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Wind speaker



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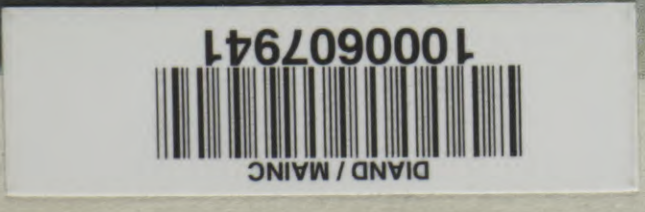
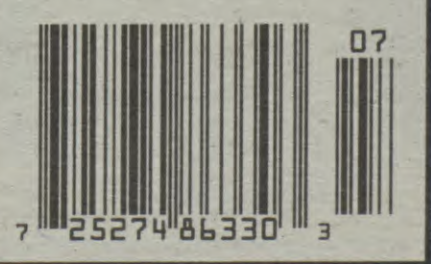


The oldest living residential school survivor, Marguerite Wabano, 104, of Moosonee, Ontario accepts a copy of the apology from Prime Minister Stephen Harper, shortly after he delivered it inside the House of Commons on June 11. Wabano was among the five other residential school survivors brought onto the floor to hear Harper apologize on behalf of all Canadians.

See more on the apology page 8.

Photo credit: Fred Cattroll

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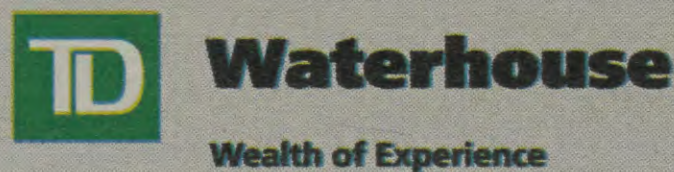
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The latest issue of **Business Quarterly – Canada's Aboriginal Business Magazine.**

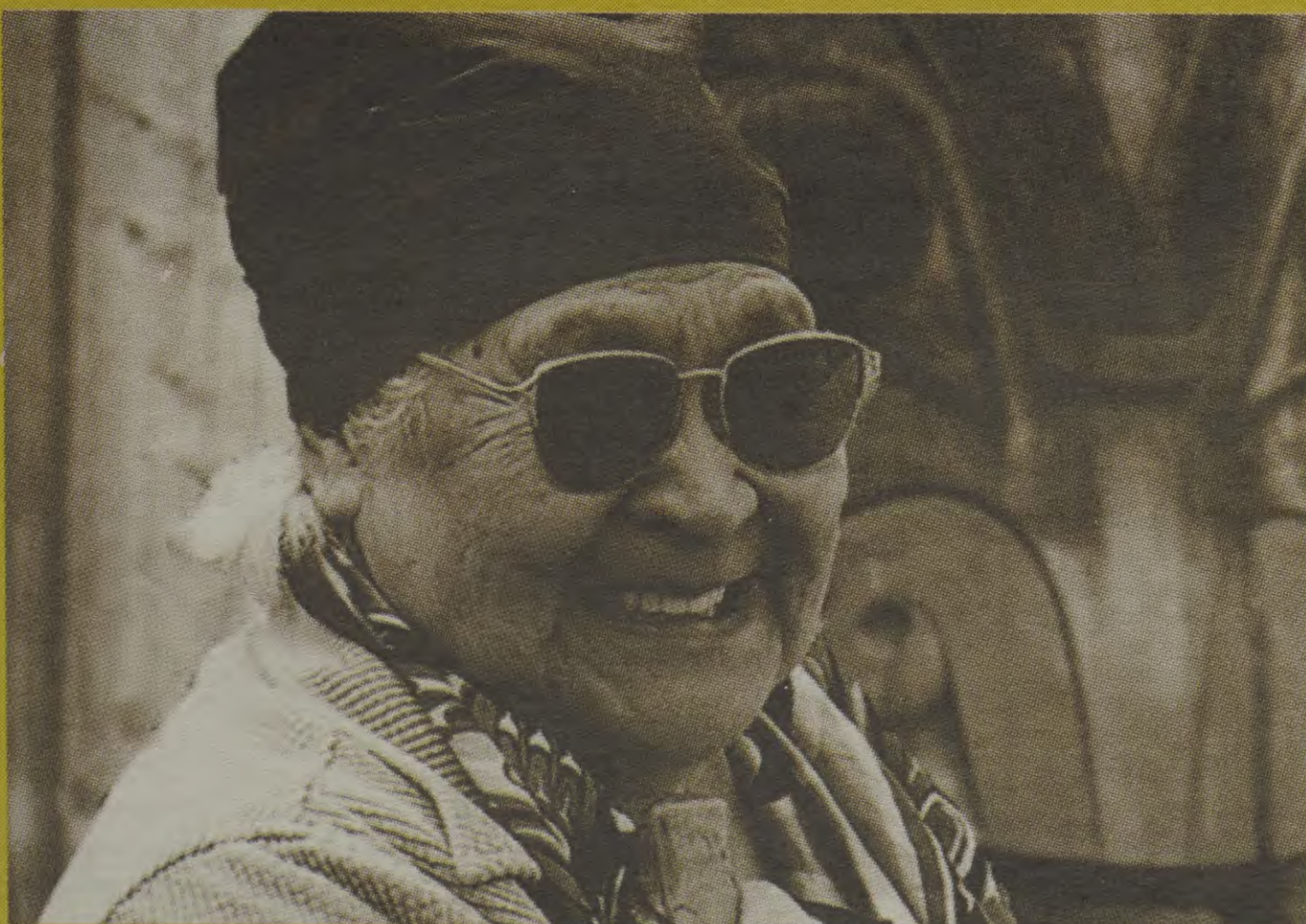
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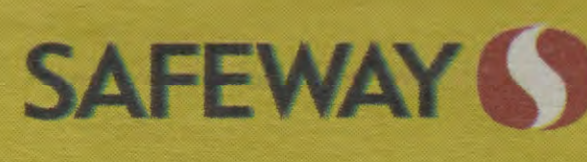
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Canada

Features

Gov't of Canada apologize for 100 years of atrocities 8

One day before the June 11 apology by Prime Minister Stephen Harper, residential school survivor, Phil Morin, predicted the words would only be a small step to help Aboriginal people recover from the residential school system. He knew it would need to be followed with major action to be sincere – a view that seemed to be held by the majority of Aboriginal people across the country.

Program helps alleviate family child welfare issues 10

"If your child is apprehended in Fort Hope (Ontario), your first appearance in court is not going to be in your community," said Ellaree Metz, manager for the Talking Together Program run by the Nishnawbe-Aski Legal Services Corporation.

Peguis to move forward with \$119 million settlement 10

A new \$126 Million agreement between the Federal Government and a Manitoba First Nation for land that was illegally expropriated by Canada will be the largest ever settlement for a single First Nation in Canadian history. The band with 8,400 members living on and off reserve will receive nearly \$119 million once legal and negotiation fees are deducted.

People across Canada call attention to many issues 14 & 15

Hundreds of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people gathered in solidarity in downtown Vancouver on May 29 to march together through the busy streets of the city to call attention to human rights issues facing First Nations people across the country.

Departments

[rants and raves] 5

[what's happening] 7

[strictly speaking] 12

[windspeaker confidential] 17

[radio's most active] 17

[provincial news] 18 to 21

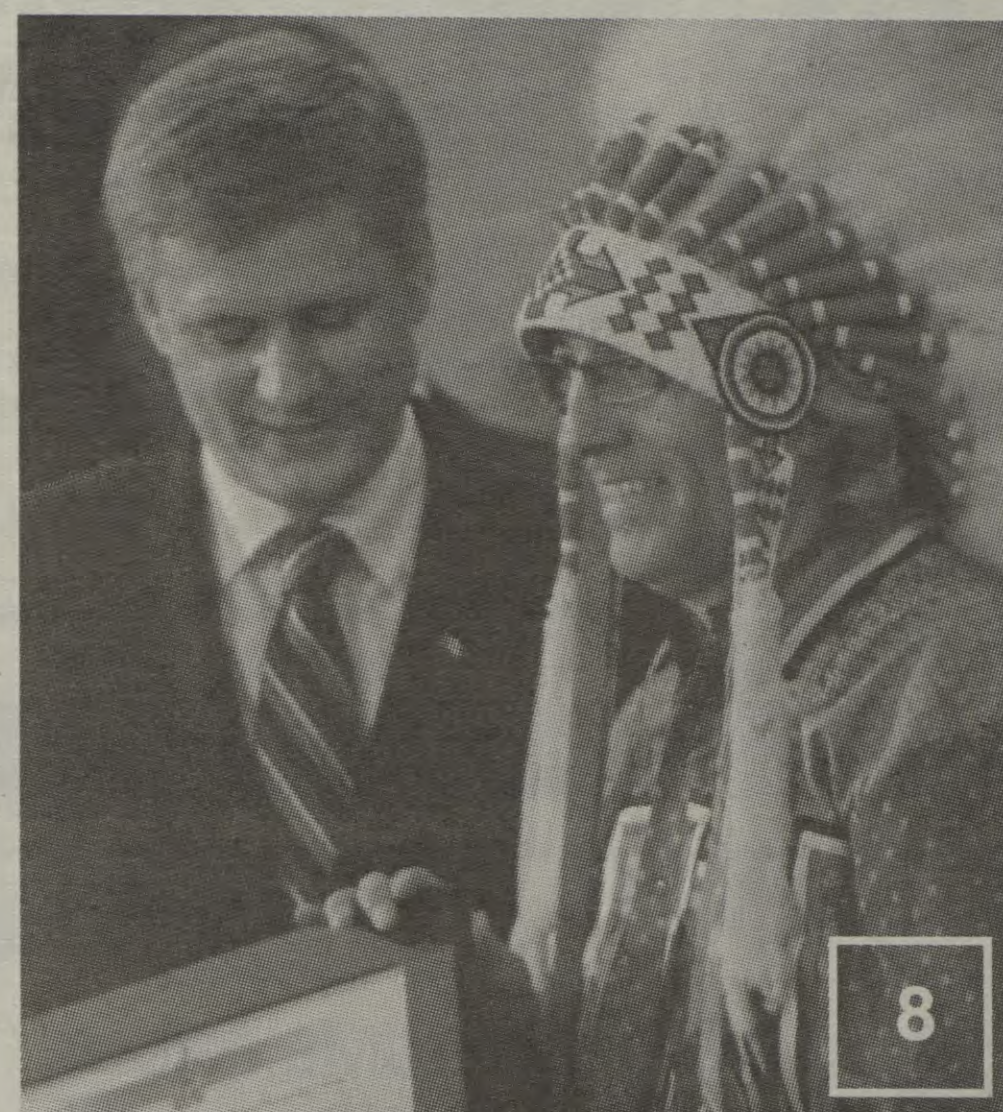
[education] 22 & 23

[sports] 24

[careers & training] 25

[footprints] Don Cardinal 26

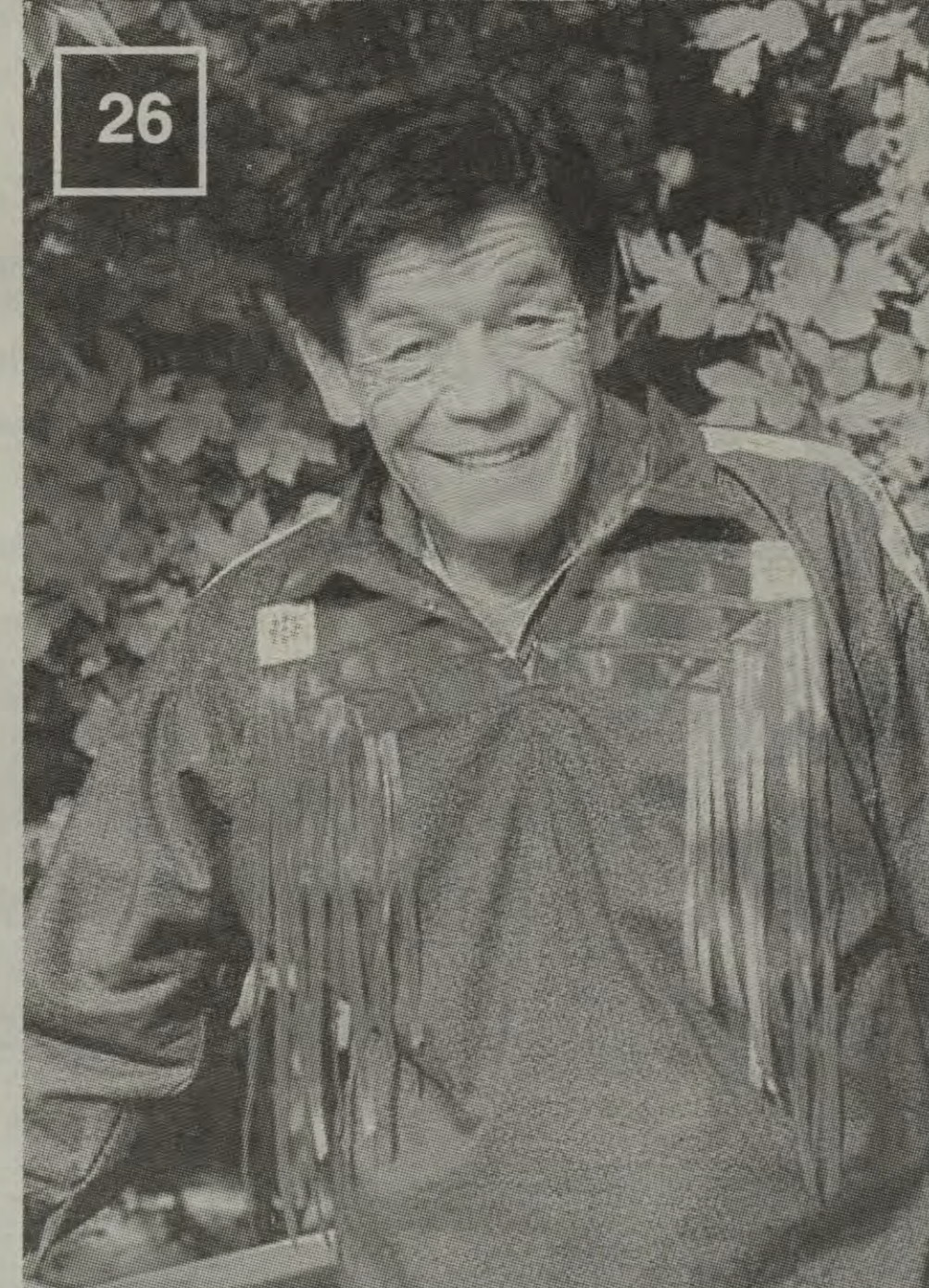
If the worth of a father is reflected in the health and success of his family, then northern Alberta's Cree Elder Don Cardinal has every reason to walk the holy road to the spirit world with a tranquil soul.



8



14



26

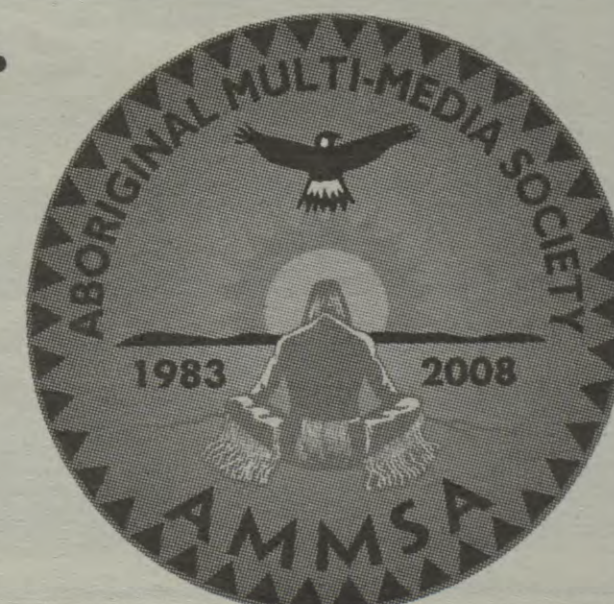
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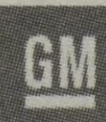
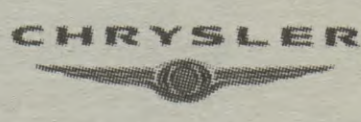
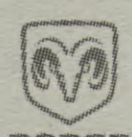
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Government of Canada asks for forgiveness

Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today to offer an apology to former students of Indian residential schools. The treatment of children in Indian residential schools is a sad chapter in our history.

In the 1870's, the federal government, partly in order to meet its obligation to educate Aboriginal children, began to play a role in the development and administration of these schools.

Two primary objectives of the residential schools system were to remove and isolate children from the influence of their homes, families, traditions and cultures, and to assimilate them into the dominant culture.

These objectives were based on the assumption Aboriginal cultures and spiritual beliefs were inferior and unequal.

Indeed, some sought, as it was infamously said, "to kill the Indian in the child."

Today, we recognize that this policy of assimilation was wrong, has caused great harm, and has no place in our country.

Most schools were operated as "joint ventures" with Anglican, Catholic, Presbyterian or United churches.

The government of Canada built an educational system in which very young children were often forcibly removed from their homes, often taken far from their communities.

Many were inadequately fed, clothed and housed.

All were deprived of the care and nurturing of their parents, grandparents and communities.

First Nations, Inuit and Métis languages and cultural practices were prohibited in these schools.

Tragically, some of these children died while attending residential schools and others never returned home.

The government now recognizes that the consequences of the Indian residential schools policy were profoundly negative and that this policy has had a lasting and damaging impact on aboriginal culture, heritage and language.

While some former students have spoken positively about their experiences at residential schools, these stories are far overshadowed by tragic accounts of the emotional, physical and sexual abuse and neglect of helpless children, and their separation from powerless families and communities.

The legacy of Indian residential schools has contributed to social problems that continue to exist in many communities today. It has taken extraordinary courage for the thousands of survivors that have come forward to speak publicly about the abuse they suffered.

It is a testament to their resilience as individuals and to the strength of their cultures.

Regrettably, many former students are not with us today and died never having received a full apology from the government of Canada.

The government recognizes that the absence of an apology has been an impediment to healing and reconciliation.

Therefore, on behalf of the government of Canada and all Canadians, I stand before you, in this chamber so central to our life as a country, to apologize to Aboriginal peoples for Canada's role in the Indian residential schools system.

To the approximately 80,000 living former students, and all family members and communities, the government of Canada now recognizes that it was wrong to forcibly remove children from their homes and we apologize for having done this.

We now recognize that it was wrong to separate children from rich and vibrant cultures and traditions, that it created a void in many lives and communities, and we apologize for having done this.

We now recognize that, in separating children from their families, we undermined the ability of many to adequately parent their own children and sowed the seeds for generations to follow, and we apologize for having done this.

We now recognize that, far too often, these institutions gave rise to abuse or neglect and were inadequately controlled, and we apologize for failing to protect you.

Not only did you suffer these abuses as children, but as you became parents, you were powerless to protect your own children from suffering the same experience, and for this we are sorry.

The burden of this experience has been on your shoulders for far too long. The burden is properly ours as a government, and as a country.

There is no place in Canada for the attitudes that inspired the Indian residential schools system to ever again prevail.

You have been working on recovering from this experience for a long time and in a very real sense, we are now joining you on this journey.

The government of Canada sincerely apologizes and asks the forgiveness of the Aboriginal peoples of this country for failing them so profoundly.

We are sorry.

In moving towards healing, reconciliation and resolution of the sad legacy of Indian residential schools, implementation of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement agreement began on September 19, 2007.

Years of work by survivors, communities, and Aboriginal organizations culminated in an agreement that gives us a new beginning and an opportunity to move forward together in partnership.

A cornerstone of the settlement agreement is the Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

This commission presents a unique opportunity to educate all Canadians on the Indian residential schools system.

It will be a positive step in forging a new relationship between Aboriginal peoples and other Canadians, a relationship based on the knowledge of our shared history, a respect for each other and a desire to move forward together with a renewed understanding that strong families, strong communities and vibrant cultures and traditions will contribute to a stronger Canada for all of us.

[rants and raves]

RSSC welcome apology but expect more

Dear Prime Minister Harper:

On behalf of the Residential School Survivors of Canada, we welcome your announcement of an apology. Residential School Survivors have waited patiently for decades to hear the Government of Canada acknowledge what was done and the profound impact on survivors, our families and our communities.

We acknowledge that it is your prerogative to speak for all Canadians; however, as you ponder what you will say, we want you to know first hand what we expect.

We write this open letter because we want you to hear our voice and know that your words will have an intense impact on reconciliation. We know that "...no apology means no reconciliation."

It is with deep respect, we boldly put forward what survivors expect in the apology."

1. Survivors expect Canada to recognize what was done was wrong and Canada accepts TOTAL responsibility for what they did to survivors and their families and their communities. Canada acknowledges that the impact on survivors and their families has been physical, emotional, mental and spiritual and has resulted in the destruction of our families and communities.

2. We expect Canada to make a sincere public expression of sorrow for what they have done. The apology must be sincere and recognize how terrible the experience was for survivors and knowingly Canada continued the operation of residential schools when they knew these were issues and concerns. Each month for decades there were reports

and letters expressing concerns and describing the physical, emotional and sexual abuse, but these concerns were totally ignored.

3. Canada must stop what they have done, and what they are doing to survivors and their families in our communities today. Canada must abandon the policies, rules and activities that continue re-victimizing survivors. The abuse has to stop and Canada must direct the forces that continue these activities to cease.

4. Canada must confess publically, what they did to each survivor. Survivors were 'kidnapped' from their families, they were 'imprisoned' in institutions which had

little or no respect for human dignity.

Children were beaten, humiliated, starved, introduced to contagious diseases like tuberculosis, sexually abused, some were 'murdered,' in an environment whose goal was to '...take the Indian out of the child.' Most in the world would call what was done 'cultural genocide.' What would be appropriate is an apology letter sent to each survivor from the Prime Minister confessing and asking forgiveness for what was done.

5. Canada must make restitution – Canada must put back what was taken away by committing to rebuilding individuals, families and communities. Canada needs to recognize that the Settlement Agreement does not compensate the pain and suffering, but it is only a small token to acknowledge this travesty. Canada needs to acknowledge that it may take a number of generations for First Nation, Métis and Inuit families to recover and Canada will NOT "...wash their hands" of what they did. The commitment is to do all they can to make things right.

6. Canada has an obligation to reconcile and ask forgiveness for what they did as perpetrators of these terrible acts. Canada's obligation to reconcile means that survivors also need the capacity to also reconcile and forgive. Healing is easier said, than done and the desire to reconcile and ask forgiveness is the beginning of a process where others will also need to reconcile and ask for forgiveness.

7. Canada needs to commit that it will never, never, never let this happen again.

Anything less than the above is not in our view a sincere apology, and will not be accepted by most of the survivors, their families and their communities. Anything less will not be an expression of reconciliation.

Once again, we welcome the announcement of the apology and applaud your decision to acknowledge a part of Canadian history that many deny was as intense as it was or even happened.

It is with profound gratitude that we encourage you to hear our voice.

All my relations,

Ted Quewezance
Executive Director -Residential
School Survivors of Canada

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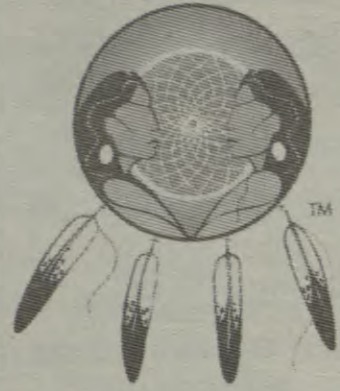
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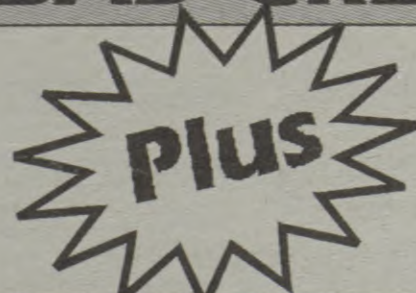


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Windspeaker news briefs

Blockade to get gov't attention

Band members of the Kelly Lake Cree Nation, 540 km northwest of Edmonton, are concerned about the damage being done to their traditional lands from oil and gas exploration and hope to bring attention to their health and safety concerns by holding a blockade from June 20 to 23.

Members of the community, located on the northern BC and Alberta border, are undertaking efforts to convince federal and provincial governments to help them deal with the situation. They seek to reach a solution peacefully and in partnership with government and the companies, rather than settling the matter through court.

Kelly Lake Cree Nation band members will blockade Highway 43 near Beaverlodge and Highway 2 near Dawson Creek, forcing rigs, semi-trailers, and other vehicles used in the oil and gas industry to use alternate routes to development sites.

According to community spokesperson and band consultant, Clayton Anderson, the blockade will be held along with an emergency disaster preparedness drill next week. This is expected to demonstrate the health and safety concerns caused by oil and gas exploration in the area.

The approximately 400 members living in the community are also affected by the large amount of industrial traffic going through the area every day. Anderson said the roads are not fitting for the type of vehicles using them to travel, especially with the large loads of dangerous and toxic goods they carry. Furthermore, no plan is in place to help the community should an explosion or any other type of disaster occur.

Anderson stated band members in the blockade will allow regular traffic to pass, but will deter those from the industry from going through.

The band, which follows its own traditional hereditary governance system, currently has a comprehensive land claim agreement they have been trying to settle with the federal government since 1994, but have not any progress in the matter.

Impaired Driver not considered a dangerous offender

A drunk driver who killed a mother and her three daughters on a northern Alberta highway in 2006 may someday get behind the wheel again.

Though Raymond Charles Yellowknee, now 35, has had repeated impulses to get behind the wheel after drinking hard, seeming not "to show regard for endangering other people's lives and obviously does not fear harming himself," according to one correctional officer, he cannot be jailed indefinitely.

With a blood alcohol level almost three times the legal limit, he slammed head-on into another vehicle on Jan. 20, killing driver Misty Chalifoux, 28, and her three daughters Michelle Lisk, 13, Trista Chalifoux, 9, and Larissa Cahlfoux, 6.

Provincial Court Judge Ernie Walter ruled Yellowknee's offence was liable to at least 10 years imprisonment as part of his repetitive, dangerous behaviour, but he used his discretion to rule out sentencing him as a dangerous offender.

"While Mr. Yellowknee is highly criminalized he is not a psychopath," Judge Walter said.

The day of the fatal accident, Yellowknee was released from Peace River Correctional Institute, made his way to his hometown of Slave Lake, and drank the day away. He stole a running pickup truck and then led police on a chase that ended when he fishtailed, veered on the shoulder and then swerved over the centre line straight in the Chalifoux family's oncoming vehicle.

Yellowknee pleaded guilty to 10 charges; in exchange for his admittance of guilt he was relieved of other charges against him.

"I apologize for all the hurt I've caused," he told court last December. "I never meant to hurt anyone that night. I never thought it would cause this much trouble."

Yellowknee told the court he has been addiction-free since January 2006. He has pledged to never drink or get behind the wheel again.

Crown prosecutor Johnathan Hak argued that Yellowknee has made those promises before to no avail.

Defence Lawyer Laurie Wood said her client doesn't have a pattern of serious personal injury offences and suggested a 14-year sentence would be appropriate as well as long-term offender status.

Gov't of Canada apologize for 100 years of atrocities

By Christine Fiddler
Windspeaker Staff Writer

OTTAWA

One day before the June 11 apology by Prime Minister Stephen Harper, residential school survivor, Phil Morin, predicted the words would only be a small step to help Aboriginal people recover from the residential school system. He knew it would need to be followed with major action to be sincere – a view that seemed to be held by the majority of Aboriginal people across the country.

"It's not going to make a whole lot of difference right away as far as I'm concerned," the Peter Ballentyne Cree Nation band member said from Saskatchewan. "It will depend on how sincere the government is, if they're willing to provide some resources, education system, create jobs for our people, then the apology will mean something. Otherwise it won't mean a thing at all in the long run."

At 70 years old, Morin has had a long journey as a survivor of three residential schools: the Guy Indian Residential School, the Pas Residential School, and the Lebreton Indian Residential School.

"I hope he will say that they will do everything they can to share the resources in this country that rightfully belong to First Nations people. We can't continue to live how we do, with one society benefiting more than the other. That was not the spirit and intent of the treaty. We were supposed to co-exist peacefully," he added. More importantly, he hopes the apology alleviates the negative legacy of abuses and addictions that residential schools brought onto the Aboriginal population.

"We want to get rid of this thing once and for all. This bad experience and go ahead and turn the page and look into a brighter day. That's what we want, and it's good for First Nations people and it's good for the people of Canada. It's good for our children to look to a better future, that's what it's all about," he said.

Ted Quewazance, executive director of the National Residential School Survivors Society, was also concerned about government action after the apology, as he waited expectantly the day before it was to be delivered.

"The fear I got is after the apology they wash their hands clean of what they did to little children, that's my concern," he said. "They don't just say, 'we're sorry it happened' and it's sincere and then life continues in our communities, that's not the answer. Canada has to understand this really, really happened, because there is a lot of denial right across this country," Quewazance added.

"There has to be a 25-30 year healing strategy set up for individuals, families, and

communities, the churches have to be involved in it. You can see what's happening in our communities, the gangs, the drugs, that's the continuation of the residential school legacy. And it's the responsibility of us, as survivors, and families, to deal with it. But we can't deal with it without resources," he expressed.

Almost thirty years have passed since the last church-operated residential schools were closed down, schools that were run in partnership with a government that followed strict policies to deal with Aboriginal people. In the cheapest possible effort to fulfill its treaty agreement for Aboriginal education, Ottawa built the residential schools and paid churches on a per capita basis to take in Native children.

The federal government started funding the schools in 1874, and about 150,000 Native children were put through its program until 1970, when they were forced to abandon their culture and traditions and endured many forms of abuses.

David Newhouse, a professor at Ontario's Trent University and an expert on the political aspects related to the federal government's apology for the residential school system, said the apology signifies an acknowledgement of a historic wrong done by the Canadian state that will be placed into the public record of Canada's history and collective memory.

"I think it also sets the stage for further action. It's somewhat the very first stage of reconciliation. For a lot of people, it's recognition, it's very important, that people have been heard, than they don't feel powerless," he said. Newhouse also commented on the possibility that the apology could be simply a political move by a Conservative government that doesn't have a great deal of credibility among Aboriginal peoples.

"They were responsible for the killing of the Kelowna Accord, (and) Harper hasn't been very supportive in previous (decisions) on the lives of Aboriginal peoples and rights. And so if it's done right it may buy them some credibility," he said.

"But the question is, at least in my own mind, are they doing this grudgingly or do they really feel regret, is it a real apology? And I think that's going to be the most important question that people are going to be trying to answer when the Prime Minister stands up in the House. 'Is this real and does he mean it?'" he asked.

Newhouse went on to say that if Aboriginal leaders were part of the consultation process leading up to the apology, more Aboriginal people would be likely to accept it's content. He said it was unfortunate that it had to be formed solely on the government's agenda.

The day the apology was delivered by Prime Minister Stephen Harper, many Aboriginal people paid close attention as he finally admitted that residential schools were wrong. Wrong as part of an overall federal policy to assimilate Aboriginal people into the population of European immigrants.

"The government now recognizes that the consequences of the Indian residential schools policy were profoundly negative and that this policy has had a lasting and damaging impact on Aboriginal culture, heritage and language," Harper stated in his apology from the House of Commons.

"While some former students have spoken positively about their experiences at residential schools – stories are far overshadowed by tragic accounts of the emotional, physical and sexual abuse and neglect of helpless children and their separation from powerless families and communities. The legacy of Indian residential schools has contributed to social problems that continue to exist in many communities today."

He went on to stress the government's renewed commitment to working with Aboriginal people to help them recover from the residential school experience.

"The burden of this experience has been on your shoulders for far too long, the burden is properly ours as a government, and as a country. There is no place in Canada for the attitudes that inspired the Indian residential schools system to ever again prevail. You have been working on recovering from this experience for a long time and in a very real sense, we are now joining you on this journey," Harper further stated in his speech.

A small group of Aboriginal leaders and residential schools survivors entered the House of Commons just before the speech and took their place in a circle of chairs at the centre of the floor, with various MP's looking on from their seats and the whole country watching from televised screens. The oldest living survivor, Marguerite Wabano, 104, of Moosonee, Ontario was among the five other residential school survivors brought onto the floor to hear Harper apologize on behalf of all Canadians.

Just before Harper began, a motion was brought forth to allow a response from five Aboriginal leaders: Assembly of First Nations Grand Chief Phil Fontaine, National Chief of the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples Patrick Brazeau, Métis National Council President Clément Chartier, President of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami Mary Simon, and President of the National Women's Association of Canada Beverley Jacobs.

Fontaine's response to the apology reaffirmed the event as a historic moment in Canada and

[news]

a new dawn in the relationship between Aboriginal people and the rest of Canada.

"For the generations that will follow us, we bear witness today in this House that our survival as First Nations peoples in this land is affirmed forever. Therefore, the significance of this day is not just about what has been, but, equally important, what is to come," he said. "Emboldened by this spectacle of history, it is possible to end our racial nightmare together."

In an interview with media afterward, Fontaine stressed his hopes of the government recognizing the need to deal with First Nations poverty as the single most important social justice issue in the country.

Jacobs said her participation as one of the Aboriginal leaders at the House of Commons event brought about a wide range of emotions.

"We did not know what he was going to say, and were a little apprehensive about what is he going to say, is it real, is it sincere?" Jacobs explained in an interview soon after the apology. "And so there were a lot of questions that I had, are they going to talk about the effects on Aboriginal women specifically and the dishonour to our mothers and grandmothers. I listened for those things and there were some things that I needed to respond to." Like many others she is concerned about the need for government to follow with action.

"They need to start respecting us as a people in those original relationships and that we can make decisions on our own and we know what needs to be done in our communities," she said. As far as accepting the apology, Jacobs stated she did not accept it, although she thanked the Prime Minister for his effort.

"To all the leaders of the Liberals, the Bloc and NDP, thank you, as well, for your words because now it is about our responsibilities today, the decisions that we make today and how they will affect seven generations from now," Jacobs stated in her response to the apology in the House of Commons.

"My ancestors did the same seven generations ago and they tried hard to fight against you because they knew what was happening. They knew what was coming, but we have had so much impact from colonization and that is what we are dealing with today. Women have taken the brunt of it all."

Jacobs further asked Harper what is going to be provided to help the situation, as the government begins to work in partnership with Aboriginal people. "I acknowledged that he did it and that this government did it, but it's another thing, it's the action that needs to occur, that needs to come with it," she said.

On a different note, Inuit leader Mary Simon said although she accepted the apology as it stood, the forgiveness itself has to come on an individual basis from Inuit survivors.

"But as a leader, as the national leader I acknowledge that we are

okay with the apology," she said in an interview. "I think it was comprehensive, we were looking for specific mention of Inuit and also we wanted enough detail so that it could be all encompassing of the issues, that people have been talking about. And there's quite a bit of detail in that apology so I think people could identify with it."

Simon's response to the apology expressed optimism for a renewed "commitment to reconciliation and building a new relationship with Inuit, Métis, and First Nations." She said a major problem faced by the Inuit population she represents is the government not recognizing some of the schools of the Labrador Inuit and Nunavik as part of the residential school settlement agreement.

"They've been excluded for different reasons, it varied from region to region, in Labrador, it's because these schools, boarding schools, were provincially run schools, and they weren't under the authority of the federal government. There's no record of them being at that school, even though they were," she explained, adding that the issue needs to be resolved because students suffered the same abuses and effects are seen in the generations of residential school survivors and their children.

"Sometimes it's hard to know exactly why somebody's behaviour is going a certain way, but when you look at the number of people who have similar type issues, that they're dealing with, then I think there's a pattern there. And I think residential school impacts are intergenerational, they get passed on from generation to generation. When these adults were abused as children and they grow up, if they don't get the right kind of support and treatment, they become abusive parents or abusive adults as well, so it's a vicious cycle," she said.

"We do have a lot of issues to address in the north, and I think the apology is a good apology but the work is going on and hopefully this will be an impetus to make it more comprehensive and maybe deal with the issues a bit more rapidly," she said, pointing out the low education outcomes, lack of mental health support, and crowded housing conditions in the north.

As a representative of Canada's Métis and a past student of a Métis residential school, Chartier shared the same concern of disregarding some residential school students in the settlement agreement.

"Thousands of Métis attended Indian residential schools, enduring forced separation from family, attacks on their culture and, in many instances, physical and sexual abuse," he stated.

"However, the vast majority of Métis survivors attended church-run, government-sanctioned boarding schools not – and I repeat – not included in the settlement agreement, and

are receiving no compensation," he said. "Also excluded from the residential school agreement are thousands more Métis people who attended day schools run by religious orders." His response at the House of Commons also pointed to the need for recognition of Métis rights by government.

"I know deep in my heart that the party leaders and the Prime Minister who spoke today spoke with sincerity, not with the theatrics of the Commons. That has been set aside. I can feel that. I know that it is deep and it is real," he proclaimed. "Finally, Prime Minister, the Métis Nation of western Canada, which has been excluded from many things by the workings of this House and its policies, wants in."

Conservative MP Pierre Poilievre, also delivered an apology of his own, a day after Prime Minister Stephen Harper, for comments he made during a radio interview with CFRA News Talk Radio on June 11, stating Aboriginal people need to learn the value of hard work more than they need compensation for abuse suffered in residential schools.

"Now along with this apology comes another \$4 billion in compensation for those who partook in the residential school over those years," said Poilievre. "Now, you know, some of us are starting to ask: 'Are we really getting value for all of this money, and is more money really going to solve the problem?' My view is that we need to engender the values of hard work and independence and self-reliance. That's the solution in the long run – more money won't solve it," he said referring to compensation payments for past students of residential schools.

Poilievre referred to the \$1.9 billion Common Experience Agreement, in which anyone who attended an Indian residential school is entitled to \$10,000 plus another \$3,000 for every year they attended. Under the settlement deal, additional compensation is given to those who suffered severe forms of abuse with payments determined by a 1 to 121 plus point system. The points measure child abuses ranging from humiliation, threats, hitting, slapping, beatings, whippings, burnings, starvation, use of religious doctrine to facilitate abuse, exposure, sexual molestation, witnessing abusive acts, and forced intercourse. The points are then calculated to determine varying payments that fall from \$5000 to \$275,000.

In Poilievre's interview, he went on to comment about funding First Nations bands receive as part of treaty agreements. "We spend 10 billion dollars – 10 billion dollars – in annual spending this year alone now, that is an exceptional amount of money, and that is on top of all the resource revenue that goes to reserves that sit on petroleum products or sit on uranium mines, other things where companies have to pay them royalties. (See Will on page 11.)

Windspeaker news briefs

Human rights bill reintroduced after three decades

A lapsed bill that would give Canadian human rights protection to First Nations people on reserves is finally being revived after 30 years.

MPs approved the Conservative bill on May 28 and now it heads to the Senate for consideration.

The legislation calls for First Nation members to be allowed to make formal human rights complaints against band councils or Ottawa, something they were barred from doing under the Canadian Human Rights Act.

The act, originally passed in 1977, temporarily exempted reserves to give bands time to prepare for the complaints process, but it was never discussed again.

In an attempt to close the loophole, the legislation was first announced in December 2006 again, but was put on hold while the Conservatives agreed to several opposition changes, including a three-year phase-in period and clauses to protect collective native rights.

The government originally wanted the legislation to take effect in six months, stating that it was important to shield people on reserves against discrimination, and give them full human rights protections.

This time the bill was stalled by Aboriginal leaders from across Canada who claimed the bill in its original form gave cash-strapped First Nations too little time to prepare for potentially costly complaints and that the government failed to consult them in its process.

Band risks oil payoff for traditional lifestyle

A small band near Chard in northern Alberta is joining other bands like Chief Bernard Ominayak's Lubicon Lake Band in suing the Alberta government for failing to ensure its treaty rights.

Nearby industrial sites near Chipewyan Prairie Dene First Nation is making it impossible for them to hunt and fish to support themselves.

Chief Vern Janvier explained in a press conference "our primary concern is to keep our way of life alive." Since half of his people are uneducated and have no inclination to become engineers, they have no stake in expanding oilsands development.

This isn't about money, he told reporters. On the contrary, Janvier stands to lose potential income from contracting with the oil industry.

"We took a big risk doing this, losing all our revenue from those companies."

The First Nation wants a judicial review to delay the expansion of MEG Energy's Christina Lake oilsands project near its land until the band has been adequately consulted.

Industrial expansion is wiping out wildlife and encroaching upon land guaranteed by the federal government for the band's use under Treaty 8.

The Chipewyan Prairie Dene First Nation has 690 members, 400 of whom live on-reservation. If successful in their lawsuit, the band could affect how industry consults with Aboriginal communities and could delay projects.

Meechance returns to court in July

Charles Meechance, the former chief of Saskatchewan's Red Pheasant First Nation, made his first appearance in court on June 18, charged with seven counts of attempting to buy votes in an election. The case was adjourned until July to allow Meechance time to hire a lawyer.

Also charged is fellow band member Burt Benson, who faces two counts of attempted vote-buying.

Meechance denied buying votes in an interview after his hearing. He said any number of others could have been charged with a similar offence and that electoral abuse is widespread on his and other reserves around the province.

The charges relate to the April 2005 band election held on the Red Pheasant First Nation located about 50 kilometres south of the Battlefords. Meechance was initially declared the winner but an appeal was launched and the election results nullified by the Department of Indian Affairs.

Chief Sheldon Wuttunee won the subsequent election ordered by the department. In February 2006 he defeated Meechance with 404 votes to 277.

Program helps alleviate family child welfare issues

By **Melanie Ferris**
Windspeaker Writer

THUNDER BAY

"If your child is apprehended in Fort Hope (Ontario), your first appearance in court is not going to be in your community," said Ellaree Metz, manager for the Talking Together Program run by the Nishnawbe-Aski Legal Services Corporation. Metz discussed what it's like for First Nations parents living in a northern Ontario community who have had a child removed from their family.

"Both parents have to come out of the community for the court date. In many circumstances the child is placed out of the community," Metz continues, "How do you facilitate meaningful access?"

These types of questions and situations spurred the legal services corporation to create and refine the Talking Together Program, which provides parents involved with child welfare with an alternative way of resolving conflicts.

The program is unique, being one of only two "alternative dispute resolution" programs available to parents with child welfare issues in all of Ontario.

Suzanne Withenshaw, acting

executive director of the corporation, said the program "can alleviate the need for the often costly and adversarial family court system."

Once a child is removed from a home, he or she can spend only 12 to 24 months in "care" until a children's aid society has to request a Crown wardship. Once the Crown has wardship, the parents no longer have any legal rights or responsibilities to the child.

With the wait times for court dates, especially in northern communities, the months can pass by too fast. While a parent may wait for a first appearance in court, their child may be in care for six to eight months.

Along with having to wait months for a court appearance, Metz said, "the availability of lawyers willing to work in the area of child protection is pretty tricky. There are no lawyers taking on this issue in the Thunder Bay area right now."

Recognizing the challenges of the judicial system, the legal services corporation is helping more First Nations families access the Talking Together Program through its recent partnership with Dilico Anishinabek Family Care.

After four and a half years of talking about protocols, the two

organizations signed an agreement in June. The Talking Together Program is now available to NAN community members (Treaty 9) under Dilico's jurisdiction. Approximately 160 of the children in Dilico's care are NAN-affiliated.

Treaty 9 members can access a culturally sensitive approach to dealing with child protection matters that arise from Ontario's *Child and Family Services Act*. Agencies, outside organizations, or parents can refer themselves to the program at any time during a child protection matter. Parents refer themselves to the program by filling out a form and having their needs assessed.

"We offer a traditionally appropriate medium for parents to have a voice and for children to have a voice in the process, to have a voice in what solutions can be created," said Metz. "The program gives you the opportunity to create workable solutions, keeping in mind the best interest of the child."

Terry Waboose, the Deputy Grand Chief of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation said the program "will empower our people to avoid the courts and deal with local issues at the community level."

The program is based on

traditional circles. All players meet on equal grounds to develop, by consensus, a plan to resolve child protection concerns. Using a more cultural approach helps empower families to heal themselves.

"We've had many success cases," said Metz. "We have a high level of satisfaction among clients who use the program. We have facilitated apprehensions not going forward by having the participants together coming up with a plan."

People involved in a circle could include the mother, father, child, the child protection workers, external service providers, probation workers, school teachers, grandparents, neighbours, and so on. The benefit to having so many people involved, according to Metz, is that "Solutions are a lot more creative. The process is faster, the process is cheaper, the process is more humane."

"When you're in the circle you can have grandparents involved in making decisions, or both sets of grandparents involved," said Metz. "This [circle process] can go on for a period of months or longer and that affords the parent the opportunity to address outstanding matters."

"Basically within two weeks you have the ability to be sitting

together to come up with solutions, occasionally I have a referral coming into the office (apprehension) and so we may come up with a circle within the week. It can be quite fast, at least the initial circle."

The Talking Together Program recognizes the unique needs of First Nations families living in remote communities.

"Many of our communities are fly-in communities; their access to services is limited," Metz explains. "The services you can get in Thunder Bay you can't get in Attawapiskat. Parenting classes may not be available in the community in which they reside."

"A lot of those folks require a lot of support in order to heal the integrity of the family. Parenting skills have been fractured by their experience in residential schools. You're looking at some long-standing issues, so we offer a best-case scenario."

Metz also explains that the program helps pregnant women in jail, as there are no systems in place to help women parent babies in this setting.

"Many parents are not going to be able to negotiate handling child aid on their own," Metz states. "Children's aid has a lot of resources compared to the parents who may not have the same level of resources."

Peguis to move forward with \$119 million settlement

By **Philip Paul-Martin**
Windspeaker Writer

PEGUIS FIRST NATION

A new \$126 Million agreement between the Federal Government and a Manitoba First Nation for land that was illegally expropriated by Canada will be the largest ever settlement for a single First Nation in Canadian history.

The band with 8,400 members living on and off reserve will receive nearly \$119 million once legal and negotiation fees are deducted.

Descendants from what now forms the Peguis First Nation,

located in Manitoba's Interlake region were forced to move from their original settlement, the St. Peter's reserve, located north of the city of Winnipeg in 1907.

Peguis Chief Glenn Hudson said the history of the re-location from a thriving farming community to the present day location in the middle of the bush created an undue hardship on the people. The land they were moved to is subject to yearly spring flooding and has been evacuated on numerous occasions since that time.

Hudson said the agreement in principle, reached March 5, was long overdue and didn't come without the feeling of righting a

previous injustice. "It was very emotional and obviously the over all history of it makes this settlement very significant," said Hudson.

Calling the relocation 'the largest land swindle in Canadian history.' The land in question, was 'one of the best developed communities in Western Canada' at that time according to Hudson.

"The deal that had us moved was a one-day affair," said Hudson. "It was move to the left if you want \$90 and move to the right if you don't."

"If you look at the entire process from start to finish, you will realize that we were swindled but also that our original band

members never lived to see this day," said Hudson.

"I think it was very fair," said Hudson of the settlement. "We're looking forward to developing our community and moving ahead and this settlement will allow us to do that."

Band negotiator Lloyd Stevenson said reaching the historic deal was time consuming and difficult.

"In order to get to the negotiation stage we needed a validation stamp from INAC, they acted as defendant, a jury, judge and prosecutor," said Stevenson.

Stevenson said claim after claim had been rejected by the Federal

government until 1998 and the agreement in principle took ten years to negotiate.

The money is to be held in trust, with up to 25 per cent used for band capital projects. There is hope that a new hockey arena will be built after the first one burned to the ground a year ago.

INAC spokesperson Patricia Valladao said any agreement must be voted on by Peguis band membership and Treasury Board approval before it becomes official.

The First Nation will also be required to draft a proposed trust agreement with the department and the complete legal text of the settlement.

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Will action follow the apology?

(Continued from page 9.)
And that's on top of all that money that they earn on their own reserves. That is an incredible amount of money," he stated. He apologized the next day in the House of Commons, and Harper followed by saying he is confident in the MP's support of Aboriginal rights issues.

Leona Makokis is a past student of residential school and the President of Blue Quills College in Alberta, which is housed in a former residential school. She watched Harper's apology on CBC and said she felt dismayed with these kinds of misunderstandings still are prevalent in Canadian society.

"For me one of the most crucial part of this is that Canadians need to know the true history," she said. "Canadians are not aware of it. And so I saw the blogs coming in and I was really disappointed to see that there's such ignorance about us."

"Jim Miller, that historian, I commend him for filling in those areas that he caught right away what was being said, he had a good response in terms of knowing the history and bringing that forth. Now if it had been just the announcer, he represented the true absence of knowledge by Canadians. The comments he was making really showed that really - when I think of it - that's the Canadian public," Makokis said, adding that under-funding and misunderstanding are major setbacks in Aboriginal people moving forward.

"People will keep saying that we get everything for free, well you look at other people are getting, the housing, the infrastructure, you look at stuff that other people take so much for granted. You

look at the universities that are being built and you look at what we're not even funded for. We got six First Nations colleges in Alberta, not one of us is funded for a building infrastructure and we're housed in former residential schools," she said.

"There needs to be action, needs to be follow up. And the whole capacity building in our communities, takes money, there's waiting lines of students wanting to go to post-secondary but there's no funding, I hope I'm not sounding like I'm whining but I really feel that has to go out in terms of people saying 'aw, those people again, wanting more money, we're paying more taxes,' the whole area of complaints, when they're getting the resources from our lands. Reaping the profits, it's just not a just society. In terms of the definition of equality, I don't want to be equal. I want to be who I am, it seems like being equal means that we have to be like them, but I don't want to be, I am a Cree woman and I want to maintain that. We do have something to offer. And I don't think that's recognized yet."

Aside from watching the apology on a live televised broadcast, many people traveled to Ottawa and listened from various areas of the government building as Harper spoke.

Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) Grand Chief, Stan Beardy was at the House of Commons for the apology and said the acknowledgement of injustice means that the healing process for First Nations people across the country can finally begin.

"Thousands of innocent lives were shattered by the residential school system, not only NAN

members but First Nations across the province and country," said Beardy.

"This apology does not erase the pain endured by survivors nor does it fix the broken families, nations or promises that were a result of the residential school system but it is an important first step towards reconciliation between the Government of Canada and First Nations."

Meanwhile, Grand Chief Randall Phillips of Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians in Ontario said there is much work ahead to deal with the legacy.

"The current policies regarding child welfare and protection issues coupled with the socio-economic situation are still designed to punish people for living in poverty by removing the children from their families, their culture and their communities. There are far too many children and families in the system and we need to address this now," he expressed.

The apology is met with settlement payments to survivors and a five-year Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) process that will gather stories from former students. These are all part of a compensation package that's expected to reach \$4 billion in settlements and healing programs to help generations of Aboriginal people recover from the continued effects of residential schools. Is this enough to help survivors recover from what they experienced in residential schools? As a survivor, write in to *Windspeaker* and tell your story about your experience at a residential school or voice your opinion on what needs to be done to begin the healing process.



PHOTO COURTESY OF RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL SURVIVORS OF CANADA

Times have changed from school photos like this one from nearly a century ago taken in Alberta at one of the many residential schools.

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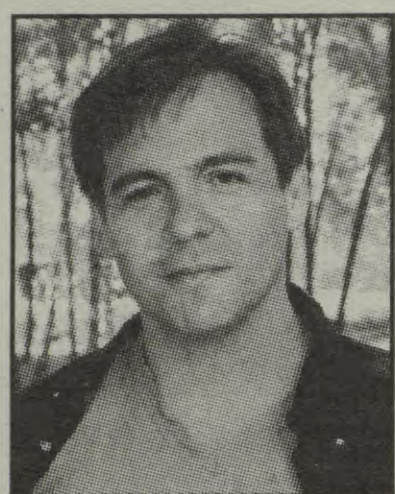
[strictly speaking]

Is the grass greener on the other side?

Just from the smell I could immediately tell by the combination of sea air, smog, and silicone, I was back in the city of Los Angeles. Beverly Hills to be exact. The reason: I was there to accept an award from the First Americans in the Arts for my book on Native humour, *ME FUNNY*. They are an organization set up to help foster, develop and promote Native participation in the arts. Luckily for me that included Canadian writers. I always love coming to Los Angeles but I will hold judgement on whether I could live there or not. So many pros and cons. But Beverly Hills, let me tell you, if there was ever a place I wanted to stake a land claim.

I knew I was living the cliché when a woman in a Saab convertible picked me up at the airport and drove me to my hotel by the ocean. Things were off to a good beginning I thought. I could get to like this. Briefly put, the awards were fun and fabulous, though a bit long. Unfortunately, two thirds of the winners weren't there.

The event was held at the Beverly Hilton, an amazing hotel. It is the kind of place that



THE URBANE INDIAN Drew Hayden Taylor

convinces you your shoes would and could never be shiny enough to walk their marble halls. It was a pretty special evening with the cream of the artistic Aboriginal crop wandering between the tables, exchanging cards and daily rates. Gary Farmer was there in the thick of things. Adam Beach was also supposed to be there because he was receiving an award for his work on *Law & Order: SVU*. I tell you, I never saw so many young lady's head swivel every time a young Native man walked in through the door. And a few men's heads too. But alas, he was a no show. So they had to settle for Gary and me.

The whole evening was quite the experience for this little boy from Curve Lake First Nations, population approximately 1200

— depending on what's playing at the cineplex. You have to imagine the scene. Four hundred of the best dressed Native people in the country making small talk. There were tuxes, bolo ties, shined cowboy boots, immaculate Stetsons, black dresses, and surprisingly, plenty of plunging necklines (on the women, not the men). That's what really caught my attention for several reasons. First of all, the obvious. Secondly, that's not something Native people are particularly well known for. In my travels I've noticed Native women are usually more reserved (no pun intended) about the wonders that exist in the valley between the mountains.

But not here. There were lovely black dresses on a multitude of lovely Native

women, showing off their multiple copper coloured assets. I guess I shouldn't have been so shocked, after all, this is Beverly Hills, and most of the people here worked in some fashion in show business. When in Rome. Still, it was unexpected and admittedly breathtaking. I kept thinking two things; maybe it could catch on in Curve Lake. And also, for some reason it kept reminding me that I must remember to bake more bread.

Unfortunately, there was one draw back to the trip: trying to figure out what to bring back for my cousin. Her name is Laurie and I always make it a point to bring her a gift that was culturally unique to what ever area of the world I was travelling in. When I went to Milan, I brought her some authentic Parmesan cheese from a nearby cheese shop. From Germany I brought her some cider. The Czech Republic—beer. China—green tea. Etc. Etc. I do this because she doesn't get the opportunity to travel like I do—what with having a job, a husband and kids. I'm told they can interfere quite substantially with a person having fun. So instead, I try and bring the world

to her. In small increments.

Being the sweetheart she is, she's often offered to reciprocate as best she can. In a few weeks she's off to Nashville for some country music festival, and she's offered to bring me back a souvenir or something indicative of the area. From the state of Tennessee. All that came to my mind was moonshine. And the Beverly Hillbillies.

Still, it's the thought that counts. So there I was, at the Beverly Hilton, circulating amidst the beautiful Indigenous people, holding my stomach in, wondering what to get my cousin back home. What says L.A.? What says Beverly Hills? Oranges? Kelp? Cocaine? Then, from all around me, the answer came with a flash of lightning. I was blinded by the solution.

On my return, I brought her back a set of fake boobs from a nearby clinic. I guess you could say they were more for her husband Danny, but he can thank me later. Maybe she can use them in Nashville.

There is a possibility that I might get a chance to go to Russia in the near future. I wonder how hard it is to get an AK 47?



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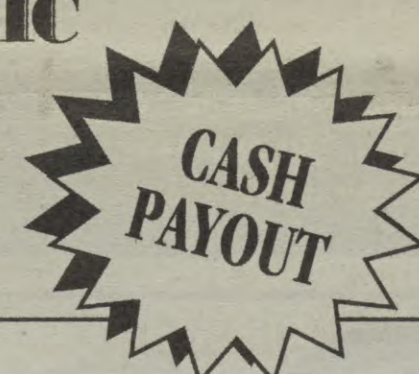
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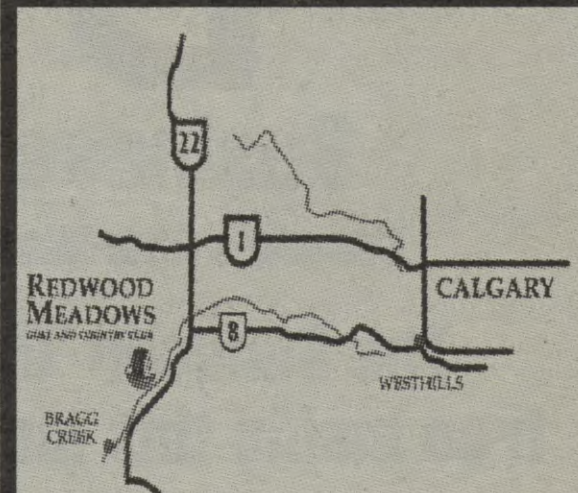
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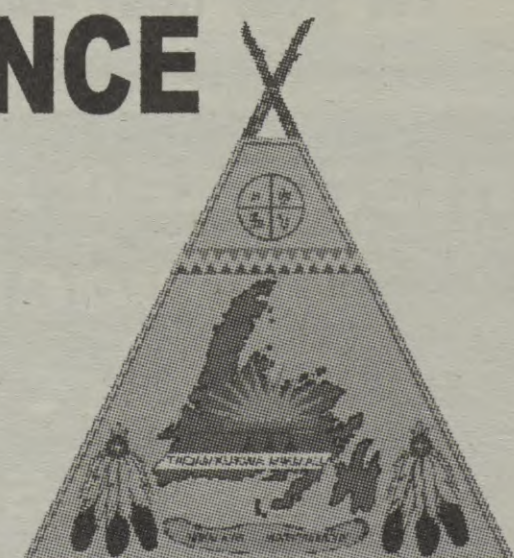
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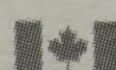
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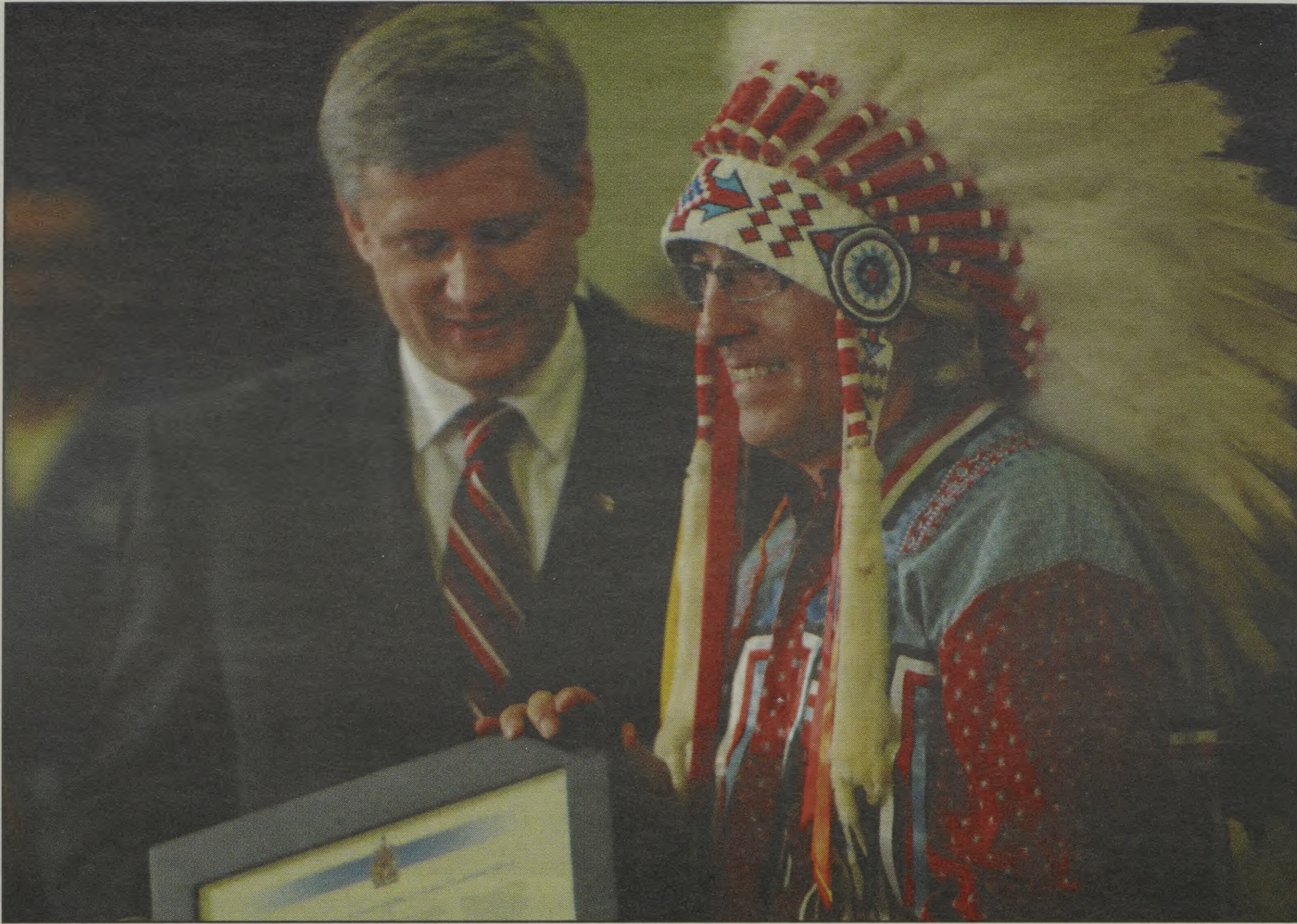
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Fontaine—"We have attained the impossible" [apology]



Prime Minister Stephen Harper presents a copy of the apology to National Chief of Assembly of First Nations Phil Fontaine after Harper delivered the apology in the House of Commons in Ottawa on June 11. Harper admitted that residential schools were wrong. "The government now recognizes that the consequences of the Indian residential schools policy were profoundly negative and that this policy has had a lasting and damaging impact on Aboriginal culture, heritage and language," Harper stated in his apology. Many people gathered on Parliament Hill to watch on a jumbo screen as the apology was read. Some rejoiced while others looked on in disbelief or disapproving. Since the apology, many leaders and the public have been concerned as to what's next. What is the next step to begin or continue on the road to recovery.

FRED CATTROLL



ANDREW BALFOUR



ANDREW BALFOUR

People watch the jumbo screen on Parliament Hill to hear Prime Minister Stephen Harper deliver the apology June 11.



ANDREW BALFOUR



HEATHER POITRAS

(Top) Residential School Survivors file into Edmonton's Marriott at River Cree Resort in Enoch on June 11 to watch the long-awaited apology on a jumbo screen.

[day of action] People across Canada call attention to many issues

By Joe Couture
Windspeaker Writer

VANCOUVER

Hundreds of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people gathered in solidarity in downtown Vancouver on May 29 to march together through the busy streets of the city to call attention to human rights issues facing First Nations people across the country.

Traffic was held at bay by a police escort as the sign-bearing train of people wound its way to the Vancouver Art Gallery, where First Nations leaders took the podium to join the voices of their counterparts across the country in calling for change.

The event held in Vancouver for the second National Day of Action was one of nine organized in communities across the province and among many happening across the country. This year's theme was "Our Children, Our Future, Our Responsibility".

"The national executive (of the Assembly of First Nations) has determined that there has been no appreciable progress made over the last year since the last National Day of Action," explained Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, president of the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs. "So we obviously need to continue to march and rally to draw public attention to the crushing poverty that represents the everyday reality of the Aboriginal people across this country."

The issues at hand are ones of social responsibility, justice and human rights, Phillip told the crowd of supporters gathered at the rally.

"We live in a country that has incredible wealth and enjoys this wealth," he said. "However, there is an absolutely enormous human rights abuse that has been going on in this country since the beginning. Of course, I'm talking about First Nations poverty, which unfortunately has become institutionalized in this country."

The tragic dimensions of the problem include rising infant mortality rates, increases in the



FRED CATROLL

Hundreds of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people gather together on Parliament Hill in to bring public attention to the number of issues affecting Aboriginal people. This Ottawa event and many around Canada was held in support of National Day of Action on May 29.

number of children being taken into care, deplorable housing conditions, health issues and deteriorating or non-existent infrastructure, Phillip said, noting it amounts to racism for lawmakers not to commit resources to this problem and instead blame victims.

"It will only be when we unify our voices across this country that we'll be able to bring about a new reality in Aboriginal communities," Phillip said. "A reality where our children will grow up in safe homes, where they will be able to go through an educational experience that takes them on through university, where water systems and infrastructure will be there in order to service their homes — all of the issues that most Canadians take for granted will begin to become a reality."

"And most importantly, the government of Canada and the provinces and specifically the

province of British Columbia need to understand and recognize our inherent rights and our Aboriginal rights and title interests in the lands and resources. The economic marginalization of our people has got to come to a stop."

"Justice for one and justice for all is what is being asked for," Phillip said.

"This is a human rights issue. It is the most disgraceful abuse of human rights in this country, the institutionalized poverty of Aboriginal people," Phillip said. "As human beings, we must make this journey together, and we must close the horrible and tragic chapter of oppression and poverty of Indigenous people in this country."

"The issue of Aboriginal poverty is an absolute disgraceful stain on this country. Certainly the United Nations recognizes that fact and has chastised the Government of Canada for this abuse of situation, but obviously Canada is stonewalling our voices and those observations at the international level," Phillip continued, referring to events of last year related to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

On September 13 of last year, the United Nations General Assembly — the highest body of the UN system — voted to adopt the declaration, which was the product of more than 20 years of intensive negotiations between nation-states and Indigenous Peoples.

However, despite being a member of the Human Rights Council, Canada voted against the declaration. With an

overwhelming majority of 143 states voting in support, Canada was one of only four countries — the others being the United States, Australia and New Zealand — to vote in opposition.

Grand Chief Ed John of the First Nations Summit of BC worked for years to advocate for First Nations in the drafting and passage of the Declaration, and spoke at the National Day of Action from his perspective of taking First Nations issues internationally.

Survival, dignity and well-being are the key concepts both in the declaration and around which calls for action need to be focused, John said, the crowd chanting "shame" as he explained how Canada voted against the declaration at the UN.

John went on to note that the majority of members of parliament support the declaration, but the minority government does not. He also called the government to ask for disparities in funding for First Nations education and child and family services.

"Unless we stand up, no one is going to, and that's the reality in this country," he said.

First Nations organizations will also be strengthening relationships with human rights and other "like-minded" groups, including organized labour groups, health care workers, environmentalists, educators and the multi-faith community, Phillip said.

"They will join with us to increase our numbers, and to increase the public profile of the appalling abuses of the human rights of the Aboriginal people in

this country," Phillip explained.

Such support indeed existed at the National Day of Action rally, with social justice groups of all stripes on hand to call attention to a variety of specific issues which affect Aboriginal people and to simply to offer the support of their organizations.

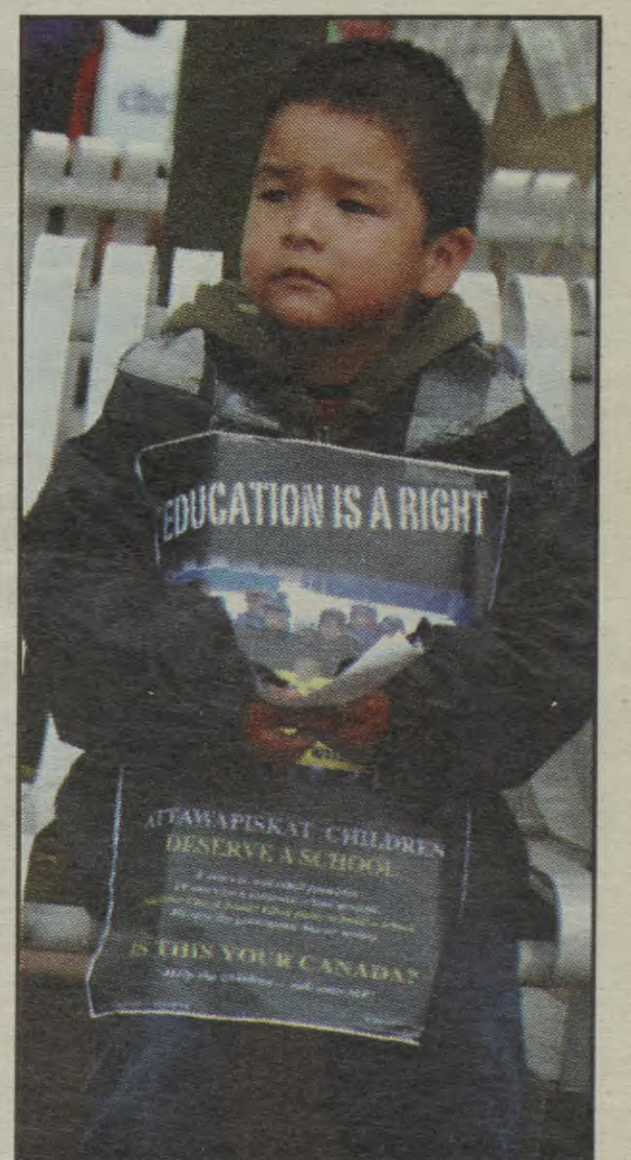
"Certainly the prime minister and all of the premiers aren't going to rush into their offices tomorrow morning and begin to enact legislation, and change policy frameworks that have proved absolutely ineffective, but that they have relied on for generation after generation.

"But as time goes on and the profile continues to build, they're going to be pressured to make concrete changes and will no longer get away with the political rhetoric and public spin they are putting out at the moment."

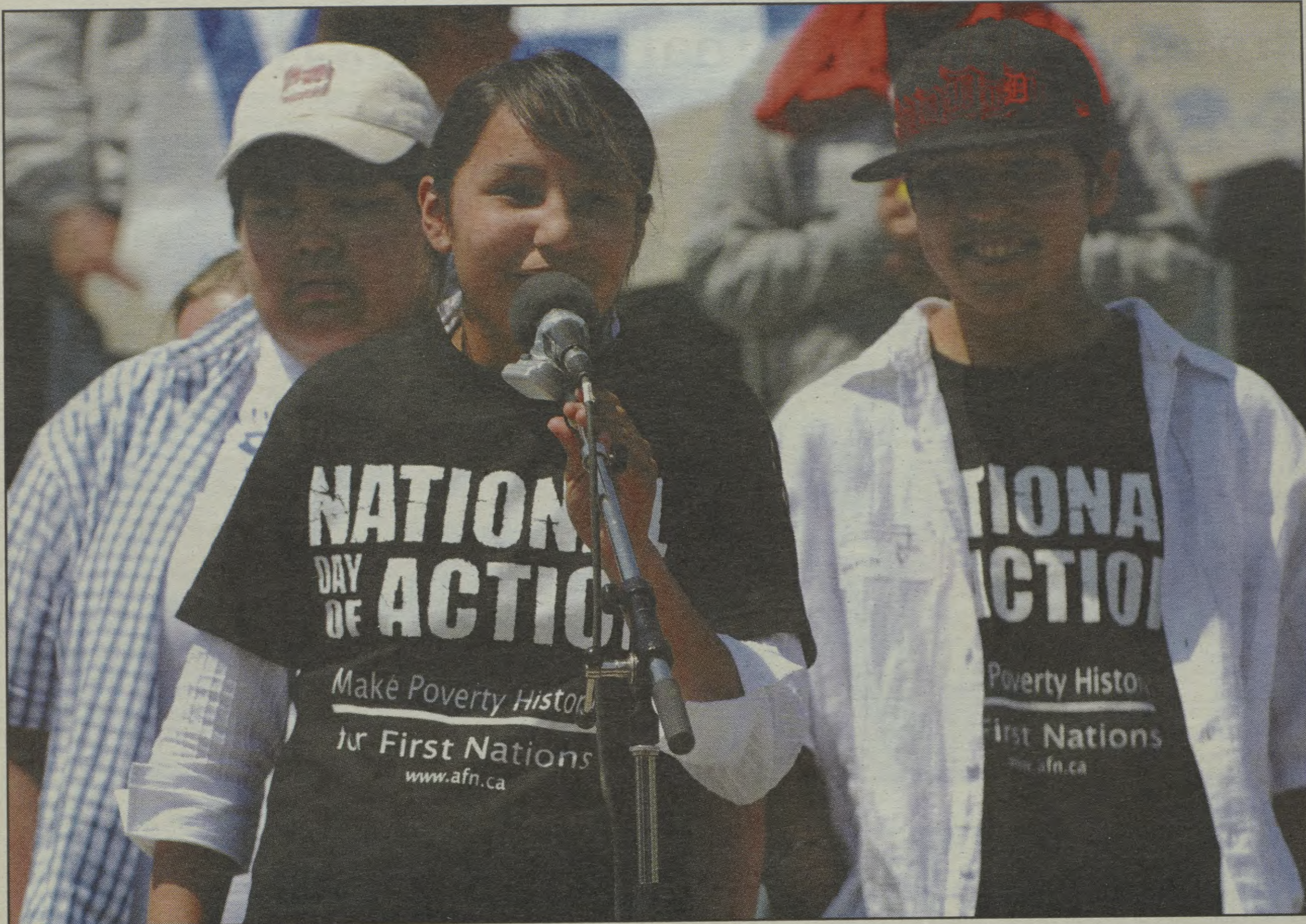


A participant of the Vancouver march of solidarity offers a prayer as she and others try to bring awareness of issues facing Aboriginal people.

PHOTO BY JOE COUTURE



JOE COUTURE



(Left) Students from Attawapiskat in northern Ontario attended the National Day of Action on Parliament Hill to describe the poor conditions of the portables they currently use for classrooms. The group of 21 Grade 8 students cancelled their graduation trip to Niagara Falls to attend the protest in Ottawa and tell The Department of Indian and Northern Affairs that they are tired of waiting for a new school, a school that they were promised to get in 2000. It closed after many students and teachers fell ill due to contamination from a diesel fuel spill. Shannen Koostachin (at the microphone) said that she got sick twice from coming out of the gym all sweaty and cold. She went on to talk about the windows and doors in the portables that don't close, leaking ceilings and washrooms with very little privacy.

PHOTO BY FRED CATTROLL



AARON PIERRE



DEBORA STEEL

(Left) In support of National Day of Action, this little guy takes a rest during the march in Winnipeg on May 29.

(Right) This teenager shows his sign of support during the rally on Vancouver Island.

(Bottom) Hundreds march in unity for DOA in Vancouver. This year's theme was "Our Children, Our Future, Our Responsibility." The march and rally was also organized to draw public attention to the issue of poverty that represents the everyday reality of Aboriginal people across Canada. Education and child and family services are other issues that need to be addressed.



JOE COUTURE

More to be done before a sustainable Canada is achieved

By Joe Couture
Windspeaker Writer

VANCOUVER

Sustainability is about more than the environment — it's about taking care of socioeconomic issues and ensuring the inclusion of everyone.

That's the message Chief Kim Baird of the Tsawwassen First Nation (TFN) gave as a guest speaker at YWCA Canada's 116th Annual Membership Meeting held in Vancouver in June. Sustainability was the theme of the gathering. Baird shared stories of her community's struggles and successes.

Baird's political career started in 1993, when at age 22 she was elected as councillor for the TFN. In 1999, she was elected chief of the First Nation, making her the youngest woman chief in its history. She has been chief since, totaling four terms in the position.

During her tenure, Baird initiated a productive organizational review, brought management powers to the First Nation, negotiated a favourable joint venture agreement with the Vancouver Port Authority, developed an employment

partnership with the construction industry, and negotiated a treaty with federal and provincial governments estimated to be of a \$120 million value.

The TFN has one reserve in Delta, B.C. Approximately 390 members of the Coast Salish Nation reside both on- and off-reserve. The population is growing quickly, increasing by almost five times in the past 15 years, Baird explained.

Baird spoke of the impact of colonization on her people throughout history, and of the many political battles she and others needed to fight to achieve the successes they have.

She said much more needs to be done before a sustainable Canada is achieved, especially in relation to the issues faced by many Aboriginal people.

"For us, the work is just starting in implementing the treaty," Baird told *Windspeaker*. "We have to replace the Indian Act within the next year for our community. And we have a bunch of rebuilding to do that rests solely on us. That's just at a local level. At a national level, governments need to be more proactive in resolving outstanding issues of First Nations people, whether it be civic claims or treaties or self-governance agreements. I don't



JOE COUTURE

Left to right are: Janet Austin, CEO of YWCA of Vancouver; Chief Kim Baird of the Tsawwassen First Nation; and, Paulette Senior, CEO of YWCA Canada.

think we can get very far if those issues aren't advanced."

The involvement of Aboriginal people is key when considering issues of sustainability, Baird noted.

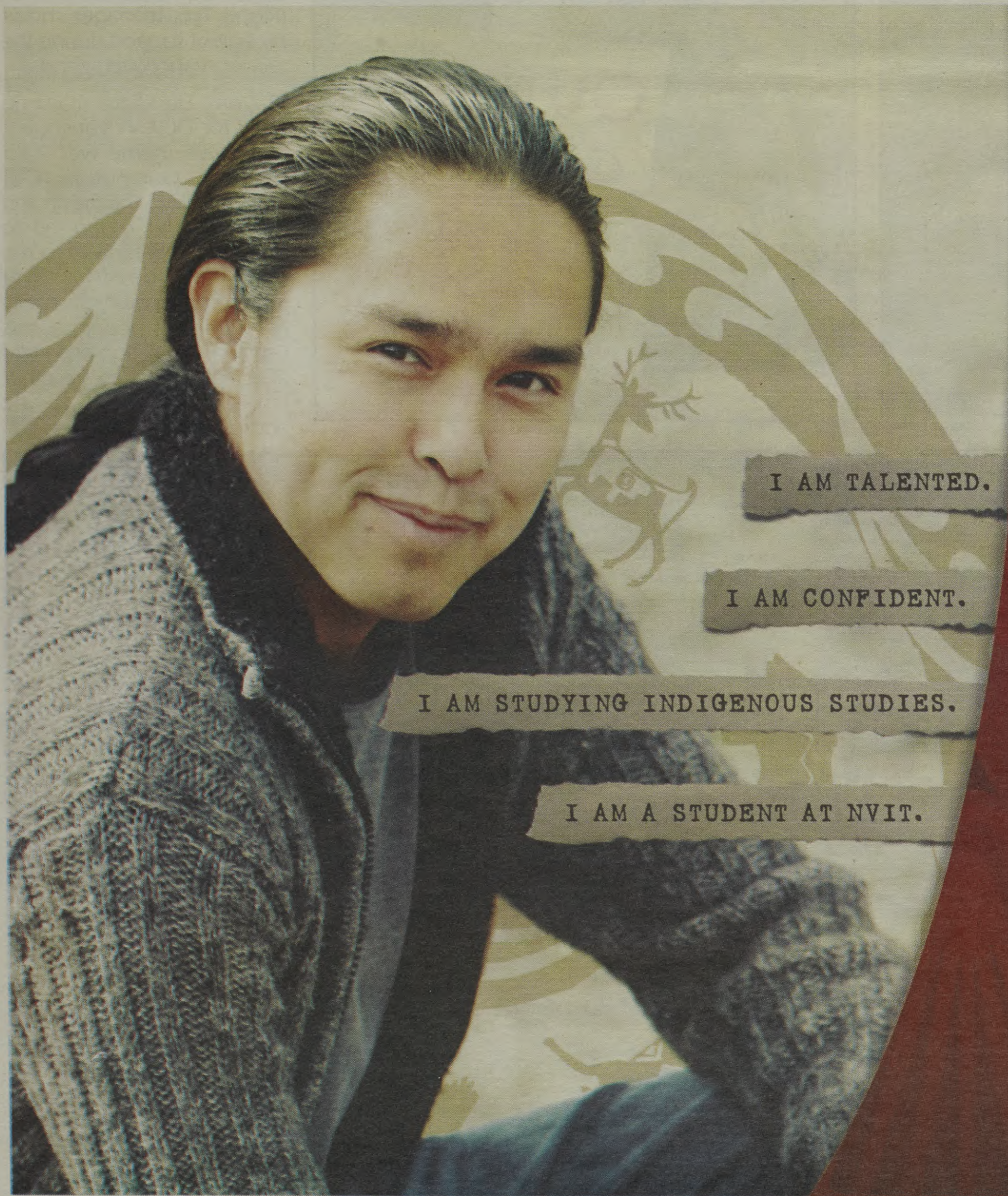
"I don't think it's true

sustainability unless it looks at every aspect of society," she said. "And again, I think it's far more than an environmental issue. It has to do with socio-economic issues, culture and well-being of everyone within ecosystems."

There are many things that need to happen before a sustainable state is reached, she added.

"I think it's overcoming poverty.

(See Chief page 18.)



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[windspeaker confidential] — Aaron Paquette

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

Aaron Paquette: A tough one right off the bat! All the good answers are honesty, loyalty, that kind of thing, but if someone's your friend, hopefully they already have that in spades. I think I'd have to say the ability to sit with you in silence, neither one feeling forced to break the awkward moment because the moment isn't awkward at all! It's just you and an old friend sitting there. Well, now that I put it that way it sounds kind of boring...

W: What is it that really makes you mad?

A.P.: People throwing their trash out the window of their car. Who do they think is going to clean it up anyway? Me? They're probably right, but that's a little presumptuous on their part, don't you think? Seriously, though, it really bothers me. It speaks of a complete absence of gratitude for the earth we live on and share. I can't really blame anyone, because who do you blame? In the end everyone does the best they can with what they've got at the moment. If you don't have gratitude, it's because no one gave that gift to you, or if they did you didn't understand it. I guess it's why we have a whole lifetime to learn it.

W: When are you at your happiest?

A.P.: I should probably say that it's when I'm painting, but really

it's when I'm with my family. There's just something special about being able to tell old stories and love them every time, and to be able to take tragedy and turn it into laughter. Even though your family can make you go crazy sometimes, getting through it is healing and it's when I learn the most.

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

A.P.: Hopeless

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

A.P.: Myself. My humility. Ha ha, just kidding. It's got to be my mom, for giving it her best every day of our lives. They don't give awards for that, but they sure as heck should.

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

A.P.: Getting to the point where I knew what it really meant to let go. Once I finally reached that, actually letting go was the easy part.

W: What is your greatest accomplishment?

A.P.: Being a father. I don't just mean "making a baby". Any fool can do that. I mean actually sticking around, being a part of my kids lives. Being clean, strong, and patient - all the things I needed and all kids need from their dads. Don't get me wrong, I'm far from perfect, but for my children I try to be a better man

every day.

W: What one goal remains out of reach?

A.P.: Are any goals really out of reach? We walk from moment to moment, sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly, but eventually we get to where we were going, even if it means finding out that what we thought we *really* wanted wasn't all that important after all! We can achieve anything but what's really cool is learning what we *should* be trying to achieve.

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

A.P.: Something else! What I mean is, in the end I've found it doesn't really matter as long as you love it. I've been in deep pits shoveling fish guts and found the fun in it. I've cleaned up messes, served drinks, stocked shelves in the middle of the night, shaped gold, cut glass, planted trees and so on - and even though every job I've had was hard, it was losing myself in the work that took the work out of it, you know? There's something fascinating in everything we do, we just have to find it.

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

A.P.: Be quiet. Speak up. My dad always taught me to just be quiet and listen. Let someone say everything they need to say. And then *still* be quiet! The other person may have more to share if you give them a chance.

It's the only way you'll ever know what's important to them. My mom always taught me to speak up, to stand up for myself. Not to shout or get angry, but to just be firm, speak plainly, simply and then see what happens.

W: Did you take it?

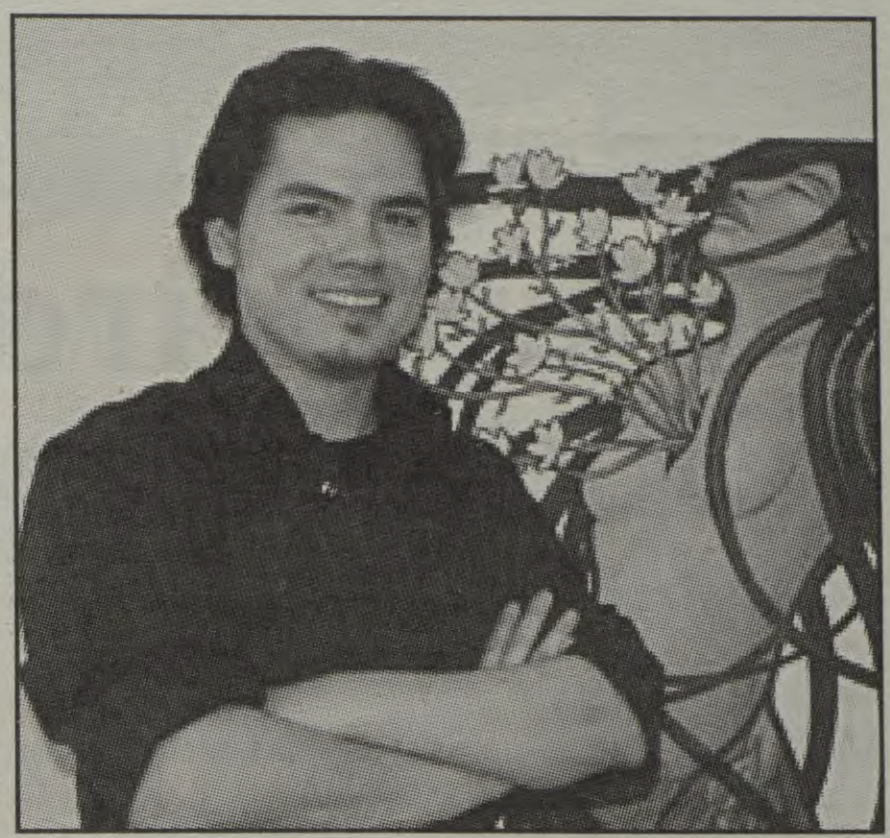
A.P.: Eventually.

W: How do you hope to be remembered?

A.P.: Well, if anyone remembers me at all, I hope it's because I made their life happier. The sad thing is I know I've hurt people along the way - so when I'm gone, they might hold on to those pains I've caused and it will make them unhappy.

If I could track them all down and make it right, I would, but I can't. So what do you do?

I guess try to be a force for good in this world, so good that it spreads out and touches the lives of the people you might have wronged and that it makes things a little brighter for them - and everyone else. They may never know that the happiness spread out from your good actions, and they never have to! All that matters is you did good in your life. Enough good that it passed beyond yourself. So I hope to be



remembered not for myself, but for the happiness I added to this world. That would be mighty fine.

Aaron Paquette, 34, is a deep-thinking Edmonton artist who avoids "angst" in his paintings, preferring to portray crowd tricksters wearing bone breastplates and top hats, and beautiful, earthy women with gold light glowing around their heads.

"I'm not trying to make them look like saints," he explains. "I'm expressing my awe and respect for the sacred beings they are."

He began his artistic career as a stained glass artisan and gold smith, the influence reflected in his trademark bold, black outlines around his subjects and meticulous attention to small details.

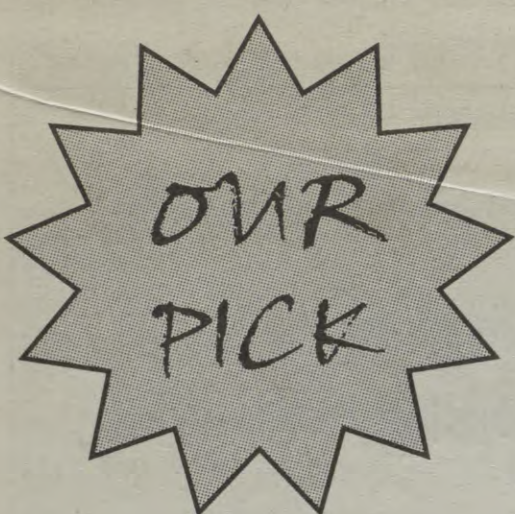
Aaron is currently showing a new body of work at Edmonton's Bearclaw Gallery.

[radio's most active]

ABORIGINAL RADIO MOST ACTIVE LIST

ARTIST	TITLE	ALBUM
Phyllis Sinclair	Lost For Words	Fathomless Tales from Leviathan's Hole
Crystal Shawanda	What Do I Have To Do	Dawn Of A New Day
Lester	Life Flies	Day One
Shane Yellowbird	Drive Me Home	Life Is Calling My Name
Gerald Folster	Now I Understand	Magical Places Of The Heart
Yoza	Beat Of The Drum	Family Tree
Mykal Gambull	I'm Your Man	Volume 1
Black Rain	Marlena's Song	Hundred Dollar Hickey
Ray St. Germain	Life Ain't Hard	Life Ain't Hard
Fred Moose	Come On In	Once & For All
Mitch Daigneault	Driving All Night	Single Release
Mark Jacob	A Little Piece Of My Heart	Single Release
Leela Gilday	Time Rushes By	Sedze
Ry Moran	Dreams Of Grey	Groundwater
Donny Parenteau	Belly Up	What It Takes
Sierra Noble	Possibility	Single Release
Desiree Dorion	I'm Gonna Love You	Single Release
Uasheshkun	Eshakumitshiku	Ninan
Pappy Johns Band	Calling For You	Single Release
Darrel De La Ronde & Saskia	Road Less Traveled	Laura's Kitchen

CONTRIBUTING STATIONS:



Artist—Road Engine Dreams
Album—Road Engine Dreams
Song—Built 2 Break
Label—Independent
Producer—Road Engine Dreams

Appreciate life—a clear message on album

Change is a word many people are ashamed to admit that they are scared of. Some take it as a sense of inadequate stability, while others thrive on the feeling of what is yet to come, almost like an adrenaline rush. We also learn how to compromise our lives with others. Our lives are full of winding roads, turning points and busy highways. We are all capable of success, the only downfall people possess is the fear of change, 'It's not a change for the worst, your soul's your strength did you throw it away', taken from the song "Built 2 Break" by Vancouver based band "Road Engine Dreams" from their self titled album. The chord changes and melody in minor mixes the beat of the drums and hard riffs, almost like the uphill battle of life. The sonic qualities, tempo and rhythm makes this song so vivid, one can almost feel the pain in which we suffer or the freedom of taking a deep breath on a beautiful day. Almost like the border between music and noise so is music and culture in which Road Engine Dreams writes about in "Built 2 Break." Based in East Vancouver, Road Engine Dreams album was written about the life experiences of the band's daily life.

Road Engine Dreams is four talented musicians with the strength and belief in themselves and each other. For more information on the band go to: www.roadenginedreams.com or www.myspace.com/roadenginedreams.

Chief Baird well received at conference

(Continued from page 16.)
I think it's having similar living conditions that other Canadians enjoy. I think it's preserving and reviving First Nations culture. I think it's autonomy for First Nations communities, and contributing within the larger fabric of society."

Though the TFN treaty was not reached without criticism and controversy, its success is of major importance for the community going into the future, in terms of

the independence and self-governance seen by Baird as vital.

"Our achievement of a treaty is helping our community move forward," she said. "Once we're able to take care of some of our issues at home, we'll be better able to contribute to overall society and the province generally."

"As more First Nations find their way forward it will contribute to sustainability in Canada."

Relationships

with

organizations like the YWCA are also important in terms of gathering support to improve the situation for Aboriginal people, Baird said.

"I spend a good part of my time trying to explain Aboriginal issues to different groups and the general public, because it is so important," she said. "Communication and dialogue leads to understanding which leads to support for resolving First Nations issues, including issues of

rights and issues of socio-economic conditions. I totally believe that sort of dialogue is necessary for any substantive change if we want the public to support it as well, which is an important part of the political process in Canada."

Baird received a warm reception and a standing ovation from an audience obviously moved by her words. Such frank and down-to-earth discussion that educates and fosters networks of support is important, according to Paulette Senior, YWCA Canada Chief Executive

Officer.

"It's like (Baird was) in her living room, just talking to us and being with us and actually being herself," Senior said. "I think that's the style that's really important in terms of having us listen. And I think we want to do more and more of that because we need to understand as much as we can so that we can be able to support where we can. Part of having (Baird) here is also finding out what are those avenues in which we can support. We fully support all she had to say and we want to be able to do more."



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Alberta Sweetgrass: Special Section providing news from Alberta

Grand chiefs and Stelmach ink deal to meet regularly



BERT CROWFOOT

From left to right, Alberta Premier Ed Stelmach, Gene Zwowdesky, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, Treaty 7 Grand Chief Charles Weaselhead, Treaty 6 Grand Chief Stanley Lagrelle and Grand Chief Arthur Noskey of Treaty 8 (missing from photo) sign an agreement that will allow them to meet on a regular basis.

Three grand chiefs anticipate regular meetings with Premier Ed Stelmach will improve the lives of approximately 100,000 First Nations people living in Alberta.

First Nation leaders of Treaty 6, 7, and 8 inked a long-awaited historical agreement on May 29 with Premier Ed Stelmach that finally allows them to meet

leader-to-leader on issues such as housing, health care, education and the environment.

The five-year Protocol Agreement on Government to Government Relations between Alberta First Nations and the Government of Alberta, forces the premier to meet at least once a year with the grand chiefs, and

twice a year with Ministers responsible for land use and resource development. It also creates the possibility of other ministers agreeing to similar meetings and processes.

Treaty 7 Grand Chief Charles Weaselhead said the agreement "provides a vehicle by which areas of concern can be addressed and streamlined to the decision makers who can affect change."

Grand Chief Arthur Noskey of Treaty 8 said, "We've always voiced our concern for the environment, but it seemed like nobody (was) at the table to address these issues. Hopefully, a

protocol agreement like this will get us to that table to address these concerns and gain a better understanding of what's in the water and in the environment."

Even though the federal government, under the Indian Act, is responsible for First Nations people on reserves, Premier Stelmach said the provincial government still has a big part to play.

"You've got to remember the First Nations people that move off the reservation—heath care, education, services et cetera—are provided by the province. We have so many opportunities

available to all in the province of Alberta in terms of work and education, for example, and that's why we want to make sure all Albertans benefit."

Treaty 6 Grand Chief Stanley Lagrelle agreed the agreement should open many doors and make a difference in the lives of many.

"It's everything," he said, referring to the fact he and his people "have been looking in instead of looking out. I think we're going to be looking out more. I want us to open up these doors that (have been) shut for us provincially."



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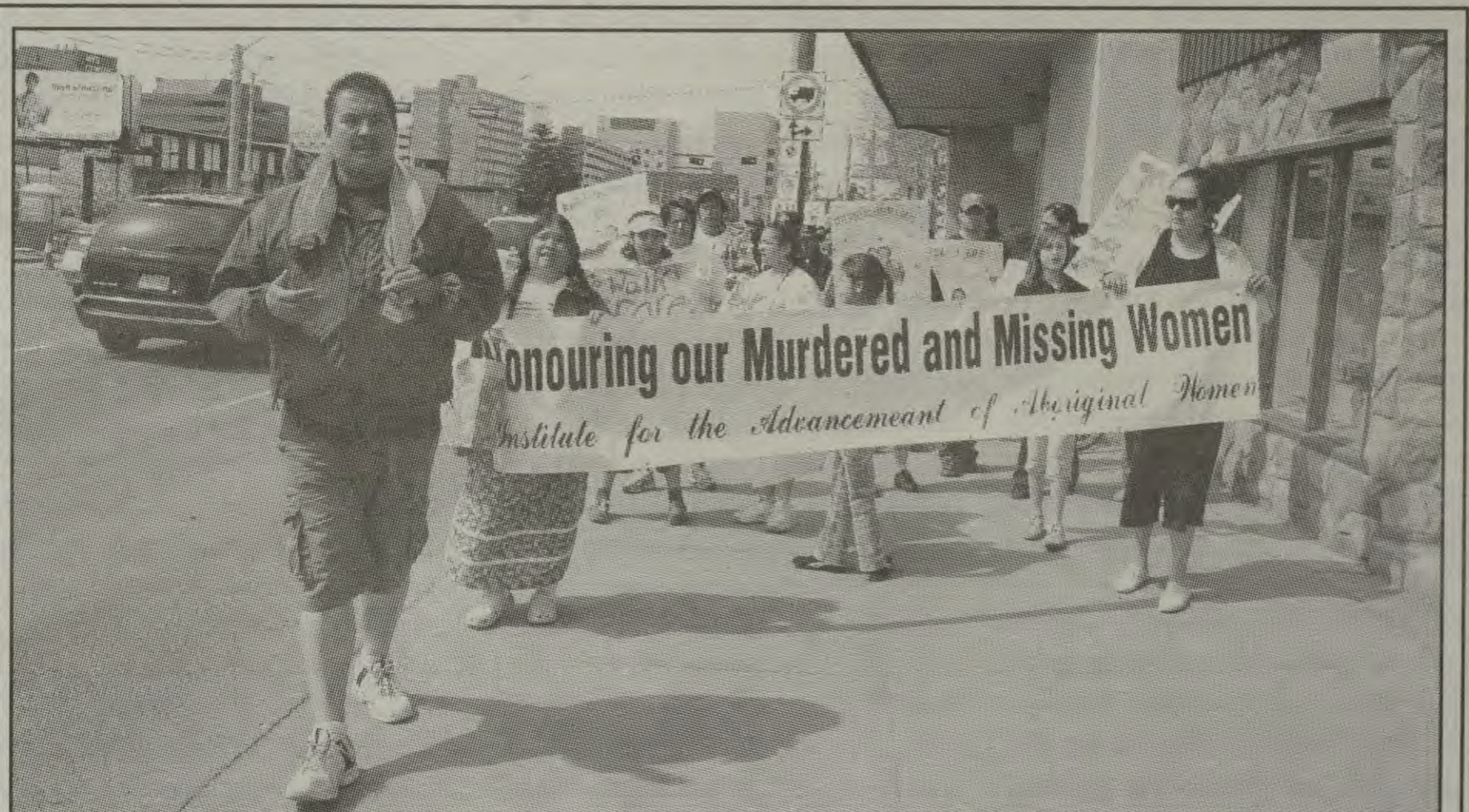
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CHRISTINE FIDDLER

Nearly 200 people participated in the Stolen Sisters Awareness Walk in Edmonton on May 10. The walk was to raise awareness for the disproportionate amount of missing and murdered Métis, Inuit, and First Nations women across Canada.

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Saskatchewan Sage: Special Section providing news from Saskatchewan

Leaders march together to bring awareness of issues



PHOTOS BY SHAUNNA GRANDISH

BY SHAUNNA GRANDISH
Sage Writer

REGINA

Saskatchewan's Aboriginal and provincial leaders walked together in the spirit of unity on May 29 in a Solidarity March to bring awareness to issues concerning First Nations people.

The Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) organized and hosted the Solidarity March in support of the National Day of Action. The day's events were to address issues such as poverty, education, and infrastructure on First Nations.

Approximately 100 Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people gathered at the First Nations

University of Canada and marched to a rally in front of the Legislature Building. Speeches were made by various leaders such as Vice-Chief Lyle Whitefish and NDP opposition leader Lorne Calvert.

FSIN Vice-Chief Morley Watson said he wanted the event to spur discussion among the public about the issues First

Nations people face on a daily basis—such as poverty, unemployment, and overcrowded housing—despite the province being in the midst of an economic boom.

"Saskatchewan's wallets are bulging, but yet we continue to be poor, unemployed, and we don't have much of a future. We are hoping that this new government and the rest of Canada will say they want to involve us in discussions that will bring great change to our people," said Watson.

Watson added that Canadians should speak to their different levels of government about assisting Aboriginals so they can have the same opportunities as other citizens in contributing to a better Saskatchewan and Canada.

Christine Tell, minister of

tourism, parks, culture and sport also participated in the march and rally. She said she would take the FSIN vice-chiefs concerns back to the Saskatchewan government.

"The point is we are willing partners with our First Nations and Métis people. Only will talking bring about common understanding so that we as a government understand where we have to go to ensure that we are doing the best for the First Nations and the people of Saskatchewan," said Tell.

NDP leader Lorne Calvert believes it's important to recognize treaties obligations "because we are all treaty people."

"It is important to stand shoulder-to-shoulder, particularly in this province where there are very, very significant issues that do face our Aboriginal community," said Calvert.

Ride to create awareness of First Nations addictions

By Christine Fiddler
Sage Staff Writer

**RED PHEASANT/
MOSQUITO FIRST NATION**

During the hot days of summer, band members of the Red Pheasant and Mosquito First Nations plan to trek across the Saskatchewan plains on horse and wagon to bring awareness to addictions and promote cultural teachings and healthy lifestyles in their communities.

"It's going to take five days of riding wagons to reach the destination point and we're hoping to get not only youth involved but people themselves who are struggling with addictions," said organizer Ryan Buglar, who is an addictions counselor at the Red Pheasant First Nation.

"We're really encouraging them to attend the ride and participate fully and stay sober for the four or five days that they're on the ride. Because the reality is that a lot of people they haven't stayed sober that long, four or five days. So if they can do that, that's an accomplishment," he added.

Buglar is organizing the ride

along with Mosquito band counselor, Elbert Pahsaknuk, which will occur on July 26 to 30.

"We're expecting ten wagons and riders that are already registered. It's usually a couple of riders per wagon, however many they bring," Buglar said.

The day that the unity ride begins, those involved will hold a sweat lodge ceremony for the purpose of helping the ride to go well for those people taking part.

"The reason we're doing this is just to create an awareness of addictions on both reserves," explained Buglar. "And along the way we're trying to initiate cultural teachings about the traditional lifestyle of horses and how they were used for healing and how they can still be used for healing."

Buglar said addictions—especially cocaine use—have become a huge problem in his own reserve during recent years. And they want to especially reach the younger community members. To educate them and let them know that there's people in the community who are trying to do something about the problem.

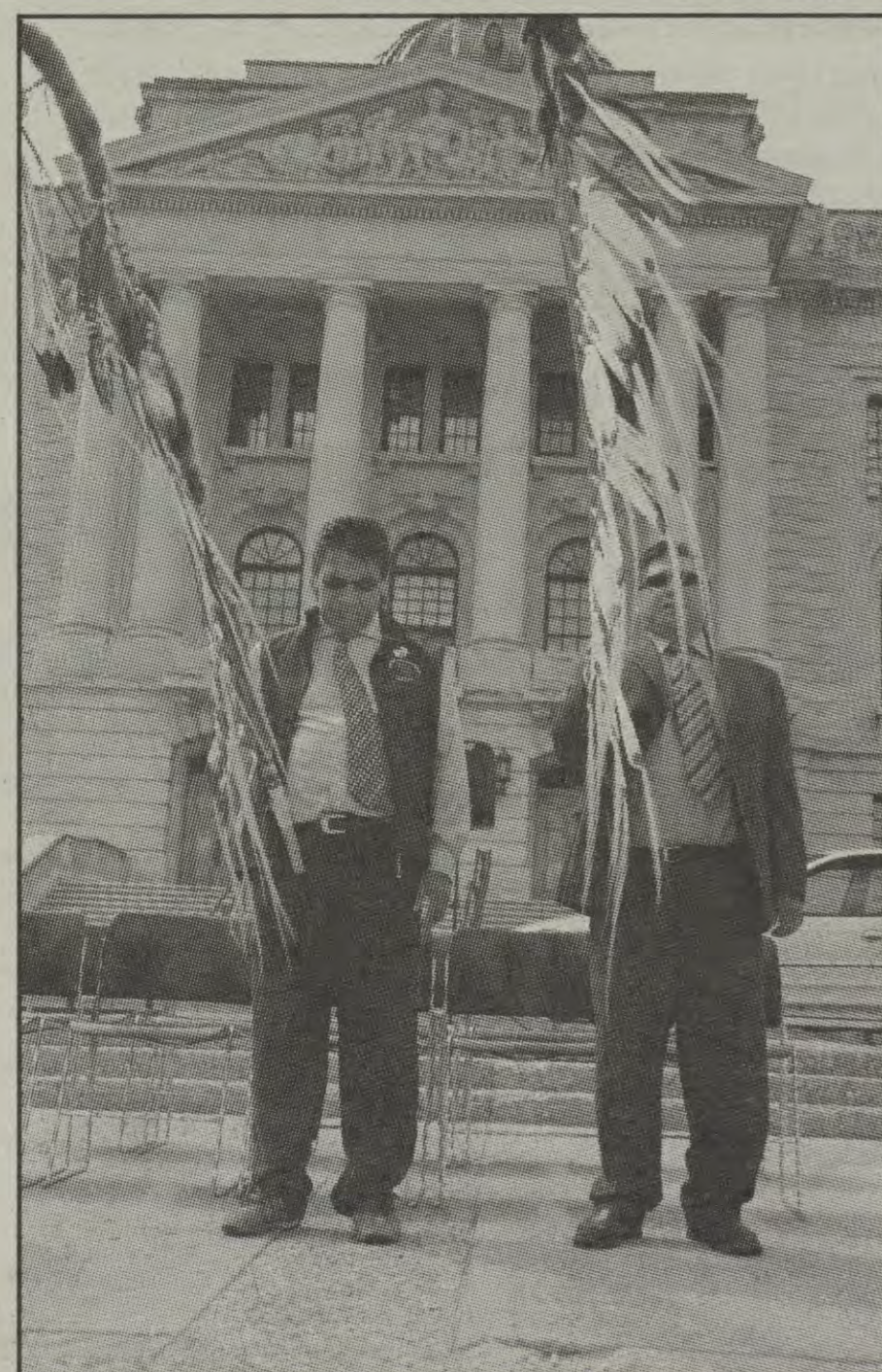
Buglar said when he discussed

the unity ride with Pahsaknuk they realized Elder support was really needed, so they consulted with Elders who agreed to help. Furthermore, non-Native people who farm the land where the unity ride will progress, have offered their support as well.

"We hold a cultural camp every year at Red Pheasant on this TLE land along the river so we're camping along the river and traveling along an old wagon trail that's been used for a lot of years for traveling across western Canada and it takes us right to Saskatoon," said Buglar. "We pre-scouted the map, we visited the land owners, we stopped and had coffee at some of the farmers houses and they really enjoyed the idea and we had some of them say that they would have burgers ready and drinks, they wanted to know roughly when we would be coming through there."

Buglar said non-Native people have also been inquiring about whether they can participate and he told them they could also join in during the ride.

"It's open to everybody, anyone who wants to participate. It's definitely open to other people," he said.



FSIN Vice-Chief Morley Watson (left) and Vice-Chief Lyle Whitefish spoke in front of the Legislature Building in Regina on May 29. They spoke about the many issues that affect Aboriginal people and the urgent need to address them. FSIN hosted the day long event in support of National Day of Action.

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Ontario Birchbark: Special Section providing news from Ontario

Manitoulin Island represents at Cuban festival

By Margo Little
Birchbark Writer

WIKWEMIKONG

Holguin, Cuba – A formerly unadorned wall in the thriving town of Holguin, Cuba now displays the distinctive outline of Manitoulin Island surrounded by First Nations clan symbols and floral motifs. The 27 by 15 foot mural stands as a vibrant testimony to the artistic revolution taking place on this once isolated island nation.

Artist Michael Cywink, a member of the Wikwemikong Unceded Indian Reserve, the Aboriginal Curatorial Collective and the Aboriginal Arts Administrators group, recently participated in the creation of the colourful mural in Holguin (pop. 300,000). It was all part of the 15th annual Romerías de Mayo Festival, an event that draws over a thousand young intellectuals and artists from all continents plus all the Cuban provinces to a marathon week of cultural exchange. This year's festival ran from May 2 to 8 and served as a preamble to the World Young Artists Festival slated for 2009.

The Romerías de Mayo concept came into being in 1993 when a group of young artists decided to organize a venue to share their diverse artistic endeavours. Since then it has evolved into an intense week of activities involving musicians, artists, dancers, writers, actors and researchers. Workshops began early each morning and delegates took part in conferences, symposiums, expositions and stage shows until well into the night.

The 2008 gathering captured the imagination of Cywink when he received an invitation from

Alexis Triana Hernandez, president of the organizing committee.

"We summon artists from all over the planet to be here for our World Festival of Artistic Youths," she wrote. "We believe your work will suit the purposes of the festival. You represent a culture almost extinct among us; only a few Aboriginal descendants remain despite what has been done to preserve their culture, which has several features common to your own Aboriginal origins. By working with those descendants, the people of Cuba and the artists from other countries participating in the event, we will defend our common Aboriginal culture."

The rugged mountainous region known as Holguin is famous for a park and statues commemorating the arrival of Christopher Columbus in 1492. When the Europeans explored this island it was part of the Great Maniabon Indian territory. Historical plaques at Holguin symbolize the meeting of European and Aboriginal civilizations.

It was a challenge Cywink could not ignore. He has made it his mission to relate the history of the First Peoples wherever he travels. So when he was also urged to speak at the "Our Memory" (Memoria Nuestra) theoretical event as well, he determined he would "speak on my experiences defending my culture and passing this cultural knowledge on to the new generations."

He started approaching sponsors for the once in a lifetime adventure in Cuba and before long he had the support of the Wikwemikong Heritage Organization and the Canada Council of the Arts.

The festival organizing

committee covered all the lodging, food and transportation costs once he arrived in Holguin.

Since the first few days of the festival are devoted to tradition, Cywink decided to design a wall mural featuring woodland floral images and dodems which are representative of the

Anishinaabe of the Great Lakes. It was his sincere wish that "this cultural sharing may help bring the history of the Anishinaabe into a clearer international vision and help unify the vision of the Indigenous people partaking in this event."

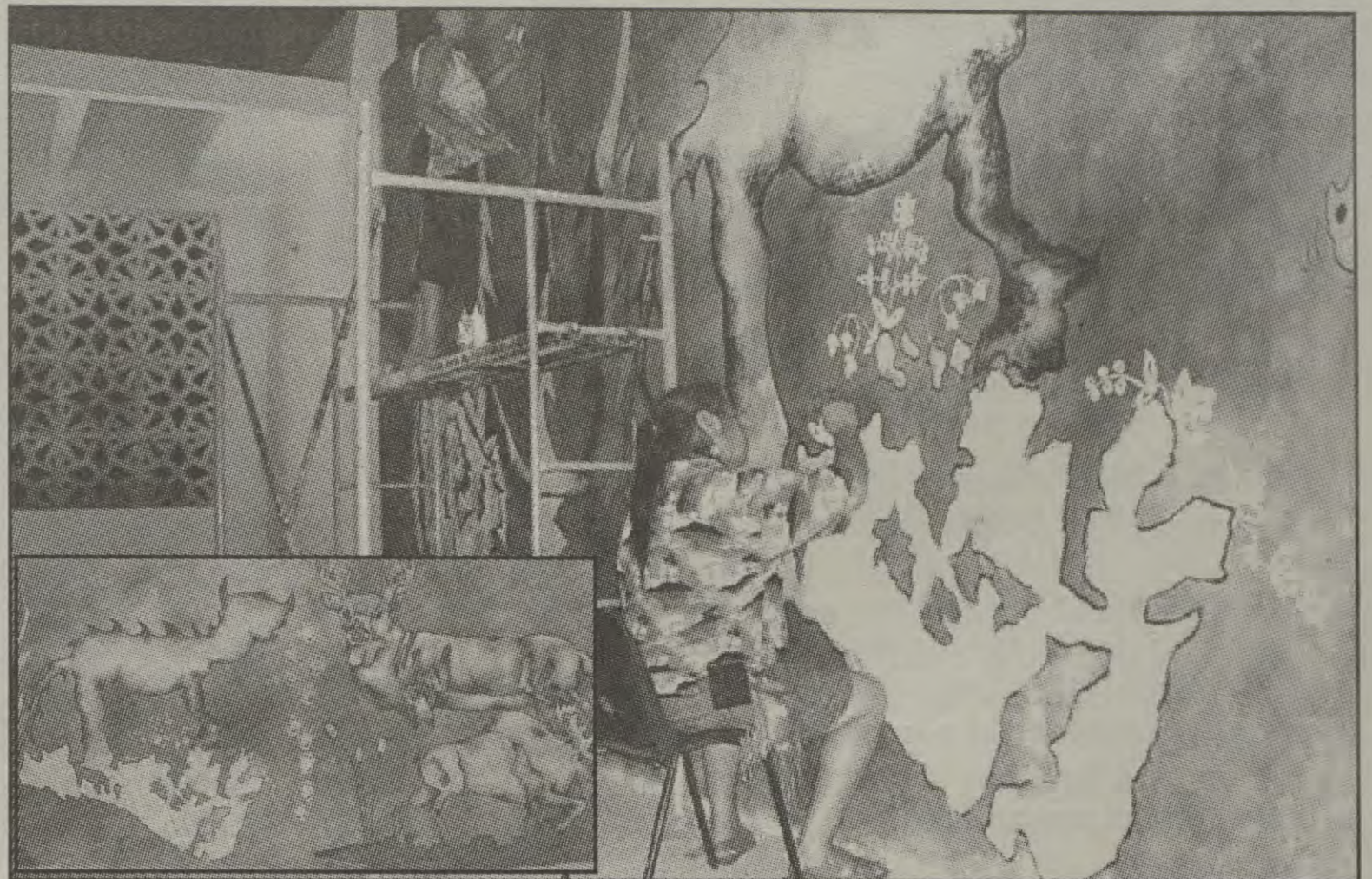
Needless to say, he had his work cut out for him as a cultural ambassador. To some of the Cuban people he appeared as somewhat of an exotic visitor with his long hair, eagle feathers, bear claw and deer hide accessories.

"The Cuban perception of Canada is that it's all ice and snow. Many thought that I was an Eskimo; they thought I came from Alaska or the North Pole. They had never had an Eskimo down in Cuba before," he laughed.

Naturally, the "Canadian Eskimo" was regarded as a celebrity and attracted a great deal of media attention. He was featured on Cuban national television several times, he reported. But once the mural project started to take shape, there were many opportunities to dispel stereotypes and educate viewers about Anishinaabe heritage.

"I helped them overcome many misconceptions," he said. "I showed them some traditional art such as breast plates and deer hide. I told them the history of the Ottawa people and I talked about pre-contact before the Europeans came to Turtle Island."

Throughout the exchange, he worked with Juan Carlos Anzardo



Artist Michael Cywink (right) puts finishing touches on a mural in Cuba. Inset, the finished mural which displays an outline of Manitoulin Island with First Nations clans surrounding it was part of the 15th annual Romerías de Mayo Festival.

and Nalia Martines Grau, two senior master muralists plus Ibrahim Ambar Richardo and Yail Parras Guerra, two students from the local art academy. To facilitate communication, interpreters Aniely Fernandez Torres and Maikel Ballester Gutierrez assisted Cywink in guiding the brushstrokes of his apprentices.

First they put a layer of ochre on the wall and then they applied blues and reds over top, he explained. Slowly an archetypal Great Lakes scene emerged with the shape of Manitoulin Island in the centre surrounded by flowers and strawberries. The outline of the island melts into an iconic representation of the water spirit as a wolf peers out from a backdrop of towering evergreen trees. Nearby a majestic deer and moose survey their domains amidst a knot of cat-tails. Hand prints placed on the wall earlier are transformed into bear paw prints.

"This was the first time a mural was completed at the event," he noted. "It took us three days. It was quite a challenge, but we had interpreters to help me convey the stories and the spiritual interpretations of the symbols. We had to work in stifling heat so a lot of the work was done in the evening when it was cooler."

Before his departure for home, Cywink presented copies of his publication "The Adventures of Crazy Turtle" to Alexis Triana Hernandez, the provincial director of culture of Holguin and to Abel Prieto, the national

minister of culture. And since it is traditional for participants to present a flag and a soil sample to their hosts, Cywink gave his Cuban counterparts a Canadian flag with Manitoulin superimposed over the maple leaf. "I was not representing Canada," he said. "I was representing the First Nations."

The Canadian delegation to Holguin was the largest group at this year's festival, he indicated. A contingent of artists from Concordia University in Montreal was especially well-received, he said.

He speculates that Cuba still has strong bonds with Quebec because former prime minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau was a staunch ally of Cuban president Fidel Castro.

Now that he's home and has had a chance to reflect on his time in Cuba, Cywink is eager to return for the World Young Artists Festival next year. He plans to take some young artists from the Manitoulin area with him.

He sees much potential for an "island to island" exchange involving theatre, art, research and writing.

"There's a lot of respect for Canadians in Cuba," he said. "It was a real eye-opener for me and I want other artists to see just how amazing it is to leave Manitoulin and journey to the salt water island they call Cuba."

"There is a revolution going on in Cuba and it's with the arts," he concluded.

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Staying home makes the grade for KIHS students

By **Melanie Ferris**
Windspeaker Writer

OJIBWAY NATION OF SAUGEEN

Killing, skinning, and feasting on a deer with your teacher and classmates doesn't sound like something students would do in a typical school. But the Keewatinook Internet High School (KIHS) is anything but typical.

Based in northern Ontario, the high school helps to provide a healthy alternative to students who are faced with leaving their reserve to continue their education beyond grade eight.

"Students leave for grade nine—they're a little young to be taken off (reserve) so the school gives them an opportunity to stay at home," school principal Darrin Potter explains.

Operating for eight years now, KIHS is an online program that offers a full grade 9 and 10 program, courses in grade 11 English and math, and grade 12 English.

In order to attend the school, students should be of First Nation descent with at least a grade eight education. Potter said the school is an ideal match for students if "they have trouble with traditional schooling."

"It's a good learning facility," said 17-year-old Riel Lyon from the Ojibway Nation of Saugeen. He is a perfect example of why First Nations students attend the high school. Lyon explains that he originally left his home to attend high school in Sioux Lookout. He said the experience

was "nerve wracking" and that he turned into someone else.

"I became like a bad ass because I left," Lyon recalls. He attributes this change largely due to "being away from the support of my mother."

Potter said that the high school enables students to stay on reserve, allowing for parents and the larger community to be involved with their children's lives as much as possible.

Although Potter and science teacher Eli Pivnick are not Aboriginal people, they recognize the vast history of barriers and issues that First Nations people face in achieving quality education.

"It's a challenge," said Potter when asked about whether all parents are supportive of the students. "A lot of parents who live in our communities haven't had a great experience with the education system."

Although older generations are trying to deal with mistrust of the educational system, Pivnick highlights the differences of living in a First Nation community. Attitudes are different and things are much slower and more relaxed. Since the communities are mostly related, "there is more caring and sharing."

"The social fabric of the community is connected to the school," states Potter.

The staff are working to break down barriers to achieving academic success. The school model offers more support. Students work online in a small classroom and teachers are there to support them one-on-one if



From left to right: Genevieve Beardy, Eli Pivnick (science teacher), Riel Lyon, April Mckay and Darrin Potter (Keewatinook Internet High School principal).

needed.

Pivnick, who is based out of Sachigo Lake First Nation, keeps in touch with the students parents. "The best way to contact parents is by getting involved in the community."

Staying involved in the community is also tied to the school's interest in and commitment to developing traditional land-based activities. The teachers work to develop activities that relate to the everyday environment of their students. "We don't talk about riding a streetcar in Toronto!" Pivnick jokes.

Potter goes on to explain, "We really encourage our teachers to come up with land-based activities. We've got funding to develop traditional activities."

The school recently purchased canoes for a canoe trip this June.

Other traditional activities include netting and smoking fish with Elders as well as gathering medicinal plants with Elders. Pivnick hopes to help expose teenagers to traditional foods through these types of activities, explaining that "junk food is very prevalent."

Meanwhile, Lyon seems to be having some success at his new school. Along with five of his classmates, his teachers chose him to represent the school at York University's 29th annual Engineering and Science Olympics, held on May 6. The event was an opportunity for the six teens to visit the city of Toronto and test out their skills in events such as building and

launching a small shuttle, using handheld GPS receivers to find hidden objects, and investigating the density of different types of sea water. Along with Lyon attending the York Olympics were Conrad Morris of Sachigo Lake First Nation; Wabun Quequish of Round Lake First Nation; Genevieve Beardy from North Caribou Lake First Nation; Iris Barkman from Sachigo Lake First Nation and April Mckay from Sachigo Lake First Nation.

Now back in his home community, Lyon said that his goals include graduating from high school, getting his driver's license, and becoming a police officer. He plans to stay and work in his home community. He encourages other youth to finish high school as well.

Students praised for stories of history and culture

By **Amber Gilchrist**
Windspeaker Writer

CALGARY

An Awards Ceremony was held June 17th at the Glenbow Museum in Calgary to celebrate the winners of the 4th Annual Canadian Aboriginal Writing Challenge.

The short story contest is open to young Aboriginal youth in two age groups, 14 to 18 and 19 to 29. The short story must be based on a defining moment in Aboriginal history.

First prize in the two age groups is \$2000 and a trip to Calgary to attend the Awards Ceremony. This year's first place stories are "Unmasked" by Nigel Grenier aged 14 from North Vancouver B.C. a member of the Gitwangak Aboriginal Community and the play "Notay Kiskintamowin (Wanting to Know)" by Shaneen Robinson of Winnipeg Manitoba from the Cree and Gitksan Nations.

Shaneen's play is a compelling narrative between two people that portrays the struggle for some persons to maintain knowledge of their culture.

Nigel is very proud of being

able to tell his story as it is based on the legend of Waydetai, a story of oral tradition in the Gitksan Nation. He feels "very blessed with cultural wealth." Being involved in a dance group, his family is "living their culture."

"There is a difference between preserving your culture in a museum and actually living it" Nigel said and feels like he can, continue to share his peoples traditions.

The Awards Ceremony included the recognition and formal remarks of Canadian dignitaries: National Chief Phil Fontaine; Lieutenant Governor of Alberta Norman Kwong; Honorable Gene Zwozdesky, Alberta's Aboriginal Relations Minister and musician and actor Tom Jackson.

The writer's challenge is an initiative of the Dominion Institute, which was established in 1997 by a group of young professionals dedicated to raising the knowledge and appreciation of Canadian history and reversing the decline of our civic identity.

A jury of esteemed Aboriginal Leaders and celebrities in film, music and literature select the finalists and winners. Each year the institute receives hundreds of

stories, essays and prose from young people across Canada.

Alison Faulkner, Acting Director of the Dominion Institute, is in awe by the "brave and sensitive way that these young people tackle a broad range of topics."

The contest allows youth to showcase their talent and to learn about and share their knowledge of a piece of Canadian history.

Stories by the ten finalists in each age category covered a range in topics from substance abuse, Residential School Syndrome, traditional stories mixed with a modern context and the struggle to find a cultural identity. Despite the strong portrayal of the struggle of the First Nations in Canada throughout history, Alison found that "the message is one of hope for future generations through reconnecting with their past."

Among the finalists is Ashley Kagige (which means "forever" in Ojibway) aged 18 from Scarborough Ontario, a member of the Wikwemikong Unceded Indian Reserve.

Her story titled "Stolen Identity" is told from the perspective of a child that was taken from their home and forced

into a Residential School and the story leads to the adult life of the child.

The story is poignant, absorbing and heart breaking. Ashley has heard many of the stories of Elders in her community that attended schools and can see in her every day life the long lasting effects that these experiences have had on the First Nation community.

In the wake of the recent National Apology from the Government of Canada to the survivors of Residential Schools, Ashley feels that it took a long time coming but that it meant so much for the people it effects and it is helping to bring "awareness to people who do not know the struggle our people have to go through."

Raised attending Catholic schools, Ashley began teaching herself the Aboriginal history and cultural knowledge of her community that she was not being taught in her high school history classes.

She felt as though she was confronting stereotypes that she didn't know how to justify and is now able to speak up and share her knowledge with others.

"People would have a totally

different outlook on Native people if they understood their role in Canadian history." Ashley took a writers course in which her teacher encouraged her to write about her people history and she began writing about the historical issue.

She feels that the children today are still dealing with some of the effects of their family history involving survivors of Residential schools and that kids are in fact still taken from their homes as a result of the Residential School Syndrome and that raising awareness is a major step forwards.

Ashley is very proud of her work and while studying to be a nurse she still plans to write and to share her knowledge.

Winners of second and third place in the 14 - 18 age group are Ashley Brown of Stephenville Crossing NL and Erica Lee from Saskatoon SK.

Winners of second and third in the 19-29 age group are Jason Matthews of Port Williams NS and Clifford Cardinal from Vancouver B.C.

Contest rules for 2009's contest and the stories of all twenty finalists is available online at www.our-story.ca.

A vision come true for Kenjgewin Teg

By Margo Little
Windspeaker Writer

M'Chigeeng First Nation

An innovative First Nations educational institute on Manitoulin Island is poised to fulfill a long standing dream. After seventeen years of struggle and setbacks, Kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute (KTEI) has officially launched a \$2.8 million capital building campaign that

will see a modern new facility built by the fall of 2009.

KTEI is an Anishnaabe controlled and directed organization formed to provide a cultural and holistic approach to First Nations based education and training.

The fledgling organization was known as Nda-Gkenjge-Gamig in 1991. It later merged with the Waubetek Training Institute in 1994. The board of directors is made up of representatives from

community partners including M'Chigeeng, Whitefish River, Zhiibaahaasing, Constance Lake, Sheshegwaning, Aundeck Omni Kaning, Sheguiandah and the Anishnawbek of Sagamok.

The institute offers a secondary school geared to the needs of First Nations students as well as adult education programs providing college and university accredited courses. Other services include professional development for teachers, school evaluations, consultation on school improvement and customized training programs.

Executive director, Stephanie Roy, welcomes the prospect of expanding the organization and moving beyond the confining quarters that have served as home since 1994. Now in her third year at the helm of KTEI, Roy brings a varied background in education and administration to the position.

"The vision for the new building has been in the works for seventeen years," she said. "In the past services have been piecemeal and housed in nine portables. We have aggressively pursued this

new facility because we are looking at the long term viability of our programs. And these portables have certainly outlived their usefulness."

A feasibility plan completed in 2004 laid the groundwork for the full scale capital building plan launched in spring 2008, according to Roy. The conceptual drawings for the envisioned

educational and business centre were presented to federal and provincial funding agencies as well as private and corporate donors.

"At a cost of \$2.8 million this institute will continue to play a big role among our First Nation communities," she said. "We have an ambitious schedule to have it constructed by fall 2009. Once built, we will certainly be able to offer more educational programs and training services because the facility will accommodate our post secondary and secondary



Stephanie Roy, executive director at Kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute.

programs as well as conferences and professional development."

In her view, education is an important tool in the ongoing battle against poverty and social ills in the partner communities. All KTEI programs focus on employment plus they incorporate a strong cultural component into the courses.

"We aim to increase our students' knowledge level and skill level," she said.

(See KTEI on page 25.)

VIEWS ON ABORIGINAL ISSUES

We are interested in the perceptions of Aboriginal peoples toward issues of the day that may be of special relevance to this community.

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Mallard recognized for the talent of Lacquette sisters

By **SAM LASKARIS**
Windspeaker Writer

MALLARD

A pair of Aboriginal sisters are doing their best to put their tiny community of Mallard, Man. on the map.

Brigitte and Tara Lacquette, aged 15 and 17 respectively, have both been identified as two of the country's best young female hockey players.

Both Brigitte, who plays defence, and Tara, a goaltender, are hoping to be named to the Canadian girls' under-18 squad this year.

If you haven't heard of Mallard, there's a good reason for it. The Lacquettes' father Terrence said Mallard's adult population is only about 80.

"But when you count all the kids and all the cats and dogs, it's about 120-130," said the Elder Lacquette, a Métis, who has lived in Mallard his whole life.

Though they live in a small, rural Manitoba community, Hockey Canada officials are fully aware of well the Lacquettes can play hockey.

The sisters were among the 47 invitees to a strength, conditioning and skating camp Hockey Canada ran for its girls' under-18 program in Calgary in late May.

In early June the sisters were awaiting to hear whether they would be invited to the club's next camp, set for July 18-27, also in Calgary. Forty players are expected to receive invites to that camp.

Following the next Calgary camp, a total of 26 players will be chosen to travel to Lake Placid, N.Y. in August.

And then, following some more training and games in Lake Placid, Canada's final 20-player roster for the 2008-09 season is expected to be announced.

Terrence Lacquette is unsure how far his daughters will advance with the national team

program this season. But he's thrilled that both were even considered for the first Calgary camp.

"We still really can't believe it right now," he said. "Right now I'm really excited for them and happy for them. Just to be called to this level says something about what they've already accomplished. If they don't make it to the next level, we'll still be happy for them."

The sisters have managed to excel in hockey even though they have to overcome some huge travel obstacles just to play.

As they have done for the past several seasons, the Lacquettes played for two different clubs this past year.

They play girls' hockey with the Parkland Panthers, a midget AA squad located in Gilbert Plains, Man., almost 160 kilometres from their home.

And they also play for a boys' team, the Winnipeg Tigers, who are based about 100 kilometres away.

Between the two teams, the Lacquettes played a total of 84 games this season – two more than National Hockey League teams have during their regular season schedules.

Terrence Lacquette doesn't mind the lengthy road trips, often just to get his daughters to their home games.

"We've been through four or five cars already," said Lacquette, whose wife Anita is from Saskatchewan's Cote First Nation. "Once they reach about 350,000 kilometres, they're pretty much done. We usually drive them into the ground and then run them into a field somewhere."

Even getting to school is a bit of a trek for the Lacquettes. They attend Rorkaeton Collegiate, about a 50-minute drive from their home.

Finding any nearby ice to skate on during the spring and summer months is also a challenge for the Lacquettes.

"We're just too far north,"

Terrence Lacquette said. "The closest rink is in Brandon, three hours away."

So in order to stay in shape, the Lacquette siblings either rollerblade, jog or go biking.

Brigitte Lacquette said her first national team training camp has further cemented her long-time hockey goal of one day representing her country.

"It was always on my mind," she said of her desire to don a Canadian team jersey. "And it's never left my mind."

A total of 14 defence players, divided into two groups, attended the first Calgary camp.

The youngest Lacquette was in one of the seven-player groups and did not get to see the other group in action. So she said it's impossible to speculate where she fared in comparison to all the defence players.

"I would say I was in the middle somewhere for my group," she said.

As for Tara Lacquette, she was one of six goaltenders at the camp. Only four are expected to receive invites to the next Calgary camp.

"They said I had tried really hard



Brigitte Lacquette (left) and her sister Tara of Mallard, Man., have been bringing some much welcome attention to their tiny community of Mallard through their hockey playing abilities.

but I'm not actually sure how I did," she said. "But I think I should be among the top three goalies. And I'm crossing my fingers and hoping that I am in the top three."

Though this is her first season with the national team program, Tara Lacquette is no stranger to national competition.

Last November she was a

member of the Manitoba squad that captured the bronze medal at the national girls' under-18 tournament staged in Kitchener, Ont.

Both Lacquettes also represented their province at the National Aboriginal Hockey Championships, which concluded in early May in Sault Ste. Marie, Ont.

Former Calgary Flame suiting up for Calgary Vipers

By **SAM LASKARIS**
Windspeaker Writer

CALGARY

Theo Fleury, one of the best Aboriginal hockey players ever, is expected to return to the professional ranks. But in a different sport than he is known for. And possibly for just one game.

Fleury, who averaged more than a point per game during his 15-season National Hockey League career, created quite a buzz earlier this spring when it was announced he would be suiting up for the Calgary Vipers, a minor professional baseball team.

Fleury is still much loved in Calgary where he spent 10 of his NHL seasons with the Flames.

The diminutive Fleury was often considered the face of the Flames because he excelled in the sport even though he was one of the NHL's smallest players, listed as being 5-foot-6.

The Vipers are an independent team, meaning they are not affiliated with any of the Major League Baseball franchises. Calgary competes in the eight-squad Golden Baseball League (GBL).

Besides another Alberta-based franchise, the Edmonton Cracker-Cats, the GBL also features clubs in Arizona, California, Nevada and Utah.

After it was announced Fleury was joining the Vipers, it was revealed the move was mostly a promotional stunt, to drum up some support for the baseball club.

During the pre-season, Fleury did take some batting and fielding practice with the Vipers. And he was on hand for the club's home opener, an 8-3 victory over Edmonton on May 29.

Fleury, however, did not play in that game. He simply threw out the ceremonial first pitch and then remained at the contest, mingling with fans and signing autographs.

The official club line is that Fleury will indeed play in a Vipers' game this season. But as mid-June approached, he was still in negotiations with the club to determine when he would suit up.

News of Fleury's connection to the Vipers has already helped the team. The club drew 1,991 spectators to its season opener. Calgary usually draws about 1,500 fans to its home games.

Vipers' media relations director

Patrick Haas said the Fleury-will-play-baseball-in-Calgary story has created awareness for the organization.

"If you mention the Vipers to someone, they'll more than likely say isn't that the team that Theo Fleury is going to play for," he said.

Haas is also hoping for a sellout at the Vipers' home stadium when it is announced that Fleury will play. The Vipers' home, Foothills Stadium, has a capacity of about 6,000.

Mike O'Brien, Fleury's business partner, said the former NHLer, who also had stints with the Colorado Avalanche, New York Rangers and Chicago Blackhawks, is serious about playing a pro baseball game.

"He's ready to roll," he said. "He's excited about it."

But Fleury is not quite ready for game action, considering a deal to suit up for the Vipers has not been finalized.

"He's still in negotiation over the one-game contract," O'Brien said.

Fleury did grow up playing baseball. But he gave up the sport in his teen years to concentrate on his hockey career.

"If you ask him he's a better baseball player than a hockey player," O'Brien said.

If that's the case, then Fleury in a baseball uniform would be something to see.

During 1,161 NHL games he racked up 1,167 points, including 489 goals. Fleury was also a member of the Flames' Stanley Cup championship squad in 1989. And he was a league all-star seven times.

Unique police program developed for Aboriginal youth

By Heather Andrews Miller
Windspeaker Writer

WINNIPEG

A unique federal-provincial government partnership has resulted in the creation of the Indigenous Police Preparation Program which will prepare Aboriginal youth to enter training to become police officers.

Chuck Stralh, minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and federal interlocutor for Métis and non-status Indians launched the program on May 23 in Winnipeg, along with Vic Toews, president of the treasury board and federal regional minister for Manitoba. The program will see a partnership between the government, the Louis Riel Institute, the University of Winnipeg, and various law enforcement agencies.

Erin Stewart is dean of continuing education at the University of Winnipeg and said that the university was approached by members of the RCMP who asked if a program

to enhance Aboriginal recruitment could be developed.

"At that time they also approached the Louis Riel Institute and we agreed it would be beneficial to work together on it," she said. "We were very honoured and pleased to participate."

Dierdre Shore is community program director at the university and said that several prospective students have already expressed interest in attending the program, which will begin in September and continue with full-time studies for eight months. "And the RCMP has a list of potential candidates as well. Students will be prepared for policing with the RCMP, the Winnipeg Police Service, local tribal and policing in rural communities as well as careers within Manitoba Justice and the corrections system," she said.

Typical courses include Aboriginal history and culture, family violence, ethics in policy, first aid and criminal law.

"The RCMP requirements for fitness are quite rigorous and we expect students will also be

spending a fair amount of time in the gym," added Stewart. "They go through regular supervised tests to document their progress in health and fitness."

It is expected that some of the students will remain at the university and continue with post-secondary studies, graduating with degrees in criminal justice and law. Aboriginal students enjoy studying at the university, and are well represented in all programs, some designed specifically for the Aboriginal community, such as a teacher education offering.

"We especially hope to recruit students for the Indigenous Police Program from the northern areas of the province, because that's where the need is and people from the north would be the natural ones who would go back home to work," said Stewart. "Through our program, they are gaining confidence and preparation for further studies in a promising career and we are excited for them."

Grant Anderson is general manager of the Louis Riel Institute, the educational branch

of the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF).

"It's important to have a balance of Aboriginal policing in law enforcement. And other provinces, including Saskatchewan and Alberta, have similar programs which have proven to be very successful, so we were pleased to become a part of the project," he said. "It's a made-in-Manitoba solution to the under-representation in our province." An advisory committee consisting of members from the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, the MMF, the RCMP, the University of Winnipeg, the Winnipeg Police Service and Manitoba Justice ensured the curriculum was relevant and applicable.

The Louis Riel Institute is an affiliate of the MMF but has its own board of directors and own mandate.

"We're closely connected and work towards many of the same goals, but we are separate

organizations," he said.

For the Indigenous Police Program, the LRI will assist with recruiting, and then supply supports to ensure the students are encouraged and assisted in completing the program.

"We're bringing in Elders for the candidates to talk to, but we also help with other possible issues, such as housing and day care."

The goal is to prepare students of Métis, First Nation, and Inuit descent for meeting the admission requirements of police forces across Manitoba, but it promises to provide much more, he added.

Anderson said policing was a great career choice for the students.

"Both male and female recruits can look forward to a rewarding and satisfying career in law enforcement. There's no question about that. And we're pleased to have had a hand in providing a bright future for our youth."

Aboriginal-governed institute offers first ever degree program

With an eye to giving Aboriginal students the edge when it comes to shaping social policy in their communities, the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology is offering a bachelor of social work degree program this fall.

Delivered jointly with the Thompson Rivers University, this is the first degree program approved for the Aboriginal-governed institute.

The program builds on a bachelor of social work degree program offered by the university and institute since 1998. The institute program has an Aboriginal-centred curriculum and includes courses in Aboriginal life cycles, Aboriginal perspectives on social policy, ethical practice in Aboriginal communities, and cultural immersion.

Twenty five seats are available in each of the institute's Merritt and Vancouver campuses, where intake will also take place.

According to institute president Casey Sheridan, "Offering our first degree program in partnership with Thompson River University recognizes our long-standing relationship. Students may now benefit from the Aboriginal-centred programs we offer as they pursue their bachelor's degree in social work."

The Nicola Valley Institute of Technology is British Columbia's Aboriginal public post-secondary institution offering credentials in fields linked to community, social, economic, land and First Nations self-governance development. Government is supporting the institute this year with more than \$7 million in operating grants, an increase of almost nine percent over 2007-08.

KTEI programs

(continued from page 23.)

"We want to give them employment opportunities so they can improve their quality of life, like all Canadians. Education remains an essential component in the collective well-being of our communities," said Stephanie Roy.

In April 2008, the KTEI capital networking team kicked off the building campaign at Science North in Sudbury. The project received a boost with contributions from Sudbury's nickel giant Vale Inco, the Royal Bank of Canada and KPMG. Anishnaabe artist James Simon Mishibinijima of Wikwemikong has presented the corporate sponsors with framed prints of his work entitled "New Pathways." Since education has always been a passion for Mishibinijima, he has worked closely with KTEI over the years developing First Nations based curriculum materials. He takes his role as a teacher and role model very seriously and is proud to share the culture's "humanitarian teachings" with others.

He has thrown his support behind the capital building campaign and remains very optimistic that the new building will materialize as envisioned.

"People are going to make something happen here," he said. "They are going through labour pains at the moment, but the birth has started."

A project manager for the new facility will be announced shortly.



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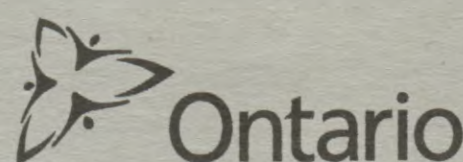
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[footprints] Don Cardinal

Cardinal dedicated his life to helping Aboriginal people in need of healing

By Dianne Meili

If the worth of a father is reflected in the health and success of his family, then northern Alberta's Cree Elder Don Cardinal has every reason to walk the holy road to the spirit world with a tranquil soul.

He has two famous sons: Lorne Cardinal, well-loved actor of television comedy *Corner Gas*, and Lewis Cardinal, an Aboriginal Relations consultant who recently ran for Edmonton city council. His late brother Harold was a consummate promoter of Indigenous rights who published numerous writings on the subject and gained political ground for his people.

Though Lewis will "miss being able to pick up the phone and talk to his dad for guidance" he and Lorne agree they are blessed by being closer than ever after seeing through their father's wishes for a traditional burial. They also worked together to arrange complex memorial arrangements in Winnipeg and Edmonton so hundreds could pay their last respects.

"At the Winnipeg ceremony, a young man told me he'd be dead if it wasn't for my father," said Lorne. "He was a gangster who'd seen a lot of Elders but it wasn't until my father sat down with him that he changed his life."

"A homeless woman told my dad's wife, Allison, that she came to pay her respects because he bought her a meal and talked with her many years ago."

While in the Winnipeg hospital where Cardinal died of terminal lung disease on May 20, he disconnected his life support system to hold his final pipe ceremony.

"He did it for us, gathered around his bed, so that the grief and pain of losing him would be eased," Lorne observed.

Traditional values guided Cardinal's personal and political

life and, according to Lewis, "we travelled many a bumpy road that seemed to go nowhere to find Elders and go into ceremony and council. That was when my father was vice president of what was then known as the Northern Alberta Indian Association, and he wanted the best of guidance from the old ones."

Cardinal, of Sucker Creek First Nation, once told Lewis he relied on his traditional knowledge as a hunter and trapper to read people and strategize for the fledgling political organizations he helped develop in the late 60's and early 70's.

"He said 'inside each person lives an animal - sometimes even two - and the nature of that animal governs how the person operates. I just used my knowledge of animals and kind of set the trap, so to speak'."

In 1967 he joined his brother Harold to kick-start an opposition to Pierre Trudeau's infamous 1969 White Paper that aimed to exterminate treaty rights. The brothers responded with *The Red Paper*, which was a factor in the formation of the national Assembly of First Nations that has led to treaty rights victories ever since.

According to Lewis, "Harold was the great communicator, the articulator, but my dad moved things along and brought people on-stream. A lot of people speak generic Cree, but he spoke high Cree, or the traditional, ancient woodlands Cree. He could work closely with the Elders and they counselled him along the way. At times he worked as a field organizer getting people in remote communities like Fort Vermillion in northern Alberta informed and organized."

Cardinal gathered information for his personal life, too, by plunging into a variety of ventures, once even setting himself up as a chicken farmer.

"But that only lasted a week after he realized the first batch of chickens he bought were all roosters," Lewis laughs.

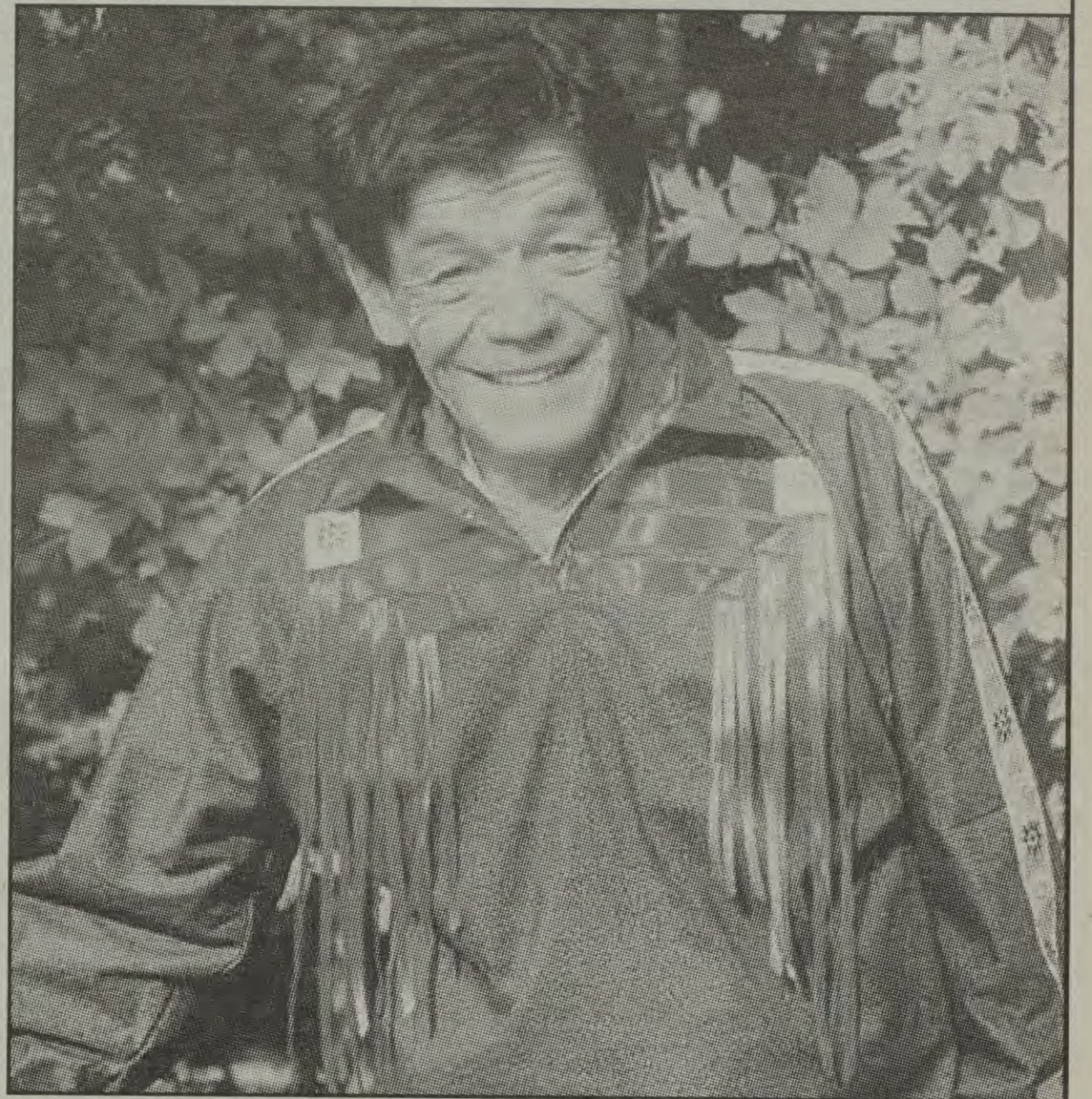
"It wasn't for him to stay on the reserve. I guess the fact Lorne and I went to ten different schools in 12 years is a testament to that. The first part of his life was very physical as he worked in industry - mining and timber - and the last part definitely focused on the spiritual."

A personal vision ten years ago led Cardinal to position himself in central Canada to make himself available to calls from all directions. He travelled the province looking for the right place to settle, choosing traditional lands near Seven Sisters Falls that featured rocks inscribed with ancient pictographs. He believed these markings were left by ancestors across Turtle Island to guide people to the fires and the old ways that are not lost.

He travelled the four directions, re-opening ceremonial grounds throughout North America and unlocking spiritual fortitude in those who would listen. Crossing the country to build a sweatlodge was nothing to him if it meant helping people. He shared his traditional knowledge through programs in Geneva, the United Nations, Brandon University in Manitoba, Hofstra University and Manhattanville College in New York state, where he also conducted ceremonies for the general public.

In the aftermath of the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attack on the United States, Cardinal offered healing prayers for the 500 people gathered at New York's Ground Zero memorial ceremony.

Based on the traditional values of kindness, sharing, and truth, Cardinal dedicated his life to healing his people, but welcomed all sincere seekers to his pipe ceremonies, sweatlodges,



Don Cardinal

vision quests and counselling sessions.

He played an instrumental role in the establishment of Winnipeg's Thunderbird House, designed by world-famous architect and cousin Douglas Cardinal. He assumed the role of Aboriginal doctor at the health and wellness centre there.

As a father "he wasn't a hard line traditionalist; he let us kids explore different things and then he'd dialogue with us afterwards," said Lewis. "He firmly believed each of us was put here by the Creator to do something and we each have a personal vision. To find it, the first place you go to is your heart. Listen to it, even if what you're about to do seems irrational, he always said."

Close friend Marilyn Buffalo, who attended Cardinal's Edmonton ceremony and burial soothed mourners in her response to Lewis's public e-mail detailing his father's life and passing. She wrote: "Don

Cardinal is no longer in physical pain he is likely holding court under shady trees right now with his brother Harold, his father Frank and my grandfather John Tootoosis, Albert Lightning, John Samson, Robert Smallboy, Peter O'Chiese, Lazarus Roan, Eddie Bellerose and all of those great Treaty Rights Leaders that went before him."

Don Cardinal is survived by his wife, Allison, and his ten children: Jackie (Dennis) Lewis (Patricia), Lorne (Cheri), Lisa, Tami (Robin), Trevor (Lisa), Tara, Andrew, Megan and Sabrina; and his grandchildren: Pam, Mary, Jacqui, Hunter, Shelby, Michael, Shaina, Darryanne, Lane, Kale, Darius, Dakota, and Jessy; as well as his great granddaughter Delaney. He was predeceased by his mother Agnes, father Frank, his brothers Harold and Ronald, his sister Florence, and his grandson, Denny.

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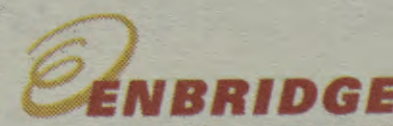
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Not only do I provide negotiating, I have all the financial institutions that are available across Canada at my fingertips to provide you with the best possible interest rates available. I can pre-approve you on your next purchase in a matter of minutes in person or on the telephone. Having a pre-approval in place allows me to search for the perfect car, truck, van or SUV that suits your needs and meets with payments that you want. I have access to all new and used vehicle makes and models.

If you have had credit problems in the past, do not let this stop you from calling, whether it was because of divorce, a bankruptcy, loss of job, illness, bill collectors, etc. That's the main reason we are here!!

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