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It's one or the other,
says the
Supreme Court
Page 8

Child welfare
statistics
eye-opening
Page 9

AMMSA alum
leaves
cherished memories
Page 15

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Carrying on the traditions

Gail Joseph, 23, helps process salmon caught on the Cheakamus River near Squamish, BC in August 2011.

Photo Credit: Bert Crowfoot

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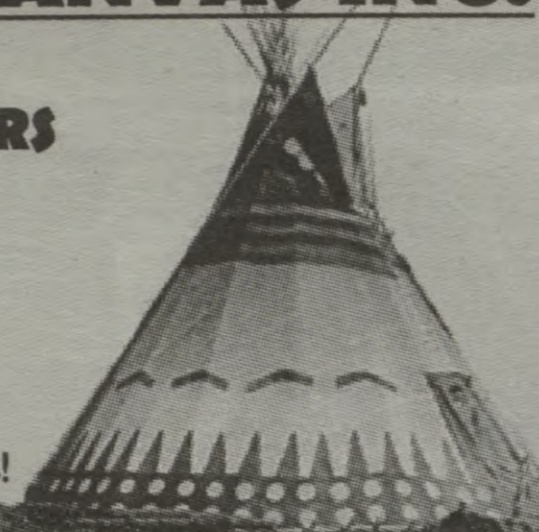
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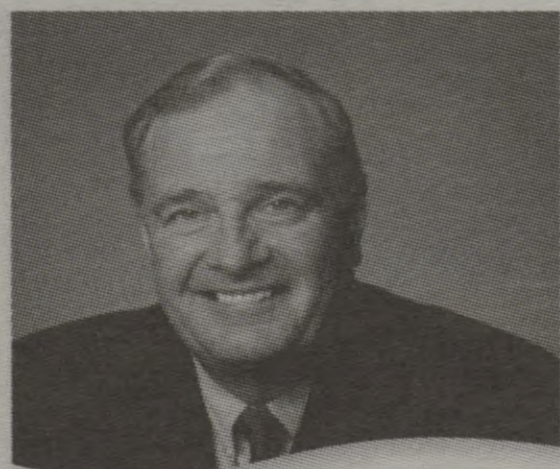
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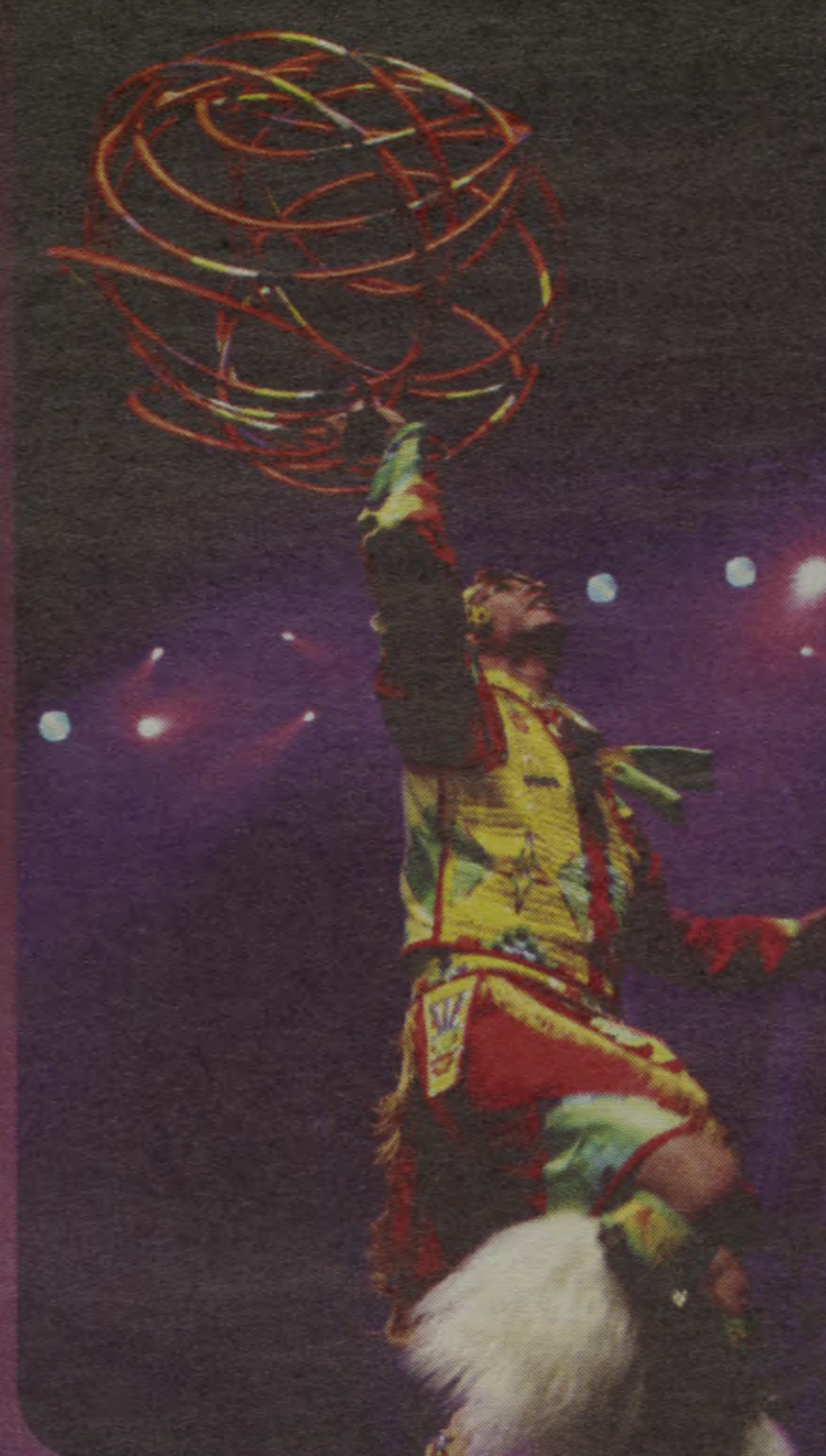
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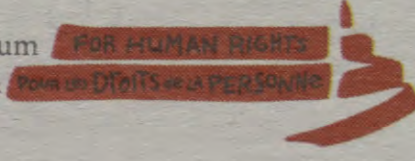
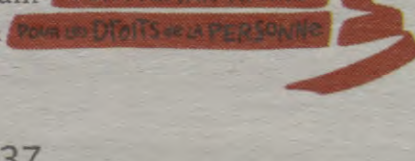
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Canada

Features

Protocol lacks recognition of Indigenous knowledge 8

A ruling by the Supreme Court of Canada underscores that the Métis are a people with a distinct identity and culture. And, insists Jason Madden, legal counsel for the Métis National Council (MNC), "the Metis have the right to decide who they are themselves and to make those distinctions and to exclude individuals who are registered as Indians."

Child welfare statistic eye-opening, says Beaucage 9

Ontario wants to improve its child welfare services for Aboriginal children. So, the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services hired former Anishinabek Nation Grand Council John Beaucage as Aboriginal advisor to the minister of children and youth.

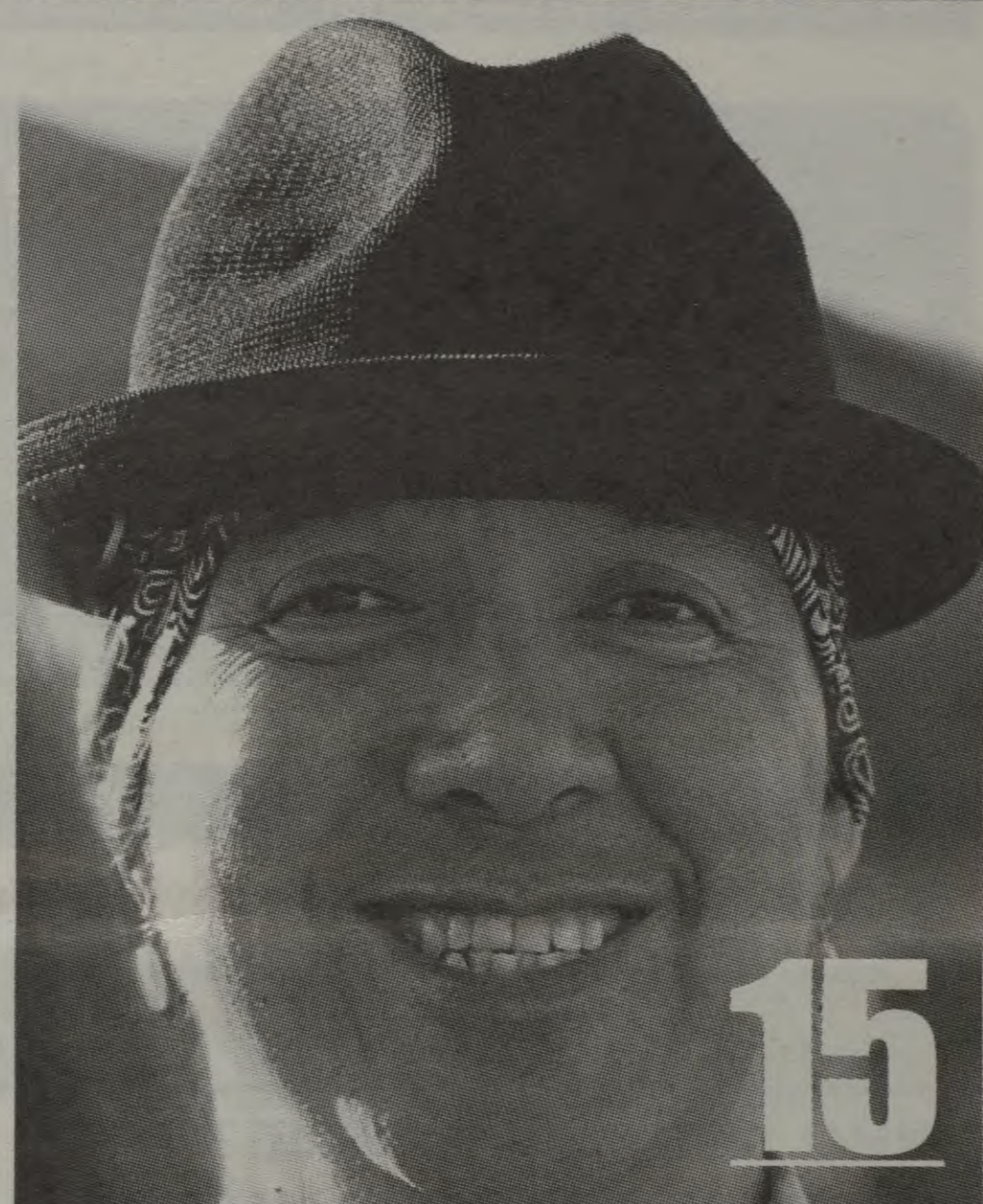
Conference confronts police 'culture of oppression' 10

A recent conference in Winnipeg accused police forces across Canada of continuing racism against Indigenous people. Native people are more often killed or abused by police officers than are others in Canada, presenters said, but police actions are more often than not chalked up to 'bad apples' on the force instead of symptoms of systemic problems within police ranks.

Departments

- [rants and raves] 5
- [what's happening] 7
- [windspeaker briefs] 9
- [strictly speaking] 12
- [dear auntie] 13
- [rank comix] 13
- [provincial news] 16 to 18
- [windspeaker confidential] 19
- [radio's most active] 19
- [sports] 20
- [business] 21
- [health] 22
- [education] 23 & 24
- [careers] 25
- [footprints] William Commanda 26

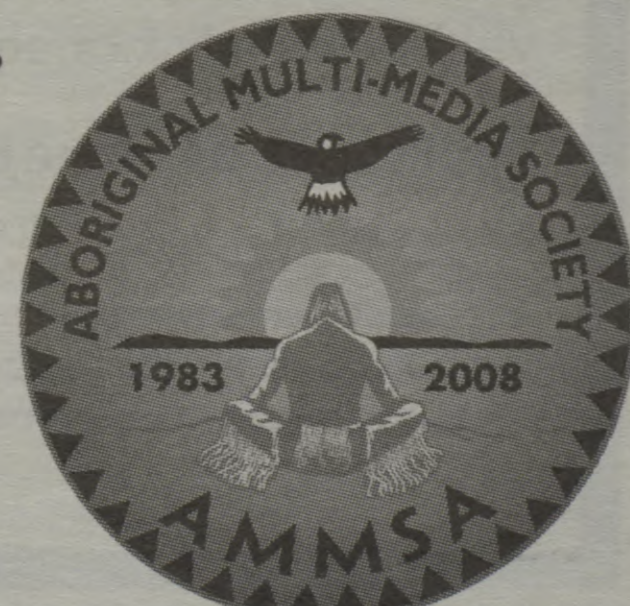
In the quiet vigil that followed William Commanda's death, his grandson Johnny revealed that he saw his beloved grandfather leaving in a canoe. "I had envisioned the same," said Romola Thumbadoo, Grandfather Commanda's assistant and close friend.



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Shedding a little light on the agenda

Well, in case you missed it, the table is being set for a leadership challenge at the Assembly of First Nations. It was evident at this summer's chiefs gathering in New Brunswick, with all the fine speeches being made by a certain 'also ran,' who we suspect will take another stab at securing the top post of the chiefs' organization next July, and now we've seen the first very public shot lobbed across the bow of the S.S. A-in-chut when Quebec, Ontario and Saskatchewan announced they were turning their collective noses up at the education panel.

The education panel, jointly announced by National Chief Shawn Atleo, and Aboriginal Affairs Minister John Duncan, is currently touring to collect information from First Nations communities as a way to break down the walls that have grown around on-reserve education, including lack of resources, both material and financial.

What with the need for 60 new schools to be built on reserve, with high school and post-secondary Aboriginal graduation rates being eclipsed by the non-Native education success rates, and the severe underfunding of each child in our schools, the education panel is a construct long overdue. So it doesn't take a great leap to wonder if the public flogging of this initiative isn't more politically motivated than driven by what has been described by the critics as a "flawed and deficient" process.

The chiefs have learned a thing or two about brinkmanship from the mainstream politicians, especially over the years since the trouncing of Paul Martin by his own federal Liberal colleagues, and then the trouncing of the federal Liberal brand by Conservatives under Prime Minister Stephen Harper during the minority years.

Remember Kelowna? It doesn't matter if the idea is good and right; it's about stymying the efforts of the current leadership so any claims of achievement can't be made heading into the next election.

Brinkmanship: To seek advantage by pushing a highly dangerous situation to the limit.

We saw it this summer in the United States when the Republicans, in the name of ideology, pushed the American economy into that extremely dangerous place. Raise the debt ceiling or default on loans. The Republicans dug their heels in and let their suffering citizens twist in the wind. The result was a slap on the wrist from Standard and Poor's by knocking back the

State's triple A credit rating to an double A plus. With that the stage was set for another roller coaster ride for investors, who, it seemed, hadn't been hurt enough by the sub-prime loan debacle of a couple of years back.

What will be the ramifications for our children now that 230 leaders decided to play chicken with their future?

Perception is everything in politics, so, in order to secure an advantage for the challengers, the current leader has to be seen as ineffectual or incompetent. Never mind right or wrong. That's another matter altogether, and not nearly as important as the acquisition of power and influence.†

Never mind that our children's ability to learn and therefore compete is at stake. Heck, they're just kids. They don't know what they're missing anyway, having always been behind the eight-ball when it comes to education and educational supports.

There's a greater purpose to serve here, right? Power and influence. It doesn't really matter how much havoc is caused as long as that end goal is achieved.

Oh for a new way of doing things, or at least a more constructive way of carrying on. We lauded that as an ideal with the passing of Jack Layton, leader of the NDP, this August. The public outpouring of grief for Mr. Layton caught many by surprise, but Canada's reaction to his death was driven not only by the affection we had for him, but by the fact that the man was cut down at the pinnacle of his political life. Many wondered about what could have been if cancer hadn't taken him.

But perhaps what Canada was also grieving was the death of Jack's promise of a future of political civility. And that civility might well have spilled over into the rough and tumble world of Aboriginal politics.

Is it too much to imagine in First Nations politics that the bully-boy tactics and belly-bumping currently being applied could somehow become a relic of times past? What's wrong with letting ideas and vision become the foundation upon which the chiefs choose a leader, rather than relying on devious political games to subvert accomplishment?

It's time for our leaders to choose to behave with our interests in mind and not allow personal self-interest to scuttle our progress forward. And it's time we start exposing their self-interest to the light of day.

Windspeaker

Letter: Innovation needed to solve problem of gangs

Re: They're Stealing our children

It is like the elephant in the room that no one wants to acknowledge or admit, especially the federal and provincial governments and First Nations. The state of most reserves is, in fact, very dismal and extremely discouraging to my people. In Hobbema, we had a little boy lose his life to violence recently (EthanYellowbird).

Most initiatives that are or were designed by INAC/Health Canada in the past unfortunately have failed. Poverty and unemployment continue to plague our reserves and that reality is on every reserve in Canada. Education appears to become less of a priority to all governments.

The environment and water quality, especially in Alberta, is a non-starter with this provincial government due to the fact that the oil sands projects inject billions of dollars into the economy. The fact is that most Native Albertans in the north do not share in this economic development or any spin-off opportunities or else very minimally.

Perhaps all levels of government could devise some creative way to assist the Indian and Métis

populations in the north in the area of employment, environment, education, gang violence, child welfare and improved living conditions on reserve and colonies. That is a tall order but "status quo" does not appear to be working as we speak.

Colonial attitudes will have to change from all the government(s) to truly bring positive change for our youth/children and communities in the area of improving the living conditions and position of Indian people within the Canadian mosaic. We cannot afford to stand by and allow our children and our communities to remain in a situation of extreme poverty, gang violence, lack of education and employment, lack of potable water, etc.

The challenge for all of us is to put our collective minds together to find innovative ways of improving the lives of all Native people on and off reserve. The time is now for change.

Respectfully submitted,

Mel H Buffalo

Samson Cree nation member
Hobbema, Alta.

[rants and raves]

Page 5 Chatter

ON AUG. 30 A COURT SAID THE

suspension of Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations Grand Chief Guy Lonechild was unlawful and the non-confidence vote the organization had planned for Sept. 1 could not go ahead. Lonechild had been under siege since a conviction in March on drunk driving charges. Complaints came from some chiefs in the FSIN that Lonechild failed to disclose the charges during his election campaign in 2009. On Aug. 4 an executive committee of the FSIN suspended the leader, but Lonechild fought back. Court of Queen's Bench Judge Ronald Mills ruled that the executive committee overstepped its authority denying Lonechild "the basic principles of natural justice." Mills said there was confusion over the process that saw Lonechild suspended and some voiced their concerns about that confusion at the time. However, the judge said it was obvious from material and comments made that there was a personal agenda being pursued that pushed the suspension forward. "The importance of this process to the FSIN ... and to all First Nations individuals throughout the province should have made those responsible for the process to be vigilant in ensuring that it was conducted fairly and impartially with respect to all those involved," said the judge. He didn't, however, rule that Lonechild should keep his job. He said the FSIN could challenge Lonechild's leadership again, but in accordance with the organizations own rules and regulations.

POSTMEDIA NEWS REPORTS THAT THE

sixties scoop has sparked a class-action lawsuit against the federal government. Regina lawyer Tony Merchant, a major player in the residential school compensation agreement, filed the suit representing about 57 plaintiffs. The suit could attract thousands more, however, who were adopted out allegedly under spurious circumstances. Merchant said the Adopt Indian Metis (AIM) program took Aboriginal children away from their families and communities and placed them in non-Aboriginal homes, with many children sent great distances away, even over the border into the United States. Merchant alleges it was part of a well-publicized effort to assimilate these children who were "forced to be white." Some suffered physical or sexual abuse. The suit seeks unspecified damages for such things as loss of sense of family, suppression of culture, and emotional or physical trauma.

OUT WITH THE OLD AND IN WITH THE

new as the Bears paw First Nation (Alberta) chief and council are swept out of power. Former chief David Bears paw had come to national attention when he endeavored to put forward new electoral guidelines that would have postponed this year's election, extending his own term in power from two to four years. Community members challenged him in court and the election went forward, with the result being the community's rejection of all the re-election bids of the incumbents. Darcy Dixon, who held the chief's position before Bears paw came along in 2008, was returned to power with 327 votes to 222. Rod Hunter, Farrel Holloway, Keith Lefthand and Rex Daniels are councillors. These folks will now have to deal with the \$400,000 in legal bills left from the challenge.

THE DAILY GLEANER IS REPORTING THAT

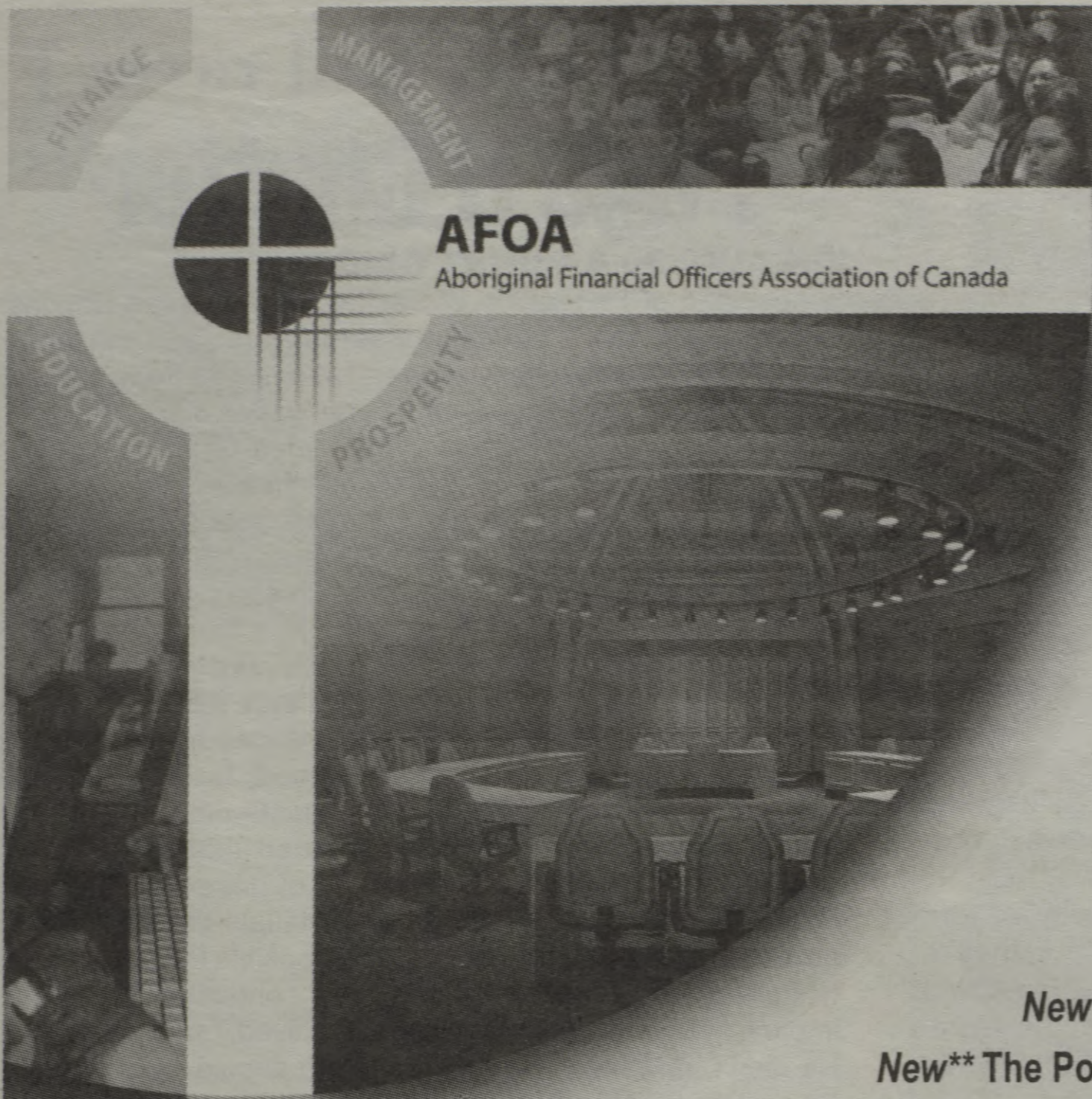
New Brunswick will return more than \$3 million in tobacco fuel and taxes collected from Tobique First Nation members. Councillor Paul Pyres said the taxes collected violated Section 87 of the Indian Act. Pyres led negotiations for the nation with the province on the issue, and says the band had been fighting the tax for 12 years. While Tobique was looking at \$11 million in compensation dating back to 1954, a province-imposed six-year statutory limit capped the amount at just over \$3 million. "We could have fought it in court, but we would have ended up with the same outcome we have now after lawyer bills and the time that the legal argument takes," he told the paper.

CHIEF JACKIE THOMAS OF THE

Saik'uz First Nation in Vanderhoof said her doubts about the "true intentions" of the Missing Women's Inquiry led by Wally Oppal, former BC attorney general, has grown in recent months. "Commission staff have left me with the impression that they are more interested in being seen to have consulted with First Nations leaders than actually meeting with the families who have lost relatives," she told the Vancouver Sun. She said the commission traveled to northern British Columbia ahead of the Sept. 12 start date to meet and greet First Nations leaders. It then held separate meetings with northern community mayors. "We will not be part of redwashing this commission to justify its existence or aid its search for palatable answers," Thomas said in a statement. And she said the commission is not welcome in her community. The Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs, the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council and the Native Courtworker and Counselling Association of B.C. said they would not participate in the inquiry without government funding for lawyers.

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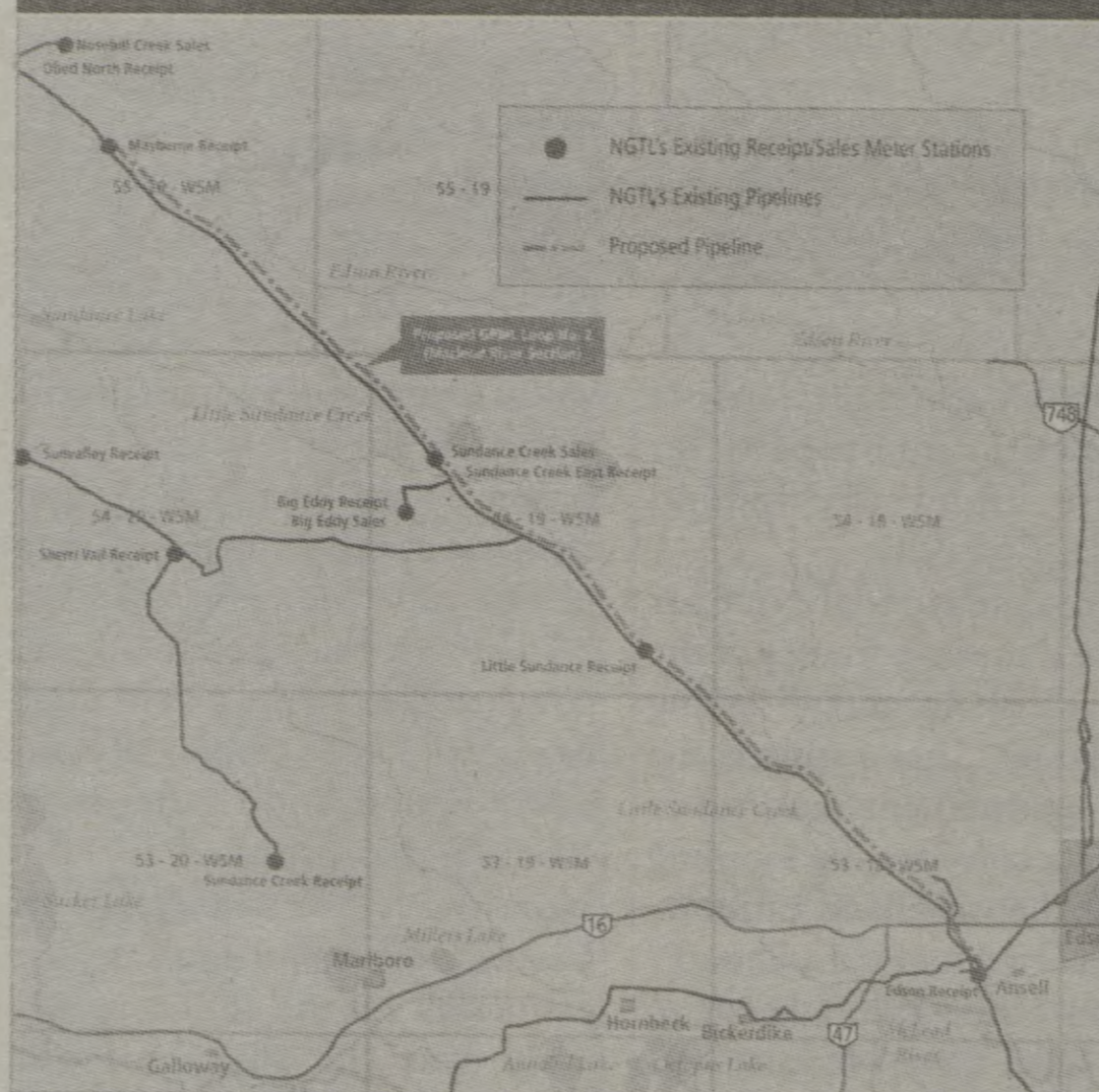
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Public Notice

Grande Prairie Mainline Loop No. 2 (Macleod River Section) Pipeline Project



An application to construct the pipeline is expected to be filed with the National Energy Board in the fourth quarter of 2011. Pending regulatory approvals, construction of the pipeline is expected to start in the third quarter of 2012 and would be in-service by the fourth quarter of 2012.

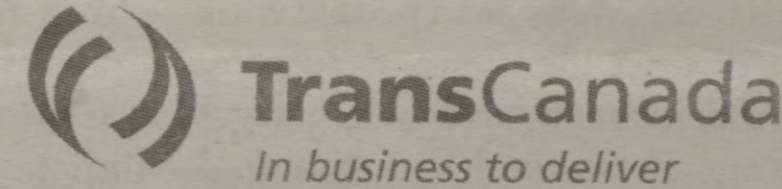
TransCanada encourages public input on these proposed plans. Anyone having an interest in this project is invited to contact us.

TransCanada
Attn: Mark Mulder
Project Manager
450 - 1st Street S.W.
Calgary, AB T2P 5H1

403.920.5333 or 1.800.361.6522
mark_mulder@transcanada.com

TransCanada's wholly-owned subsidiary, NOVA Gas Transmission Ltd. (NGTL), is proposing to construct and operate the Grande Prairie Mainline Loop No. 2 (Macleod River Section) pipeline project for the purpose of transporting sweet natural gas from the northwest area of Alberta.

The proposed project is located approximately 5 kilometres (km) west of Edson, Alberta, and will consist of approximately 37 km of 48 inch (1219 mm) diameter pipeline, with a maximum allowable operating pressure of 8275 kPa (1200 psi). Majority of the pipeline will be located alongside existing rights-of-way (ROW), paralleling NGTL's existing Grande Prairie Mainline Loop from SE 1/4 11-53-18-W5M to NW 1/4 21-55-20-W5M.



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Canada ordered to take another run at caribou protection

By Shari Narine
Windspeaker Contributor

BEAVER LAKE CREE NATION, Alta.

A recent federal judge's decision is a welcomed step in the fight to protect the woodland caribou and First Nation rights in northeastern Alberta.

At the crux of the matter is the lack of action since 2007 under the Species at Risk Act when the woodland caribou became listed as a threatened species.

The federal minister of environment was required at that time to prepare a recovery strategy that would protect the woodland caribou and their habitat. That has yet to be done.

Three First Nations and two environmental groups took the matter to court, and are pleased that Justice Paul Crampton ruled

on July 28 that Environment Minister Peter Kent failed not only the caribou, but the First Nations applicants' treaty rights to the caribou, as well as the caribou habitat, and the honor of the Crown in interpreting his mandate under the federal Species at Risk Act.

"We're pleased the court recognized the importance of the Species at Risk Act and, in issuing this judgment, has required the federal environment minister to properly reconsider the looming crisis for the woodland caribou—an animal vital to our livelihood," said Ron Lameman, advisor to Beaver Lake Cree Nation chief and council.

The Beaver Lake was joined by the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation and the Enoch Cree Nation, as well as environmental groups Pembina Institute and Alberta Wilderness Association,

in a judicial review hearing on June 22 in Edmonton.

Action to spur on the federal government to protect the caribou was initiated last summer with a letter to then Environment minister Jim Prentice. Legal action by the First Nations and environmental groups got underway in September 2010.

"The fact that these herds are going to die . . . the loss of these herds will have a ripple effect on all the surrounding herds in British Columbia, in the Northwest Territories, in Saskatchewan and increase the extinction for the entire species. That was the thrust of our argument, that clearly the loss of these herds in and of themselves requires an emergency order," said Melissa Gorrie, legal counsel for EcoJustice, which is representing the two environmental groups.

Dene National Chief Bill Erasmus said the judge's decision didn't surprise him.

"It's fairly obvious. I've been to Fort McMurray. You fly over that area and it's like a dead zone. So I'm surprised (the federal government) found the habitat was not being bothered and that there was no danger," said Erasmus.

He noted that the Dene Nation was studying the woodland caribou and believed that although the herds are small, the same caribou in Alberta were traveling north of 60, as well as into northern British Columbia. There was some possibility, too, he said, that these same herds were venturing into Saskatchewan.

"Part of the plan the federal government has to do now is look at all of that and bring us together and let's talk about the habitat of

the woodland caribou," said Erasmus.

"As for what this court decision means, this is a very useful step towards protecting caribou in northeastern Alberta and towards respecting First Nations' rights in the area," said Jack Woodward, legal counsel for the First Nations. "But we'll have to see what the environment minister does in response to the case: the ball is now back in his court."

"This is yet another significant court decision which upholds the treaty rights of First Nations in Canada and by protecting the caribou herds and caribou habitat, these and other First Nation communities can and will continue to exercise their traditional rights and practices, including hunting, trapping and fishing," said Assembly of First Nations National Chief Shawn Atleo in a news release.

It's one or the other, says the Supreme Court

By Shari Narine
Windspeaker Contributor

OTTAWA

A ruling by the Supreme Court of Canada underscores that the Métis are a people with a distinct identity and culture. And, insists Jason Madden, legal counsel for the Métis National Council (MNC), "the Métis have the right to decide who they are themselves and to make those distinctions and to exclude individuals who are registered as Indians."

The *Cunningham v. Alberta* case went before the Supreme Court of Canada in December 2010.

At issue was the membership of the Cunningham family in the Peavine Métis Settlement. Barbara Cunningham, John Kenneth Cunningham, Lawrent

Cunningham, Ralph Cunningham, Lynn Noskey, Gordon Cunningham, Roger Cunningham and Ray Stuart were removed from the Peavine Métis Settlement's membership roll in May 2001, because they chose to claim Indian status under the *Indian Act*.

Cunningham et al chose Indian status because the family felt benefits for Indians outweighed benefits available for Métis. Section 75 of the *Métis Settlement Act* prohibits anyone with Indian status from obtaining Métis settlement membership, while Section 90 calls for the removal of membership from the settlement for individuals who have voluntarily registered as Indians under the *Indian Act*.

The Alberta Court of Appeal struck down sections 75 and 90 of the *Settlement Act* saying they

were unconstitutional.

However, the Supreme Court of Canada, which released its decision July 21, said that those sections of the *Act* did not violate the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

"In this decision, the Supreme Court acknowledges the longstanding struggle of the Métis Nation in Canada to have our rights and interests recognized by governments, including the recognition of Métis lands," said Clement Chartier, president of the MNC.

In its 50-page decision, Supreme Court Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin wrote, "The Métis have a right to their own culture and drawing distinctions on this basis reflects the Constitution and serves the legitimate expectations of the Métis people."

The MNC, along with the

Métis Nation of Alberta and Métis Settlements General Council, received intervenor status in case.

While the ruling is specific to Métis settlements in Alberta, and in particular to the membership of the Cunninghams, its implications are widespread.

"People have a choice and there's nothing wrong with that. But they can't choose both," said Madden.

However, at this point, there is no mechanism in place for the Cunninghams — or anyone else in their position — to de-register under the *Indian Act*.

"The MNC has raised (this issue) several times with the minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs. There should be a way for people to voluntarily remove themselves from the *Indian Act*. With the Cunningham decision, there's

great impetus to look at that issue more," said Madden.

He added that he expected the issue will be challenged in the future.

Alberta is the only province with a land base for Métis.

"While this case protects the Alberta Métis Settlements for Métis for generations to come, it also sends a clear message to governments that outstanding Métis land rights issues must be addressed . . .," said Chartier.

Madden said that the decision sets the stage for other provinces to follow Alberta's lead in setting aside specific lands for Métis.

"We hope this will lead to a model for other governments because what it clearly says in this decision is that it was a good thing for Canada to do it and it's protected," said Madden.

(See *Supreme* on page 9.)

Dene Nation welcomes member from Alberta

By Shari Narine
Windspeaker Contributor

ATHABASCA CHIPEWYAN FIRST NATION, Alta.

The Dene Nation has grown by one with the inclusion of the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation of Fort Chipewyan, Alta.

Dene National Chief Bill Erasmus said the addition is in keeping with what was once before. He said Athabasca Chipewyan was a part of the Dene Nation before borders were drawn in 1905 dividing Alberta and the Northwest Territories. He also noted that many members of the Athabasca Chipewyan have family in the N.W.T. and they are all part of Treaty 8.

"We'll have a lot stronger voice

once we come together and unify ourselves as one voice," said Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation Chief Allan Adam.

Issues that need a strong voice include water quality and quantity and woodland caribou habitat.

"The water comes from the south and we're downstream from the development. In the early days it was pulp mills. Now it's tar sands," said Erasmus.

The Athabasca Chipewyan approached the Dene National Assembly last year about membership.

"We're Dene," said Adam of the request. "We don't have a lot of voice in the area because we're in Alberta, but being part of the voice of the Dene Nation only increases our potential to be stronger allies together."

Athabasca Chipewyan's request for membership was debated at the Dene Nation's annual general meeting held in Fort Providence in July. Among the issues discussed was ongoing land negotiations the Dene are having with the federal government.

Erasmus said the Dene Nation consists of regions and Athabasca Chipewyan would have fallen within the Akaitcho region. However, the decision was made for the Athabasca Chipewyan not to be part of any particular region, although Erasmus expects neighboring regions to invite Athabasca Chipewyan to their meetings.

"We've come on as an independent First Nation. We won't be joining in their negotiations," said Adam.

As an independent member of the Dene Nation, the Athabasca Chipewyan have all the same rights and privileges as other member nations.

Once that distinction was made, chiefs and representatives voted unanimously to approve Athabasca Chipewyan's membership.

"We bring a lot of knowledge with us; on how we deal with the government, on how we force the government to the table when we have to deal with issues," said Adam.

Athabasca Chipewyan recently experienced success when the federal court ordered Environment Canada to take action to protect the woodland caribou. Athabasca Chipewyan had joined with two other Alberta First Nations in

litigation. The action was supported by the Dene Nation.

Also on the table for Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation is a battle with the provincial government over the Lower Athabasca Regional Plan.

"We're ready to launch litigation and all of Treaty 8 in Alberta has said they will join us in litigation," said Adam.

With the issues facing First Nations, Erasmus sees the inclusion of the Athabasca Chipewyan with the Dene Nation as coming at the right time.

"It strengthens us as individuals, as family, as communities, as a nation. The more numbers you have, the stronger you are, more of a voice you have. This brings us together as a nation," said Erasmus.

Child welfare statistic eye-opening, says Beaucage

By Jennifer Ashawasegai
Birchbark Writer

TORONTO

Ontario wants to improve its child welfare services for Aboriginal children. So, the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services hired former Anishinabek Nation Grand Council John Beaucage as Aboriginal advisor to the minister of children and youth.

In his capacity as advisor, Beaucage wrote a report on Aboriginal child welfare in the province.

Beaucage said that through his research he found "more and more money is being spent on child and family services, but the success is not growing at all, and it really begs a different way of looking at things."

He said his report addresses that and also serves as a tool to provide different ideas for the ministry and in respect to Aboriginal children.

The report is entitled: Children First, The Aboriginal Advisor's Report on the status of Aboriginal Child Welfare in Ontario. Beaucage spent a lot of time speaking with community members, frontline workers and officials involved in child welfare in the province.

In the introduction of the report, Beaucage notes his surprise at the issues he came across during his research.

"I knew there were issues, but some of the data was eye opening: for one, there are a disproportionate number of Aboriginal children in the child welfare system."

Data from the Statistics Canada 2006 Census indicates Aboriginal people make up about two per cent of the provincial population. But, Beaucage says, in the child welfare system, it's estimated Aboriginal children make up 10 per cent of those in care, and some estimates are even higher at 20 per cent.

The system has many effects on Aboriginal children who end up in foster care.

"Children are being fostered out and in many instances to non-Native homes, and being taken out of their community, and so they're losing touch with

their family, culture, language and once again, it's a process of assimilation, to assimilate a Native child into the greater society," Beaucage said.

"That leaves holes in a person's psyche. Young people are just losing touch.

"We saw it with the 60's scoop, and also with residential schools that when the children are being taken away from their home environment, having their language torn away from them, and their culture torn away, there's something that's missing and they spend the rest of their lives looking for it."

Because of that, Beaucage said social issues arise from those situations, such as addictions.

The report includes a long list of recommendations to try to prevent social issues and loss of culture.

Beaucage strongly recommends culture as a base for Aboriginal children in care, and he says, "we should start seeing more Native people on the boards of Children's Aid Societies and look at ways for Aboriginal organizations to take control of the child protection asset within their regions."

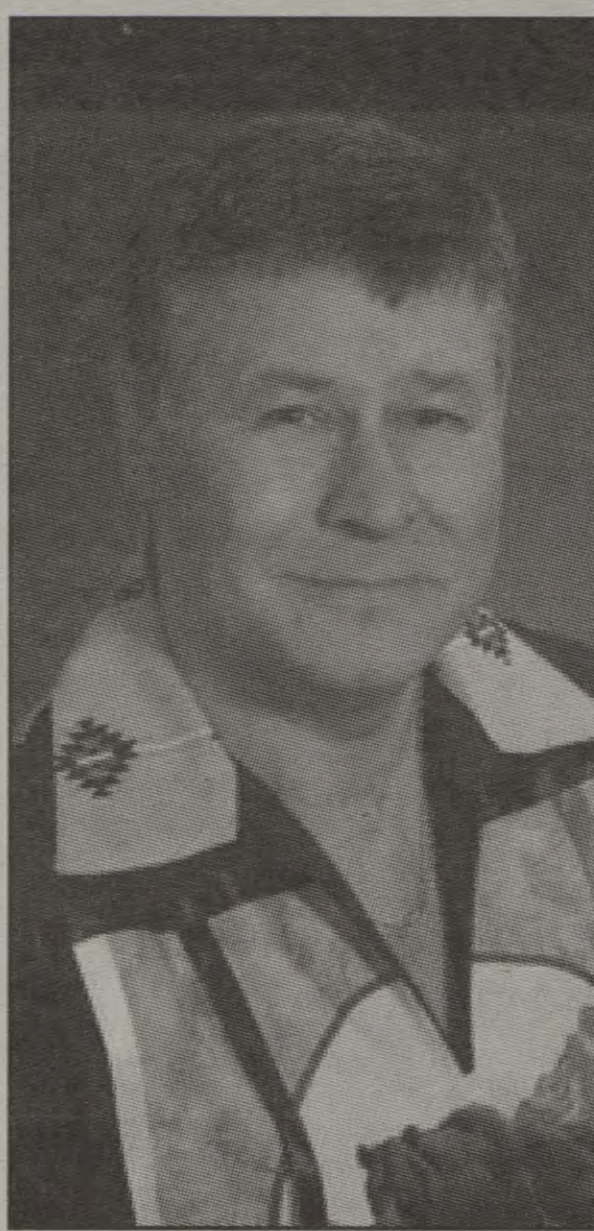
There are 14 major recommendations in the report, from implementing Jordan's Principle, to prevention strategies, to First Nation jurisdiction over child welfare matters and implementing customary care practices.

Laurel Broten, minister for Children and Youth Services in Ontario, has committed herself to bettering service to Aboriginal children and families. Broten supports the report from Beaucage, saying that the ministry has already made investments over the past year.

"In the child welfare sector, we've been ensuring that we are able to support the unique needs of Aboriginal children. We've provided \$124 million to the six Aboriginal child welfare agencies in the province each year."

To address the rate of Aboriginal children going into non-Native homes, Beaucage recommends that CAS use a different system of rating to utilize extended family customary care practices. "The rating system currently rates a household based upon an urban

province. "This is a very strong tool that the Métis have now in their kits to really stress 'We're not Indian, we're not Inuit, but it doesn't mean we're less than. You've got to do something with us. It may



John Beaucage

non-Native way of doing things, and it messes up the way things are done culturally. In the report, I suggest there be a totally different way of looking at a household and doing it by way of culture."

Also included among the recommendations is a call for government to re-institute the band representative program to ensure families have a liaison between the courts and the CAS.

Urban families are not forgotten. Beaucage recommends that a task force for urban Aboriginal children be created to "review the state of Aboriginal children in care and off reserve and make specific recommendations on their best interests."

It's hoped the report will continue to gather steam, as an election is around the bend. Broten is also hoping for reelection in her Etobicoke-Lakeshore riding.

"The ministry is examining all of the recommendations and how it can build upon many of the inter-ministerial collaborations that we have in place as we seek to move forward. It's certainly an active file and folks are very much absorbing the very thoughtful recommendations from the report and we'll be asking Ontarians on Oct. 6 to be able to continue this important work."

not be identical with what you do for Indians and it may not be identical with what you do for Inuit, but you can't be willfully blind to the fact we're there and we're an Aboriginal people," said Madden.

Windspeaker News Briefs

A DECISION ON AUG. 18 BY THE

Ontario Superior Court of Justice upholds the treaty rights of First Nation citizens in Grassy Narrows First Nation. Keewatin v. MNR determined that the province does not have jurisdiction to interfere with the First Nations' inherent right to their land and that any negotiations with the nation are a federal responsibility, said the Chiefs of Ontario in a press release. "This ruling will add to other precedents being set, not only in Ontario but across the country, which affirm the inherent rights of the Indigenous peoples in this country and the federal duties associated with those rights," said Regional Chief Angus Toulouse. The case began more than a decade ago following clear-cut logging attempts in Grassy Narrows' territory. The community has since asserted its constitutionally protected treaty rights, continuously calling on the governments of Ontario and Canada to uphold the spirit and intent of Treaty #3. "There are many First Nations, whose lands are being clearcut, mined, and polluted against their will, that will hopefully benefit from this decision. First Nations have the right to maintain and strengthen their relationship with the land and, as noted in the decision, the federal government has failed in its duty to protect these rights. It is my sincere hope that this ruling signals a new period of recognition and protection for the Anishinaabe way of life in Northwestern Ontario," Toulouse said. Assembly of First Nations (AFN) National Chief Shawn A-in-chut Atleo said "We support Grassy Narrows First Nation and all of Treaty #3 territory as they continue to protect their inherent and treaty rights and their traditional relationship with the land and rivers. We sincerely hope the outcome of this case will lead to a new relationship based on mutual respect, and an end to the unnecessary conflicts that have caused anguish and suffering to the citizens of Grassy Narrows and other impacted First Nation communities." The Canadian Boreal Initiative also congratulated Grassy Narrows First Nation on their legal victory. "The commitment of the community of Grassy Narrows in their unwavering opposition to clearcut logging on its lands has been rewarded with a well-deserved victory in the courts that strongly supports their efforts to protect their lands and the Anishinaabe way of life," said Executive Director Larry Innes. "It is now contingent on the governments of Canada and Ontario to recognize that treaty rights must be respected and protected, and to renew the treaty partnership with Grassy Narrows First Nation on that basis."

IN ANOTHER DECISION FROM THE

Ontario Superior Court, two residential high schools were added to the list eligible for compensation under the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. Windigo First Nations Council, which spearheaded the court challenge, supported by Nishnawbe Aski Nation, called the Aug. 18 decision by Chief Justice Winkler precedent setting as the motion to determine the parameters for adding further schools to the IRSSA is the first motion to be decided across Canada. "This is a good solid victory for not only those who have been directly impacted by these particular schools but also First Nations across the country," said NAN Deputy Grand Chief Mike Metatawabin. "This landmark decision paves the way for other First Nations people who have been institutionalized to be included in this national settlement and we hope they too will continue to fight for justice." The 600 former students of Stirland Lake and Cristal Lake Residential High Schools will now be eligible for the Common Experience Payments and Independent Assessment processes offered under the settlement agreement. Susan Vella, legal counsel for Windigo and NAN says: "We are ready to assist these former students with pursuing their legal rights under the IRSSA. We are grateful to the court for rectifying the oversight in the IRSSA's failure to include these schools in the original schedule of Indian Residential Schools."

FORMER SUPREME COURT OF CANADA

Justice Frank Iacobucci has a new role to play. He will review the process for including individuals living in First Nations reserve communities on Ontario jury rolls. Iacobucci will review existing processes, hold consultations, evaluate best practices, and provide a final report within a year. Recommendations will also be made on how to enhance First Nations representation on the jury roll. "I look forward to working with our First Nations representatives, and all those who have an interest in this issue, to complete a review that is comprehensive and timely and addresses the unique challenges of ensuring a representative jury roll," said Iacobucci. Stan Beardy, Nishnawbe Aski Nation grand chief, said he looked forward to working with Iacobucci and the ministry on the review. "Nishnawbe Aski Nation is committed on behalf of our people to ensuring fair and credible trial and inquest proceedings. Working with the government of Ontario to enhance meaningful First Nation participation in the Ontario justice system is an important step towards achieving this goal."

Supreme Court decision

(Continued from page 8.)

The Alberta government began setting aside lands for the Métis in the 1920s. All eight Métis settlements are located in the northern part of the

province.

"This is a very strong tool that the Métis have now in their kits to really stress 'We're not Indian, we're not Inuit, but it doesn't mean we're less than. You've got to do something with us. It may

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Conference confronts police 'culture of oppression'

By David P. Ball
Windspeaker Contributor

WINNIPEG

A recent international conference in Winnipeg accused police forces across Canada of continuing racism against Indigenous people.

Native people are more often killed or abused by police officers than are others in Canada, presenters said, but police actions are more often than not chalked up to 'bad apples' on the force instead of symptoms of systemic problems within police ranks.

"For those of us within Indigenous communities and other racialized groups, the lie of the 'one bad apple' excuse hides the colonialism behind the police," said keynote speaker Leslie Spillett, director of the Winnipeg organization Ka Ki Kanichihk.

"The Canadian state is still prepared to use lethal force for its 'Indian problem,'" she said.

"We can't reform the systems. They were someone else's vision. But we can use different systems of justice and right relations. We know they work."

Several hundred people—both Indigenous and non-Indigenous—gathered for the second International Copwatching Conference in Winnipeg July 22 to 24. The conference was organized by Winnipeg Copwatch, a civilian police accountability organization which uses videotaping police, educating the public about their rights, and protesting abuses to oppose police brutality.

Presenters addressed the history of policing in Canada, beginning with the Northwest Mounted Police Force's displacement and control over Native communities, the RCMP scoop of Native children for residential schools, and police involvement in Native protests during the Oka Crisis in Quebec, Gustafsen Lake in BC, and

Ipperwash in Ontario.

All agreed that racism in the Canadian police is not a relic of the past.

"Police brutality against Native people happens everywhere," said Billie Pierre from Merritt, B.C. He works with the Native Youth Movement.

"The people causing this pain to families maybe get a slap on the wrist. It's pretty common that no one is charged or convicted.

"We're facing extreme violence. We need to be critical of these mechanisms. I don't even think the police have jurisdiction over Native people."

Film-maker Alexis Young described her experience of being abandoned in winter by Saskatoon police outside the city in the late 1990s. It's a notorious practice known as 'midnight rides' or 'starlight tours', which resulted in several deaths and widespread condemnation across Canada.

"The police just decided I was a target," she said. "They just opened the door and said 'Get in.'"

"I didn't ask to be driven out of the city, or sexually abused or beaten. I've lost three transgendered sisters to violence. I never know if I will be attacked. But I won't let that silence me," she added, recalling how an elderly white couple saved her life by stopping to pick her up.

Young said that after the police officers took her shoes and coat, they asked her whether she thought they were racist.

"Here I'm standing out on a dirt road with no shoes and you dare ask me that question? In that instant I lied. I answered 'no' because I felt threatened, if not then, another time."

While trust in Canadian police has declined generally following widely publicized abuses, it is particularly low among many Indigenous people.

"I would never fault anyone for calling the police when their safety is in danger," said keynote speaker Andrea Ritchie of the



PHOTO: DAVID P. BALL

Winnipeg-based filmmaker Alexis Young was abandoned by police outside Saskatoon in the late 1990s. But, speaking at the International Copwatching Conference held July 22 to 24, she told *Windspeaker* she found her voice and purpose following the incident.

US-based INCITE: Women of Color Against Violence.

"But we need to figure out how to respond to violence that happens in our communities without involving the police."

Some would say Winnipeg was an apt location for the International Copwatching Conference, given its history of the Red River Rebellion, the police killings of JJ Harper and Matthew Dumas, and widespread gang problems in the inner-city.

"Police are the largest gang in Winnipeg," said presenter Greg Robson, who works in gang prevention among Indigenous youth. "The best way to approach it is to be a human being. Cops would do better in our communities if they took

that approach.

"As far as gangs go, we can really work with the young people and find a positive resolution. I'm the first person to break the cycle of gangs in my family. An elder told me, 'The secret to it all is to get young people back to their culture.' I used to be extremely angry and violent. I had a lot of problems. Through my culture—sweat lodge and ceremony—I became comfortable in my own skin."

Many presenters suggested community-led approaches to violence and gangs, asserting Indigenous sovereignty, alternative models such as restorative justice, and strengthening traditional culture.

"Each of us is struggling to reclaim our identity," said

Spillett. "Our weapons are speaking truth to power and working in solidarity with other Indigenous people."

"We need to understand and replace these instruments of oppression with peace and justice," she added.

Despite many stories of abuse and misconduct by police, attempts to find solutions and solidarity permeated the gathering. Some said that breaking the silence on oppressive policing was a positive development.

"Yes, it was a bad thing," midnight-ride survivor Alexis Young told *Windspeaker* after the conference. "But the Creator was preparing me for the here and now. I now have a voice and I'm silent no more."

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- Health Care Governance
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First Nations Health Managers Association

Huron-Wendat Village of Wendake stages The Tempest

By Marie White
Windspeaker Contributor

WENDAKE, Que.

Internationally-acclaimed director Robert Lepage chose to stage his 2011 production of William Shakespeare's classic play *The Tempest* this July at the outdoor amphitheatre in charming Wendake, home of the Huron-Wendat nation.

Lepage is a world-class playwright, actor, and film and stage director, one of Canada's most honored theatre artists, whose work includes producing Richard Wagner's second Ring opera *Die Valkyrie* at the New York MET to great acclaim this spring.

He is also close to the Huron-Wendat community.

"We were very proud and privileged that Robert Lepage... presented a show here that gave positive impacts for the community," said Konrad Sioui, grand chief of the Huron-Wendat Nation who calls Lepage a friend and neighbour.

Lepage's *Tempest* was not Shakespeare's play, but rather an adaptation of it, in which Prospero becomes the White colonizer of the island while Caliban and the spirits that inhabit the island are oppressed Amerindians," commented Champlain-St. Lawrence College teacher John Hart Whitt, who specializes in Shakespeare.

"There is nothing unusual in



PHOTO: RENAUD PHILIPPE

Prospero witnesses his daughter Miranda falling in love with Ferdinand in Lepage's adaptation of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* staged in Wendake.

Lepage's adapting the play so as to serve his own purposes, as most directors do the very same thing, to varying degrees and for different reasons, when they stage one of Shakespeare's plays," Whitt said.

"It is easily done: It suffices to omit certain passages, to change the context (and hence the meaning) of others, and to add appropriate stage business. Lepage uses all three of these techniques very effectively to turn *The Tempest* into a postcolonial play."

Lepage altered the epilogue, said Whitt. "Prospero addressed not the audience, but Caliban. He gave the end a postcolonial twist whereby the new settlers, represented by Prospero, sought forgiveness from the First Nations they encountered in the New World. By means of this change and others, Lepage transformed Shakespeare's Caliban and Prospero," Whitt said.

The director included First Nations actors, regalia and language. Huron-Wendat Steeve Wadohandik Gros-Louis played King Alonso of Naples and his internationally renowned dance troupe, Sandokwa, was central to the production.

Lepage's Ariel was brought to life by Kathia Rock, an Innu from Maliotenam, and Wendat Jean-Francois Faber also performed in the play.

This was not Lepage's first experience using First Nations' culture to inspire his work. He came to a powwow in 2009, created a unique canoe show and produced *Totem* with the Cirque



PHOTO: MARIE WHITE

Huron-Wendat Steeve Wadohandik Gros-Louis both played Lepage's adaptation of King Alonso and also danced in traditional Huron-Wendat scenes.

du Soleil in 2010.

Lepage wished "to focus more on the story of the European man (Prospero) who finds refuge on an island, becomes master of it, and then uses its culture to serve his own purpose of revenge." Lepage planned to give greater importance to the First Nations without being "too politically correct."

He was also inspired by a Joseph Légaré painting that depicts Edmund Kean, a famous English actor, performing Shakespeare in Wendake in the 1800s. Kean was much admired by the Hurons who made him an honorary chief and gave him the name "Alanienouidet," meaning "strong wind in drifting snow."

Lepage brought that historic alliance back to life.

What was it like to work with

the renowned Robert Lepage? According to Huron-Wendat artist Gros-Louis, "Robert Lepage is very calm... remarkably calm, and very open-minded, which made it easy to work with him." Gros-Louis was accompanied on stage by his eleven-year-old son, Dewatha, and his eight-year-old daughter, Keyara.

"It was an honor to work with Robert Lepage," said Gros-Louis who was pleased to be called by the director for a role in the play. Gros-Louis felt that the challenge to the production was how Lepage would put the Huron-Wendat touch into the play.

Spectators received a well-illustrated program with Innu translations of Ariel's songs, paintings from Huron-Wendat history and the story of Edmund Kean, who inspired Lepage.

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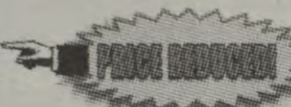
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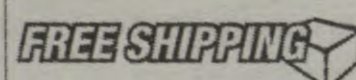
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[strictly speaking]

Smudging the line of smudging

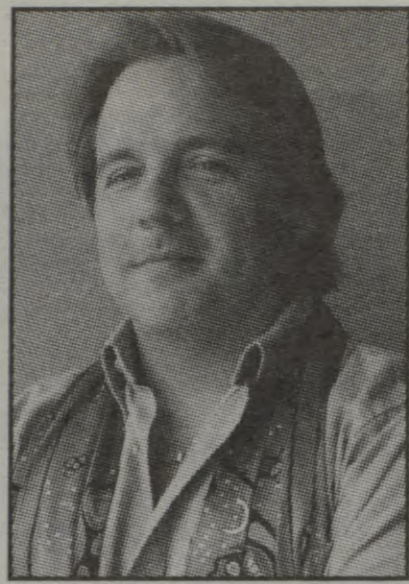
Being an Elder is not easy. Not that I know personally, but I've heard rumors. It's both a vocation and a dedication. It's a position that requires you to be smart. You also have to be empathic. A good sense of humor also helps, as well as excellent communication skills.

These are the differences between somebody who is an Elder, and somebody who is just old. And all of these talents have to come from years of experiencing life and adding life to experiences.

And in these complex times, it can also be a mine field of sorts because another Elder responsibility is bridging the gap between the old ways and the new ways. Between the way things used to be, and the way things are becoming.

This is not as easy as it sounds. What do you do when some of these traditional beliefs may, unknowingly, not be so beneficial to others and, in fact, are counter-productive?

Now that's a provocative question worthy of much discussion. For example, take the concept of traditional circles, long a part of Native practice. After a talking or healing circle has ended, it is usually customary to



THE URBANE INDIAN

Drew Hayden Taylor

hug other members as a way of ending the shared communication on a positive note.

Some Elders are quite adamant about this exercise. What's wrong with a hug?

To some, a lot.

There are people out there who go to these circles who have been the victims of sexual and physical abuse and who are looking for healing. As a result, they are severely and understandably uncomfortable with such repeated and sustained physical contact. They may shy away from such healing circles as a result.

Also, in our modern multicultural world, we are inviting more and more people from other lands and cultures into our circles because the teachings are universal. I have heard people talk

of Muslim women attending such gatherings. And, as is commonly known, it is essentially forbidden for a non-related man to touch, let alone hug, a Muslim woman.

It's a multi-faceted world getting ever more and more complex.

Let me give you another example. There are few things as 'traditionally Native' as the practice of smudging. To the uninitiated, smudging is the act of cleansing/purification through the use of burning sweetgrass (usually in braided form) or sage (held in an abalone shell or simple small clay pot).

With your hands, you wash the smoke over your head and body as you silently reflect upon yourself, your actions, and your place in the world. Essentially, most of Canada's First Nations

practice variations of this spiritual and honored tradition.

With all spiritual and sacred traditions there are certain rules that have to be observed.

Perhaps the most stringent and obvious of these rules is that anybody involved with the smudging, either the smudger or the smudgee, is not to have been in contact with drugs and alcohol for a set period of days prior to the smudging. With substances like that being the scourge of many Aboriginal societies, this is considered disrespectful and you will have your Aboriginal behinds metaphorically paddled for showing up in such a state. Or you'll at least be asked to abstain from participating.

Conventional traditional beliefs teach that our sacred medicines should never come into contact with drugs or alcohol.

This is where things get interesting.

Most ceremonies in the Native community follow this strict guideline religiously (pun intended). A hard and fast rule, or so I thought. Evidently there are Elders out there fudging (or is it smudging) this line, with good, logical reasoning.

There is one Elder I know that

not only accepts those with substance abuse problems into her circle, she even welcomes them in whatever state of consciousness or sobriety they may show up in. She doesn't see it as being disrespectful. She sees it as more of a cry for help or demonstration of need.

And since helping the needy is what she does (it's on most Elder's job description), it would seem silly for her to turn them away for such a transgression. It is these people in particular, she feels, that need the medicines —sage, sweetgrass, cedar and tobacco — more than most people.

Furthermore, she doesn't want to contribute towards the marginalization of these already disenfranchised people and chooses instead to be inclusive. This is a very controversial position to take.

Paraphrasing, she asks "Do people actually believe the medicines are too weak and vulnerable in the presence of alcohol and drugs? This is one of the things they are meant to fight."

Interesting question.

It seems there's more to being an Elder than just a cup of tea and a knowing smile.

Samson Cree Nation determined to push gangs out

By Shauna Lewis
Windspeaker Contributor

HOBHEMA, Alta.

Nearly two months after the shooting death of a child in a First Nations reserve at Hobbema, Alta., band leaders, community members, local RCMP and the province are working together to bring an end to the epidemic of gang violence that has rocked the community.

"Our task is to create a safer community and to reduce gang violence," said Samson Cree band councillor and spokesperson Koren Lightning-Earle.

She said that since the July 11 shooting, which left five-year-old Ethan Yellowbird dead from a gunshot wound to the head, the community has been focused on various efforts to 'clean-up' gang activity.

"Some of the tasks we have undertaken have included putting in effective street lighting, tearing down the abandoned houses, cutting grass and bushes that serve as hiding spaces [for gang members] and beautifying our town-site area with the use of parks," Lightning-Earle explained.

She said that along with immediate plans, the band is also looking into long-term initiatives such as, "examining current bylaws, building relationship with RCMP, looking at lobbying various levels of government [for funding] and opening the lines of communication to all of the stakeholders so that incidents like

this do not happen again."

It is suspected that Yellowbird, who was the grandson of the Samson Cree Chief Marvin Yellowbird, was an innocent causality in a gang-related drive-by attack. The child was asleep in his bed in the middle of the night when he was fatally struck by a stray bullet that entered the home where he lived with his family.†

Constable Pernell Cardinal of the Hobbema RCMP says that while no charges have been laid in connection with the incident, he confirmed that a homicide investigation is ongoing. Last month there was speculation that a member of the community had been detained after RCMP found fire arms in a home on the reserve. But Cardinal told Windspeaker that the suspect has since been released and cleared of any connection to the shooting.

But while police say the major crimes unit investigation is ongoing and progressing, they admit the task has been difficult.

"Determining who is responsible has been an arduous process," admitted Cardinal.

But he says community cooperation and the assistance of RCMP officers from detachments in Calgary, Lethbridge and Red Deer, has been an asset to the investigation.

"I believe there has been more cooperation than we've seen in the past and that's why it [the investigation] has been progressing," he said.

But the grim history of violence that haunts the

community has taken the lives of gang members, innocent bystanders and now children.

In April 2008, two-year-old Asia Saddleback was shot in the stomach while she ate dinner in her family home at the Samson Cree First Nation.

She survived, but the bullet will remain lodged in her spine for the rest of her life.

In 2009, Christopher Shane Crane pleaded guilty to several charges related to the shooting of the toddler. He claimed he fired one shot at the home on April 13, 2008 to intimidate rival gang members who frequented the area.

Other homicides in recent years include the 2008 death of Dale Deschamps, 21, who was found beaten to death at the Samson townsite.

Hobbema resident Darrell Ernest Baptiste, then 22, was given three years and 14 days for manslaughter in connection with the death.

Later that year, Hobbema resident Jordan Lee Roasting, then 18, was charged with second-degree murder in the Oct. 4 slaying of Brian Randall Littlechild, 20. Also in 2008, Delena Dixon, a 20-year-old mother was killed as bullets riddled the home she shared with her parents and young daughter.

And in 2010, Hobbema teen Preston Thom, 15, was shot on the street on Christmas Eve as he and his younger brother stood outside their home. It is reported that Thom urged his brother to run moments before he was struck.

But while the RCMP have long dealt with gang-violence in Hobbema, located 90 miles south of Edmonton, they say the level of gang-related homicide in the community had actually dropped in the last few years.

"There has been a downward trend," confirmed Cardinal.

"It was getting better," agreed Hobbema Family Violence Investigator Constable Courtney Reich. She suspects that the shooting death last December was the catalyst for an up tick in more violence on the reserve.

"This was a tragic incident and our thoughts are with the family of the child," said Ryan Cromb, spokesperson for the Department of the Solicitor General and Ministry of Public Safety in Alberta, of Yellowbird's death.

"Our ministry continues to work closely with the RCMP and community leaders to find sustainable solutions to gang-related violence plaguing Hobbema," said Cromb.

He said plans to combat violence in Hobbema must be collective.

"Community leaders recognize that police alone can't stop the violence. Strong community involvement is also needed to eliminate the deep-rooted gang culture in Hobbema," he explained.

Cromb said the Solicitor General and Public Security is supporting efforts in Hobbema through aiding with additional enforcement and community support efforts.

Since 2009, the Alberta

government has allocated more than \$5 million to community programs in Hobbema aimed at curbing gangs, domestic violence, and substance abuse while assisting victims and offering positive lifestyle choices to Hobbema youth, he said.

In addition, the local Community Cadet Corps, which was created with funding help from the Alberta and federal governments, is providing Hobbema youth with an alternative to gangs and a criminal lifestyle, Cromb said.

Furthermore, in terms of law enforcement, Cromb said the Hobbema RCMP detachment currently has 40 members, compared to 18 in 2005. He also said that the RCMP's Major Crime Unit, Emergency Response Teams, Forensic Identification Section and other support units are also available to provide assistance to the Hobbema detachment.

"We did see a jump in new [RCMP] members a few years back," confirmed Reich. "But ideally we could use more members. We're still short of what we need," she explained.

Despite the need for more policing staff, RCMP ensure they are doing what they can to help keep community members safe.

"We have responded with additional [policing] resources, particularly in the night shifts," said Cardinal, adding that the extra police presence at powwows and other cultural events acts as a deterrent for the gathering of gangs in the area.

(See *Samson* on page 14.)

The decision to make a claim is deeply personal

Dear Auntie:

The deadline for the Common Experience Payment is almost here. For the past year I've been trying to get my dad to apply. He spent a lot of time in residential school, and he should get the money that is owing to him. But he refuses to take part. He said he doesn't want anything to do with it, and he won't talk about that time of his life. He just waves his hand at me and walks away. That money could do a lot for him and his whole family. What can I say to convince him to make the right choice for all of us.

Yours truly,
Shaking my head

Dear Shaking my head:

This is a very personal topic for many who have already applied for this payment and those who have not. While some put their money in secure accounts, others catch up on bills and even plan major trips with children and grandchildren.

For some, personal or family addictions dominated until the money was gone. One of my close relatives fell off the wagon after years of sobriety. All the money and the Prime Minister's



DEAR AUNTIE

By J'net AyAy Qwa
Yak Sheelth Cavanagh

apology happened around the same time and she was overwhelmed and responded badly.

Another friend said her dad wasn't going to make a claim but later decided to anyway. My friend was saddened to see how triggered and tender her dad has been since memories (40 to 50 years old) began to flood back.

In my entire counseling career, I have come to value not "shoulding" on people. I'm not in the habit of telling anyone what they should or should not do. There is a righteous-judgmentalism to telling others what they ought to do and it's a way of setting oneself above another; something that disrespects a person's capacity to

think for themselves.

After bouncing around from foster home to foster home as a child, I was all too familiar with everyone else telling me what should happen next. Being tired of authority calling the shots could also be part of why some former residential school survivors are reluctant to take the money.

While it would be good to know this money is there for survivors and can be reinvested in the community (for bursaries, scholarships, travel funds for youth leadership, etc.) this is still fundamentally a deeply personal decision.

"Let sleeping dogs lie" comes to mind when I think of how set in their ways many of our parents

and grandparents can be described. Anyone in my immediate family knows my late-grandmother always described her experience at residential school as positive.

I wrote her biography for a women's studies class and found out that after being raised a chief's daughter, she knew how to be obedient and this helped her survive her residential school experience. She would behave "well" while around authority, but talked her own language when they were not around.

My candles will be lit for the decisions left to be made leading to the Common Experience Payment cut-off date.

Lovingly, Auntie

Dear Auntie:

I just got a new boyfriend and my dog hates him. No matter what he does to get the dog to soften up, my puppy snarls and spits whenever my boyfriend comes around. My sister says I should smarten up. Dogs and kids know things about people, she said, and I should be paying attention. What do you think? Is it time to find somebody my dog finds more suitable for me?

Thanks
Signed
Dog gone wild

Dear Dog gone wild:

I am by no means a "pet person" and in no way an authority on raising animals. I have enough challenges, messes and hidden expenses being a mother of three. What little I do know about dogs is how their relationships are organized into a "pack" organized into a distinct hierarchy or pecking-order.

Being a puppy, your pet is sorting out who is the alpha or leader of the pack. I understand

that dogs like to take the lead by sitting up high on furniture, beds and decks. Sounds like you may benefit in learning more about dog training. Not sure there are many "dog-whisperer's" on-reserve, but you could ask around.

Going online may be helpful, visiting the library or talking with someone from the animal shelter. You may be lucky enough to have professional dog trainer in a neighboring town or city. Talking with other dog owners who raised their pet from puppies may also be helpful.

Although your sister could be joking that your dog has intuitive feelings about people, it might be good to see how your boyfriend behaves when alone with the puppy. Combine this with more research on how to train your puppy and see if attitudes all around improve.

In many relationships there is an incredible tendency to attract the opposite. It may be worthwhile to find out what your new boyfriend thinks of pets, especially dogs. Dogs are protective and territorial and reserve their unconditional love for those close inside their pack.

While you still have only a puppy claiming territory in your home/life, get more advice from the dog-owning community. There is no need to be hasty and make a choice between the dog and new boyfriend...just yet. :-)

Lovingly, Auntie

Editor's Note: The Dear Auntie column is published for readers' entertainment and consideration only. The opinions expressed are those of the author and are not necessarily endorsed by Windspeaker or the Aboriginal Multi-Media Society.

Rank Comix

by Adam Martin



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Samson Cree Nation determined to push gangs out

(Continued from page 12.)

Along with policing resources, both the RCMP and the Samson Cree chief and council, say the community has been relatively cooperative in providing information for the homicide investigators and they are hoping that assistance continues.

"We need people to come forward and bring information to the RCMP," urged Lightning-Earl. "People are coming forward, but we don't want people to stop," she said.

The RCMP says the community has been helpful in the investigation, but Cardinal suspects that those who remain silent and don't come forward to police with information do so in fear of gang-retaliation or a sense of loyalty to what he calls the "gang code of silence."

Reich, who works closely with victims of family violence on the reserve, says the shootings on Hobbema have instilled fear in members of the community, especially those families with young children.

"They're terrified," she said. "People are really living in fear and they don't want to speak

because they are living in fear of retaliation," she explained. "And how can we blame them?" she added.

While some community members are afraid, others remain determined to put an end to the continuous crime and violence affecting their community.

"Our community is coming together," assured Lightning-Earl.

"The family is still grieving and we [the community] are allowing them to do so," she said.

Ethan Yellowbird's memory is being kept alive through community discussions and a fight to transform the community, Lightning-Earl added.

"His death is a continuous topic and continues to drive people to make a change," she said.

"We are a strong and resilient community and we are taking immediate steps to deal with this issue," she assured. "We have amazing people that live here and work here and we will not let a minority take away our pride."

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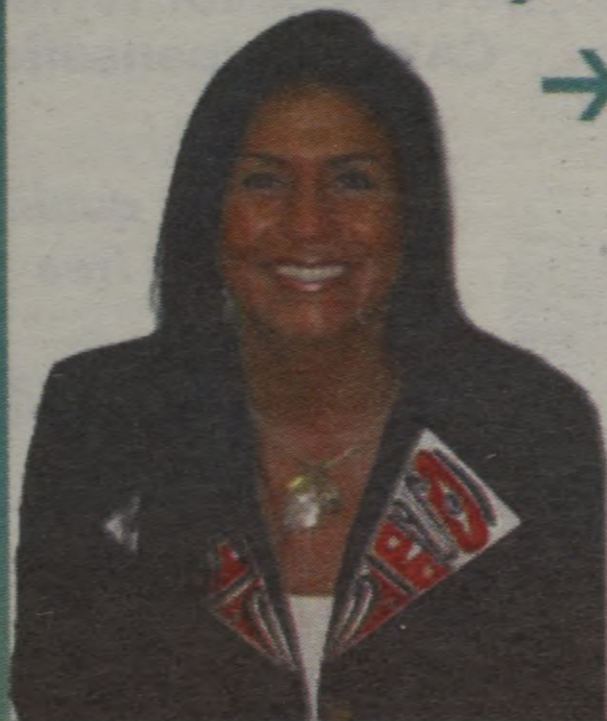
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Kimowan Metchewais (Kim McLain) [remembering] AMMSA alum leaves cherished memories

By Dianne Meili
Windspeaker Staff Writer

ST. PAUL, Alta.

A cavernous space in an abandoned textile mill in Pittsboro, North Carolina was harshly lit by bare bulbs hanging from long black wires. It was an unlikely space for art installations that riveted viewers' feet to the dusty, scarred floor.

One exhibit was comprised of a curved shelf bearing small, square cubbyholes sheltering hundreds of tiny, toy soldiers, hunched over their guns pointed at a solitary, upright and empty handed warrior, his plight made all the more heart-rending by the stark circle of light he stands in.

The artist was Kimowan (Kimo) Metchewais—a Cree from northern Alberta—who often made edifying, sometimes sarcastic and even comedic, comments about race, heritage, and disparity.

At 47, after documenting his illness with numerous videos and blogs, Kimo passed away from a brain tumor at St. Paul Hospital in Alberta on July 29.

Though his training and career led him to the United States to live out his brief life as a University of North Carolina associate art professor, he actually made his artistic debut in the pages of this newspaper as a writer, photographer and graphic artist.

"In the late 80s, Kim drew cartoons, took photographs, wrote feature stories and designed *Windspeaker* when it was a weekly, provincial newspaper," said Bert Crowfoot, headman of the Aboriginal Multi-Media Society of Alberta's (AMMSA)

"He was the kind of extraordinarily talented, easy-going employee you'd like to keep



around, but I'm glad he went on to university and developed his talent the way he did."

Kimo's wry wit, as evidenced in the cartoons he drew about government, environmental and political concerns, sometimes raised the hackles of readers, and the sensitive artist was well aware of it.

"Sometimes the editor would suggest he do a cartoon and he'd just say, 'No, I don't want to make anyone mad,'" Crowfoot said.

"But if the final judgment of a cartoonist's work is the response it gets, Kim's work gets plenty," said then director of Print Media, Clint Buehler, who was quoted in a 1989 issue of *Windspeaker*.

"Often (he evoked) outrage and offense when he accurately hit a deserving target, but more often delight and admiration at his insight and skill."

Now a collector's item, "The Best of Kim McLain" is 64 pages of his hand-picked cartoons bound inside a glossy, red cover. It's humor that portrays a positive message, and "Kim has

taken the time to enter quotes from such celebrities as Humphrey Bogart, Mickey Mouse and the rock group ABBA, telling it as only Kim McLain can," wrote *Windspeaker* writer Rocky Woodward in his review of the collection.

Born in 1964 in Oxbow, Sask., Kimo's artwork earned him recognition as early as grade school. When he grew older he entered the Alberta College of Art in Calgary. Upon leaving AMMSA, he earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree at the University of Alberta. Graduating in 1996, he spent one summer at Yale University.



Since photographic elements were becoming as prominent as paint in his artwork, Kimo chose the University of Albuquerque to work on his master's degree "because of its Native American Art History program and reputation as one of the top photographic schools in North America."

Kim found his academic home in fine art at the University of North Carolina, progressing to associate professor in the summer of 2010. He revelled in the tight-knit, intellectual community of Carrboro, and his students knew him as that rarest of instructors who was both engaging and student-focused.

(See *Remembering* on page 22.)



PHOTO: BERT CROWFOOT

Kimowan Metchewais (Kim McLain) attending the Saddle Lake powwow in 2010.



While with *Windspeaker* Kim created a variety of editorial cartoons and illustrations. Kim's work showed not only his technical abilities as an artist but a sharp wit and perception of the issues facing Aboriginal people and communities. Some illustrations like "news man" above are still in use by *Windspeaker* today.



One of Kim's cartoons from 1984 still resonates nearly 30 years later.

Brilliant sunshine leads the ancestors home

By Shauna Lewis
Raven's Eye Writer

BURNABY, BC

Members of the Heiltsuk First Nation of British Columbia's north coast gathered at the Simon Fraser University [SFU] campus in Burnaby Aug. 30 to participate in a ceremony that will end in the homecoming of their ancient relatives.

Coastal First Nations chiefs, community members, and representatives from the academic world filled the entrance of the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology at SFU to witness the Heiltsuk people reclaim a large quantity of ancestral remains that had been housed at the institution since the 1970s.

The remains, dated between 1,000- and 5,000-years-old, were handed over to the university's archaeology department more than 30 years ago through an agreement between SFU and the Heiltsuk of Bella Bella and Namu, a small island 150 kilometres north of the northern tip of Vancouver Island.

Namu is the traditional territory of the Heiltsuk First Nation and is where the archaeological burial site is located from which the remains originally came.

"It's a great, historical day," announced Heiltsuk Tribal Council member Marilyn Slett.

"This is a momentous day for our people," she continued. "It's momentous and it's also healing. It's healing for our nation."

"I'm honored and humbled," agreed hereditary Squamish First Nation Chief Janice George. "I'm shaking inside with the power that's here with you. Your ancestors are here with you," she told the Heiltsuk people.

George was asked to be a witness to the repatriation ceremony in which a document was signed and the remains were handed back to the Heiltsuk.

"I will tell my people that you took care of your ancestors in the right way, in the highest way that you can take care of your ancestors," she promised.

The past agreement, approved by the Heiltsuk Tribal Council (HTC), allowed a group of archaeologists, led by Roy

Carlson, the founder of SFU's archaeology department, to excavate remains found at the Namu burial site in the 1960s and '70s.

During that time, the remains became the subject of many scientific studies, the findings of which now prove the Heiltsuk were the original stewards of the seasonal territories they occupied.

"The archaeology supports the Heiltsuk belief that they have been there [in their traditional territories] since time immemorial," Carlson confirmed.

He said tests conducted on the remains determine sustenance patterns and diet the Heiltsuk survived on links them to the area.

Today, Carlson is continuing his research through examining potential bloodline connections by testing DNA samples from the remains against the DNA of present-day Bella Bella residents.

"We are very excited about this study," Catherine D'Andrea, chair of SFU's archaeology department, said in a statement.

"This research could yield important results, both in terms

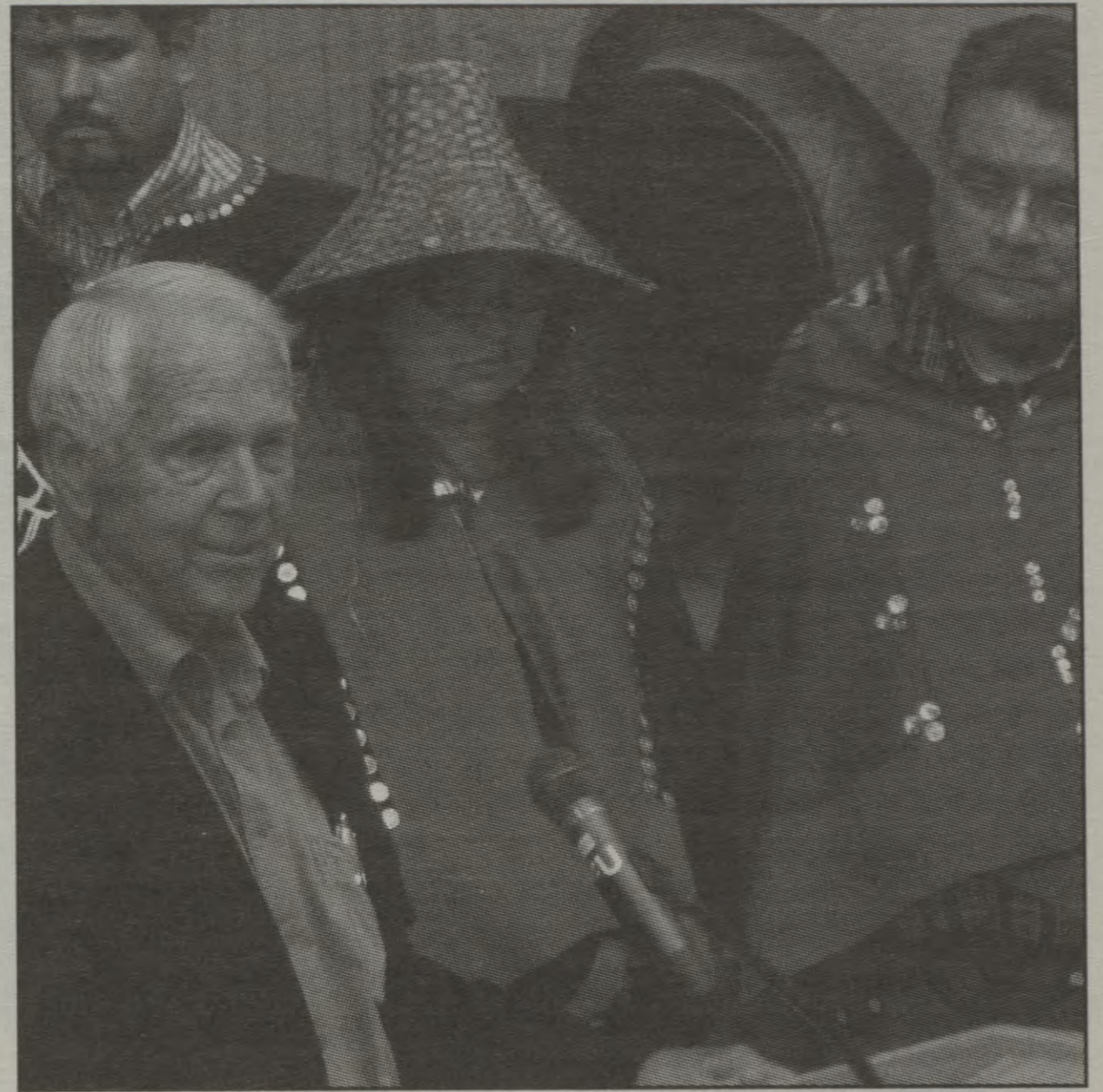


PHOTO: SHAUNA LEWIS

Roy Carlson, the archeologist leading studies on the Heiltsuk remains, addresses the crowd at the repatriation ceremony held at Simon Fraser University's Burnaby campus on Aug. 30.

of increasing our knowledge about the B.C. central coast's human history and in producing data relevant to significant First Nations issues, such as land

claims."

The topic of political and territorial right was echoed by members of the community.

(See *Brilliant* on page 25.)

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A law becomes a responsibility to KI

By Jennifer Ashawasegai
Birchbark Contributor

Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug, Ont.

Kanawayandan D'aaki.

It's Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug's (K.I.'s) own law, which translates from Oji-Cree to mean "I'm looking after my land."

The community ratified its Watershed Declaration and Consultation Protocol July 5. Both documents were ratified with a resounding 96 per cent of the votes in a community referendum.

The water declaration is to protect 13,025 square kilometres of lakes, rivers, forests and wetlands in the KI territory. The consultation protocol sets out how consent will be given before any decisions are made about lands and resources.

The documents are K.I.'s solution to more than a decade of struggling with mining companies, provincial permitting systems and court rulings. The formalized community laws mean the First Nation is continuing to stand up for itself.

KI spokesperson John Cutfeet said the protocol and declaration "means any type of development

will have to go through the K.I. processes to determine whether they are detrimental or beneficial to Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug."

The declaration and consultation protocol are a direct result of K.I.'s experiences in dealing with industry and the provincial government in the Treaty 9 area of Ontario.

The community had been fighting mining exploration in their traditional territory for about a decade.

"One of the concerns we had (with) the drilling program that was happening in that territory is that there's a river system that feeds into the main lake which is where we live," Cutfeet said.

The community took a mining company to court over its exploratory drilling program, because KI hadn't been consulted about the project. After a lengthy litigation process, the community opted out of the courts because they could no longer afford the hefty legal expenses.

In that case, Cutfeet said, the court ended up ruling that the company could have access to the territory without interference from Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug.

That decision didn't sit well

with the community. The leaders blocked the company from conducting its drilling program. Then, that's when the 'KI6', as they came to be known as, were jailed for contempt of court.

That issue quickly went to the Ontario Court of Appeal where the lower court decision was overturned.

"Court ruled that there was a duty to negotiate in good faith on the power of the Crown and ensure that Aboriginal interests were reconciled with other competing interests."

But the community wasn't sitting around waiting for the courts, the province or Canada to decide their fate. They wanted to look after the land, and more specifically, the water. The process to develop the Watershed Declaration and Consultation Protocol began while community leaders were incarcerated.

Looking after the land is very important to the community of about 1,500 because many of the families rely on it. Cutfeet said many families continue to hunt, trap, fish and harvest in the area and development would disrupt those activities.

Ontario Minister of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry, Micheal Gravelle,

issued a statement to media after the community referendum in K.I. NetNewsLedger.com quotes the minister as saying, "Our government takes KI's concerns about lands and resources very seriously. Ontario respects Aboriginal and treaty rights and is committed to meeting the province's constitutional and other obligations in respect of Aboriginal peoples."

But words from the minister are confusing, said Cutfeet, since permits have since been granted for access to the territory.

A meeting has been set up for early September between government and community officials to talk about the situation.

The KI declaration and consultation protocol have the support of other organizations throughout the province.

The Council of Canadians has lent its support of the community's laws.

Mark Calzavara, regional organizer for the Council of Canadians, said "The watershed declaration is very important, and it's what the whole world has to do ... The idea of putting our world, our environment ahead of greed and making money is key to our survival as a species."

During the development of the

protocol and declaration, Cutfeet said the documents had a lot of input from Elders in the community. The Elders wanted to ensure the documents came directly from K.I, made under their jurisdiction and authority to become laws of the community.

During the community consultation phase, another supporting organization, Earthroots, helped out a bit. Earthroots is a grassroots organization in Ontario whose goal it is to protect the environment.

And K.I Elders left a lasting impression with David Sone, Earthroots campaigner.

Remembering his time in K.I, Sone says, "The part that stands out most to me is the way people, especially Elders, talk about water as a relationship. It's not only something they require to drink, but it's something they also have obligations to, and have both a physical and spiritual relationship with."

That's also the main reason for K.I's Watershed Declaration and Consultation Protocol. Cutfeet said the documents are now K.I Indigenous law, which is 'Kanawayandan D'aaki' and it's their duty and sacred responsibility to look after the land.

The Silence is Broken: Now What?

By Christine McFarlane
Birchbark Contributor

TORONTO

On July 20, more than 80 people came out to the event "The Silence is Broken, But the Violence Continues: Now What?" held at the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto.

Four panelists spoke about where the efforts should go to end the murders and disappearances of Indigenous women, two-spirited and transgendered people.

Panelists were Lee Maracle, Darlene Ritchie, Krysta Williams, and Erin Kosmo of the Native Youth Sexual Health Network.

There was also a screening of the film "Survival, Strength, Sisterhood: Power of Women in the Downtown Eastside."

"Survival, Strength, Sisterhood" is a short film that documents the 20-year history of the annual women's memorial march for missing and murdered women in Vancouver, Coast Salish Territories.

By focusing on the voices of the

women who live, love, and work in the Downtown Eastside, this film is designed to debunk the sensationalism that surrounds a neighborhood that is deeply misunderstood, and celebrates the complex and diverse realities of women organizing for justice.

Harsha Walia, one of the producers of the film, is a South Asian activist, writer, and researcher based in Vancouver, Coast Salish Territories. She has been involved in the migrant justice movement, along with working with the women of the

Downtown Eastside.

Walia said "the issue of the missing and murdered women is critical and it is a crisis that deserves much more attention than what it is getting."

Walia believes that by chronicling the 40 women that were in the film "it gives a more humanized sense to the issues the women of the Downtown Eastside face" and she hopes that "it will open the eyes of many people to the nature of the systemic realities of poverty, racism, colonization, violence against women,

addictions, disability, child apprehension, and policing that has impacted and given rise to the issues surrounding missing and murdered Indigenous women.

No More Silence and the Toronto Missing and Murdered Women Committee at the Native Canadian Centre hosted the event. No More Silence intends to have a follow-up event and encourages everyone to come out and continue the dialogue that has begun because every year the list of women that goes missing increases.

Nation bestows chieftainship on local priest

By Jennifer Ashawasegai
Windspeaker Contributor

FORT WILLIAM FIRST NATION, Ont.

Reverend Larry Kroker was named an honorary chief on Aug. 6 by the northwestern Ontario community of Fort William First Nation.

The event coincided with the 40th anniversary of Kroker's ordination, the day upon which he became a priest.

It's not a common event to hear of a priest being named an

honorary chief. Thousands of First Nation citizens throughout the country continue to feel the effects of the abuses they experienced while in residential schools, run primarily by Christian organizations, including the Catholic Church. And that's something the reverend is very aware of, he says. He's not only been helping people pray and learn scriptures, but has also helped them work through the pain of that abuse.

"At first I felt disbelief that could happen within the church," said Kroker. "Then, also

what to do about it as far as reconciliation and the healing process."

Phil Pelletier, Fort William First Nation councillor, agrees the church hasn't always had a positive effect on community members, but he acknowledged Rev. Kroker's work.

"Priests have not always been good in the community. There are people who don't believe in the Catholic system anymore, mostly because of residential school... [Rev. Kroker]", said Pelletier, "has had a real positive effect in our community."

Kroker said the road hasn't been without bumps for him, but the journey was worth it.

"I've grown with the people and we've met these different challenges and we've all grown because of it. I've become good friends with the people. They've really opened up my life, and really challenged and opened up my faith life as well."

It was Kroker's understanding for the people and his hard work that garnered him the honor from Fort William

"He's provided leadership and service. He's been a wealth of

knowledge for the people, plus he's always been there in time of need."

Since 1971, he has worked in many of the northern Ontario First Nation communities, and he said he's witnessed many changes over four decades.

Rev. Kroker is pretty happy with the community's decision to bestow upon him an honorary chieftainship. He says, "It's good that we have something to celebrate, and I'm grateful, mostly grateful, for the experience of being an honorary chief. It's really a time of blessing."

Alberta Sweetgrass: Special Section providing news from Alberta

Investigation on-going in shooting death of five-year-old

By SHARI NARINE
Sweetgrass Contributing Editor

SAMSON CREE FIRST NATION

Members of the Samson Cree First Nation have to make a choice after the shooting death of a five-year-old boy who was asleep in a house: either they are for crime or they stand against crime.

"If you have information and you know about someone who has committed a murder (then) you're supporting that person to the detriment of your community," said RCMP Sgt. Patrick Webb. "Some people have to make a choice and some people are doing it obviously and

some people still have to make that choice so what we're trying to do is get them to realize they have to make that choice."

In the early morning hours of July 11, Ethan Yellowbird was killed by a bullet fired from outside his Hobbema home. The house was riddled with 10 bullets. The boy was sleeping at the time. An autopsy found that Ethan had been shot in the head.

Webb, media relations officer for the RCMP, said the police would not be releasing details on the particulars of the shooting or how it was discovered that Ethan had been shot. He said that information "had to be reserved for court. Some of that detail could be so specific that if we put

it out, we could fail to get a conviction in the end."

The RCMP were notified of "shots fired" and immediately responded to the residence, Webb said.

Since that time, some community members have come forward with information. One piece of information led to the seizure of a firearm at a home and the arrest of a 25-year-old man. However, at this point there is no connection between the firearm found and the shooting of Ethan, said Webb.

At this point there is also no known connection between Ethan's shooting and the boy's grandfather's status. Marvin

Yellowbird is the chief of Samson Cree First Nation.

"It is certainly known (about Chief Yellowbird) but whether that has some bearing on this issue is still to be determined," said Webb. "Until we know the total reason for (the shooting), have the person arrested and know everything about it, we're not about to speculate."

The investigation is active and on-going with a large number of RCMP members involved.

"There are several people we know about that are involved in some way but we're not about to call any of them a person of interest right now," said Webb.

Webb is hopeful that community members will

continue to come forward with information. He said that "for the most part," the community wants to see the person or persons involved in the shooting arrested and taken out of the community.

Ethan Yellowbird's funeral was held on July 14 with Elders of the Cree nation officiating. His family will be establishing a scholarship fund in Ethan's name.

In 2008, Asia Saddleback, then two years old, was wounded in a similar way. She was injured when a stray bullet entered her Hobbema home. Christopher Shane Crane was convicted of aggravated assault for that incident.

Rainbow pipeline given conditional go-ahead to resume operation

By SHARI NARINE
Sweetgrass Contributing Editor

LUBICON LAKE FIRST NATION

Plains Midstream Canada has been given the go-ahead by the Energy Resources Conservation Board to resume operation of its Rainbow pipeline 20 days after making the application.

The pipeline had been shut down since April 29 when approximately 28,000 barrels of light, sweet crude oil were spilled in traditional Lubicon Lake territory.

The application was received by the government regulatory board on July 27, confirmed Bob Curran, ERCB spokesman.

"We'll assess the information they provided to us and once that is complete we'll make a determination on their request to restart the line," said Curran.

That determination was announced in a news release in which the ERCB stated, "Following a comprehensive review and assessment, and a third-party engineering review of the incident, the Energy Resources Conservation Board has provided conditional approval to Plains Midstream Canada (Plains) to resume operations of the NPS 20 Rainbow Pipeline."

The engineering assessments determined that failure was due to high-stress on an existing crack in a fillet weld that was made on a weld-on sleeve. "Plains has committed to excavating and inspecting all

sections of the pipeline containing these types of weld-on sleeves on an expedited schedule," said the ERCB news release.

However, in a regular update concerning the clean-up at the site, Plains stated, "The ERCB has outlined conditions that need to be met before the Rainbow Pipeline can be returned to service. We are currently reviewing the conditions, and will assess when we can resume operations. We do not have a firm timeline for restart of the pipeline."

The portion of Rainbow pipeline which ruptured at the end of April was located about 20 km from Little Buffalo. The oil spill was largely contained on the 30-metre-wide pipeline right-of-way, although some escaped into a nearby wetland. A beaver dam contained the spill to a pond. A number of beavers, ducks and migratory birds died because of the contamination.

"We remain confident the pipeline is ready and safe to operate and can resume operation independent of the clean-up efforts. We are committed to working on the site until the land is properly restored to meet all environmental standards," wrote Victoria Persons, communications officer with Plains, in an email.

Curran said clean-up efforts are not monitored by the ERCB.

Clean-up at the site continues. After 14 weeks of work, which excludes 10 days of down time due to wild fires in the area, approximately 49 per cent of the original estimated 4,500 metres

cubed released had been collected.

Once clean-up and remediation is completed, which Plains estimates will take up to six months, the reclamation and restoration process will begin.

"We remain committed to completing a comprehensive clean up and we will continue to work until the land is restored to

meet all applicable environmental standards," wrote Persons.

Persons indicated that Plains had provided tours of the clean-up site for several chiefs, Elders, and band representatives, and are in "regular communication with community leaders." Plains hosted a community meeting in June in Little Buffalo and

"presented a detailed update on the clean-up efforts, and answered numerous questions from community members and their leaders."

The incident marked the largest crude oil spill in three decades in Alberta. The pipeline runs 772 km between Zama, Alta., and Edmonton. It is 44 years old.

PUBLIC NOTICE

SUNCOR ENERGY INC.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT ACT NOTICE OF DECISION

In accordance with section 74 of the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act, Suncor Energy Inc. has been issued an extension by Alberta Environment which allows them to follow the terms and conditions of an existing approval to operate the MacKay River Development Project (formerly Petro-Canada Mackay River In-situ Oil Sands Project) until August 10, 2012 in order to allow for additional review time of the renewal application. The existing approval expires on August 30, 2011. The operation is located in Sections 20, 21, 27 - 29, 32 - 34 Township 92 and Sections 3 - 10, 15 - 17, 20, 21, 29 Township 93 Range 12 West of the 4th Meridian approximately 45 kilometers northwest of the City of Fort McMurray, Alberta. The project is currently approved to recover 11,600 m³ per day (approximately 73,000 barrels per day of crude bitumen).

The Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act may provide you a right of appeal against this decision to the Alberta Environmental Appeal Board. You should note that there are strict time lines for filing an appeal dependent on the type of appeal. If you choose to appeal this decision, please contact:

Office of the Registrar of Appeals
The Environmental Appeals Board
3rd Floor, 10011 - 109 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 3S8

A notice of objection must be submitted within 30 days of the date of this notice. Please quote Application No. 009-48408.

Copies of the extension and existing approval can be obtained from:

The Regulatory Approvals Centre
9th Floor, Oxbridge Place, 9820 - 106 Street
Edmonton, Alberta, T5K 2J6

Find more of everything online:
www.ammsa.com

Justin Rain — [windspeaker confidential]

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

J.R.: Honesty. Usually people that are honest carry a healthy self esteem as well. It's a two for one.

W: What is it that really makes you mad?

J.R.: When people defeat themselves. It's sad when I come witness to a person who stops themselves before they even get started in perusing their dreams and goals. Excuses as to why they can't do them or start them right away. And the more time passes the easier it is to settle for less. Sometimes we are not our thoughts, and sometimes they do get the best of us. Fear of failure, fear of success stop so many people from doing what they love. And I think when anyone loses what they love they can become lost.

W: When are you at your happiest?

J.R.: When I'm on a stage, a film set, being interviewed talking about what it is that I do and love. Telling the stories through the scripts I've been given, and being honest with them. Also the work I do with youth. 'Artist Inside' Speak with your HEART-Speak through your ART is a personal project of mine that I've been working on for the past year. It's a youth presentation with the sole purpose to inspire and inform. A presentation that helps reach out to Native youth and connect with them on a personal level. My time as an actor and my own personal

experiences are shared with the hope that other young and aspiring artists can understand the value of pursuing their dreams. I believe we are all artists in some way shape or form, capable of anything we put our hearts and minds to. By extending a hand to the next wave of young, Native artists, I hope to show that art can save your life and make dreams come true.

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

J.R.: Isolated.

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

J.R.: My mother. She's the strongest person I know and the main reason I'm where I am today. Growing up she always told me I was capable of anything I put my heart into. Love you Mom! Industry wise I look up to Christian Bale in the work that he produces. The dedication and discipline of that man floors me. I hope to aspire to his level some day and be capable of playing the range of characters he has.

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

J.R.: I'll admit I'm resisting the answer to this question. I had a severe drug addiction through high school. I was no honor student, I barely passed my classes. And it was all because I was running from who I was and the artist inside me. I overdosed a few times, almost died. Then I was touched. I realized if I

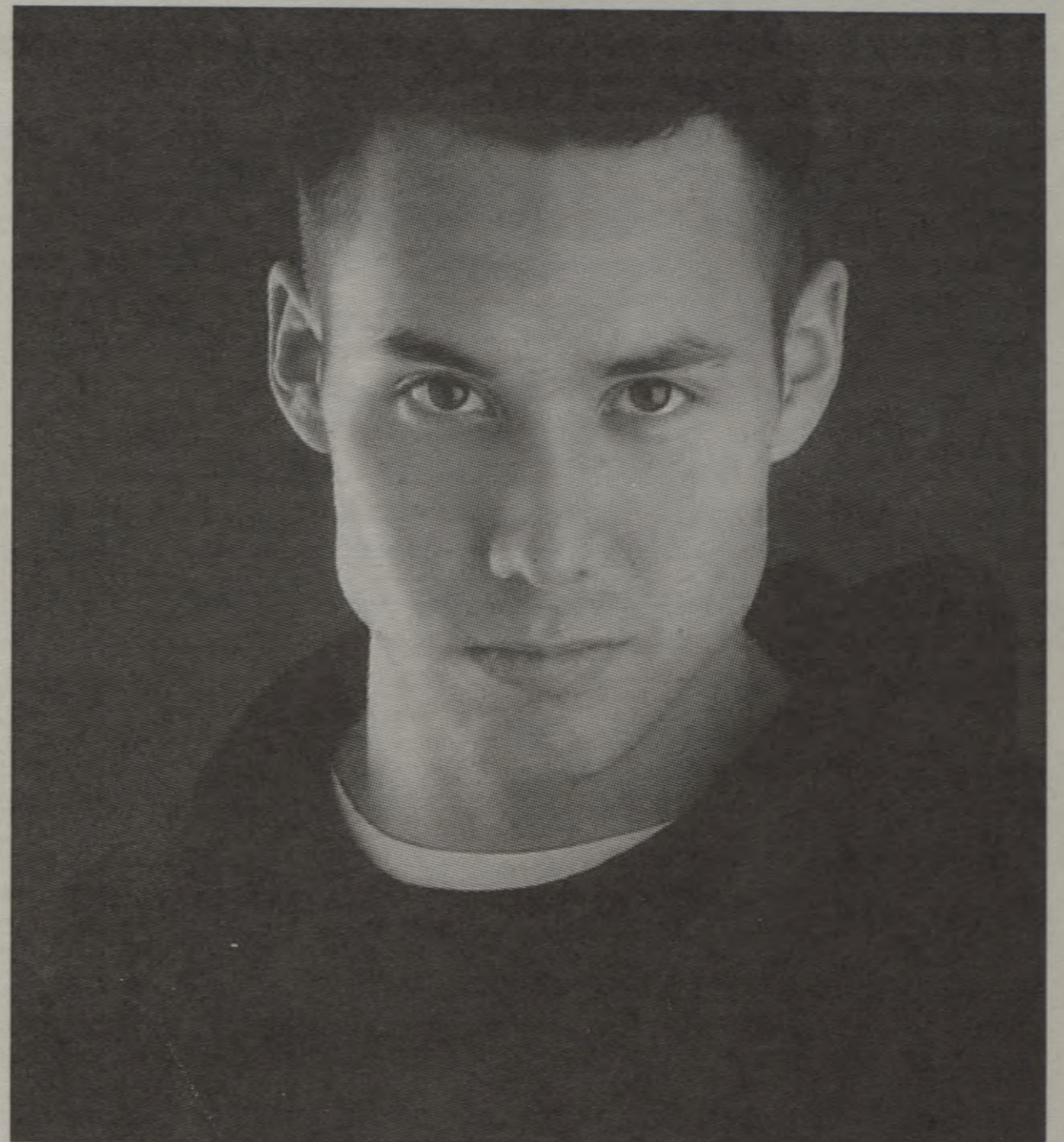
continued that path I would without a doubt not be here today. The thought hit me that at that time I wasn't surrounded by positive people that were expressing themselves in a creative way. None of my friends at that time were doing anything creative. Just getting high and getting into trouble, as was I. I needed to surround myself with positive people, so I started to do that. In my youth project I talk about how we are who we surround ourselves with. It's the truth. The homeless spend time with other homeless, the architects with the architects, lawyers with lawyers, artists with artists. You can't tell me that the mentality of the people around you doesn't rub off. If you want success you have to surround yourself with it or literally throw yourself in the pathway of it.

W: What is your greatest accomplishment?

J.R.: Today I'm doing what I love most. I'm a professional actor, and this is just the beginning. I heard this saying from I forget where but it goes like this. Do what you love and you'll never work a day in your life. I believe it. I'm here!

W: What one goal remains out of reach?

J.R.: Who is your favorite first nations actor? Have you ever been affected or touched by a First Nations actor through performance the way that Daniel Day Lewis, Gary Oldman, Tilda Swinton, Christian Bale, or Ben



Justin Rain

PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Foster has? I haven't seen that yet. I want to be that person, and some day I want to be handed that gold statue that most actors dream of. If not the first Native actor to receive it, then I'll definitely be one of them.

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

J.R.: I'd be an architect. It's actually why I moved out to Vancouver to attend BCIT. Then I started hanging around actors and industry people. One thing

led to the next; five years later here I am. I'd probably just be graduating right about now (laughing). That's funny.

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

J.R.: Don't ever let somebody tell you, you can't do something. You got a dream? You got to protect it. People can't do something themselves, they want to tell you that you can't do it. You want something; go get it. Period!

(See Justin on page 21)

OUR PICK

Artist—Damien Cheecham
Song—It's Just a Dream
Album—Damien Cheecham (2010)
Label—Independent



If it ain't broke, don't fix it! Perhaps Damien Cheecham approaches his music writing with this philosophy as his self-titled album release is chock full of songs that all work just fine and make for enjoyable listening from beginning to end. Some music styles never die in Indian Country and the old classic rock music approach works for Damien Cheecham. One can only hope this kind of music is on the upswing in

popularity again because musically it feels like home. The standard band instrumentation around solid guitar riffs sets the ground work for his songs that will instantly feel familiar. Not that you've probably heard his music played on mainstream radio in constant rotation (though there's no reason a station couldn't or shouldn't do so) as it's a music style we are instantly comfortable with if you grew up listening to classic Canadian rock music from the late 70's and early 80's.

"Adolescent Man" is one such song that begs you to remember another song you know is on the tip of your tongue, especially when Damien sings the last line of the chorus, "Kick it loose, while you still got a chance". Fortunately most music playback devices will let you play this one over and over and maybe the song it reminds you of will come to you. But at this point, I only hear Damien's song playing back in my memory now.

Make no mistake; Damien can crank out a crowd swaying, bic lighter torch ballad that moves you to want to sing along as well as any other show stopping songs, such as on the cut "It's Just A Dream". The album does not get mundane or repetitive in the least as there is a lot of variety in songs melody. Each song has its own identity and they all fit together as well as any collection of songs can. Come to think of it, I might just hit the "repeat play" on my cd player and let her go for a few spins it's that enjoyable.

Review by : K. Kantan

[radio's most active]

ABORIGINAL RADIO MOST ACTIVE LIST

ARTIST	TITLE	ALBUM
John McLeod	The Breed	Do It Anyway
Marc Merilainen	Paivaa	The Wolves Of Tuonela
Cassidy Mann	Kinda Cute	Cassidy Mann
Murray Porter	Set My Love Free	Murray Porter
Elisapie Isaac	Out Of Desperation	There Will Be Stars
Ali Fontaine	Runaway	Ali Fontaine
Donald Bradburn	Just To Hear You Say	Single Release
Will Belcourt	Coast Og Gold	Epoch
Tyler Lizotte	NYC Is Killing Me	Single Release
Samantha Crain	Up On The Table	You (Understood)
Hank Horton	Someone You Can Count On	Mama's Waiting
Damien Cheecham	Take Your Soul Away	Damien Cheecham
Derek Miller	Wonderful Night	Hard Done By Still Crazy
Ron Loutit	Why Don't You Call	Where I Come From
Mike Gouchie	I Cried	Shattered Glass
Victoria Blackie	Don't Make Me Love You	Wanted Man
Digawolf	Chainsaw	Distant Morning Star
Nathan Cunningham	Saturday Night Angel	Single Release
Rayanne Ottenbreit	Don't Know Anymore	Play These Games
Rhanna Gagnon	Come And Get Me Guy	Single Release

CONTRIBUTING STATIONS:



Sports Briefs

By Sam Laskaris

Latvia hires Nolan

Former National Hockey League coach of the year Ted Nolan will once again be behind the bench, but the 53-year-old Ojibwe from Ontario's Garden River First Nation is not returning to the NHL. In fact, he won't even be guiding a minor professional or junior team in North America. Instead, Nolan is taking his coaching expertise overseas. On Aug. 3 it was announced that Nolan has been hired by the Latvian Hockey Association to serve as the head coach of its national men's team.

For the past two years Nolan had worked as the vice-president of hockey operations for the Rochester Americans, a squad that competes in the American Hockey League, a circuit considered just a step below the NHL. Nolan is probably best known in hockey circles for coaching the Buffalo Sabres from 1995-97. For his efforts during his second season in Buffalo, Nolan was awarded the Jack Adams Award, annually presented to the NHL's top coach.

Despite being named the league's best bench boss, Nolan did not return to the Sabres the following season due to a rift with management. It took Nolan almost a decade to resurface in the NHL. He was the New York Islanders' head coach from 2006-08.

Besides coaching the Latvian national men's squad, Nolan is also expected to serve as a consultant for the country's under-20 national male team.

Sacobie wins silver

Former University of Ottawa Gee-Gees star quarterback Josh Sacobie helped Canada win a silver medal at the world football championships. Sacobie, a Maliseet from the St. Mary's First Nation in New Brunswick, was a member of the Canadian squad that competed at the eight-country world meet, which concluded on July 16 in Austria. The United States defeated Sacobie and his teammates 50-7 in the gold-medal match.

This marked the first time Canada had sent a squad to the world tournament, which is held every four years. Three previous world championships had been staged, the first in 1999.

Prior to this tournament, Sacobie, 27, had not played in a tackle football game since November of 2008, his last contest with the Gee-Gees. Sacobie was one of three quarterbacks on the Canadian roster at the world championships. He played the second half of the team's tournament opener, a 45-10 victory over France.

Sacobie did not see any action in Canada's next two outings, a 36-14 win over Austria and a 31-27 triumph over Japan. Sacobie though played the fourth quarter in the championship final against the Americans.

Though he no longer plays on a regular basis, Sacobie is still involved with the sport. Since May of 2009 he has worked as the technical co-ordinator for Football Canada, which has its office in Ottawa.

Jon Mirasty signs with KHL

After several years of bouncing around various minor professional hockey teams in North America, Jon Mirasty is taking his toughness to the Kontinental Hockey League, which primarily features teams from Russia.

Mirasty, a Cree who is from Meadow Lake, Sask., signed a contract this off-season with Vityaz Chekhov, a Moscow-based franchise. The 29-year-old Mirasty never made it to the National Hockey League even though he has been regarded as one of this continent's toughest players in recent years.

Mirasty split his time this past season suiting up for three teams in three different leagues. He played 16 games with the American Hockey League's Syracuse Crunch. He also made 19 appearances with the Central Hockey League's Fort Wayne Komets. And he dressed for nine matches with the East Coast Hockey League's Elmira Jackets. Mirasty had just two points in all 44 of his games this past year and racked up a total of 159 penalty minutes.

Aboriginal race

A new Aboriginal association is organizing a five-kilometre race in Vancouver this October. The Aboriginal Physical Activity and Cultural Circle (APACC) will stage its competitive race on Oct. 29 in the British Columbia city. Besides the competitive race, the day will also include a community run/walk. Proceeds from the event will go towards creating Aboriginal community grants.

The APACC, which has its office on Musqueam land in Vancouver, is a national non-profit group for Aboriginal people involved in sports, recreation, fitness and traditional activities. The registration fee for the competitive race is \$35 per runner for those who sign up before Sept. 7. The fee increases to \$40 after that.

Those looking to take part in the community run/walk can register for \$8 before Sept. 7 and for \$10 after that. Children under 10 and those over 70 will be allowed to take part in the community run/walk for free. More information about the race is available by emailing race director Dr. Rosalin Miles at torosalin@yahoo.ca or by calling (604) 537-7777.

[sports]

Perennial bridesmaids become brides at this year's nationals



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Regina-based Aboriginal Memorial Incorporated (AMI) Pride captured the women's crown at the Canadian Native Fastball Championships. Top Row: (Left to Right) Jenna Tanner, Lisa Korchinski, Billy Laswisse, Jamie Fedler, Ion Boire (Assistant Coach), Tyrah Morris, Sara Blaser, Shelley Mike, Chelsea Poitras, Shalayna Bear, Dale Fedler (Base Coach). (Middle Row: Left to Right) Miranda Kaiswatum, Pam Yuzicappi, Jamie Ledoux, Brittany Fedler, Rikki Fedler, Jamiy Moran, Joey Morris, Lianda Tanner. (Bottom Row: Left to Right) Rudy Tanner (Head Coach), Joe Bear (Assistant Coach and Sponsor).

By Sam Laskaris
Windspeaker Contributor

WINNIPEG

A pair of Aboriginal fastball teams that had some close finishes in recent years were finally able to get over the hump and celebrate national championships.

The Kinbasket Development Corporation (KDC) Braves from Invermere, B.C. won the men's title at the Canadian Native Fastball Championships, which concluded Aug. 1 in Winnipeg.

And Regina-based Aboriginal Memorial Incorporated (AMI) Pride captured the women's crown.

The four-day national tournament attracted 55 clubs.

For the Braves, this marked their first national title in 10 years. This franchise, previously known as the B.C. Arrows, had won seven consecutive Canadian championships in the late 1980s and early 1990s, but the club had finished second at the nationals seven times in the past 10 years.

"It's been a long time coming," said Braves' coach Randy Martin, who quit playing for the team five years ago to assume the bench boss duties.

As for the Pride, this is its ninth season of operations. The club had placed second at last year's nationals. It had placed third another time and fourth twice in previous appearances at the Canadian tournament.

"It's an amazing feeling to finally win it all," said Pride coach Rudy Tanner. "It's unbelievable what we went through to get to this."

The men's division at the nationals attracted 25 entrants. And the women's category featured 18 squads.

An additional 12 teams took

part in the men's Masters division, for those age 40 and over. This grouping was won by the B.C. Arrows and included several players who starred in the men's division during the franchise's previous national dominance.

As for the Braves, they played seven games at this year's nationals. The KDC squad won its first two matches before dropping a 7-4 decision to the Manitoba-based Peguis First Nation club, also called the Braves.

Since the national event featured a double-knockout format, another loss would have eliminated the KDC club from further action. But it reeled off four straight victories to claim the national title.

In the semi-final match, KDC once again squared off against the Peguis Braves and this time prevailed by a 6-5 score.

Since both of the Braves teams were the only remaining clubs with just one loss at this point, they had to square off again in what proved to be the national final.

And the KDC team once again pulled out a 6-5 triumph.

"We all knew we could take these guys down," Martin said of the Peguis Braves. "We were confident we could win."

Martin also had plenty of praise for the tournament organizers.

"Winnipeg did a great job," he said. "This is one of the best Canadian championships in recent years. They did an awesome job."

Martin explained some recent tournaments had been plagued with scheduling and umpiring problems.

As for the Pride, which also participates in a Regina women's league, it ended up playing six

games at the nationals.

The club did win its first four contests, outscoring its opponents 38-1 in those games, but the Pride was then downed 8-4 by the Red Nation Jets of Alberta.

The Pride and Jets were the sole survivors at this point and needed to play once again to determine national bragging rights.

The Pride eked out a 5-4 win to claim its first Canadian crown.

There were plenty of tense moments, however, late in the contest. The Pride had carried what appeared to be a commanding 5-0 lead into the bottom of the seventh and final inning.

And victory appeared imminent as the Pride retired the first two batters of the inning.

But the Jets cut the deficit to 5-2 by hitting a two-run homer. And then the Alberta entry managed to make things more interesting by scoring two more runs to make the score 5-4.

The Jets also managed to get the potential game-tying run on first base. But the match then ended when the Jets' baserunner attempted a steal and was thrown out at second base.

"It shouldn't have been that close," Tanner said of the final score. "The girls were getting just a little excited."

The Pride and Jets met in the 2010 national final with the Jets registering a convincing 17-0 victory in that matchup. Tanner was pleased his charges were able to avenge their humiliating loss of a year ago.

"It was very special because of that," he said of this year's Canadian final.

Tanner also had another reason to celebrate. His daughter Jenna, a Pride pitcher, was selected as the tournament's most valuable player.

Business Briefs

The Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (CEAA) has accepted Taseko Mines Limited's project description for the proposed \$1 billion New Prosperity gold-copper mine in British Columbia's central interior. But the Tsilhqot'in National Government called on the federal government to "halt the continuous drain on everyone's time and resources and to reject Taseko Mines Ltd's second rebid for the Prosperity Mine project," reads a press release.

"If the Canadian government wants to reduce its deficit, then cancel this process. It will prevent the frivolous spending of tax money consistently being wasted to review a mine that will not go through," said Tsilhqot'in's Tribal Chair Chief Joe Alphonse. "This bid, which was presented to the previous Expert Panel and deemed worse than the original plan, fails to address any of the environmentally scathing issues that led to the first proposal being rejected."

"Surrounding our sacred lake with an open pit mine, preventing access to it for 33 or more years, destroying its fish spawning grounds and most likely destroying the lake later as it receives toxic tailings or the mine expands is clearly not an improvement," said Marilyn Baptiste, Chief of Xeni Gwet'in.

There is solid, national opposition to this project from First Nations along with people from all walks of life, the Tsilhqot'in said. The Assembly of First Nations chiefs last month passed its second resolution renewing its 2010 pledge to help defend Tsilhqot'in lands against this project and cautioning the federal government against approving this project.

"It would be irresponsible if [Prime Minister Stephen] Harper's government did not appropriately consider the environment and its constitutional and international obligations to safeguard First Nations rights," said Chief Baptiste.

From Taseko's perspective, the step ensures the federal environmental assessment of the project will begin on or before Nov. 7. "With this decision we have a clear view of the regulatory timeline ahead. Under a comprehensive study, which is the process we expect for New Prosperity, CEAA will have 365 days in which to complete its review and submit a final report to the federal minister of the Environment," said Russell Hallbauer President and CEO of Taseko.

"Taseko has made significant efforts to address the concerns identified during the original federal review process. In particular, the preservation of Fish Lake, which adds \$300 million in capital and operating expense to the project, is a strong example of the company's commitment to the success of New Prosperity and to the principles of sustainable mining," he said.

Wawatay News is reporting that the Ring of Fire office opened in Thunder Bay on Aug. 25. The office will promote the economic opportunities located within a 4,000 kilometer area of northern Ontario thought to be rich in chromite, nickel, copper, platinum, zinc, gold and diamonds. There are 35 mining companies holding 25,000 claim units in the Ring of Fire area. It could become one of the world's largest deposits of chromite and the only one located in North America. The office will work also to facilitate the successful development of the area with the interests of both the mining industry and Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities being met.

"This is one of the most promising mineral development opportunities in Ontario in more than a century. All aspects of development of the Ring of Fire will require careful coordination and planning over the long term," said Michael Gravelle, minister of northern development, mines and forestry.

Chief Larry Nooski of Nadleh Whut'en First Nation, a member of the Yinka Dene Alliance, said Enbridge's proposed pipeline and tanker project is "dead in the water," despite news that the company has garnered industry support. "Enbridge's pipeline isn't happening, period," said Nooski. "It doesn't matter who they get a deal with. They plan to come through our territories and we've already said no, and we'll use every legal means we have to stop them. Their proposed pipeline is against our laws because we refuse to put our communities at the risk of oil spills." Nooski said there are now more than 100 First Nations in western Canada that have said no to the project. From the Rockies to the Pacific, every mile of their pipeline and tanker route goes through a First Nation that has banned their project, he explained. The Yinka Dene Alliance includes Nadleh Whut'en, Nak'azdli, Takla Lake, Saik'uz, and Wet'suwet'en First Nations in northern BC, which have banned the Enbridge Northern Gateway Pipelines from their territories.

Actress Tantoo Cardinal was arrested in Washington during a sit in protesting the proposed Keystone pipeline that will carry crude oil from northern Alberta to the Gulf of Mexico.

Cardinal traveled with actress Margot Kidder, who was also arrested, to join hundreds at the event held on the sidewalk in front of the White House, hoping to influence President Barack Obama to reject the pipeline proposal. "If there was any amount of energy, and time, and money, and education spent to wind energy, solar energy, and the natural ways of living a good life, then that would be some source of satisfaction," she said in a video on Youtube. "But the greed has not left. This that is going on right now is no different than all that has happened in the history of my people. This blind greed and meanness is what has annihilated so many nations of my people in genocide. . . This will affect your children before your grandchildren," the 61-year-old actress said. "And the power is with the people. You nourish people's spirit, nourish their life, and that brings us together."

[business]

Supreme Court upholds tax exemption on investment income

By Shari Narine
Windspeaker Contributor

OTTAWA

Recent decisions by the Supreme Court of Canada could have far reaching implications for investments made on First Nations reserves.

"After relentless efforts over many years by the Canada Revenue Agency to erode the First Nations tax exemption, the Supreme Court has upheld the exemption and affirmed its ongoing relevance," said Assembly of First Nations National Chief Shawn A-in-chut Atleo.

On July 22, Canada's top court made a joint ruling in the *Bastien* and *Dubé* cases that term deposits situated on reserves are property income under the *Income Tax Act* and are therefore exempt from taxation in accordance with Sect. 87 of the *Indian Act*.

"The wider implication is it's an entire area of income-generating activity that can potentially be exempt from taxation," said Jeff Pniowsky, a tax dispute resolution lawyer.

Pniowsky's Winnipeg-based law firm Thompson Dorfman Sweatman represented the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, which had intervener status in the joint case.

Pniowsky said the two cases,

although separate, were heard together and ruled on together because of their similarities. Both dealt with the taxation of interest income of an Indian from a financial institution located on an Indian reserve. Both Bastien's estate and Dubé lost earlier decisions in the Tax Court of Canada and the Federal Court of Appeal. The decision to overturn the lower courts' rulings was not unanimous on the part of the Supreme Court.

"The majority. . . (said) significant weight must be given to the most important factors, that is, that the contractual obligation or loan giving rise to the interest income was concluded on reserve, the debtor financial institution was located on reserve and the obligation was performed, in the form of payment of interest, on reserve," wrote Eric Koh, of Gowling Lafleur Henderson, which represented the AFN, the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) and the Union of Nova Scotia Indians, which received intervener status in both cases.

"We attacked the commercial mainstream aspect of previous court decisions where they were focusing on the commercial-like nature of the income almost to the point where if it's of a commercial-like nature it loses its quote-unquote Indian-ness, which is not

only offensive, our argument is that it was wrong," said Pniowsky.

The Supreme Court agreed with that argument and rejected Revenue Canada's claim that the tax exemption did not apply to income in the commercial mainstream and that it only applied to income connected to a "traditional Indian way of life."

Much of the arguments presented were technical, said Pniowsky, who noted that his client was the only representation west of Ontario.

The Supreme Court's ruling could result in a new form of income for First Nations, said Pniowsky.

"It can open the door to banking on-reserve. It certainly opens the door to First Nations having the ability to lend money out on a commercial basis on reserve to individuals who aren't necessarily from the reserve," he said.

"(The Supreme Court's majority decisions) recognize the evolving circumstances of life on reserves, and permit the tax exemption to take account of this evolution. In so doing, these decisions reverse the trend of court decisions in recent years toward narrowing the scope of the *Indian Act* tax exemption," said Koh.

Also granted intervener status was the Chiefs of Ontario.

Justin Rain — [windspeaker confidential]

(Continued from page 19.)

W: Did you take it?

J.R.: Every day, all day.

W: How do you hope to be remembered?

J.R.: That I made other people's lives better and inspired them by sharing my own.

Justin Rain is a professionally trained actor, multimedia artist and public speaker of Plains Cree descent. He was born and currently resides in Vancouver and was introduced to the local film and television industry soon after graduating high school. He worked with the East Vancouver Urban Native Theatre Company for three years before beginning formal study at the Vancouver Academy of Dramatic Arts, William Davis Centre and

Second Avenue Studios. Five short years later and Justin is an accomplished dramatic artist with over 10 lead supporting and recurring film and television roles to his name.

Justin has most recently taken on the recurring role of the kind and strong-hearted Alan Fraser in the new original series *Blackstone*. Set on the fictional *Blackstone First Nations Reserve*, the series is an authentic drama that premiered in January 2011 on Showcase and the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network. Justin also appeared in the widely popular third installment of Summit Entertainment's supernatural romance fantasy film series, *The Twilight Saga: Twilight Eclipse* (2010).

To add to the long list of

accolades and recognition received throughout his career is Justin's recent lead performance as the stubborn and fiercely intelligent character, Adam, in *Two Indians Talking*. His performance in the feature length film won the Rogers Peoples' Choice Award at the 2010 Vancouver International Film Festival and landed him a nomination for Best Supporting Actor at the 2010 American Indian Film Festival in San Francisco. Most recently the young rising star took home the award for Best Actor at the 2010 Winnipeg Aboriginal Film Festival and has just recently been nominated for a Leo Award by the Motion Picture Arts & Sciences Foundation of British Columbia for his leading performance.

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Working together to make a difference

By Gregory Sawisky
Windspeaker Contributor

RED DEER, Alta.

Rates of HIV infection in Aboriginal people are rising and Raye St. Denys wants that to change.

St. Denys, the executive director of Shining Mountains Living Community Services in Red Deer, Alta., an Aboriginal AIDS service organization, has elicited the help of Red Deer College's Health Research Collaborative, a research partnership between Red Deer College and Alberta Health Services, to develop culturally-sensitive materials for Aboriginal front-line staff and people working with Aboriginals.

And according to St. Denys, developing material for Aboriginal front-line workers to address issues like HIV and safe sex will help fight the rising rates of infection.

"Our HIV rates are rising because of a lack of cultural competency in mainstream agencies, and a lack of skills in our agencies to address these challenges," she said.

St. Denys first approached the college in 2009 to find out if it could support developing a strategy to address the cultural shortfalls. That's when she met Scott Oddie, the chair of Rural Health Research at Red Deer

College and director of the Health Research Collaborative. According to Oddie there has been no shortage of academic research conducted into Aboriginal people and HIV in Canada. Yet little of it has appeared to be of much benefit in solving the rising infection rates.

"There are five decades of research on HIV done in universities and academic institutes and there are as many decades of research done on Aboriginals, but infection rates have continued to rise," Oddie said.

Over the last year, with guidance and support from Oddie and the college, St. Denys has been putting together a toolkit for Aboriginal front-line staff working with Métis and Aboriginal women around HIV. The kit is called Messengers and it provides ways of talking in a culturally sensitive manner about safe sexual habits and avoiding infection.

"This is a tool that was developed for Aboriginal staff to be able to address the needs of their clientele and improve their skills so they could talk about it with more ease," St. Denys said.

But St. Denys says that the most important part of the process is that the research into Messengers wasn't developed inside the halls of a university but by the same people it is going to

support.

"This is a program developed by Aboriginals for Aboriginals," St. Denys said.

Oddie said that such a mentality is important in creating a sense of ownership into research that can make a difference.

"Aboriginals have to collect that information and they had to own it themselves so they can go back to their community and develop strategies to address these problems," Oddie said.

Speaking with Aboriginal focus groups across western Canada, St. Denys traveled as far as Cumberland House, Saskatchewan (a journey of more than 2,000 kilometres round-trip) to gain perspectives that helped inform her research.

But it was also her work with the local college that provided guidance and support to the research process.

"The relationship we're developing with the college is one we can use as a template for other Aboriginal communities. We, in many ways, are raising the bar for partnerships between Aboriginal agencies, communities, and colleges and universities," she said.

Oddie said that health regions face challenges in trying to provide appropriate services to Aboriginal people. By working with St. Denys, they've been able to identify ways to improve local health services.



PHOTO: GREGORY SAWISKY

Shining Mountains Living Community Resource Centre executive director Raye St. Denys.

"We now know the general population has some misperceptions about Aboriginal culture that we thought they didn't have," Oddie said.

St. Denys said that misperceptions about accessing health services can be just as challenging to overcome.

"Mainstream aids service organizations try really hard. But if they were providing culturally safe, appropriate services, Aboriginal numbers around HIV wouldn't be climbing while

mainstream numbers are declining," St. Denys said.

Statistics Canada has documented that rates of HIV infection for Aboriginal people have increased over the last few years and that Aboriginal HIV infection rates typically occur at younger ages than non-Aboriginal people.

St. Denys hopes her research will reverse this trend and is grateful that her partnership with Red Deer College has enabled her to produce Messengers.

"We were going to be doing research and so without their academic support this project would never have happened. The college has done a huge service in upgrading our technology skills and has supported us in growing as an Aboriginal community agency," St. Denys said.

At the end of the day, St. Denys hopes that Messengers will make a difference.

Messengers wasn't the only product of the partnership between Shining Mountains and the college. Another study called 'Voices from the Fire' is gathering information about what provides resiliency in Aboriginal people.

For more information regarding Messengers (which is available in French and English), contact St. Denys at Shining Mountains Living Community Resource Centre at (403) 346-9794 or elk@telusplanet.net.

Remembering Kimo the artist and friend

(Continued from page 15.)

A former student, known simply as Brendan, blogged that Kimo "was constantly learning with us. Every time he assigned a project, he would create his own piece along with us. While his work is clearly aesthetically and conceptually consistent, the process by which he makes each piece is ever changing. It's all about the journey for this dude."

His willingness to embrace the ride, no matter how tumultuous, served him well when he was diagnosed at the age of 29 in 1993 with a brain tumor, known as oligodendroglioma. His head was cut open and the tumor removed, but he would never grow hair in that spot again. Hair became a subject he liked to explore in video-blogs, and he created several portraits of himself bearing glorious, black, floor-length hair.

New Yorker Ann Humphreys, who met Kimo after being emotionally walloped by his textile mill installations, shared a close friendship "and love of the arts" with him. She observed he was "in the best of health with no discernible limitations" until the summer of 2005 when he was spending the summer with relatives in Cold Lake. Numbness in his left hand and vision problems portended another craniotomy (opening of the brain cavity) and full removal of the tumor that had grown back.

Kimo made a full recovery and

continued to teach and make art, adding hooping (dancing with a hoola hoop) classes to his daily routine. He found new ways to move his body during practice, and the slow movements became a powerful medium for him to express himself.

But by the summer of 2007 he was facing the surgeon's scalpel yet again. This time, a bout of bacterial meningitis threatened his life and the pain of medical intervention was almost unbearable.

Recovery was slow, but he worked hard at rehabilitating himself, going so far as to create exercises he called "Kimo-chi" which he said were designed specifically to the conversation he felt was going on between his brain and body.

Long stays in the hospital had their benefit, though, and Kimo fell in love with his tall, German speech therapist to whom he became engaged in February 2011. Friends said Antje Thiessen, 33, had a "sense of the absurd" which extended and heightened Kimo's. In Thiessen, he found a hooping partner and caregiver.

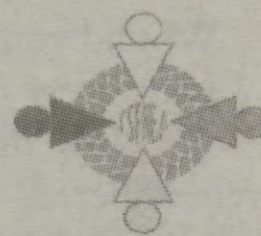
"None of Kimo's ideas were usual," Thiessen said. "He would find a topic or issue and explore it completely, always give it a fresh perspective. He wasn't spiritual in any conventional sense, but he was rooted to his people, especially the Elders."

Videos on youtube - Kimo.tube - poetically document his illness. Two years ago, faced with complete paralysis of one

side of his body, he blogs allegiance to his brain hemiplegia "for taking away one side of my body and changing everything.

Not that I needed everything to change, but you have given me a new kind of life. Thank you for the simplicity. I like it a lot better."

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National chief backs panel as leaders turn away

By Shauna Lewis
Windspeaker Contributor

OTTAWA

Leaders that represent an estimated 230 First Nations groups in Quebec, Ontario and Saskatchewan have refused to participate in an effort to improve education in Native schools.

The initiative was announced jointly in December 2010 by John Duncan, minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, and Shawn Atleo, national chief of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN).

Despite this lack of participation, the three-person, non-partisan education panel, tasked with facilitating discussions on education with First Nation communities throughout Canada, will continue its work. This was confirmed by Atleo during a mid-summer interview with Windspeaker.

Atleo said that while any recommendation that spring from the information collected during nationwide meetings is non-binding, the panel is expected to report to the AFN and Ottawa by the end of the year.

The report could eventually be used to create future legislation for First Nation elementary and secondary school education, something Atleo said is much needed.

"It's about taking the control

back and power over First Nations education...It's about how we take control and it's about getting a fair and equitable funding guarantee," he said.

Atleo called First Nations input and collaboration a "critical" element in the education planning process.

"[Collaboration] can only help First Nations during the work forward," he said. And "it will remain up to First Nations to decide the way forward," he added.

"This is about our people deciding for themselves," he continued. "There can't be a top-down, 'one-size-fits-all' approach."

Chief Gilbert Whiteduck of the Kitigan Zibi First Nation in Quebec is a critic of the panel. He claims that leaders were told they would have a say in the selection of the education panel and input into its Terms of Reference.

"We embarked on this belief that we were going to collaborate," he said. "Later we began to realize that selection of the panel and the Terms of Reference were not going to be made in a collaborative way," he said.

"We were being misled," he claimed. "We were being misled in the belief that our input would make a difference."

While Whiteduck said he is not against legislative reform, he said he is dedicated to ensuring that future legislation will guarantee

autonomy for First Nations people and that concrete funding will be established, various jurisdiction and capacity issues will be examined, and levels of service required for distinct communities throughout Canada will be assured.

Representatives of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) share Whiteduck's concerns and announced last month that they too would not be participating in the panel, citing worries stemming from the potential risks to treaty rights and fears regarding disintegration of power over decision-making.

The group "With federal legislation, the federal government will assume full control over First Nations education," claimed FSIN Vice-Chief Lyle Whitefish.

"They will drive it, develop it, change it and do whatever they want with it. And First Nations children will be forced to dance to their tune again," he said.

Whitefish further casts blame on the AFN, saying the organization is walking a proverbial tightrope with important treaty rights to education.

"Unfortunately, the AFN, our own national First Nations organization, is not listening to us, and appears to have been co-opted by the federal government in supporting a process that will only serve to create legislation that weakens our treaty right to

education," he said in a statement. But Atleo denied the allegations.

"We're not going to allow the government to determine unilaterally what's right for us," he explained.

Asked if he thinks the chiefs' decision not to participate in the education review is a politically-motivated move in light of next year's election for the AFN's top position? Atleo shrugged.

"This is a political office," he acknowledged.

But Whiteduck denies that he has his eye on the AFN national chief's seat, explaining that his primary motivation for bowing out of the panel had to do with legislative framework concerns, a lack of assurance regarding Aboriginal autonomy and the lack of concrete promises for a funding guarantee if new legislation is passed.

"At the end of the day, the panel will consult with an unrepresentative group of First Nations across Canada and then influence federal legislation that is not aligned with our belief systems," Whitefish said in a statement.

Whitefish linked the panel process to a legacy of historic power struggles nestled under the trope of the Indian Act.

"While the federal government issued a residential school apology that included a commitment not to repeat the mistakes of the past, this national panel seems like a step back to the 'we know best' colonial attitude," he said.

Although Minister Duncan was unavailable for comment, the department of Aboriginal Affairs weighed in on the issue.

"I can tell you our government is taking action to improve the educational outcomes of First Nation students. We are working in collaboration with First Nations communities to engage on possible options for improving First Nation elementary and

secondary education. Our government believes students come first and we are committed to working directly with First Nations. The independent National Panel announced jointly by our government and the AFN is seeking views from First Nation leaders, parents, students, Elders, teachers across the country on how to improve elementary and secondary education outcomes for First Nation children living on-reserve."

"Also, it is important to note that individual First Nations from some of these regions have already participated in discussions with the independent National Panel and have expressed an interest to continue discussions on this important initiative," the spokesperson stated.

But those opposed to the panel say Ottawa has no place in the process.

"We don't need our 'great white father' sitting at the table," said Whiteduck.

"There have been many reasons not to trust government," Atleo said. "We have to be vigilant and we can't put all our eggs in one basket."

But in urging caution, Atleo continued to emphasize the importance of legislative education reform for the Indigenous people of Canada.

"We're not going to allow for government to decide unilaterally what's right for us," he declared.

"My job is to kick the door open and get out of the way for nations to proceed.... It's no longer about discussions," he said. "We need action."

The education panel report is expected to be completed by and presented to the AFN and Ottawa in December.

Quebec, Ontario and Saskatchewan are in the process of writing independent reports that will also be presented to the AFN and Aboriginal Affairs Canada by the end of the year.



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Librairie Hannenorak specializes in First Nations literature

By Marie White
Windspeaker Contributor

WENDAKE, Que.

There is a store in Quebec City's Huron-Wendat Village of Wendake that specializes in First Nations literature. The Librairie Hannenorak is exclusively devoted to literature by and about the First Nations of Quebec and Canada. This makes it unique in the area, if not the province.

With its modern décor, the bookstore is also a cozy café that offers coffee and homemade baking for visitors who wish to discover its remarkable selection of books.

Opened in 2009, it sits in the heart of the Huron-Wendat village and is easily accessible for locals and visitors.

Huron-Wendat Daniel Sioui, 27, decided to create the store in the same house that belonged to his paternal grandfather, Armand.

Today, Daniel is the store's owner and his father, Jean, and sister, Rosalie, work there. Unfortunately, Daniel was only two when his grandfather died so he did not get to know him

well.

Sioui's store focuses on First Nation authors from Quebec—including works by writers like his poet father Jean Sioui, historian Georges Sioui and novelist Michel Noël—as well as well-known Canadian and international authors like Joseph Boyden, Tomson Highway, Louise Erdrich, Thomas King and Sherman Alexie. Researchers from nearby Laval University are noted customers.

Aside from his current wide selection, Sioui can also order in books for customers upon request in English or in French.

"I want to promote my culture," said Daniel Sioui. "I also want others to learn about us. Even many Huron-Wendats here enjoy coming over to learn more about their own traditions and history."

Ultimately, Sioui said, he hopes to promote pride in the community for its culture. He also wishes to foster a love of reading.

Sioui's vision of making Native books accessible to the public, publishing Native writers and celebrating local, national and international Native talent, is proof of a keen spirit that is

having an impact on his community.

"I try to teach, but not in a classroom." He teaches through his store and his actions.

Jean Sioui joined son Daniel to create a publishing firm, also called Hannenorak, one year ago.

The first publication was a coloring book for young people to learn about their culture. Then, this July 7, the store hosted a community book launch for its first two full-length books.

Huron-Wendat authors Louis-Karl Picard-Sioui and Manon Sioui did a book signing for their latest books, both of which explore Native mythology.

Picard-Sioui, a multi-talented artist who helped organize the First Nations Literature Festival with Maurizio Gatti in 2008, called his book *La femme venue du ciel* or *The woman who came down from the skies*. It recounts the complete Huron-Wendat creation story accompanied with rich and vivid drawings by Christine Sioui-Wawanoloath.

Manon Sioui's *L'etre Étrange qui venait de l'ouest*, or *The Strange Being who came from the West*, tells the myth of a foreigner who arrived from the west

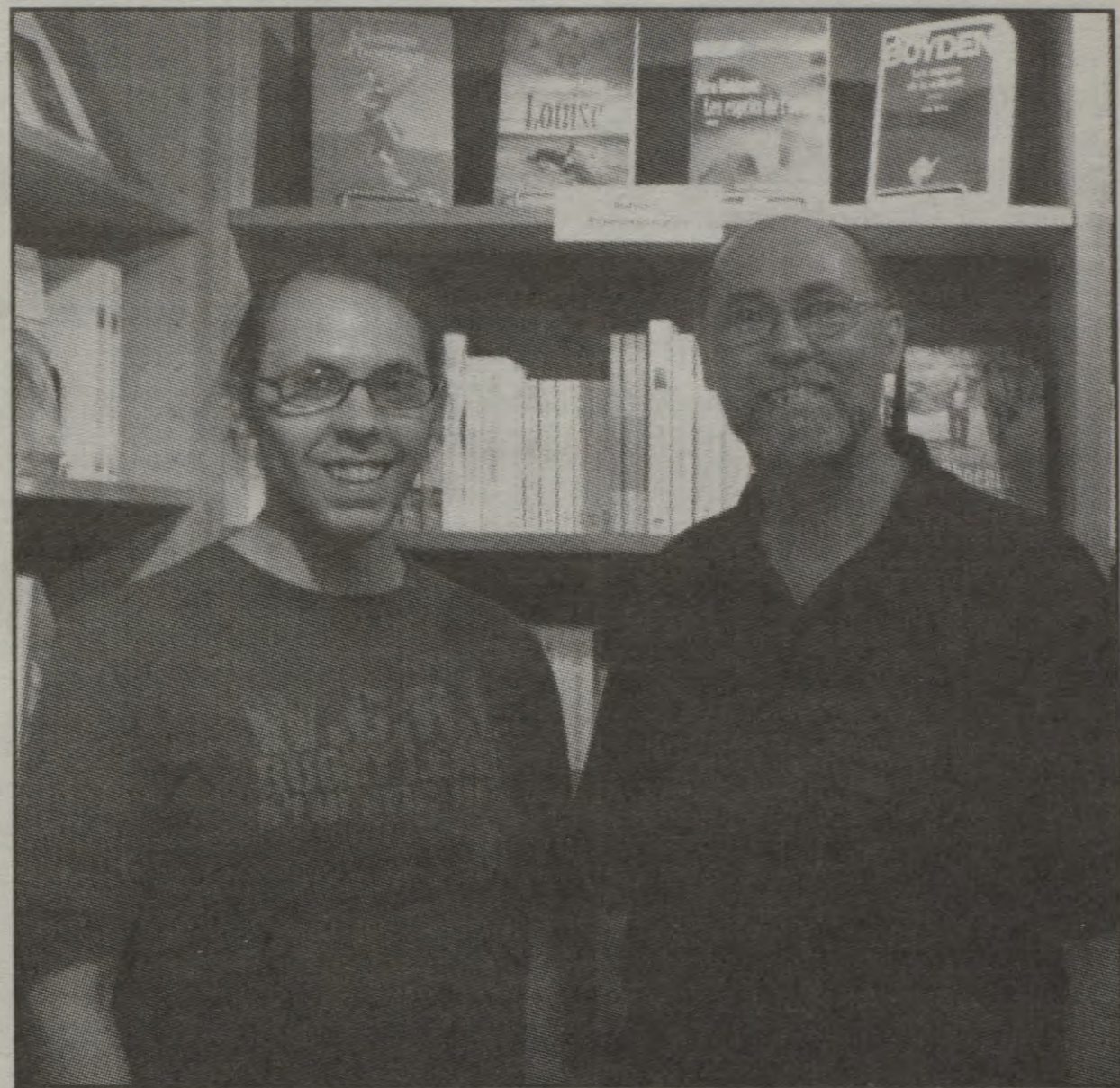


PHOTO: MARIE WHITE

Jean Sioui and son Daniel pose in their unique bookstore that specializes in First Nations literature by and about First Nations in Quebec and Canada.

shortly after creation.

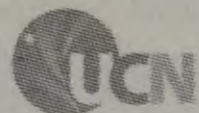
The quality of the print and the books' illustrations is remarkable.

Future publications through Hannenorak are currently in progress and the Librairie Hannenorak is already

anticipating more book launchings this fall.

The Librairie Hannenorak and the Hannenorak publishing firm can be contacted at hannenorak@gmail.com or readers can find them on Facebook.

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Dean, Faculty of Native Studies

The University of Alberta invites nominations and applications for the position of Dean, Faculty of Native Studies. The appointment, for an initial five-year term, begins July 1, 2012.

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Native Studies, the only degree-granting academic unit of its kind in Canada, distinctively combines Aboriginal community knowledge and concerns with the scholarly standards and methods of a research University to offer relevant interdisciplinary education in a rigorous, respectful, academic environment. This is a student-centred Faculty that provides a common ground for students to learn, research, explore and critically examine the historical and contemporary relations and broader societal issues that concern Native peoples and communities.

The student body of the Faculty reflects a mixture of both Native and non-Native students.

The Dean is responsible to the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) for the supervision and administration of all operations of the Faculty, including the budget and fund development. In addition to the role of senior officer of the Faculty, the Dean also serves as a senior administrator of the University.

Candidates must possess an earned doctorate and be eligible for appointment at the rank of associate professor or of full professor. Also required are: a proven record of contribution in academic and research fields related to Native Studies; a proven commitment to excellence in teaching and research; administrative experience at a senior level; and a demonstrated ability to build and maintain relationships at various levels, especially with Aboriginal communities. Candidates must have a record of excellence in leadership and experience in fundraising and external relations.

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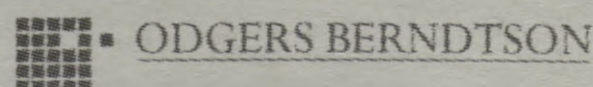
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Brilliant sunshine leads the ancestors home

(Continued from page 16.)

"I believe that with the remains having been found there and being returned there, that this will open the door to land claims, and the testing of genealogy closes any unanswered questions," said Namu native Arlene White.

"I feel [the testing] is important to our history and to our genealogy," she continued. "We know we've been there from the beginning of time, but this is concrete evidence," she said.

Andrew Petter, SFU president, expressed his respect of the Heiltsuk people for allowing the university to conduct the archaeological studies on their ancient ancestors.

"I know this is an incredibly important event for your community, and Simon Fraser is honored to play a part today," he said.

"We spend so much time in our daily lives thinking about the here and now and the present, and this is a chance to really reflect on the past and show respect for history," he added.

That deep respect for history was shared by other university faculty members.

"Bones matter. They've always mattered," said John Craig, dean of Arts and Social Sciences at SFU. "We are intrinsically tied to the

past," he told ceremony attendants.

Although two ancestral remains were displayed during the ceremony, Heiltsuk Chief Harvey Humchitt said that the additional remains will be placed in bentwood boxes made by high school kids in the community before being in-turned back to the earth.

During the two-hour long ceremony, traditional drumming and song resonated throughout the campus building. Spiritual rites were also respected as a burning ceremony took place and certain dances were performed by the Heiltsuk people to ward-off bad energy during their ancestors' journey back into the spirit world.

During these rites the sun began to shine onto the ceremony, transforming the day from otherwise grey, an omen for many that gathered.

"It's an uplifting of our ancestors," White said of the sudden sunshine during the ceremony. "It opened up the heavens," she added.

"It brought excitement and goose bumps and all kinds of happy feelings," White continued. "Those are our ancestors and they're going home where they belong," she smiled.

The reburial of the remains in Namu was held Sept. 2, while a community celebration was held Sept. 3 in Bella Bella.

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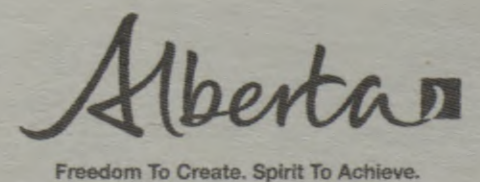
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[footprints] William Commanda
**Elder led a long life
 as incredible visionary**

By Dianne Meili with files from Romola Thumbadoo

In the quiet vigil that followed William Commanda's death, his grandson Johnny revealed that he saw his beloved grandfather leaving in a canoe.

"I had envisioned the same," said Romola Thumbadoo, Grandfather Commanda's assistant and close friend.

Everything fell into place after that, and the family gained permission to bring home a birchbark canoe on display at the local school. It would "carry" home the 97-year-old spiritual leader, who died of kidney failure on Aug. 3.

It was an extraordinary vessel built and stencilled by Grandfather Commanda himself, his wife Mary, and their grandchildren. It was marked in the William Commanda fashion and dated September 1980. The Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg Elder of Bitobi Lake in Maniwaki, Que. was laid in it, and both boat and builder were ensconced in the eight-sided lodge—also designed and built by Commanda—until it was time for a coffin burial on Aug. 5.

On the very day he was returned to his Mother Earth, the annual *Circle of All Nations*—which many believe served as William Commanda's great "going away party"—was set to begin.

Knowing he would say, 'the show must go on', Grandfather Commanda's countless friends came together to hold this, the 42nd year of the event held in a succession and hosted by Commanda at his home since 1969.

They animated his beliefs in love, equality and sharing so that once again the international crowd that regularly attended the spiritual gathering could experience his aspirations.

"His was a funeral like no other," said Thumbadoo. "No one was invited, and we learned the obituary did not even make it into the paper." Yet, the masses came, including leaders and representatives of First Nations, Metis and Inuit organizations, federal and provincial politicians,

foreign diplomats, environmental activists, and spiritual Elders from across Canada and beyond the border. Artists, musicians, writers, filmmakers, police, fundraisers, guests from France, Belgium, the United States and South America, and "grass roots folks" and children arrived during the three-day gathering.

As darkness fell on day one, Friday, the documentary *The Portage of Wisdom*, produced by *Circle of All Nations* supporter and environmentalist Patrick Gravel, was screened.

Discussions during the weekend focused on how Grandfather Commanda's work would continue, especially his vision of establishing a National Aboriginal Centre on Victoria Island in Ottawa, as well as the protection of sacred and special sites.

"William saw development of the centre as urgent, as a place where united voices could offer Indigenous wisdom regarding environmental stewardship and national and global peace building," Thumbadoo said. But, first, a strong contingent of Aboriginal leaders must come together to plan it out. It can be no other way, she added.

Generally, the one of a kind spiritual gathering ends with a Giveaway Ceremony and drumming and dancing, but this year it seemed Grandfather Commanda, who loved all kinds of music—having learned to play the fiddle as a teenager—orchestrated a grand concert. Entirely unplanned, world renowned musician Marc Vella arrived with his baby grand piano, and his Caravan of Love of fifty French supporters, followed by a fifty-member Belgian Boys Choir.

Grandfather Commanda's life experience was as diverse as his genius. Born in the early hours of Nov. 11, 1913—his mother named him Ojigkwanong, meaning Morning Star—he worked as a guide, trapper and woodsman.

Fully trilingual in Algonquin, English and French, he was named chief of the Kitigan Zibi First

Nation from 1951 to 1970, just as his great-grandfather Pakinawatik, who settled Kitigan Zibi after moving from Montreal in the mid 1800s, led his people.

Along the way, he learned to craft birch bark canoes, and is renowned for having built 75 of them, even building one for Queen Margrethe of Denmark, and famously helping Pierre Trudeau to repair his.

At the age of 90, he shared his canoe-making skills and philosophy in the documentary *Good Enough for Two*.

Well-versed in the messages of wampum belts, he carried three of them and shared their teachings: the ancient Seven Fires Prophecy Belt about choice; the 1700s Welcoming Belt about sharing the grand natural resources and values of the original peoples with the newcomers; and the Jay Treaty Border Crossing Belt, which recognized Turtle Island as a coherent entity.

Known worldwide for his ability to bridge cultural gaps, Grandfather Commanda travelled the world, including the United Nations, conducting pipe ceremonies and offering prayers for the earth, waters, animals and people.

On home turf, he not only blessed the Human Rights Monument in Ottawa alongside the Dalai Lama in 1990, but also presented Nelson Mandela with an eagle feather from all First Nations in 1998.

He was named as an officer of the Order of Canada in 2008, awarded the key to the city of Ottawa, given an honorary doctorate degree from the University of Ottawa, and in 2010 received a lifetime achievement award from the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation.

Among the many of Grandfather Commanda's teachings is the Seven Fires Prophecy, which states mankind will come to a fork in the road and have to choose spirituality over materialism to survive. More of his beliefs and ideology are captured



PHOTO: FILE

William Commanda

in the books *Learning from a Kindergarten Dropout, Book One and Book Two*, and *Passionate Waters – Butterfly Kisses*.

Grandfather Commanda's wife Mary passed away in the late 1980s. The couple had no children together, but they did adopt Mary's niece, now 65-year-old Evelyn Derache-Commanda.

He also adopted Mary's son, Sonny Smith-Commanda, who died in the 1990s, and his only surviving sibling is Mary Commandant (her name differs from his because a French priest incorrectly recorded it).

Aboriginal leaders such as Marlene Jerome, vice grand chief of the Algonquin Anishinabeg Nation Tribal Council, stated in their press releases that "a page of history has closed" with Grandfather's passing, and Thumbadoo, who gave up her federal government job years ago

to help him with his message and work, agreed, saying his faith in love, equality, sharing and grace did not fail him.

"He came from a time when Native people didn't have money, and so they shared and supported each other," she said. Staging his annual gatherings, and his other work and projects without staff, organization, or financial support, he relied on friends to help him prepare for it, and asked guests to open their hearts and volunteer for security duty, food preparation and cleanup.

"Ginawaydaganuc—we are all connected—with nature and each other, William always said. It really is that seamless," Thumbadoo reiterated.

"If you will connect with Mother Earth, you will know what he meant, and you will find him there."

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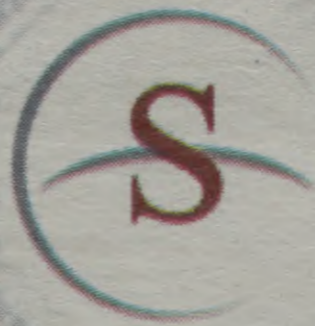
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