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Volume 25 No. 10 • January 2008

plus G.S.T.
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Aboriginal Multi-Media Society (AMMSA)

ISSN 0834-177X • Publications Mail Reg. No. 40063755

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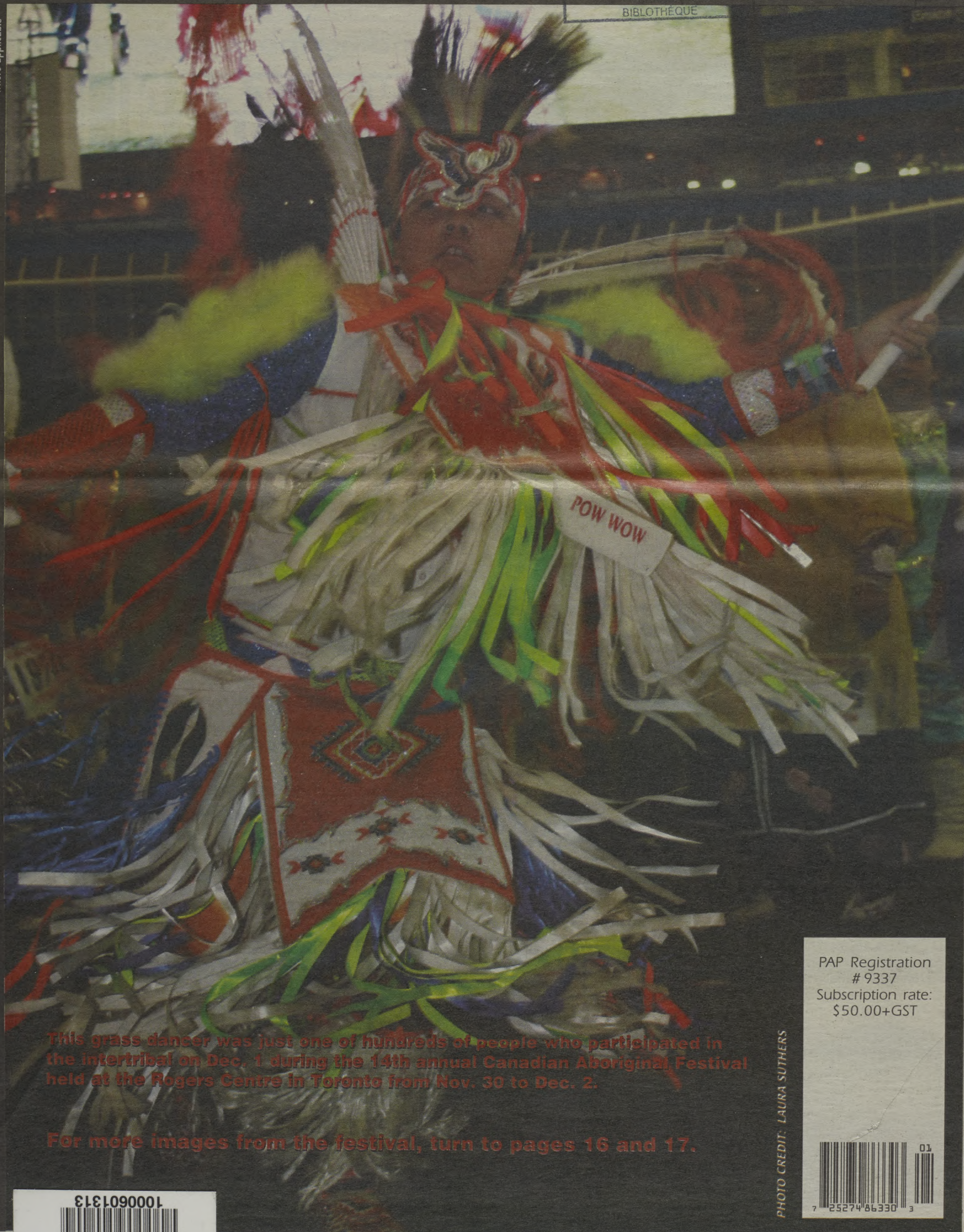
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Windspeaker



26401 1 02/26/2008
Indian & Northern Affairs Can. Department
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Canada's National Aboriginal News Source



This grass dancer was just one of hundreds of people who participated in the intertribal on Dec. 1 during the 14th annual Canadian Aboriginal Festival held at the Rogers Centre in Toronto from Nov. 30 to Dec. 2.

For more images from the festival, turn to pages 16 and 17.

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PHOTO CREDIT: LAURA SUTHERS



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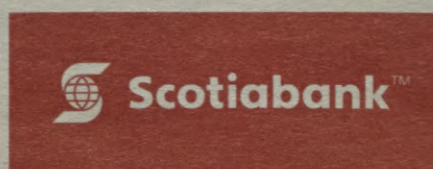
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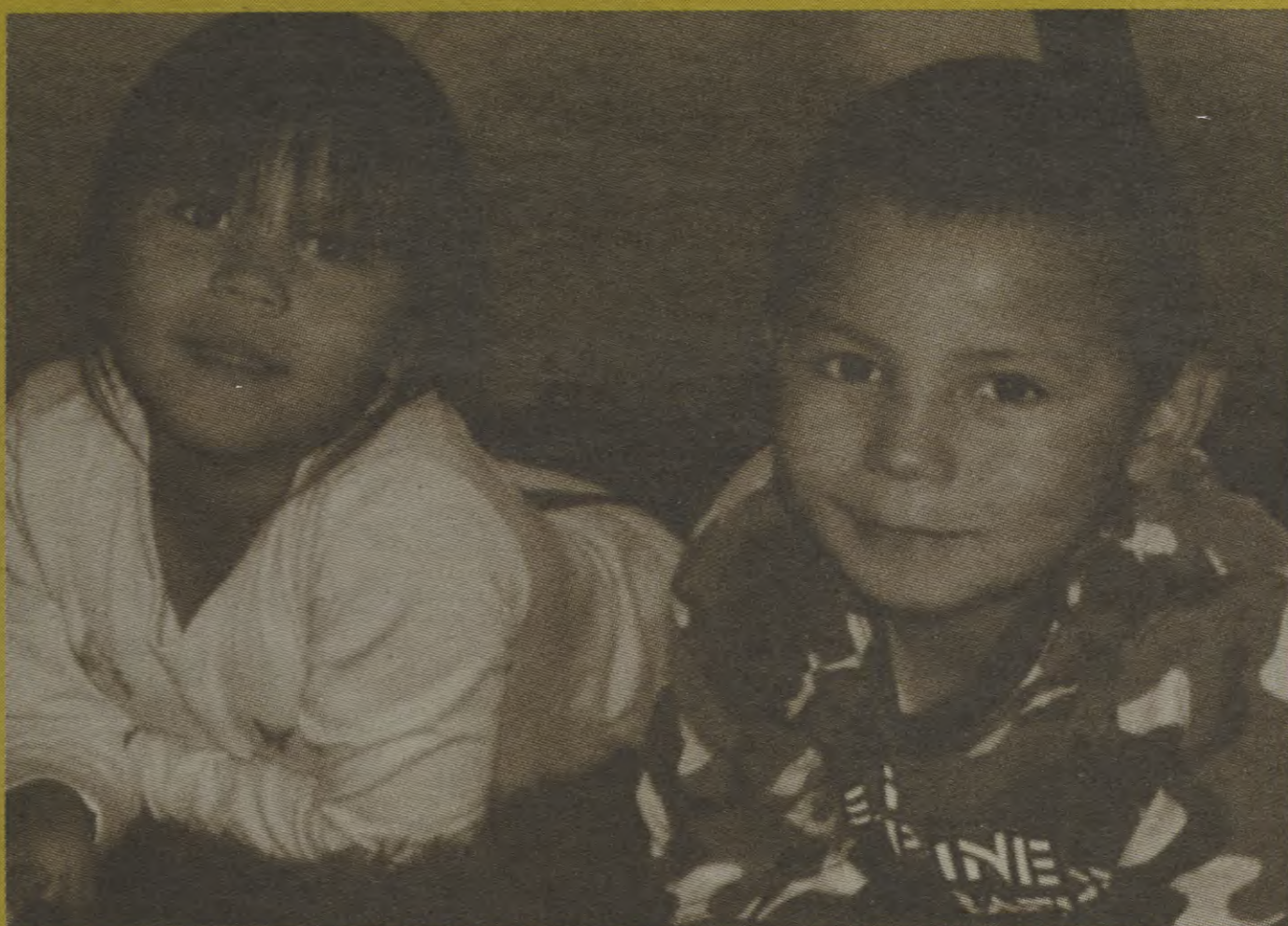
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Guide to Powwow Country (June): 27,000
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Letters to the editor and all undeliverable Canadian addressed copies can be sent to:

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E-mail: edwind@ammsa.com

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The advertising deadline for the February 2008 issue of Windspeaker is Jan. 24, 2008.
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We acknowledge the assistance of the Government of Canada through the Publications Assistance Program toward our mailing costs.

Canada

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Trial puts spotlight on missing women 8

Brenda Wolfe, Sereena Abotsway, Marnie Frey, Andrea Joesbury, Georgina Papin and Mona Wilson were all Aboriginal women who were loved and respected by their friends and family. And all six women died violent deaths at the hand of Robert Pickton, who on Dec. 9 was found guilty of six counts of second-degree murder in connection with those deaths.

Inquiry to shine light on coroner's findings 10

Wrongful convictions, ruined lives and families torn apart were the result of the questionable findings of a doctor who worked for the Office of the Chief Coroner for Ontario

Climate change a threat to Indigenous cultures 12

Excessive flooding, endangered animals, exotic insect migration and the onset of erratic weather patterns are the things Hollywood films are made of. But for three Indigenous nations from different regions of the globe, these occurrences are very real and gradually altering their way of life.

Appreciation and honour demonstrated at festival 16 & 17

The three grand entries of the Canadian Aboriginal Festival is what draws thousands of people from all over Canada to enjoy the stunning display of nearly 1,000 Native dancers.

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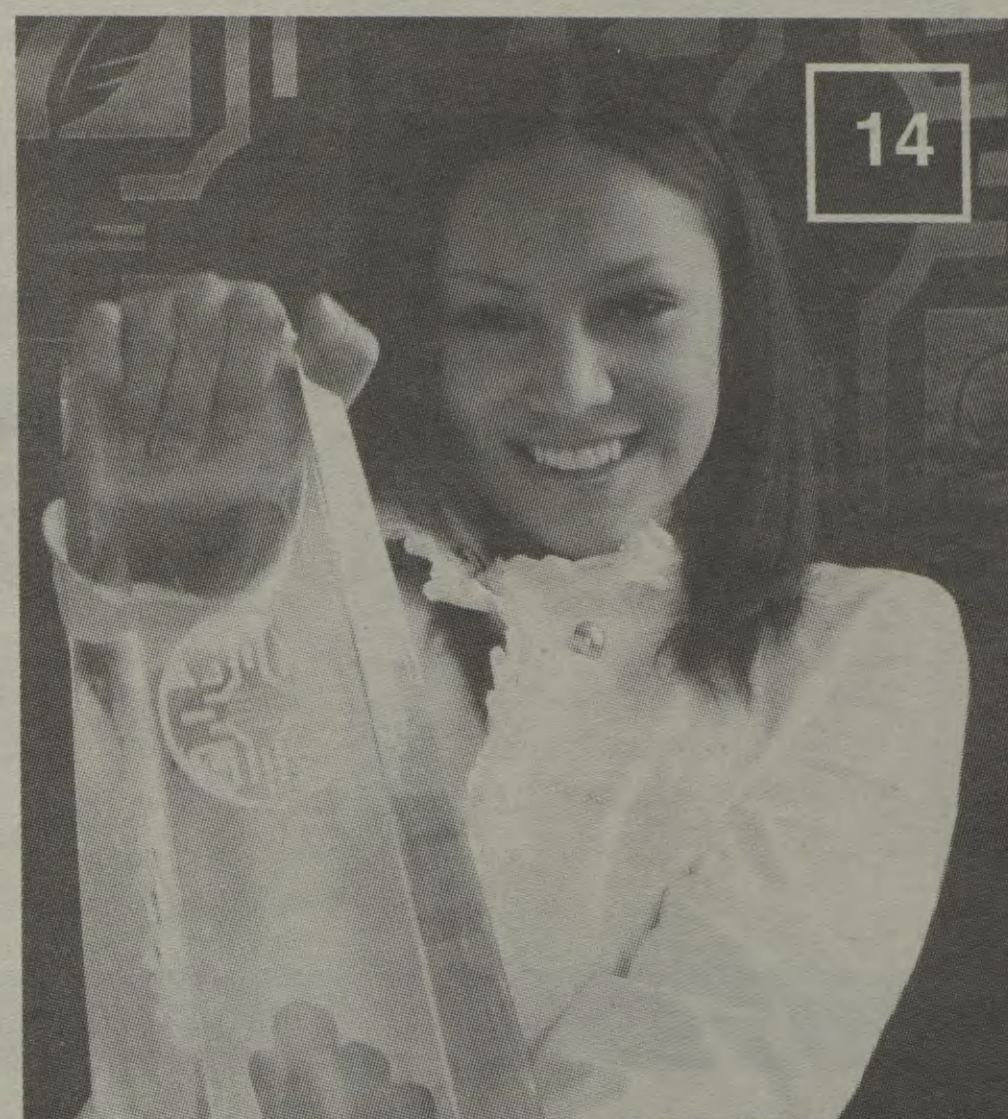
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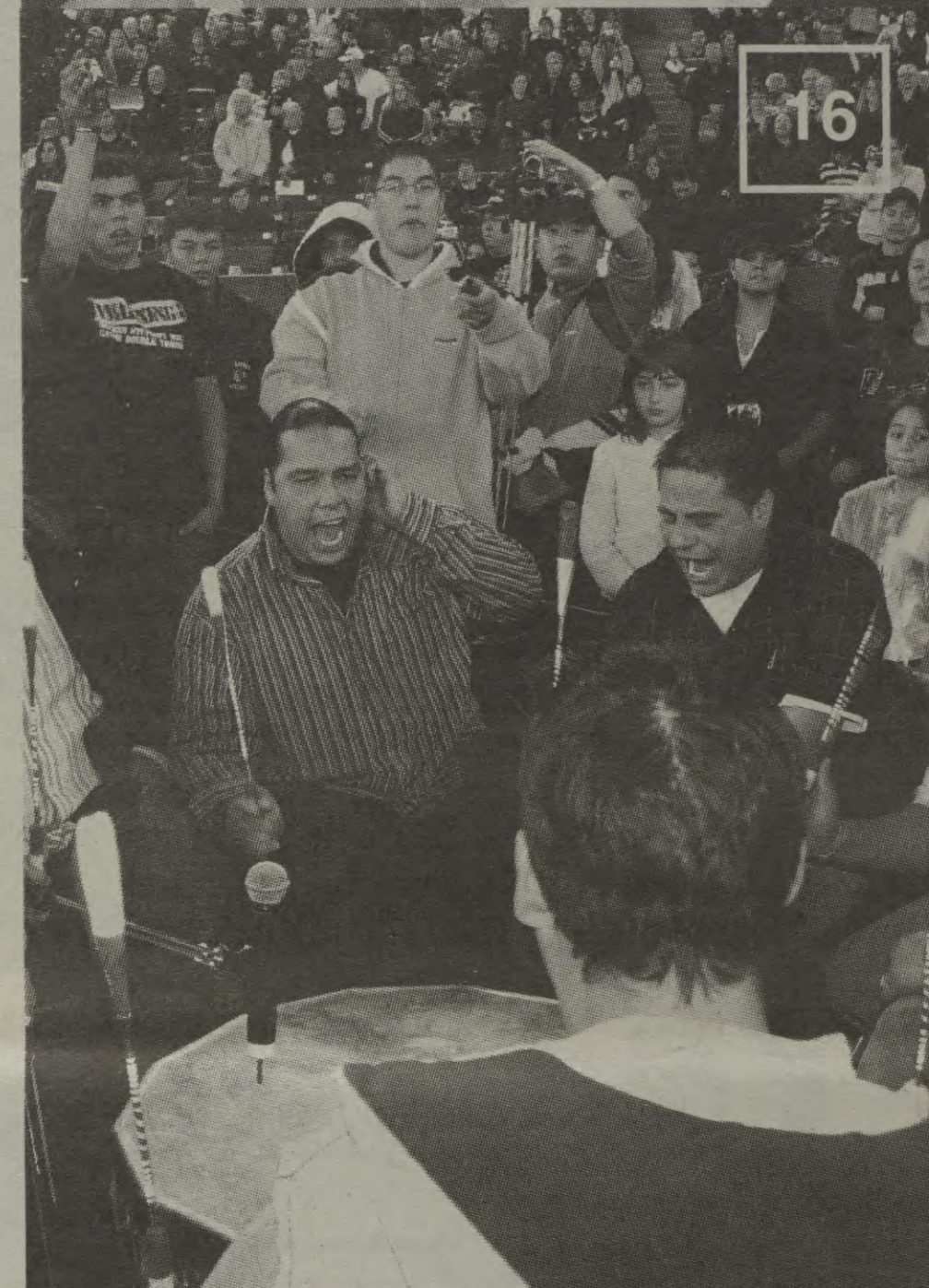
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Norval Morrisseau has been known by many names. Some have called him the father or grandfather of Native Canadian art. Others dubbed him the Picasso of the North. He was also known as Miskwaabik Animiiki, or Copper Thunderbird, the name he was given when he was 19 and gravely ill and which he credited with saving his life.



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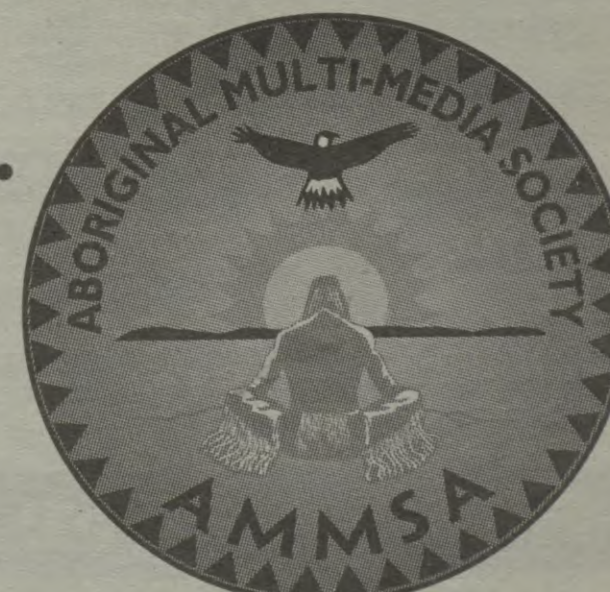
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Society needs to recognize worth of Aboriginal women

Five hundred. That's the estimated number of Aboriginal women who have gone missing or have been murdered in Canada over the past two decades. Five hundred women—mothers, daughters, sisters—who have died violent deaths, or simply disappeared without a trace, leaving their families and friends to wonder what fate has befallen them.

The fate of at least a few of those women is no longer a mystery, thanks to the RCMP investigation that found traces of their DNA on the Port Coquitlam farm owned by Robert Pickton.

On Dec. 9, Pickton was found guilty of murdering six women and is expected to be tried for the murder of 20 more. But while the Pickton trial and verdict may have provided the families of his victims with a sense that justice has been done; that someone will pay for taking the lives of their loved ones, has it done anything at all to address the societal problems that marked these women as viable targets in the first place?

While working in the sex trade or living on the street increases a woman's risk of being a victim of violence, so, too, does simply being Aboriginal.

When Amnesty International released its Stolen Sisters report in 2003, it quoted statistics indicating that Aboriginal women are at least five times more likely to be victims of violence than are non-Aboriginal women.

The report highlights the tragic stories of Aboriginal women who have died at the hands of men who chose them as victims because of their own racist opinion that the life of an Aboriginal woman is worth less than that of a non-Aboriginal woman, or because of the racist attitudes of society that led them to believe they were more likely to get away with a crime committed against an Aboriginal woman because nobody would really care.

Much work is being done to draw public attention to the high rates of violence perpetrated against Aboriginal women, and to the stories of the many women who have been murdered or who are missing, but most of it's being done at the grassroots level—by the families of the missing or murdered women, and by front-line workers who try to provide supports to Aboriginal women who are living on the streets.

Provincial and national Aboriginal women's organizations are also working to draw attention to the problem, through campaigns such as Sisters in Spirit, but calls for government to do something to change the situation have seen only limited success.

More needs to be done to ensure violent acts perpetrated against Aboriginal women receive the same police attention as cases involving non-Aboriginal people, advocates for Aboriginal women demand. And more needs to be done to address the poverty that forces Aboriginal women into dangerous lifestyles in the first place.

But even these changes won't be enough if there is no change in societal attitudes towards Aboriginal women. The police have to act as quickly on reports of missing Aboriginal women as they do when a non-Aboriginal woman is reported missing. The media has to give the same amount of coverage to all missing person's cases, regardless of whether the person who is missing is Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal. And the people of Canada have to show would-be perpetrators that they can't hurt Aboriginal women with impunity because we do care, and we will demand that justice is done.

Following the conclusion of the Pickton trial, one of the jurors was interviewed by the media, and talked about how sitting and listening to details about the six murdered women at the centre of the trial—about how they lived, and how they died—changed his attitude about them. By the end of the trial, he no longer saw them simply as prostitutes or drug addicts who had chosen a life on the street, but as women, abandoned by society and preyed upon by a man who chose them for exactly that reason. Hopefully that's a shift in perception that society as a whole can experience. And hopefully, for the sake of all Aboriginal women, it's a change that takes place sooner, rather than later.

Concerns raised over gaming policy

Dear Editor:

I would like to comment on the province of New Brunswick's recently announced new gaming policy. I should preface my comments by informing you that I have lived in the Aboriginal First Nation of St. Mary's for 40 years. I am non-Native and married a St. Mary's First Nation member 40 years ago. I was employed for the nation for 25 years, starting out as the recreation director and later held the position of director of economic development. I retired in March of 2005.

I had the pleasure of working under five different chiefs over my 25 years of employment with the nation. They all had one thing in common and that was to provide more opportunities and enhancing the quality of life for their band members. St. Mary's has worked very diligently toward that goal for all their members both on and off the reserve.

I can tell you from past knowledge and experience that job opportunities for St. Mary's band members to work off the reservation were very few and far between. The only way out of this tragic situation was to create economic development projects that would resolve the high unemployment rate that was, at one time, 85 to 90 per cent.

The first major project was to secure investors to construct a bingo entertainment centre. This project did not get completed without a substantial number of problems that for the most part were caused by the investors during construction. After opening there were more problems and struggles due to mismanagement by a pair of non-Native individuals from Saskatchewan that were hired by our partners from the west coast. These people did not understand the bingo gaming market in New Brunswick or the Aboriginal people they were working with. A business development review recommended that, because of the gross mismanagement by the two individuals, that they be relieved of their duties. This was done immediately. St. Mary's hired an Aboriginal St. Mary's member to manage the centre. This happened some 10 years ago. This gentleman has done a great job and is still the manager today. He has a staff of about 100 people. Just recently they bought out their partners and now will not be sharing revenue. The centre has 60 VLT machines licensed with the province. Under the new regulations they will be allowed to utilize 75 machines in the facility under three liquor licenses that could house 25 machines in three different areas, but under the same roof. In 1995 St. Mary's was one of the initial First Nations to negotiate and sign a provincial agreement for the "Collection of Provincial Tobacco Tax, Gasoline Tax, Sales Tax, and Self Licensing Relating To Gaming." Of the 15 First Nations in New Brunswick, there are eight First Nations who have these types of agreements. The entertainment centre is an overwhelming success through dedication, planning and effective management. The agreement with the province has been and is a mutually beneficial agreement for both the first Nation and the province. I know from working at St. Mary's they have always followed the regulations, met their financial obligations and managed their recourses in a professional manner.

On April 13 of 2003, St. Mary's First Nation opened their newly constructed \$7 million mall. I was involved with the administration of that project. I can tell you that I was not successful in securing any financial assistance from the province or federal departments in any form. We were not deterred despite many people telling us that this would not be successful. How wrong they all were proven to be. The mall also included a supermarket, several retail spaces, a daycare, gas station and an office complex

[rants and raves]

with three floors of office space. The 100 jobs created by this project were filled by both Native and non-Native employees. They now have about 150 employees. The only financial assistance that we were able to secure was a \$1 million grant from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC). The one gentleman who deserves the credit for his vision, confidence in us, and support was Mr. Greg Martin of INAC. The thing that bothered me the most was that the province assisted some businesses with grants of up to \$10,000 for each job they created. I know of businesses that were assisted that are now not even in business. St. Mary's is here to stay and their businesses will be long term. I know that some of the smaller businesses that they own and operate are not profitable but can be revamped or new businesses created. The most important aspect of these Aboriginal businesses such as the entertainment centre, supermarket and gas station are the many jobs that they have created. People have meaningful full- and part- time positions that would be non-existent otherwise.

It is no wonder that the Aboriginal population across Canada is skeptical, what with the broken promises and shabby treatment they have experienced from non-Native governments throughout history. This is shameful and totally inexcusable. It leaves me wondering if non-Native governments really want to eliminate the poverty that would lead to a better quality of life for Aboriginal Canadians. Most politicians talk a pretty good game but their actions do not match their stated good intentions. Yes, I know that people will make mistakes, but non-Native governments are making the same mistakes over and over again. It is not surprising that the Aboriginals have lost trust in their non-Native brothers. Other provincial and federal departments should take a page from the strategy that is utilized by Crown Lands provincial employees in dealing with the Aboriginals. I believe this sector has done a fair job in their bilateral discussions and subsequent decisions on this most difficult file.

In regards to the recent gaming policy plans it is further evidence that the Aboriginals are not being treated fairly by the province. It is unfair to expect them to compete against non-Native casino proposals. They are once again being set up to fail.

The provincial government needs gaming revenue but not as much as First Nations require those funds. Would you as a taxpayer want to have to pay more taxes to make up for the shortfall should gambling be abolished? I think the answer to that is clearly no. I do not personally play the VLTs, but I think every individual should be allowed to make their own decision in regards to whether they choose to play them or not. How many millions of dollars are now leaving the province by those who travel to gamble in a casino operation?

The policy should have allowed two casinos, one Native and one non-Native. The 15 First Nations could decide among themselves by a vote of the chiefs on what reserve they want it on. They could finance it and the profits from the facility could be split by the 15 First Nations based on a formula that would take into account their population. The province should not receive any share of this revenue derived from this casino ... the province would share the revenue as previously announced for the non-Native casino. I also believe that the racino that the St. John Raceway requested should have been granted. It was not realistic to tie this aspect into the fact that the casino proposals must include a racino in order for a racino to be developed.

In a recent statement by Chief Gerald Bear of Tobique First Nation, he was quoted as saying that his machines generate a net profit of \$750,000 that is utilized for the community. I can tell you that if those 200 illegal machines were legal and registered following provincial gaming regulations, plus negotiating a taxation agreement, the financial benefits would be substantial. The province rebates back 95 per cent of their standard share, which is 53 per cent to those First Nations who have agreements. This sum alone would be in the vicinity of \$10 million.

With the much needed business and gaming revenue St. Mary's has been able to provide many long term meaningful jobs, build more new houses and infrastructure in addition to developing and promoting new economic development initiatives. All status band members also receive a share of the royalties semi-annually.

In closing, the First Nations deserve better from governments of the day. They deserve to have the same aspirations of self sufficiency that Premier Graham has for New Brunswick. You either want the First Nations to succeed or you don't, you can't be half committed.

*Without prejudice,
Wayne D. Brown*

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- * Establishing and maintaining a positive relationship with the Aboriginal community;
- * Familiarity and experience with page layout software, photo manipulation software and design principles an asset;
- * Knowledge of Aboriginal issues and culture an asset.

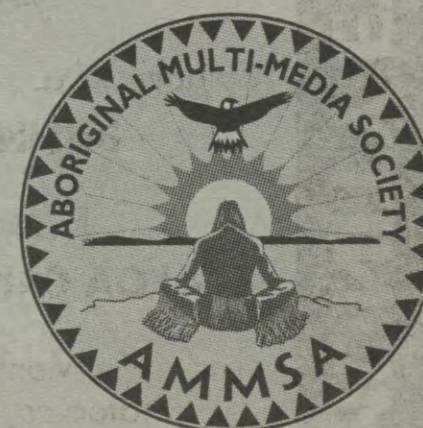
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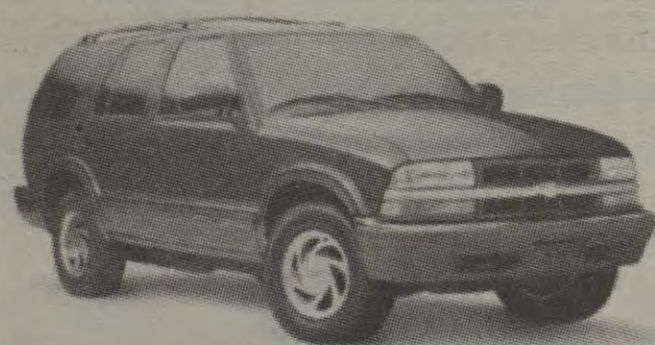


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In accordance with the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*, Laricina Energy Ltd. has applied to Alberta Environment for an approval for the construction, operation and reclamation of a steam-assisted gravity drainage (SAGD) project known as the Germain SAGD Pilot Project, Application No. 001-242701. The Central Processing Facility (CPF) will be located in Section 31 Township 84 Range 22 West of 4th Meridian. The Germain 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. 00243581, 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 total licensed diversions from groundwater sources and surface water will be used for enhanced oil recovery purposes.

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

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

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 February 9, 2008 to:

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

Please quote Application No. 001-242701 when submitting a statement of concern in regards to the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act* application. Please quote File No. 00243581 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.

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Trial puts spotlight on missing women

By Laura Suthers
Windspeaker Staff Writer

VANCOUVER

Brenda Wolfe, Sereena Abotsway, Marnie Frey, Andrea Joesbury, Georgina Papin and Mona Wilson were all Aboriginal women who were loved and respected by their friends and family. And all six women died violent deaths at the hand of Robert Pickton, who on Dec. 9 was found guilty of six counts of second-degree murder in connection with those deaths.

Pickton also faces additional charges in the deaths of 20 other women—Jacqueline McDonnell, Dianne Rock, Heather Bottomley, Jennifer Furminger, Helen Hallmark, Patricia Johnson, Heather Chinnock, Sherry Irving, Inga Hall, Tiffany Drew, Sarah de Vries, Cynthia Feliks, Angela Jardine, Diana Melnick, Debra Jones, Wendy Crawford, Kerry Koski, Andrea Borhaven, Cara Ellis and one as yet unidentified victim being referred to as Jane Doe—who have gone missing from Vancouver's downtown eastside. Pickton is scheduled to appear in court again on Jan. 17 to secure a date for a possible second trial.

Most, if not all, of the women who have gone missing or murdered have been pegged as prostitutes and drug users but that shouldn't matter, said Mona Wilson's brother, Jason Fleury.

"Even if they were prostitutes they didn't deserve that sort of execution," he said.

Fleury remembers his sister as an "awesome lady."

"She was very caring, curious and bright eyed, always wondering, asking questions, always growing and always learning. Always trying to make the best of a sad situation."

Windspeaker asked Fleury if he felt justice has been served by the Pickton verdicts, and he replied with a resounding no.

"We are all aware that our kids are still being murdered, our kids are still missing," said Fleury. "It's not safe on the highway for anybody. When's this madness going to stop? Is this somebody's way to control our population here in Canada? I don't know."

Fleury said he will stop at nothing until an inquiry into these deaths is undertaken.

"We're going to push for that. We've got support and we're going to take this to the next level," he said.

Like so many other family members and friends, Fleury is frustrated and, more than anything, disturbed about the death of his loved one, but for Fleury, it's something more. He's also enraged because of the lack of support for Aboriginal women.

"The resources available for women of any nation is obsolete," he said. "There's a lot more First Nations women that are homeless today and it's a big concern of ours down here."

Fleury has been volunteering at the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre (DTES) since May of 2007. The centre is an initiative organized through the Aboriginal Women's Elders Council.

"My job is a lot of trust. I'm about the third male to be in that women's shelter since it opened and that women's shelter has been opened for 10 years," said Fleury.

Fleury believes he's lucky to be where he's at today and "that's only because of hard work and me reaching out to my higher power and the community," he said.

"Not everybody can do it but when somebody does reach out for help, we need to be there. The right people need to be there."

Throughout the Pickton trial, media covering the story routinely reported on the more graphic details of the evidence presented. This type of coverage was hard on the friends and family of the victims, and sickened others, like Gloria Larocque, who had never met any of the victims, but was moved by their stories.

"What I felt was a lack of humanity to the women. The media exposure was very degrading," said Larocque, whose own sister battled with addictions before dying of cancer earlier this year.

"It really promoted that these women were to blame for being in the situations they were in by not even promoting factors that lead them there like poverty, abuse and various other issues. It just left one with the impression that they just decided to take drugs on their own."

Wanting to pay tribute to the murdered and missing women and thinking about how the children that the women left behind are trying to cope with their losses, Larocque decided to create 100 Aboriginal angel dolls.

According to Larocque, the 100 handmade, faceless dolls represent a symbolic gesture to express the neglect that the Aboriginal women received in life and in death.

"I feel it's a bit of a responsibility on my part to be a voice for women like my sister and allow their memory to be served in a dignified manner as opposed to what society has taken as being her own fault because she was addicted to drugs," said Larocque.

Not only is Larocque the sole creator of the 100 dolls, but she also formed the Kookum Educating Traditional Acceptance (KETA) Society in August 2005 to acknowledge and raise awareness of missing and murdered Aboriginal women in Canada.

"I call these women a tribe of lost souls because many of them don't even have a cultural identity," said Larocque.

"Many of them haven't been claimed by their nations. How many Cree, who's from which reserve? We don't know any of that information either. It is unfortunate that these women aren't being claimed."

Larocque has recently launched another project, called A Million for 500. From Dec. 21, 2007 to Dec. 21, 2008, Larocque and the many organizations involved in the project will try to get one million signatures in an effort to raise awareness regarding the women going missing and being murdered. A candlelight vigil was held the same day the petition was introduced.

"What I'm petitioning is not only the fact that 500 Aboriginal women who go missing or who have been found murdered in Canada is not considered a crime against society and the reason it isn't is because the justice system dictates what is a crime against society. The justice system has not taken this on as part of their agenda. They haven't taken it on as a file to be worked on," said Larocque.

"We will see in a year, do a million people care in Canada what's been happening to Aboriginal women?"

Larocque added that what's been going on within the community of Aboriginal women needs to be an issue of importance to Canadian society as a whole.

"I want society to take it on and say we need to do something about this. The perpetuation of negative stereotypes, that is a society problem. It's a wrong way of thinking and very damaging and it's neglecting the important role Aboriginal women have had in building Canada. Aboriginal women have had an integral role within the creation of Canada and this is what we're left with?"

By the end of next December, Larocque will tally up how many people actually signed the petition, but will also be watching to see how many organizations sign on, "because that will be harder to ignore, I think, as a call of action," she said.

Larocque said she gets her inspiration for her work from people like Mona Woodward, a First Nation crisis worker at the Battered Women Support Services.

Woodward works with women who are in a crisis, assists with police complaints, helps women who have been assaulted and offers short term counseling. On a volunteer basis, Woodward has been working with a group at the DTES for two years.

As a former sex trade worker, she uses her experiences to help women out of that lifestyle.

"I just use my personal experience when it's relevant, to give them hope and inspire them, to show them to make small changes within their own life, to give them more self-confidence to be able to do what they need to do," said Woodward.

"I think it's really great that there's more Aboriginal women that are part of the healing movement and that are taking more leadership roles and

starting to motivate other Aboriginal women. Just by making those small changes within myself and getting the help that I need, it sort of had a ripple effect, not just on my personal life and my children but it's also rippling out to other people I encounter."

Woodward recognized that if she didn't get out of the high-risk life of a sex trade worker, she herself could've been on the list of missing and murdered women.

"I guess one of the things that rang true for me is the fact that there were a lot of missing women, and also that I myself have gotten a bad date, where he almost killed me. That really affected me," said Woodward.

She knew Sereena Abotsway and Mona Wilson for close to 15 years and describes them as two completely different people.

"Sereena was really happy-go-lucky and she was always smiling. She had a lot of love for people in general and very easy going," said Woodward.

"Mona was very quiet. She had her own friends that she used to hang out with."

Abotsway was the 48th of 50 women to disappear from Vancouver's downtown eastside. Wilson was the last on the list of Pickton's alleged victims to vanish.

Woodward points out a positive aspect that she said came from the Pickton trial and that it helped to increase awareness of "how society has socialized marginalization of women who are judged because they are homeless, have drug addictions, they're women of colour and because they're poor."

"It just needs to be put out there that marginalized women are human beings and that their concerns of violence, of being looked at as thrown away women and as disposable, needs to be acknowledged by the general public in order to make social changes, and more importantly, to make changes in the three levels of government," said Woodward.

"It's very shameful for the provincial government to have this happen and to be turning a blind eye."

Muriel Stanley Venne, president of the Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women in Edmonton, told *Windspeaker* she has composed a letter that will be sent to the federal cabinet ministers. The letter is a plea for help and a request to work together to end the unnecessary violence against Aboriginal women.

"I'd like to meet with you to see where we could make a difference to the lives of women," Stanley Venne states in the letter.

"We have answers and solutions but we don't have the resources to implement the changes and policies to ensure life for each of the citizens. I'm asking for your help in addressing this critical situation."



House gives its unanimous support to Jordan's Principle

By Cheryl Petten
Windspeaker Staff Writer

OTTAWA

The father and sister of Jordan River Anderson were in the visitor's gallery on December 13 when members of Parliament gave their unanimous backing to a private members motion in support of Jordan's Principle, which calls for governments to put the needs of First Nation children first when jurisdictional disputes arise over whose responsibility it is to meet those needs.

The vote was a major victory in the campaign to have federal, provincial and territorial governments in Canada implement Jordan's Principle in an attempt to ensure First Nation children aren't caught in the middle of jurisdictional wrangling the way that Jordan was.

Jordan, who was from Norway House Cree Nation in Manitoba, was born with medical problems and needed special care. Because the federal government is more willing to provide services to special needs children in care than to those living with their families, Jordan's family placed him in foster care in order to get him the services he required. The local child and family services staff found Jordan a foster family and worked to prepare for his eventual return to the community.

Because of his medical condition, Jordan was forced to spend the first two years of his life in the hospital before getting word from his doctors that his medical condition had stabilized enough that he could go home. That's when the provincial and federal governments began their discussions about who should pay for the special care he'd need in his home community, and decided Jordan should remain in the hospital until they made their decision. Jordan died at the age of 5 before that decision was ever made, never having known a home other than the hospital.

Under Jordan's Principle, whenever a question of jurisdictional responsibility arises related to provision of services for a First Nation child, and those services are readily available to other Canadian children, the government or department of first contact would pay for the services, then work to settle the jurisdictional dispute once the child's needs have been met.

Cindy Blackstock, executive director of the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada (FNCFCFCS), the organization co-ordinating the campaign to have governments adopt Jordan's Principle, was thrilled to see the private members motion on Jordan's Principle receive so much support in the House.

"The most special time for me was really seeing Jordan's father

"These children affected under this Jordan's Principle issue are being denied government services only because of who they are, and that shouldn't be OK in 2007."

— Cindy Blackstock

and his sister in the gallery, finally getting some small measure of comfort in the tragedy that happened to Jordan," she said. "There's a real commitment to turn that into something positive for other children, and to make sure that Jordan's story goes heard, but more than being just heard, that it actually turns into a positive difference, not only for other kids in their community, but for Aboriginal kids in Canada and around the world. I've just had so much admiration for that family. They're wonderful, wonderful people."

While passing of the motion shows that support for Jordan's Principle is growing in Parliament, it is also growing at the grassroots level, Blackstock said. The FNCFCFCS Web site has a joint declaration of support for Jordan's Principle posted on it, and so far, close to 1,400 individuals and organizations have signed on.

"I think when people hear Jordan's story, they just know that implementing this principle in his memory is the right thing to do," Blackstock said.

The private members motion introduced on Dec. 13 was tabled by MP Jean Crowder, the New Democratic Party's Aboriginal Affairs critic, who first introduced a motion in support of Jordan's Principle in May of this year. Seeing the motion pass with unanimous support from the House was a very emotional experience for her, she said.

"It was a moment of celebration, and of a huge amount of respect for Jordan's family for their courage in having Jordan's name stand to represent all those other kids who were in Jordan's situation."

Crowder said she took up the cause of trying to get government to adopt Jordan's Principle as a way of safeguarding future generations of First Nation children.

"I do believe in the principle of it we don't make decisions for future generations, then we're never going to make a wise decision. And when we can't put the current group of children first, it doesn't give us much hope in terms of future generations of children," she said.

While passing of the motion in Parliament sends a signal that members of Parliament support the concept of Jordan's Principle, as a private members motion, it carries with it no

obligation for government to spring into action. Crowder said her next step will be to continue pushing government to back up its words of support with something more tangible. She'd like to see the federal government sign a memorandum of understanding with provincial governments that commits them to put the needs of children first.

Crowder said at least two provinces-British Columbia and Manitoba-have already expressed an interest in introducing a child-first policy. "And I think if we can get a couple of provinces to start working, then it will help the other provinces come along."

She hopes to reintroduce Jordan's Principle in the House in another form, and to meet with representatives from B.C. and Manitoba about how she can work with them to help implement Jordan's Principle. Crowder and the FNCFCFCS are also spreading the word to their network of grassroots supporters, calling on them to bring pressure to bear on federal, provincial and territorial governments.

"It has to be a multi-level approach, otherwise we won't get the kind of movement we need," she said. "People have to put the pressure on their own provincial governments, their own political representatives at the provincial and federal levels, and then on the federal government itself," she said. "It's by working together that we'll see some meaningful action on this."

"Jordan's message will not have been respected until other children stop being discriminated against," Blackstock added. "There are so many stories like Jordan's... these children affected under this Jordan's Principle issue are being denied government services only because of who they are, and that shouldn't be OK in 2007."

Blackstock stressed that the only thing preventing the federal government from fully implementing Jordan's Principle seems to be a lack of political will.

"This could be done tonight," she said. "It does not need new legislation. It just needs a policy change and political will... they don't need to strike committees. They don't need to talk to people. They don't even need to talk to First Nations, because First Nations have developed this policy and spoken and said it needs to be implemented immediately. What they need to do is do it. And it would make a huge difference for these children. I just really hope they do."

Windspeaker news briefs

MMF to appeal ruling

The Manitoba Métis Federation is planning to appeal a decision handed down by the Manitoba Court of Queen's Bench on Dec. 7 that dismissed its long-standing claim for compensation for loss of the land base promised to Métis people in Manitoba in 1870.

The case revolved around a claim by the MMF that they "have suffered an historic injustice" due to the loss of the land base promised to them under the Manitoba Act of 1870. The plaintiffs in the case-all MMF members-claim to be descendants of the Métis people the land base was promised to in the act, and as such are entitled to land and other rights guaranteed under the act.

In presenting their case to the court, the MMF claimed that a treaty was struck between the Crown and the Métis provisional government in 1870. The provincial Métis organization further claimed that the federal government failed to fulfill its obligation to the Métis people as outlined in the Manitoba Act, that the province of Manitoba interfered with fulfillment of that obligation through legislation that it passed and by imposing taxes on the lands, and that certain statutes and orders in council made by both levels of government regarding the lands were unconstitutional.

"In my opinion, the facts of this case cause me to conclude that as a matter of law the plaintiffs' claim is fundamentally flawed," Justice Allan MacInnes stated in his decision. "It seeks relief that is in essence of a collective nature, but is underpinned by a factual reality that is individual. At the relevant time, the Métis did not live in a communal or collective setting. True, they lived more or less together in parishes, the common connection being religion, language and culture. But they held land on an individual basis and were able to and did sell, buy and otherwise deal with their land as did any other individuals, but Indians. Sections 31 and 32 of the act by their language clearly provided for individual grants, and section 32 was not directed at the Métis qua Métis, but to landholders in the area that became Manitoba. Given the factual basis for this litigation, I fail to understand how the plaintiffs can now seek collective entitlement to a land base, something they did not enjoy or seek to enjoy at the material time. There is nothing in the evidence to suggest that Canada ever discussed or contemplated the creation of a land base for the Métis at the time. Nor is there anything in the language of section 31 or 32 which speaks of or from which one could infer that a land base was intended."

"We will appeal the decision. History shows that very rarely does a lower court side with Aboriginal peoples on a matter of importance. The Métis people will have to rely on a higher court. We would not be surprised if this went all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada," MMF President David Chartrand said in a statement released following the decision. "The MMF has been in court on this issue for a quarter century. Challenging Justice MacInnes' judgment is another one of the steps we must take on our way to getting justice for the Métis people."

AIP signed in Nunavuk

An agreement-in-principle (AIP) entered into by the Makivik Corporation, the federal government and the government of Quebec on Dec. 5 is the first step in a process designed to provide the Inuit people living in Quebec's Nunavik region with more control over the way their communities are governed.

The AIP proposes creation of a new regional government that will consolidate three existing organizations-the Kativik Regional Government, the Kativik School Board and the Nunavik Health and Social Services Board. The regional government would be run by an assembly of 21 members, including an executive council of five elected members.

"The agreement-in-principle signed today is at the heart of our desire to promote, as never before, the socioeconomic development of the Inuit communities," Quebec Premier Jean Charest stated in a news release announcing the signing. "It aims to build an efficient government institution truly adapted to the needs of Nunavik."

"In conjunction with the governments of Canada and of Quebec, it is by maximizing our efforts and by pooling our resources that we will be able to more effectively advance the regional priorities of Nunavik and significantly improve the living conditions in our communities," Makivik Corporation President Pita Aatami stated in the release. "I am confident that together and in the wake of the amalgamation of our public institutions and the creation of a new government, we will succeed in building a better Nunavik for the greater good of our communities and our children."

Before the amalgamation outlined in the AIP can proceed, a final agreement must be negotiated that outlines terms and conditions of the amalgamation. The final agreement must then be ratified by all three signing parties, approved by the people of Nunavik through a referendum, and then given a final stamp of approval by the provincial and federal government.

Inquiry to shine light on coroner's findings

By Kate Harries
Windspeaker Writer

TORONTO

Wrongful convictions, ruined lives and families torn apart were the result of the questionable findings of a doctor who worked for the Office of the Chief Coroner for Ontario.

Dr. Charles Smith was a pediatric forensic pathologist. That means that when a child died in suspicious or mysterious circumstances, it was his job to try and determine what had caused the death. His findings were given great weight by police in deciding whether or not to lay charges, and his evidence was taken very seriously in court, resulting in the conviction of family members of the deceased children on many occasions over the past couple of decades.

But in a number of cases, he was wrong. One of the most notorious was that of Williams Mullins-Johnson, an Aboriginal man who languished in jail for 12 years while protesting his innocence in the 1993 death of his niece. Mullins-Johnson, 22 at the time, lived with his brother and sister-in-law in their Sault Ste. Marie home. He had babysat their three children the night before Valin, 4, was found dead in her bed on the morning of June 28.

Smith determined from marks on the child's body that she had

been raped and strangled several hours earlier. No forensic evidence linked Mullins-Johnson to the crime, but he was charged and convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced to life in prison. His case was taken up in 2003 by the Association in Defence of the Wrongly Convicted. A review by international experts found that the laceration that prompted Smith to conclude there had been a sexual assault had in fact occurred after death, when her body was prepared for the autopsy.

Normal post-mortem changes to the body caused the marks that Smith had attributed to strangulation and sexual assault. Although the cause of death could not be pinpointed, sudden natural death during sleep could not be excluded.

It took two years for these conclusions to be reached in part because Smith had lost key evidence that was finally found in his office. During that time, colleagues and superiors closed ranks to protect him, and Jim Young, the chief coroner of the time, closed his ears to a rising tide of protest regarding Smith's shoddy work—from sources as disparate as Mullins-Johnson's lawyer, writing as a concerned private citizen, to an Ontario judge, to a Peterborough MP, to the *Fifth Estate* and *Maclean's* magazine.

After the evidence was re-

evaluated, Mullins-Johnson was released on bail in September 2005, and in April 2007, the Ontario government supported his request for a review of his conviction by the federal justice minister. Finally, in October, he was acquitted by the Ontario Court of Appeal—with an apology.

"It is regrettable that as a result of flawed evidence, you were wrongly convicted and you spent a long period in custody," Justice Dennis O'Connor told him. The Ontario government also apologized.

Mullins-Johnson was not alone. Louise Reynolds of Kingston spent almost two years behind bars after Smith concluded that her 7-year-old daughter Sharon had been stabbed to death. Charges were withdrawn after other pathologists determined her daughter was killed by a dog. And Lianne Thibeault of Sudbury was investigated for manslaughter after her son died in 1995 after apparently hitting his head on a table. Smith concluded the boy suffered a deliberate blunt-force injury. No charges were laid because prosecutors decided there was not enough evidence, but Thibeault had to fight off intervention by child welfare authorities when she gave birth to another child. Her parents spent their life-savings to prove her innocence and assure her unrestricted access to her daughter.

Now, Judge Stephen Gouge is heading a provincial inquiry into 18 cases in which Smith made questionable findings—including the deaths of Valin, Sharon and Nicholas. Transcripts of proceedings are available at www.goudgeinquiry.ca. The site also features a live Web cast. Smith is expected to take the stand for a week, starting Jan. 28.

A coalition of two Aboriginal groups have standing at the inquiry—Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto (ALST), which represents the interests of a growing urban Aboriginal community, and the Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN), which represents 45,000 people in 49 communities across an area that covers two-thirds of Ontario. They'll be focusing on the lack of coroners' services to remote communities in northern Ontario, said NAN Deputy Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler. It's hard enough getting a doctor to see to live people, let alone a coroner to see to the dead, Fiddler explained. "It was very important for the commissioner to see that first-hand."

At the invitation of the ALST-NAN coalition, Gouge visited Mishkeegogamang and Muskrat Dam First Nations in October, before the Nov. 11 start of public hearings, and met with families who have lost children. "Just to hear that people didn't know who a coroner was, that the chief and council had never met a coroner,"

that made an impression on the commissioner, said ALST executive director Kim Murray.

Although Goudge's mandate is to look at child death investigations, the coalition's interest is more than pediatric, Murray said. "We're not getting any service for adults, we're not getting any service for children."

The coalition will be pushing for changes to legislation to allow a lay person to act as a coroner as is the practice in several other provinces and territories. The current situation in Ontario is that only a medical doctor can be a coroner, although the coroner can delegate investigative duties to a police officer.

That's a problem, Murray said, because in communities that are policed by the Ontario Provincial Police, there's a lack of trust so the findings will be questioned; and in communities policed by the Nishnawbe-Aski Police Service, it's a question of adding a further layer of responsibility to a severely under-funded force.

Just getting an inquest is an uphill battle, Fiddler said. "The only inquests that I'm aware of in recent years are those cases where it's mandatory for an inquest to happen." Those cases would include deaths in custody.

"The system needs to change—it shouldn't matter where the death occurs. It's up to the government and the system to ensure that there's adequate resources."



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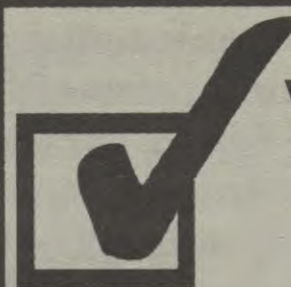
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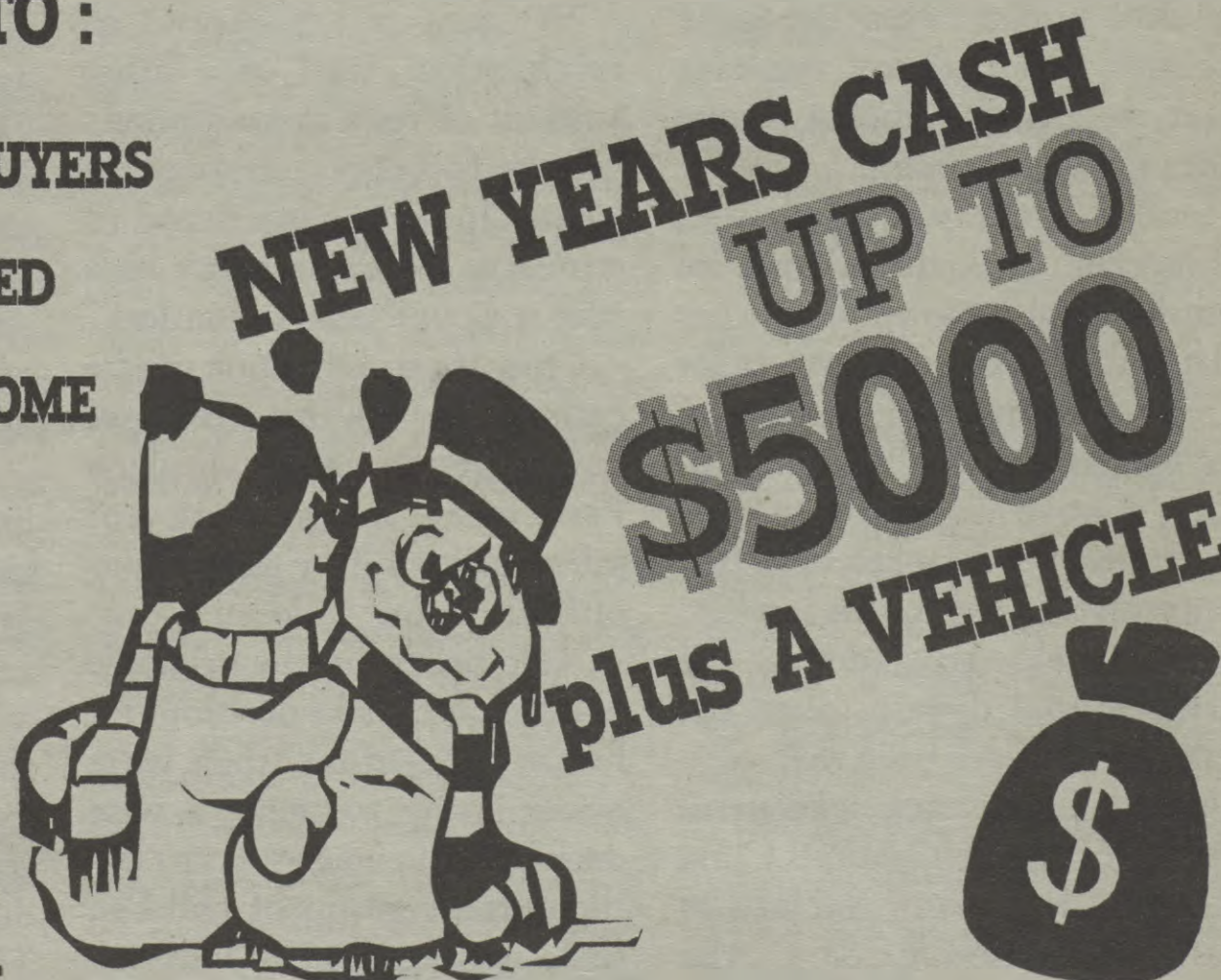


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Specific claims legislation introduced in House

By Diana Bird
Windspeaker Staff Writer

OTTAWA

On Nov. 27, the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) and the federal government took the next step in their efforts to create a new and improved process for handling land claims, with legislation to create a specific claims tribunal being tabled in the House of Commons. That same day, AFN National Chief Phil Fontaine joined Indian and Northern Affairs Minister Chuck Strahl in signing a political agreement that deals with issues surrounding specific claims reform not dealt with in Bill C-30, the Specific Claims Tribunal Act.

The AFN further indicated its support for the bill on Dec. 12, adopting a resolution at its special chiefs assembly that calls for creation of a "fair, effective and efficient system to resolve First Nations' specific land claims."

The proposed legislation calls for creation of a tribunal of impartial judges, which will work to resolve the current backlog of land claims. The claims need to be addressed by "fair, efficient and effective means" said Fontaine in

his address to the assembly in which he endorsed Bill C-30.

"The resolution recognizes that First Nations have an active interest in a full review and discussion of the proposed legislation. And as such, the AFN will facilitate First Nations involvement in discussing the approach and in raising any further issues with the Parliamentary committee," Fontaine said to the leaders.

The next day, Strahl addressed the assembly, discussing a number of issues including education, economic development and Bill C-30. Strahl commended the AFN and Fontaine for their efforts in moving forward with this legislation.

"Just two weeks ago I introduced this legislation, Bill C-30," Strahl said. "National Chief Fontaine, you and your organization played a key and historic role in drafting and developing this legislation, and I believe First Nations people and Canadians at large should acknowledge your leadership in making this happen. I want to thank you for that and tell you I look forward to continuing this partnership as we work together in the future to fulfill the promise of the political agreement we also

developed through this process."

According to information on the INAC Web site, once Bill C-30 is passed into law, First Nations will be eligible to file a claim with the tribunal in situations where their claim has been rejected by Canada, if Canada fails to complete its claim assessment within three years, following three years of unsuccessful negotiations, or at any time during the negotiation process if all parties involved agree to file. The tribunal will only look at claims valued at less than \$150 million, and won't deal with issues related to claims such as punitive damages, cultural and spiritual losses and non-financial compensation.

This proposed new approach to land claims is in response to more than 60 years of unsuccessful efforts to deal with land claims.

"It's good that they are recognizing that these claims are legitimate, they want to speed up the process on these outstanding claims and of course the implementations of our treaties. There's a backlog of 1200 claims. It has taken an average of 10 to 12 years to receive any type of response on a claim, so that was a real problem for the chiefs and the cost that they were being incurred

by the courts," said Kathleen McHugh, interim chair of the AFN Women's Council, who was in attendance at the special chiefs

assembly when the resolution was passed. "With Bill C-30, at least the chiefs were reassured that it was not going to take that long."

Quick facts: the history of Canada's land claim system

1947—The Special Joint Committee of the Senate and the House of Commons recommended a commission be set up immediately to settle the claims.

1973—Canada's Specific Claims Policy was developed as an alternative to litigation.

1979—A report recommends an independent body be created to resolve land claims, indicating that having the government involved in resolving claims against itself was a conflict of interest.

1983—The Penner Report called for a quasi-judicial process to overlook claims.

1991—The Indian Specific Claims Commission (ISCC) was created to conduct reviews and provide mediation to deal with rejected claims outside the courts.

1996—The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples recommended a tribunal be created to replace the ISCC.

1998—A Joint First Nations-Canada Task Force on Specific Claims Policy Reform recommended creation of an independent claims commission, and a tribunal to help resolve disputes.

February 2007—A report by the Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples recommended creation of an independent claims body.

June 2007—The federal government proposes major reforms to the specific claims process, including creation of an independent tribunal, faster processing of claims, and better access to mediation.

November 2007—The Specific Claims Tribunal Act, developed jointly between Canadian government and the AFN, was introduced in the House of Commons.

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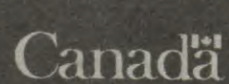
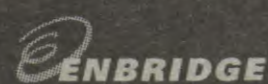
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Climate change a threat to Indigenous cultures

By Shauna Lewis
Windspeaker Writer

VANCOUVER

Excessive flooding, endangered animals, exotic insect migration and the onset of erratic weather patterns are the things Hollywood films are made of. But for three Indigenous nations from different regions of the globe, these occurrences are very real and gradually altering their way of life.

On Nov. 23, academics, environmentalists, researchers and a concerned public gathered for a symposium on climate change and Indigenous perspectives at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver. The first panel, Shifting Tides: Indigenous Responses to Global Climate Change, had representatives from Alaska, the South Pacific and Canada's Northwest Coast discussing regional differences and similarities, traditional Indigenous practices and the key issue that binds them—the dire consequences of climate change in their communities.

Larry Grant, an Elder from the Musqueam Nation in Vancouver, remembers when ponds would completely freeze over in the winter and seasonal salmon and eulachon runs were in abundance. From the podium, he spoke about global warming and the transformative effects it has had on the environment for coastal First Nation communities. From annual pine beetle infestations killing British Columbia forests to fierce and unyielding winter winds causing havoc on parks and affecting drinking water supplies, Grant said there has been a shift between natural ecological occurrences and the human-induced environmental changes we're experiencing. These transitions affect traditional First Nation hunting, gathering and

"We must adapt to new realities and find tangible ways for aspects of our culture to survive in a rapidly changing environment where traditional knowledge is forced to adapt."

—Mona Belleau

harvesting methods and Grant says industry and humanity are to blame.

"Modern western industrial society, not knowing—or possibly not really caring—has not maintained balance between keystone species and predator species, creating an imbalance in how Mother Earth is interdependent," he said.

The failure of lucrative salmon runs in the Fraser river has not only prompted a wake-up call, causing the industry to recognize the effects of climate change, but in the past, it has also caused the First Nation fishery to become something of a political and economic scapegoat, Grant said. Talking about how climate change is resulting in a rise in ocean temperature and the negative effects that warmer water has on salmon spawning cycles, Grant said the resulting shortages in seasonal salmon stock has often led to misplaced accusations of poaching by Aboriginal people, "thus creating a misconception of immorality in Aboriginal peoples of Canada and perpetrating a negative stereotype of Aboriginals," he said.

According to Imogen Ingram, a Cook Island resident and spokesperson on sustainable development and climate change, British Columbia First Nations and Indigenous people of the Cook Islands have more in common than the Pacific Ocean.

Climate change is affecting both local sustenance patterns and economy in very drastic ways in the South Pacific. Ingram said 50 per cent of the gross domestic

product in the Cook Islands is accrued through tourism and, due to flooding and hurricanes, tourism peaks and wanes during various seasons. This is nothing new, as seasonal storms are part and parcel of nature's transitions, however, over the years a gradual climb in the severity of such natural occurrences has been noted and shifts in the environment have been seen.

Ingram, who lives on the island of Rarotonga and is the president of the Cook Island Sustainability Alliance and a member of the Koutu Nui Council of hereditary chiefs, said that while the general public must take steps to combat global warming, it's in the best interests of big companies to fight global warming and climate change as well.

"If they (companies) pursue sustainable initiatives, it actually saves them money," Ingram said. The activist stressed the importance of talking in a language corporations would understand and said even putting a bug in the ear of big business regarding the frightening effects of climate change is a positive start.

"Even if it's just lip service. It's a big step along the way if companies realize climate change," she said. "The tide is changing and we're just about at the tipping point."

"All you have left to work with between the imbalance of power and money is persuasion," said Shauna Morgan, senior manager for the Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources (CIER). During the plenary

session, Morgan said the best tool to combat global warming is public education and outreach, and that even small steps toward energy saving can bring about positive changes for the environment. Carpooling or using public transit, buying locally grown organic produce and better insulating your home are steps everyone can adopt into their daily life. Morgan said it is important to identify and prioritize climate change impacts so that mitigation and adaptation initiatives can be implemented. While climate change affects everyone, Morgan said rural communities will likely suffer most because of their sparse population and typically lower economy.

"Unique communities require unique decisions," Morgan said. "The idea that food and water only come from the store is a foreign one for many Indigenous communities." When global warming threatens community sustenance, changes must be made in order to adjust—especially in a culture so intrinsically linked to the land.

Imagine the Alaskan tundra melting and shrinking in size. Inuk youth and panelist Mona Belleau doesn't have to imagine—she is a first-hand witness to the gradual and potentially catastrophic changes occurring in her Arctic homeland. Global warming in the region has begun to disturb animal migration patterns and has brought an influx of new insects, foreign to the area. Although currently living in Quebec City, the 27-year-old environmentalist knows global warming is affecting her Indigenous people and their traditional sustenance harvest of caribou.

"Climate change not only affects weather patterns but the food that we eat," she said.

Because of unnatural environmental transformations being brought about by climate change, Belleau fears the health and traditional Indigenous knowledge of her people is at stake and adaptation is imperative.

"We live in a land where agriculture is impracticable and our dependency on hunting and fishing is essential to our survival," said Belleau. "Over the

centuries we developed an intimate knowledge of our environment, allowing us to not only survive, but thrive in one of earth's harshest and most unforgiving climates. The survival of the Inuit people was based on how well we could adapt to such isolated and inhospitable environment. Today the Inuit are being forced to adapt once again. The impacts of global warming on Inuit social and cultural well-being are monumental," she said.

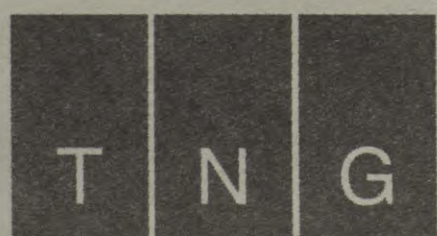
For Belleau, Grant and Ingram, adaptation in an ever-changing world is not just about coming to terms with realities their communities face regarding natural disasters and permafrost thaw; it is about finding a way to hold on to traditions and other Indigenous knowledge while reconciling with climate unpredictability.

"We must adapt to new realities and find tangible ways for aspects of our culture to survive in a rapidly changing environment where traditional knowledge is forced to adapt," Belleau said.

Documented through oral tradition and handed down through families, the way in which many Indigenous communities survive has much to do with their relationship to the land. When that land begins to transform and sustenance patterns lose their predictability, safety is at risk and Indigenous knowledge can be lost.

"The knowledge of our ancestors is in peril as the northern climate becomes much more unpredictable," Belleau said. "Inuit now fear that their traditional knowledge might not be as reliable as it was in the past and thus the lives of those who go out on the land are even more at risk."

There was urgency in the voices of guests and speakers at the symposium, as all stressed the need for action on global warming before it's too late. Action taken today will have a lasting impact on future generations, many of the speakers indicated, noting that the ecological damage the globe is currently experiencing is a byproduct of pollution created 50 years ago and emissions expelled into the atmosphere today will not show their extreme affect for half a century.



The New Gallery

EXHIBITION OPPORTUNITIES AT THE NEW GALLERY:

MANDATE: The New Gallery, an artist-run-centre, is a non-profit charitable society established in 1975. It is committed to providing a forum for a wide spectrum of critical discourse and multi-disciplinary practices within the contemporary visual arts. The New Gallery fosters the growth of the arts community and the community at large, through the creation of local, national and international networks of understanding, collaboration and cooperation.

ARTIST OPPORTUNITIES: Proposals are accepted from visual and performance artists, curators and galleries who deal with contemporary art forms and issues. Artists who are emerging, mid-career or established and who are based within Canada or internationally are invited to apply.

The New Gallery has two exhibition spaces available: the Main Gallery and the +15 Window project (located in the Epcor Centre for the Performing Arts, 225 - 8 Avenue SE). Proposals for off-site exhibitions and performative works are also welcome. The New Gallery meets or exceeds the recommended minimum CARFAC artist exhibition fee. Travel, accommodation and shipping assistance is contingent on sufficient funding. Main Gallery exhibitions change on a monthly basis, +15 exhibitions change every two months.

Please contact the gallery at info@thenewgallery.org for Submission Procedures and Guidelines. Gallery staff can also be reached directly at (403) 233-2399, Tuesday through Saturday from 11 am to 5 pm.

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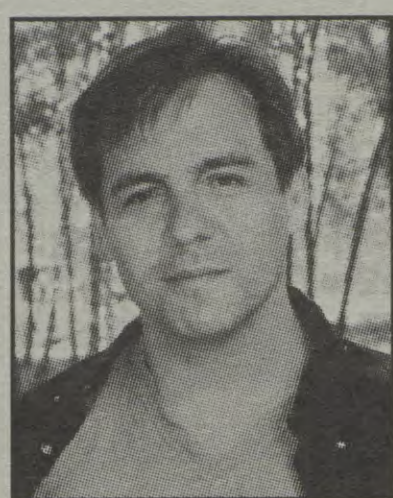
A month or so ago, the Catholic School Board in Halton Region pulled *The Golden Compass*, a children's novel written by Philip Pulman, from the shelves. Supposedly not because of anything in it, but because the man who wrote it is an avowed and proud atheist. He does not believe in God.

I heard that's allowed in some countries. In theory, I can understand the school board's perspective. As a Native person, would I want somebody working at Indian Affairs Canada who didn't believe in Ojibways? It's a difficult position.

On the other hand, as a professional writer, I have rather severe concerns about pulling books. Especially when it has nothing to do with the contents.

If I remember correctly, Lewis Carroll liked to take photographs of prepubescent children. But *Alice in Wonderland* is a fabulous book and still pretty much available. I wonder where the Halton Catholic School Board stands on him. And he was a clergyman, too.

Banning has precedents. There was the obvious Nazi fondness for bonfires. Or perhaps more aptly, the burning of all Mayan books in Central America in the



THE URBANE INDIAN

Drew Hayden Taylor

seventeenth century by Catholic missionaries because they thought it was the language of the devil.

As a result, there are only five texts in the Mayan language that have survived. In Halton Region's defense, I don't think any public school board was involved in that incident.

This whole issue makes me wonder if there's a double standard. Should the Bible be pulled from secular school libraries because Mark, Luke, John and other contributors didn't believe in the theory of evolution? You see my point.

Currently, a review committee will be assessing *The Golden Compass* to see if it will remain on the shelves. Until then, the book will be removed from public display and placed behind the counter—the librarian equivalent of barbed wire-making it available

for selective viewing.

Trust me, banning or restricting books makes them more desirable. I know. It was in the mid 1970s when I went behind the counter and obtained secret peeks at Marion Engel's *Bear and Tales from the Smokehouse*. All the good reads were back there. It's like the VIP room for books. Chicks always dig the bad boy, well, readers always dig the bad books (by bad I mean evil, not poorly written), going all the way back to banned classics like *Huckleberry Finn* and *Catcher in the Rye*.

Think of it as your parent's liquor cabinet. Maybe this is the board's attempt to get more students to join the library club. The logic of these subjective literary assaults always puzzles me.

Pulman's book was pulled because he was an atheist. What

if he was merely an agnostic? Would the Halton Catholic School Board then just wonder about pulling *The Golden Compass*? What if he was an Orthodox Jew? Or a Muslim. A Haida? Or is it simply a case of "it's not what you believe, it's just a matter that you do believe something?"

I remember years ago, in my own county of Peterborough, there was a big stink over banning Margaret Lawrence's *The Diviners*. I was young at the time and the particular details escaped my attention. I was too busy reading *Dracula* and *Frankenstein* in the original versions.

But somewhere in my adolescent mind, I do seem to recall thinking "Wow, if they allow little kids like me to read about all this repressed Victorian sexuality and vivisection, about the power of evil and man's striving to do better than God, I can't imagine what goodies await me in that book."

Needless to say, I was a little disappointed. I could not find one decapitation.

But in a peculiar way, I am for banning books. I think more should be pulled. A lot more.

Back in the '90s, when a fatwa was put on Salman Rushdie's

head for his book, *Satanic Verses*, many of my artist friends went out and bought it on principle. The irony being, the book was practically unreadable in the first place, a salute to post-modern art and incomprehension. But now it sits on so many shelves, mostly unopened, that Rushdie, though forced into hiding for several years, became substantially richer for it.

I sure wish somebody would pull some of my books. I could use the money. I recently had my first novel, aimed at teens, published. It's called *The Night Wanderer*. It's about an Ojibway vampire. An atheist Ojibway vampire. If some school board out there would like to read it, I'd be very interested in talking about a possible ban. While I'm not an atheist, I am a BAP (Born again Pagan). That must be almost as bad.

We believe God did not spend 40 days in the wilderness. He spent it at Casino Rama. Ignored Land Claim obligations are the true original sin. Residential schools were hell and the court system purgatory.

So if any trustee is reading this and is interested in banning my book, there's a twenty in it for you.

A positive lifestyle improves overall health

The following article is the first in a series of columns by the Canadian Cancer Society that will be running in *Windspeaker*, providing information on healthy living and cancer prevention from an Aboriginal perspective.

Living a healthy lifestyle is an important way to improve your physical, mental and spiritual well-being. And it's one of the most important things you can do to reduce your risk of cancer, as well as many other chronic diseases.

Aboriginal people have seen a dramatic increase in cancer rates,

as well as diabetes rates, in recent years. Diabetes and some cancers, particularly colorectal cancer, share several risk factors—obesity, physical inactivity and some aspects of diet. Smoking commercial tobacco is also an accepted risk factor for colorectal cancer.

"At least 50 per cent of cancers can be prevented through healthy living and policies, such as smoking bans, that protect the public," said Patti Payne, senior advisor of prevention at the Canadian Cancer Society, Ontario Division. "Incorporating traditional Aboriginal

philosophies—bravery, love, humility, wisdom, truth and respect—helps to keep the body, mind and spirit in a healthy balance."

To get you started, here are a few ideas to think about:

- 1) If you smoke commercial tobacco, think about getting help to quit. Smoking causes about 30 per cent of all cancer deaths in Canada. Bravery is demonstrated when using tobacco as the sacred medicine to communicate to the Spirit World and to the Creator.
- 2) Increase the amount of vegetables and fruit you eat daily by snacking on an apple or

banana, making a salad for lunch or adding a vegetable side dish to dinner. While fresh fruits and vegetables are the best choice, frozen, canned and dried vegetables and fruit are just as healthy. Honesty begins with us and is necessary in our diet to restore balance in our lives.

3) Get active by parking further from the door or going for a walk after dinner. Physical activity allows your body to practice this unconditional love as Creation intended.

4) Apply sunscreen year-round. Skin cancer is preventable and, in the winter, more than half of the

sun's rays are reflected off the snow, increasing UV levels. Humility in the presence of Grandfather Sun is necessary to protect ourselves against the strength of the Sun.

5) If you haven't seen a doctor or dentist recently, see about making an appointment today. Truth to oneself is speaking to a health professional when there are changes in your normal state of health.

More information is available by calling the Canadian Cancer Society Cancer Information Service, at 1-888-939-3333, or online at www.cancer.ca.

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[windspeaker confidential] — Larissa Tobacco

Windspeaker: What one quality do you most value in a friend?
Larissa Tobacco: I value above anything, honesty. I can count my true friends on one hand and what they all have in common is honesty.

W: What is it that really makes you mad?
L.T.: Ignorance really irks me, but hey, can't win 'em all, right?

W: When are you at your happiest?
L.T.: The very moment I walk out of an exam that I've just spent the last two weeks studying for and know that I've done well. Ah, redemption!

W: What one word best describes you when you are at your worst?
L.T.: Well you'd have to ask my mom ... probably miserable.

W: What one person do you most admire and why?
L.T.: My mom, 'cause she puts up with me! ... I hope that I am only privileged enough in my lifetime to be as graceful, intelligent, independent, strong and loving as she is.

W: What is the most difficult thing you've ever had to do?
L.T.: Burying my daughter. After I did that, I thought to myself ... life can give me whatever it can 'cause nothing could ever be as

bad as that moment and that I could live life knowing that I've weathered the storm.

W: What is your greatest accomplishment?
L.T.: Honestly I think to date if the National Aboriginal Achievement Awards go off well-fingers crossed-then that will it be it.

W: What one goal remains out of reach?
L.T.: No goal is out of reach. Some goals I haven't yet accomplished, but nothing is out of reach if you just believe in yourself and never give up.

W: If you couldn't do what you're doing today, what would you be doing?
L.T.: Honestly, I am very blessed to be doing everything I wanted to do in life. I promised myself a long time ago that I'd never look back on my life while on my death bed and think to myself, "I wonder what would've happened if I had done something else." Instead I'll look back and say, "Well, at least I tried, and damn, was it fun!"

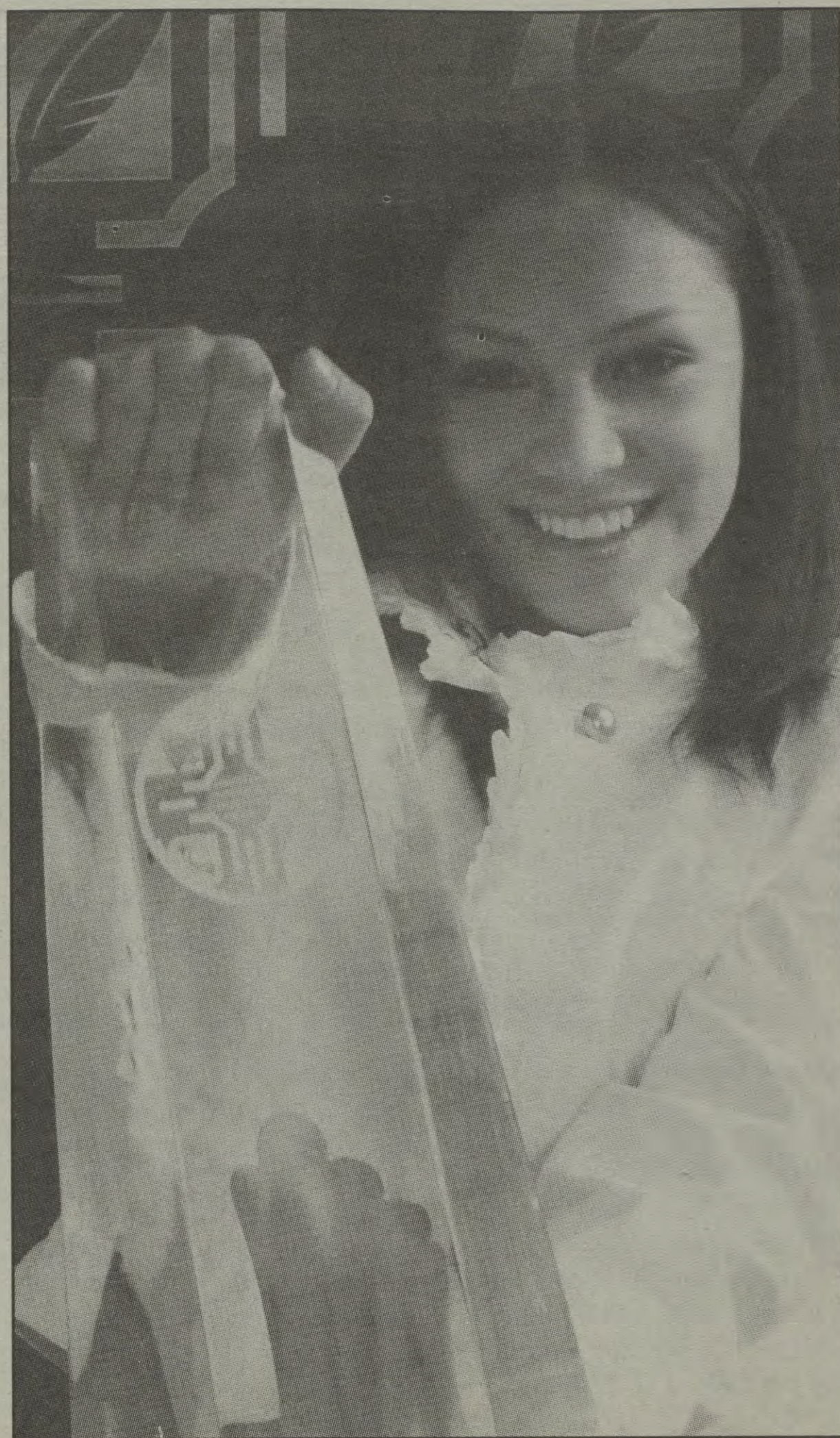
W: What is the best piece of advice you've every received?
L.T.: One day when I was younger and being a brat-'cause I really was! - I came home to find all my dirty clothes cleaned with

a note on top written by my mom saying, "Larissa, I've done this for you not because of how you've been treating people, but because I want to show you how to treat people. Love Mom."

W: Did you take it?
L.T.: I'll never forget that advice and still to this day, when someone is mean to me, I try to be extra nice to them. You'd be surprised how people react to that.

W: How do you hope to be remembered?
L.T.: As someone with the biggest heart in the world.

Twenty-two-year-old actor and student Larissa Tobacco is probably best known for her work as host of the APTN program Upload, and her time spent as a contestant in MuchMusic's 2006 VJ Search. In the New Year she'll be adding another entry to her resume, when she takes on the hosting duties for the 15th annual National Aboriginal Achievement Awards gala, to be held in Toronto on March 7. The gala event, which will see awards presented to 14 exceptional Aboriginal achievers, will air nationally on APTN and Global Television at a later date.



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Artist—Sandy Scofield
Album—Nikawiy Askiy
Song—Raining in Vancouver
Label—Independent
Producer—Sandy Scofield and Shael Wrinch

Scofield tackles tough issues on new CD

Since the release of her first independent album, *Dirty Water*, in 1994, Sandy Scofield has been a musical force to be reckoned with. In 2000, her second album, *Riel's Road*, won the awards for best alternative album and best single for beat the drum at the Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards (CAMA) and earned her a Juno nomination. In 2003, she released *Ketwam*, which won Scofield the award for outstanding Aboriginal recording at the Western Canadian Music Awards, and for best folk album and best producer/engineer at that year's CAMAs.

Scofield is continuing her winning ways with her latest album, *Nikawiy Askiy*. On Nov. 28, she was named best songwriter-Aboriginal at the Canadian Folk Music Awards.

Nikawiy Askiy, which means "my mother earth" in Cree, is a breath of fresh consciousness. The album is a powerful compilation of environmental and socially conscious themes sung with hip-hop, blues, rock and electronic influences.

Scofield's songs are loaded with great themes that conjure a sense of awareness and sensitivity to the issues going on with Aboriginal people today. She sings about the environment and she is not afraid to touch upon issues such as suicide, which she sings about in the song *Faith*. Scofield also honours other Aboriginal talents in the music industry on her album, including Kinnie Starr, Os12, Eekwol, Manik and Green Tara, who all join her to perform tracks on the CD. Scofield's music is a refreshing take on today's contemporary issues with a strong spiritual message from the "old ones" to have faith and take care of mother earth.

[radio's most active]

ABORIGINAL RADIO MOST ACTIVE LIST

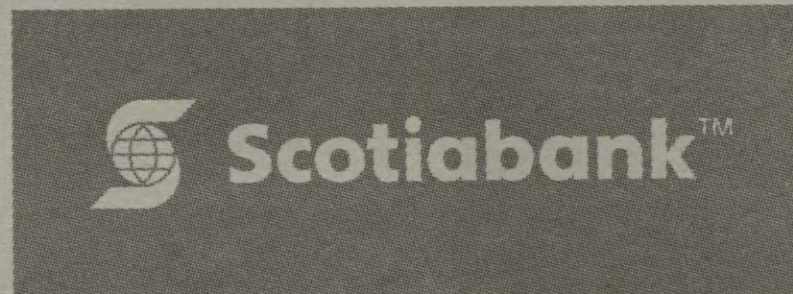
ARTIST	TITLE	ALBUM
Shane Yellowbird	I Remember the Music	Life is Calling My Name
Gabby Taylor	You're the One	Where I Feel Alive
Donny Parenteau	Postmarked Heaven	What it Takes
Cheryl Bear	Hey Cuzzin'	The Good Road
Native Roots	Time to Dance	Celebrate
Segweh	Feels Like Rain	Single Release
Will Belcourt	Falling to Pieces	Full Moon Blanket
Sandy Scofield/Kinnie Starr	Faith	Nikawiy Askiy
Yoza	Manitoba '49	Good to Go
Little Hawk	The Bottle Drinks From You	Home & Native Land
Fara Palmer	Poor Me	Phoenix
Ry Moran	Right Time	Groundwater
Hector	Die for Me	Rain Dancing
Rick Dixon	Ten Candles	Ten Candles
Lucien Spence	Back to You	Single Release
Keith Secola	Drum in the Car	Single Release
The Breeze Band	Road to Eden	The Breeze Band
Steve Rain	Holdin' Out	Only for a Moment
Farrah Meade	I'll Be Gone	Single Release
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[festival]

Aboriginal diversity and culture celebrated



Choreographer and dancer, Santee Smith (middle wearing blue dress) and her group of dancers performed on education day Nov. 30 at the Roger's Centre to a large crowd of students, teachers and parents. Smith a Mohawk singer and actor from Six Nations is well known for her production Kaha:wi.



(Left) Cynthia Trudeau from Wikwemikong, Ont., spoke to the kids about the importance of Aboriginal languages and that learning more about the culture can be rewarding. (Right) Donna Leach (right) and her daughter Celina showed students how to put the mystery braid bracelet together during education day on Nov. 30.



These two models were joined by other models displaying the common stereotypes that Aboriginal people face. The host of the fashion show tells the audience that they are stereotypes that are given to us but not all Natives act like this. The fashion show ran from Dec. 1 to Dec. 2 at the Roger's Centre.



Joshua Peltier an artist from Manitoulin Island displayed his work and was airbrushing and painting in the visual arts tent on Nov. 30.



(Left) President of Native models, Larry Price (centre) poses with some of the models at the 14th annual Canadian Aboriginal festival at the Roger's Centre on Dec. 1.



(Top right) Fara Palmer was one of the featured artists in the performance tent during the festival.

(Bottom) Troy Westwood also known as Little Hawk sang songs from his album, Home and Native Land during the festival Dec. 1.



Representatives from the Canadian Army answered many questions about being in the army and the benefits of it. Kids who asked more than how old were you or how old do you need to be to join the army? recieved a small football.

PHOTOS BY LAURA SUTHERS



[festival]

Appreciation and honour demonstrated at festival

The three grand entries of the Canadian Aboriginal Festival is what draws thousands of people from all over Canada to enjoy the stunning display of nearly 1,000 Native dancers.

The first grand entry is always a dramatic procession into the Roger's Centre, which took place on Dec. 1 at 1 p.m., followed with the second grand entry at 7 p.m. The last grand entry took place on the last day of the festival, which was Dec. 2.

Dancers come from all around Turtle Island come to display their beautiful regalia and give thanks to the Creator and to honour loved ones. They also dance for competition in their respective category.



The thundering of each beat of the drum and the powerful chants that echoed throughout the Roger's Centre signalled the grand entry dancers to make their way in.



(Top) Digging Roots picked up a CAMA for Best Song Writer for Brighter and Rebel from their album Seeds during the awards show at the Roger's Centre.

(Left) Shane Yellowbird was one the evening's top winners, picking up CAMA's for Best Male Artist, Best Country Album and Best Album of the Year for Life is Calling My Name.

PHOTOS BY LAURA SUTHERS



Cheri Maracle-Cardinal gave a stellar performance during the 9th annual Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards Nov. 30 at Toronto's Roger's Centre.



Arvel Bird picked up Best Instrumental Album for his album Animal Totems during the CAMA's at the Roger's Centre.

Students honoured for academic pursuits

By Shauna Lewis
Raven's Eye Writer

Terrace

What do an aspiring First Nations artist, a welder and a business administrator have in common? All are paving the way for a bright future through education, and were all acknowledged for their academic pursuits after becoming British Columbia's Northwest Community College bursary and scholarship recipients for 2007.

This year, Northwest Community College (NWCC), which has campuses in Smithers, Hazelton, Houston, Kitimat, Terrace, Stewart, and Prince Rupert, presented \$60,000 in awards to 47 deserving students nearly half of them being First Nations.

"It was nice, I put it right into tuition right way," said fine arts student, Henry Kelly. The 39-year-old Nisga Tsimshian husband and father of three was presented the Dempsey Bob fine arts award in the amount of \$1000. Kelly, who is in his second year at NWCC's Freda Diesing School of Northwest Coast Art in Terrace B.C., said it was an honour just being chosen by renowned Tahltan artist, Dempsey Bob.

For Kelly, the award has done so much more than help him continue his final years in the program.

"It has inspired me to keep going," he said, in reference to his courses and his craft. Living on the streets for a stint and having substance dependence issues in the past, Kelly said the arts are what has kept him sane and on track the last few years. Once a fisherman, Kelly admits that while he still has fishing in his blood, he had to consider an alternative future.

"It's a dying industry," he said. "I love the job, but it's not going anywhere."

"I can go live in a tipi. But if I want us to move ahead, I have to get an education. I feel like I could achieve anything after I received the awards."

—Annette Krause

For Kelly, the future looks bright. Currently, Kelly's art is being showcased at the Spirit Wrestler gallery in Vancouver and in early 2008 he will travel to New Zealand for a three week culture and art exchange with Maori Indigenous artists.

Vanessa Woods could very well be called an anomaly in regard to women her age. Woods completed her initial certificate in welding at NWCC's Terrace campus in November and was granted a bursary of \$600. At only 23, the Haisla First Nation woman has decided to pursue a career in welding.

"It was easy for me to step into a trade and understand what I was getting into," she said.

Her father was a welder and she was completely inspired by his career and work ethic. On a whim, Woods applied for the bursary and wrote the mandatory essay with a focus on women in the trades.

"Women today have opened their minds and extended their views to the limit and take more risks with their career choices," she said.

It was in those words and her dedication to welding that enabled Woods to obtain the scholarship she so deserved. Woods, who worked the summer in a pulp and paper factory in her hometown of Kitimat, B.C., and whose band didn't financially support her for her year in NWCC, said she will use the award money to continue her studies.

While she hopes to pursue a job in welding within her hometown,

Woods said she wouldn't hesitate to look elsewhere for a career position if need be.

Woods also said that while it is important that First Nations people get an education, she followed her dreams not because she is First Nations, but because she had a dream.

With three kids and a husband, Annette Krause has her plate full. But her busy life hasn't stopped the 38-year-old Gitxan/Kispixw/Tsimshian First Nation woman from working to attain her goals. After winning four NWCC awards—the most granted to one recipient this year, the business administration diploma student is still letting it all sink in.

"I feel pretty overwhelmed," said Krause. "I feel like I could achieve anything after I received the awards."

It is in this self-esteem and acknowledgement of goals that Krause believes is a catalyst for Aboriginal people everywhere. Like Kelly, Krause hasn't had the easiest life.

A past marked with substance abuse has left her thankful for life changes and accomplishments, and she's hopeful other students will follow in her footsteps.

"They (Aboriginal students) can say, 'if she can do it, I can do it,'" said Krause.

While education is key to Krause, she states she is torn between her culture and adapting to a non-Native Society.

"I have to play by the white man's rules," she said. "I can go live in a tipi. But if I want us to move ahead, I have to get an education."



Annette Krause shows off four Northwest Community College awards the most that has ever been granted to one recipient.



Henry Kelly (left) accepts the Dempsey Bob fine arts award from none other Dempsey Bob.



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Alberta Sweetgrass: Special Section providing news from Alberta

Poor housing conditions lead to health concerns

By **HEATHER SCHULTZ**
Sweetgrass Writer

Piikani Nation

Invasive mould, spongy floors and leaky ceilings forced the evacuation of 31 people, more than half of them children, from five uninhabitable homes of the Piikani Nation Nov. 23.

"We declared a state of emergency for the Piikani Nation because of our housing situation," said Adam North Peigan, a band councilor. "Some of our Nation members would not have survived the winter."

Poor conditions have led to health concerns such as pneumonia, asthma, nosebleeds and migraines for the occupants of the homes. Eight other homes are also considered priorities, and others still are endangered from years of gradual deterioration. The reserve's location, on a flood plain, has only compounded the problem.

Piikani Nation leaders estimate cost of fixing their housing at \$3 million, North Peigan said.

The evacuees are currently housed in motels in nearby Pincher Creek and Fort McLeod.

Health Canada has declared a dozen homes on the reserve unfit for living since 2002, said spokeswoman Jeannie Smith. While it has no jurisdiction on First Nations land, environmental inspectors do examine buildings when invited and give their recommendations.

"It's the responsibility of the band to fix up the houses," Smith

said. "Some are beyond repair."

Lorna North Peigan was evacuated from a home where she and her three girls, aged two to 10, have lived with pigeons taking roost in their attic, water seepage causing mould on the ceiling and walls, the top flooring torn up because of water damage and two years without a working furnace.

"I went through 10 cans of Lysol a month just to disinfect," she said. "We tried our best to maintain it."

North Peigan's youngest has had a life plagued by asthmatic problems, but she said her daughter's wheezing stopped within days of moving out of the damaged house. North Peigan has also found her own constant headaches and persistent fatigue have faded.

"I didn't know it was the house," she said.

Temporarily living in a motel in Fort McLeod, North Peigan has taken time off work to search for a new home for the end of the week. Since hearing from inspectors that her house was unlivable in June, she has tried to find replacement housing near work and her daughters' school. She thinks her family will end up living in Lethbridge, and make the necessary commutes.

The Red Cross provided 72 hours worth of accommodation and food, along with supplies for laundry, to evacuees to help the transition.

"It was really frightening to go through these houses," said Pam Heavy Head, a Red Cross

outreach coordinator. "It was really tragic. I didn't expect to see that."

Eighteen of the evacuees were children under 17. Heavy Head said one of the evacuated Elders was suffering from pneumonia, while others told her of symptoms such as asthma and nosebleeds.

"There was a very strong mould odour," she said.

Just moving out of the mouldy environment was enough to help some of the displaced residents feel better. When Heavy Head visited with the evacuees three days later, many had noticed a change.

"Being free of the smell of mould — it's an immediate difference," she said.

Adam North Peigan praised the Red Cross for their help, and said the mayors of the adjoining communities, including Lethbridge, have been supportive. But he said the band could not move forward with its five-year housing plan, which includes addressing mortgage arrears, and repairing and rebuilding houses, without more money. Implementing a rental policy in January will not be enough.

Despite numerous pleas, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) has not provided funding above the \$450,000 received last year in housing assistance — money which is managed by the band. North Peigan said that money went to cover mortgage arrears and housing administration costs.

"The department does not have



Mouldy floors like the one above is just one of many housing conditions members of the Piikani Nation have to live with.

additional funding at this time," said Pam Lemouel, a spokesperson with INAC.

She said the office is searching for avenues that might help the band with their temporary housing problems, and added that the band will begin charging rent in the new year to help offset housing costs.

"We're in disaster mode," North Peigan said. "We've done everything we've been asked to

do, and their position is still that they're broke."

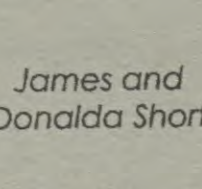
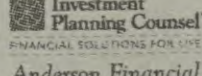
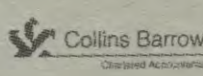
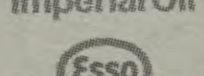
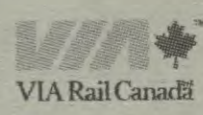
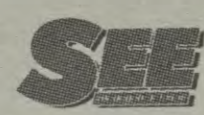
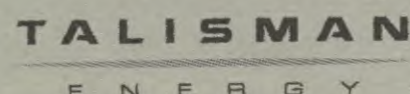
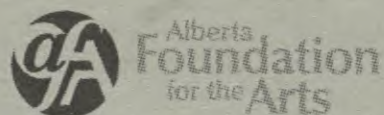
He said more attention should be paid to third-world conditions within Canada before pledges are made to send more aid abroad. "The Prime Minister really needs to look in his own backyard."

North Peigan said the fight for money isn't up. "We're not taking 'no' for an answer," he said. "My hope is to restore stability to our community."

The Gathering: A Cultural Expression of Indigenous Arts

The Alberta Native Friendship Centres Association would like to offer our sincere thanks to the many Sponsors, Volunteers and Attendees, who made this year's gala, *The Gathering: A Cultural Expression of Indigenous Arts*, such a success.

Happy Holidays!



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Saskatchewan Sage: Special Section providing news from Saskatchewan



More than 100 inner city girls have benefited from the Girl Guide program at Albert School.

Girls benefit from guiding

By Linda Ungar
Sage Writer

REGINA

Judi Kehler has mentored many girls from the time they were curious five-year-olds through their teens. She's been involved with Girl Guides for 35 years, but she believes one of her biggest accomplishments is the inner city program at Albert community school in Regina.

"I got into Guiding with Albert School about 10 years ago," said Kehler, who was Girl Guide commissioner for Regina. "We had some success setting up units in rural areas and wanted to do the same in the inner city. In 1997 the community co-ordinator at Albert School called for help to form Guide units at the school, which has mainly Aboriginal students."

To make the program applicable to Aboriginal participants, the Saskatchewan Girl Guides developed Kiskinowasinahika, a guidebook supplement which includes Aboriginal philosophies and traditions introduced through crafts, games and stories. Guide leaders are trained in how to use the tool and adapt it to the needs and beliefs of their girls.

Sparks (ages 5-6), Brownies (7-8), Guides (9-11), Pathfinders (12-14) and Senior Branches (15-17) are now an integral part of the Albert community plan and a model to other schools in the city.

One of the original participants is Jennifer Dunster. She started in Sparks and now, at 15 and in Grade 10, is in Senior Branches in preparation to be a leader herself.

"Guides was fun. We went skiing and snowshoeing and to camp. I would not have been able to go camping otherwise. We learned how to help people and do good things for the community of North Central,"

Dunster said.

In 2000, Saskatchewan hosted Mosaic, an inter-provincial Guide camp held on Treaty Four land in the Qu'Appelle Valley. Twenty-eight girls went from Albert school. Many of the activities were based on an Aboriginal theme and included a powwow and feast. In 2001, 31 girls registered. In 2004 the Albert School Guides, along with other Regina members, spent Visitors Day at Discovery 2004, held at Can-Ta-Ka-Ye on Lake Diefenbaker.

"We went to an international camp on the last year I was in Guides. I would recommend it to other girls because you get involved and meet new people and go places" Dunster said.

Dunster's mom, June, said she is pleased with her daughter's involvement. "The Guide program is good for girls and has given her the ability to work with others. If parents are looking for something for their girls to do, getting involved with Guides is a good option."

The girls in Guides earn badges for different accomplishments like music, swimming and community involvement. Dunster completed the requirements for her Canada Cord, the highest level a Guide Pathfinder can achieve, and received the award at the Youth Recognition ceremony in October 2007.

The school itself is instrumental to the success of the Guide program. Albert School provides a snack for the girls and access to the community room, library and gym. The girls sell cookies as a fundraiser, but the main funding is from the Community Initiatives Fund and the Urban Aboriginal Community Grant Program. Those grants cover registration and camp fees, uniforms, program books, transportation, leader training, special events, ceremonies and celebrations.

There is no cost to the families.

Registration numbers fluctuate, said Kehler. "We start in the fall with a combined group at all levels of anywhere from 12 to 20 girls. They all come together and do crafts as a larger group and then split off to do the programming that is more age specific. Generally the girls know each other and are from the same school. Many are related. Once an older sister or cousin is in the program, the younger ones can't wait to join when they are old enough."

Some parents are able to help out, but Kehler said recruiting and maintaining leadership is one of the biggest barriers faced by the program.

"Often the women in the community are in situations which make it impossible to be involved. They may not have the confidence to step forward and lead a unit. Some are transient. The paperwork can be daunting and in some cases they can't read. Many are single mothers and have small children at home. We need devoted Guiding mentors on a consistent and on-going basis," she said.

"I tell the moms to bring the babies along when they come to watch their girls perform or get their badges. I make sure they know Guides is not just for girls. It is also a program for women. We provide leadership training and it is an excellent thing to put on your resume. Not only are you going to have a positive impact on your community and your girls, but there is an impact on you too. You get to network with other women in a positive way. I got to travel and learn life skills and I got jobs because of what I experienced through Guides."

At Albert School alone the Girl Guides program has touched the lives of more than 100 girls. "It would be nice to see some of the girls who have had a good experience as Guides come back as leaders," Kehler said.

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Windspeaker's Special Section Serving the Aboriginal People of Ontario

Newly elected chief wants a successful community

By Kate Harries
Birchbark Writer

Six Nations

A thriving community is a key goal for the newly elected chief of Six Nations of the Grand River, home to the largest Aboriginal population in Canada.

"The way ahead for me is to put back the public affairs of our community into a healthy and sustainable state," said Bill Montour.

He defeated incumbent chief David General by 663 votes to 287 in the Nov. 17 election.

"The previous council in my opinion has allowed our public

infrastructure to deteriorate by focusing on the actions of the federal government – the governance act and all the other stuff, which really is of no concern to Six Nations because we do our own thing anyway."

Roads, bridges drainage, water, sewers, waste management, education, social services, health,

recreation and economic development – these will be the pre-occupation of the elected council or, as Montour likes to word it, the "administrative council."

As for the land claims that have kept Six Nations in the headlines since the February 2006 reclamation by a group of community members of a proposed subdivision in Caledonia, Montour says all that is none of his business.

"I've been badgered by Ontario and Canada on what my position is going to be in negotiations," he said, referring to calls from Michael Bryant, Ontario's new Aboriginal affairs minister and chief federal negotiator Ron Doering. "I've clearly told them, 'not any position.' The land issues in the Grand River tract I believe should be handled by our national government, the Confederacy."

The Haudenosaunee Confederacy Council was ousted by the Canadian government in 1924, to head off an appeal to the League of Nations by the Deskaheh, Levi General, and a council elected under the Indian Act was imposed. While Six Nations never gave up their traditional form of government, it took 82 years for the Canadian government to recognize it once again.

In April 2006, Confederacy Chief Allan MacNaughton was at the table with Canada and Ontario at the head of a Six Nations team – a significant victory for the people involved in the reclamation.

Elected chief General was at the table too. That led to problems, because the General's positions often differed from those taken by the Confederacy.

"You can't have two heads in

negotiations – when you have two heads, the opponent can drive a wedge through it and that's what they have done," Montour said. The role of the elected council will be to provide support, he adds. "Any negotiation has to have a strong back room."

Montour plans to meet with federal and provincial representatives within the next few weeks, "and then we'll see what kind of relationship we're going to have."

He's no neophyte when it comes to dealing with government of any stripe. First elected to council in 1976, Montour served as Six Nations chief from 1985 to 1991. From 1991 to 1994 he worked at the Assembly of First Nations as chief of staff for Grand Chief Ovide Mercredi. In 1994, he went to work for Indian Affairs where he was associate regional director for British Columbia, then Atlantic regional director-general, ending up back in Ottawa as national director of housing.

"I went in with the idea that I was going to make significant change from the inside," Montour said of his time as a federal bureaucrat. He laughs. "I quickly realized that you can't change the course of Queen Mary with a paddle."

Upon retiring from government, he set up a consulting firm with his wife to help First Nations deal with housing and economic development issues. They helped write proposals for subdivisions and assisted First Nations in accessing programs that weren't accessible because they weren't explained.

"We had contracts from Manitoba to the Atlantic," he said. "I really enjoyed that."

(See Chief page 23.)

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Windspeaker sports briefs

By **SAM LASKARIS**

Goalie cut by national team

Leland Irving will not have an opportunity to win a second consecutive world championship. A year ago Irving was the backup goaltender for the Canadian hockey squad that captured the gold medal at the world junior championships in Sweden. Canada went with an all-Aboriginal duo between the pipes for that tournament. Starting goalie Carey Price, who is now a member of the NHL's Montreal Canadiens, was one of the stars of the world tournament. Price's solid play in Sweden kept Irving from seeing any action.

But with Price now in the NHL, Irving, a 19-year-old from Swan Hills, Alta., was obviously hoping to once again be named to the Canadian roster and play in this year's tournament, which begins Dec. 26 in the Czech Republic.

Irving, who is in his fourth season with the Western Hockey League's Everett Silvertips, was one of four netminders invited to the Canadian selection camp in Calgary in early December, but he did not end up cracking the 22-player roster.

Team officials opted to go with Jonathan Bernier and Steve Mason as their two goaltenders. Bernier is a member of the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League's Lewiston MAINEiacs while Mason toils for the Ontario Hockey League's London Knights.

King leads huskies

Dayna King is not content to have her brothers earn all of the headlines in the family. So the 20-year-old, who has a pair of hockey-playing brothers at elite levels, is doing her best to get a bit of the spotlight as well.

King, who is from Meadow Lake, Sask., is in her second season as a forward with the University of Saskatchewan Huskies women's hockey squad.

Heading into the Christmas holidays, King was leading her team in scoring. She had earned 12 points (six goals, six assists) in 15 games this season.

King has already surpassed her rookie season point totals with the Huskies. A year ago she appeared in 22 games and picked up 10 points (seven goals, three assists).

King's 23-year-old brother D.J. is a forward who is in his second season with the National Hockey League's St. Louis Blues.

Her 18-year-old brother Dwight, also a forward, has NHL aspirations as well. He was selected in the fourth round, 109th over-all, by the Los Angeles Kings in the 2007 NHL Entry Draft.

Dwight King is now currently in his third season in the junior ranks, toiling for the Western Hockey League's Lethbridge Hurricanes.

Nationals return to Ontario

The National Aboriginal Hockey Championships (NAHC) are returning to the province where they were first held.

The 2008 NAHC will be staged in Sault Ste. Marie, Ont., after the Garden River First Nation was awarded the rights to play host to the national tournament.

The event will begin on Apr. 27 and continue for a week. Championship matches will be contested on May 3.

Akwesasne, Ont. had played host to the inaugural NAHC in 2002. Akwesasne also was the site of the 2003 championship.

Since then the national tournament has rotated to various sites across the country. The 2007 NAHC was staged in Prince Albert, Sask.

As in previous years, the 2008 tournament will feature both girls' and boys' divisions. At last year's event there were nine entrants in each category.

The Ontario South girls' squad won its fifth title in six years at the 2007 tournament. The boys' title was captured by the Quebec-based side called Eastern Door and the North (EDN). This marked the first time EDN had won the boys' division at the NAHC.

Milwaukee awarded games

Regina has once again lost out on its bid to play host to the North American Indigenous Games. The Saskatchewan city was hoping to be the host for the 2011 NAIG. But those games will be staged in Milwaukee, Wisconsin as the NAIG Council selected that American city as the host in early November.

Regina had previously submitted a bid to play host to the 2008 NAIG. The '08 Games instead were awarded to Cowichan Valley, B.C.

Officials with the Regina bid were not given a reason why the Milwaukee bid was preferred for the 2011 Games, but a possible explanation could be the fact that the province of Saskatchewan has already played host to a previous NAIG. The 1993 games were held in Prince Albert.

Another possible factor could be that the NAIG Council members simply wanted the games to return to an American city since the '08 Games are being staged in Canada.

There is no stipulation, however, that the games must rotate between the two countries.

Canada played host to the inaugural games in 1990 as well as the following NAIG in Prince Albert. Canada also staged back-to-back Games in Victoria in 1997 and then again in Winnipeg in 2002.

Denver was the last U.S. city to play host to the NAIG when it held the 2006 Games.

Cowichan gears up for the games

By **Sam Laskaris**
Windspeaker Writer

COWICHAN, B.C.

The 2008 North American Indigenous Games (NAIG) set for Cowichan, B.C. are still eight months away, but organizers are confident all preparations are running smoothly at this point.

"Over the last two years we have been operating as a host society," said Rick Brant, chief executive officer for the games. "Everything is in place."

Essential contracts to feed, house and transport games' participants have already been awarded. Now officials are just waiting to see exactly how many competitors 2008 NAIG, which will be held Aug. 3 to 10, will attract. Estimates are that there will be about 5,000 junior sport participants. This number includes athletes aged 13 to 19 as well as their coaches and support staff. And about 1,000 senior participants, aged 20 and over, are also expected to compete. NAIG officials can start making more concrete plans by the end of December.

"The key period we're entering is the registration deadline," Brant said.

A total of 29 teams (13 Canadian and 16 American) are eligible to compete in Cowichan.

Participating squads have until Dec. 31 to inform NAIG officials of exactly how many participants—that includes athletes, coaches and support staff—will be attending the games. NAIG officials don't need to know the names of those who will compete next year, but they will need to know how many athletes per sport will take part as well as the athletes' age category and gender.

"That's really the key focus for us right now," Brant said. "That will set the numbers for us."

And it will assist organizers in informing the recipients of the already awarded contracts of just exactly what to expect.

"The food, accommodations and transportation are all driven by the registration numbers," he said.

A company has been hired to feed all of the junior participants twice a day. An exact number of competitors will determine just how many meals must be prepared.

As for accommodations, the majority of NAIG participants will be staying in one of 22 schools scattered throughout the district. NAIG officials have already purchased 2,000 bunk beds and mattresses from a company in China. These beds, which arrived two months ago and are now in a storage facility, will be placed in classrooms in the various schools where the NAIG entrants will sleep.

The bunk beds won't be assembled, however, until late July when NAIG officials take over the schools to prepare for the games.

As for transportation, there will be plenty of bus drivers who will be kept busy. The games will feature 52 different venues, and drivers will be responsible for getting the participants to and from their competition sites as well as the athletes' centre, where they will be fed.

The athletes' centre will also serve as a facility where participants can do other things such as enjoy some recreational activities or hook up to some Internet access.

Following the registration deadline, NAIG officials can then turn their thoughts to welcoming some of the games' key representatives. All 29 of the chef de mission (team leaders) are expected to be in Duncan, B.C. from Jan. 23 to 25. There NAIG officials will deliver the overview of the entire games' programs.

Another item that will need to be taken care of early in the New Year will be the selection of performing and musical groups for the games. Applications have already been sent out to various Aboriginal performers throughout North America.

"We will be making our decisions (on who will be performing) in February or March," Brant said.

Unlike some other multi-sport competitions, which scramble to complete some of their facilities, the 2008 NAIG already has all of its venue sites in place. Though there will be no mad construction dashes to get a competition facility in place, there could still be one venue change.

"There are no capital projects directly involved with the games," Brant said. But there is a new swimming pool being built in Cowichan; its projected completion date is this coming July. If it is indeed completed in time, Brant said the games will utilize that facility for its swimming competitions. And if there are any construction delays, then NAIG officials will simply make use of an existing pool, adjacent to the one being built, for its swim events.

So far about 300 volunteers have registered to help out with the games. Organizers are eventually hoping to secure 3,000 volunteers.

Brant is confident sufficient individuals will step up to lend a hand. At this point he's not worried that those individuals have yet to indicate they'll be helping out since there wouldn't be anything for them to do right now.

"The majority of those (volunteers we need) are really focussed at games' time," he said.

Achievement award recipients announced

The National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation has announced the names of its latest batch of National Aboriginal Achievement Award recipients. The foundation hands out the awards each year to recognize the contributions of exceptional Aboriginal people.

Chief Jim Boucher of Fort McKay First Nation in northern Alberta is being honoured with an achievement award in the business and commerce category for his efforts to ensure his community benefits from oil sand developments in the region. Recognizing the opportunities afforded to Fort McKay due to the community's proximity to the Athabasca oil sands, Boucher has worked to develop partnerships with industry and government, and has helped pave the way for creation of a number of successful First Nation owned companies. The Fort McKay Group of Companies, which operates seven companies and is fully owned and operated by the First Nation, is a prime example of the fruits of Boucher's efforts, boasting annual revenues of more than \$50 million.

Another National Aboriginal Achievement Award recipient for 2008 is Hubert Skye of Six Nations of the Grand River Territory, who will be honoured in the culture, heritage and spirituality category. When the residential school was operating in Moose Factory, Ont., Skye secretly worked to help children enrolled at the school maintain their languages. Skye is an Elder, a Faithkeeper in the Cayuga Longhouse, and works to assist a number of cultural and educational organizations in his community.

The award in the education category will be presented to Mi'kmaq academic Dr. Marie Ann Battiste. A respected expert in the area of Aboriginal education, Battiste has authored numerous papers and books dealing with subjects such as protection of Aboriginal knowledge, language and culture, and decolonization of education. Battiste is currently the academic director of the Aboriginal Education Research Centre and a professor in the department of

Educational Foundations within the college of education at the University of Saskatchewan, and co-director of the Aboriginal Learning Knowledge Centre.

The National Aboriginal Achievement Award in the health category will be presented to Dr. Jeff Reading of Tyendinaga First Nation, who is being recognized for his work to improve the health of Aboriginal people across Canada. Currently the scientific director of the Institute of Aboriginal People's Health, Reading played a lead role in development of the Aboriginal Capacity and Developmental Research Environments networks that exist across the country to help build capacity in Aboriginal health research.

Paul Andrew, from Tulita in the Northwest Territories, will receive the award in the media and communications category. Andrew has been a broadcaster for both CBC TV and CBC Radio for many years, and helps to promote the Dene language and culture through his broadcasts.

The award in the politics category will be handed out to Métis educator and politician Joseph Leon Handley from Meadow Lake, Sask., who has dedicated his career to public service, most recently as premier of the Northwest Territories. Handley served in that position from December 2003 to October 2007, choosing not to run for re-election following one term in office.

Before entering politics, Handley worked as an educator, serving as a teacher and vice-principal at schools in Saskatchewan, a school division trustee and superintendent in Manitoba, an assistant professor at universities in British Columbia and Manitoba and a lecturer at a teacher training college in Ghana.

Sylvia B. Maracle, from Tyendinaga First Nation, has been chosen as the 2008 award recipient in the public service category, in recognition of her work with Aboriginal organizations at both a national and local level. Her efforts have resulted in positive changes for urban Aboriginal people in the



BEN POWLESS

The 2008 National Aboriginal Achievement Award recipients will be honoured at a gala celebration in Toronto on March 7.

areas of health, justice, employment and housing.

The National Aboriginal Achievement Award in the sports category will be presented to Reggie Leach from Berens River First Nation in Manitoba, who spent 14 years playing in the National Hockey League. His achievements on the ice earned him a spot in the Manitoba Hockey Hall of Fame and the Philadelphia Flyers Hall of Fame. Currently, Leach is working to pass his hockey skills and knowledge onto a new generation of young Aboriginal players and gives presentations on alcoholism education.

Shirley Cheechoo of Eastmain, Que. will be presented with the award in the arts category. Cheechoo is a successful writer, director, producer, actor and visual artist who works to give back to the community by supporting the work of other Aboriginal artists. She is co-founder of the De ba Jeh Mu Jig Theatre Company, co-owner of an art gallery that promotes Aboriginal artists, co-owner of the Spoken Song film production company that focuses on producing works dealing with Indigenous culture, and is founder of the Weengushk Film Institute that works to promote Aboriginal involvement in the film industry.

The award in the environmental and natural

resources category will go to Elizabeth (Tshaukuesh) Penashue, from Kanekuanikat, Labrador, who has spent decades fighting to protect her Innu homeland and the traditional lifestyle of her people. Her efforts began in the 1980s, when she helped lead protests aimed at putting an end to low-level flying by NATO forces over Innu land. She has also worked to promote the traditional Innu way of life by organizing and, for many years taking part in, a 150-mile trip by snowshoe through Innu territory, and a month-long canoe trip along the Churchill River.

David C. Nahwegahbow, from Whitefish River First Nation in Ontario, has been chosen as the 2008 National Aboriginal Achievement Award recipient in the law and justice category. Nahwegahbow is senior partner of an Aboriginal law firm and has worked as a lawyer in private practice for 25 years. He is a founding member of the Indigenous Bar Association and works to promote Indigenous rights both in Canada and abroad. He also volunteers his time to speak to students about the importance of the law and to help build positive relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

Bernard McCue from Beausoleil First Nation in Ontario will receive the award in the technology and trades

category. McCue completed his post-secondary studies in chemistry by taking extension courses while working full-time, then went on to make significant contributions in his field of expertise. He is the holder of three U.S. patents, helped aid in the development of synthetic jet aircraft lubricants, and developed methods that improved the colour on television sets produced by RCA Ltd.

The 2008 Youth Award recipient will be Boyd Wesley Benjamin of Vuntut Gwitch'in First Nation in the Yukon. Benjamin is fulfilling his childhood dream of being a pilot, having earned both his pilot and helicopter licenses.

The Lifetime Achievement Award will be presented posthumously to world-renowned artist Norval Morrisseau from the Red Rock band in Ontario, who passed away on Dec. 4. Credited for the creation of the Woodland school of art, Morrisseau painted for close to half a century and has inspired many other Aboriginal artists who are following in his footsteps.

The awards will be handed out in Toronto on March 7 and will be hosted by Cree actor and former MuchMusic VJ Search contestant Larissa Tobacco. The gala will be taped, and will air on APTN and Global at a later date.

Chief to focus on revitalizing Six Nations community

(Continued from page 21)

Community development is Bill Montour's first love, dating back to the 22 years he spent in construction as an ironworker.

Looking forward, Montour hopes to develop a new way of existing with Canada.

"I still believe we as Six Nations, we have our own sovereign right to our own self-determination as a First Nation, not as an independent body or a dependent body, but as an interdependent body because I still think the idea of Canada is a good idea," said Montour.

Like many Aboriginal leaders, he sees welfare as something that has sapped the community's self-reliance.

"In 1956, the government came in, it said we're going to give you welfare, we're going to take care of you. A lot of people took that to heart. Prior to that we had numerous farms on the territory that were second to none on any place, producing great crops and cattle and sheep and chickens. We had everything, everything was here. "My family, we continued farming, in fact my brother still runs the family farm, but we

found over the years that the whole welfare system created the idea that people don't have to work. So we can't get help in the summer time, we had to mechanize."

Six Nations land could be put to better use, he believes. "We have so much land that's sitting here, but we're buying everything off the territory, we don't buy our own food anymore, we're dependent on the world market."

Montour shakes his head when he considers the wasteful attitude towards land across southern Ontario, the breadbasket of the

province, with subdivisions built on prime agricultural land while city centres look like war zones.

"I remember going to Brantford when I was a kid, there were so many people walking on the street that it was crowded. Now you can shoot a cannon down the street, and not hit anybody. The people who live on the outskirts need to drive to buy food. "And it just goes on and on and on. We've got to come to grips with this, because Mother Earth can't take this crap any more."

It's a problem that Aboriginal

and non-Aboriginal people have to solve together, he says, and he plans to start repairing relationships with Six Nations neighbours that have been stressed by the reclamation. "I think the whole council has a role to play, not as peacemakers but more or less as advocates of our history, we've got a proud and long history here and people have got to know that."

"Communication to me is critical information, is the currency of democracy, so we've got to do more of that kind of stuff."

Dream Makers documentary headed into schools

By Shari Narine
Windspeaker Writer

CALGARY

When Tantoo Cardinal made her film debut in the early 1970s, acting was not a viable career for Aboriginal people. Today, working in film and television, both in front of and behind the camera, is a rewarding career choice for Aboriginal people and Cardinal, a Métis woman who was raised by her Cree grandmother in northeastern Alberta, thinks it's important for youngsters to know that.

"(The entertainment industry is) becoming more and more a part of society. We're getting to be more of an electronic, technological society and storytelling has gone that way and we're big on stories. It makes sense," said Tantoo Cardinal, who has enjoyed success as an actor in such well-known films as *Dances With Wolves* and *Black Robe* and guest appearances on television series like *North of 60* and *Street Legal*.

She also hosted *Dream Makers*, a project two years in the making that was spearheaded by executive producer Robin Wortman. The film debuted on Bravo in December 2006 and played again on APTN in early 2007. Now, an extended version of *Dream Makers* will be making its way to Aboriginal classrooms across Canada this month.

Dream Makers, written and directed by Susan Cardinal, tells the story of Aboriginal people in the Canadian film industry, from replacing Mexicans and Italians in Indian roles to standing firm in their convictions to fight stereotypes.

For Tantoo Cardinal, *Dream Makers* is an important tool to let young Aboriginals know that they don't have to volunteer for eight years in theatre - like she did - before realizing that they can be paid to do what they love.

Getting Aboriginal youth interested in the film and movie industry is an important message Wortman hopes to get across through *Dream Makers*, but he also wants to spread the message

that hard work and dedication can lead to success.

We, as Aboriginal people, are capable of achieving anything if we set our minds to it. The influence that these actors have had on how people are portrayed on film and television has been significant," he said.

Wortman said it was his original intention to have *Dream Makers* play to school aged children 12 years and over. Funding from the Aboriginal Workforce Participation Initiative has paid for 600 DVDs to be distributed throughout Aboriginal junior and senior high schools and the re-editing of the project to allow for more than an hour of extra footage. The film, which tells the stories of 14 Aboriginal actors, was whittled down to 47 minutes for television broadcast. The educational DVD allows for the airing of additional footage of interviews that were shot with the actors and is close to two hours in length.

"The kids get to hear from the actors," said Wortman, noting that the actors, who serve as role

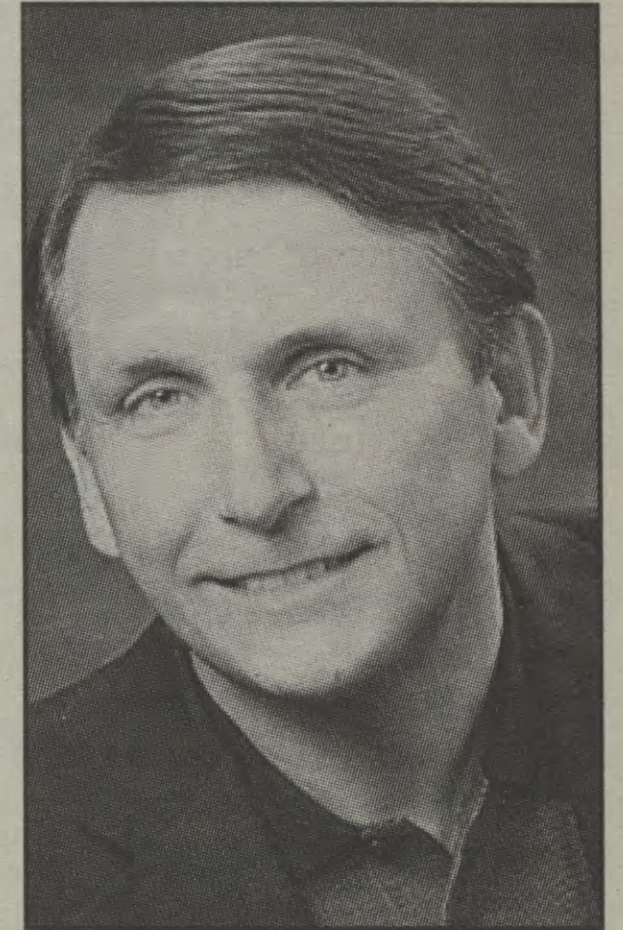
models, have an influence on the children.

With the additional footage, teachers have flexibility in how they use the DVD in the classroom, either showing *Dream Makers* all the way through, as it appeared on television, or breaking it into chapters with the different actors, who talk about starting out, what it's like to be Aboriginal in the industry, the challenges they face, and what the future holds.

The footage gives "insights into an array of people," said Wortman.


Instructional material is yet to be developed, but a teacher's guide and student workbook are in the making. When they are completed, which Wortman anticipates will be in time for the 2008-2009 school year, they will be posted on the website www.dreammakers.tv where they can be downloaded.

There is talk of further distribution of *Dream Makers* to Non-native schools and to post-secondary institutions. In fact, said Wortman, the original



Robin Wortman

interest to put *Dream Makers* into the classroom was voiced by post-secondary schools. The DVD will likely be sent to select post-secondary institutions that have Aboriginal programs once the main mailing is completed, Wortman said. And there is on going discussion with some organizations to have the DVD available to non-Native schools. (See Career page 26)



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Scholarship recipient pursuing her dreams

By Diana Bird
Windspeaker Staff Writer

PETERBOROUGH, Ont.

It's taken a lot of hard work and determination, but Deanna Perrault is realizing her dream of making a better life for herself and her family.

The Trent University student has had to balance pursuing a post-secondary education with the responsibilities of caring for her two children, but has risen to the challenge. Perrault, who had dropped out of high school in Grade 9, decided to go back to school in 2003. Three years later, she'd earned her diploma in Native Studies. She is currently enrolled in the university's Indigenous Studies program and plans to continue on at Trent to earn her master's degree.

On Nov. 16, Perrault's efforts were recognized and rewarded when she was presented with a \$1,000 Canada Post Aboriginal Education Incentive Award, presented each year to Aboriginal people who have overcome

adversity in order to further their education. Perrault was one of 20 Aboriginal students from across the country to receive an award for 2007.

"The bursary meant a lot to me. It acknowledged and recognized my own struggles with school and my determination to finish. I encourage other people who are not in school or who are contemplating school to continue on with it," Perrault said.

"Tap into your own personal power and move towards and strive towards achieving your dreams. For myself, I had to come to the realization that no one else is going to do that for me, so I had to do that. I had to be able to understand that I have survived a lot and just going through-as many people have-life's challenges. That it is really important to not give up, to not feel victimized by our circumstances; to just learn from them. To use those challenges, those experiences, as learning tools so that you can go and apply them to what you want to fulfill in your life. Never give up."



Deanna Perrault, a mature student at Trent University currently enrolled in the school's Indigenous Studies program, receives a \$1,000 Canada Post Aboriginal Education Incentive Award from Canada Post local area manager Gene Adamo on Nov. 16.

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North Battleford
Gold Eagle Casino
(Gold Ridge Room)
Date: January 22, 2008
Time: 1:00 pm

Fort Qu'Appelle
Treaty 4 Governance Room
(Archive Room)
Date: January 24, 2008
Time: 1:30 pm

FEBRUARY
Prince Albert
Prince Albert Grand Council
(Main Boardroom)
Date: February 6, 2008
Time: 10:00 am
(Main Boardroom)

Whitebear Bear First Nation
S/E Treaty #4 Tribal Council
(Council Chambers)
Date: February 14, 2008
Time: 10:00 am

Meadow Lake
Meadow Lake Tribal Council
(Main Boardroom)
Date: February 26, 2008
Time: 1:00 pm

MARCH
Spiritwood
Agency Chiefs Tribal Council
(Main Boardroom)
Date: March 6, 2008
Time: 1:30 pm

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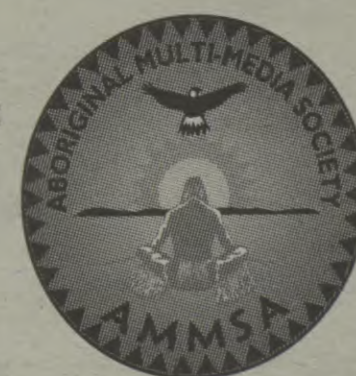
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Career options highlighted in film

(Continued from page 24)

"Alberta schools have a diversity program for students and this documentary would fit well in that," Robin Wortman said.

Wortman noted that Alberta culture minister Hector Goudreau included *Dream Makers* in a package of four internationally acclaimed films that went out to members of the legislative assembly at Christmas time.

Dream Makers was recently on the receiving end of some of that international acclamation when the film won the award for best documentary short at the annual American Indian Film Festival in San Francisco on Nov. 10.

"That's probably the most prestigious film festival in the world for Indigenous or Aboriginal film and it was wonderful," Wortman said. "The category we were in, the best documentary short, there were some tremendous, well-established award-winning directors in that category. To be quite honest, not to take away from the decision they made, we

didn't think we would win."

To have the documentary available in the classroom is a powerful tool, said Wortman. "It carries a very positive message ... I don't think anybody has ever put this story together of the evolution and how Aboriginal people were portrayed through film and television and the crucial role that we played ourselves in changing that."

It encourages Aboriginal youth to consider an industry that has evolved through the hard work of their predecessors - and to acknowledge that hard work can accomplish anything, he said.

And if there were any doubt, Wortman points to Lorne Cardinal, who now portrays a police officer in the comedy *Corner Gas*.


"Lorne will tell you he got the part in *Corner Gas* because when the opportunity came, he was ready, he was prepared. He had worked hard. I think that's a good message for all of us, particularly our youth: don't let your Aboriginal-ness set you back. You work hard, you go out there."

Correction

An error appeared in the article *Exhibit provides fresh perspective on treaties*, which was featured on page 14 of the November 2007 edition of *Windspeaker*.

The article incorrectly identified the exhibit created by Library and Archives Canada as *Spirit and Intent: Understanding the Voices*. The correct name of the exhibit is *Spirit and Intent: Understanding Aboriginal Treaties*. We apologize for the error and for any confusion it may have caused.

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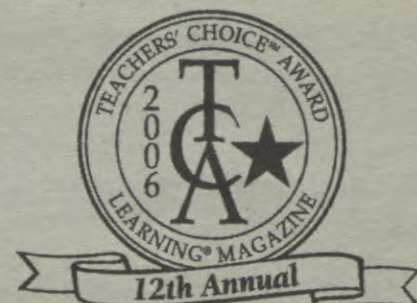
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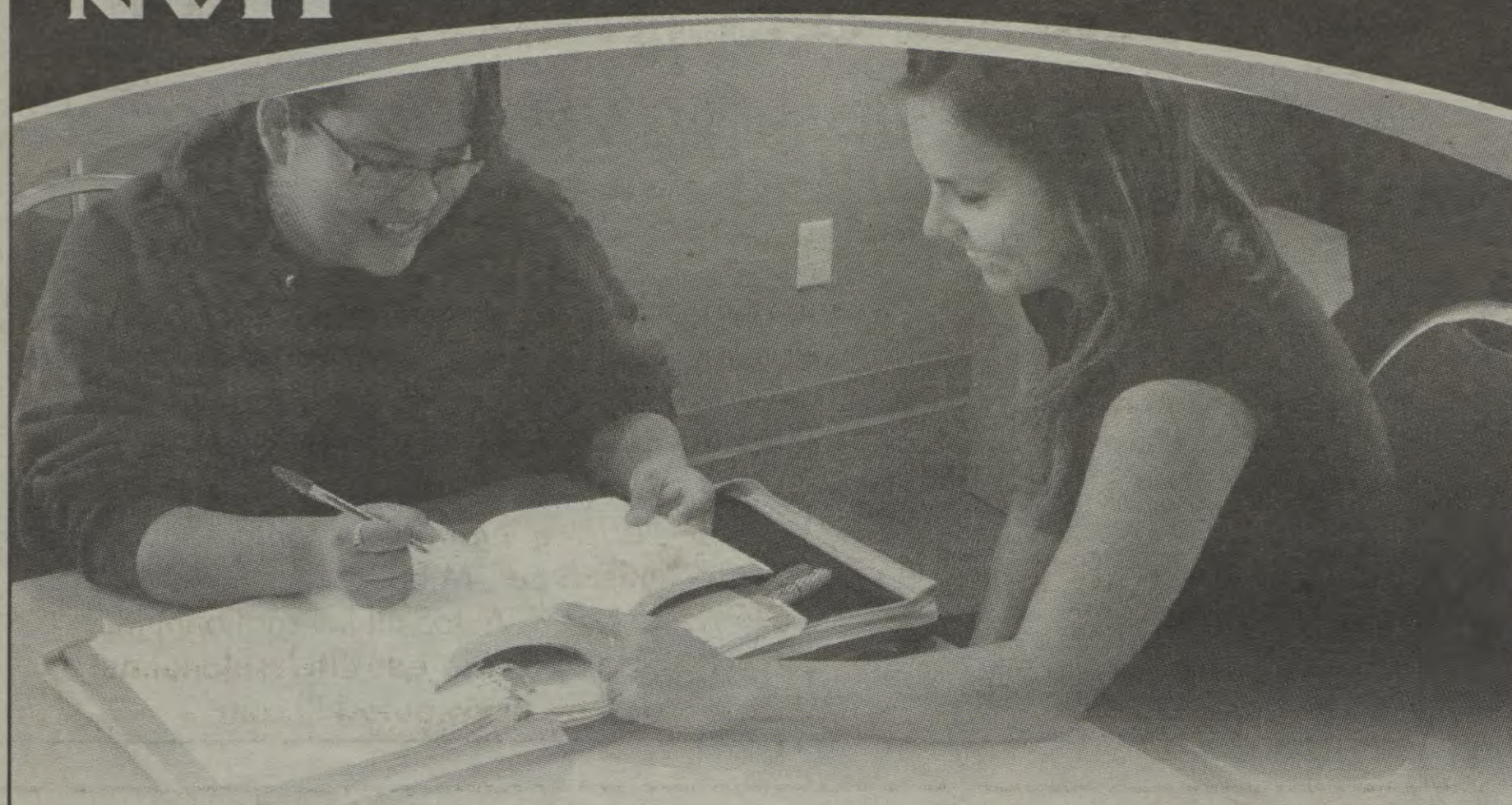
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PROGRAM COORDINATOR HEALING PROGRAMS, ABORIGINAL MINISTRIES CONGREGATIONAL EDUCATIONAL AND COMMUNITY MINISTRIES (CECM) UNIT

The United Church of Canada is seeking a Program Coordinator, Healing Programs, in the Aboriginal Ministries cluster, to assist The United Church of Canada's efforts toward healing and building right relationships with Aboriginal peoples as part of the Church's response to the legacy of residential schools, by providing lead role responsibilities in enabling healing initiatives of Aboriginal communities and between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities for a more just and reconciled Church.

The incumbent will provide staff support to the Healing Fund Council and provide leadership in responding to requests for the funding of healing initiatives by Aboriginal peoples and organizations. She/he will establish ongoing and supportive relationships with applicants and recipients of grants there by giving credence to the Church's Apology. She/he will act as a resource person to educate bodies in the Church about the legacy of residential schools and the need for the Healing Fund.

The incumbent will also provide staff support to the Sisters in Spirit Circle and facilitate educational processes on issues of gendered violence impacting Aboriginal women, and assist in the animation of Circle and Cross processes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities. She/he will work to encourage the recognition that healing must be seen as a necessity for the whole Church.

This position has a 2008 salary range of \$50,306.40 to \$67,075.20 (OM) or \$57,153.66 to \$76,205.22 (LE).

Please visit our website: www.united-church.ca
to view the full posting and position description

Métis Nation of Alberta Labour Market Development Program

The Métis Nation of Alberta Labour Market Development Program is currently offering the following projects created specifically for Métis people in Alberta:

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Oil and Gas Production Operators may be responsible for the maintenance and monitoring of oil and/or gas wells. The Métis Oil and Gas Production Operator program has been designed to provide a Level One Oil and Gas Production operator certificate. This 20 week program starting January 8, 2008 in High Level, Alberta includes a six week work experience placement with prospective employers.

Métis Environmental Monitor Program

Environmental Monitors work with a variety of industries assisting with activities such as water, soil, and air quality testing, geological surveys and wildlife counts. Delivered at Portage College in Lac La Biche, starting January 7, 2008 this program consists of 24 weeks of instruction and 13 days of practicum. The objective of this program is to provide Métis students with the academic/educational, occupational skills, and work experience necessary to become Environmental Monitors.

Métis Firefighting Preparation Program

This training assists Métis clients in making application to municipal firefighting authorities. A 10 week program starting January 7, 2008, will prepare Métis people for the Firefighting Threshold exam. Held at the Alberta Fire-Fit Training Center in Edmonton training includes, physical fitness, First Aid/CPR and Emergency Medical Responder Certification, and a Class 3 Drivers License.

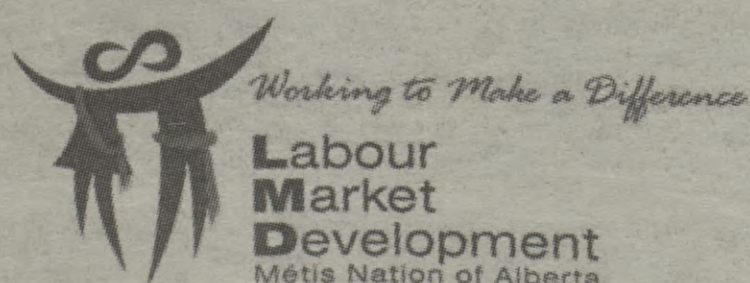
Alberta Aboriginal Youth Achievement Awards

Recognize the achievements of Aboriginal youth and share their successes with others at the Alberta Aboriginal Youth Achievement Awards to be held in Edmonton on Friday, January 28, 2008.

An Aboriginal Youth can be nominated by an organization, school, community leader or individual. There are eight award categories with two individuals from each selected for an award.

Nomination Deadline:
January 11, 2008

For more information on the gala or to
nominate a youth contact: **Christie
Ladouceur**
youth@metis.org
Or call
1-800-252-7553



For More Information on Métis Training Programs Contact:
Métis Employment Services at 1- 888- 48 METIS

Canada

International association honours RCMP officer

By Heather Andrews Miller
Windspeaker Writer

OTTAWA

For the first time ever, a Canadian has been recognized by the International Association of Chiefs of Police. Superintendent Shirley Cuillierrier, an Aboriginal employee with more than 25 years of distinguished service in the RCMP, was named Indian Country Law Enforcement Officer of the Year for 2007.

Cuillierrier was project leader in the implementation of a co-ordinated police response to the National Day of Action by Aboriginal groups on June 29, an event the RCMP viewed as a possible threat to the safety of the public and the police. Under her leadership, the RCMP forged a relationship with Aboriginal organizations, the Ontario Provincial Police, the Sûreté du Québec and individuals, making her teamwork approach a critical component in the peaceful outcome of the event.

"I looked at the mandate and realized we had to invite other policing agencies to the table. It needed to be a nationally-coordinated effort and we formed a national steering committee. With the RCMP, and the two provincial policing services, we

had the whole country involved," Cuillierrier said. "The people needed to be assured of their rights to a peaceful demonstration."

Because of all the planning and the open dialogue with the police, the levels of government and the Aboriginal communities, she believes that the day was a huge success.

"We didn't want the tragedies of the past to be repeated. We looked back to Oka, Ipperwash and Gustafson Lake to ensure that a similar situation wouldn't happen."

Cuillierrier is from Kanesatake herself, and sees that the community is still reeling from the residue of Oka 17 years ago. "It will take another generation before the healing can be complete," she said.

The shared history of Aboriginal people and the RCMP goes back to 1873 when the force was formed to protect Aboriginal communities from marauders to the south. Without this support, the ability to provide effective policing services to some areas of Canada would not have been possible.

Cuillierrier brought in Elders to talk with representatives from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) about land claims issues, which is what the

National Day of Action had originally been organized to address. "But over the months before June 29, the goal broadened to include the bigger picture of narrowing the gap on poverty and other conditions that are negatively affecting the Aboriginal communities throughout the country," she said.

It seems like there is a renewed interest and sensitivity amongst Canadians to begin to understand the root causes of the challenges facing Aboriginal people. An example cited by Cuillierrier would be then-INAC minister Jim Prentice announcing a land claims commission just before the National Day of Action.

"Politicians and bureaucrats seemed to be listening," she said.

Her 25 years in policing have included 14 years in Atlantic Canada where she worked in drug enforcement and the general investigations section. Eleven years ago, she moved to Ottawa where she was assigned to the prime minister's detail when Jean Chrétien held the position.

"More recently I've enjoyed the commission of being in charge of national Aboriginal policing services, which is quite an honour. I felt that it was an opportunity to really make a difference through my work," said the mother of two. "I feel very strongly about

mentoring younger people and every day I talk to youth about joining the RCMP."

Cuillierrier wants to share her acquired knowledge with young people and show them that every individual can contribute to the broader perspective, whether they join a police service or not.

"We need Aboriginal people making a better world in every walk of life and in every occupation," she said. Currently about 1,000 RCMP employees are Aboriginal.

Cuillierrier realizes that learning is a life-long experience and plans to continue to add to her knowledge throughout her RCMP career. She believes that her experience will take her to new challenges not possible earlier in her career and she has no immediate plans to retire. Besides the rewarding work she has done, her career has allowed her to travel the country and the world as she learned about other policing organizations.

"Even though Native people have sometimes been on the front page over confrontations, we still have so much to be proud of and I encourage everyone to consider a career in policing," she said. "Having our men and women on the front line makes a difference in someone's life every minute of every day."



RCMP Superintendent Shirley Cuillierrier was recently honoured by the International Association of Chiefs of Police, who chose her as the Indian Country Law Enforcement Officer of the Year for 2007.

RCMP Commissioner William Elliot, to whom Cuillierrier presented a braid of sweetgrass during the award ceremony, stated that the recognition by the international association was a real honour for the RCMP.

"To see one of our own singled out this way highlights the impact that one individual can make on the safety and security of our communities. We are very proud of Supt. Cuillierrier," he said.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND CEO

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- Ability and willingness to travel and a Secret Security Clearance is a condition of employment.

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We thank all those who apply. Only those selected for further consideration will be contacted.



Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
Indian Oil and Gas Canada

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Le candidat/la candidate devra veiller à l'exécution des obligations fiduciaires et légales de la Couronne, sous le régime de la *Loi sur le pétrole et le gaz des terres indiennes* et du *Règlement de 1995 sur le pétrole et le gaz des terres indiennes*. Le candidat/la candidate retenu sera aussi appelé à diriger la mise en place et la négociation, en partenariat avec les Premières nations et le conseil d'administration, d'initiatives qui apporteront un soutien stratégique au transfert de la gestion du pétrole et du gaz aux Premières nations et à leurs institutions. PGIC recherche un/une leader respecté, intègre et animé d'une vision stratégique exceptionnelle qui s'emploiera résolument à remplir les objectifs et la mission de l'organisation. La personne recherchée possèdera les qualifications essentielles suivantes :

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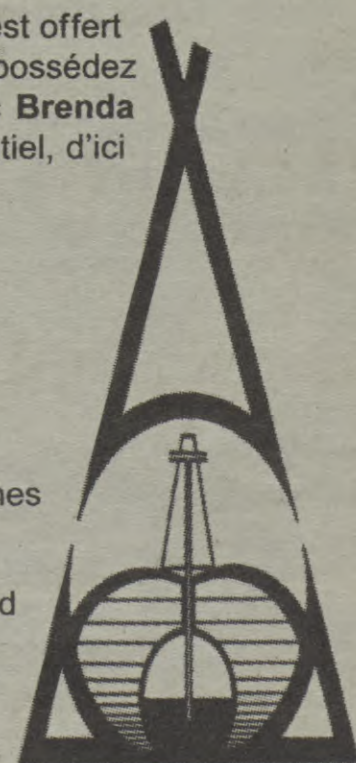
(la méthode privilégiée pour poser sa candidature).

Nous remercions toutes les personnes qui se porteront candidates. Seules les personnes sélectionnées seront contactées.

For further information in English, please contact the human resources agent mentioned above.

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
Indian Oil and Gas Canada

Affaires indiennes et du Nord Canada
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- ◆ Certification and Best Practices Manager (FMB004)
- ◆ Legal and Standards Manager (FMB005)
- ◆ Administrative Assistant (FMB006)

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[footprints] Norval Morrisseau

Copper Thunderbird worked to instill pride in his people

By Cheryl Petten

Norval Morrisseau has been known by many names. Some have called him the father or grandfather of Native Canadian art. Others dubbed him the Picasso of the North. He was also known as Miskwaabik Animiiki, or Copper Thunderbird, the name he was given when he was 19 and gravely ill and which he credited with saving his life.

Morrisseau was born on March 14, 1932 in Fort William, now part of Thunder Bay, Ont. He was the eldest boy in the family and, as such, was raised by his grandparents according to Anishnaabe tradition. He grew up on Sandy Point reserve, where his grandmother introduced him to Catholicism, while his grandfather shared with him the stories he'd learned from his grandfather before him—stories of Anishnaabe myths and legends. The teachings of both grandparents had a huge impact on Morrisseau, and would be reflected in the works of art he produced throughout his lifetime.

Morrisseau's time of learning from his grandparents was cut short when he was sent away to a Catholic boarding school, where he endured abuse—physical, sexual and emotional. After two years he returned home and spent another two years attending a school in the community before his formal education came to an end.

Although he was no longer attending school, Morrisseau was eager to continue his learning, but now his teachers would be his grandfather and the other Elders in the community. The young boy had aspirations of one day becoming a shaman, and as such was eager to gather any and all wisdom they chose to impart.

When he wasn't spending

time with the Elders, Morrisseau liked to draw, putting to use his talents as a natural born artist. Later in life, he would find a way to merge these two identities—shaman and artist—into one.

Morrisseau drew inspiration for his paintings from many sources—from the ancient pictographs he saw painted on rocks near his home community, from Midewiwin scrolls such as the ones he'd watched his grandfather create, and from his grandfather's stories.

Other inspiration, Morrisseau would tell people, came from the House of Invention, a place he would travel to in his dreams, another realm where all the works he had yet to create would be laid out before him.

When he began to paint images inspired by Anishnaabe myths and legends, many in the Aboriginal community, most notably the Elders, were not pleased that he was creating these paintings and sharing them with the world. Even Morrisseau had doubts as to whether he was crossing a line with the subject matter of his artworks, but his fears were eased by a dream he had in which the Great Spirit told him to continue his work.

The art he created was so innovative and unique that it spawned an entirely new style of Native art—the Woodland, or Anishnaabe, school of art, which features X-ray-like images of people, animals and spiritual beings, rendered in bright colours, with thick, black lines outlining and connecting each figure.

Morrisseau credited a visit to the House of Invention—and his tours of art galleries in Europe, where he found the works of the great masters to be dark and colourless—with inspiring him to introduce the bright colours so prominent in much of his work. Over the years, many people have

told Morrisseau his paintings have healed them, and he linked those restorative powers to the colours in the paintings and the emotions they invoke.

Although he'd been an artist all of his life, it was in 1959 when Morrisseau decided to make art his career.

His first major success came in 1962, when he had his first showing in Toronto. Five years later, his work was introduced to an international audience when two of his murals were featured at the Indian pavilion at Expo '67 in Montreal.

In 1973, Morrisseau joined together with six other First Nation artists—Daphne Odjig, Jackson Beardy, Alex Janvier, Eddy Cobiness, Carl Ray and Joe Sanchez—to form Professional National Indian Artists Inc., a group that soon became known as the Indian Group of Seven.

Over the years, Morrisseau has accumulated a long list of honours and accomplishments. In 1978, he was appointed a member of the Order of Canada, and in 1986, he was named a Grand Shaman of the Ojibwa people. In 1989, he was the only Canadian artist invited to show his works as part of an exhibit held at the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris to mark the bicentennial of the French Revolution, and in 1995, the Assembly of First Nations honoured Morrisseau by awarding him with an eagle feather. In 2005, he was elected a member of the Royal Society of Canada's Academy of Arts. And in 2006, Morrisseau became the first First Nation artist to be featured in a solo exhibition at the National Gallery of Canada. That exhibition, Norval Morrisseau-Shaman Artist, ran at the gallery for three months before travelling to the Thunder Bay Art Gallery, then the McMichael Canadian Art Collection in Kleinburg



NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA

Norval Morrisseau poses for photos in front of his painting, *Androgyny*, during the official opening of his solo exhibition at the National Gallery of Canada on Feb. 3, 2006.

before heading to the National Museum of the American Indian in New York City, where it wrapped up a four month stay at the beginning of January, 2008.

The latest addition to the list of Morrisseau's many accomplishments is a 2007 Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation.

While Morrisseau's career and life contained numerous high points, they were countered by an equal number of lows, at times when his drinking got the better of him.

For a time in the late 1980s, Morrisseau was living on the street, and selling his paintings. It was then that he met Gabor Vadas, a young man who was also living on the street and who had just lost his father. The two formed a bond, and with help from Vadas, Morrisseau left the alcohol and drugs behind and once again channeled his energy and creativity into his art. He created a number of pieces during this time, some of which have been called his greatest works. But this creative period was not to last

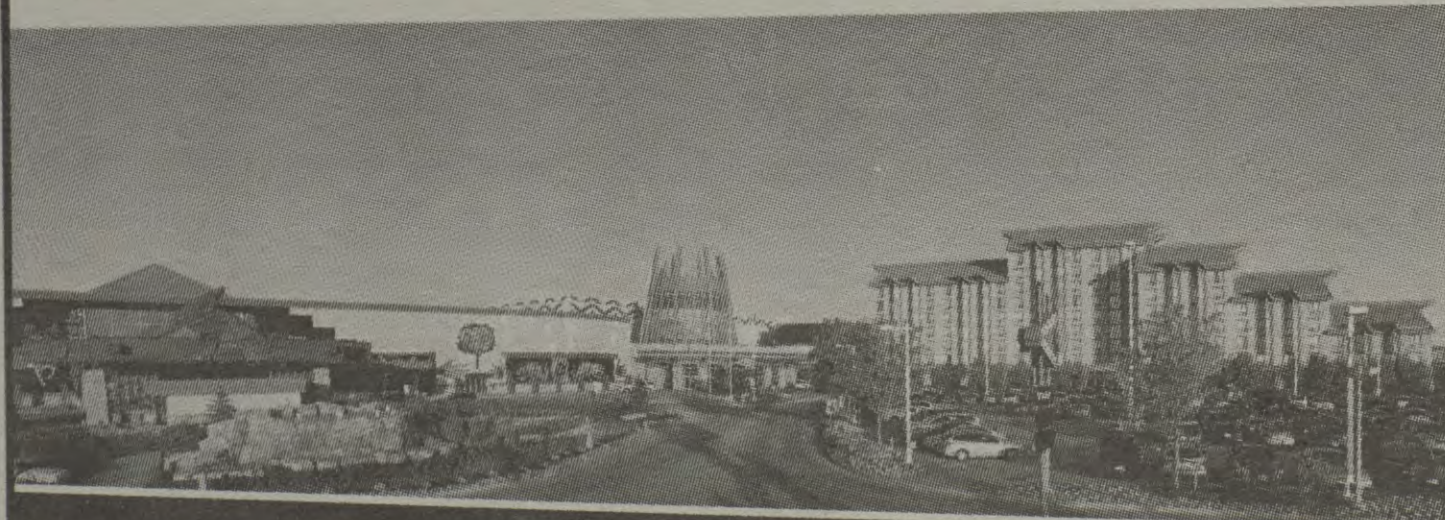
for long. Within a decade, Morrisseau developed Parkinson's disease, and as his condition worsened, it robbed him of his ability to continue painting. He died of complications of Parkinson's on Dec. 4.

Morrisseau's career as an artist spanned nearly half a century. During that time his work served to inspire a number of Aboriginal artists. But more than that, it inspired Aboriginal people in general, who felt pride in seeing an Aboriginal artist viewed as one of the greatest painters Canada has ever produced. At the end of the day, that is all Morrisseau had hoped for.

"I wanted to be a Shaman and an artist. I wanted to give the world these images because I felt this could bring back the pride of the Ojibwa, which was once great," Morrisseau says in the book *Norval Morrisseau-Return to the House of Invention*. "My aim is to reassemble the pieces of a once-proud culture, and to show the dignity and bravery of my people."

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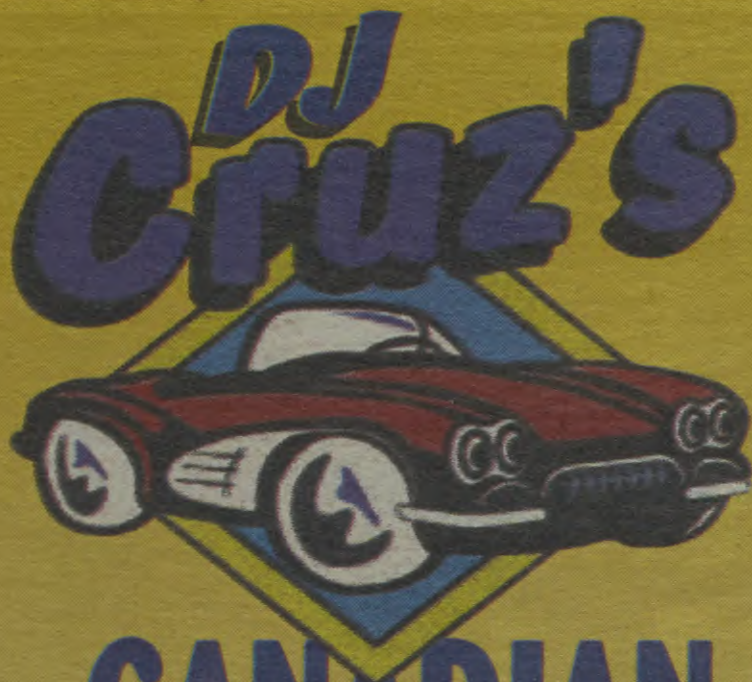
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My name is Judy Colwell and I am a member of The Canadian Certified Credit Professionals. I specialize in building AAA credit for you. I have helped my customers from starting with no credit, to getting their first starter vehicle and then trading up to the vehicle of their dreams. I make absolutely sure that you receive top dollar for your trades and that you do not overpay for your next vehicle purchase. I will negotiate on your behalf to get you the best deal possible and with 22 years of negotiating experience, I have saved my customers thousands of dollars. I make sure that you get all the dealer rebates when purchasing a brand new vehicle and that you get top book prices on used vehicles.

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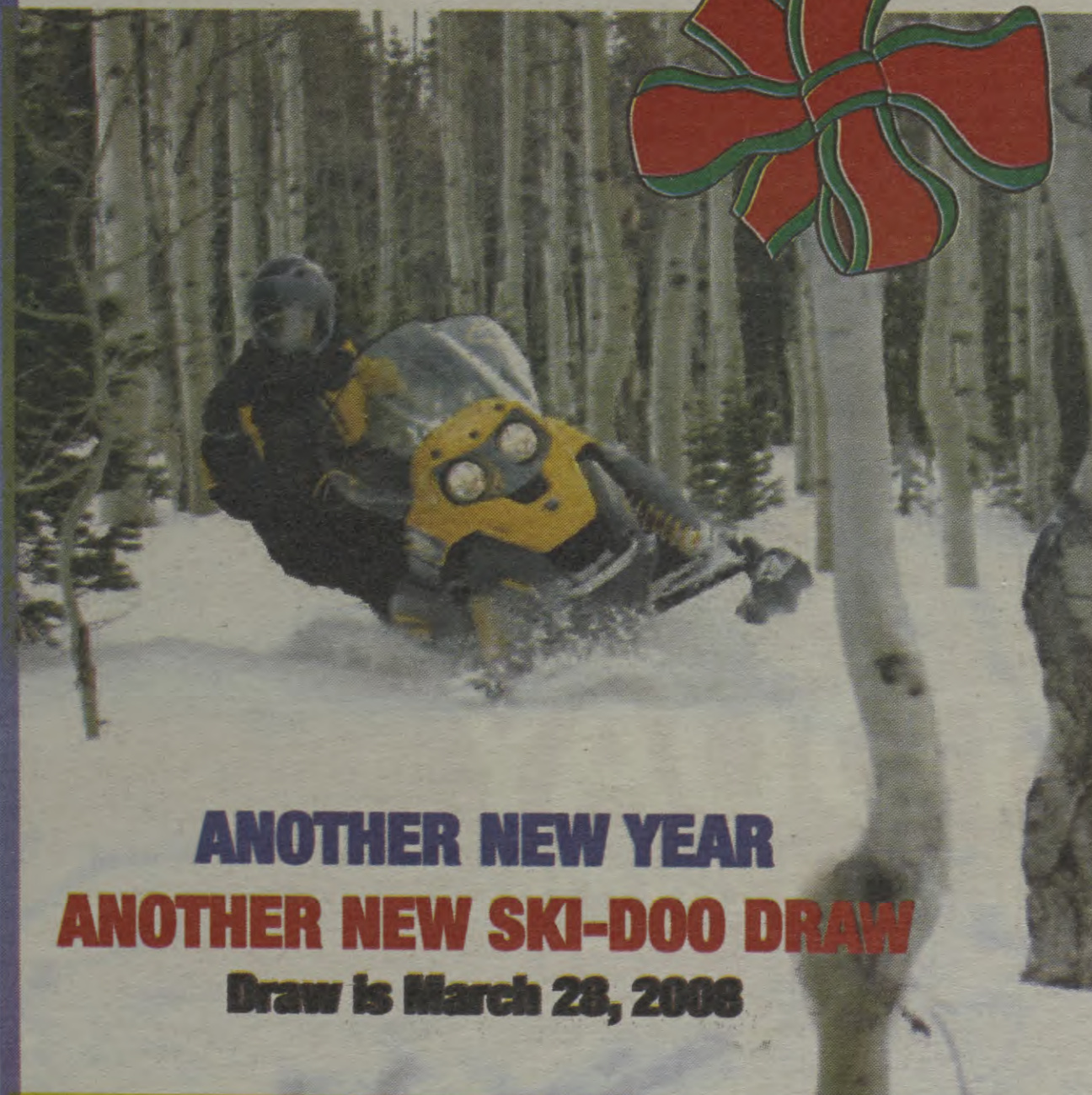
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