.

For more information about ESS, visit the Compass Group Canada Web site at www.compass-canada.com. For more information about the CCAB or the PAR program, visit the Web site at www.ccab.com.

By Cheryl Petten



Don Kallusky playing Santa at a Kaska Nation elementary school

Editor's note:

The article *Businesses reach out to Aboriginal community*, which appeared in the Spring 2007 issue of *Windspeaker Business Quarterly*, contained an omission. In the listing of companies involved in the *Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) program*, an initiative of the *Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB)* that helps businesses measure their success in achieving good Aboriginal relations, two companies were inadvertently left off the list—*Syncrude Canada*, which has twice re-certified at the program's gold hallmark level, and *Eurest Support Services (ESS)*, a division of *Compass Group Canada*, which renewed at the gold level for the first time this year. The following article highlights some of the efforts of ESS to reach out and build strong and mutually-beneficial relationships with Aboriginal communities across the country.

Continued from page 8.

"This year is our product-testing year and next year, when the project is in full operation, the price will be vastly different," she said. "For 2007 only, the patron's tour price is \$3,000 CDN, but next year it will be more like \$7,800."

Accommodations along the way are in small, private, remotely situated lodge facilities, and each has been designed with themes to harmonize with and accentuate the unique wilderness and historical aspects of the surrounding area, she said. Meals featuring local ingredients and traditional foods will be served throughout the journey.

The adventure begins in Whitehorse and travels to Upper Labarge Lodge, where participants stay overnight and enjoy a range of activities, such as a leisurely walk through the Ta'an village, hiking, fishing, kayaking and biking. Guests are met by a floatplane on day three, which takes them on a one-hour flight over the Yukon River to Homestead Lodge near Fort Selkirk, an historic site that is proving popular.

Days five and six find visitors at a wilderness outpost where they tent and enjoy a truly wild section of the journey. Arrival at Dawson City gives the travellers an opportunity to view the many historical, cultural and natural attractions in the capital city. Here the travellers reluctantly end their journey, with most visitors flying home or travelling on by riverboat to Alaska, or enjoying a side trip to Inuvik.

"Great River Journey trips are all inclusive, from the moment you are picked up at the Whitehorse airport or at your hotel. The trip fee includes meals, accommodations, float plane charter, group equipment and guide services," she said. "Tours depart four times a week, beginning on June 1, with the last departure on Sept. 15." More information is available at www.greatriverjourney.com or 867-456-2421.

"Great River Journey targets the growing number of affluent international travellers who seek unique and authentic experiences that provide them with a true sense of place," concluded Festel. "It provides our clients with the opportunity for a personal journey of discovery of the Yukon, its people, land and culture, history, wildlife and geography, and it's unique to North America."

By Heather Andrews Miller



Interior of main lodge.