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Wind speaker



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Protocol gives
nation a seat
at the table
Page 8

Alberta court ruling
major blow to Métis
harvesting rights
Page 9

Deadlines approach for
residential school
compensation
Page 10

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Aboriginal Multi-Media Society (AMMSA)

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

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Sleigh ride in a winter wonderland

Conrad Whiskeyjack drives his team of matched Percherons at Saddle Lake First Nation, Alberta. Community members were treated to sleigh rides on Dec. 19th. The sleigh rides were sponsored by CFWE radio - a part of the Aboriginal Multi-Media Society - publisher of Windspeaker.

Photo Credit: Dianne Mell

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2011-2012 CCAY Application and Guidelines are available on-line at www.mac.mb.ca and/or call the Manitoba Association of Friendship Centres at (204) 942-6299 to speak to the Regional Desk.

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- Les affaires Bastien et Dubé : arguments soulevés à l'encontre de l'application du précédent de Recalma et avenir du traitement fiscal des revenus de placement des Indiens
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Monthly Circulation: 20,000
Windspeaker 1-year subscription: \$55.00+GST
Published since 1983, Windspeaker is politically and financially independent.

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Letters to the editor and all undeliverable Canadian addressed copies can be sent to:

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13245 - 146 Street NW,
Edmonton, Alberta T5L 4S8
General Enquiries: windspeaker@ammsa.com
Rants and Raves: letters@ammsa.com
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The advertising deadline for the February 2011 issue of Windspeaker is January 20, 2011.
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We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Canada Periodical Fund (CPF) for our publishing activities.

Canada

Features

Dancers and drummers receive bad cheques for powwow wins

8

The organizers of the Canadian Aboriginal Festival have found themselves in a troublesome financial situation. They are not only unable to pay out prize money to the dancers and drummers that took part in their three-day powwow held in Hamilton, the cheques they presented to the winners in a variety of categories began to bounce as soon as the lights dimmed on the event, held Nov. 26 to 28 at Copps Coliseum.

Alberta court ruling major blow to Métis harvesting rights

9

Hoping to see substantial ground gained for Métis harvesting rights, the 50 or so Métis from across Alberta who crowded into Medicine Hat Provincial Court on Dec. 1 sat in stunned silence as Judge Ted Fisher read out his 11-point decision against the Métis argument.

Deadlines approach for residential school compensation

10

An anticipated surplus in money set aside to pay claims made through the residential school settlement Common Experience Payment (CEP) will result in personal credits for successful claimants and educational funding for First Nations and Inuit.

Day scholars and excluded schools spark reconciliation debate

11

The chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission warned that if day school scholars aren't brought into the equation soon, the work accomplished by the TRC could be for naught.

Departments

[rants and raves] 5

[what's happening] 7

[windspeaker briefs] 9

[strictly speaking] 12

[rank comix] 13

[windspeaker confidential] 14

[radio's most active] 14

[provincial news] 16 & 19

[health] 20

[sports] 21

[education] 22

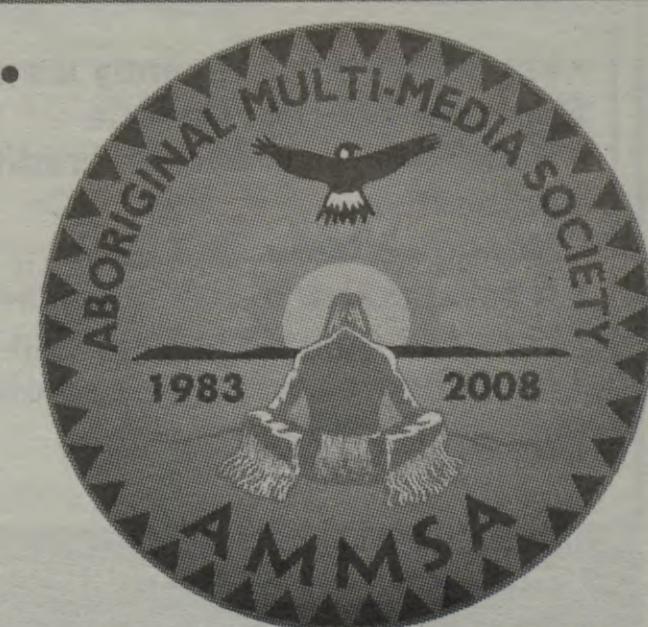
[business] 24

[careers] 25

[footprints] Ellen May Neel 26

In the 1950s, if your family had a West Coast totem pole souvenir, chances are it was made by Kakaso'las, Ellen May Neel. The Kwakwaka'wakw artist was born in a plank house in Alert Bay just off Vancouver Island's inside passage.

[contents]



Windspeaker is published by the Aboriginal Multi-Media Society (AMMSA), Canada's largest publisher of Aboriginal news and information.

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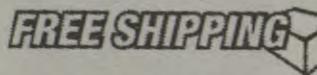
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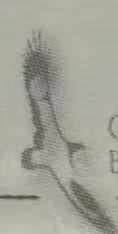
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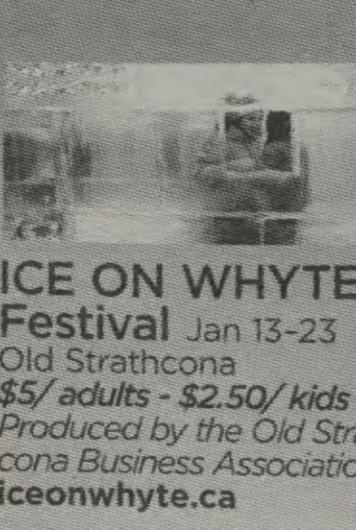


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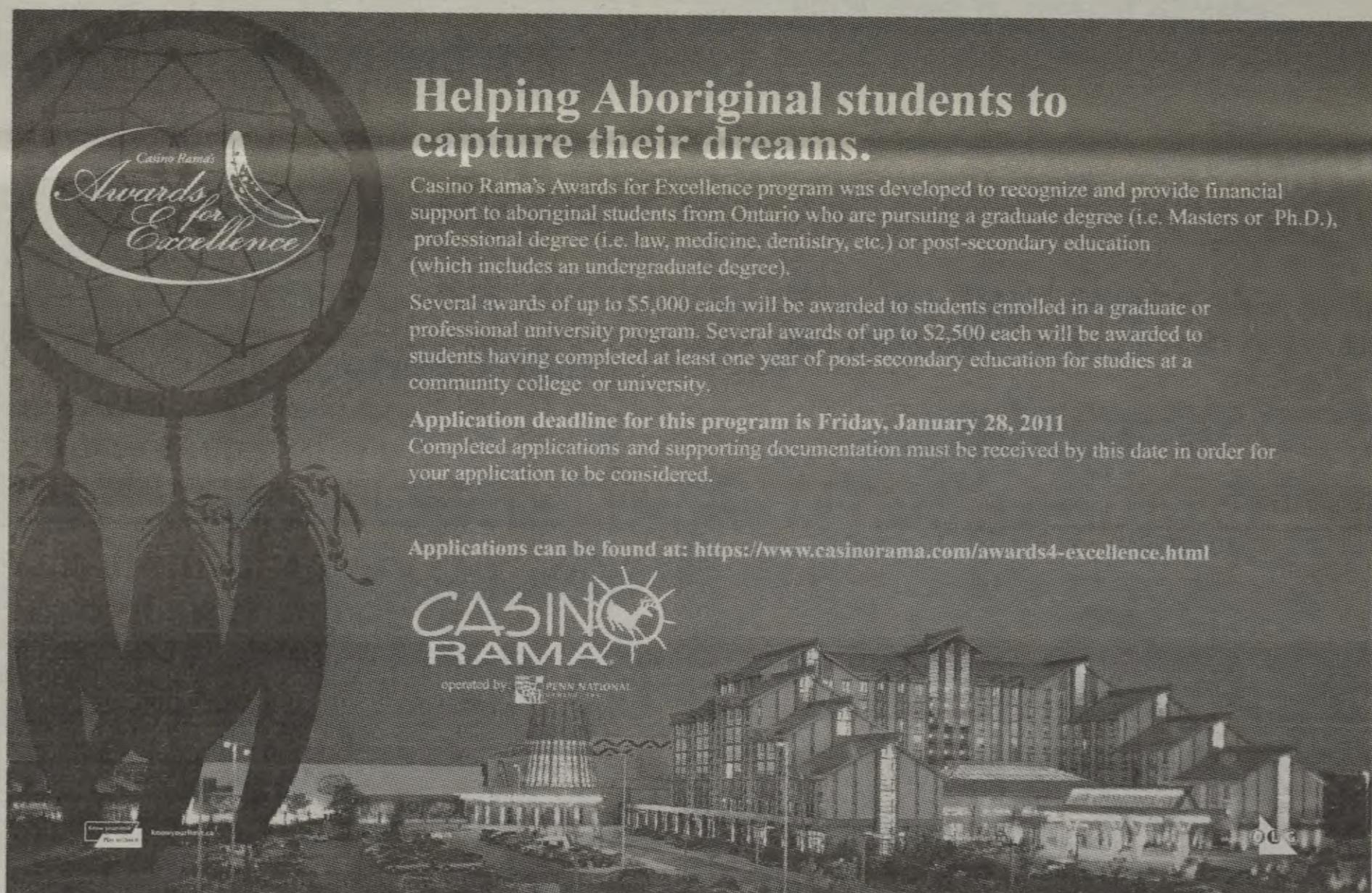
Casino Rama's Awards for Excellence program was developed to recognize and provide financial support to aboriginal students from Ontario who are pursuing a graduate degree (i.e. Masters or Ph.D.), professional degree (i.e. law, medicine, dentistry, etc.) or post-secondary education (which includes an undergraduate degree).

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- An Integrated Watershed Management Plan Jay S. White, M.Sc., P.Biol.
Principal, Aquila Environmental Consulting Ltd.

Language is worth the investment

When Canadian Heritage Minister James Moore announced recently that he was not only renewing funding for BC Aboriginal language retention and preservation programs, but was increasing the funding substantially from \$232,000 to \$834,000, our first response was...language prevention programs in BC were only sharing \$200,000!?

Sure, that's a lot of money when you consider that that's what hockey star Jaromir Jagr earned—per goal—while he toiled in the KHL in the 2009/10 season. That's what one night's purse was for the UFC's Anderson Silva. But, let's be honest, that's not a lot of money to reverse the damage done over 100 years since contact for BC's 20 different languages.

Sorry for being ungrateful for the increase, but really man? That's what you were expecting would help pull the Aboriginal languages in British Columbia back from the brink of extinction? Because that's where all of them are at this point in their long history.

According to a report prepared by the First Peoples' Heritage, Language and Culture Council this year, "every First Nations language in B.C. is in danger of being lost."

And the fine people of the FPHLCC aren't just being alarmist for the sake of a headline. Their studies have shown that of the four categories of use that a language can fall into—thriving, declining, critically endangered or extinct—all but three are in the critically endangered category. And the other three are extinct, though there is a shade in that category called "sleeping" that they prefer to place them in.

Sounds nice, huh? Sleeping. But let's not sugar coat it. Let's call it for what it is, a coma, because what sleeping actually means is that there are no living speakers left, the languages are not used, though there may be some language programming in place, there is limited documentation that contains the languages, and with no speakers to check for accuracy there is no way to increase that documentation.

How sad is this tale? Imagine all the wisdom that has been lost from those cultures, all the science, the history that has been lost to the world.

Why is language revitalization important today, the report asks.

"Language is the way a culture is transmitted—it represents the identity of a people and holds cultural, historical, scientific and ecological knowledge. When a language is lost, we all lose out on the knowledge held within it and the unique way its speakers view the world."

The report tells us that of the Aboriginal population surveyed—109,000 individuals—only 5,609 of them, or 5.1 per cent, are fluent in their Aboriginal language. That's province-wide people.

Let's break that down a little bit per language. The most healthy of our critically endangered languages is Gitsenimx1 with 1,200 fluent speakers. Compare that wealth

with that of the Aingit with only two fluent speakers. These are the two ends of a spectrum. There are 14 languages with under 50 fluent speakers each. Five of those 14 languages have under 25 fluent speakers each.

And of all the fluent speakers in the province, 52 per cent of them are 65 years of age or older.

Not to be morbid or anything, but today the life expectancy of a First Nation citizen is 68.9 years.

And those who make up the majority of our growing communities, those young people under the age of 25, only two per cent of them are fluent in their languages.

We cannot underestimate the urgency of this situation.

Look, we don't want the minister to think that the increase isn't welcome. It is. It is a step in the right direction. But while we should be running at top speed along this path, a mere step seems frustratingly inadequate.

The report acknowledges that there is a lot of work being done in communities to revitalize languages, including the creation of new speakers in immersion programs. There are communities committed to recording, documenting and archiving their languages.

There is hope, despite all the doom and gloom, and that's why adequate resources from government must flow freely and immediately.

Let's be clear, the reason why our languages are in such a state has much to do with the last 100 or so years of the government's assimilation practices.

Here's a little stat to consider—All First Nations people in BC were fluent 100 years ago. Then a little thing called the residential school system came along, and government policies to eradicate First Nations' languages and culture were imposed. Over 100 or so years, the percentage of fluent speakers has taken a nose-dive from 100 per cent to only 5.1 per cent. It's appalling.

The FPHLCC report estimates that if adequate resources aren't made available the number of fluent speakers in BC will decline to less than one per cent in less than five years. Even with adequate resources, the decline will continue, but it will be slowed and eventually reversed. Within the next two years, according to FPHLCC estimates, the number of fluent speakers would dip to just under four per cent, and by that five-year mark will have climbed back over the four per cent and be on the upswing.

There is a quote at the end of the report that we particularly like. It reads:

"Language is at the core of our identity as people, members of a family and nations; it provides the underpinnings of our relationship to culture, the land, spirituality, and the intellectual life of a nation."

Isn't that worth a hefty investment?

Windspeaker

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[rants and raves]

Page 5 Chatter

GLEN HARE, THE DEPUTY

Grand Council Chief of the Anishinabek Nation, wonders why Indian and Northern Affairs Canada is spending exorbitant amounts on overseas travel. The federal bureaucracy is responsible for improving the lives of First Nations people in Canada, he said, so why are thousands of dollars to such places Russia, Belgium and Great Britain being spent.

"They're supposed to be representing our interests. We're not aware of any First Nations in England," said Hare. "We have plenty of funding problems in our own back yard, we don't need INAC dollars spent in Europe." Hare called the expenses "jaw-dropping" at a time when First Nations education funding has been capped at two per cent for the past 13 years. "Just keeping up with inflation and our growing population would require annual funding increases of 6.5 per cent," said Hare. "This is discrimination against our young people." He called on the federal government to demonstrate more responsibility and transparency in spending taxpayers' dollars.

SEEMS WE HAVE A RELIGIOUS BATTLE

brewing in the small community of Oujé-Bougoumou. The Council of the Cree Nation of Oujé-Bougoumou has banned all Cree traditional spiritual practices and have torn down a sweatlodge that was built this fall, a magazine called the Nation reports. Redfern Mianscum built the sweatlodge because he had witnessed drug and alcohol abuse in the community and he felt there was a need for traditional healing. Mianscum said the sweatlodge helped several people, providing them a sense of identity. But it was shortly after the structure was erected that a petition began to circulate, and that sparked a community meeting where a council resolution was struck banning traditional spirituality.

The council "hereby declares that the sweat lodge, along with any form of Native Spirituality Practices, such as Powwows, Rain Dances etcetera, do not conform with the traditional practices and teachings of our Elders," the resolution reads. It also states, reports the Nation, that the community was founded on the Christian faith and values of the community's Elders and past leadership and that the community will continue to uphold its faith in guidance with God.

Mianscum says the council argues that the sweatlodge practice was not part of Cree ancestral practice, coming instead from Native cultures in the west or from the south.

The new bylaw in Oujé flies in the face of a resolution from the 2010 Annual General Assembly of the Crees that Cree Nation Native spirituality and its practices ought to be protected throughout the Cree communities.

Mianscum said he is weighing his options, and will be seeking legal council.

IN HIS DEC. 21 NEWSLETTER

called Gathering Voices, Assembly of First Nations National Chief Shawn Atleo said "They are beginning to see us." He was quoting the words of his late grandmother who attended the residential school apology given by Prime Minister Stephen Harper in 2008. Two years later, Atleo is optimistic that indeed progress is being made both in Canada and around the world. He cites the Four Host Nations and the Winter Olympics in Vancouver and Whistler as providing a surge of pride in Native capacity. He said he spent the last year at the table with decision makers in every sector of Canadian society and has been struck by the reception to the First Nation's perspective and plans for the future. "Our message is one that needs to be heard by more people, and I have witnessed a growing openness and willingness to have these important conversations. This work has translated into direct advocacy on our behalf by players in the corporate sector, a willingness to follow-up and even invest directly in our people and our projects." He says 2011 holds much promise.

JAMES MOORE, MINISTER OF

Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, announced a three-year renewal of the Aboriginal Languages Initiative, as well as a new formula for First Nations languages that distributes funding according to regional realities of languages across Canada. First Nations organizations active in language initiatives in provinces and territories with a greater number of languages will have access to more funding than those where fewer languages are found. The new formula comes into effect on April 1, 2011. Moore also announced funding for 16 language projects in British Columbia: 12 under the auspices of the First Peoples' Cultural Foundation and four other First Nations projects. Under the renewed program, funding available to eligible projects in British Columbia will increase significantly—from \$232,470 to \$834,400. "Ensuring that languages are seen and heard as living languages within Aboriginal communities is essential for them to thrive," added Moore. "Our Government is committed to safeguarding these languages and supports Aboriginal communities in their efforts to protect and enhance them." Funding for these projects is provided through the Aboriginal Languages Initiative (ALI) of the Department of Canadian Heritage's Aboriginal Peoples' Program. The goal of ALI is to support the preservation and promotion of Aboriginal languages for future generations of Aboriginal peoples and other Canadians.



Canada's National Aboriginal News Source

A brief history of Windspeaker...

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The Aboriginal Multi-Media Society (AMMSA) is incorporated and begins publishing the AMMSA newspaper to serve Alberta's Aboriginal people.

1985

The AMMSA newspaper is renamed Windspeaker.

1987

Windspeaker expands coverage to western Canada.

1990

AMMSA and Windspeaker develop a 5-year plan to become self-sufficient.

1991

AMMSA and Windspeaker (along with 10 other Aboriginal publishers) lose all government funding to support training of Aboriginal people in publishing careers.

1993

Windspeaker celebrates its 10th anniversary and self-sufficiency by expanding distribution and coverage to include all of Canada.

1996

AMMSA and Windspeaker launch the web site: www.ammsa.com

2001

AMMSA and Windspeaker re-launch www.ammsa.com to include archived articles.

2003

AMMSA and Windspeaker celebrate 20 years by expanding operations and moving into a new and larger location.

2010

AMMSA and Windspeaker celebrate 27 years with a major re-launch of the web site.

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[news]

Dancers and drummers receive bad cheques for powwow wins

By Debora Steel
Windspeaker Contributor

HAMILTON, Ont.

The organizers of the Canadian Aboriginal Festival have found themselves in a troublesome financial situation.

They are not only unable to pay out prize money to the dancers and drummers that took part in their three-day powwow held in Hamilton, the cheques they presented to the winners in a variety of categories began to bounce as soon as the lights dimmed on the event, held Nov. 26 to 28 at Copps Coliseum.

It's not clear how many of the cheques were presented. According to the powwow prize list, as published on the Canadian Aboriginal Festival's Web site, there were about 150 possible prizes to be won worth about \$76,000. The richest prize was for the drums with \$8,000 for first prize, \$5,000 for second, and \$3,500, \$2,000, and \$1,500 for third, fourth and fifth respectively.

Organizers Catherine Cornelius and Ron Robert refused to speak with *Windspeaker* about the issue, but have accepted responsibility and promised that the situation will be resolved soon. "No further comment at this time," they said

in an E-mail.

Robert and Cornelius had earlier requested that *Windspeaker* publish a letter from them which stated that the organization had "hit the perfect storm financially."

"Money that was to be there prior to the event was not there."

The letter stated that the organization was endeavouring to collect monies from the various sponsors who committed to the powwow. They now anticipated that it "will take more time than (sic) we had thought it would, but we are confident that we will be successful in collecting the money that should cover the prizes for the various winners."

The letter, however, does not state which of the sponsors did not live up to their responsibilities.

It is not clear if the organizers issued cheques with the full knowledge that there would be insufficient funds in the account to honour them, or if they fully believed they could collect the dollars from the sponsors in time to make good on their commitments.

Nonetheless, dancers and drummers are either dealing with the personal repercussions of having a cheque, which they accepted in good faith, bounce, or they are hanging on to bad

cheques in the hope that they will one day soon become good.

Said one dancer who asked that only her first name be used for this article:

"My family has travelled to that powwow for many years and usually someone in the family has the honour of being recognized and to place," wrote Liz in an E-mail to us. "Two of my children placed and as of yet... I have yet to take my girls to the bank to cash... I am not interested in being out 'money' and if I cash and they bounce, then my girls have no way of getting their prize money if I don't have a cheque when and if funds become available in the future."

According to bank practice, however, those cheques that Liz is holding on to for her daughters may never be good. Once cheques start bouncing on an account the bank is most likely to shut the account down.

In the letter to *Windspeaker* from Robert and Cornelius, it doesn't state that people should not attempt to cash the cheques, but does ask for banking information from those who are owed prize money.

"[I]f you could send us your bank information so that when the money does arrive we can make direct deposits to your accounts," reads the letter. "For those who do not have bank

accounts if you could send us your mailing address then we will be able to forward you the money when it becomes available."

Banking sources caution, however, that banking information should only be disclosed to institutions that can be trusted and can ensure the security of that information. How festival organizers plan to store the participants' banking information is not known. Nor is it known who and how many others will have access to the information.

While a bank account number may not in itself be dangerous to disclose, add the information that may already be on file with the organization. Names, addresses, and signatures may be combined if the information fell into the hands of the unscrupulous.

There are other, more secure, ways to transfer money to the recipients, if it ever comes available, rather than a hundred-plus individuals disclosing personal banking information. One is an email transfer where money is transferred to an email account and only the person with the password can access it. There are certified cheques and money drafts that can be distributed. All this requires the organizer to be actively working with their banking institution to rectify a

bad situation.

"In the 17 years that we have been doing the Pow Wow," reads the letter from Robert and Cornelius, "we have always paid the prize money and did not anticipate this to happen and we assure everyone that they will be paid."

They signed off with "heartfelt apologies," but that may not be enough to smooth over any banking problems that may result for the many individuals who attempted to cash the cheques.

Beyond the minimal fee the bank would charge the depositor of a cheque returned non-sufficient funds (NSF), a note would appear on the person's account about the transaction, and this could put a black mark on the reputation of that client with his or her own bank. If the bank honoured the cheque without waiting for the cheque to clear, that money would have to be returned to the bank before regular banking services for the client could resume. If the account becomes overdrawn, the client may start to default on their own financial obligations and accumulate their own fees for non-sufficient funds.

Said Liz "I know many people who are in the situation of their accounts being in the negative because they cashed their cheques."

Protocol give nation a seat at the table

By Debora Steel
Windspeaker Contributor

BELLA COOLA, BC

The Nuxalk Nation has signed on to the Coastal Reconciliation Protocol, though the decision is a controversial one in the community, said elected Chief Spencer Siwallace.

Any agreement with the province would be viewed suspiciously, he explained, given Nuxalk's long history of fighting BC over jurisdiction and control of the territory.

Nuxalk becomes the sixth Indigenous nation to sign onto the protocol, joining the Gitga'at First Nation, the Heiltsuk Nation, Kitasoo Indian Band, Metlakatla First Nation and Wuikinuxv Nation, which all signed the document in

December 2009.

Among the benefits is that Nuxalk now has a seat at the table of any development in their territory from the moment the discussions begin, rather than after the province has issued permits in the territory.

The protocol puts politics aside, said Siwallace, as the province acknowledges Nuxalk's rights and title to the territory, without the nation having to surrender or cede lands or jurisdiction over those lands.

"We were very hesitant to sign the protocol with the province... but with Canada endorsing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the province finally acknowledging that Nuxalk rights, title and interests exists, we are cautiously optimistic that the 'new relationship' may have

some merit," reads a press release from the Nuxalk.

The release is filled throughout with such "cautious" support of the protocol, and states clearly that the Nuxalk Nation has never surrendered, ceded or sold its territory to the Crown. Nuxalk takes great pains in the statement to assert its sovereignty over the "entire ancestral territory."

The Nuxalk Nation has famously protested against unapproved activity in their territory, including logging at King Island, located about 50 km south of Bella Coola.

In 1997, International Forest Products Ltd. (Interfor) was given permission by the Ministry of Forests to harvest timber and build roads on King Island near the origin site (ISTA) of the Nuxalk people. ISTA is the place where the first woman

descended to earth.

The nation blockaded the work site and prevented clear-cutting of their forests that summer. It was the second such protest against government and industry. In 1995, three hereditary chiefs were among those arrested for direct action to prevent logging in the area.

The protocol is but a step in a process which allows the Nuxalk a forum to express their concerns and opinions about development in the territory, Siwallace said.

Logging is no longer taking place in the territory, and the protocol will allow Nuxalk to take advantage of the work done by the other five nations, including selling carbon offsets on the open market to benefit the nation.

He said the protocol does not

limit other avenues that may be required to thwart unwanted development in the territory. It does not prevent the Nuxalk from taking the province to court on an issue, or from engaging in direct action again.

"We agree that we will sit and meet," Siwallace said of the nation's obligation in the protocol.

What is hoped is that industry wishing to do business in the territory will come to discuss the proposal with the Nuxalk first, and if the development benefits the nation then it would proceed to provincial agencies for approvals.

Nuxalk leadership will now initiate a community information campaign to clear up any misconceptions about the protocol with a skeptical citizenship.

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Alberta court ruling major blow to Métis harvesting rights



PHOTO: SHARI NARINE

Lawyer Jason Madden, flanked by Métis Nation of Alberta President Audrey Poitras (left) and lawyer Jean Teillet, addresses media and disappointed Métis in the cultural room of the Miyawasin Centre following the guilty verdict handed down in Medicine Hat Provincial Court.

By Shari Narine
Windspeaker Contributor

MEDICINE HAT, Alta.

Hoping to see substantial ground gained for Métis harvesting rights, the 50 or so Métis from across Alberta who crowded into Medicine Hat Provincial Court on Dec. 1 sat in stunned silence as Judge Ted Fisher read out his 11-point decision against the Métis argument.

In the end, defendant Garry Hirsekorn was found guilty of two counts under the Alberta Wild Life Act and fined \$350 for each count, but he was able to retain both his firearms and his hunting privileges.

Hirsekorn's charges stem from an incident in 2007 where he killed a mule deer near Elkwater in the Cypress Hills area of southern Alberta. Hirsekorn's case, and a number of others yet to be resolved, were all part of planned action by the Métis to bring attention to harvesting rights that the Alberta government said were limited to areas around established Métis settlements, which are located north of Edmonton.

"Seems a guy has to move north to be a Métis," said Hirsekorn, following the verdict. "I'm disappointed."

So, too, was Métis National Council President Clem Chartier, a witness in the case and who attended court to hear the verdict. "I'm disappointed that on every issue there was a total loss," he said.

Chartier said the Hirsekorn case added one more element to the fight that shows that Métis people were mobile and that the entire northwest was part of the Métis nation homeland. He said harvesting victories in Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario were "pieces of the puzzle. Eventually we'll be able to put all the pieces together. Here in Alberta are all the pieces of the puzzle."

The media and Fish and Wildlife officials had been informed of the Hirsekorn hunt. Fisher held that because the hunt

was used for political purposes, Hirsekorn could not make the argument he was hunting for sustenance or ceremonial purposes.

Judge Fisher stated that he would not rule on the claim that there was a rights-bearing northwest Métis community, which encompassed Métis across the Prairie Provinces, but would only decide on Métis harvest rights in central and southern Alberta.

Fisher took more than 60 minutes to present his ruling, which admonished the Métis Nation of Alberta for proceeding in criminal court on their rights case instead of taking the issue to a civil court. He said that the strategy to invoke Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution, which proclaims Aboriginal rights, against the province's Wild Life Act was not appropriate in a criminal proceeding.

Fisher used the points established by the 2003 Powley ruling to refute the Métis hunting argument and conclude that with no historical Métis community in southern Alberta, Hirsekorn was guilty of illegal hunting.

Chartier said he was surprised by a number of Fisher's findings, including the claim that Sect. 35 couldn't be used to refute the Alberta Wild Life Act in criminal court.

"Saying people who were unlawfully, unconstitutionally charged don't have the right to use the highest law of the land to aid in your defense is to me something that doesn't abide by the rule of law," said Chartier, who is also a lawyer.

The loss was not unexpected, said Métis lawyers Jean Teillet and Jason Madden, who spoke to the media and Métis members after the verdict was rendered.

"We knew going into this that we were trying to open up the Powley box a little bit further, and clearly Judge Fisher didn't want to open up the Powley box at all," said Teillet.

It was Teillet who successfully represented Steve and Roddy Powley in the case that determined Métis had an Aboriginal right to hunt, a right that was infringed by

Ontario game laws. Powley now serves as a yardstick for Métis rights rulings.

Teillet and Madden have not only successfully fought harvesting charges in Ontario, but in Saskatchewan and Manitoba too.

Victories were coming "hectare by hectare and we said, 'We need the court to look at this in a principled bigger view' ... What we did in this case, we put the full picture in. Judge Fisher believed and used the Powley framework in order to say, 'No, what I have to look at is narrow,'" said Madden.

Métis Nation of Alberta President Audrey Poitras said the decision will be appealed.

"Our forefathers fought every step of the way to get the recognition that we deserve and we will continue to fight. There's no doubt about it," she said.

There are 25 Métis in Alberta awaiting trial on illegal hunting charges. Madden expected some movement on the part of the Crown because of Fisher's acknowledgement that there is a historical rights-bearing Métis community in the North Saskatchewan River area of Alberta, and some of the Metis facing charges hail from that region.

The rest are with a case management judge and may not proceed pending a decision on the Hirsekorn appeal.

A leave to appeal must be filed in 30 days with the Court of Queen's Bench in Calgary.

A civil case was filed, but Teillet said the decision to proceed criminally was made because criminal proceedings involve less time and money.

If the criminal case goes all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada, Madden said costs could climb as high as \$1 million.

When the court proceedings began in April 2009, Hirsekorn was one of three Métis men facing charges. Prior to the trial ending, Bruce Bates couldn't continue, citing personal reasons. He plead guilty to the charges. Accused Ron Jones took his life and the life of his partner in a murder-suicide shortly after the trial concluded.

Windspeaker news briefs

TWO MEN IN NEW BRUNSWICK

failed to convince a court in Moncton that they had an Aboriginal right to harvest clams in Kouchibouguac National Park because they are Métis. Jackie Vautour, 82, was convicted Dec. 17 of violating Canada National Parks fishing regulations and the Canada National Parks Act by fishing clams illegally in September 1998. His son Roy Vautour, 53, was convicted on four counts of harvesting clams illegally between October 2001 and August 2005. To meet the Supreme Court of Canada requirements to prove a Métis right, the defense lawyer had to prove the Vautours' were descended from Métis, that there was an historic Métis community in the area with a distinct culture, traditions and practices, and that the Vautours were recognized as being part of that community. The judge said defence arguments not only didn't meet the test, the evidence would "overwhelmingly" suggest that a historic Métis community never existed in the area of Kouchibouguac. The court gave Jackie Vautour an absolute discharge, given the exceptional circumstances of the case. The judge fined the younger Vautour \$800 because he had other similar convictions on his record.

NUNAVUT TUNNGAVIK INC. (NTI)

is considering its legal options after the department of Fisheries and Oceans decided to ban the trade of narwhal tusks from 17 Nunavut communities. NTI President Cathy Towtongie has called on the department to immediately reverse their decision as the organization was not made aware of the restriction prior to it being imposed, and Inuit were not consulted. This violates Inuit harvesting rights as set out in the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement. She says the narwhal population is thriving and the harvest numbers do not threaten the species. Scientific surveys estimate the population to be 80,000 strong in Canada. Inuit harvest about 500 per year. The ban effects tusks harvested from Grise Fiord, Arctic Bay, Resolute Bay, Clyde River, Qikiqtauluaq, Pangnirtung, Igloolik, Kimmirut, Cape Dorset, Coral Harbour, Repulse Bay, Hall Beach, Chesterfield Inlet, Rankin Inlet, Whale Cove, Arviat and Sanikiluaq. Communities permitted to continue to export narwhal tusks are Kugaaruk, Taloyoak, Gjoa Haven, Igloolik and Pond Inlet.

IN A SURVEY RELEASE BY THE

First Nations Fisheries Council, 87 per cent of those surveyed support First Nations rights to the use of fish and aquatic resources within their traditional territories for food, social and ceremonial purposes. Sixty-nine per cent of those surveyed who support First Nations rights to use fish and aquatic resources within their traditional territories, believe First Nations should be able to use the resources for economic benefit. "The results of this survey demonstrate overwhelming public support for First Nations' fisheries rights," said Ken Malloway, co-chair of the First Nations Fisheries Council. Said Steve Carpenter, First Nations Fisheries Council member "Canadian courts recognize First Nations fisheries rights, the Canadian Constitution protects those rights, the general public supports these rights, but government and politicians are not moving forward on these issues. Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy funding has not increased for the last 20 years, treaty negotiations are stalled because of a lack of movement from DFO, and Canada cannot meet its basic consultation obligations with First Nations on fisheries issues."

THE MÉTIS NATIONAL COUNCIL

and Métis Nation of Alberta went before the Supreme Court of Canada Dec. 16 to intervene in *Cunningham v. Alberta*. At issue is whether sections 75 and 90 of The Métis Settlements Act (MSA) breached the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in prohibiting individuals, who voluntarily register under the Indian Act, from maintaining or obtaining status as members on the Métis settlements. The respondents (Cunningham et al.) had been removed from the Métis settlements registry pursuant to Section 90. They were granted a ruling by the Alberta Court of Appeal that sections 75 and 90 of the MSA were constitutionally invalid. MNC lawyer Jason Madden argued that the Métis settlements are the only legislatively recognized Métis self-government arrangement and collectively-held Métis land base in Canada. They represent the only concrete step the government of Canada has taken in the 20th century to recognize and protect a Métis land base and to provide a framework for the implementation of Métis' self-government as a part of the reconciliation process between the Métis Nation and Canada. He also argued that the membership scheme in the MSA reflects a negotiated agreement that provided for the Métis community to decide issues of membership on the settlements. Madden cautioned that removal of this authority from the Métis community could result in individual choice over-riding the collective will of the people. MNA lawyer Jean Teillet argued that the statutory appeal process ought to have been engaged prior to a review of sections 75 and 90 by the courts. This circumvented the internal self-government process provided for in the legislation. Teillet also argued that a "one-enrolment" policy (where a person cannot be registered under two Aboriginal registries at one time) also forms the basis of historic treaties, the Indian Act, Métis Nation registries and modern land claim and self-government agreements. The central issue, she said, is whether Aboriginal peoples and/or government can legislate or negotiate schemes that include a policy prohibiting multiple concurrent enrolments. The MNA had urged the court to grant a declaration, which prohibits removal from membership for improper purposes under section 90.

[news]

Deadlines approach for residential school compensation

By Shari Narine
Windspeaker Contributor

GATINEAU, QUE.

An anticipated surplus in money set aside to pay claims made through the residential school settlement Common Experience Payment (CEP) will result in personal credits for successful claimants and educational funding for First Nations and Inuit.

Aideen Nabigon, director general of the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement (IRSSA) with Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC), said terms and conditions for the educational use of the surplus funding are under development.

He was speaking to a group of chiefs and residential and day school survivors on Dec. 13. Discussions about the surplus are taking place with representatives from the Assembly of First Nations, Inuit, the National Consortium, the Merchant Law Group, and independent counsels.

"(The group) will be providing

a plan for implementing these personal credits to the courts by the spring of 2011," said Nabigon.

The IRSSA stipulates the use of surplus dollars in the CEP fund after all claims are paid out.

If the balance is more than \$40 million, every successful CEP claimant is eligible for personal credits tagged as an education grant of \$3,000, which may be transferred to a family member.

If the balance is less than \$40 million, the funding will be transferred to the National Indian Brotherhood Trust and Inuvialuit Education Trust Fund to be used for education programs.

The CEP fund was established at \$1.9 billion for an anticipated 110,000 applications. As of November 2010, 100,644 applications had been received, said INAC's Assistant Deputy Minister Elisabeth Chatillon, in charge of administration and implementation of the IRSSA.

Of those, 97 per cent have been processed and of those, close to 96 per cent were deemed eligible and received full or partial payment.

To date, \$1.577 billion has been paid out.

Now that the deadline for CEP is approaching, with the Individual Assessment Payments (IAP) deadline coming a year later, the federal government will be engaging in "aggressive outreach."

"We're going to get out into the communities and encourage people to get their applications in as quickly as possible," said Akivah Starkmen, executive director of the IAP Secretariat.

Deadline to apply for compensation under CEP is Sept. 19, 2011. Second notice plans will go out in January of 2011 for CEP applications. Deadline for IAP comes in September 2012. There will be a similar push final for IAP applications in January 2012.

Notice plans that were distributed in 2006 and 2007 were "extremely successful. We believe they added to the high number of applications received and processed," said Nabigon.

Nabigon also credited the Assembly of First Nations for taking the information into their communities and reaching the

grassroots.

Starkmen said partnerships had to continue if information on pending deadlines was to get out.

"We rely on you to invite us into the communities. We rely on you for advice in terms of how we can best reach potential claimants in a way that helps them understand the process, understand the deadline, and understand the need to come forward," said Starkmen.

Nationally, about one-quarter of the people who received CEP payments submitted IAP applications. However, in some regions of the country that percentage is as low as six per cent.

"It's less than 10 per cent, so we're really trying to focus there. A lot of that is actually in the north and more remote communities. So we are doing a comprehensive outreach program, but are really trying to focus our efforts in some areas where we think it's most needed," said Starkmen.

CEP and IAP officials will combine their outreach activities with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

"We want to go into the

communities together and provide a comprehensive and supportive environment for people to learn about the IAP and come forward," said Starkmen.

The IAP process can be a daunting one. While application for CEP compensation is done on paper, the IAP system involves hearings with independent adjudicators.

"Our biggest challenge is to make sure that (re-victimization) does not happen. To make sure that people who come into the IAP process are supported. This is not an easy thing to do, but we want to make sure the supports are there," said Starkmen.

Chatillon said Indian Affairs has been "eliminating backlogs and improving timelines. There are no delays in processing CEP currently."

The same could not have been said this time last year, she said.

CEP applications that go through the reconsideration process are, if successful, being paid out in 39 days, compared to the previous 90 days, and those that are appealed to the National Administration Committee are, if successful, paid out in 20 days.

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Day scholars and excluded schools spark reconciliation debate

By Shari Narine
Windspeaker Contributor

GATINEAU, QUE.

The chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission warned that if day school scholars aren't brought into the equation soon, the work accomplished by the TRC could be for naught.

"The issue of day scholar exclusion, and exclusion of certain schools from the settlement agreement or from the class action litigation, still remains to be discussed because I'm not sure it makes any sense for us to be looking at the possibility there may be another class action lawsuit, there may be another settlement agreement and there may be another truth and reconciliation process in the future," said Justice Murray Sinclair.

Sinclair was part of a forum held Dec. 13 to discuss the Indian

Residential School Settlement Agreement process. A group of chiefs and residential school and day school survivors met the day prior to the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Special Chiefs Assembly gathering in Gatineau.

The agreement that was negotiated does not include day schools or students who attended day schools.

At the AFN's annual general assembly this summer in Winnipeg, the chiefs passed a resolution directing the AFN to "engage the government of Canada in a reconciliation and compensation package for day scholar students and, failing progress, to seek support for a class action suit on this matter."

"(What) truly impacts our community is day scholars," said Shane Gottfriedson, chief of Tk'emlups te Secwepemc First Nations of B.C., who introduced the motion in July. "Our families suffered from the same sort of

abuse, if not worse, as day scholars as (did) regular scholars and we're not even considered for compensation for anything."

Names of day school students are being gathered for possible class action litigation, said Ray Mason of Peguis First Nation in Manitoba.

"We're taking names to prove to Canada and the courts that there are day scholars across Canada," said Mason.

Dan Ish, chief adjudicator for the Independent Assessment Process, confirmed that "some legal action has been brought to include (day school scholars) and so forth, but I'm not included in that because I'm not the decision maker in that."

Ish said day school students who were abused are only eligible for compensation through the IRSSA and the IAP if they were abused while attending an Indian residential school. If the abuse occurred at a day school, those

former students are not included in the agreement.

In figures provided by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, of the 4.4 per cent of Common Experience Payment applications turned down, eight per cent were claims made by day school scholars (1,749 applications) and 41 per cent were for schools not included in the agreement (8,731 applications).

There were 130 institutions originally deemed eligible for compensation. Six more have been added. However, applications were made on 1,414 schools, with decisions rendered on all but three, said INAC Assistant Deputy Minister Elisabeth Chatillon, in charge of administration and implementation of the IRSSA.

The application process is underway for Stirland Lake and Cristal Lake residential schools in Ontario and Timber Bay residential school in Saskatchewan. Appeals on school decisions are made to the courts supervising the IRS settlement agreement. There are nine courts across the country with supervisor roles.

"In this particular settlement agreement, the agreement was limited to the residential schools as opposed to day scholars. That's what they've adjudicated on, that's the settlement that's being implemented here. Unless there's

something before the courts, there's nothing for them to adjudicate on," said Ish.

Gottfriedson said it was time for the day school scholars to be included in the process.

Sinclair noted that not including day scholars in the settlement agreement left out a "large segment of the Aboriginal population."

Said Sinclair, "This whole discussion that we're having now may end up being fruitless and becoming unfocused. So I think we need to think seriously about whether the reconciliation process that we are going to be engaging in the next little while needs to also include a reconciliation focus for day scholars and those who are claiming to have attended other schools run by government whose lives have been affected by their experience in those schools."

The Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement was signed in May 2006 between Canada, representatives from the Catholic Entities, Anglican, United and Presbyterian churches, representatives for the students, Assembly of First Nations and Inuit representatives.

The agreement does not include day schools nor does it include Metis residential schools or residential schools operated solely by religious orders or provincial governments.

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[strictly speaking]

Fahrenheit 2010: Or burn baby burn

What is it with white people and book burning? I realize that's quite an inflammatory (pun intended) statement, but it deserves some exploration regarding recent events down in Florida where it seems lighter fluid, fundamentalism, and sun tan lotion go hand in hand.

But here's something to ponder in the backdraft of the Florida bonfire enthusiasts' now-fizzled threats to torch copies of the Koran. Looking at the burning of religious books objectively (if that's possible), one could theoretically come to the conclusion that up here in Canada it would seem more logical to burn the Bible.

Before crucifying me for saying so, understand that I make this supposition on the sheer logic of history. Examine how Native people have been treated in the more than 500 years of Christian colonization. I am, of course, speaking of the physical, sexual and emotional abuse perpetrated by Church-run residential schools, small pox carrying Jesuit missionaries, the banning of Sun Dances and potlatches because it turned Aboriginals away from



THE URBANE INDIAN

Drew Hayden Taylor

Christianity. And the list goes on.

It seems to me far more damage has been done to the First Nations by people following the Gospels, than by any believing in the Koran.

To paraphrase Muslim boxer Mohammed Ali's famous comment about refusing to fight in the Vietnam War, to better suit Native audiences: "I've got no quarrel with Muslims. No Muslim ever beat me up for speaking my own language."

Yes, we understand there are numerous Muslim zealots out there committing unspeakable acts in the name of God, but it would be unfair for us to comment on them. We are only familiar with the Christian zealots here.

As a Native person, in fact, instances of insane book burning are reminiscent of the arrival of the Catholic Church into Central America in the mid 1500s. As the Spanish were slicing and dicing their way across the Yucatan, they made it a regular practice to burn all the Mayan manuscripts they came across saying they were the work of the Devil. As a result, only a handful of so-called "books" exist today. An entire cultural library willingly wiped out of existence in the name of God. Spoiler alert: I don't actually think God had much to do with that decision.

If it's the same God I was brought up to respect, in fact, it probably pissed Him off, as it likely does when Florida's Pastor

Terry Jones blames his bad behavior on Him. (Maybe I'll go kick my lefthanded next door neighbor in the leg this afternoon and say God made me do it. After all, ignorant superstitious people used to think southpaws were evil too.)

I feel it should be mentioned that I'm not anti-Bible by any means. At home on my shelf I have a Bible (along with the Bhagavad Gita, The Tibetan Book of the Dead, and several Beatles albums that survived the great "We're bigger than Jesus" burning of 1966).

Some of my best friends and relatives are Christians. I have one that cleans my house twice a month. Jesus even made a cameo appearance in my last novel.

And the one thing I do remember from Sunday School was what I believe is called the Golden Rule: Do onto others as you would have them do onto you. Great words. So if he believes so surely in the good book, I wonder if that means Pastor Jones also accepts the potential burning of Bibles. 'A' does seem to follow 'B' in that scenario. Do two wrongs make a

right?

I am not exactly sure what he expected to achieve with his plan to burn a hundred Korans. From what I understand, God and the Bible is supposed to bring people together, not drive them apart. Most religious and secular leaders in the States and other countries have condemned this action, including soldiers fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan. Maybe I misunderstood the bigger picture, sitting there between the pews.

I was always led to believe that books aren't evil, people are. I guess it's just more convenient to burn books. I read somewhere that burning people was recently outlawed, although of course there were a couple of centuries when it was a favorite Christian pastime.

I wonder if Pastor Jones has even read the Koran. Admittedly, I haven't, but from what I've heard, it's not that different from the Bible we know. Most religions teach essentially the same message. They just use different textbooks.

And by pretty much any of their guidelines, it's guys like Rev. Jones who give God a bad name.

Chiefs vote for public disclosure of salaries

By Shari Narine
Windspeaker Contributor

GATINEAU, QUEBEC

Assembly of First Nations National Chief Shawn Atleo applauded the chiefs at the special assembly held in Gatineau for unanimously passing a resolution that pushes for accountability and calls for "itemizing and publicly

disclosing salaries, honoraria and expenses associated with the operations of chief and council."

The resolution, entitled "First Nation Governments Demonstrating Accountability," which was voted on during the Gatineau Assembly held Dec. 14 to 16, re-affirmed the chiefs "commitment to maintaining transparent and accountable decision-making structures in

their communities."

Early in 2010, the Canadian Taxpayers Federation launched a campaign pushing First Nations' members to disclose their elected officials salaries. Later the CTF began publishing salary figures of some named and some unnamed chiefs and councilors, comparing their earnings to other elected officials, including the Prime Minister and the premiers.

"I take great exception to the way the information they gathered was collected and then described. It suggests that all 3,300 chiefs and councillors that serve our people are corrupt and are not accountable. It's simply not true and you know our own internal analysis (of the information provided by CTF) says it's completely inaccurate," said Atleo.

He maintained that if the same

analysis was done of MPs' earnings and included salaries, allowances, and other financial compensation, "you might as well say every MP makes \$500,000 in a year."

The resolution also noted that the chiefs "primary reporting and accountability relationship is to their citizens, and that they will design mechanisms to ensure open and informed involvement in community decision-making."

(See *Chiefs* on page 13.)

Where does AFN draw the line on corporate sponsorship?

By Jennifer Ashawasegai
Windspeaker Contributor

OTTAWA

The Assembly of First Nations has thrown its weight and influence behind the 61 First Nations opposed to the proposed Enbridge Northern Gateway Pipeline Project. But some see a disconnect between what the AFN says and what it does.

Monies from Enbridge were accepted when a gala event associated with the AFN was hosted in Calgary in 2009.

An Enbridge Aboriginal relations newsletter from September that year states National Chief Shawn Atleo took his oath of office at the Calgary assembly where he was elected, then met with supporters and well-wishers at the National Chief's Reception hosted by Enbridge.

The company news bulletin of

Atleo's election in July 2009 is accompanied by a photo of the national chief with three company representatives, including Enbridge Northern Gateway Pipeline Project President John Carruthers.

Peter Russell, a retired political sciences professor from the University of Toronto, says corporate sponsorship is something organizations need to think about.

"When any organization accepts sponsors' funds for any activity or event, they have to consider very carefully the source of that money and whether, at the source, the organization that's giving them the money might be in conflict with any of the principles of the organization itself or any of its members."

Enbridge spokesperson Gina Jordan deflected a question about the contradiction of the corporate sponsored event, which was followed by public opposition from the AFN more

than a year later.

"I certainly can't speak for Mr. Atleo," she said. "I do know that every project will have its opponents, as well as its supporters, and we certainly do feel that as people learn more about the Northern Gateway Project, and understand the details of the application, that they will understand that the project can be built safely and operated safely."

Jordan added that she could not comment further on the issue.

Meanwhile, the Assembly of First Nations is not taking any credit for the Enbridge-hosted gala. An email from the organization's communications department stated, "...the event you are referring to was a "farewell gala" for outgoing National Chief Phil Fontaine. This was not part of the AFN AGA, but did take place that same week. Enbridge was one of a number of sponsors for the

event."

First Nation opposition of the Enbridge project didn't crop up overnight. According to Terry Teegee, vice-tribal chief of the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council, its member First Nations have been against the project since it was first proposed in 2005.

Russell said he would be troubled by an oil company sponsoring a First Nation event.

"There are a number of situations in Canada, (for example) particularly right now around the Mackenzie River where the Dehcho Dene are. The interest of oil companies are in conflict with the First Nations. The oil companies are pressing for a very quick settlement of land issues that would extinguish the title of Aboriginal people, and the Dehcho Dene are holding out for a much more fair and just agreement."

"So, getting money from an oil company is supporting one side of that debate."

Russell recommends that organizations have specific policies about corporate sponsorship. As a member of the Canadian Political Sciences Association, he said there are very strict rules about corporate sponsorship. For instance, he says the CPSA does not accept any money from political parties for fear of party bias.

It's unknown whether or not the AFN has any policies around corporate sponsorship. The organization didn't respond to email enquiries on the issue.

Policies or not, Russell has a dire warning about corporate sponsorships.

"He who pays the piper will try to call the tune, and there are some tunes that the member nations of the AFN are opposed to and you have to be very careful accepting funds from organizations that may have a different view of the Aboriginal relationship with Canada than the ones that the AFN espouses."

Commitment from the highest office has Atleo hopeful

By Shari Narine
Windspeaker Contributor

GATINEAU, QUE.

A letter stating the commitment of Prime Minister Stephen Harper, his office and the top levels of the federal government to tackle issues facing First Nations "is significant," said Assembly of First Nations (AFN) National Chief Shawn Atleo.

The correspondence from Harper came on the last day of the AFN's Special Chiefs Assembly held in Gatineau, Dec. 14 to 16. The theme of the assembly was moving from endorsement to action. Canada had endorsed the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People on Nov. 12. Implementation is the next step forward on that front.

Harper's promise to commit came as U.S. President Barack Obama met with tribal leaders in his country and endorsed the declaration.

"It's really good to have high level commitment. Now we need to see results from it," said Atleo.

Harper's letter follows a meeting between the Prime Minister and Atleo held Oct. 28, and correspondence from Atleo in November. Harper committed officials from his office, the Office of the Privy Council, and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada to a meeting to assess the viability of a First Nations-Crown gathering to set out plans to transform the approach to First Nation education, economies and governments.

The prime minister's words are far-reaching and sweeping, said Atleo.

"In my view he acknowledges the failure over the course of history of government policies where he acknowledges that fundamental reforms are needed in relation to First Nations economies and First Nations governments and that a specific plan is required," said Atleo.

Education was one area specified by Harper in need of renewal.

Under the leadership of the AFN's Chiefs Committee on Education, education forums, specifically tailored to regions and individual First Nations, will

take place over the next six months. The report from those forums will be considered for action and recommendations at the AFN's assembly in Moncton in July.

It will also go to the government. Atleo said no action will be finalized with the government until the chiefs have deemed any proposal on education reforms acceptable.

"We don't know what that final outcome looks like. What we do know is we shouldn't take forever to do this work. . . . We need to organize our work so we can build on 30 years of advocacy for First Nations' control for First Nations' education," said Atleo.

The push is for kindergarten to Grade 12 education, because that area is "very anchored in the Indian Act," said Atleo, but post-secondary education is also a priority.

The AFN is hosting a virtual summit on Jan. 27 to look at aspects of higher education.

"First Nations are very resolved to make sure post-secondary education for our people is protected, sustained and, in fact, should be enhanced," said Atleo.

Reports like the one tabled in March 2010 by the Macdonald-Laurier Institute for Public Policy, which calls for post-secondary funding to bypass the band and go directly to the student, is on the agenda for the virtual summit, which will include input from young people.

"I'm very concerned about this report, very concerned about our treaty rights and title land rights being overstepped," said Atleo.

While the national chief believes that education is a "shared value amongst all people" and that, in part, is responsible for Harper prioritizing First Nations' education, Atleo said there is also a practical side to Harper's new focus.

"I think Canada's concerned about the economic future and see (that) Aboriginal people forge a large part of the potential for the economic future of the country. And, of course, First Nations are playing a more prominent role in the economy in terms of resources and how the economy is progressing, and the relationship with First Nations is going to play an increasingly important role," said Atleo.

Over the next 18 months of his term, Atleo said education, economy and implementing the

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, will remain his priorities.

Atleo said the declaration moves treaty rights and Aboriginal title rights forward, which was supported by numerous resolutions passed by the chiefs at the special assembly.

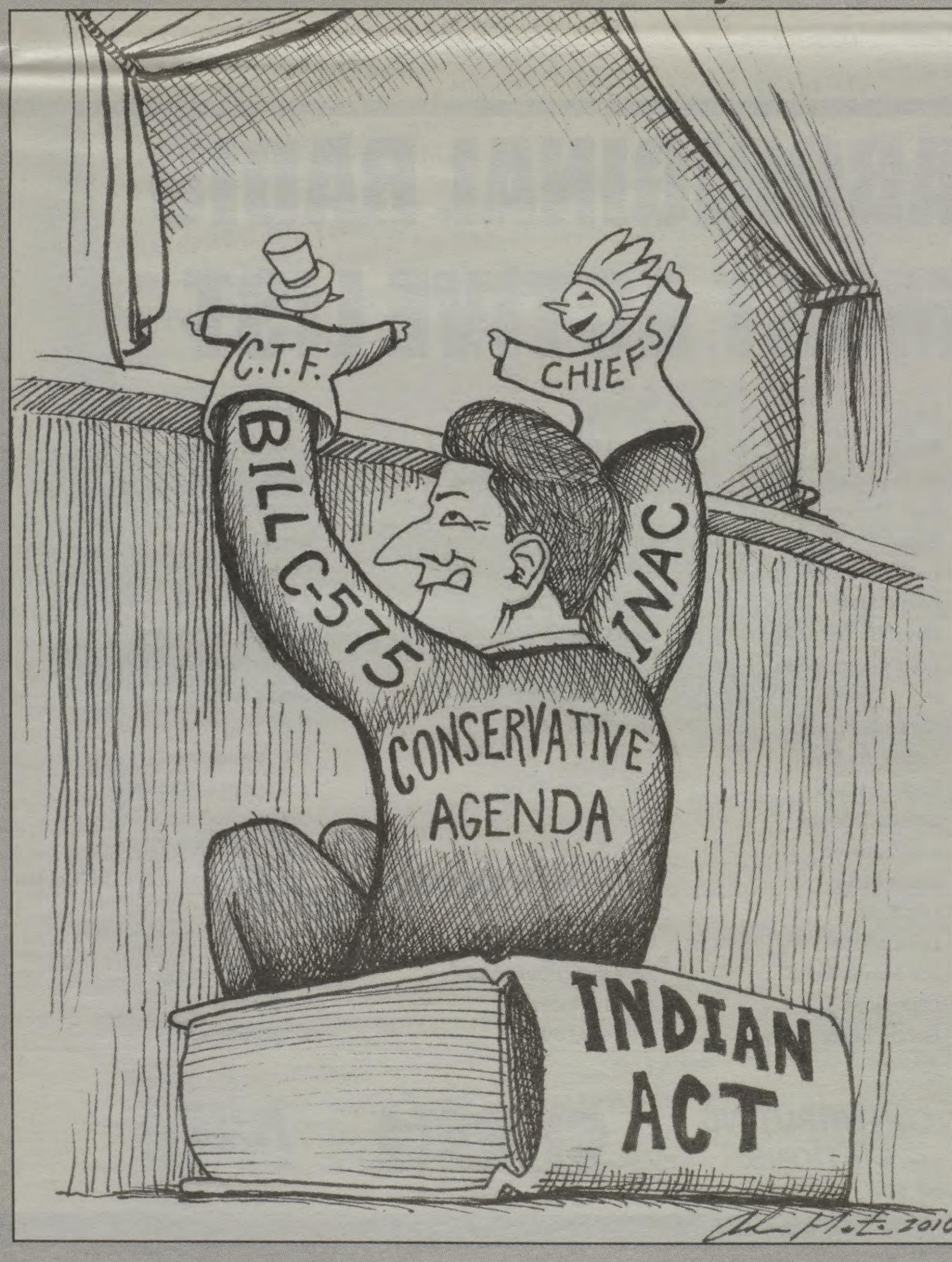
He noted that fighting for these different aspects of First Nations' society, whether economy, education, or development, was fighting for the rights of First Nations people.

"The ancestors knew when they forged treaties that these are one and the same and they needed to be treated as such. So all of our work is about supporting the advancement of First Nations treaties and First Nations title land rights. If you talk about education, you're talking about treaty rights and title land rights. It goes in my view that way across the entire spectrum of the topics we might talk about," said Atleo.

"I know there's a strong desire for deep and rapid change to the conditions in our communities. I think that's going to be what will continue to propel us forward, the shared sense of urgency of the need for a better day for our people," said Atleo.

Rank Comix

by Adam Martin



Chiefs vote for salary disclosure

(Continued from page 12.)

That the push to publicize the salaries of chief and council comes from the CTF doesn't sit well with Atleo.

"(This is a) principally unilateral, external attempt to impose on our people, and I think that's where I take great issue and exception," said Atleo.

He noted that in 2006, First Nations approached the federal government asking that a First Nations auditor general and a First Nations ombudsman be named. The suggestions were turned down. The resolution calls once more for the creation of the positions.

Auditor General Sheila Fraser attended the assembly gathering.

"She said the real issue of accountability lies with the federal government," said Atleo. He said she brought into question how the government manages and expends its budget, which includes "operations ballooning by over 50 per cent

while resources to children still remain at least \$2,000 less per student than the average Canadian."

The resolution noted that First Nations provide a minimum of 168 financial reports to the four federal departments from which they receive the majority of their funding: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Health Canada, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp.

Atleo said Fraser admitted that many of the reports aren't read.

"The vast majority of First Nations are very accountable and they demonstrate that to their citizens and, to their credit, (the chiefs) stood up in the assembly and said, notwithstanding the attacks, we're going to commit to this resolution and ongoing accountability to our people because that's where the power and demanding accountability rightfully belongs is with the citizens," said Atleo.

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Shy-Anne Hovorka — [windspeaker confidential]

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

Shy-Anne Hovorka: Honesty. If you can't be honest, how do I know the friendship or relationship is real?

W: What is it that really makes you mad?

S.H.: People who interrupt and don't let you finish a sentence. Oh, and also being patted on the head. (I'm short, lol.)

W: When are you at your happiest?

S.H.: When I finally get some sleep! But, when I am awake... hmm, I would have to say when I'm in the middle of the secluded bush by a river, and no one knows where I am. I'm not talking about a park, either. I mean deep in the bush where there are no trails and no people. Just me and nature.

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

S.H.: Whiny

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

S.H.: Buffy St. Marie. She is my hero and always has been since I was a little girl. Her picture has been on my TV stand for over 10 years. She has shown what perseverance, determination, and standing up for yourself really means.

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

S.H.: Quit my full time job – with full benefits and full pension – to pursue my music career.

W.: What is your greatest accomplishment?

S.H.: Confidence. I never had it until recently.

W: What one goal remains out of reach?

S.H.: Growing old with someone I love and having grandkids.

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

S.H.: I would still be teaching. I love the students.

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

S.H.: If you want something, ask for it, or go and get it. The worst that could happen is that you don't get it. You still have everything else in life.

W: Did you take it?

S.H.: Yes, that is why I'm doing what I'm doing.

W: How do you hope to be remembered?

S.H.: As someone who followed their dreams while keeping the Creator and the Seven Grandfathers in plain view.

Shy-Anne Hovorka was named Aboriginal Female Entertainer of the Year, and given the award for best-produced album, at the 2010 Aboriginal People's Choice Music Awards in Winnipeg this past November. From north-western Ontario, she has been singing since she was three and performing since the age of nine. Working in a wide variety of musical genres

like blues, pop, contemporary and folk music, her first love is singing, but she also accompanies herself on piano. These days, Shy-Anne is also joined by guitarist Jordan Elcheson and percussionist Rob Benvegnu, who complete her live sound.

Shy-Anne was a spotlight performer for the Aboriginal People's Choice Music Awards in 2010 and in 2008 at the Winnipeg MTS Centre. As Master of Ceremonies for the 2009 Aboriginal Youth Achievement Awards, she's also delivered keynote speeches for a number of youth events. Selected as one of Lakehead University's three most successful graduates in the last decade, Shy-Anne is part of the school's nationwide branding campaign for her musical and educational accomplishments.

Shy-Anne's release *Pseudo*, from the new album of the same name, placed number one on the Canadian *myspace* charts for three weeks, and held number 18 on Toronto's DJFM Dance station in Toronto. Her band performed their song *Can't Change the World* as the kick-off for the 2010 World Interfaith G-8 Summit, and they were also invited to be a headlining act for the 2010 Indigenous Festival with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra.

Shy-Anne has performed as the featured soloist for the Thunder Bay Symphony under David Bowser, and has won numerous



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Shy-Anne Hovorka

awards for her performances in Classical Music Festivals. However, given her eclectic musical interests, her performances have broadened to include numerous and varied venues and she's appeared on television and radio stations across Canada. Her love of music

and commitment to developing her talent—along with her desire to share her passion with the world—direct her path in life.

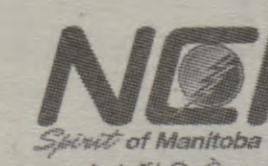
Shy-Anne's debut album *Black Thunderbird* was highly successful and now *Pseudo* is eclipsing the popularity of her first offering.

[radio's most active]

ABORIGINAL RADIO MOST ACTIVE LIST

ARTIST	TITLE	ALBUM
Black Rain	One More Time	Under The Gun
Anita Issaluk	Healing Through Song	Arctic Wind
Evan Reeve	You Deserve Better	Evan Reeve
Segweh	Open Eye	Segweh
Direction Four	10th Regiment	Direction Four
Kinnie Starr	A Different Day	A Different Day
David St. Germain	Don't Matter	David St. Germain
Crystal Shawanda	Beautiful Day	Single Release
Night Switch	Indian Princess	Single Release
Kimberley Dawn	Built That Way	Built That Way
Samantha Crain	Santa Fe	You (Understood)
Eagle & Hawk	What If We Could	The Great Unknown
Colette Trudeau	Ex-Girlfriend	Colette Trudeau
Art Napoleon	Wild Flowers	Creeland Covers
Derek Miller	Something Bad, Something Good	Derek Miller with Double Trouble
Lori Kole	Bare Feet & Butterflies	Lori Kole
Lucie Idlout	Lovely Irene	Swagger
Joe Maxim Band	Screaming Out Loud	Single Release
Little Hawk	Metis Princess	Vigilance
Gabby Taylor	It Spells Love	Single Release

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[footprints] Sophie Thomas

By Dianne Meili

Traditional healer offered help when doctors said 'no' "You've brought me to heaven." That's all the late Sophie Thomas could say when her daughter Minnie Thomas drove her to Tamarack Lake near Skookumchuk, B.C. years ago. "She looked around and she..."

Windspeaker News Briefs - May

Compiled by Debora Steel

MARCH 31 MARKED THE 50th anniversary of the right to vote for First Nations. "This is an important milestone and a cause for reflection," said Indian and Northern Affairs Minister Chuck Strahl. The Diefenbaker government amended the Canada Elections...

TRC open for business and planning Winnipeg event

By Shari Narine, Windspeaker Contributor,
WINNIPEG

"Survivors and their families are all the work we do," says Commis...



Innovative approach to oil, gas development

By Shari Narine, Sweetgrass Writer, Edmonton

The Ermineskin Cree Nation has signed an agreement with a fledgling oil and gas company that both partners are hoping is the start of doing energy business on First Nations' land in a new way. After six months of negotiations, Ermineskin Chief...

Calgary Briefs - April

Compiled by Shari Narine

CPS IRS training video made available to all. The Calgary Police Service is making its award-winning Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement training video available for anyone who wishes to use it. "Although the video was developed for our..."



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Editorial: Dam spin a story

Windspeaker Staff

Gordon Campbell, the premier of British Columbia, seems to have some memory issues. It wasn't long ago that he was boasting that his government was going green. Now all of a sudden he's reviving a massive hydroelectric project from three decades ago...

Compiled by Shari Narine

Homeless Connect held next month May 9 marks the fourth Homeless Connect event to be held at the Shaw Conference Centre. Homeless Connect Edmonton is a broad-based community-inspired initiative, providing free appropriate services to homeless...

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Raven's Eye: Special Section providing news from BC & Yukon

Ecotrust announces leadership award winners

By Susan Solway
Raven's Eye Writer

QUALICUM INDIAN RESERVE

On Dec. 2, Indigenous leader Kim Recalma-Clutesi was awarded the 2010 Ecotrust Indigenous Leadership Award for her exceptional conservation efforts that have helped shape, not only British Columbia, but the national Indigenous community as well.

A jury of tribal leaders within Ecotrust's Native Program Services handed out four awards, each comes with an investment of funds that will go into the community or to the honorees' personal initiatives.

Recalma-Clutesi (Kwagiulth/Pentlatch of the Qualicum Indian Reserve) received \$25,000. Finalist Terry L. Cross (Seneca Nation of Indians/Bear Clan of Portland, Oregon) received \$5,000. Finalist Jessie Housty (Heiltsuk First Nation of Bella Bella) received \$5,000. Finalist Sandra Sunrising Osawa (Makah-Seattle, Wash.) received \$5,000.

Ecotrust is a non-profit organization based in Portland, Oregon which promotes innovation and provides services for all those West Coast communities who wish to develop their economies within a framework of conservation.

Specifically, the areas of interest are California, Oregon, Washington, British Columbia, Yukon, Alaska and, occasionally, Nevada. These areas line the waters in which the salmon run, which is why Ecotrust refers to the honorees as those from the 'Salmon Region,' explained Program Associate Gloria Borg

Olds.

"Conservation is widely defined," said Borg Olds. "(It is) the conservation of resources, and culture, economy, and health. You know, all the things involved in having a strong world."

To be considered for an award, the nominee must be in mid career and have the support of their communities.

Recalma-Clutesi is an award-winning filmmaker, political activist, educator and historian who uses these roles as tools to pass along the knowledge of her people.

"I am driven by the desire to facilitate for those knowledge holders I hold dear to my heart, to help them through whatever medium is appropriate, to remember accurately the teachings of our ancestors. I am a lens to those who hold and own that knowledge... driven by the deep love for the sacred, and honoring of our ancestors."

The former elected chief of the Qualicum Indian Reserve (2002-2006) prides herself in the identity of her place in her clan. She is the daughter of a clan chief, the late Ewanuxdzi. She is sister to the current Clan Chief Klagwagilla, and partner to Clan Chief Adam Dick.

She believes in a world that has specific gender roles, inherited rights, and obligations and protocols, she said. Individual achievement is not what she has ever strived for, nor is it something, in the strictest traditional sense, is rewarded.

Her teen and young adult years were filled with teachings from both her parents. Recalma-Clutesi has found a passion for the media arts, and has developed expertise in ethno-

botany.

As a member of the Ninograd Collective, Recalma-Clutesi works to preserve her Indigenous language and reclaim the ceremonies of her people.

Out of the many experiences that Recalma-Clutesi has had, she says that the role of assistant producer, a position she held for the 1994 Commonwealth Games, was, "a transforming experience."

"(The amazing) Mary Kerr and I brought Chief Adam Dick's origin story, the Legend of Kawadillikalia, to life on a football field at the University of Victoria. It was an amazing thing to be asked by the Clan Chief to oversee his most precious possession... It was such a life lesson and tested my skills to the limit. Mostly it was also a lesson in great humility. At the end of the day it was Kwaxsistalla's story,

not mine."

The Ecotrust Indigenous Awards program, 10 years in the running, now has a network of remarkable leaders and will add Recalma-Clutesi to its panel to adjudicate the next nominated honorees.

Recalma-Clutesi acknowledges the future honorees with pieces of advice that she herself lives with.

"Always remember the teachings of the ancestors. They got it right for tens of thousands of years... to move too far to a modern business model is only to be a poor carbon copy of this modern society of today and that has many cracks... All economy must be sustainable."

Recalma-Clutesi plans to put her award towards the development and production of her new film, *Singing Through The Seasons*.



PHOTO: COURTESY LYNN THOMPSON

Kim Recalma-Clutesi

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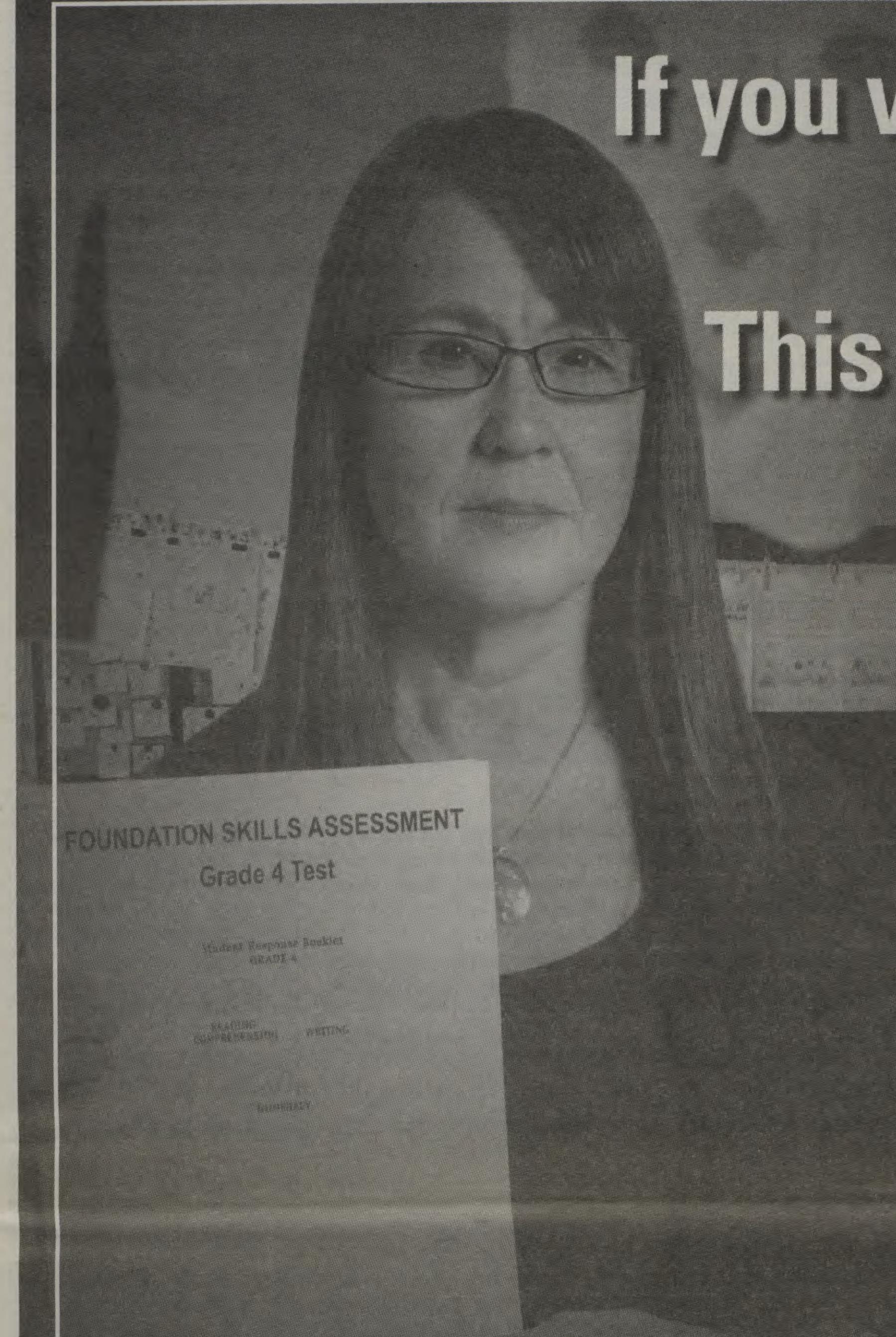
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Join the growing number of parents who are withdrawing their children from these meaningless tests.

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Please cut out this form, fill it in and send it with your child to their principal to have your child withdrawn from this year's FSA tests.

Dear Principal,
I understand that parents may request the principal to excuse a student in the event of a family emergency, lengthy illness, or other extenuating circumstances.

Please excuse my child, _____, from all three Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) tests for the following reason:

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Thanks for your co-operation.

Sincerely,

Parent / guardian signature

KIDS MATTER. TEACHERS CARE.

A message from the BC Teachers' Federation



Raven's Eye: Special Section providing news from BC & Yukon

Gladys Radek: A woman on a mission

By Christine McFarlane
Raven's Eye Writer

VANCOUVER

Gladys Radek is a Gitxsan/Wet'suwet'en First Nations woman from Morcetown. She has been nominated in the Social Change category in the CBC News Champions of Change contest which celebrates volunteerism, and she's made it into the top 10 as a finalist. Voting ends Jan. 6, 2011.

Radek is on a quest to seek justice for the countless number of Indigenous women who have either gone missing or have been murdered throughout Canada, and focuses especially on those who have been lost to violence or simply vanished along what has become known as the Highway of Tears, a notorious stretch of Highway 16 between Prince George and Prince Rupert.

More than 30 women, many of them Aboriginal, have mysteriously disappeared or have been killed along the highway. In March 2006, Radek joined a walk to honor those women. The group walked from Prince Rupert to Prince George to participate in the Carrier Sekani

Tribal Council symposium where the Highway of Tears initiative began.

"Representatives of government, police, First Nations leadership, such as the Assembly of First Nations and the Chiefs of Ontario, and the victimized families all gathered and presented at this three-day event," said Radek.

The symposium brought out "a lot of tears, pain and anger" on all sides, and participants agreed upon 33 recommendations pertaining to violence prevention, community development, family support and emergency planning."

Radek's quest for justice for these missing or murdered women is not only political, it is also personal. The issue hit close to home when her own niece, Tamara Chipman, who was only 22 years old at the time, "disappeared out of Prince Rupert on Sept. 21, 2005." Chipman remains missing to this day.

According to Radek, it was Chipman's disappearance that "was the catalyst" that started the grassroots movement Walk4Justice in Vancouver. Walk4Justice was created, said Radek, as a meeting of the minds

between herself and Bernie Williams, a Skundaal of Haida Gwaii who lost her mother and two sisters to violence.

"We were very angry at the inaction on the system's part at not paying attention to those who have gone missing and/or have been murdered."

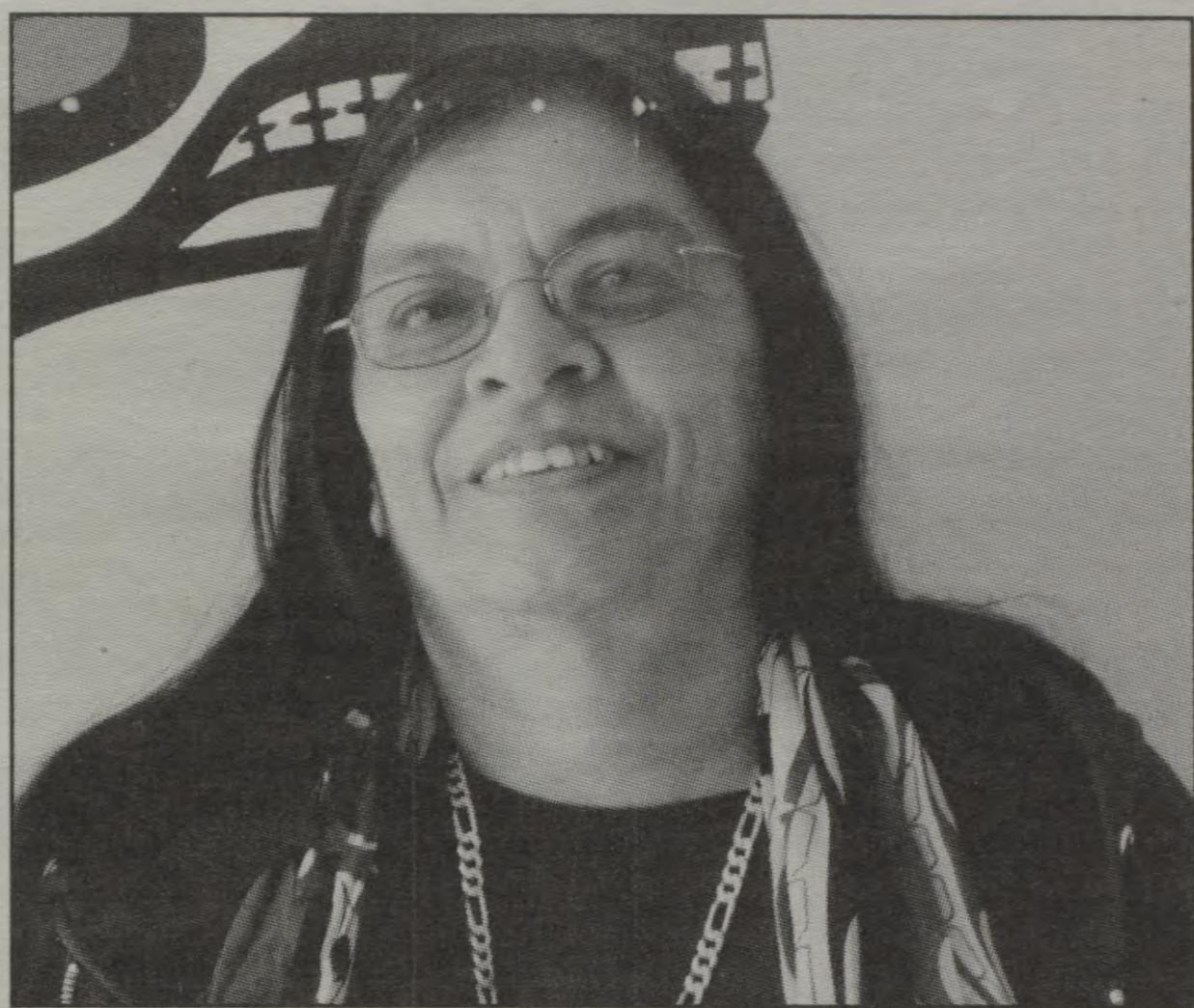
People do not think of how the missing and murdered women affect those left behind as family members.

"It is very difficult," said Radek.

She spoke about how her niece "was a young mother at the time she went missing. She left behind a two-and-a-half year old boy. She was my brother's only child. I am still looking for her, and so is her family."

As a co-founder of Walk4Justice, Radek has organized three walks to date. The first was a 4,000-kilometre event from Vancouver to Ottawa during the summer of 2008. On June 21, National Aboriginal Day, Radek set out with a caravan of volunteers, and walked in 10 kilometre relays to take a message to Parliament Hill. Another walk is scheduled for June 2011.

Walking does not come easily to Radek. She has a prosthetic leg since losing hers in a hit and run



Gladys Radek

incident years ago, but she says that "her pain is not as big as the pain in the people's hearts who have lost their loved ones and are still looking."

Between walks, Radek organizes vigils, advocates in communities and updates a Walk4Justice databank of missing women.

When asked what message she is trying to get across, Radak replied "I want people to pay attention when a woman goes missing, investigate all

disappearances and murders equally, including those of sex workers, and have a national symposium, as well as a public inquiry, into how and why these women go missing."

The whole organization Walk4Justice runs on volunteers and donations, and Radek says "We encourage you to walk with us if you can, and give us support. You can contact me at frillyfrog08@yahoo.ca and I will be more than happy to give you more details."

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Ontario Birchbark: Special Section providing news from Ontario

Holmes and AFN choose small community of Whitefish Lake

By Susan Solway
Birchbark Writer

ATIKAMEKSHENG ANISHNAWBEK, Ont.

The community formerly known as Whitefish Lake First Nation is the first to be chosen to participate in a home-building initiative undertaken by the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), "Canada's Most Trusted Contractor" Mike Holmes of the television program "Holmes on Homes," and the Holmes Group foundation.

The community, now called Atikameksheng Anishnawbek, is located just west of Sudbury, Ont. The project it has been chosen to participate in is the Building Homes and Building Skills joint pilot project, which will focus on the development of green and sustainable housing within the First Nation.

A total of nine First Nation communities offered up proposals at the end of November to be considered by the AFN, The Holmes Group, and the First Nation Technical Services Corporation who will cooperate on the initiative.

The news came to the Atikameksheng Anishnawbek on Dec. 17.

"The proposal of Atikameksheng Anishnawbek was fittingly named G'Wiigwaamnaaniin, which means 'Our Homes,'" said AFN National Chief Shawn A-in-chut Atleo. "Their submission met, and in fact exceeded, all the necessary requirements that were set out for this project. I know that Mike and I, with our respective teams, are ready to get

this project rolling. The work we are doing in Atikameksheng Anishnawbek will create benefits and opportunities for First Nations communities across the country. And I want to thank Mike Holmes and The Holmes Group for partnering with us on this project."

Chief Steve Miller of the Atikameksheng believes his First Nation was an ideal community for the project based on a number of qualifications, including its location, the readiness of the community, the access to financial, natural and human resources, the control over the lands, and the dedication and commitment of the staff, management, and leadership that all had a hand in the submission of the proposal.

Atikameksheng has 400 members living in the community, with a total of 125 houses. The majority of the houses were built in the 1950s. The last five homes were built in 2006.

"We cannot accommodate requests because of the lack of resources," Chief Miller says of the housing requests. "Currently we have 23 lodges ready to be built in the Spring of 2011 with Indian Affairs...and now with

this (pilot) project the type of homes are going to be, instead of regular conventional homes that people are accustomed to, a move forward on the green initiatives... This (pilot) project will bring that to our community."

The project will benefit and enhance not only the Atikameksheng nation but other First Nations communities across the country, plus municipalities

that will all be welcome to use the project template for green and sustainability housing within each of their own communities.

"Our First Nation (has) very little green initiatives because of our lack of opportunities," said Chief Miller. "Sustainable resources, such as solar power, wind power, hydro electric power, are concepts that will be introduced... Having a housing sector on our First Nation that is totally self-sufficient is one of the goals, and is something we are certainly looking forward to."

The building skills portion of the project has the Atikameksheng youth buzzing with enthusiasm. Nearly half of the population is below the age of 25. The Holmes Group has offered training to certify those youth who are dreaming of a better life with employment opportunities, said Miller.

According to television star and general contractor Mike Holmes, Chief Miller says, the green initiative has not been incorporated into the construction education system. The technology changes, but the education stays the same, so this is a chance for that barrier to be combined with the training initiative.

Upon hearing the big news, chief and council, along with staff, organized a last-minute community supper to announce to the 200 nation members that were in attendance that theirs was the successful proposal.

"I did emphasize that it is not political, it's not an administrative process here, that this is a community-driven process and an initiative that incorporates the community on

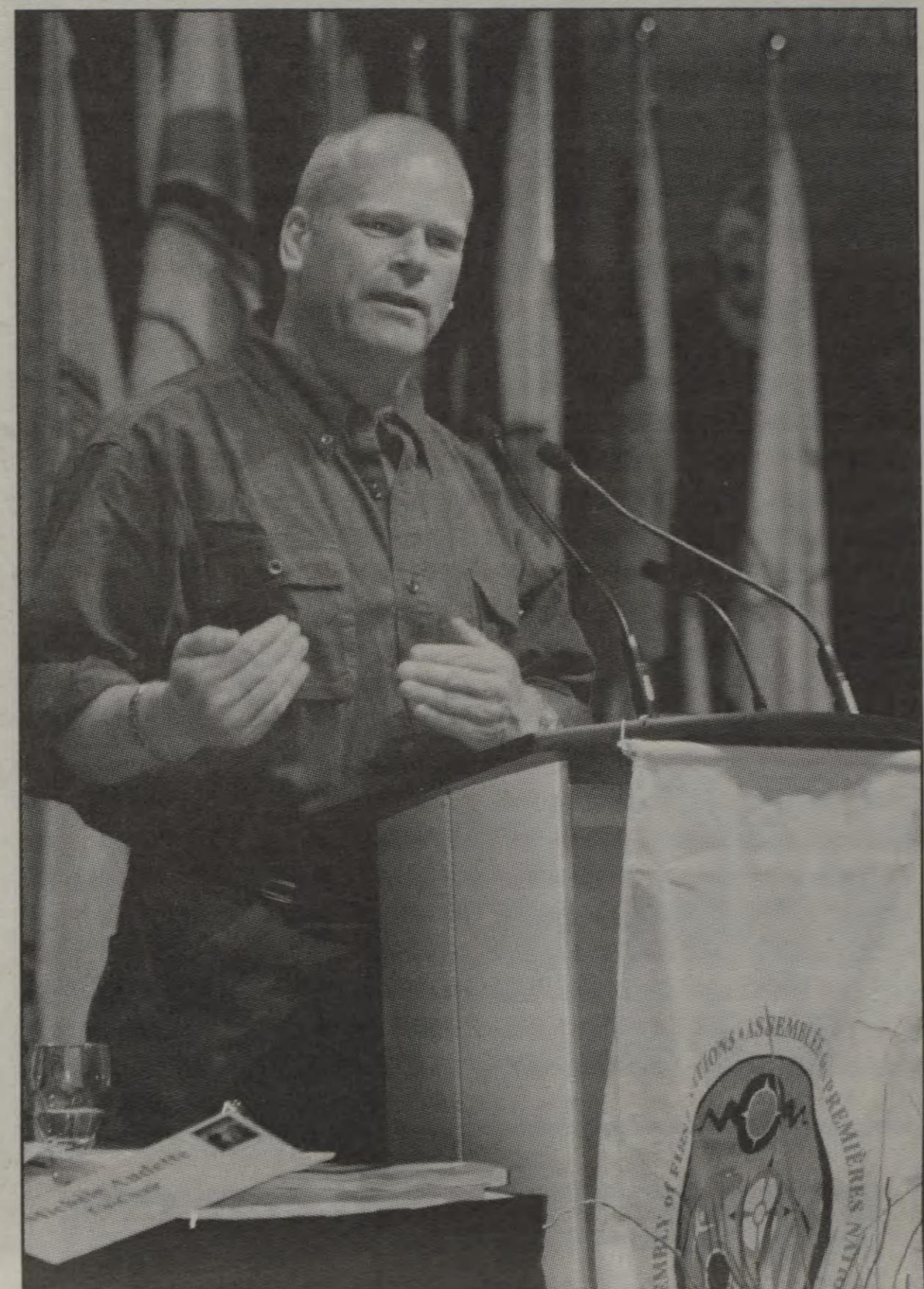


PHOTO: FILE

Mike Holmes, speaking at the AFN Assembly in July 2010.

which direction they want their community to head into in the future here... These new concepts will open up a lot of eyes."

Small businesses in the community, such as Darlene Napose's film production company, can expect spin-off benefits. So everyone is anticipating the assessment process that will begin in January, and the clarification of all the

steps of the project. The groups will get together in Atikameksheng to plan for the arrival of Spring, when the community can physically begin to move forward.

Chief Miller applauds the AFN and Mike Holmes for the outstanding vision to develop a project such as this, saying it is extraordinary knowing that it could benefit everyone across Canada in the long run.

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Unfortunately, it was not possible to send calendars with Windspeaker without folding. So this is your chance to get a nice clean calendar for your office, home, or for a gift.

[health]

Groups share problems, concerns and cookies

By Reuel S. Amdur
Windspeaker Contributor

OTTAWA

Cindy Peltier had an idea. She is the FASD (Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder) coordinator at Ottawa's Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health, and she organizes get-togethers for the families she works with.

But there are other families in Ottawa facing the same problems, so why not get together with them? So Cindy invited the FASD of Ottawa group over for an informal supper. That was on Oct. 19.

The evening went well, lots of chatter and good food, with the Wabano group and the visiting non-Native people of Ottawa group interacting and playing some word games that Peltier led. Then it was time to make the next step. Elspeth Ross, the co-facilitator of the FASD of Ottawa group, invited the Wabano group to one of their meetings.

That meeting will not be quite so elaborate as the Wabano session, as it is held in a basement room of the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO), where they don't have cooking

facilities. However, there will be a sharing of problems, concerns, and cookies. Most of the CHEO meetings have an educational component to them, with guest speakers, but this one will be just to share among themselves.

While the Wabano group functions in the Aboriginal community, Ross' group also attracts some First Nations people, and some of the non-Native people in the CHEO group have adopted Native children. If the groups act together, more good things may happen.

A central problem facing FASD families is how their children do in school. It is a matter of helping children cope and learn in school, and help schools cope with the children and learn how to help them.

Unfortunately, Ontario lacks a provincial FASD strategy and Ontario educators at all levels have limited knowledge about the challenges. Ross wants to see parents involved in the school district special education advisory committees, which are mandated by law.

FAS—fetal alcohol syndrome and FASD are serious problems. They are expensive to treat and

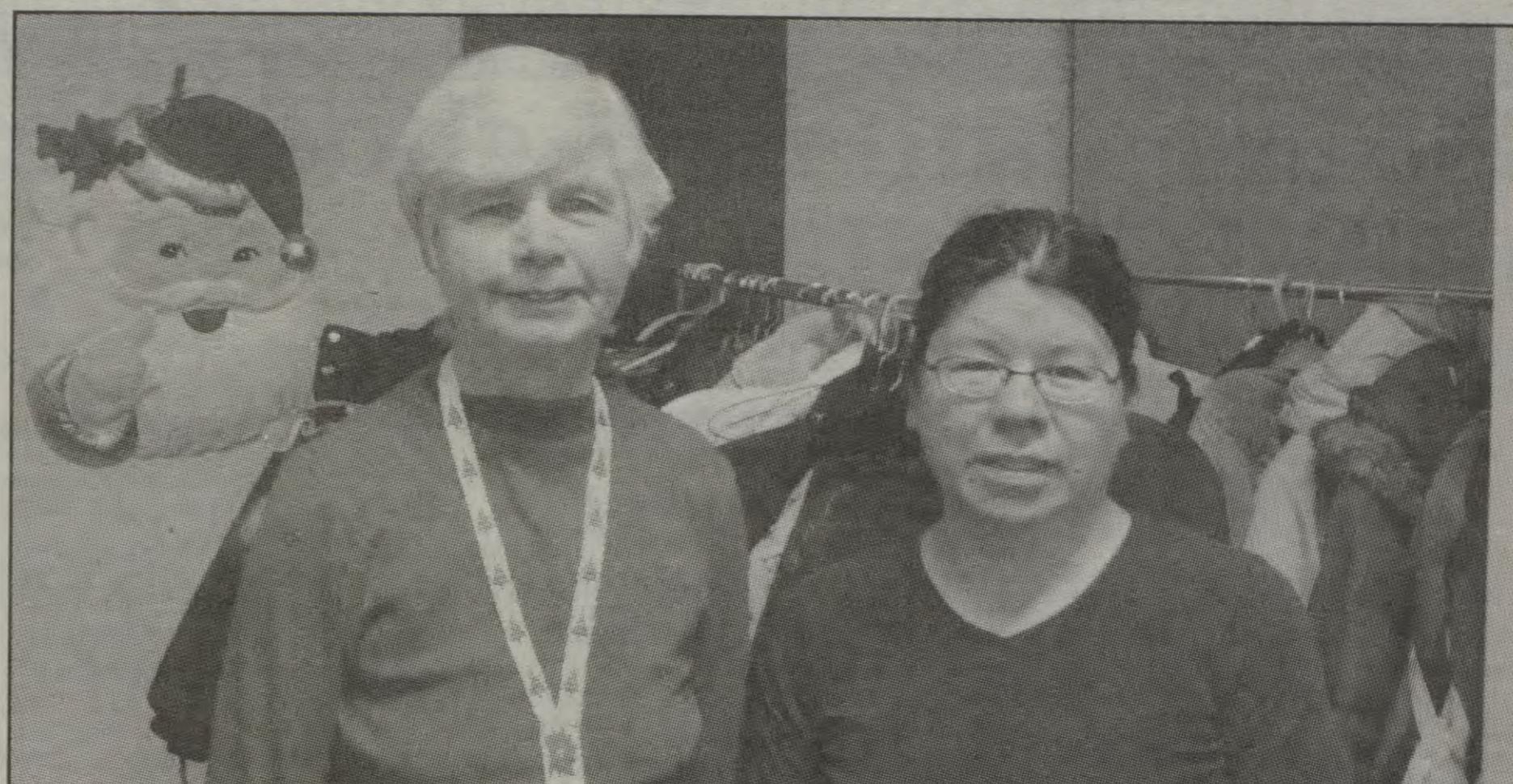


PHOTO: REUEL S. AMDUR

Elspeth Ross and Cindy Peltier

equally or more expensive to society to leave untreated.[†]

FAS is the full-blown condition, while a child with FASD does not have the complete list of features that the FAS child exhibits.

The facial features of a child with FAS are usually lacking with FASD, and that may make things even more difficult for the child. The FASD child with a normal appearance may not be seen as having special needs and may just be considered to be lazy or troublesome.

Children with FASD are easily distracted and need structure in order to function well. They also do better with hands-on activities than by learning by listening. Such youngsters are not good at problem-solving and

learning from experience, and they are easily led. As a result, they get into trouble. They are hyperactive. All of these characteristics mean that an effective educational experience needs to be custom-made, individualized, and adequately staffed.

The staffing involves teacher aides, with adequate backup from social workers, psychologists and nurses. That is a message that school systems need to hear, and heed.

Diagnostic support is also needed, as diagnosis is not straightforward. As well, these children may have other problems, such as depression and compulsive behavior. So there is a need for psychological assessments and for availability of

psychiatrists and family physicians.

It's a tall order, making it necessary for the parents to be prepared to bring pressure to get the necessary services and assessments.

All of these difficulties can be avoided, however, if pregnant women do not drink. Yet some do. Some of these women themselves have FASD.

While FASD is a problem of the wider society, it is particularly a First Nations problem.

That is why Peltier and Ross are working to get their groups to cooperate with each other. Together families can share their common concerns. And they can work to get the educational and social supports that their children need.

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Windspeaker sports briefs

By Sam Laskaris

More funding announced

Even more Aboriginal groups in British Columbia can benefit from additional funding to the Local Sport Development Program (LSDP). The provincial government announced in early December that it was providing an additional \$100,000 in funding to the program. Stephanie Cadieux, the minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development, made the announcement about the additional funding. The LSDP was created in 2008 as part of the 2010 Legacies Now venture, borne out of the Vancouver Winter Olympics. Community organizations can apply for some of the funding in order to launch new programs. Or they can expand on existing programs. Each program can receive a maximum of \$2,000. Those eligible for the funding include Aboriginal groups, municipalities and not-for-profit organizations that deliver organized sport programs. So far funding has provided some type of sporting activity for about 3,400 people in 58 communities across the province. One of the projects that has benefited Aboriginal youth already was a six-week basketball program offered by the Wachiay Friendship Centre in Courtenay. And another project that saw Aboriginal youth benefit was when Delta Gymnastics and the Tsawwassen First Nations Recreation Centre combined to develop a pilot gymnastics program, which was held on the First Nation.

Texas teammates

A pair of Aboriginal hockey players from Alberta, who are both third-year pros, now find themselves starring on the same minor pro team. Colton Yellow Horn, who is Blackfoot and from Brocket, Alta., and Judd Blackwater, who is from the Blood First Nation, are members of the Allen Americans, who compete in the Central Hockey League. The Americans, a second-year franchise, play their home contests in Allen, Texas.

Yellow Horn, a 23-year-old forward, also played a portion of last year with the Americans. For Blackwater, who is also 23 and a forward, this marks his first season with the Allen squad. The two Aboriginal players are among the Americans' top scorers. As of mid-December, Yellow Horn was third in team scoring with 24 points (nine goals, 15 assists) in 22 games. Blackwater was in fourth place among Allen scorers with 23 points, including 10 goals, in 22 matches.

For Yellow Horn, the Americans are the fourth team he has suited up for since turning pro. He previously played in the East Coast Hockey League (ECHL) with the Elmira Jackals and Stockton Thunder. And he also spent a portion of the 2008-09 season with Salzburg, a club in Austria.

Blackwater has also changed addresses a few times during his pro career. He played in the ECHL with Stockton, Fresno Falcons and Alaska Aces. He also had stints in the higher calibre American Hockey League with both the Rochester Americans and Rockford IceHogs.

New program launched

A new initiative, dubbed the Aboriginal Champions Program, is getting off the ground in Saskatchewan. The program is seeking to celebrate the accomplishments of Aboriginal athletes, coaches and supporters.

Those who are selected as "Champions" will then be able to promote the benefits of sports and act as role models, hopefully encouraging other Aboriginals to participate in sports.

The program is supported by Sask Sport Inc., which is the federation of the various sport governing bodies in the province. And support is provided through the organization's Building Communities Through Sport initiative.

Anybody can nominate an individual for the Aboriginal Champions Program. They can be nominated for outstanding contributions to a sport, either as an athlete, coach or supporter. Nominees, however, must be Aboriginal and they must also live in Saskatchewan.

The eventual champions will be selected by members of Sask Sport Inc.'s Aboriginal Sport Leadership Council. Those who are selected as Aboriginal Champions will be expected to make various public appearances at schools, sporting events and Aboriginal events.

The nomination process closes Jan. 30, 2011. More information is available by calling (306) 780-9425.

Flin Flon hosts games

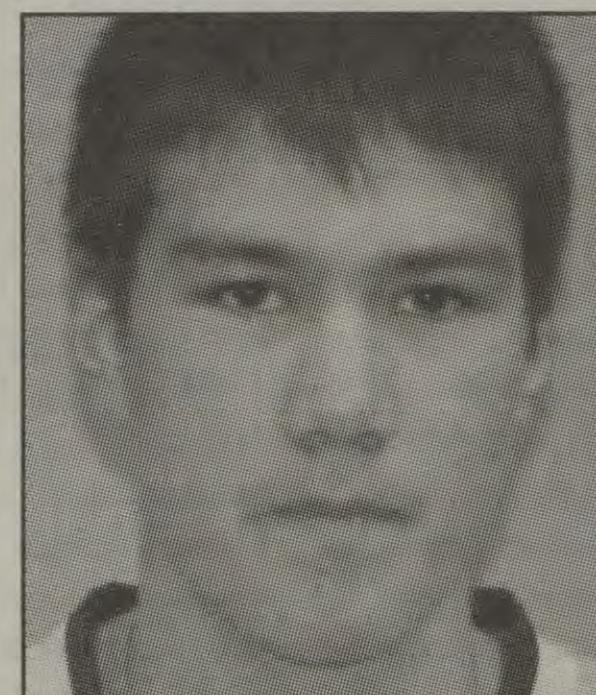
Manitoba's Norman Games ('Nor' for Northern and 'man' for Manitoba) will be held in Flin Flon from Jan. 28 to 30, 2011. These games provide athletes from northern Manitoba to compete in a multi-sport competition, thus preparing them for possible future competitions, such as the Manitoba Indigenous Games or the Power Smart Manitoba Games. Sports that will be contested at the 2011 Norman Games are badminton, basketball, cross-country skiing, curling, darts, hockey and volleyball. Besides various youth categories, some of the sports also offer adult divisions.

[sports]

Wheat Kings' Tribe overcome their injuries



Renee Hunter



Eric Roy



Michael Ferland, who toils for the Brandon Wheat Kings, has been drafted by the Calgary Flames.

By Sam Laskaris
Windspeaker Contributor

BRANDON, Man.

Numerous Aboriginal players have honed their skills in the Western Hockey League (WHL) over the years. Michael Ferland, Rene Hunter and Eric Roy are continuing that tradition this season.

All three Aboriginal players are members of the Manitoba-based Brandon Wheat Kings.

Ferland, an 18-year-old left winger, is in his second season with the Wheat Kings. He impressed enough during his rookie season in Brandon that he was also selected by the Calgary Flames in the fifth round, 133rd over-all, this past June at the National Hockey League Entry Draft.

As for Hunter, who is 17, and Roy, who only turned 16 on Oct. 24, both are rookie defencemen with the Wheat Kings.

Ferland enjoys the fact he has some Aboriginal teammates this season.

"They call us The Tribe," he said of the good-natured ribbing the trio receive from other Brandon players. "And they call me Chief or the Leader of the Pack."

Ferland said he does spend quite a bit of time away from the rink with both Hunter and Roy.

"We hang out a lot," he said. "We go to the mall and movies together."

Ferland, who is Cree, is the only one of the three Aboriginal players on the Wheat Kings' roster that is actually from Brandon.

Hunter, who is Ojibway, is from Manitoba's Ebb and Flow First Nation. And Roy, who is Métis, is from Beauval, Sask.

Ferland appeared in 61 games and registered 28 points (nine goals, 19 assists) during his rookie season with the Wheat Kings.

As for this season, Ferland has been hampered by some injuries. He tore his meniscus in his knee in September. And he also missed some matches due to a foot injury.

He only managed to play in 19 of the club's first 35 games this season. When he did suit up, Ferland was able to contribute. He had 14 points, including five goals, in his 19 appearances.

Since he's now in his second season with the Wheat Kings, Ferland said he's trying to be a player that others look up to.

"I just want to be a leader on and off the ice," he said.

Though he is an NHL draft pick, Ferland said he still has tons to prove. He has yet to be offered a pro contract, so is still trying to impress the Flames' brass.

"For sure, I'm trying to get signed," he said.

Besides helping out teammates whenever he can, Ferland said he's also trying to be a role model in the community.

Brandon's home games attract a large number of Aboriginal fans.

"There's quite a few of them and I talk to them a lot," Ferland said, adding he enjoys providing advice or inspiration to other young Aboriginal players.

As for Hunter, he spent the 2009-10 campaign with the Portage Terriers in the Manitoba Junior Hockey League, considered a step below the WHL.

He said he had an adjustment period earlier on this season, primarily while he tried to get accustomed to the speed and intensity levels of the WHL.

"Things are pretty good now," he said.

Like Ferland, Hunter has also battled some injuries this season. Neck and groin injuries forced him to miss some contests.

Hunter said he had a pretty simple goal this season.

"I just want to play well," said Hunter, who had four points, including one goal, in his first 32 matches.

Since the Wheat Kings had four returning defencemen, Hunter said he wasn't quite sure whether he would even crack the Brandon roster this season. He's now one of eight blueliners on the club.

Roy managed to earn a spot on the Wheat Kings' roster even though he was just 15 when the season started. His season though has already had its ups and downs.

He too spent some time on the injured list as he suffered a concussion when he was hit from behind by an opponent during a game earlier in the year.

Even when he was fit to play, Roy was a healthy scratch for some games because of the number of defencemen the Wheat Kings carry. But he has been on the ice a bit more of late.

Roy spent the past two seasons playing midget AAA hockey in Prince Albert. So this actually marks the third year he's been away from home.

"I'm kind of used to it now," said Roy, who had four assists in his first 14 games in a Wheat Kings' jersey.

[education]

Private member's bill encourages investment in education

By Susan Solway
Windspeaker Staff Writer

OTTAWA

The dream to strengthen First Nations education within the Canadian federal system has a new name—Bill C-599.

On Nov. 17, the Bloc Quebecois introduced the legislation in the form of a private member's bill. It is meant to encourage the Conservative government to lift the two per cent cap on yearly increases to funding going to First Nations.

The cap has been in place since 1996, and limits educational opportunities for all First Nations students, said Bloc MP Marc Lemay.

"It's very dangerous for the First Nations... It means we go slowly, but surely, with the genocide of the First Nations and it's really urgent we are doing something to give the chance for the First People of Canada to have the right to receive the education on the language, culture and in their community," said Lemay.

Lemay oversees the Indian and Northern Affairs file for his party, and wants government to open

up the national purse and commit dollars to First Nations education.

He said the issue needs no further study. The time for action is now.

"It's a question of money, but, first, it's an investment of money. It's not an expense. It's not a tax. It's an investment to the First Nations, and we are obliged to do that. If we are not doing that, then we are not respecting the First People of this country... That's it. That's all," Lemay explained.

Government, he said, is not moving promptly on its obligations.

"Now we discover step by step that the government (doesn't) do what they are supposed to do."

Government, he said, does not make First Nations issues a priority.

What they fail to absorb, however, is the impact that Bill C-3 will have on First Nations communities. Bill C-3 is the legislation that attempts to provide gender equity in the Indian Act. It was introduced in response to the McIvor ruling that said the Indian registry continues to discriminate against women, their children and their

grandchildren.

Under Bill C-3, an estimated 50,000 to 100,000 more people will be added to the Indian registration list. That alone demonstrates the need for an increase in on-reserve funding, said Lemay.

If Bill C-599 is passed it will also bridge the gap between on reserve and off reserve funding inequities. The feds, which fund on-reserve schools, provide far fewer dollars per student than those provided by the province to off-reserve schools.

Education laws, provincial and territorial, apply on and off the reserve, but the federal government is supposed to fund (on-reserve) schools and the quality of education... but they do it on a lesser level," said Cindy Blackstock, executive director of the First Nation Child and Family Caring Society.

Since 2006, Lemay has slowly come to realize the challenges faced by on-reserve schools in dealing with the lack of resources provided by the federal government, and said he was shocked by what he's learned.

"In one community, it's not so far away, 135 km from Ottawa, they don't have any computers,

no technical courses, no sports programs... We are in 2010. I can't believe that!"

Since the election of National Chief Shawn Atleo in 2009, it has been the priority of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) to press the issues surrounding First Nations education.

When the AFN launched the National Week of Action on Education in September, the *Shannen's Dream* campaign also came alive. It is based on the hopes and dreams of student Shannen Koostachin, whose desire it was that all First Nations children would receive a quality education in clean and comfortable schools.

The young activist made an impact on the human rights movement by stepping up to face members of Parliament while encouraging youth activists, leaders, and faith groups to stand up for equal education, explained Blackstock.

The sudden death of the 15 year old last May in a car accident prompted immediate action by all supporters of the campaign.

MP Charlie Angus put Shannen's Dream to the House of Commons in Motion 571.

The motion allowed for a

discussion of the dire education conditions within Shannen's own reserve of Attawapiskat, and eventually Lemay's draft bill completed the motion.

Since November, the campaign has over 22,000 organizations and individuals supporting the cause so that the government, said Blackstock, understands that the people who vote them into office do not accept racial inequalities for First Nations kids.

"We discuss a lot of things and now it's time to discuss the real thing, and the real thing is what is happening to the kids from Grade 5 to Grade 12. It's on these grades that we lose the kids, and if we lose the kids than we are going to lose the First Nations."

Lemay wondered how society can expect First Nations kids to develop and work if they don't complete school.

Lemay hopes the 2011-2012 federal budget will remove the two per cent funding cap, and with the help of the AFN, government will establish a better education funding plan.

"I would like if it is possible, in the beginning of next year, but, we know the works of the House," Lemay said.

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[business]

So many great businesses, it was difficult to choose



The recipients of the 2010 BC Aboriginal Business Awards pose for group photo.



Amy Dopson is the BC Achievement Foundation's young female Aboriginal entrepreneur of the year.

In just two years, Amy Dopson developed a business aimed at supporting and enriching the student experience within the education system, and today she is British Columbia's Young Female Entrepreneur of the Year.

The BC Aboriginal Business award was presented to Dopson on Dec. 1 in Vancouver by the BC Achievement Foundation and Premier Gordon Campbell.

PAC10 Tutoring services heavily emphasize Math, English and Science and offer flexible programs that work within a student's school schedule. The business provides a diverse set of options meeting the needs of each client and includes monthly group programs, private sessions and year-round tutoring services.

The developer of PAC10 Tutoring in Prince Rupert joined 18 other achievers in a variety of categories for a gala dinner. There were 18 business awards and one Aboriginal Business award for individual achievement, which went to Port Alberni's Dolly Watts McRae.

McRae's restaurant, the Liliget Feast House on Vancouver's Davie Street, was open for 12 years. The 52-seat restaurant received a four-star rating from the New York Times for offering the best Aboriginal food in North America.

McRae has also garnered such awards as the National Aboriginal Achievement Award in 2001 and a gold medal in the Iron Chef competition, received at the age of 69.

McRae is now writing, and in 2007 published "Where People Feast: An Indigenous People's Cookbook," which she co-authored with her daughter Annie.

Young Male Entrepreneur of the Year is Robert Ellis of Nanaimo. His creation is Ellis Excavating Ltd. which provides excavation services to the construction industry with a focus on residential subdivision development. The work includes site clearing, road building, trenching, pipe and foundation laying. He's developed his business over the last four years.

Ellis was all smiles and gave a thumb's up as he accepted his plaque and citation from the premier for being one of this province's top Aboriginal achievers.

The BC Aboriginal Business Awards were launched in October 2008 to honour and celebrate business excellence. Seven award recipients, one from each category, were selected in the 2010 awards. In addition, a further group of eleven Aboriginal businesses were noted for their outstanding achievement. An independent jury panel evaluated the submissions based on the viability, sustainability and competitiveness of the business.

The jury had a difficult task selecting the recipients from the many great businesses nominated in this year's submissions, so in some categories there was an overall winner and then one or two honourable mentions.

For example, in the Community-Owned Business of the Year category, the winner was Coast Tsimshian Resources LP Terrace. In that category were two additional Outstanding Business Achievers—Quinsam Shell Service Station of Campbell River, and Tseshah Market of Port Alberni.

(See *Business* on page 25.)

Windspeaker business briefs

WAHNAPITAE FIRST NATION HAS

purchased Rocky's Restaurant and Marina and took ownership on Dec. 6. Rocky's is situated on the Wahnapitae First Nation land base on Lake Wahnapitae. It provides the perfect getaway destination for an evening or weekend, reads a press statement released by the band. "We are very excited about this new business venture and look forward to continued economic growth through this acquisition," said Chief Myles Tyson. The First Nation will keep the current management consistent with the previous owners and everything will remain the same. The acquisition of Rocky's is an accomplishment for the community, as it aims to diversify the economic base and decrease reliance on government funding. The establishment is open year round and consists of a licensed restaurant, convenience store, gas bar, marina, motel, meeting room and seasonal campground. For more on this venture, visit the Web site www.rockysonthelake.com

THE CANADIAN COUNCIL FOR

Aboriginal Business has named Chief Clarence Louie of the Osoyoos Indian Band in British Columbia and Ruth Williams, the Chief Executive Officer of All Nations Trust Company, B.C., to the Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame. The Hall of Fame recognizes their accomplishments in achieving sustainable economic development in Aboriginal communities. Williams has been a leader in social and economic development for more than 25 years with All Nations Trust Company and is a founding member of eight non-profit organizations. Louie was first elected chief of the Osoyoos Indian Band in 1985 and has devoted his career to improving his community's standard of living. One notable accomplishment under Chief Louie's leadership is the establishment of the first Aboriginal owned and operated winery in North America. Louie was recently named a Transformational Canadian by The Globe and Mail.

RBC HAS COMMITTED \$300,000

to the Martin Aboriginal Education Initiative (MAEI) to support the expansion of its Aboriginal Youth Entrepreneurship program and encourage young people to stay in school. The Aboriginal Youth Entrepreneurship program is designed to improve students' proficiency in all subject areas, including business, math, English, accounting, marketing and information technology. Using activities, guest speakers, mentors and examples of successful Aboriginal Canadian business leaders, students have the opportunity to learn how to create a product, or service-based business. Founded in 2006, MAEI brings together Aboriginal organizations, accounting professionals, the business community, post-secondary institutions, First Nation schools and provincially-funded school boards to implement programs that support Aboriginal students and help them succeed. RBC's funding will provide teacher training, program materials and program development to both current and new program locations. MAEI is currently operating in seven locations across Canada and plans to add an additional six schools over the next three years.

CHIEFS OF THE JAMES SMITH CREE NATION,

the Peter Chapman Band and the Chakastaypasin Band of the Cree signed an agreement with Saskatchewan's Environment Minister Dustin Duncan which outlines how the parties will work together on understanding the impacts of a proposed diamond mine on the communities and their treaty and Aboriginal rights. The consultation agreement regarding the environmental assessment of Shore Gold's Star-Orion South Diamond project was initiated by the three First Nations closest to the proposed mine site in the Fort à la Corne Provincial Forest, northeast of Prince Albert. The agreement outlines general provisions related to consultation on this project and the roles and responsibilities of the province, the three bands and Shore Gold in the consultation and environmental assessment processes. "The signing today is another step on our journey to being a healthy, wealthy and prosperous community," said James Smith Cree Nation Chief Wally Burns. "The agreement is the first of its kind in Saskatchewan and it will require diligence on the part of all parties to ensure we secure the future our ancestors foresaw in the treaties. This is a proud day for the people of the James Smith Cree Nation." The agreement does not bind the signatories to support the mine and is not a financial agreement. The James Smith Cree Nation received funds in August 2010 from the Ministry of First Nations and Métis Relations' Consultation Participation Fund to assist with its participation in the environmental assessment process for this proposed mine.

Keith Ashfield, Newfoundland and Labrador's minister of National Revenue, minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and minister for the Atlantic Gateway, announced an investment of \$75,000 to assist the Miawpukek Band government to implement the business and revenue development strategy for the First Nations Trust. "Our government's assistance will help the Miawpukek Band Government establish a trust whose objective is to support strategic economic development for the community," said Minister Ashfield. Specifically, the funding will enable the trust to engage expert advice to refine and help implement a revenue development strategy, develop a marketing and publicity campaign and assist the trust in gaining charitable status. The First Nation's Trust of Newfoundland and Labrador was established by the Miawpukek First Nation to foster and promote, through education, the preservation and growth of the culture, language, history, beliefs and spirituality of the Mi'kmaq people of Newfoundland and Labrador. A three-member board of directors will oversee the operation of the First Nations Trust. The board includes Saqamaw M'isel Joe as chair, Tammy Drew as secretary/treasurer and Phillip Jeddore as director. A volunteer advisory board will provide additional direction and support.

Barkerville Gold Mines Ltd. has entered into a project agreement with the Lhtako Dene Nation (Red Bluff Indian Band) of Quesnel, B.C. The parties will mutually benefit in the development of Barkerville's 100 per cent-owned Bonanza Ledge Property located in the Cariboo Mining District of British Columbia. The agreement is a multi-year arrangement providing for preferential contracting, employment and training provisions, academic incentives, environmental review participation, and other economic benefits from the Bonanza Ledge Project, subject to permitting approvals and the company's decision to commence production at the Bonanza Ledge property.

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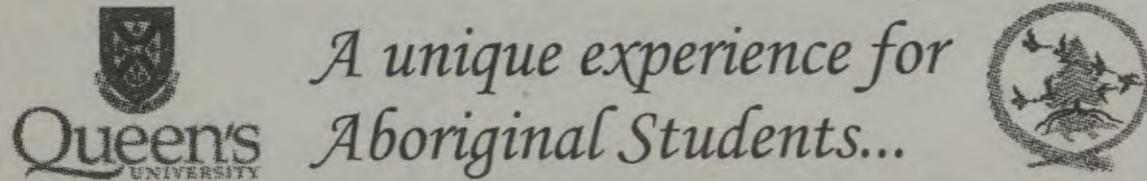
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To Make A Difference!

Business Awards

(Continued from page 24.)

"This year's Aboriginal Business Award recipients represent the growing number of outstanding Aboriginal business leaders in British Columbia," said Barry Penner, minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation. "These role models will encourage the next generation of Aboriginal people to bring their entrepreneurial ideas to life."

Business of the Year in the one to two person enterprise category went to Jeff Ward and Animikii Inc. of Sooke near Victoria on Vancouver Island.

Ward founded Animikii Inc. in 2003 and continues as its sole operator. The business provides its clients with Web site design, Web application development and Web hosting expertise. Animikii has clients from throughout North America and develops relationships with both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal partners.

The other 2010 Aboriginal Business Award recipients are:

Runner up in the Young Male

Entrepreneur of the Year Award category was Michael Salto of Salto Waterworks.

Runners up in the Business of the Year - one to two person enterprise Jags Beanstalk and MUG Solutions

Business of the Year - two to ten person enterprise is Little Kingdom Gas and Grocery of Vernon with runners up or winners in Outstanding Business Achievement AJ Towing, Grizzly-Man Resource Management Ltd. and Theytus Books Ltd.

Business of the Year - ten or more person enterprise was Kekuli Café Aboriginal Foods and Catering of Kelowna. Outstanding Business Achievement in this category are DL Safety Consulting and Selkin Logging Ltd and Michell Enterprises

Joint Venture Business of the Year was Stuwix Resources Joint Venture: partners Coldwater Band, Cook's Ferry Band, Lower Nicola Band, Nooaitch Band, Shackan Band, Siska Band, Upper Nicola Band, Upper Similkameen Band of Merritt.

Stuwix Resources was established in 2004 and is the only First Nations company in the B.C. Interior to hold a replaceable forest licence. Stuwix is responsible for the overall management of the licence, including planning, developing, marketing, timber-harvesting, road-building and silviculture. A management committee, made up of representatives from the eight bands, operates the joint venture.

Outstanding Business Achievement in this category went to Katzie Coast Marine.

An award for Individual Achievement also went to John Harper from the First Citizen's Fund loan program. Harper provided the oversight for the delivery of the FCF loan program through the Aboriginal capital corporations Tale'Awtxw (TACC); Tricorp; Nuu-chah-Nulth Economic Development Corporation (NEDC); First Nations Agricultural Lending Association (FNALA); and All Nations Trust Company (ANTCO).

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Government of Alberta ■

[footprints] Ellen May Neel First North West Coast female carver revived totem pole culture

By Dianne Meili

In the 1950s, if your family had a West Coast totem pole souvenir, chances are it was made by Kakaso'las, Ellen May Neel.

The Kwakwaka'wakw (pronounced Kwok-wokie-wok) artist was born in a plank house in Alert Bay just off Vancouver Island's inside passage. Her Kwakwak'wakw name, which she seldom used but with which she sometimes signed her totem poles, means "people who came from far away to seek her advice." In Alert Bay, she was simply known as Ellenah.

"My grandmother was bedridden, so my mom always wandered down to the beach where her grandfather Charlie James had his carving shed," explained Ellen's daughter Cora Beddows.

Amidst the hammering and shouts of children playing, he taught her his craft. Lending a hand, too, was Ellen's famous uncle, Mungo Martin.

When Ellen turned 10, her grandfather, appreciating her natural talent, increased the intensity of his instruction. He made her repeat drawings to his exact specifications amidst her stressful tears, but by the time she was 12 she could carve totem poles well enough to sell them to Alert Bay tourists.

By the time she was 18, Ellen had quit school.

"She married my father Edward Neel in 1938 and they moved to Vancouver in 1943," said Beddows. "Dad hurt himself and couldn't work, so my mother found herself having to feed and clothe six of us children. On Powell Street – it's part of skid row now – in the 40s and 50s when women weren't allowed to carve totem poles, there was mom carving and painting them." Her little workshop slowly became a storefront business.

By 1946, Ellen had recruited her family to help her make small tourist totem poles. According to Beddows: "I can't remember a time when the house wasn't covered with wood or a day when mom didn't work. One time she got an order for 2,000 poles from the Hudson's Bay Company. My dad cut out the blanks with a band saw and my mom carved them. Us kids would paint them.

I was assigned one colour to paint, like the brown on a bear."

The small souvenirs were Ellen's bread and butter, but she gave her heart and soul to the carving of commissioned full-sized poles for setting outside houses and in public places. Those assignments dribbled in, and she was more commonly asked to make "midway" poles about two to five feet high. The pole itself was carved from a single piece of yellow cedar, but the top eagle or thunderbird's wings were attached with "paddles" nailed to the back. The paddle "handles" were fitted into holes in the central column.

Ellen's talent and prolific output of poles helped to revive the artform. Vancouver City councillors presented totem poles to visiting dignitaries like Queen Elizabeth, actor and singer Bing Crosby, and 50s actress Katharine Hepburn. Vancouver became known as Totemland, and Ellen's work was collected internationally.

Vancouver Mayor Charley Thompson arranged for Ellen to provide the model for the totem pole used as the insignia for the Totemland Society, to promote tourism. Vancouver public relations officer Harry Duker also arranged for the Neel family to carve in a tent in Stanley Park, eventually helping them establish a permanent workshop and store at Ferguson Point, near Mohawk writer Pauline Johnson's burial site.

Ellen sold her first polished totem to University of British Columbia President Norman Mackenzie. The Vancouver Province newspaper described the artist as "probably the only woman totem pole carver in the world."

Soon after, she gave a 16-foot thunderbird totem as a gift to the UBC Alma Mater Society and gained more notoriety.

But by 1960, when she was only 44, Ellen began losing weight and her sight, and became so sick she couldn't work at times. In 1961 her oldest son Dave was killed in a car accident and she failed to overcome the loss, sinking into a deep depression.

At the behest of her friends, Ellen applied for a Canada

Council grant in 1963 to support her artistic development. Though she was a leading – and Canada's first female – totem pole carver, she was flatly turned down. Friends say when the letter refusing help arrived, Ellen read it and sat for a long time staring into space.

With both parents sick, one of Ellen's sons began selling family heirlooms to bring in cash. Ellen's tools, her favorite drawings and carvings done by her grandfather Charlie James, and the family's sacred copper were sold behind her back. When she found out, she and her sibling were furious. Her depression hit a new low.

Ellen entered the hospital in January 1966 and died on Feb. 3, totally worn out by the cares of her life.

"She did carry a huge load in life," explained Beddows. "Our relatives in Alert Bay sent my cousins to live with us in Vancouver so they could get better schooling. There were two to three of us in a bed and the meals mom made were huge. Everybody cared for each other. The thing I admire most about my mom was the way she used her art to support us. She was firm, strict and loving all at the same time, but the strain of her work soon started showing."

Though Beddows didn't carry on the carving tradition, she's done all she can to serve others as Ellen did. As president of the Friendship Centre in Courtney, B.C. she and her husband also fostered children for 28 years.

"My nephew David Neel carves in wood, gold and silver and his work is well known," commented Beddows. A generation of artists like Freda Diesling and Doreen Jensen were also inspired by Ellen's work.

"Mom was so generous in sharing her skills. She trained Phil Nyutten, and he can carve a mean totem pole," concluded Beddows. Phil Nyutten is a Métis inventor, entrepreneur and deep-ocean explorer who authored *The Totem Carvers*, published in 1982, which features the work and lives of Charlie James, Ellen Neel and Mungo Martin. The book is a standard reference text in Northwest nature ethnography studies.



Ellen May Neel

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