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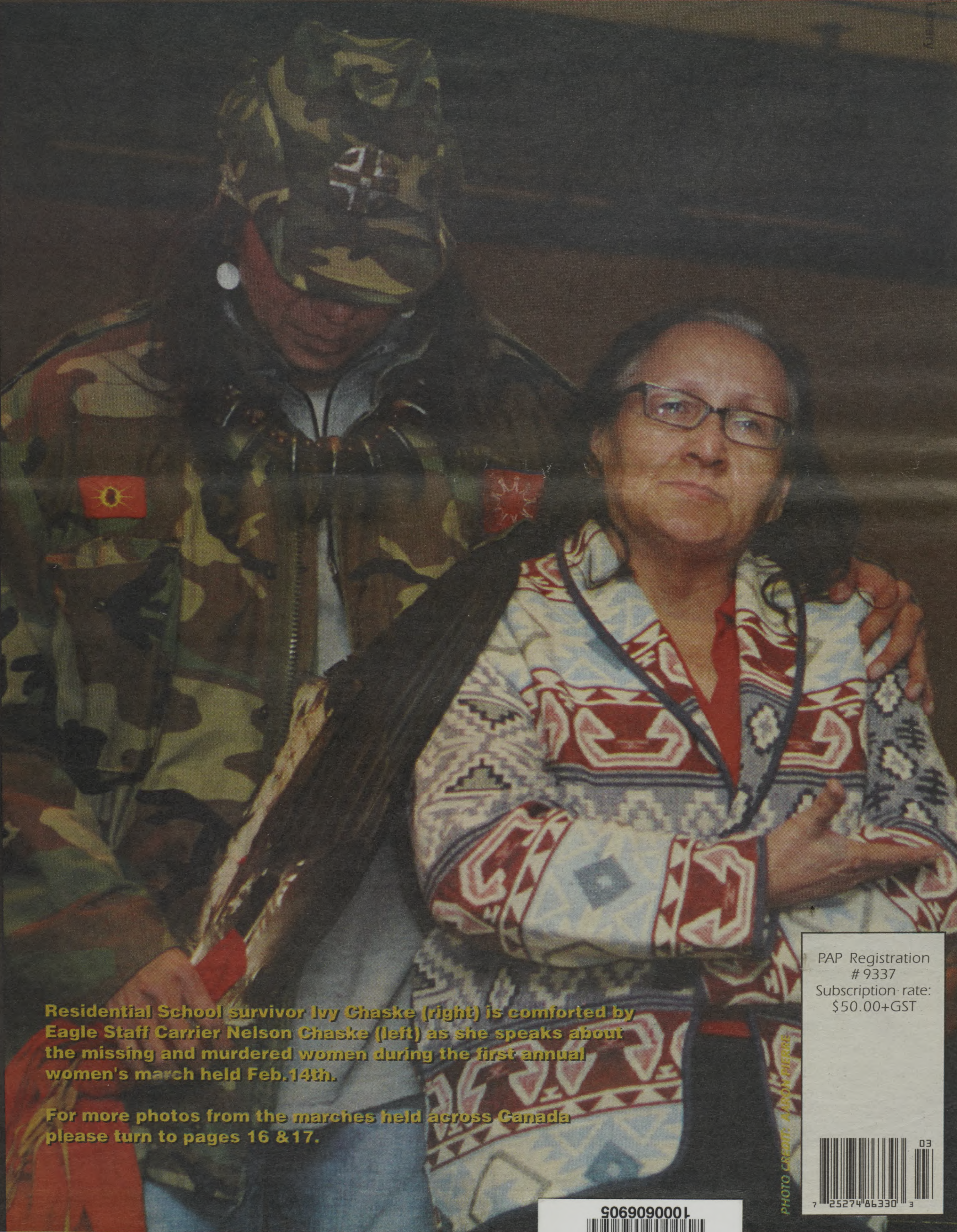
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Windspeaker • Established



Residential School survivor Ivy Chaske (right) is comforted by Eagle Staff Carrier Nelson Chaske (left) as she speaks about the missing and murdered women during the first annual women's march held Feb. 14th.

For more photos from the marches held across Canada please turn to pages 16 & 17.

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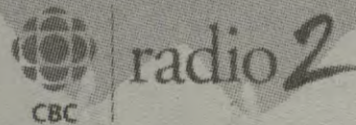
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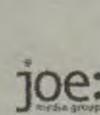
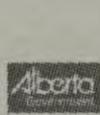
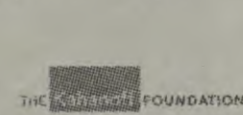
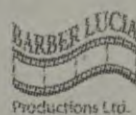
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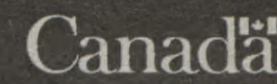
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PUBLIC HEARING ANNOUNCEMENT

The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) has issued an official Notice of Public Hearing, available at www.nuclearsafety.gc.ca, that it will hold a two-day public hearing on the application by SRB Technologies (Canada) Inc. (SRBT) to seek authorization to resume the processing and use of tritium for the purpose of manufacturing sealed light sources at its facility located in Pembroke, Ontario. The hearing will be held in the CNSC Public Hearing Room, 14th floor, 280 Slater Street, Ottawa, Ontario, on April 3, 2008 and June 12, 2008.

CNSC staff and SRBT's submissions to be considered at Hearing Day One will be available after March 3, 2008. The public is invited to comment on the application on Hearing Day Two. Requests to intervene must be filed with the Secretary of the Commission by May 12, 2008 at the address below and include a written submission; a statement setting out whether the requester wishes to intervene by way of written submission only or by way of written submission and oral presentation; and the name, address and telephone number of the requester.

Hearing documents (submissions) are not available on-line and must be requested through the Secretariat at the address below. For more information, instructions on how to participate in this public hearing process or the complete text of the official Notice of Public Hearing, see www.nuclearsafety.gc.ca, and refer to Notice of Public Hearing 2008-H-03, or contact:

L. Levert, Secretariat
Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission
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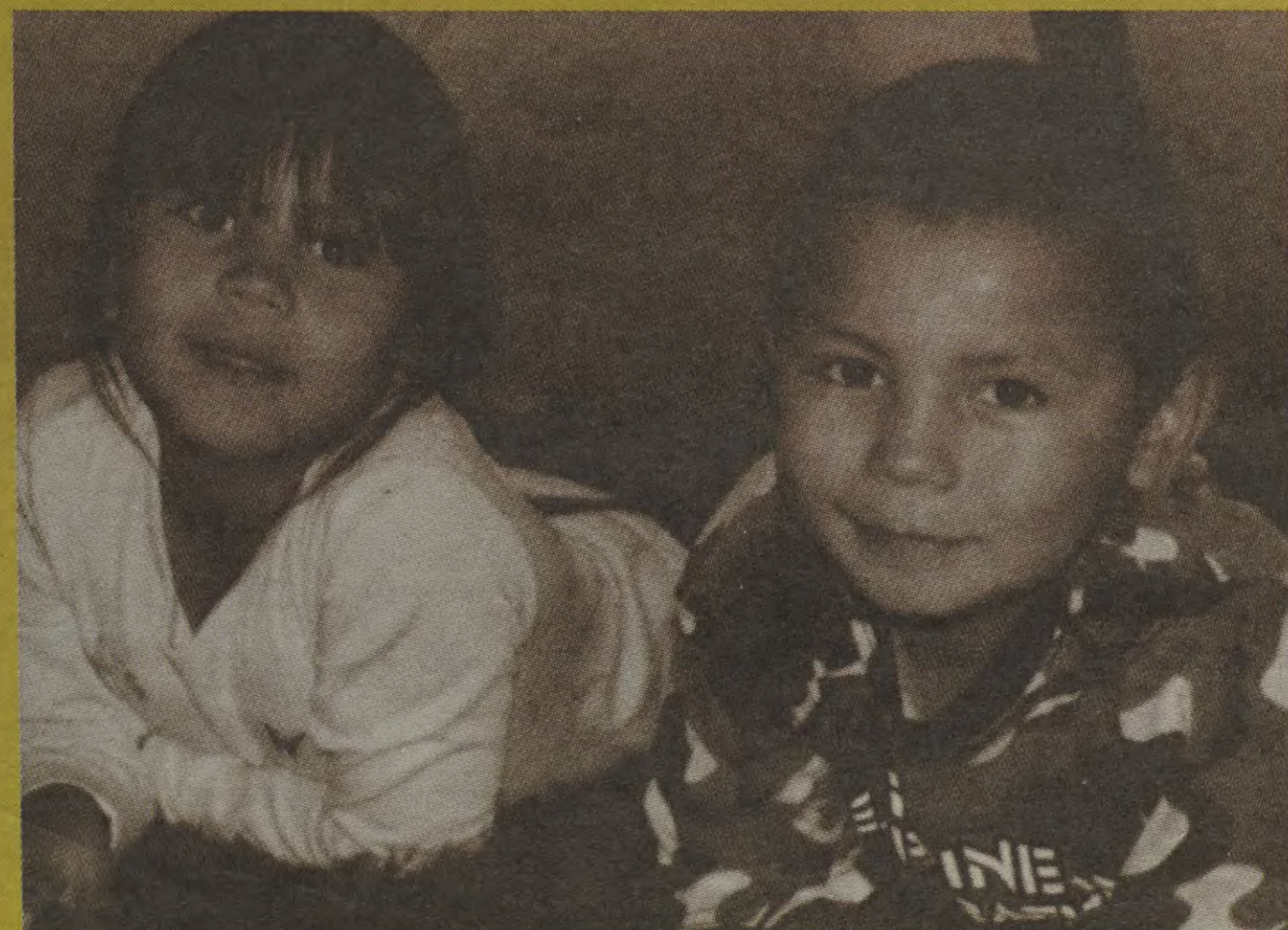
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Publisher
Bert Crowfoot

Editorial
1-780-455-2700
E-mail: edwind@ammsa.com

Interim Senior Editor
Laura Suthers

Staff Writers
Dianne Meili
Marie Burke

Production
Judy Anonson

Advertising Sales
1-800-661-5469
E-mail: market@ammsa.com

Director of Marketing
Paul Macedo

Alberta, N.W.T.
Shirley Olsen

Toronto, Ottawa-Hull, Montreal,
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The young female police officer doesn't get it. "I graduated from OPC (Ontario Police College) right beside those OPP officers," she says. "I have the exact same training, I do the exact same job, why can I not have the exact same supplies and detachment and equipment that will keep me safe and the community safe?"

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Following a landmark year, where two Treaties were signed and approved by both First Nations and Government, the B.C. government is promising to continue to make progress.

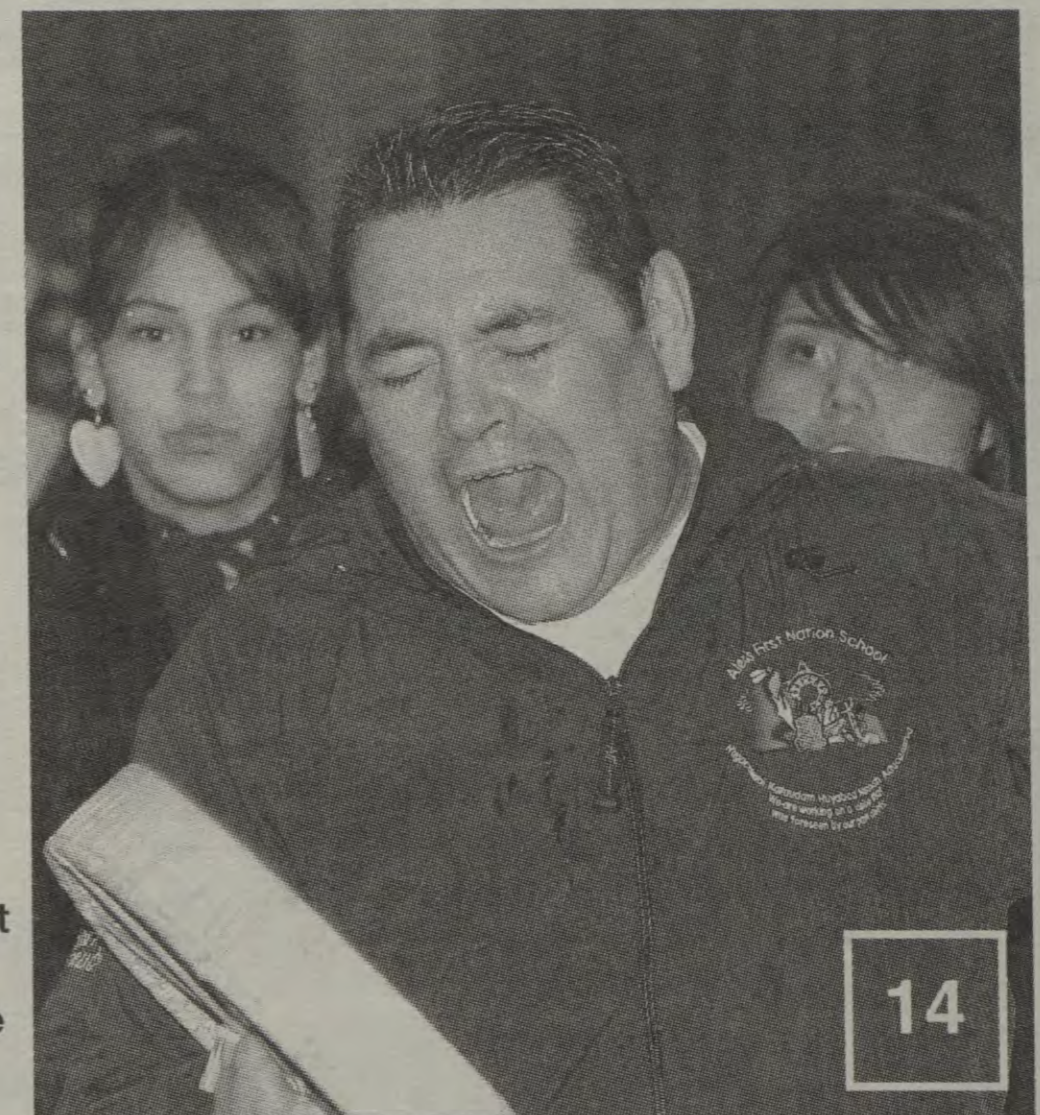
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A storm of protest has greeted the jailing of an Algonquin leader who defended his territory against a uranium mining exploration company.

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Voice faltering, Natalie Gloade talks about the unread Christmas cards she found in her late mother's mailbox - holiday wishes from residential school survivors who wanted to thank Nora Bernard for going to bat for them. Sadly, the Mi'kmaq Elder of Millbrook First Nation, near Truro, N.S., died on Dec. 27, 2007 before she could fully appreciate how much she means to a nation.



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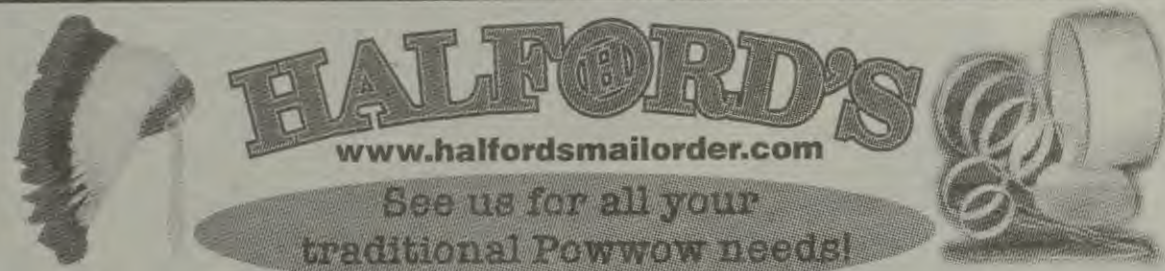
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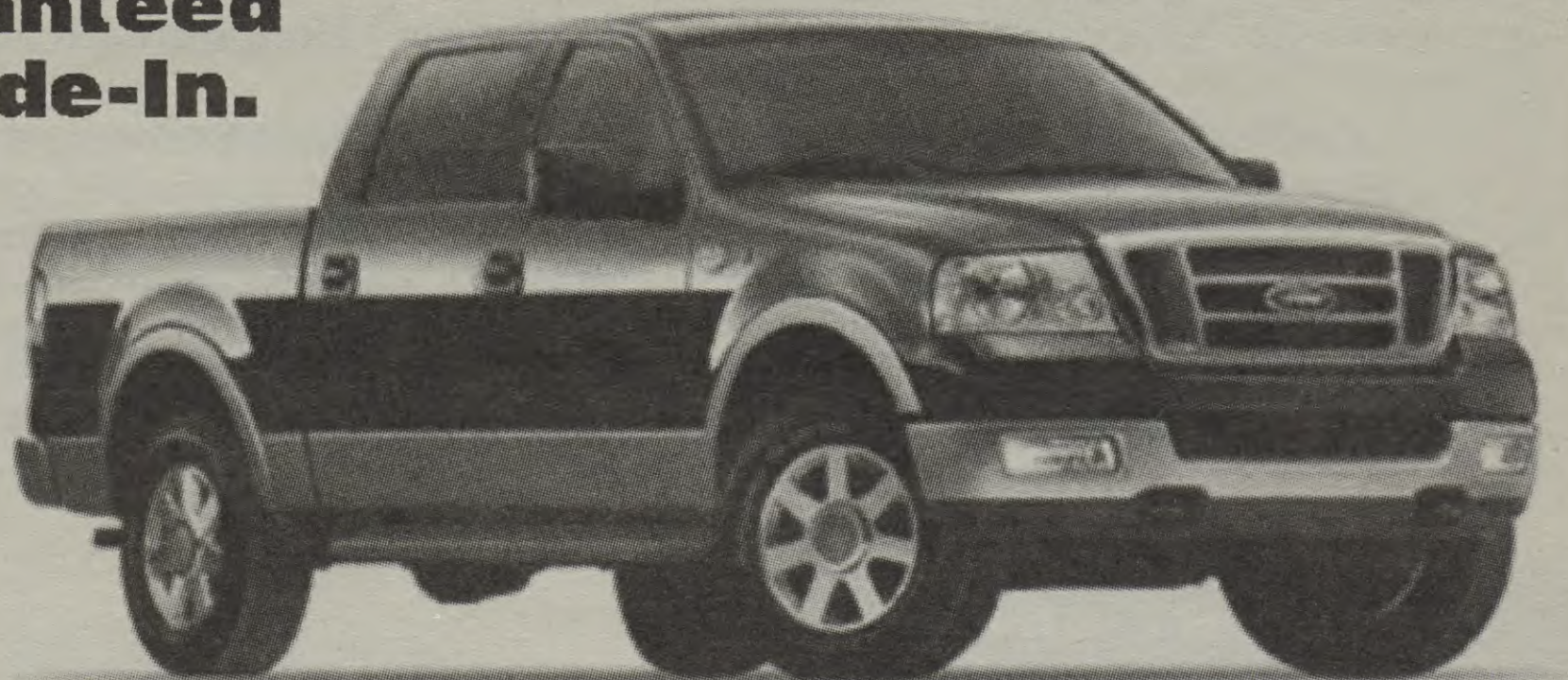
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First Nation child welfare needs cash intervention

By MARIE BURKE
Windspeaker Staff Writer

EDMONTON

First Nations Child and Family service agencies will begin to receive an initial \$15 million from an agreement with the Department of Indian Affairs set to be released this month.

The agreement was signed last April with the federal, provincial governments and First Nation leaders in Alberta. The funding is supposed to help First Nation Child and Family deliver their newly adopted Alberta Response Model as part of the province's input to the agreement.

In order for the money to flow, the 18 First Nations Child and Family agencies in the province had to submit business plans. So far, most have been approved, said Glen Luff, Media Relations for Indian and Northern Affairs.

In a press release, INAC estimates that an additional \$98 million could be provided over the next five years.

The provincial government introduced the response model as a new approach to the child welfare service delivery six years ago. The model is based on families receiving support and services before they reach crisis using community-based services, and allows more access sooner to adoption for children in care.

In 2004, the Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act came into effect.

In background material from INAC, since the new Act, child intervention caseloads were cut by 22 per cent. Over the same time period for First Nations agencies without early prevention and intervention services, caseloads increased.

"If the standards and similar outcomes are to be achieved then funding has to be put in place so that there is a degree of success," said Chief Charles Weaselhead of Treaty 7 First Nation.

First Nation agencies want to establish some outcomes with the criteria and standards that are equivalent at the federal and provincial level and realize the financial burdens on the First Nations services, he added.

"A lot of this is about jurisdiction and I think given the environment that we are in as First Nations, the gap that has been created both financially and administratively over the long years, we still have a ways to go, but at this point it looks very favorable," said Cindy Blackstock.

It's about being able to take a hard look at the things that challenge First Nations children, whether it is in academics, housing or the whole issue of poverty, stated Weaselhead.

The new money will be introduced to First Nation agencies' current budgets to start addressing equality in regard to infrastructure, salaries, administrative costs and

general care of children.

"The funding disparities are huge, not only for the child welfare portfolio, but for the differential response (Alberta response model) to work. You need to have volunteer sector services to refer to things like food banks and domestic violence shelters which are available to community members off-reserve," said Blackstock of the First Nations Caring Society.

Another concern Blackstock has is that while there may be new money available to First Nations child and family, it may mean INAC will decrease or cap current funding for First Nation children.

"The level of funding is still not entirely clear and there's questions about the department clawing back money, the children's special allowance according to the records we've been given, and they are also looking at capping maintenance costs, which is the cost of children coming into care," said Blackstock.

Blackstock said in December 2007 she obtained INAC documents access to information about the authority on the Alberta deal and it indicates claw backs.

"The auditor general is investigating INAC at the moment for their funding formula for child welfare and they are due to release their report in May of this year," said Blackstock.

She expects the auditor's report will validate wide scale under investment in First Nations child welfare system by the federal government.

There are 9,000 children on reserve in care, and the best estimate is at least 27,000 kids are in care on and off reserve overall in our country, she said.

The 2007 Wende report, published by the First Nation Caring Society of Canada, said 10.2 per cent of status Indian children are in care.

The services for a non-Aboriginal kid comes from a western value structure, so it is more of a cultural match and they do better, said Blackstock. Not only do Aboriginal children lack resources, the programs offered are a cultural mismatch, she said.

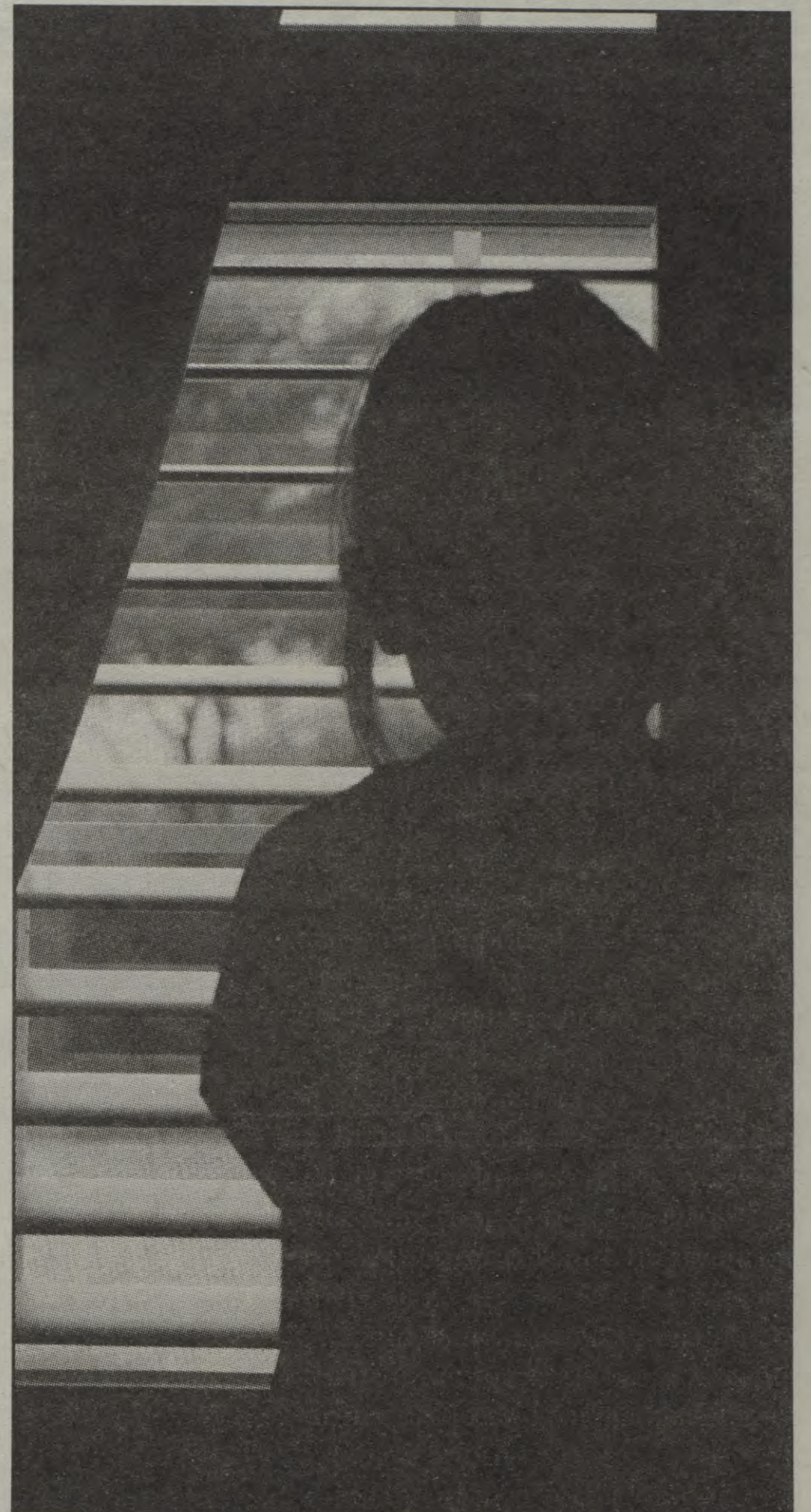
"What we are hearing in the Wende report is that the real preference was to invest in locally developed strategies that are reflective of the unique needs and culture and context of First Nations," said Blackstock.

There is evidence that this works, but the department of Indian Affairs went wholesale in the direction of the differential response, she said.

The extensive Wende report spans three phases as it sets out to develop an equitable federal funding formula for First Nations Child and Family Services.

The request for the Caring Society's review and its report came out of the Joint National Policy Review of First Nation Child and Family Services.

Alberta's First Nations participated in a detailed case



study of 12 First Nations Child and Family Services agencies. They were surveyed on the range of services provided: costs associated with providing equitable culturally based funding formulas and management information systems, jurisdictional disputes and prevention services in order to inform the funding formula research.

"First Nations children come into care for far different reasons than non-Aboriginal children; they come into care because of neglect driven by poverty, poor housing and substance abuse," said Blackstock.

Those three factors are not responsive to short term interventions, if people are poor it's not likely that they won't be poor in six months, she concluded.

Agency works with survivors of the child welfare system

By MARIE BURKE
Windspeaker Staff Writer

EDMONTON

Craig Benson's involvement with child welfare didn't end when he became an adult, and now that his children are in care he plans to work hard to provide for them, change his life, and stay hopeful he will get them back.

For 31 year-old Benson, growing up as a permanent ward of the government meant rarely seeing his home, Alexis First Nation.

He grew up in foster homes and in youth care facilities, he said. At a workshop last weekend, hosted by the Creating Hope Society, Benson began to look even deeper at how his life is still being spent in the government systems.

"I've been in the system all my life and they helped me identify a few issues that have to do with my behavior patterns and plus now my son and my godson who are 13 and 14 are in care because I'm on day parole," said Benson.

Benson currently attends Norquest College taking an upgrading course during the day and reporting back to the Stan Daniels Healing centre every evening to finish his five-year sentence.

"The first time I ever stole a car and ran from the cops, I was running away from a foster home when I was 13," said Benson.

Now, Benson's godson is in the same secure custody youth facility where he himself stayed as a youth. His

biological son is staying in a foster home. Working with the Creating Hope society is about ending the cycle of involvement with child welfare for his sons, he said.

The story of how Benson and both of his sons wound up in care with child welfare is complex and tragic, he said. Benson knows it will be very hard to get his sons back. Still, he plans to continue working towards wellness for himself and his family.

"I'm dealing with my issues first, that's why I'm in school I sweat and practice the culture," said Benson.

As part of his healing from his past mistakes and his own experience growing up in care, Benson believes he may have to try something different in his life.

He can't say exactly what that is right now, except that working with Creating Hope facilitators has given him faith that he will find out.

It takes so long for anything to get done and the people at Creating Hope are helping him stay focused on giving his sons a good home by the summer, he said.

Benson attended the latest workshop offered by the society that gave participants a chance to hear and experience cultural teachings with Darlene Auger.

"It was really what I needed, the negativity was really getting to me and this put my mind back in focus," said Benson.

He will be going back to court with child welfare for his son this month hoping to keep him from becoming a permanent ward. Facilitators from the Creating Hope society will be there to support him, he said.

The society formed in 2006 after a conference on what

is known as the 1960's child welfare scoop. The 60's scoop is about a time when hundreds of Aboriginal children taken from their parents and placed directly in care. Many of these children had no idea where their biological roots were, said Bernadette Iahtail.

One of the ideas that came out of the conference was to have a support group for adults who were and are involved with child welfare, she said.

"Part of creating hope was about healing and reconciliation, it's about healing yourself and forgiveness," said Iahtail.

There are at least 10 calls a week from people who are dealing with child welfare in some way, she said. Some of the issues involve kinship care for relatives in care, parents who want their children back and people who still are trying to resolve personal issues from their past experience with child welfare.

"Right now there are at least 3,000 kids in the child welfare system and at least 60 per cent of those kids are Aboriginal in this area," said Iahtail.

Iahtail realized something about what the system meant to her. It means sharing your story with every member of the community and making a difference, she said. People who have been somehow involved with child welfare carry a lot of shame about it, she said.

"The kind of program that should be designed to be done with Aboriginal people really doesn't fit in the western way of thinking and it's always seems we have to fit into what their criteria is, our traditional ways of healing do work," said Iahtail.

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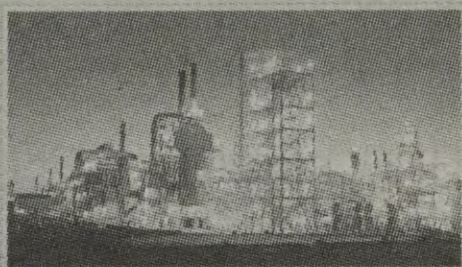
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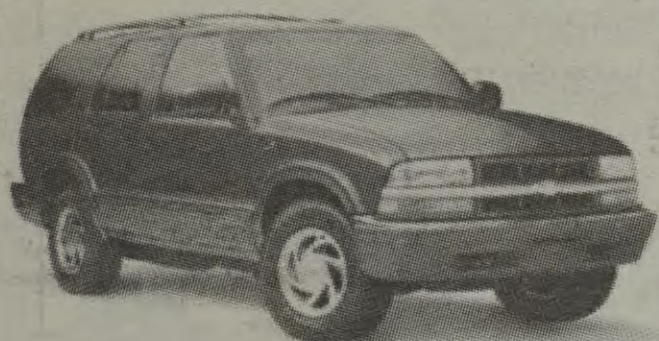
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Windspeaker news briefs

Audit into Indian Affairs pending

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada has appointed a new acting director general for Manitoba. Blair Clarkson takes over the job while the region's three top managers remain suspended on full pay pending an audit.

Mary Blais, regional director general; Martin Egan, associate regional director and Fred Mills, associate director of funding services operations, were placed on leave in December.

There's no news of when the investigation, being headed by former Privy Council official Anne Scotton, chief audit and evaluation executive with Indian Affairs, will be completed.

But meanwhile, some observers are expressing sympathy for the suspended officials.

"I know two of the three people, they're fine long-serving civil servants," said Anita Neville, Liberal MP for Winnipeg South. "I just wish them well and I'm looking forward to the outcome."

Chief Terrance Nelson of Roseau River First Nation said he believes the bureaucrats ran a foul of procedure.

"They worked outside of the box trying to resolve some issues, they basically got slapped down by policy," he said. "The policy is to make sure that the Indians don't get ahead."

The audit is an examination of millions of dollars disbursed on the Framework Agreement Initiative on the Dismantling of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development - a now-cancelled initiative aimed at handing control over department programs and services to Manitoba First Nations.

The focus is on two files in particular - Governance House and Manitoba Hydro.

Second trial hangs on decision of first trial appeal

Several reports have been made that the 20 remaining murder charges against Robert Pickton may not be heard at a second trial if Pickton loses his appeal of his first trial.

The British Columbia Attorney General, Wally Oppal gave this explanation to family members through the Victims Services program in British Columbia.

Many of them are apparently upset that another trial would not likely happen.

After the comments to family members of the murder victims, Oppal made the announcement in legislature that another long trial would not be in the public interest.

"The public interest here involves putting everybody through a second trial, given the fact that no further punishment, no further sentence can be achieved by virtue of further convictions. He is now receiving the maximum," the attorney general told reporters in Victoria.

Canada has no provision in law for consecutive life sentences and Pickton's sentence on the six counts for which he's already been convicted is the maximum possible, said Oppal.

There are families who agree with the decision, while others are disappointed, he said.

Pickton was charged with 26 counts of first-degree murder, but the judge at his trial decided to divide them into two groups with the first trial hearing only six cases. He was convicted of the lesser charge of second-degree murder in those cases last December. Pickton was sentenced to life in prison with a minimum of 25 years before he can apply for parole.

The Crown will not proceed with a second trial on the remaining 20 counts of murder if Pickton loses an appeal of his first trial, said Oppal.

The Crown and the defense for Pickton have appealed the convictions. The defense is asking the court to overturn the convictions and the Crown is asking for a new trial on all 26 counts.

The investigation of the murders is reported to be one of the most complex in Canadian history and the first trial lasted almost two years, including preliminary arguments, and cost millions of dollars.

Many of the family members of Pickton's alleged victims are publicly saying they want to hear in an open court what happened and convictions of first-degree murder against Pickton in the remaining cases.

Aboriginal police services need adequate funding

By KATE HARRIES
Windspeaker Writer

MISHKEEGOGAMANG

The young female police officer doesn't get it.

"I graduated from OPC (Ontario Police College) right beside those OPP officers," she says.

"I have the exact same training, I do the exact same job, why can I not have the exact same supplies and detachment and equipment that will keep me safe and the community safe?"

Constable Robin Bannon is with the Mishkeegogamang First Nation detachment in Northwestern Ontario. She's one of six officers in a community of 900 people who work out of a building that's pretty good by the standards of the Nishnawbe Aski Police Service, but little more than a shack compared to the OPP detachment in Pickle Lake, 20 kilometres to the south.

There, seven officers police a township of 375 out of a building that has a number of amenities not available to their NAPS counterparts, including video surveillance in the cells, separate rooms for interviews, fingerprinting, fitness, storage and male and female showers.

"To me it just doesn't make sense that we have triple the population and less manpower," Bannon says on a documentary produced and directed by Nishnawbe Aski Nation Deputy Grand Chief Roseanne Archibald. (The video, entitled *A Sacred Calling*, can be viewed at <http://www.nan.on.ca/article/nishnawbe-aski-police-service-a-sacred-calling-307.asp>)

Bannon's frustration was articulated by Aboriginal leaders across Ontario last month after the cells in the Kasabonika Lake NAPS detachment had to be closed and, a few days later in Marten Falls, a fire destroyed the seniors' home where an officer was living, resulting in his reassignment and leaving the community without policing.

NAPS - which covers an area the size of France, consisting of 2/3 of Ontario's land mass - has been trying to address infrastructure problems with federal and provincial representatives since it was formed in 1994, says NAN Grand Chief Stan Beady. Only one of 35 NAPS detachments - Moose Factory - meets the

requirements of the national building code for police facilities.

"First Nations have no place to put officers so they are put in motels and other unsuitable arrangements. In one community, we have two officers sharing a room so small there is only one bed and they have to take turns sleeping in it."

As for the situation in Kasabonika Lake, prisoners are being flown to Sioux Lookout at a cost to NAPS of \$8,000-\$10,000 a trip, less than a monthly lease payment on a new detachment building.

Regional Chief Angus Toulouse echoed Beady's concerns.

"Both communities and police officers are left at risk by chronic underfunding of First Nations police forces," he said.

Both leaders recalled the tragic deaths in 2005 of Ricardo Wesley and Jamie Goodwin, who were trapped in their cells when a fire broke out in the Kashechewan detachment. A NAPS officer was badly burned trying to rescue the two 20-year-olds (an inquest has been called into their deaths, although no date has yet been set).

"I cannot emphasize strongly enough the decrepit and unsafe conditions that far too many of our police detachments are in," Toulouse said. "Will it take more people to die before we get a response from the federal and provincial governments?"

Toulouse noted that the Ipperwash Commission called for federal legislative reform to enshrine First Nations police forces as essential services within their communities. Presently, the federal government regards them as "enhancements" to the provincial force.

Commissioner Sidney Linden also called for increased capital and operational funding for First Nations police services, to be secured by renewable five-year agreements between federal, provincial and First Nation governments.

But instead, a funding cap has been imposed. "We learned that in January when federal negotiators said there would be no increase in the police services budget on 2008-2009," said Nathan Wright, justice co-ordinator for Chiefs of Ontario.

Who's responsible?

Provincially, it's Community Safety and Correctional Services Minister Rick Bartolucci who funds 48 per cent of First Nations policing. Ministry spokesperson Anthony Brown said "Ontario continues to work with the federal government to make investments towards addressing infrastructure needs of First Nations."

And Brown added: "We are committed to ensuring that First Nations police services have all of the resources that they need not only to do their jobs effectively but to ensure adequate working conditions for their officers."

Federally, Stockwell Day, Minister of Public Safety, who funds 52 per cent of the costs, is similarly upbeat.

He told the House of Commons Feb. 5 that "there are a number of working arrangements in place to make sure that proper policing is there. The various First Nations groups apply for and work in a collaborative way to establish what levels of policing they would like and what levels can be delivered."

"This particular situation is one that is of concern to us and one that is being looked at via a variety of people at a number of levels. We want to make sure that things that they ask for and the things that they contracted for are in fact delivered, Mr. Speaker."

His spokesperson Melisa Leclerc did not respond to questions on the funding cap, and whether Day is preparing to give First Nations forces the status of essential services and provide increased funding along the lines recommended by Linden.

In an email, she noted that "the First Nations Policing Program does not cover major infrastructure. The federal government provides assistance to First Nations communities for four categories of expenditures for existing policing facilities: repairs and restorations, operational fit-ups, modular facilities, and fair and reasonable rent, all cost-shared with provinces."

None of which seems to figure in the reality being lived by Bannon and her fellow officers. They can only hope Stockwell Day and Rick Bartolucci check out the video.

Have a comment, complaint or compliment?

Email us at: edwind@ammsa.com

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13245 - 146 Street • Edmonton, AB T5L 4S8

Throne speech promises a positive future for Natives

By MURRAY LANGDON
Windspeaker Writer

British Columbia

Following a landmark year, where two Treaties were signed and approved by both First Nations and Government, the B.C. government is promising to continue to make progress.

"History has taught us that we all move forward by moving beyond the positions that have held us back," said Lt. Gov. Steven Point in the Throne Speech.

"That is the essence of your government's effort to build a new relationship with First Nations."

The speech from the Throne generally highlights what the government has accomplished and lays out a broad plan for the future. Having it read by B.C.'s first Aboriginal Lieutenant-Governor gives it added credibility, especially because Point has such respect and a solid reputation.

The province didn't appear to be using their new appointee for political posturing on this front, instead championing the collaborative success seen through a concentrated effort to find what it calls "certainty".

"Working together, we are opening new doors for progress," the L-G went on to say, championing how effective treaty negotiations have been and what a difference the process can make.

"It aspires to a brighter future for all Aboriginal Canadians, built on self-reliance and self-determination, and based on mutual respect, recognition and reconciliation."

Hope for a better start for youth was also highlighted, coming on the heels of a recently announced decision to adopt a common-sense principle regarding children.

"The journey to reconciliation is about bridging the barriers that have divided Aboriginal Canadians from everyone else in Canada," said Point. "Nowhere is that more important than in caring for our children."

New money for Okanagan College

Support to Aboriginal students at the Okanagan College will be coming from Health Minister George Abbott with a \$302,000 in funding.

The funding will support two programs with \$49,000 going towards increasing the number of nursing students of Aboriginal ancestry and improving the quality of nursing care in Aboriginal communities.

Approximately \$235,000 will go to building a gathering place at Okanagan College's Salmon Arm campus for Aboriginal students. Okanagan College's nursing program project aims to raise awareness of the need for Aboriginal nurses in the Okanagan-Shuswap region. It will also increase awareness of

"It is time that all of Canada embraced Jordan's Principle. Simply put, that principle says the interests of Aboriginal children must always be paramount, and that no child, on- or off-reserve, should be put at risk due to jurisdictional disputes."

"Your government will work with First Nations and the federal government to put Jordan's Principle into action, and to strengthen services for Aboriginal children and families."

Support services and resources are needed for any family member or child, and that is something the government is trying to address.

The speech once again touched on the cornerstone of the Liberal Government's philosophical doctrine of trying to redress the past and help build toward a positive future.

"The Transformative Change Accord calls on us to close the gaps for B.C.'s First Nations in health, housing, education and economic opportunity."

But the glowing words have not necessarily translated into more money to address some challenging, if not outright desperate, situations.

In her final budget as Finance Minister, Carole Taylor focused on climate change, opening new doors to the Asia-Pacific region and the film industry; all laudable and generally supported by the public.

But for First Nations, this can't be seen as a big windfall.

There is money pledged for the ongoing "reconciliation" toward the "new relationship", but little in many other areas. Some money will be spent to address the needs of Aboriginals currently incarcerated, focusing on cultural and spiritual needs, in order to make their time more rehabilitative and ease their reintegration into society.

And money for a new First

Nations museum has also been committed, along with re-iterated support for the Indigenous Games, slated for this summer in Duncan on Vancouver Island. There is talk of dealing with addictions issues and pledges to focus on aboriginal children and the family unit, but the bucks pretty well stop there.

In his ministerial service plan, a required submission for all cabinet ministers as part of the fiscal planning process, Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation Minister Mike de Jong stated three defined goals for the ministry.

The first is, closing the socio-economic gaps between aboriginal people and other British Columbians.

The second goal is building respectful relationships with Aboriginal people.

The last goal for the ministry is reconciliation of Aboriginal rights and title through lasting agreements

That doesn't vary much from previously stated objectives. On one hand, that can be seen as positive, as some 98 First Nations are now at either Stage 4 (agreement-in-principle) or Stage 5 (final agreement) of the treaty negotiation process.

But many groups can look at the government's budget surplus, billion dollar funding announcements for transportation, health care and the 2010 Olympics and ask "what about us?"

Perhaps more in the way of concrete promises will come out, especially since an election in B.C. is about a year away.

Hardly a day goes by now where a long-term, sore-thumb, issue isn't remedied by a surprising pile of cash and splashy, coordinated announcement.

Until then, the words of Steven Point are all that now stands as proof of what might come: More progress, more agreements, more steps toward a brighter future.

Aboriginal nursing as a career choice.

The project will also examine the benefit of developing a culturally specific nursing preparation program aimed at easing the transition into existing registered nursing and licensed practical nursing programs.

The funding comes from a total of \$500,000 that was available to Aboriginal groups, post-secondary institutions, nursing associations and other organizations.

The Okanagan College is a public, post-secondary education institution established in 2004 under the College and Institute Act.

The region served by the

Okanagan College covers the areas from Osoyoos and Princeton in the south and west to Mica Creek and Revelstoke in the north and east.

The gathering place at Okanagan College's Salmon Arm campus will be added onto the cafeteria and lounge, with glass doors between the two areas.

This will create a space for Aboriginal students while allowing a larger area to be opened up for functions and events.

The centre will have access to new computers to help Aboriginal students expand their knowledge and skills.

Study tables with a work space for the students will be added along with an equipped kitchen.

Windspeaker news briefs

BDC invests in Nuu-chah-nulth entrepreneurs

A \$250,000 investment in a partnership agreement with the Nuu-chah-nulth will benefit entrepreneurs in the Nuu-chah-nulth trading area.

The Business Development Bank of Canada and the Nuu-chah-nulth Economic Development Corporation will create a new Aboriginal Business Development Fund.

The \$250,000 will be for a micro credit loan fund and qualified entrepreneurs will be able to obtain business loans of up to \$20,000. The NEDC will identify entrepreneurs who are potential loan candidates.

Through the corporation's established Youth Entrepreneurship program, candidates will be offered appropriate business training that includes mentoring and education on human resource management, financial planning, marketing and problem resolution.

The importance of the candidate's management capacity, business feasibility, and commitment are highlighted as opposed to equity and security.

Aboriginal communities show higher rates of new business and self-employment than their counterparts, with more than 30,000 Aboriginal people currently running their own businesses. Increased activity means greater need for a variety of consulting and financial services.

The NEDC statement includes how the agreement with the BDC will ensure entrepreneurs are well prepared to take advantage of the unprecedented employment and business opportunities that exist in their own backyard.

Other programs the NEDC has developed include the Business Equity program, youth entrepreneurship, mentoring and Business Links.

NEDC was incorporated in 1984 to assist the Nuu-chah-nulth in achieving economic and social independence through financial assistance and advisory services to individual and tribal business development initiatives. The BDC is a financial institution wholly owned by the Government of Canada.

Australia Aborigines given full apology

On Feb. 13, the Aborigine People received a formal apology from the newly elected Prime Minister of Australia, Kevin Rudd. The apology speech was read out at 9 a.m. as the first action of the second sitting day of parliament.

The apology is for more than 100 years of taking Aborigine children from their families and forcing them into institutions away from their homes.

The opening of the new parliament included, for the first time in its history, Aborigine people who gave a traditional welcome in their custom.

Prime Minister Rudd told parliament that past policies of assimilation were a stain on the nations' soul. About 100 members of the Stolen Generations were in parliament to hear the government apologize. It is widely reported; many of them wiped away tears as Rudd spoke.

The apology comes after more than 10 years after a report into policies that found between one in three and one in 10 Aboriginal children were taken from their families between 1910 and 1970.

The report recommended a national apology to those affected, known as the Stolen Generations, but the government at the time, under Prime Minister John Howard refused the advice and offered instead a statement of reconciliation.

The Assembly of First Nations released a statement shortly after the apology congratulating the Australian Prime Minister for issuing the apology, which took one half hour to read. Fontaine is quoted in the statement as expecting the government of Canada to give a full and sincere apology at an early date.

He states, the AFN has submitted a draft apology to federal government in May of 2005 are still waiting to be consulted.

Leader jailed for protecting Algonquin territory

BY KATE HARRIES
WINDSPEAKER WRITER

ARDOCH ALGONQUIN FIRST NATION

A storm of protest has greeted the jailing of an Algonquin leader who defended his territory against a uranium mining exploration company.

Bob Lovelace, former chief of the Ardoch Algonquin First Nation and a negotiator in recent mediation talks with the Ontario government, is a political prisoner, said AAFN spokesman Jack LaPointe.

The provincial government failed to consult his community before licensing Frontenac Ventures's activities on unceded Algonquin territory that is currently the subject of negotiations with Ontario and Canada.

Lovelace viewed it as his duty to protect the land and refused to obey two injunctions that required him to stay away from a drilling site to which the courts had granted Frontenac Ventures "unfettered" access.

"I want to obey Canadian law but Algonquin law instructs me that I must preserve Creation," Lovelace told Judge Douglas Cunningham in a Kingston court on Feb 15. "I must follow Algonquin law."

"There can only be one law – the law of Canada as expressed in this court," said Cunningham who sentenced Lovelace, 59, an

instructor at Queen's University and Sir Sandford Fleming College, to six months in jail for contempt of court. The draconian sentence included a fine of \$25,000

"There's an awful lot of outrage out there, certainly from First Nations across the country," said LaPointe, who is also a negotiator for AAFN until talks broke down in early February.

Craig Benjamin of Amnesty International said the reaction from the public has been unprecedented. "We've had a flood of emails from across the country," he said. "It's not the usual thing for us to issue a press release and have people write in to ask, 'what can we do?'"

The Nishnawbe Aski Nation issued a statement calling on Ontario to negotiate a settlement to the dispute rather than use the courts to delay a political solution.

"First Nation people are being criminalized for practising constitutionally protected Aboriginal and treaty rights - our way of life on the land," said Grand Chief Stan Beardy.

"These extreme positions by Ontario to support court proceedings rather than negotiating settlements could seriously jeopardize new meaningful relationships not only in Algonquin territory, but across the province."

A similar dispute between a mining exploration company and a First Nation has resulted in

leaders of Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug, 600 km north of Thunder Bay, being found guilty of contempt in December. They are to be sentenced in April.

"What the government of Ontario and general public need to realize is that our people have a sacred responsibility to the land. It's not that we operate outside of Canadian law, however the laws of our lands come first," Beardy said.

Christian Peacemaker Teams issued a statement lamenting the unjust actions of Judge Cunningham and the Ontario government. "We fear that the actions of the court and the government are leading this province down the road of confrontation that will inevitably lead to more suffering, injustice and bloodshed for Aboriginal peoples."

Amnesty International pointed out that Canadian courts have clearly established that whenever the rights of indigenous peoples may be affected, governments have a legal duty to ensure that there must always be meaningful consultation to identify and accommodate Indigenous concerns.

"The situation defies justice," said Benjamin. "Indigenous leaders and their supporters are facing stiff punishments for doing what they feel is necessary to protect rights that may one day be upheld in court or in the land claims process. Meanwhile the provincial government is ignoring

its own legal obligations without any accountability."

The dispute began last June when both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities north of Kingston discovered thousands of acres – both crown land and private properties – were being staked by Frontenac Ventures under the free entry provisions of the Ontario Mining Act. But trees were cut and blasting began before any prior consultation of local Algonquins by the Ontario government despite the fact that the lands are part of their traditional territory and are also the subject of ongoing treaty negotiations between the Algonquins and Canada and Ontario.

Leaders of AAFN and the Shabot Obaadjiwan First Nation occupied a site off Highway 509 near Sharbot Lake, about 60 miles north of Kingston, where Frontenac was preparing to conduct drilling tests..

The lands are part of 8.9 million acres within the watersheds of the Ottawa and Mattawa Rivers, including the city of Ottawa, that were never surrendered. Treaty negotiations are ongoing, involving 10 Algonquin communities, only one of which – the Algonquins of Golden Lake or Pikwakanagan - has reserve status.

The Algonquins said they never objected to other activities on their land but uranium mining is a threat to the environment.

Frontenac sued the two First

Nations for \$77 million and filed contempt charges. The court actions were put on hold and the occupation was lifted in October when the province entered into mediated talks with the two First Nations. But the talks collapsed in early February.

Kathy Nosich, spokesperson for the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, said the mediation process, funded by Ontario, is evidence that the province was consulting. She declined to say why the talks ended. The reason, according to a report posted by Lovelace at http://www.aafn.ca/Final_negot.html, was that Ontario's negotiator Cam Clark went back on an undertaking that no drilling was a possible outcome of the talks.

Paula Sherman, co-chief of the Ardoch Algonquin, was sentenced to six months in jail at the same time as Lovelace. But her sentence was not carried out after she agreed to obey a court injunction. She has been ordered to pay a \$15,000 fine and the AAFN has been fined \$10,000.

Honorary Chief Harold Perry also gave the court the required undertaking. "I want to be with Bob" he said, "but my community does not want me to do this." Perry, 78, has heart problems and Sherman is a single parent. Shabot Obaadjiwan Chief Doreen Davis and Elder Earl Bedore also agreed to obey the injunction. They are to be sentenced March 18.

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In accordance with the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*, Laricina Energy Ltd. has applied to Alberta Environment for an approval for the construction, operation and reclamation of a steam-assisted gravity drainage (SAGD) project known as the Saleski SAGD Pilot Project, Application No. 001-245592. The Central Processing Facility (CPF) will be located in Section 26 Township 85 Range 19 West of 4th Meridian. The Saleski SAGD Pilot Project will be capable of producing 285 cubic metres per day of bitumen.

In accordance with the *Water Act*, Laricina Energy Ltd. has filed a licence application, File No. 00246458, with Alberta Environment to:

- divert and use up to 401,500 cubic metres of water annually from groundwater source(s); and
- collect, store and use up to 3,000 cubic metres of surface runoff water from a storm water collection pond.

The licensed diversions from groundwater and surface water sources will be used for enhanced oil recovery, construction camp and administrative office purposes.

To obtain additional information or a copy of the application, free of charge, contact:

Laricina Energy Ltd. Telephone: (403) 750-7093
Attention: Deepa Thomas Fax: (403) 263-0767
800, 138 4 Ave SE Email: DThomas@laricinaenergy.com
Calgary, AB T2G 4Z6

Copies of the application are available for viewing at the following locations:

- Laricina Energy Ltd. www.laricinaenergy.com
- Wabasca Public Library
Wabasca, Alberta
Telephone: (780) 891-2203
- Alberta Environment
Register of Environmental Assessment Information
111 Twin Atria Building
4999 - 98 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T6B 2X3
- Alberta Energy and Utilities Board
Information Services, Calgary Office
Main Floor, 640 - 5 Avenue S.W.
Calgary, Alberta T2P 3G4 • Website: www.eub.ca

Pursuant to section 73 of the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act* and section 109 of the *Water Act*, any person who is directly affected by these operations may submit a written statement of concern regarding these applications. Failure to file a statement of concern may affect the right to file a Notice of Appeal with the Environmental Appeals Board. Such a statement of concern must be submitted by May 3, 2008 to:

Director of Northern Region
Alberta Environment
Regulatory Approvals Center
9th floor, 9820 - 106 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2J6
Fax: (780) 422-0154

Please quote Application No. 001-245592 when submitting a statement of concern in regards to the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act* application. Please quote File No. 00246458 when submitting a statement of concern in regards to the *Water Act* application.

Note: Any statements filed regarding these applications are public records which are accessible by the public.

Health concerns rise over oil sands pollution

BY JOE COUTURE
Windspeaker Writer

ATHABASCA

First Nations communities in Alberta are resounding the calls made by environmental organizations and others for the federal government to pay more attention to the suspected health and environmental effects of oil sands development, and to ensure the industry is made as clean as possible.

On Feb. 15, the group Environmental Defence released a report entitled "Canada's Toxic Tar Sands: The Most Destructive Project on Earth". At a press conference in Ottawa, representatives from First Nations downriver of oil sands development in Alberta expressed their concerns. Chief Allan Adam of the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation and Councillor Willis Flett, Mikisew Cree First Nation, wanted their voices heard.

"We've seen a drastic change in water contamination going down the Athabasca River, which has a direct impact on our reserve," said Adam, whose community is located approximately 280 kilometres northeast and downriver of Fort McMurray. "Seventy-eight per cent of our community still relies on traditional foods. Every animal survives off the river, and we still live off those animals."

"We've seen severe health

concerns coming within our community," Flett added. "We've had high rates of various forms of cancer. We've had lupus, which is a blood disorder, and other various health concerns within our region. At the present time, we don't have any evidence that it is due to the tar sands. But we do live downstream from the tar sands, and we've seen the higher rates within the last say 10 years."

"There are two known cases of bile duct cancer," Adam added. "That's a rare cancer, one in 100,000. There are possibly four others, but the others cannot be recorded because the people have passed on. If there are six in a community of 1,200 people something's got to be going on. Everyone is pointing to the water."

Environmental Defence's press release notes, "The community of Fort Chipewyan made headlines last year when Health Canada launched a complaint against the town doctor for speaking out about abnormal disease rates in the community."

Deformities in fish and high concentrations of toxic substances in animals have also been identified.

Some published reports claimed fish from the area have smelled like burning plastic while being fried. While there isn't a clear link to the tar sands, Matt Price of Environmental Defence says the connection makes

common sense.

"The tailings ponds, these giant ponds that can be seen from space they're so big, everyone knows they're leaking into the groundwater," Price said. "No one knows what happens after that. Hydrologists will tell you that it's all connected. So the strong suspicion is this ends up back in the Athabasca, and then it flows downriver, and then builds up over time in the sediments."

Key findings of the Environmental Defence report include the projected doubling of greenhouse gas emissions from oil sands development to double by 2020, claims of seepage from toxic tailings ponds into groundwater and suspicion that oil sands pollution is causing acid rain in Saskatchewan and beyond.

"It can get better," said Price. "We've focused on some fixes; we haven't come out and said shut it down. Now is the time to force some of this technology to be implemented before things get a whole lot worse."

"The big part of this is there's a five-fold expansion in the cards," he continued. "Now we're actually talking about dramatically scaling this whole thing up in a very short time frame. We actually haven't got it right yet in terms of the regulatory oversight. So given the current trajectory, it's just a disaster."

There are some technological

solutions already available, but they tend to be too expensive for companies to embrace on their own, according to Price.

"Industry doesn't basically voluntarily do these things, because they say, 'Well, our shareholders aren't going to like us for voluntarily incurring however many cents per barrel when our competitors aren't doing it.' So you need government to step in and say everyone needs to do it and level the playing field," Price said.

Price thinks the government has means to step in. Currently, under the federal fisheries act, it is against the law to discard toxins in a river.

Environmental Defence thinks this law should be used in connection with the suspected groundwater seeping from tailings and oily sands blowing into rivers.

The Environmental Protection Act also gives some discretionary powers to government, but they need to choose to use them.

"We recommend that the federal government actually enforce its own laws," Price said.

"We want everybody to know that we are feeling the effects of the tar sands, both socio-economically and culturally," Flett added. "We want to find out what's out there."

What's been revealed so far is reason for concern, and it's very alarming to the people, Flett said.

"We're not asking industry to stop, we're asking them to slow down to let us catch up. And after we have conducted our studies, then it will be back up to the community to decide on which actions we go with."

On Feb. 25 in Calgary, chiefs representing the Treaties 6, 7 and 8 nations of Alberta — including Chief Adam — met and passed a resolution, unanimously, to support the calls for no new oil sands approvals until Treaty First Nations have approved a comprehensive watershed management plan and resource development plan for the region.

"Evidence is there that there's grounds for legal action," Adam had stated in an interview just days previous. "If people want to take it. It all depends on what the people want to do. We're elected officials and we represent the people. Whatever happens, it's people-driven."

Although they may seem to be worlds apart in position, the industry and Environmental Defence may have some things in common, according to Greg Stringham, vice president of the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP). Both agree that technological advances must continue and both think the public should be better informed by an independent and trusted body about oil sands development.

(See environment page 13.)

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Clem Chartier re-elected president of MNC

BY MARIE BURKE
Windspeaker Staff Writer

Ottawa

The Métis National Council (MNC) fulfilled their General Assembly on February 23rd and voted their national President into office after months of disputes over leadership.

"It's been a long road to get to that vote to enable the legitimate representatives of our people who have been elected at the ballot box within our five jurisdictions," said Clem Chartier, re-elected President of the MNC.

Chartier's presidency comes after 28 votes were cast in his favor out of the total 54 votes allowed.

The other candidates include: Tony Belcourt, President of Métis Nation of Ontario with 12 votes, Rick Laliberte, Métis citizen from northern Saskatchewan and Bruce Dumont, Métis Nation of British Columbia with 11 votes.

Disputes about the legitimacy of Chartier's earlier term as national president began after his term expired October of 2006, but was extended because the national council could not hold an assembly.

In July of 2007, the MNC Board of Governors, made up of provincial presidents, put forward a motion to appoint Bruce Dumont as interim president until a general assembly was held. Chartier and the president of the Manitoba Métis began legal actions against the Ontario and Alberta provincial presidents that began a long round of disputes between regional leaders.

"I wish we had a mechanism within our nation itself, within our constitution to deal with conflict resolution, but we don't have that," said Chartier.

The plan to adopt political constitution is part of what Chartier says he will do as president along with representing

the MNC with the federal government.

The leadership now sees that is a need and also there is a need to understand the lesson that all of this has taught us, he said.

Chartier states he is prepared to meet with all of the provincial presidents and put aside any bad feelings from the past to move on with the future of the MNC.

When asked how his earlier lawsuit, that includes \$300,000 in damages, against the MNC will be handled, Chartier explained he is still seeking legal advice to resolve those issues.

"Yes, part of the suit is seeking damages for unfair dismissal and things of that nature with that amount that is mentioned in there, now we still have to sit down, the Manitoba Métis Federation and myself with the law firm that is representing us to determine how we are going to move forward on this," said Chartier.

Bruce Dumont, President of the Métis Provincial Council of British Columbia (MPCBC) said his organization is considering what part it will play on the national council.

The MNC needs to have national support from the federal government on Métis issues, but is doubtful that will happen under Chartier's leadership.

"I was hoping for change, we need change, and the Métis National Council is in crisis right now," said Dumont.

MPCBC supports the MNC, but under a different leader, said Dumont.

Self-governance should be the highest priority for the national council so disputes like the one that took place over the last year aren't settled by the courts, and there needs to be equality among the provinces with the number of votes each council has, said Dumont.

The MPCBC has five votes at

the national general assemblies along with Métis Nation of Ontario while Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba each have 15.

"We have 37 chartered communities and we represent 60,000 people - self-identified Métis people. I take it (votes) to the table every year and it's in the by-laws that we ask for additional delegates and it's been turned down," said Dumont.

As member of Board of Governors, Dumont is still considering if he will take part in further meetings at the national level because of his lack of confidence in Chartier's leadership.

When asked if there was any chance of repairing his relationship with the MNC and Chartier, Dumont said there should be meetings before too long which he hopes will be candid to iron out any differences.

Tar sands blamed for environment issues

(Cont'd from page 11.)

"I don't agree with the Environmental Defence report that nothing's being done right now and they need to start doing it," Stringham said. "I could agree that, yes, there has been some things done and it needs to be continued or maybe augmented until that confidence is gained, but it's not like they're starting from ground zero.

"We as an industry recognize that more needs to be communicated," Stringham continued. "Lots is being done already, but we are in complete agreement that more needs to be done to try and make sure that people have access to the info — again, independently so they can make their own assessment of what's going up there. Because the last thing we want to do is be able

to have a perception or a reality that there's anything going on in the area that might be damaging to human health."

Companies need to do a good job of developing relationships with First Nations communities near oil sands development, especially as work goes on in the area for upward of 40 years, Stringham said.

Chief Jim Boucher of the Fort

McKay First Nation in Alberta didn't return calls for comment on the benefits his community has seen, but Fort McKay communications director Jeff Winsor explained the community has a group of eight companies that provide service to the oil sands industry, as well as several joint ventures.

Fort McKay was about to become the first First Nation to

venture into oil sands development, but made the news in mid-February when the deal with Shell Canada was cancelled before production began. Winsor explained the two simply couldn't come to a business model that worked, and the First Nation is open to ideas to develop its oil sand resources and will do whatever is in the best interest of its members.

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Impression of Native people reinforced

I am sure everybody felt the same way I did when I first heard the news. Two children on the Yellowquill First Nations in Saskatchewan frozen to death, clad only in t-shirts and diapers.

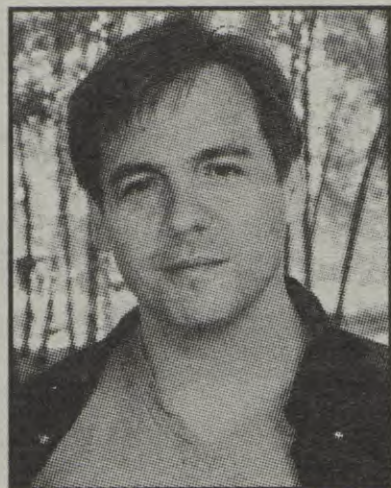
The reason - a drunken father it appears. A drunken Native father to be specific. Once the shock of the news wore off, another equally unappetizing thought occurred to me. Once more, the dominant culture's impression of Native people has been reinforced. Native people equal alcohol equal tragedy. Definitely an unhappy equation.

Some would call it the algebra of marginalization. Canadians may not consciously think thoughts like that. Or maybe they do. But I know they are there, not far below the surface. Like a grave.

The facts are still coming out about that community; evidently they had been struggling with substance abuse for a number of years - these were just the latest casualties. Some might call what happened there a war between what was, and what should be.

Astronomers often talk about still being able to see shock waves from the Big Bang, an event that created the universe fifteen million years ago.

Some might consider



THE URBANE INDIAN Drew Hayden Taylor

misfortunes like Yellowquill shock waves from a different kind of Big Bang, five hundred and sixteen years ago.

Other Native people have frozen to death in the cold prairie winter. Neil Stonechild comes to mind. He was taken to an abandoned field outside of Saskatoon, relieved of his coat and shoes, and told to walk back to the city by the police. He never made it.

There were no drunken fathers involved, just non-Native cops. Many, especially First Nation people, have come to think this is a regular occurrence - that there is a constabulary shuttle service of sorts existing in all major centres and Natives should beware. Now, unfortunately, many Canadians will also think the Yellowquill tragedy happens all the time in Native communities.

It's the power of prejudice, of media reinforcement, of painting with broad brushes. This brush was populated with well over a million bristles, according to the last census.

A thousand years ago, I left my reserve to attend college in Toronto. I was young and unknowing in the ways of the outside world. But I was armed with cowboy boots, a metro-pass, and an eagerness to see what the country of Canada outside my sleepy little community had to say.

I must point out here that, to my knowledge, there is no case of anybody freezing to death in Curve Lake in recorded history, drunk, sober or narcoleptic.

So, during my first year, I found myself sharing a house with several people. One of my new roommates, who became my closest friend for many years,

came from a town near Sudbury, a place of exotica called Falconbridge. After I had moved in, he informed his family up north about me, and that I was Native.

I still remember him telling me that his older sister had cautioned him about me, because "you know how Indians like to drink!" If memory serves me correctly, he got blasted just as frequently as I did, if not more.

At the time I was puzzled by her concerns about my presumed vices, but I just chalked it up to weird things white people say. When, several months later, I was introduced to her, I casually brought up her sight-unseen assessment of me. Flustered, she immediately tried to justify her original statement by adding "well, up where we are, Indians do tend to have a drinking problem."

Since then, I've been up to Sudbury quite a few times, and have done some field research in a few bars, especially those patronized by local miners, and would you believe it, there were few dark skinned faces to be seen.

I don't hold a grudge. If anything, I am somewhat grateful for what she said. When I lecture about Native identity, I frequently mention her when I

talk about the stereotypes.

It's generated much interesting discussion. I must buy her a drink. True, that was way back in the early '80's, and I'm sure a few naive optimists believe that things have changed since then. God bless them. It makes me want to ask them "what colour is the sky in your world." Or maybe, more accurately, "what colour is skin in your world?"

In geological times, a quarter of a century is a millisecond. Barely a blink of an eye. The same can be said about how long it takes for attitudes to change. In a nearby restaurant/tavern close to my reserve, somebody was discussing with a waitress the possibility of holding a wake. The waitress thought this was odd and jokingly asked "Is the guy Irish?"


The man said "Actually he was part Native." Almost immediately, most of the patrons burst out laughing. And not a pleasant laugh.

It must have been the fellow's white Irish side wanting a wake. You know how they like to drink.

I don't think people are laughing in Yellowquill.

Once those poor girls are buried, the legacy of their passing will unfortunately live longer than they did. You have to wonder.


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Census not a huge concern for most Aboriginal people

BY MARIE BURKE
Windspeaker Staff Writer

EDMONTON

It's lunchtime at the Canadian Native Friendship Centre in Edmonton and questions about the 2006 census report are the last thing on the minds of Aboriginal people here.

The room fills quickly with urban Aboriginal people as they share a free soup and bannock meal that is offered at this friendship centre weekly. *Windspeaker* asks a number of Aboriginal people here if they participated in the census, but no one seems to remember.

Finally Jeremy Busch said he might have taken part in it.

Busch volunteers in the kitchen on community lunch day and takes some time to enjoy his food with everyone else. While the 32 year-old is a member of the Cold Lake First Nations, he lives and attends school in Edmonton.

Busch said he vaguely remembers telling someone how many people were living in his household at one time, but he did not fill out any forms that identify him as an Aboriginal person. He doesn't believe in the numbers collected on Aboriginal people. But it should be about how the government can do better than 100 years ago, he said.

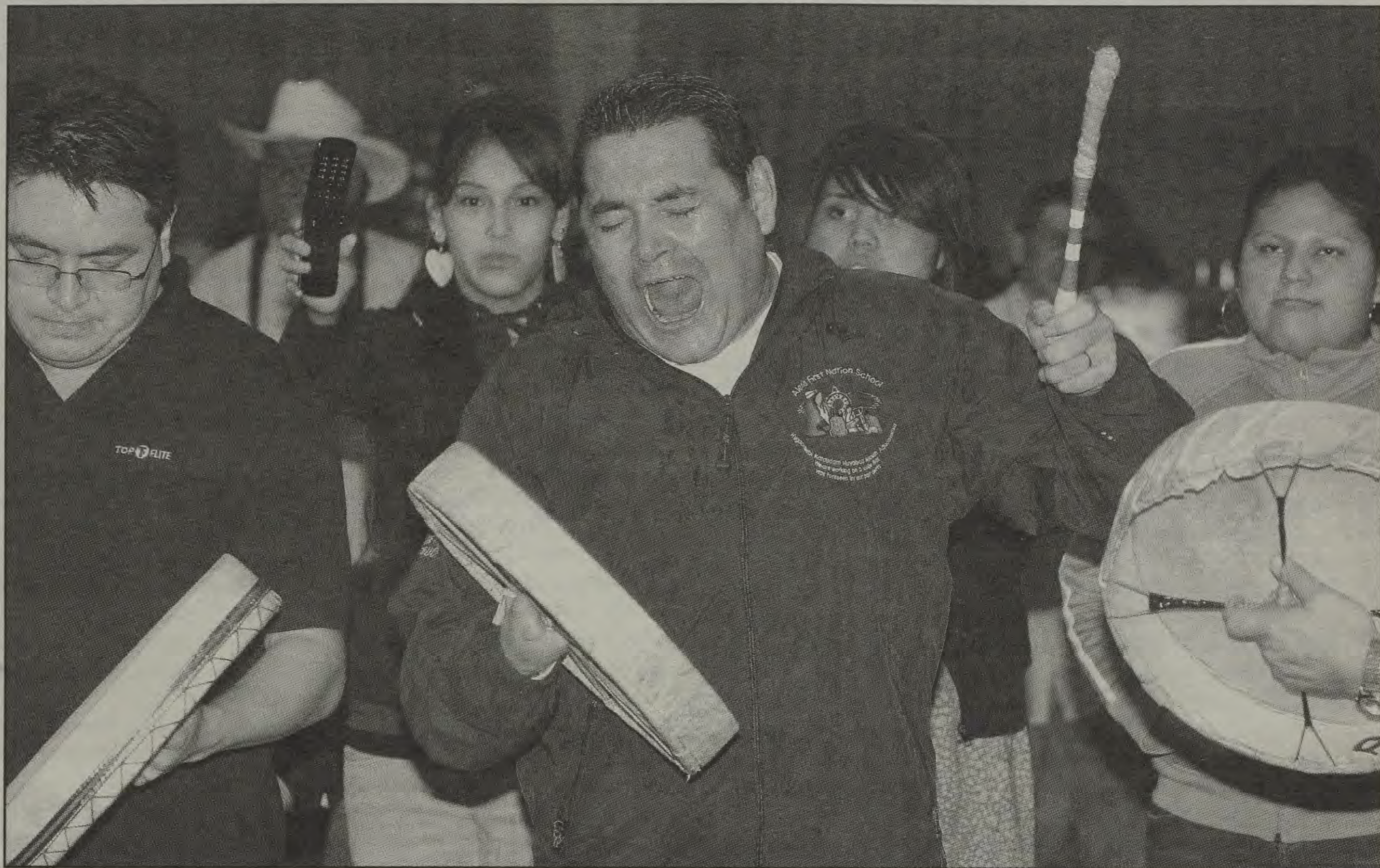
"Native people are still dealing with the past, and we are still the poorest. We have adapted our language and our way of life and still, we are trying to do better for ourselves. Yeah we are still here," said Busch.

The issues for him are about how much work there is available now for and with Aboriginal people, he said. The statistics prove there are still many jobs for social workers in the government, for doctors, lawyers, and psychiatrists because Aboriginal people are still dealing with effects of residential schools, states Busch.

"How can you educate people that have no respect for school after what has happened? I think why they collect the numbers is to understand how many there are to deal with. I still think that there is more that has to be done and that it has to be with the young people," said Busch.

Aboriginal kids are actually waiting to see what they are going to be part of and especially those in the urban areas are asking how do they fit in, he said. He believes Aboriginal people are moving forward, but are still trying to catch up to mainstream ideals of education and work.

It's been a struggle to care for his one son, because he is dealing with issues surrounding poverty. Now, Busch wonders if he is supposed to go and work for the oil companies, or for Aboriginal organizations. While he believes going to school is part of the answer to some of the troubling issues he is facing; he's still unsure



While attending the Rose Auger memorial round dance on Feb. 23, *Windspeaker* got comments from some of the participants about the Census.

of the future.

The up side to having Aboriginal people officially at over a million is that makes him feel good about being an Indian, he said. "We don't have to prove we are here," said Busch.

At a round dance in honour of Rose Auger held on Enoch First Nation near Edmonton several hundred Aboriginal people gather to remember a departed community member, socialize and enjoy a feast.

When some people here are asked if they participated in the 2006 census on Aboriginal people, most can only remember the headlines from last month.

"I have some idea about it, I heard we are at a million now, but I don't know if that is treaty Indians or non status Indians," said Robert Johnson, a member of Samson First Nation, Hobbema.

The census report is not something Johnson has really thought about and he doesn't remember filling out any forms for the census.

"The census results are most important to the government and for some Aboriginal groups to use for funding purposes," he said. "Not all First Nations would use the figures and statistics from the census because they are working towards self-sufficiency and keeping their own statistics."

"I think it's a good thing to have that kind of information, if there is a million of us in Canada, but how do you determine if they are Native or do they just claim they are," he said.

If the government really wants to be accurate they may want to do DNA tests to really find out who has Aboriginal ancestry, added Johnson.

"Many people now think being Aboriginal is good, and there might be some financial benefits to saying you are, he states. In the 1950's and 1960's not everyone wanted to admit they are Aboriginal and maybe now that Aboriginal people have assimilated a bit more and some are not as dark skinned, it may not be such a bad thing," said Johnson.

National Aboriginal organizations are now analyzing the census reports not only for use in proving the need for programs and services, but also to check if Statistics Canada is giving an accurate picture of Aboriginal people.

During a telephone interview with Beverly Jacobs, President of National Women's Association of Canada, she tells *Windspeaker* that the census needs to include a culturally relevant gender based analysis.

"A lot of what we look at is in the statistics about seeing if they make the difference between genders, how that has an impact on programs and services and how that will affect Aboriginal women," said Jacobs.

On and off reserve the issues are about housing, issues of violence against Aboriginal women, she said. When dealing with the Indian Act system a lot of people are not aware it is a system of control for our communities, she said. It creates a cycle of poverty that leaves Aboriginal women and their children in the most vulnerable positions that are then open to violence against them, she stated.

women and creates awareness about the issues facing Aboriginal women in Canada with fewer resources than any other national organization, she states.

"The resources and I mean the lack of resources that are put into communities are what creates that whole systemic problem, so the issues on reserve and the limited resources causes a lot of the internal conflict," said Jacob. And the cycle continues.

The National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations was unavailable for comment by press time, but according to the Special Advisor of the AFN they are analyzing the census data to pinpoint inaccuracies.

In the AFN's preliminary analysis of the number of First Nations counted there are fundamental problems.

In addition to registered Indians, two other groups of Aboriginal people, were included a group called Aboriginal ancestry whose data was not reported on except for the large total population figure and then there was this other group called Aboriginal identity," said Daniel Wilson, special advisor to the AFN.

The First Nations data is tied together with registered Indians and the Aboriginal Identity population. It was skewed to include over 133,000 people of this Aboriginal Identity population and none live on reserve, said Wilson.

"Even their own numbers with regard to registered Indian population showed that the majority, by their numbers, 53 per cent still lived on reserve, but because they rolled the definitions together, they skewed perception," said Wilson.

The trend and bulk came out in the wrong direction of the truth, he said.

Under reporting is the second issue. The difference comes between the 2006 Indian and Northern Affairs Indian registry and what Statistics Canada identified as registered Indian was almost a 200,000 difference, said Wilson.

"There is no other category of statistic where stats would be comfortable releasing census data where they were off by 25 per cent but for some reason they feel comfortable doing it with us," said Wilson.

There are 22 communities who refused to participate in the census as identified in the Statistics Canada report.

Some of the largest First Nations communities who did not take part include Mohawk communities, which Wilson estimates make up about 47,000 First Nation people.

"When you begin with these fundamental flaws anymore detail just exacerbates the flaw," said Wilson.

Meetings with Statistics Canada representatives and the AFN to address the concerns about the data on Aboriginal people collected lead to disappointment, said Wilson.

The history of information being abused and misused by government leads to First Nation people's fears of disclosing their information to government, he stated.

"Fundamentally it is that bad data that leads to bad policy. The government bases legislation, policy, regulation, programs and services and funding decisions on their understanding of population bases," said Wilson.

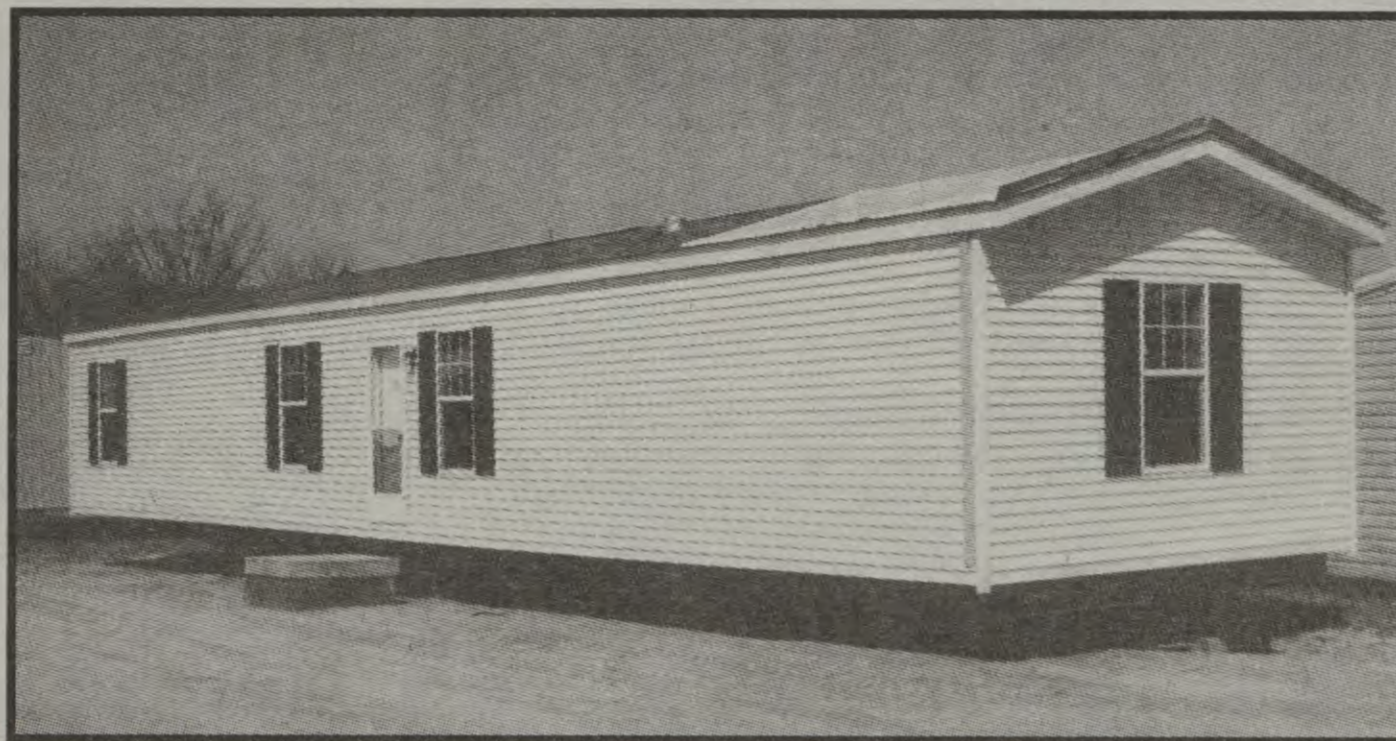
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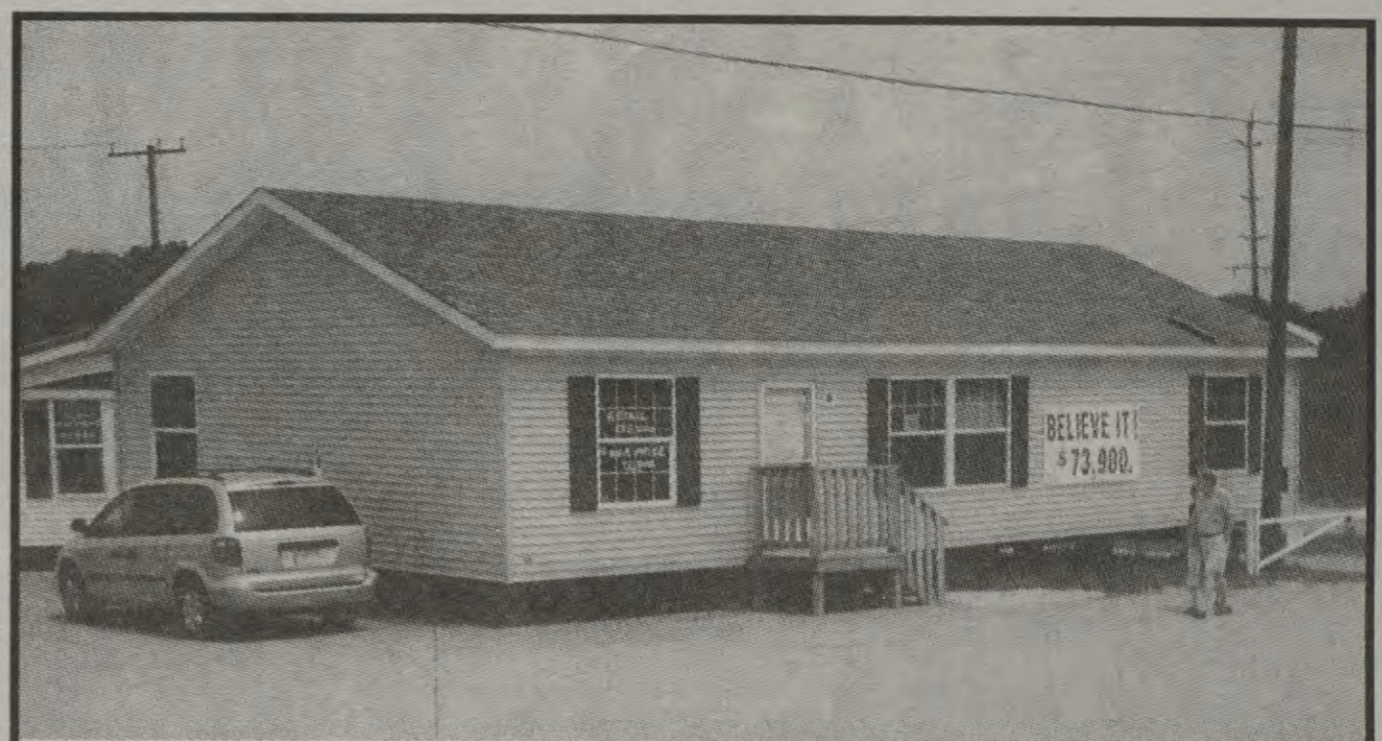
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[remembering our women]



MARLENE GEORGE

Elders lead the 17th annual Women's Memorial March in Vancouver on Feb. 14. Approximately 800 participants came out to show their support for the missing and murdered women.



AARON PIERRE

Lana Gaywish places a card of her cousin Colleen McDonald along with the other approximately 160 cards of missing and murdered women from Manitoba. Gaywish along with other participants set out to march around the Winnipeg art gallery and back to the University of Winnipeg, but due to the extreme wind chill, the march was cut short. This 1st annual march coincided with others on Valentines Day in Sudbury, Vancouver and Edmonton.

[remembering our women]



MARIE BURKE

(Top) Organizer Danielle Boudreau (middle) lead the Third annual Memorial March for all the murdered and missing women of Edmonton on Feb. 4. The March originated in Vancouver in 1992 to bring awareness to the high number of women killed and missing from Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. Since then, other cities like Edmonton, Winnipeg and Sudbury have joined in an effort to expose the violence that Aboriginal women have endured and continue to face.



MARIE BURKE

(Left) Many participants both young and old braved the cold temperatures on Feb. 14. Edmontonians walked together to honour and remember their mothers, sisters, daughters, aunts and friends.



MARLENE GEORGE

Participants of the 17th annual Women's Memorial March stopped outside the Vancouver Police Department on Feb. 14. According to Marlene George the photographer of the event, some of the speakers from the March addressed the lack of action from the VPD in the search for the missing women.

Shared agreement will reconnect First Nations to land

By **AMBER GILCHRIST**
Raven's Eye Writer

K'OMOKS FIRST NATION

The land of K'omoks First Nation and the Sliammon First Nation, face each other across the Straight of Georgia on the West Coast of British Columbia.

On Monday Feb. 25 Chiefs from both Bands were present at a ceremony to celebrate the signing of a shared territory agreement at the Sliammon Salish Center in Powell River, BC. The ceremony included dinner and entertainment and was attended by members of both Bands, the Provincial and Federal Governments and media.

"Our goal is to reconnect in a manner that respects each others uniqueness as well as our common cultural ties to the lands and resources within the shared area," stated Sliammon Chief, Walter Paul.

The Sliammon First Nations has signed territory agreements and community accords with the regional districts of Powell River and Sechelt and the First Nations of Klahoose, Homalco, Qualicum and Sechelt.

The agreement with the K'omoks is a final step for the Sliammon Indian Band in finalizing their Treaty negotiations.

Of the 58 Bands negotiating Treaty Rights with the BC Treaty Commission and the Canadian Government, two Treaties have been signed.

The Tsawwassen First Nation signed the first Treaty in BC, followed closely by the Maa-Nulth. Many Bands in the fifth stage of the process have refused the signing of their treaties due to unsatisfactory terms.

As with most BC Bands, the Sliammon Nation entered treaty negotiations in 1994. They are currently in stage five of the six-stage process of developing their Treaty status. Stage five settles technical and legal issues before implementation of the Treaty can take place.

Technical issues include the boundaries of settlement lands that are determined through historical studies of the lands traditional use.

In order to successfully reach their goals, the Sliammon Treaty Council was developed to lead negotiations and the "Sliammon Traditional Use Study" was created to determine shared land

use with neighboring communities to enable the creation of borders.

The study has become an integral part of the six-stage process and an invaluable resource for affirming pride in their culture and rich history.

The current land base for the Sliammon Indian Band was established in the 1880's as a part of the Indian Reserve Commission. The treaty settlement area of the Sliammon includes the reserve area as well as islands and harvesting areas in the Georgia Strait.

The progress made to date has been accomplished with persistence and not without obstacles.

Members of the Sliammon community had to protest when logging rights were given to Weyerhaeuser on Treaty Settlement Lands. The protests lead to an Order in Council that protects these lands while the stages of negotiation are ensuing. Chief negotiator for the Sliammon Treaty Council, Roy Francis, has been present for many of the signed agreements.

"We must formerly acknowledge that these lands have been shared since time immemorial," Francis stated.

The Band is excited to be so close to obtaining control over the matters that affect their lives. They are strongly committed to economic development and the final implementation of their Treaty includes planning for the sustainable development of lands and resources such as fisheries, forestry and plutonic extraction.

"Long before anybody else was here, our peoples coexisted and shared the resources in a sustainable manner," said Chief Ernie Hardy of the K'omoks First Nations.

The K'omoks Band is also keenly devoted to economic development. As they enter stage five of the Treaty process, this agreement with the Sliammon is the first of many technical issues to be resolved.

The K'omoks occupy land in the Comox Valley along the east coast of Vancouver Island. They are a small community that has numerous successes with natural resources and are internationally recognized for their art.

Finalizing their treaty rights will enable self-governing of their resources for future generations. The majority of both the K'omoks and Sliammon Nations are under the age of 25.

Gathering will focus on health and healing within the Aboriginal community

A symposium will bring together Aboriginal artists, art therapists, health professionals, front line workers and community and cultural leaders from May 13 to 14.

Sharing a vision of approaching health and healing in community through culture and the arts is the first focus of the conference.

The gathering, organized by the Kutenai Art Therapy Institute in Nelson, BC, is taking a medicine wheel approach to Aboriginal issues in health with a focus on the value of arts and culture in prevention, rehabilitation and therapeutic treatment. The workshops and presentations promise to focus on all aspects and essential needs

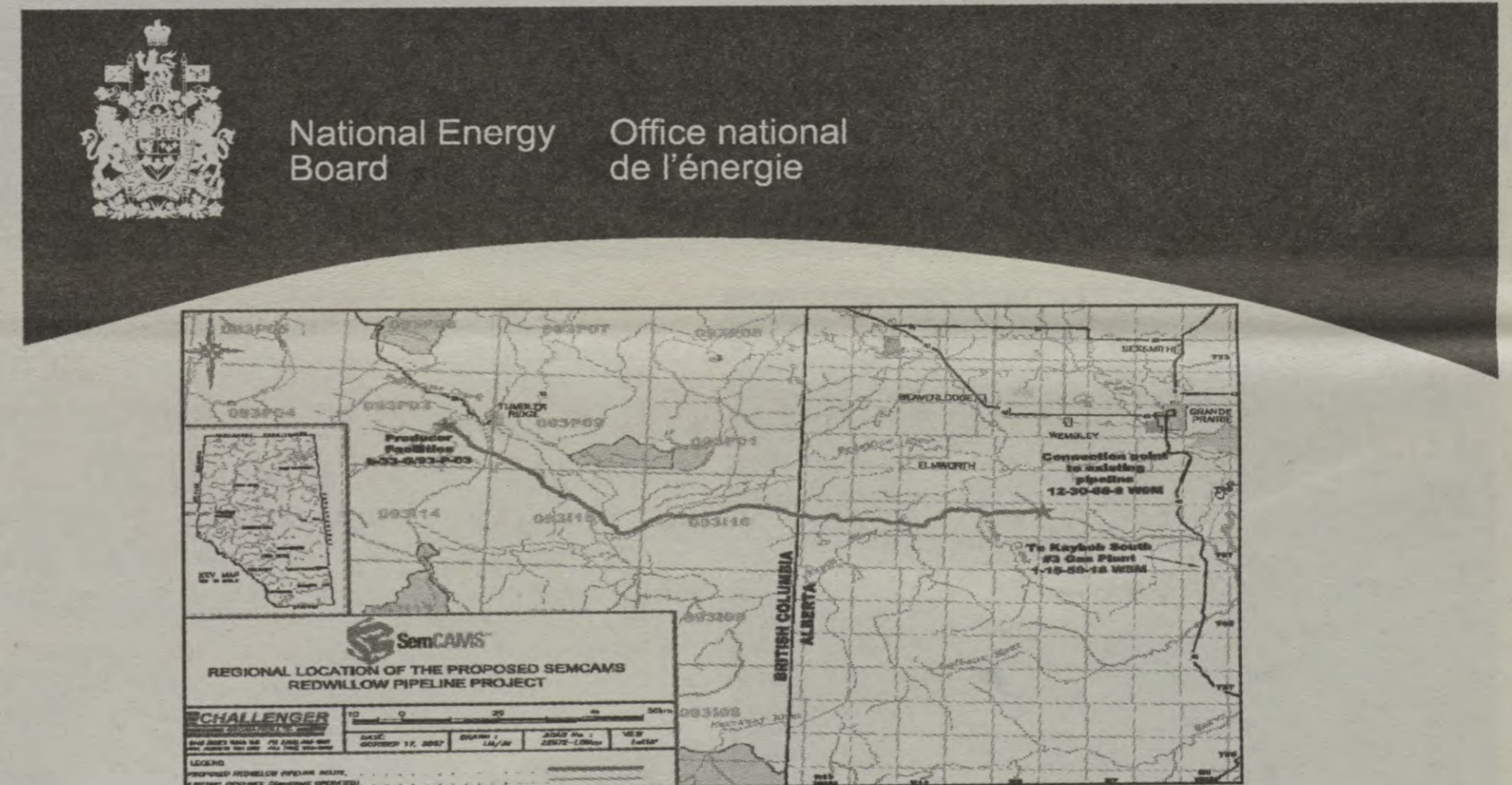
of human beings. Aboriginal cultures have traditionally integrated arts and culture in healing practices and the contemporary use of Art Therapy is promoted by the institute as a very valuable method in addressing many of the physical and emotional issues facing Aboriginal communities today.

The symposium is intended to establish healing and reconnection through the arts and igniting a fire of compassion and community action and creativity. Workshops and speakers featured aim to offer experiential art therapy, speakers who will address the underlying disruptions to health and the need for arts in healing. Also

offered are panels and presentations on the arts and healing with physical, mental health and emotional issues: substance abuse, diabetes, suicide, trauma and abuse, grief, residential schools, FAS/FAD, ethical issues and dilemmas.

The Kutenai Art Therapy Institute is a private post-secondary school with a diploma program that began in 1995. The institute is modeled on Dr. Martin A. Fischer's method of training art therapists which is about the importance of deep personal exploration through the process of art therapy.

The symposium will take place at the Mir Centre for Peace at Selkirk College in Castlegar, BC.



National Energy Board Notice of Public Hearing for the SemCAMS Redwillow Pipeline

The National Energy Board (NEB) has scheduled an oral public hearing on an application from SemCAMS Redwillow ULC (SemCAMS) under the National Energy Board Act (the Act) for the Redwillow Pipeline Project. Copies of the application are available for viewing at the Board's library (1st floor, 444 Seventh Ave. S.W., Calgary), the Tumbler Ridge Public Library (340 Front Street, Tumbler Ridge, BC) and the Grande Prairie Public Library (9910 - 99 Avenue, Grande Prairie, AB). The application is also available electronically on the Board's Internet site at www.neb-one.gc.ca (click on "Regulatory Documents" then "Quick Links" and scroll down to the SemCAMS application).

Public hearing

The public hearing will start at 9:00 a.m., local time, on Tuesday, 3 June 2008 at a hearing location, to be determined. Through the proceeding, the NEB will obtain the evidence and views of interested persons on the application. Any person interested in participating in the hearing may do so by filing an application to intervene or by providing a letter of comment and should consult the Board's Hearing Order GH-2-2008 for further background and instructions.

Information for intervenors

Any person wishing to intervene in the hearing must file an application to intervene by noon, Calgary time, on Friday, 29 February 2008 with the Secretary of the Board and serve a copy on SemCAMS and its counsel at the following addresses:

Ms. Laura Hunt
Manager, Regulatory and Consultation,
Redwillow Pipeline Project
SemCAMS Redwillow ULC
2000, 450 - 1st Street S.W.
Calgary, AB T2P 5H1
Facsimile: 403-536-3053
laura.hunt@semcams.com

Mr. Paul R. Jeffrey
Blake, Cassels & Graydon LLP.
855 - 2nd St. S.W.
Suite 3500, Bankers Hall East Tower
Calgary, AB T2P 4J8
Facsimile: 403-260-9700
paul.jeffrey@blakes.com

There is an on-line application to intervene form available on the Board's Internet site at www.neb-one.gc.ca (click on "Submit a Document", then click on "Apply for Intervenor Status") which you may use to file an application to intervene. SemCAMS will serve a copy of the application and related documentation on each intervenor.

Letters of comment

Any person wishing only to comment on the application should file a letter of comment to the Secretary of the Board and send a copy to SemCAMS and its counsel by noon, Calgary time, on Tuesday, 15 April 2008. There is an online letter of comment form available on the Board's Internet site at www.neb-one.gc.ca (click on "Submit a Document", then click on "Submit a Letter of Comment") which you may use to file your letter of comment.

Information on Hearing Procedures

You may access the Hearing Order through the Board's Internet site at www.neb-one.gc.ca (click on "Regulatory Documents" then "Quick Links", scroll down to the SemCAMS application, then click on "Hearing Order" at the top of the screen). You may obtain information on the procedures for this hearing or on the National Energy Board Rules of Practice and Procedure, 1995, as amended, governing all hearings (available in English and French) by writing to the Secretary of the Board, contacting Mona Butler 403-299-3928 or Louise Niro 403-299-3987 (Regulatory Officers), or by calling the NEB Toll-Free at 1-800-899-1265. You may also go to the Board's Internet site and click on "Acts and Regulations" to access the Board's Rules of Practice and Procedure and other legislation.

Claudine Dutil-Berry
Secretary of the Board
National Energy Board
444 Seventh Avenue S.W.
Calgary, Alberta T2P 0X8
Facsimile (403) 292-5503



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Alberta Sweetgrass: Special Section providing news from Alberta

Aboriginal youth discovers her roots

By SHARI NARINE
Sweetgrass Writer

EDMONTON

When Ashley Reimer was given the choice to work with students on the Innu reserve of Uashat in Sept-Iles, Quebec, she jumped at the opportunity. Little did she expect that connecting with these youth would spur her on a path to discover her own Aboriginal roots.

"I've always had an interest in Aboriginal people, but until I went to Sept-Iles, I wasn't really ready to find out about it," said Reimer, who turns 20 this March.

Reimer lives with her mother, Charlene Reimer and Charlene's

boyfriend Jimmy White on a ranch just outside of Onoway, near Edmonton. Reimer, who is Métis, knows almost nothing about her birth father, whom she hasn't seen since she was six.

And although the Alexis Nation is close to Onoway and some First Nations students attend Onoway High School, from which Reimer graduated in 2006, Reimer points out that they were all in the minority. That changed when she went to Uashat.

"A lot of the kids I worked with (in Uashat) were the same age as me, but I didn't have any difficulties with them," said Reimer.

Reimer and her working partner Stefan connected with their wards by "hanging out with them," encouraging them to write journals and Reimer used her artistic talents to help them paint an abstract mural in their school.

Indeed, Reimer connected so well with the Innu community that she plans to return in April to spend two more months there. "I felt as if I was more enriched by my experience in Sept-Iles. The Innu community showed kindness and shared their culture with me."

Reimer appreciated that connection. "It's interesting to be around native people all the time. It's a very different feeling."

She even participated in a sweat lodge. "It was a very important experience for me, very emotional and helped me with some problems. The sweat lodge was one of the highlights of my experiences in Sept-Iles and gave me great inner peace after I had finished it."

Reimer's voyage of discovery began just before graduation when she talked to her guidance counselor about future plans. The counselor put her in touch with Canada World Youth.

"I wanted to travel and learn about new cultures, but in something with more structure." CWY seemed the perfect fit. Reimer was one of nine Canadians to make the cut and become part of the Brazil/Quebec team.

Her time in Quebec was the second part of her six-month commitment in 2007. The first three months she spent in the city of Tramandi, Brazil.

She and her Brazilian counterpart, Juliana, lived with a

host family in a small three-bedroom house in a favella (poor area) along the shore. Reimer took the bus each day where she joined up with work partner Stefan interacting with young children in two schools.

In the evenings, Reimer and her fellow Canadians would go down town, walk around and talk about their experiences.

The most difficult adjustment for her in Brazil was the poverty. "The poverty was constant. There is a large gap between the rich and the poor."

What was also constant – whether in Brazil or Quebec – was the isolation that resulted in not knowing the language. In Brazil, a few people spoke English but Reimer didn't speak Portuguese.

In Quebec, Reimer's host mother spoke English, but the students spoke French or Innu.

"I learned to be more aware of my actions. And although language was a barrier, I learned I can still have strong communications with people," said Reimer.

Reimer does not hesitate in recommending Canada World Youth to others.

"It was a very unique experience. Instead of traveling alone, you get more of a feel of the culture because you live with



SHARI NARINE

Ashley Reimer

a family and with another person who is part of that culture."

After returning from Sept-Iles, Reimer plans to pursue her studies with Norquest College, taking a program to work with those who have been abused or are addicted to drugs or alcohol.

Ashley Reimer told Sweetgrass that her interest in the program was "based on Aboriginal focus and culture."

Anyone interested in finding out more about Canada World Youth, which takes youth from ages 17-21 years, is encouraged to check out the Web site www.canadaworldyouth.org or to e-mail Reimer at scarlentine@hotmail.com. Youth spend three months in a country in Asia, South America or Africa before returning to Canada to carry out similar work in a Canadian community.

The organization is presently recruiting for 2008 participants.



Marvin Yellowbird was selected as the new Samson Cree Nation chief and his first official day as Chief was March 3. Yellowbird brings a wealth of experience to this position. He is Chairman of the Peace Hills Insurance Company, a member of the Board of Directors of Peace Hills Trust and Chairman of the Samson Education Trust Fund.



Windspeaker - AMMSA's 25th Anniversary Open House

Please join us as we celebrate Windspeaker and AMMSA's 25th Anniversary. Some special invited guests will be in attendance along with the AMMSA Board of Directors, management and staff. Ceremonies will be held at noon. Food and refreshments will be served.

We will also be conducting tours of our facilities including CFWE radio Station.



March 14th, 2008
11:00 am - 4:00pm
Noon: Ceremonies
Refreshments will be served
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Edmonton, AB
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Prairie art need more exposure

By JOE COUTURE
Sage Writer

REGINA

Aboriginal art is in a renaissance period on the prairies, but more needs to be done to encourage its continued success, according to an expert from the University of Regina (U of R).

Dr. Carmen Robertson, assistant professor of art history in the department of visual arts at the U of R, shared information about Aboriginal artists and images of their work during a presentation entitled, "Red Renaissance: Aboriginal Arts from the Flatlands" on Jan. 31 in Regina.

Robertson went through a slideshow filled with images of work created by prairie Aboriginal artists. As she explained the depth of history and meaning behind each work, it was apparent that the assembled group of listeners was fascinated by the new information to which they were being exposed.

"I think the title, Red Renaissance, really promotes a new way of thinking about contemporary Aboriginal art in the prairies," Robertson explained. "We have made a strong contribution and artists are continuing to make a strong contribution, so I just wanted to let people in the community know how important our artists are."

"Louis Riel talked about how our people will sleep for 100 years and when they wake up it will be the arts that show them the way," she continued. "I think that's the idea of renaissance, or rebirth, that we're seeing — sort of this de-colonizing spirit that's taken hold through art as a first line of defence. It's often art that really inspires people to change."

Robertson accompanied the showing of images of artwork with a lecture describing some of the factors that came together for each artist, and the history and awareness of Aboriginal issues on which each drew. Deep symbolism and meaning spoke to the richness of each piece. Each made a powerful statement, especially when accompanied with information about the artist and the work. Robertson said this is important to getting the artists' messages out to the community.

"Accessibility to information and understanding the pieces is

important," she said. "Even my students at the university find it difficult to write papers on contemporary Aboriginal artists, because there's nothing written about them. We have a lot of work to do in getting those messages out. Some arts magazines in Canada have begun to include the work of Aboriginal artists, but it's very sketchy at this point."

While recent years have brought some positive attention to Aboriginal arts on the prairies, artists continue to struggle against a lack of funding and a lack of public coverage of their work.

Some have received more recognition elsewhere than in their own communities, Robertson said.

"In some ways, they actually are more well-known or recognized on a national or international scale."

"In Germany, these people are Gods," said Robertson jokingly. "In our own community, within the media, going to galleries around, we don't see a lot of their work. However, the Saskatchewan Arts Board has really tried to make inroads to change those perceptions, to give grants to Aboriginal artists in ways that other provinces have not."

"Provincially, arts bodies look to Saskatchewan as a leader for their importance in helping Aboriginal artists. So, in one way we're really ahead of the game, in funding and in promoting the arts. Yet in mainstream culture, we just don't have very many opportunities to get that message out."

Finding funding, venues to show work and help in getting word out about one's work are all huge challenges for Aboriginal artists, especially emerging ones, Robertson said.

"Being able to make your work and feed your family at the same time is not an easy issue," she said. "Also, finding venues to show your work is very difficult in Canada for Aboriginal artists and we don't see a lot of opportunities for emerging artists to look to a strong history or direction they can go in, so a lot of them are re-inventing the wheel."

"I think that the artists themselves are pushing the envelope and they're trying exciting new things. It's just that they're not necessarily finding that support that's needed."

Find more of everything online at www.ammsa.com

Participate

INFORMATION CENTRE: REVIEW OF PROPOSED OPERATIONS

French/Severn Forest 2009-2019 Forest Management Plan

The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) and Westwind Forest Stewardship Inc. and the Local Citizens Committee invite you to attend a public information centre to help us in the development of the 2009-2019 forest management plan for the French/Severn Forest.

The purpose of this notice is to ask you to review and comment on the areas we have identified for harvest, renewal and tending operations, the nature of those operations and the proposed road locations and conditions, for the first five-year term of the plan. We also want you to review and comment on the areas where harvest, renewal and tending operations are preferred to occur during the second five-year term of the plan, as well as the proposed one kilometer wide corridors for each new primary and branch road which is planned for construction during the ten-year period of the plan. Additions that you can provide to the background information, previously made available, will be appreciated.

To assist in your review and comment of the proposed operations for the French/Severn Forest, other information and maps will be available at the information centre for you to examine, or can be obtained upon request. The information available includes a summary of the MNR Regional Director endorsed long-term management direction for the forest; and map(s) summarizing the proposed, preferred and optional areas for harvest, renewal and tending operations, as well as the proposed one kilometer wide primary and branch road corridors.

Maps, with information such as fish and wildlife habitat features (e.g., lake trout lakes, heronries), parks and protected areas, tourism facilities as well as many other features on the French/Severn Forest are available on request. These maps, known as "values maps", will be useful for anyone with a general or specific interest in this management unit.

The opportunity to review proposed operations for the 2009-2019 forest management plan for the French/Severn Forest will occur at the information centres shown, held at the following times and locations:

March 27, 2008
2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Quality Inn and Conference Centre (formerly Jolly Roger)
1 J.R. Drive, R.R.2, Parry Sound, ON

March 29, 2008
1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Hidden Valley Resort
1755 Valley Road, Huntsville, ON

Comments on the proposed operations for the French/Severn Forest must be received by Joe Johnson of the planning team at the MNR Parry Sound District Office, by **May 27, 2008**.

The plan is being prepared by the following planning team members:

Joe Johnson, MNR, Chair
Maxine Davidson, Westwind Forest Stewardship Inc.,
Project Manager
Barry Davidson, Westwind Forest Stewardship Inc.,
Plan Author
Michael Henry, Westwind Forest Stewardship Inc.,
Operations Forester/Operations Planning
Dave Deugo, MNR, Area Forester
Jan McDonnell, MNR, Area Wildlife Biologist
Laura Heidman, MNR, Resource Liaison Specialist
Dave Miles, MNR, GIS Officer
Kim Benner, MNR, District Planner
Gord Martin, MNR, Area Lands Technician
John McNutt, Tembec Industries Inc.,
Forest Industry Representative
Vern Fallows, Parry Sound District Local
Citizens Committee
Wayne Pamajewon, Aboriginal Representative
Shawanaga First Nation
Wanda Noganosh, Aboriginal Representative
Magnetawan First Nation

The planning team members, the MNR District Manager and the local citizens committee are available during the planning process to meet and discuss your interests and any issues or concerns you may have. A formal issue resolution process, as described in the *Forest Management Planning Manual (2004)*, can be initiated upon written request. A summary of all comments collected throughout the planning process will be made available to the public in a summary form during the planning process and for the duration of the approved ten-year plan.

Following this opportunity to review the proposed operations, there are two remaining consultation opportunities, tentatively scheduled as follows:

Public Information Centre: Review of Proposed Operations
Public Information Centre: Review of the Draft Forest Management Plan
Public Inspection of MNR-Approved Forest Management Plan

March 27, 2008 – May 27, 2008
September 4, 2008 – November 4, 2008
January 15, 2008 – February 15, 2009

The draft forest management plan is tentatively scheduled to be submitted on July 1, 2008.

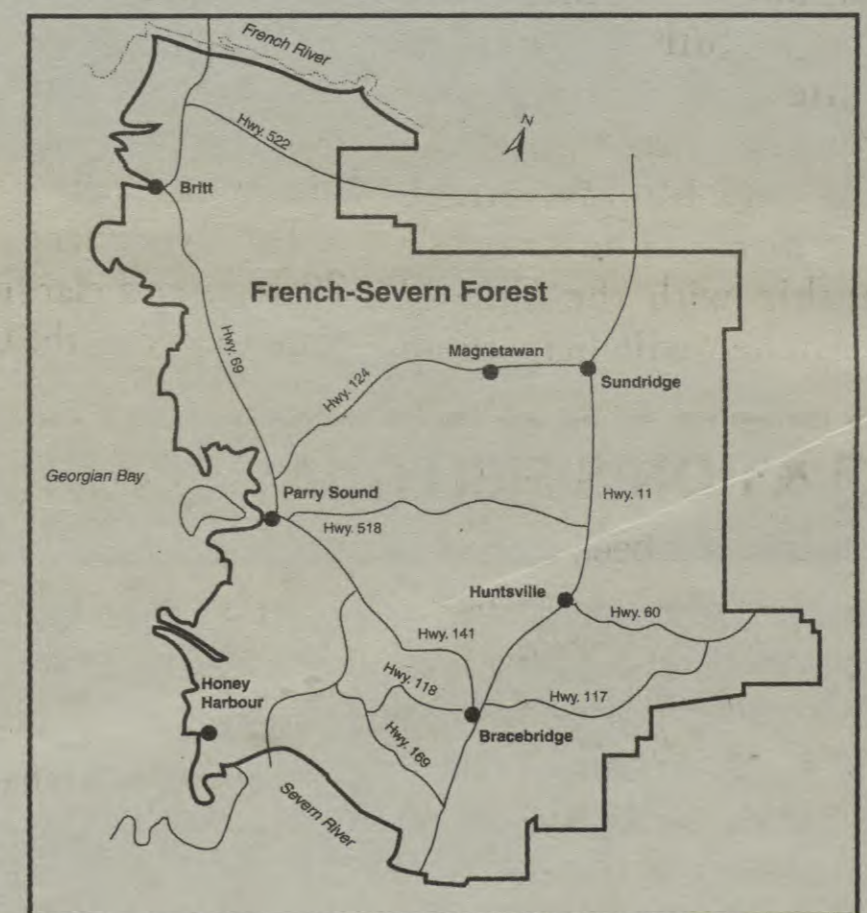
Comments are collected and documented as part of the public consultation process for forest management as required under the *Crown Forest Sustainability Act*. Under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (1987)* or FIPPA, personal information will remain confidential unless prior consent is obtained. However, this information may be used by the Ministry of Natural Resources as public input on other resource management initiatives. For further information regarding FIPPA, please contact Anne Collins at 705-646-5553.

The information and maps described in this notice, as well as general information regarding the forest management planning process, will also be available for review and comment, for a 60-day period (March 27, 2008 – May 27, 2008) after the information centre(s) at the Westwind Forest Stewardship Inc. office and at the MNR office during normal office hours. As well, an appointment with the ministry's Parry Sound District Manager or with a planning team member during non-business hours may be made by calling 705-773-4238. For further information, please contact any of the following individuals during normal office hours:

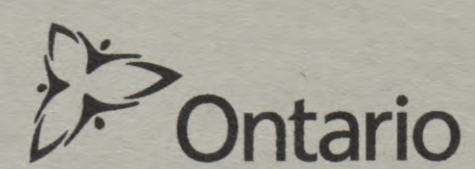
Joe Johnson, R.P.F.
Ministry of Natural Resources
7 Bay Street
Parry Sound, ON P2A 1S4
Tel.: 705-773-4238

Barry Davidson, R.P.F.
Westwind Forest Stewardship Inc.
74 Church Street
Parry Sound, ON P2A 1Z1
Tel.: 705-746-6832, ext. 24

Vern Fallows
LCC Chair
1419 South Rill Lake Rd., RR #1
Baysville, ON P0B 1A0
Tel.: 705-767-2325



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Historic Agreement for Cree in Quebec won't be forgotten

By Peter Derbawka
Birchbark Writer

JAMES BAY

"February 21 is a date that will not be forgotten by the Cree Nation," said Matthew Mukash, Grand Chief of the Quebec Cree. That is the date he and the Honourable Chuck Strahl, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and non-Status Indians signed an Agreement Concerning a New Relationship between the Government of Canada and the Cree of Eeyou Istchee.

The Cree of Eeyou Istchee live in nine communities on the shores of James Bay and Hudson Bay, as well as further inland.

"Our Government's commitment and decisive approach puts the past to rest, and will clear the way for the Cree to become a full partner in economic and resource development in northern Quebec," said Minister Strahl. "Our new constructive relationship with the Cree of Eeyou Istchee will help them

become more self-sufficient, resulting in a brighter future for the Cree and for all Canadians."

The agreement includes \$1.4 billion in compensation.

It brings resolution to litigation over past implementation of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA), and resolves other disputes not necessarily related to the JBNQA.

The signing is the culmination of over 30 years of activity.

"This agreement is forward-looking as it provides the Cree the resources to implement outstanding obligations of Canada in the 1975 James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement," said Grand Chief Mukash.

"It also sets in motion what is probably the most important initiative since 1975, the development of a new Cree Government."

"I look forward to working with Canada and Quebec in the near future to make this a reality that benefits all."

The Agreement is in place for 20 years and clarifies the federal responsibilities the Cree Regional

Authority will administrate. It establishes a two-phased process for modernizing Cree governance and a dispute resolution mechanism.

Originally signed in 1975, the JBNQA was, according to an INAC News Release, Canada's first modern treaty. It dealt with land and other issues dating back to the late 1800s.

The Quebec Cree will now assume federal responsibilities primarily in the areas of administration of justice and economic and social development.

In the second phase of negotiations, the Grand Council of the Cree and the Government of Canada will address the modernization of the Cree's governance regime.

The first step will be to determine which "jurisdictions and authorities" will be the subject of self-government negotiations with the Cree government.

This process will begin in the next few months.

"We will begin negotiations toward the creation of a Cree

Nation Government, by way of a Cree Constitution," said Grand Chief Mukash.

"We're hoping to have an Agreement in Principle within two years. Then there will be an additional three years to negotiate a Final Agreement. If no agreement is reached by then, there is a provision that the parties can decide if more time is required."

"What we hope is to come up with a model of government that other First Nations can use in their negotiations with the federal government."

Quebec will be a part of the process, and the Grand Chief said that the relationship with the provincial government has been good for some time.

When asked what changed in the relationship with the Government of Canada, he said, "we signed a separate agreement with Quebec in 2002, and the federal government saw that as an opportunity to conclude this agreement."

"This is a new beginning for our people," said Grand Chief Mukash.

Scholarship for Ontario Producers

Ontario based media producers will have the opportunity to pursue professional development through a 21-day residency at the Banff New Media Institute at the Banff Centre with the financial support of the Quebecor Fund.

The Quebecor Fund Scholarship, under the banner of The Banff New Media Institute & Quebecor Production Fellowship will support two Ontario based producers at a value of up to \$5000 each.

The scholarship will provide the participants with world-class support, professional development, mentoring, and career guidance. It will also allow content creators to gain experience and expertise in diverse areas of production and technology.

The Quebecor Fund for Professional Development in Film and Television has been established as part of the SUNTV benefits package.

The fund will support innovative initiatives for experienced professionals from under-represented groups.

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[windspeaker confidential] — Art Napoleon

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

Art Napoleon: My best friends are trustworthy, dependable, loyal, funny and free of judgment. True friends are hard to stumble on.

W: What is it that really makes you mad?

A.N.: Corporate/consumer madness and the basic garden variety stupidity surrounding most corporations and consumers.

W: When are you at your happiest?

A.N.: Camping with loved ones in the real wilderness.

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

A.N.: Insane

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

A.N.: Oliver Shouting from the Blood reserve. I like his integrity, his sincerity, his faith, his giving heart and his sense of humor.

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

A.N.: Deal with the deaths of close friends and family members.

W: What is your greatest

accomplishment?

A.N.: I think my kids are but I didn't have much to do with making them so maybe just staying alive long enough to become a sober and conscious person.

W: What one goal remains out of reach?

A.N.: To play in the NHL or fight in the UFC cha!

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

A.N.: I would be living part-time in a wilderness cabin. Maybe I'd get back to ceremonies and traditions and back to writing. Spend more time learning things I want to learn.

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

A.N.: There have been some doozies like 'get on with your life you wimp' or 'get out of bed you lazy bugger' but the best one this decade is "life is short and fragile so find balance between changing the world and accepting it just as it is".

W: Did you take it?

A.N.: I'll be working at this one a while. Sometimes I'm still a wimp and a lazy bugger.

W: How do you hope to be remembered?

A.N.: As an intertribal man of mystery who lived fully, left a trail of broken hearts, left a fortune for his kids and died painlessly.

Cree singer/songwriter Art Napoleon has just released a new CD called *Mocikan: Songs for learning Cree language*, which features sing-along songs for practicing the sounds of Cree, but anyone can enjoy the music.

His album *Miyoskamin* has been nominated for several Canadian Music Awards; he's definitely found an audience for his rootsy music infused with northern humour mixed with folksy wisdom. Raised to become a bushman in the northern woodlands, he may have been a trapper had the music bug not bit him. He can tell a story as well as he can sing a song and his material is both deeply spiritual and irreverent, whether he's singing about mail order brides or "dancing for the buffalo and praying for this land." Napoleon has been featured on radio and television programs including *Basic Black*, *Dead Dog Cafe*, and *APTN's Cree for Kids*; he is currently host of *CHUM TV's The New Canoe*; an Indigenous Arts, Culture and Travel show.



Film tells survival story of the Kwaxkwaka'wakw people

By Marie Burke
Windspeaker Staff Writer

Qualicum Beach, BC

One of the first things that strikes you about *Smoke From His Fire* is the scenic natural setting of the northwest coast that tells of the connection to supernatural forces, of a people's sensitivity and the fortitude of Clan Chief Adam Dick and his people: the Kwaxkwaka'wakw.

"It's a story of survival; it's a story of how people dealt with the coming destruction of their culture, and every culture had their own method of trying to preserve what was under siege," said Kim Reclama-Clutesi, co-producer, co-director and writer of *Smoke From His Fire*.

The Kwaxkwaka'wakw people received a message to prepare for that destruction when Adam Dick's mother had a prophetic dream about her son before he was born. This is where the film starts and takes us on a captivating journey into a world of culture, ritual and ethnic cleansing.

Reclama-Clutesi makes it very clear that it isn't her who is giving this information. She is only told about the dream and retelling it through the film about how serious the dream was taken. Dick, who is known as Kwaxsitalla, was born in 1929, at the height of the government's horrendous and lawful measures to assimilate Aboriginal people into a way of life completely foreign to their own.

Dick did not have a normal upbringing and was heavily protected as a young person. He was not allowed to have immunizations and was hidden from the police who came to take his peers to residential school.

His training to be a Clan Chief started with an initiation into the Psa'sa, which lead him to hold several potlatch seats and knowledge of a complete seasonal round of food gathering practices of his people. The Psa'sa was an investment system for the Kwaxkwaka'wakw person that is now known as the Potlatch system.

The anti-potlatch laws came into effect in the late 1800's and there had been a devastating loss of Native people on the west coast of British Columbia. This all coincided with the institution of residential schools, and laws instituted and carried out against the Kwaxkwaka'wakw people for practicing their own cultural laws and dances. The people resisted the only way they knew how and that was through the precise training that Kwaxsitalla was given from birth. Today, there are only a handful of people with the knowledge of cultural laws, protocols and history, said Reclama-Clutesi.

"So much had been taken away that Aboriginal people went into a recovery mode," she said.

That is what she found remarkable and why she wanted to tell this story because the people fought back, she said. So much of their world had been devastated so rapidly there were few opportunities to fight back in



Clan Chief Adam Dick

an appropriate manner. It was against the law until 1951 to practice the cultural ceremonies central to their existence.

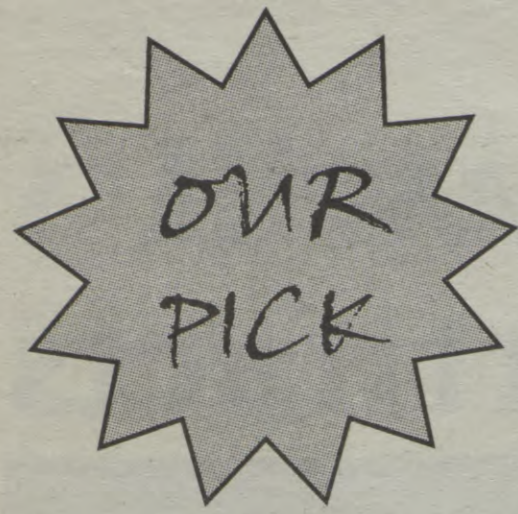
"It always worried me that our own people were turning towards each other to blame for what happened. Our languages were decimated by the residential school, but Adam said you can't blame the people," said Reclama-

Clutesi.

Reclama-Clutesi is Kwaxsitalla's traditional wife in the ways of their culture. Midway through the interview, she asks for a moment while she takes time to give Kwaxsitalla his insulin shot. At 79, he is dealing with diabetes and heart disease, and Reclama-Clutesi knows it's a race now against time. She

believes it is so important to document the vast amount of knowledge he carries for future generations. *Smoke From His Fire* aired on APTN Feb. 20. The film received a nomination from the American Indian Film Festival, held in San Francisco last year. Reclama-Clutesi is currently working out a DVD distribution agreement.

BERT CROWFOOT



Artist—Will Belcourt
 Album—Full Moon
 Blanket
 Song—Fire
 Label—Independent
 Producer—Will Belcourt

[radio's most active]

ABORIGINAL RADIO MOST ACTIVE LIST

Belcourt produces soulful tracks

If all musicians were paid every time they wrote a song about the weary heartaches of love, they would all be millionaires. There are only a certain number of artists that can pull it off. Will Belcourt is one of them. Not only is the song "Fire" upbeat with a folky rhythmic heartbreak lullaby, Belcourt includes his influential touch of Jimi Hendrix and attaches it perfectly with a hint of original rock riffs and as a bonus, some catchy harmonizing. Fire is...you guessed it a song about the loss of love, the only difference is it won't leave you sad when it's over; but with more of a sense of contentedness and a sense of strength.

Born in the Métis Community of Marlboro which is near Grande Cache, Alta, Belcourt is of Cree, Iroquois and Scottish Descent. He resides in Edmonton and is no 'newbie' when it comes to the music scene, he has been playing as a professional musician for over 15 years.

Like the majority of gifted guitar players he began his music journey with an old beat up guitar. His new folk/rock album, Full Moon Blanket is all original soulful material. Belcourt takes the bull by the horns and not only does vocals/guitar but also showcases his Rhythm, lead guitars, bass, drums, strings and piano abilities. His voice is heartfelt and full of hope and optimism.

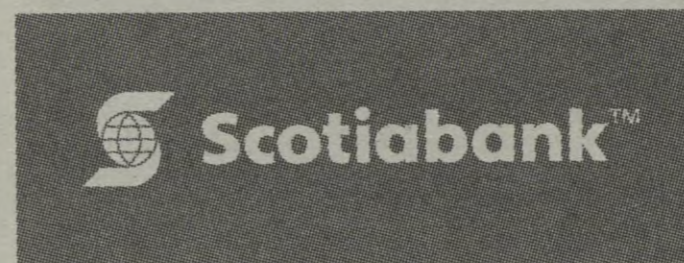
Taken from the lyrics of the song: "No time to be afraid, got to keep movin' on, got to keep movin' on." Are these words of wisdom or just another love song? It's up to you. For more information or to purchase the album go to: www.garageband.com/will_belcourt.

ARTIST	TITLE	ALBUM
Guy Chaput & Sci-fi	That Girl	Awakenings
Fara Palmer	Poor Me	Phoenix
Crystal Shawanda	You Can Let Go	Single Release
Gabby Taylor	You're The One	Where I Feel Alive
Farrah Meade	I'll Be Gone	Single Release
Black Rain	Wild Women	Hundred Dollar Hickey
The Breeze Band	Road To Eden	The Breeze Band
Holly McNarland	Mermaid	Chin Up Buttercup
Sandy Scofield/Kinnie Starr	Faith	Nikawiy Askiy
Mike Gouchie	Childhood Friend	Let It Rain Steve Rain&Friends
Derek Maurice	Forgive	I Am Derek Maurice
Little Hawk	Bottle Drinks From You, The	Home & Native Land
New Horizon	Woman In The Picture	Single Release
Segweh	Feels Like Rain	Single Release
Eagle & Hawk	It's About Time	Sirensong
Lester	Let Me Love You	Day One
Wade Fernandez	What You Didn't Say	4 The People
Ron Loutit	Molly	Mine To Discover
Yoza	Manitoba '49er	Good To Go
Hector	Die For Me	Rain Dancing

CONTRIBUTING
 STATIONS:



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Windspeaker sports briefs

By SAM LASKARIS

CURLERS HEAD TO SASKATOON

National bragging rights will be up for grabs in Saskatoon.

The Saskatchewan city will play host to the 2008 National Aboriginal Curling Championships. The event, which runs from Mar. 21 to 24, will be held at the Granite Curling Club.

The 2007 nationals were also held in Saskatchewan, in the town of Wynyard.

This year's Canadian bonspiel will feature a maximum of 72 teams, competing in four divisions.

The men's category has a 40-team limit. There's also a women's division, which can accommodate up to 16 teams.

The Canadian tournament will also offer youth divisions, both female and male, for those aged 19 and under. Both youth categories have a limit of eight entrants each.

Besides vying for national titles, teams will also be battling it out for some prize money. The winners of the men's division will take home \$4,000 as well as championship jackets, not bad considering the team entry fee in this grouping is \$400.

Several other men's team will also be awarded cash prizes. The second-place finishers will take home \$2,000. The squads that place third and fourth will both be presented with \$1,000 cheques. And teams that finish from fifth through 13th, will make \$600 each.

The registration deadline is Mar. 14. For more information call (306) 833-2420 or (306) 833-7766.

ABORIGINAL SPORTS CHALLENGE

The 2010 Winter Olympics in B.C. are still a couple of years away, but some Aboriginal youth have already benefited from the Games' existence.

That's because of the Aboriginal Youth Sports Challenge, part of the 2010 Legacies Now program, which has been introduced.

The challenge, which is aimed at Aboriginal youth, consists of a day of inspiration, competition and fun.

Besides having the opportunity to meet some of Canada's top Aboriginal athletes, the challenge allows youth to be introduced to various winter sports. And they have a chance to test their athletic abilities.

The challenge is made up of two parts. All youngsters can take part in the SportFit component where participants are challenged at various stations. Event stations include vertical jump, trunk flexion, basketball throw and 800-metre run.

There's also a Talent ID part to the challenge. Here participants can discover what it takes to be a top athlete. Challenge stations include a 30-metre sprint, push ups and a box jump.

SOURAY'S SEASON OVER

Sheldon Souray's homecoming was nowhere near as pleasant as he had anticipated.

Souray, a Native of Elk Point, Alta., was regarded as one of the National Hockey League's top free agents last summer.

Souray, who had suited up for the New Jersey Devils and Montreal Canadiens in his first eight NHL seasons, opted to return to his home province and sign a five-year deal with the Edmonton Oilers.

But Souray, who was coming off a season in Montreal where he registered career bests in goals (26) and points (64), was never really able to get on track with the Oilers.

The 31-year-old Souray appeared in just 26 games (he had 10 points, including just three goals) for Edmonton this season before injuries forced him out of the lineup for the remainder of this season in early February.

Souray underwent surgery to repair a separated shoulder and a torn labrum and bicep.

The Oilers, who are paying Souray more than \$5 million per season, are hoping their star blueliner is fully recovered in time for next season.

New sports gallery will house historical artifacts

By SAM LASKARIS
Windspeaker Writer

VANCOUVER

An Aboriginal Sports Gallery will be introduced as a new feature at the B.C. Sports Hall of Fame and Museum later this year.

The B.C. provincial government announced in mid-February that it was contributing \$75,000 to launch the gallery, which will include artifacts, displays, photographs and videos.

The initial phase of the gallery, which will feature an area of 300 square feet, is expected to open on June 21.

And then, if funding is secured, the second phase of the facility will be launched at some point in 2009. The anticipated expanded gallery would cover 1,000 square feet.

"I don't think any of us understood how many stories there were to tell," said Allison Mailer, the director of operations for the Vancouver-based B.C. Sports Hall of Fame and Museum. "The whole project has become bigger so there is a need for that extra funding."

The gallery currently has several partners. Besides the B.C. government and the hall of fame and museum, other partners include 2010 Legacies Now, Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games, Four Host First Nations and the Aboriginal Sport and Recreation Association of B.C.

Mailer said a fundraising committee is working on securing the necessary funds for the second phase of the gallery.

Mailer believes the gallery, which will only feature B.C. sporting figures and teams, will become a key part of the established hall and museum.

"I think it's going to be inspirational for First Nations communities and everybody else that sees it," she said.

The gallery's permanent home will be inside the B.C. Sports Hall of Fame and Museum, a facility located inside B.C. Place



This headdress belonged to Jean Baptiste Paul, one of Canada's professional wrestlers from 1930 to 1950. It will be one of the first artifacts that will be displayed in the Aboriginal Sports Gallery this year.

Stadium.

But portions of the gallery will also be roving as exhibits will be transported to various First Nations centres throughout British Columbia. For example, the gallery will be set up at the 2008 North American Indigenous Games in Cowichan Valley this August.

Mailer has seen various photographs and exhibits that will be part of the gallery. And she has been touched by the intensity displayed by many of those in photographs.

"At first it was a spark of an idea," she said. "Once we started the work on it we realized sport is just a way of life. It has meant so much to these (First Nations) communities for the past 100 years and more."

One of the first artifacts that will be displayed in the hall will be a full headdress made of eagle feathers. The headdress was the trademark of Jean Baptiste Paul, one of Canada's premier professional wrestlers who grappled under the nickname of Chief Thunderbird.

The headdress is the same one

Chief Thunderbird wore during his pro wrestling career, which lasted more than two decades, from the early 1930s to the mid-50s.

Chief Thunderbird, who was also a successful professional boxer, was a hereditary chief of B.C.'s Tsartlip First Nation. He died in 1966 at age 71.

Another exhibit will be a mural of the 1936 North Shore Indians lacrosse team. That club has already been inducted into the B.C. Sports Hall of Fame and Museum. Michael de Jong, the Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation Minister, believes the gallery will have a huge benefit.

"Aboriginal athletes in British Columbia have made great contributions to the world of sport but, until now, have never had a permanent place to celebrate their achievements," he said. "By creating this awareness and encouraging Aboriginal people to pursue healthy, active lives, this gallery will help support the province's efforts to close the gaps in health outcomes for Aboriginal people."

Aboriginal youth having Fun On Ice

Some Aboriginal youth in northern Canadian communities have been having some Fun On Ice this winter.

The Fun On Ice program is organized by the Aboriginal Sports Circle of the Western Arctic.

During the months of January, February and March, the Fun On Ice program was expected to hit nine communities in the North West Territories.

All of the communities were expected to have either an

outdoor or an indoor rink.

The Fun On Ice program was pencilled in to visit Trout Lake, Nahhanni Butte, Kakisa, Jean Marie River, Wrigley, Gameti, Wekweeti, Colville Lake and Tsiigehtchic.

For the majority of these communities, they had never received a visit before from such a program. The program is aimed at Aboriginal youth, aged 10 to 20. The objective of the program is to create sport awareness among Aboriginal youth, especially in

the remote N.W.T. communities. Program participants will hopefully realize the benefits of having an active lifestyle.

Organizers have planned a hockey program where they will teach some basic hockey skills.

Participants also learn about things such as fair play, both on and off the ice, as well as what it takes to be a member of a winning team.

Proper nutrition and maintaining a healthy lifestyle is also discussed.

CAAN launches year long AIDS campaign

BY SHARI NARINE
Windspeaker Writer

OTTAWA

Kevin Barlow is hoping that this is the year that HIV and AIDS come out of the closet for First Nations, Métis and Inuit people.

Barlow is the executive director of the Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network (CAAN), based in Ottawa. On Valentine's Day CAAN launched the first part of what will be a year long campaign targeting Aboriginal leaders and which will culminate during National Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week from Dec. 1 to 5 with a targeted 5,000 signatures on an on-line petition committing to ending HIV/AIDS stigma and discrimination.

Barlow contends that if leaders speak out publicly about HIV and AIDS, the stigma and discrimination faced by people in the community who have the disease will wear away.

"If elected leaders speak up it would help set the tone and say

that this is important for our community to know about and that I want my staff to do things to prevent this situation or if we have people in our communities who are HIV positive then we want to support them," explains Barlow.

Presently, many Aboriginal communities have closed the door to talking about HIV/AIDS. There are a number of reasons for that, said Barlow, which includes a lack of awareness about the prevalence of the disease and concerns surrounding other pressing issues. But the statistics are staggering.

According to Public Health Agency of Canada, the proportion of new HIV infections among Aboriginal Canadians in 2005 was at 53 per cent compared to 14 per cent for all Canadians; and during 1998-2006, almost half of the Aboriginal population who tested positive for HIV were women, while Aboriginal youth were three times more likely than their non-Aboriginal counterparts to test positive.

But leaders are more concerned with the visible issues of shelter, poverty and unemployment, said Barlow. "If somebody is offered a pamphlet on HIV/AIDS, but they don't know where they're going to get their next meal or don't know where they're going to be sleeping, that's part of the problem."

But there is another ignorance that has crept in and it's an ignorance of understanding and knowledge and that ignorance has bred discrimination.

Amber O'Hara hasn't spoken with her family for almost 10 years. "I chose not to have contact with them anymore," said the Cherokee/Ojibwa great grandmother, who now resides in Toronto. "It was too stressful for me."

O'Hara was raped in 1990, seven months later she tested positive for HIV. A year later, she developed AIDS.

"There is so much stigma attached," said O'Hara. "I think people are still coming from a place where they need to judge people."

And this stigma, said Barlow, is what could allow a disease – so preventable – to continue to spread within the Aboriginal community. "It still carries a lot of discrimination. In part because we're talking about some of the more taboo areas that people are uncomfortable with generally, like sex and sexuality, drug use, and that type of thing."

But there's more to it than that, said O'Hara. "I think a lot of people in our communities have this belief that people who get HIV somehow deserve to get HIV. Almost like it's a punishment from Creator for something we've done."

Denise Lambert, executive director with Kamamow Atoskanow Foundation, in Sandy Beach, northwest of Edmonton, works with youth on HIV/AIDS issues.

"There's a quietness sometimes about (HIV/AIDS) because often the issues around sexuality or addictions are based a lot of times in shame but also in uncertainty," said Lambert.

O'Hara understands the concept of shame. "My mother went to her grave never accepting the fact that I had AIDS. To her, this was the biggest shame that could come to our family. And I'm one of the few people who some people would say, 'Oh you didn't deserve to get it.' Nobody deserves to get it. But it's not like I went out and practiced unsafe sex or shared needles. I was raped. Even with those circumstances my own family to this day still

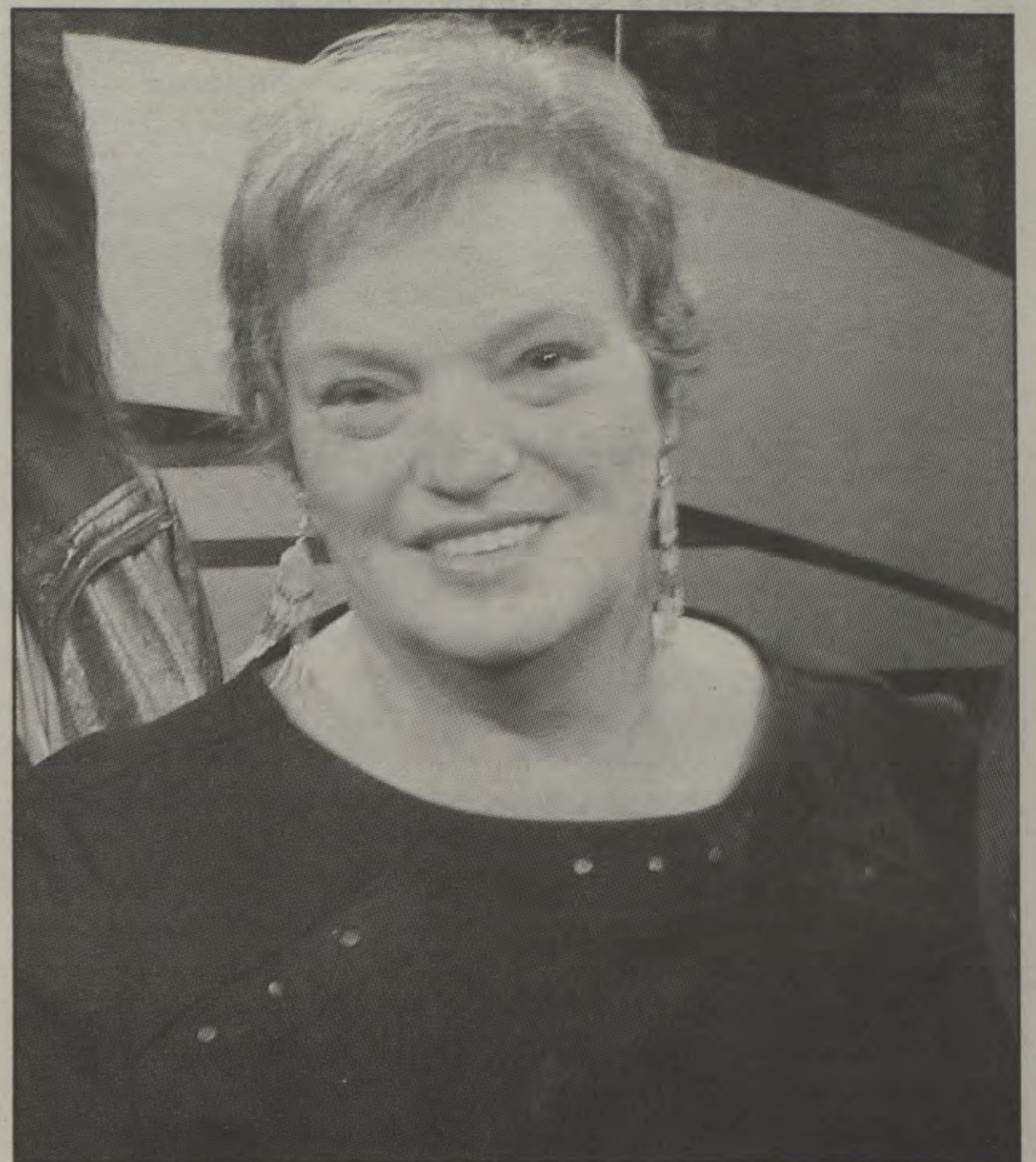


PHOTO COURTESY OF APTN

Amber O'Hara

cannot accept the fact that I have AIDS."

The inability for communities and their leaders to talk about the disease has resulted in two occurrences: Aboriginal people who have tested HIV positive or who have AIDS are not coming forward for help or support because of fear of discrimination; and, without status being disclosed, the disease has more opportunity to spread.

But disclosure, said Lambert, is a difficult situation. Even family support and a good care team doesn't mean the struggle is over. "There's a real fine line and it really ties in with some communities' attitudes around confidentiality because confidentiality is often viewed as people keeping a secret. The issues get really complex when you're dealing with close-knit communities. There has been a belief that when people are diagnosed with HIV that the community should be made aware of it so they can protect themselves. That can be a real heavy debate because people who have been open about their diagnosis have sometimes been harmed so there's a real fine line."

Barlow is counting on CAAN's newest campaign to address the stigma and discrimination surrounding the virus and disease.

Already Chief Bryan LaForme of the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation has agreed to endorse a public service announcement and CAAN will be approaching more leaders for similar endorsements. CAAN's

campaign will involve PSAs that appear in print and to be aired on television and radio. Print material with the facts and figures about the disease is also being developed and will specifically target leaders.

Aiming for 5,000 signatures on the on-line petition may be "ambitious," admits Barlow, but it'll mean that those many people are knowledgeable about HIV/AIDS; that they've made the commitment to end the stigma and discrimination surrounding the disease; that they support Aboriginal people who are living with HIV/AIDS; and that they are willing to work toward preventing the spread of the disease.

"There is an interconnection between doing prevention work but also changing the environments in our communities so that we're more able to absorb the information in a way that we can act on it," said Barlow.

Targeting the leadership, he said, is the most effective way to act on the stigma and discrimination associated with HIV/AIDS.

"By going to the leadership first we feel that it's going to take it to that next level where people then feel that they have the mandate from their leadership, that they have the ear of their leaders, and that they're given direction to say, 'We need to do something because we continue to grow every year and if we don't ramp up our effort we'll continue to see numbers rise,'" said Barlow.

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The Carrier language will expand into B.C.

BY PETER DERBAWKA
Windspeaker Writer

LAKE BABINE

A recently signed agreement will allow the Carrier Language to be expanded in British Columbia. The College of New Caledonia and the University of Northern British Columbia will be working with the Lake Babine Nation to implement a Carrier language program this fall.

UNBC was officially opened in 1994 in Prince George, with course offerings across northern B.C. Its total enrollment is over 4,000 students. The College of New Caledonia has been operating in B.C.'s Interior since the 1960's. The average annual enrollment is approximately 5,000 students.

Located in the geographical centre of B.C., Lake Babine First Nation is one of over 20 Carrier speaking First Nations.

Students completing the program will be eligible for certification by the B.C. College of Teachers.

"This will enable them to teach the Carrier language in local schools," said Monty Palmantier, education co-ordinator at Lake Babine Nation. While there have been various language programs at some facilities such as day cares, this program will allow for increased language instruction. "One of the things we are moving toward," he said, "is having teaching at the younger grade-school levels."

The program has the support of the community. "Education is

vital for the preservation of our language and culture, and this new partnership is an exciting development for the Lake Babine Nation," said Chief Betty Patrick.

A signing ceremony was held on Feb. 7, with participation from Chief Patrick, UNBC President Don Cozzetto and CNC Vice-President Academic Lynn Jacques.

The program will be taught at the CNC campus in Burns Lake as well as in classrooms within the Lake Babine Nation. This is the first time that UNBC has offered a complete program in Burns Lake.

The First Nations Language program has been delivered in a number of communities throughout northern BC. In Fort St. James (Nakazdli in the Carrier language), Carrier has been taught since 2006.

Other languages taught are Gitksan in Hazelton, Nisga'a in New Aiyansh, and Smalgyax (spoken by the Tsimshian Nation) in Prince Rupert.

The UNBC program is based on efforts by the Gitksan in Hazelton to keep their language. "In the 1990's, they did an objective analysis of the state of their language," reports Rob van Adrichem, director of media and public relations at UNBC.

"They estimated that if nothing was done, the language would be effectively extinct by 2014, based on the age of the speakers. It was then that the community and the University began to work together to give them the Certificates that the B.C. College of Teachers would recognize."



From left to right: Deputy Grand Chief Ashley Isherhoff, Minister Chuck Strahl and Grand Chief Mukash visit a cultural camp just outside the community of Mistissini on Feb. 7.

The enrollment is expected to be about 25 students. They will be taught by instructors from the CNC, UNBC, and the Lake Babine Nation. This is one of the important features of the program.

"All of the programs," said van Adrichem, "feature local speakers of the language, who don't have university credentials, but the university is recognizing their expertise. That's why it's a partnership; the community tells us who the experts are, and UNBC provides the credentials. If the community thinks it's important, then it's up to UNBC to respond."

Students can enroll for different periods of time. One year of classes will earn the student a certificate in the Carrier language. Two years will give them a Diploma, and those who complete three years will be eligible for certification as teachers with the B.C. College of Teachers upon completion of the two year Bachelor of Education degree program. Those without the B.Ed. will be able to teach only the language, not other subjects.

While many First Nation languages have been lost, the state of the Carrier language is viable. However, most of the fluent

speakers were born before the mid-1970's.

According to INAC research published on its Web site in 2004, as of 1996 the Carrier language was classified as "viable but spoken by a small population of more than 1,000 speakers and spoken in isolated and/or well-organized communities with strong self-awareness." At that time there were 2,190 people speaking the language. However, the language was still viable, since even languages spoken by less people can survive if "sufficient community interest and concerted educational programs are present."

Mi'kmaq and Maliseet languages to be revitalized

BY HEATHER ANDREWS
MILLER
Windspeaker Writer

WOODSTOCK, N.B.

Mi'kmaq and Maliseet Languages Preserved

The federal government has announced funding which will support a range of activities which will maintain and revitalize the Aboriginal languages through workshops, camps, curriculum development and documentary film-making to name just a few.

Mike Allen, member of parliament for Tobique-Mactaquac, made the announcement on February 19 at Woodstock, New Brunswick on behalf of the Honourable Josee Verner, minister of Canadian Heritage, Status of Women, and Official Languages. "The government of Canada is pleased to provide this funding as part of its support for Aboriginal language preservation," Verner said. "Providing tools and materials for the preservation and teaching of First Nations languages will

help safeguard an important part of Canadian heritage."

The funding, which amounted to \$737,613, will be given to the Assembly of First Nations regional office for New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island who will spearhead the project over a three-year period. "Languages play an important role in community and culture," said Allen. "These funds will help the AFN to undertake important work to document, promote and provide learning opportunities for the Mi'kmaq and Maliseet languages."

The Aboriginal Languages Initiative was established in 1998 in response to government commitments to work with Aboriginal people to preserve and protect Aboriginal languages. In 2007-08, the program delivered five million dollars in support of First Nations, Michif, and Inuit languages. Twenty-two Aboriginal organizations entered into agreements for language programs in their communities, with the AFN-NB/PEI being one of them.

Regional Chief Len Tomah, a

"Providing tools and materials for the preservation and teaching of First Nations languages will help safeguard an important part of Canadian heritage."

—Josee Verner

member of the Woodstock First Nation, said the funds will provide organizers an opportunity to get the materials needed to carry out the work. "It will allow the Elders to spend time with our youth and children to teach them about their language and culture and pass down valuable knowledge that will live on forever from one generation to another." Maliseet and Mi'kmaq are closely related and were separated fairly recently. They were the only languages spoken in the present-day Maritime provinces when the first Europeans arrived. As is the case with all indigenous languages, the younger

generations often do not consider it their first language, and speak mostly English or French.

Recently, Statistics Canada released data from the 2006 census that showed nearly all of Canada's Aboriginal languages are reporting fewer members who can speak their ancestral tongue fluently, and in some instances are down to a handful of speakers. It's estimated all lost about one-third of their mother-tongue speakers during the first half of the 1900s.

The program is delivered by Aboriginal organizations who submit proposals that meet requirements. The AFN-NB/

PEI program is one of 17 communities in the two provinces which have received funding since 2006 to be developed and facilitated by a third party partnership. The expected commencement date and training of teachers are to be announced by the AFN shortly.

Charles Drouin, spokesperson for Canadian Heritage explained that language is widely regarded as the vehicle by which societies reflect the unique world views to which they are linked.

"The overall goal of the Aboriginal Languages Initiative is to help preserve and promote Aboriginal languages for future generations of Aboriginal peoples and other Canadians," he said, adding that language is a critical component in the maintenance and transmission of cultural identity.

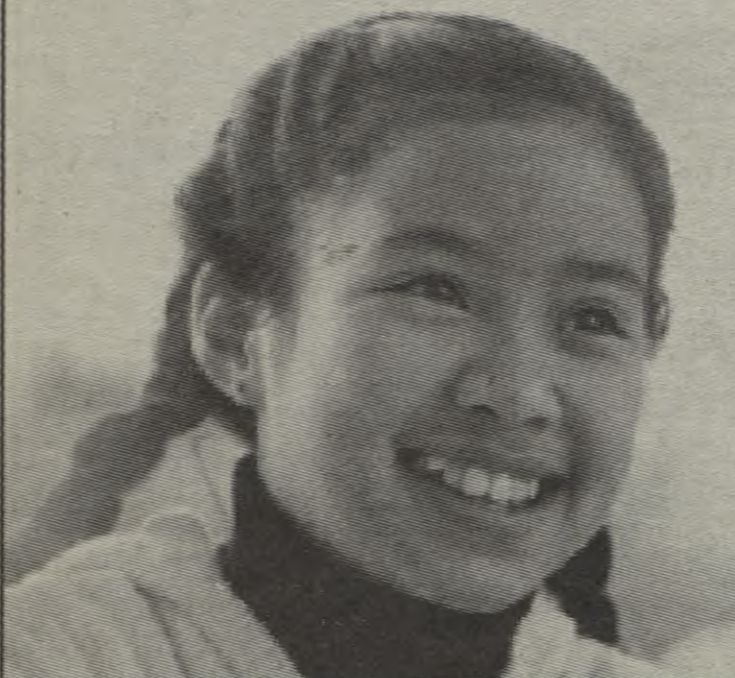
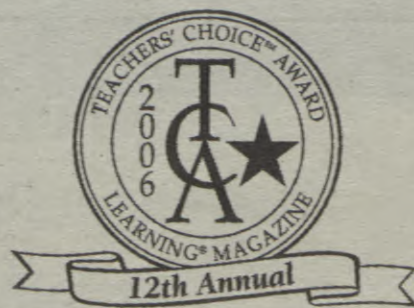
"Specific objectives of the program are to increase the number of language speakers by expanding the domains in which languages are spoken, and supporting intergenerational language speaking opportunities."

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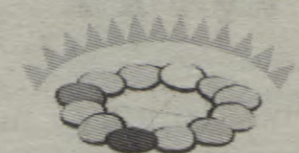
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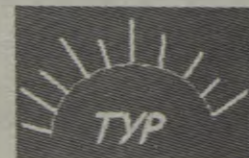
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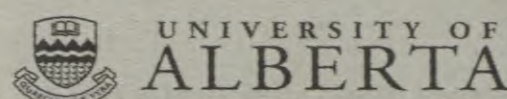
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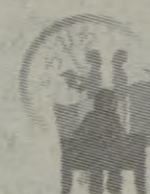
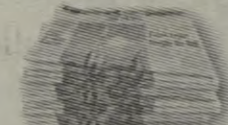
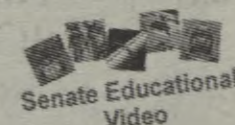
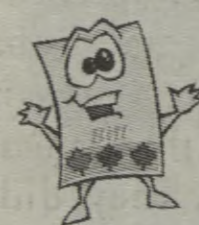
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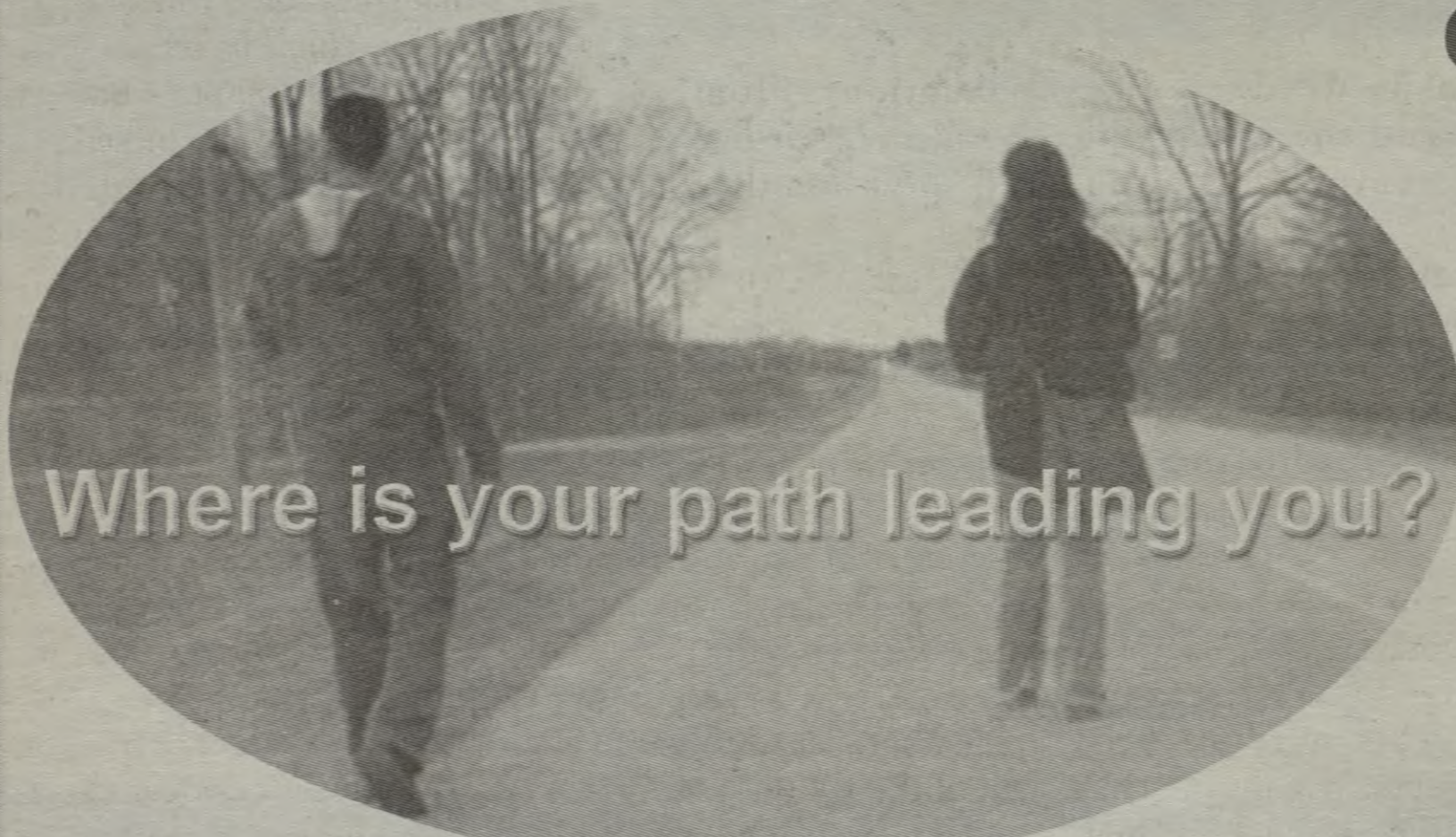
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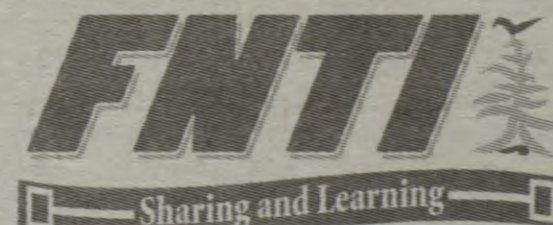
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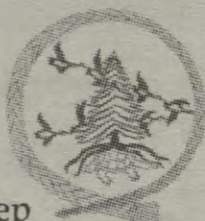


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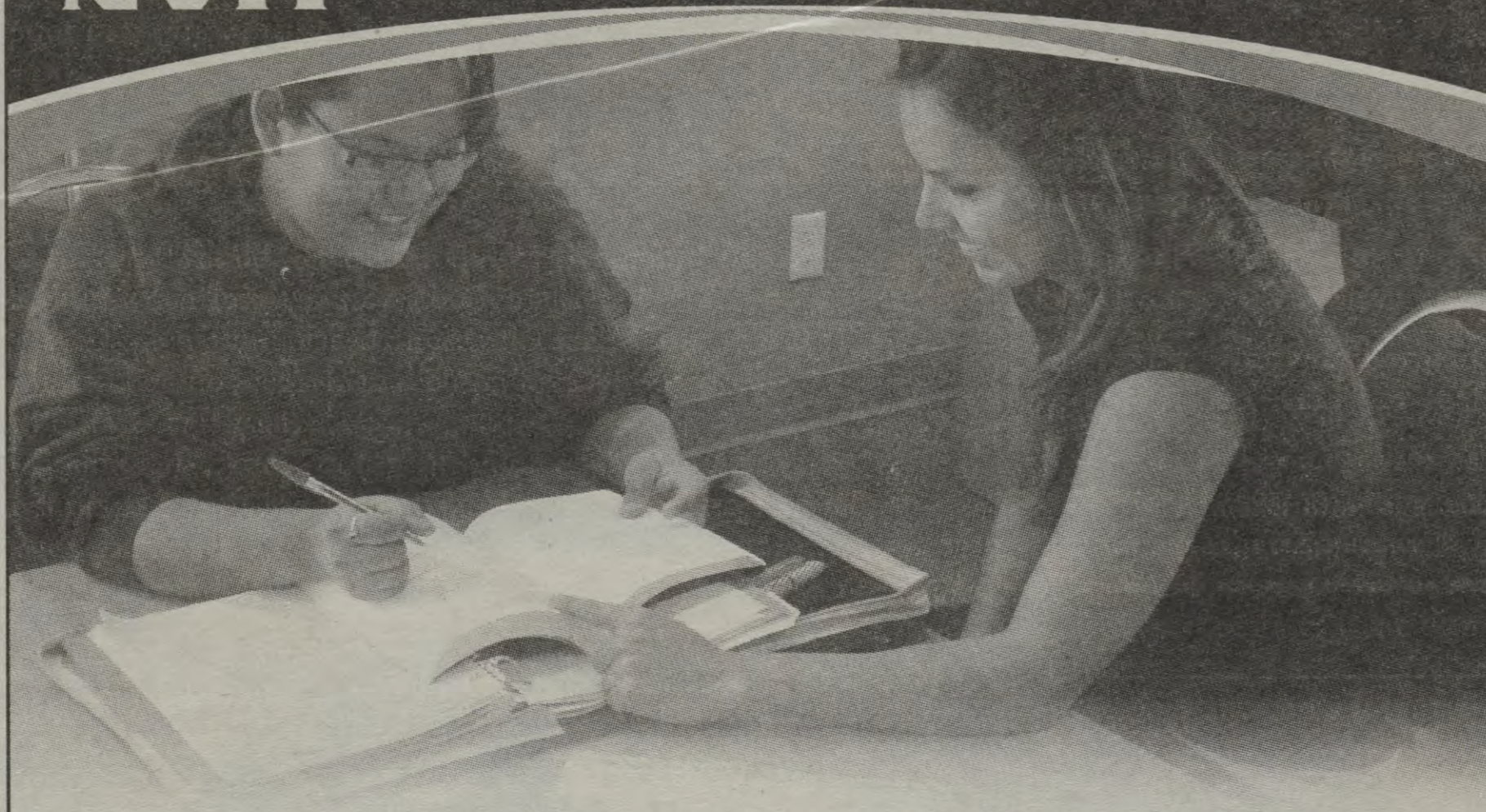
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[footprints] Nora Bernard

Nora Bernard fought for justice in the lives of family and friends

By Dianne Meili

Voice faltering, Natalie Gloade talks about the unread Christmas cards she found in her late mother's mailbox – holiday wishes from residential school survivors who wanted to thank Nora Bernard for going to bat for them.

Sadly, the Mi'kmaq Elder of Millbrook First Nation, near Truro, N.S., died on Dec. 27, 2007 before she could fully appreciate how much she means to a nation.

"People across Canada wrote to say thank you," explained Gloade. "They wrote to say the bit of settlement money they got didn't make up for what they suffered, but it did help them pay some bills and buy a few things. They wanted to tell her they appreciated her effort."

Just after an estimated 79,000 residential school survivors had received, or were yet to receive, compensation cheques resulting from a landmark lawsuit Bernard brought against the government for her mistreatment while attending residential school, their benefactor was found dead. Charged with her murder is James Gloade, Bernard's 24-year-old grandson.

Natalie, the mother of James, forthrightly apologizes for her son's actions.

"I apologize to my whole family and to the nation for what my son has done," she said. "(Police) said he was full of three or four different drugs when he killed his grandmother, but that's no excuse. He had a choice. He chose to take her life and he has robbed us. She was always there for him – feeding him and giving him money when he needed it. Now he's lost out, too. He sits in a cell. I guess it will be as people say – when the Creator comes finally to get him, he will see what justice is."

Even as police investigated the

murder at Bernard's house, Natalie said a woman who had been helped by her mother long ago drove up to see what was happening.

"She told us she remembered when my mom used to drive taxi. She mentioned to mom that she didn't have Pampers for her baby and mom went right out and bought her some – even though she was a single mom herself and raising six kids. That's how she was. She shared everything she had. And she always stuck up for people who couldn't help themselves."

As the second oldest in a family of six children, and the oldest of four sisters, "Nora took care of things when my dad left us, and she never stopped," said Bernard's younger sister, Linda Maloney, 64.

In residential school, Bernard continually stuck up for her siblings and other children who were treated cruelly.

"If she saw any of us being handled roughly, she fought the nuns," Maloney explained. "If she was in the kitchen, she'd get food for my youngest brother, Albert. I recall beatings, but nothing like Nora. She suffered for all of us."

Born in 1933, Bernard was delivered by her grandmother on the Millbrook First Nation.

"She married when she was young, 16 or 17," according to Maloney. "Her husband was non-Native and she was ousted from the band. She had a difficult time with that. She lived 37 feet from where she was born and raised on the reserve, but she didn't belong. From her house, she could see the sign for the reserve, but she was no longer a member."

It took Bernard 47 years to be reinstated, her membership being accepted just one year before her death. She had even planned to run for Millbrook First Nation chief in the upcoming election,

slated for February 28.

"Now that she can't, I'm going to run in her place," Natalie announced. "'Voice of Justice' is my campaign slogan. I'll take up where my mom left off – trying to bring justice for the wrongs against people who can't (advocate) for themselves."

Described by close friends as someone with "many pokers in the fire" who "never gave up" Natalie speaks of a certain characteristic that endeared her mother to many.

"Even though lots of people condemned her and said hurtful things to her because she spoke the truth – and many people don't want to hear it – she wasn't unpleasant back to them. She understood people who said inappropriate things when they're in conflict and under stress and they can't be held accountable. She never held grudges against anyone."

Among her many leadership roles, Bernard was a founding member of the Native Council of Nova Scotia, and the Residential School Survivors Association. As director of the survivors' group, she began meeting with fellow Shubenacadie survivors to discuss their experiences and try to reconcile the injustice they felt. Legal counsellors refused to represent her until she convinced Halifax lawyer John McKiggan to take her case. The first lawsuits over abuse were filed in 1990, but it wasn't until five years later that Bernard and her fellow survivors launched a class action suit.

"I firmly believe that if it wasn't for Nora's efforts, and other survivors like her across Canada, this national settlement never would have happened," McKiggan said in The Daily News of Halifax. He credited the determined Bernard for single-handedly making the settlement happen.



Nora Bernard a Mi'kmaq Elder from Millbrook First Nation died on Dec. 27. She will be remembered by most as a person who was always helping others.

"After we filed our lawsuit, a number of other students from other schools filed similar class actions. Those class actions eventually merged into one national class action suit."

Bernard received part of her residential school compensation in November 2007, though police do not believe her murder was connected to the money. She was able to use some of it to pay expenses like phone bills resulting from fellow survivors who called her long distance for advice.

"Nora lived humbly in her little house – she just wanted

something that was livable," Maloney said. "A councilor had put in for a house for her on the reserve and she was looking forward to that. Things were looking up for her and then she was taken away from us."

Sixty-one years after leaving residential school, Bernard succeeded in helping an entire nation of residential school survivors exact a measure of justice.

Righteousness in the lives of others is what she fought for, only to have an act of injustice take her own.



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Ceremonies will be held at noon.

Food and refreshments will be served.

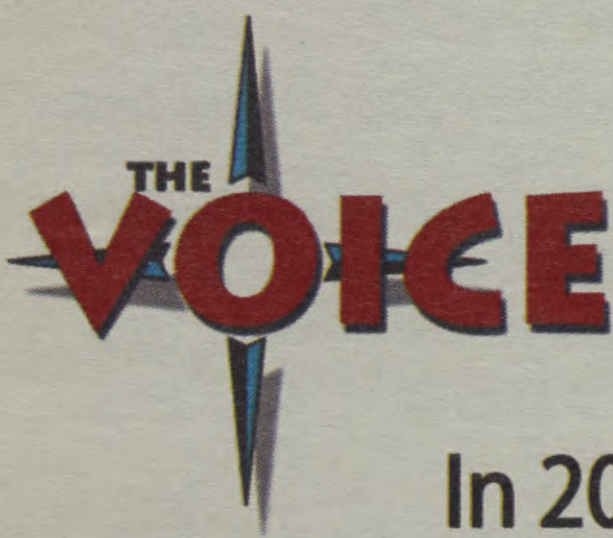
We will also be conducting tours of our facilities including CFWE radio Station.



Canada's National Aboriginal News Source

March 14th, 2008
11:00 am - 4:00pm
Noon: Ceremonies
Refreshments will be served
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In 2005, Paul Martin's Liberal Government negotiated the \$5.1B Kelowna Accord with First Nation, Métis Nation and Inuit leaders, as well as the settlement for residential school survivors.

Days later, NDP leader Jack Layton and Conservative leader Stephen Harper conspired to defeat the Liberal Government, ultimately killing the Kelowna Accord.

Stephen Harper's Conservative Government doesn't believe that the Kelowna Accord exists.

And NDP leader Jack Layton let that happen.

On election day, vote **Liberal**.

www.aboriginalvote.ca



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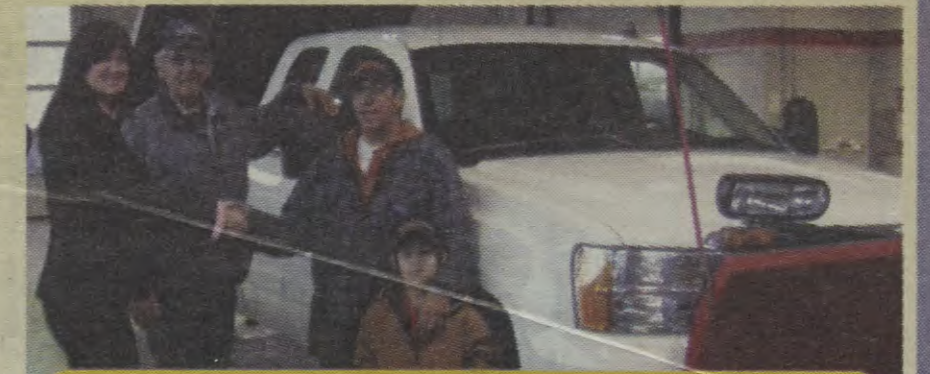
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