

Eagle Feather NEWS

FREE

Meadow Lake trio saves family from drowning

By Nathin Devlin
For Eagle Feather News

Devin Knot, 19, Brett Opikokew, 18, and Joshua Lasas, 19, childhood friends from Meadow Lake, became instant heroes on April 11 when they saved a mother and her three children from drowning in a ditch off Highway 304.

The woman's minivan had skidded into the ditch after hitting water from the spring melt, and then floated



Devin Knot, Brett Opikokew and Joshua Lasas spent some time with Premier Brad Wall at the Saskatchewan legislature. (Photo by Cassandra Opikokew)

out into the adjacent field, taking all three of her children, aged one to eight, with it. Immediately upon hearing the children screaming and spotting their vehicle sinking in the ditch, the trio jumped into the freezing water. Lasas then Opikokew then Knot, swam to the minivan and rescued the children one by one.

"We didn't plan anything. It was just a spur of the moment thing," says Lasas, who has asthma and collapsed after rescuing the first child.

"I just heard this kid screaming; we didn't hesitate," he says.

"I remember when I swam to the vehicle, it wasn't very far, but it felt like the longest swim of my life," says Opikokew.

He would collapse from exhaustion after reaching the shore, as his friends pulled the boy he had saved onto land. As soon as Opikokew was safely back, Knot went in for the third child. On what was going through his head when he jumped in the water, Knot says, "The shock set in, but I didn't really think about it."

The trio had only stopped in the area, which generally does not flood, by fluke.

"There was a moose standing in a field and Josh and Devin rolled down their windows and were trying to call the moose, and then Devin had to use the washroom," says Opikokew.

It was then that they heard the screams of the family. After the group rescued the three children Opikokew coaxed the mother to swim to the shore.

"The mom was standing on her roof screaming that she couldn't swim."

Worried that she might drag him under, and already exhausted from saving her son, Opikokew says, "I just kept yelling at her to swim for it," and eventually she did.

The boys brought the kids over to a truck that had also stopped to warm them up, and from there they were driven to the hospital.

"I didn't know if that kid was going to make it," Opikokew says.

He would only learn a day later that the child had survived.

Since that day the three men have received a rash of media attention, and have also been nominated by Saskatchewan Premier Brad Wall for Canada's National Medal of Bravery.

"I can't imagine a more deserving cause, a more deserving group of young people for the medal of bravery," said the premier.

In response to all the attention, Lasas says humbly, "We were just at the right place at the right time," representing the feelings of all three of Saskatchewan's newest heroes.

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Welcome to our
Youth & Sports Issue
Coming In June :
Annual Aboriginal Trivia Quiz
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Preparing to slay the Dragons

Tim Lewis is a recent graduate of the Edwards School of Business in Marketing. Since 2005, Lewis has been making and selling tansi clothing. He recently won the Aboriginal Youth Idea Challenge at the Edwards School of Business, and now he has been invited to take his clothing and business plan to the national stage. Lewis has been invited to pitch his business plan to the CBC show, Dragons' Den, where a group of Canada's most successful entrepreneurs hear pitches from prospective business people and then they either tear them apart, or invest in their business. Certainly it is a once in a lifetime chance for any budding entrepreneur. Lewis is expected to meet the Dragons later in May. We caught up to him on campus.

What was the inspiration behind your clothing line?

I have seen other languages being promoted and represented through many avenues including fashion. I felt Aboriginal languages should also be represented so tansi clothing was born.

What was the process like to get on the show?

I took my T-shirts to the Edwards School of Business, where they held auditions, and did my five minute presentation. The presentation was very similar to selling at conferences, pow wows, and trade shows. Selling my clothing in the past gave me much experience for the first round, but round two will be something else.

Are you nervous to pitch at these pros?

Yes and no. I am nervous because I've seen episodes

where they tear into ideas and plans, but I am also ready to take the business to the next level.

What will be the big selling point of your business?

Tansi clothing is a green company that sells organic clothing and promotes Aboriginal languages.

Are you preparing to face down billionaire Kevin O'Leary who is known to carve up many applicants?

I am preparing for Kevin O'Leary by understanding his personality and what questions he will want answered. I also understand his role on the Den. Every show needs an antagonist because it's good for ratings. I will not take anything personally.

How are you going to prepare for this ultimate pitch?

I am preparing by understanding my business plan in detail and watching old episodes to learn what to expect.

Will being an Aboriginal business owner be an advantage?

My target market for tansi clothing is both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, which gives me an advantage because I understand both cultures and I have a marketing degree.

Tansi clothing is having a steak night at Tiffany's Restaurant on Saturday, May 16 to raise funds for Dragons' Den. Tickets (\$15 each) can be purchased by calling 281-2065 or email info@tansiclothing.com or at the Aboriginal Students' Centre, 966-5790. Many door prizes will be available including tansi clothing attire.

Lewis is wearing kāya pakici or "Don't Give Up" in Cree syllabics, his theme since starting tansi clothing. (Photo by John Lagimodiere)

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Opikokew finding her voice

By Andrea Ledding
For Eagle Feather News

Cassandra Opikokew is on top of the world, and still rising: she just returned from the event Inclusion Works '09 in Vancouver. One of 100 Aboriginal students in Canada chosen by the Aboriginal Human Resources Council to network, advise, and meet with potential employers from across the country, she is co-founder and current vice-president of her campus Indigenous Student's Association, among many other volunteer and leadership roles.

A top student at the University of Regina and First Nations University of Canada, graduating with her Bachelor of Arts in Journalism degree and a certificate in Indian Communications Arts (INCA), she has been accepted unconditionally to the two University Law schools she applied to – Saskatchewan and Victoria.

"I'm not going to give up journalism," she added – her goal is to run her own production company. "You can see something happening and go home and write about it and fire it off or post it to the web or be on TV... you don't have to wait, there's an immediacy – I like the idea I can spread awareness quickly."

She is currently filming for a U of R math professor on how Indigenous teachings and ways of life reflect advanced math and physics principles. On May 17, CTV's Indigenous Circle will air "Stolen Spirit", a documentary about Amber Redman that Opikokew helped create during her final semester.

"I've been working the whole time I've been in school," she says.

INCA helped get her first summer job with CBC Regina as an editorial assistant, and she was soon in front of the camera. She's also worked for other production companies, and recently for Global in Edmonton and Calgary.

"There was a shortage of Aboriginal journalists working at Global Alberta, so they came to the U of R," she said. After the initial presentation, she asked some challenging questions, having already been in media workplaces.

"Why don't you have Aboriginal people coming forward in your province? What are you doing with the resources you already have to be inclusive, or make the non-Aboriginal journalists qualified to cover Aboriginal stories?"

Adding an Aboriginal person to the workplace as simply another box to check "doesn't fix the underlying problems," she said.

Worrying afterwards that she had been too vocal, she approached the managing editor with her resume. They called her a week later, and Opikokew worked for Global for a year, flying back and forth between Edmonton and Calgary as an advisor, observer, and resource.

While Global treated her wonderfully, she is quick to add that other experiences have been "less than rosy."

But she feels a responsibility to step forward.

"It's hard to feel in a position of enough power and self-confidence to be able to speak out – I never feel I'm in that position, but I can't keep my mouth shut," she laughs, calling it both her greatest strength and greatest weakness.

"I wait to see if somebody else is going to say something, and nobody else does because they're all thinking the same thing as me – somebody else deal with this. I just get frustrated first and do it."

And stepping into the gap is a family trait – her younger brother Brett was one of the three young heroes who rescued a family from drowning recently.

"Here I am the media person and journalist and he rescues a whole family and doesn't want to do an interview," she laughs. "He's very humble and modest and not into the limelight. What he did for that family is not out of character for him."

Her parents, Isabelle and Brian, were both the first in their families to get university degrees. Given their level of support, and that of her band, Canoe Lake First Nation, Cassandra feels not pursuing her goals would be a waste of opportunity.

"Strong parents raised strong kids. We were raised to be individuals, everything was possible," she said.

Her mother didn't say a word when her young daughter told a querying adult she wanted to grow up to be either be a boy, or a witch.

"I thought a witch would be fun and I eventually accepted womanhood. I just thought boys had more fun until I realized you could be a girl and do all those things too."

But she understands challenges. She has roots in Canoe Lake, grew up in Meadow Lake, and has seen stress, poverty, violence, and addictions.

At age 16, she received such severe head trauma caused by physical violence that she almost died. In the slow recovery process, she found that having the worst happen took away her fear of failure.

"Just go and do it, because your life can end at any minute, your life can change," she said.

She has developed multiple strategies: her memory and concentration were affected, and she often suffers headaches and nausea but manages the pain with a healthy lifestyle rather than medication. But her brain injury has forced her to be proactive – she always introduces herself to her profs and advises others to do the same.

"They'll remember you and it will help if you have problems or need help."

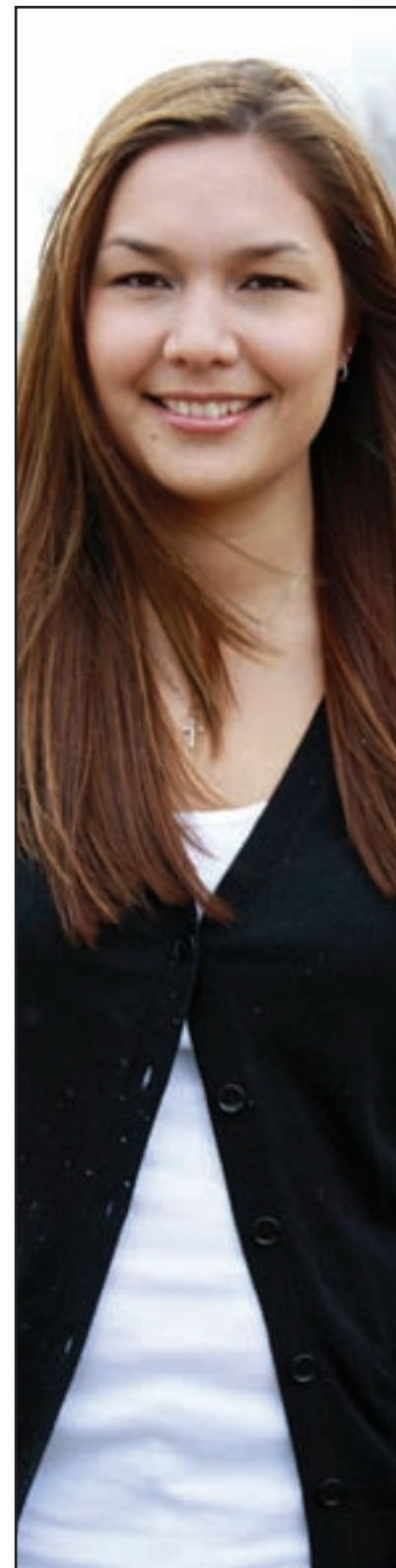
Opikokew also encourages students to self-identify, and apply for designated scholarships – many go unclaimed each year. Support systems through the student support centres, Elders, classmates, and volunteer programs are also important.

"Not everyone has a family that can always be there, so find one and make it for yourself," she said. "Expect that you will fail or make a mistake because that's just normal ... if you don't have a support system it's going to be that much more difficult."

Opikokew feels it's just as important to give back in as many ways as she can – she helped launch a mentorship program, and believes all people who have enough inner strength to help others have a duty to do so. First Nations values embrace teaching others what you have learned and passing on knowledge rather than protecting it or competing for it, and true success and leadership is teaching others to do the same.

"We complain about things as First Nations people but we need to get out there, get the skills and fix it – we can't sit back," she notes, adding that young Aboriginal people have so much to give.

"You always get twice as much back as you put into things."



CASSANDRA OPIKOKEW

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Editorial

Ya gotta love May!

May is always a great month for me. There is of course Mother's Day. Moms are great. There is the May long weekend. Long weekends are great. And I get to go spend some time teaching at the Indian Communication Arts (INCA) Journalism institute at the First Nation University of Canada in Regina. INCA is great.

The INCA program, led by Department Head Shannon Avison, alumni of SIFC many moons ago and INCA teacher and Department head most of the time since then, produces more journalists and communications experts from Indian country than you can shake a stick at.

Two young up and comers from INCA are featured in this edition. Both Cassandra Opikokew and Creeson Agecoutay took the Journalism Institute a few years ago. Cass is graduating this year from the U of R Journalism School and is in the top of her class.

Creeson has spent the year at CTV working beside the legendary Nelson Bird and helping with Indigenous Circle. Both of these young people will have a great influence on the media in Saskatchewan almost immediately.

Add in past notable graduates such as Mervin Brass, formerly of Rawlco and now of the FSIN. Nelson Bird, now a mentor, also cut his first journalistic tooth at INCA. Connie Walker, CBC TV host. Kerry Benjoe Leader-Post. And most recently to find another high profile assignment is INCA and U of R Journalism grad Michelle Hugli. Last month Michelle was named the host of the afternoon show on CBC Radio One, replacing Colin Grever. A young Aboriginal woman is hosting the afternoon show on CBC. You heard it here. That is impressive. Good for CBC. Good for Michelle.

Creeson, Michelle, Kerry, Connie and Cassandra are all under 30 years of age. Nelson and Mervin are way not!

Add in dozens of government media and communication people and you can see why many corporations and government organizations love partnering with INCA and hiring their students.

This program trains our community to go out and tell stories and communicate. They relate from our perspective and can speak to and for the community and better yet their venues allow them to reach thousands of people. Add in the age of Face Book, Twitter and texting and we know our kids will be able to communicate with everyone and at a level that our previous generations could never have dreamed of.

Thank goodness we have people like Shannon Avison and programs like INCA to help get those young people ready. Many of her former students come back yearly to teach there. But really, the old folks like Nelson, Merv and me are just there to spy and to try and keep up.

A little oops last month

Apologies to the provincial minister of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport Christine Tell. Last month we interviewed her and used the headline "SaskCulture Listening to Aboriginal Community." Well, SaskCulture is listening, but for that interview, she was representing her entire Ministry. Sorry for the oversight and keep up the good work Minister Tell.

Coming next in Eagle Feather News

As per usual, in June you can expect our always popular and in demand "How's your Aboriginal Trivia Quiz!" We think this will be the 8th annual, but we aren't really sure because we kind of lost count a while ago. Anyhow, we do this to celebrate the history and contribution of Aboriginal people to the development of Saskatchewan as the best province in Canada to live in. And thanks to the efforts of our friends at the Regina Aboriginal Professional Association June is also Aboriginal History Month so it all ties in quite nicely. We also have the pleasure of working with some up and coming journalists from the INCA Program at FNUC in Regina so look forward to reading their words next month.

Readers Forum

Nuclear power a contentious issue

I am for the construction and implementation of a nuclear power plant in

Saskatchewan. Instead of listing the many pros, people should learn more to clear up misconceptions that still plague the general public.

Donald Little, Saskatoon

Nuclear – the Other Side of the Coin

Nuclear energy is touted as being an economic choice, but let's take a closer look.

Saskatchewan is fortunate in being able to examine the history of nuclear generated electricity in other locations before deciding whether this is the road it wishes to travel.

When nuclear reactors in Ontario failed to live up to their projected life spans, costs of maintenance and repair left Ontarians saddled with a huge debt, which they are still paying with every power bill in a portion marked: debt reduction. When England chose to privatize power generation in 1989, no one was willing to take the nuclear facilities. Even when offered the power plants free of charge, the private sector was not interested. England has chosen to phase out nuclear power and encourage renewable energy sources.

Today, around the world, no new nuclear plants are being invested in by the private sector alone, nor are they being built by utilities that are driven solely by the market price. Nuclear power can only compete with other energy sources when it is strongly subsidized. The Canadian Government subsidized the nuclear industry more than \$17 billion dollars (2001\$) from 1953 to 2002.

In the recently released study, 'The Nuclear Illusion' by Amory B. Lovins and Imran Sheikh, we can find a cost analysis comparing the cost of electricity from a new nuclear power plant (14¢

per kilowatt hour) to that from a wind farm (7¢ per kilowatt hour). This comparison includes the costs of fuel, capital, operations and maintenance, and transmission and distribution. What is not included is significant: the costs for disposing of nuclear waste, insuring plants against an accident, and decommissioning the plants when they wear out. While the comparison is done in the U.S. you get the general idea.

Most of us are aware that nuclear waste requires special attention but it is less common knowledge that insurance for nuclear plants is a unique case also. Canada's Nuclear Liability Act allows that the operators and owners of a nuclear facility are minimally liable for the damage they cause. While a serious accident could end up costing several billions of dollars in damage, most of the costs will be borne by the taxpayer. (Note: your homeowner's policy does not cover nuclear damage)

It has been said that time is money and in the case of construction that is always true. Presently, nuclear reactor construction is a time-consuming endeavour. Reactors in Ontario are going months beyond their expected repair dates. With the cost of building materials continuing to rise, the overall cost of projects can only go up. Particular to the situation in Saskatchewan is the additional cost of adjustments to transmission lines.

Uranium prices are rising as remaining ore bodies are a lower grade, and therefore the costs to mine and mill this commodity are higher. And since uranium is a non-renewable resource, it is only a matter of time until uranium supplies fail.

**Carla Braidek
Saskatoon, SK**

Please go to www.eaglefeathernews.com for more letters.


Next month's question ...

Thanks to everyone for their letters regarding nuclear power in Saskatchewan. The winner of this month Safeway gift card and Rainbow Cinema movie passes is Frank Scholz. Those will be in the mail to you soon Frank. Go to www.eaglefeathernews.com to read all the letters we couldn't fit in.

The question we pose for next month is this:

"Did the Pope offer a real apology? And have the acts of atonement and sorrow from the government and the Churches been enough motivation for the healing to truly begin?"

Send your comments to johnl@eaglefeathernews.com or fax them to (306) 978-8117. All letters are welcomed and may be edited for length and content. Please include your name, address and a phone number for verification. Thanks.



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NUCLEAR POWER IN SASKATCHEWAN ... THE CASE FOR AGAINST

In this age of global warming, the need for nuclear energy is as clear as the air we deserve to breathe. Simply stated, nuclear plants do not emit greenhouse gases when they generate electricity. Along with hydro-electric stations, they remain the only large-scale generation option that can make that claim.

That's why 45 nuclear stations are being built in 12 countries around the world today and why at least 70 more plants are expected to be built over the next 15 years. It's why leading environmentalists like Dr. James Lovelock and Greenpeace founder Patrick Moore are calling for the increased use of nuclear energy as "the best medicine for a sick planet."

It's also why new units are being planned for Ontario and, potentially, Alberta. The time is right for Saskatchewan to consider joining that ever-growing list.

Many economists believe Saskatchewan will help lead Canada out of recession in the coming years and that we'll need up to 2,200 megawatts of additional electricity by 2020.

Nuclear, as a baseload source that reliably churns out power round-the-clock, can help fill that gap with the help of renewable sources like wind or solar. Diversity of supply is vital to a healthy market.

We have never said nuclear is the answer to all of our energy problems. There are no "magic bullets" when it comes to energy options. Every technology has its pros and cons. Even wind farms have a growing chorus of critics who see them as visual blights on the landscape that disrupt sleep patterns and bird migration routes.

Recognizing this, it's time to set aside the scare tactics and rhetoric too often used by those who oppose nuclear and consider some facts to see if it's right for Saskatchewan. To make informed decisions, people tell us they want to know about spent fuel and the impact nuclear has on the environment. They want to know if our plants are safe and the real story about radiation.

Often, they are surprised to learn:

- That within 40 years, used fuel has less than one-thousandth of the radioactivity it had when it was removed from the reactor.
- Spent fuel is not really waste, but a valuable resource that can be recycled and reused should Canada ever adopt this practice. In France, where fuel is already recycled, the waste generated by a family of four over their entire lifetime would be small enough to fit into a coffee cup.
- Vacationers will receive 20 times more radiation flying just once from Saskatoon to Hawaii than they would living beside a nuclear station for a year. You would also have to live beside that plant for more than 2,000 years to get the same amount of radiation you'd receive from just one medical X-ray.
- Nuclear plants have been safely operating in Canada for nearly half a century and power every second house, hospital and school in Ontario today. In all that time, no member of the public has ever been harmed by radiation from their operations.
- More people get hurt working in real estate offices than nuclear plants, according to injury statistics compiled by the U.S. Bureau of Labor, and employees in the nuclear industry are less likely than the general population to die from cancer or non cancer diseases.
- Nuclear plants have the smallest environmental footprint of all energy options, meaning they produce the most amount of energy per hectare of land. In fact, a single uranium pellet smaller than your thumb can power your home for more than a month.
- Nuclear plants are efficient, operating at greater than 85 per cent capacity. You would have to burn 400 tonnes of coal, 270,000 litres of oil or 3,000,000 litres of natural gas to replace the energy that can be drawn from a single nuclear fuel bundle about the size of a fireplace log.
- The carbon dioxide emissions from nuclear power are similar to those from wind power when you consider all of the life-cycle environmental impacts of building a new plant – from manufacturing equipment, construction and installation.

- Steve Cannon,
Bruce Power

Before I say anything – I recommend you go to the report site and read what the nuclear advisory committees are saying to the Wall government. One of their recommendations is that Saskatchewan become a repository for the toxic waste of every other plant in the world.

While I accept that much of the world's uranium has come from here, including the bombs that landed in Nagasaki and Hiroshima, every citizen of this province needs to look to our First Nations leaders. I don't know nearly enough about treaties, but the phrase "to a plough's depth" leaves me hoping that the wisdom of our ancestors will stop us from stuffing toxins into our mother after taking them out and making them radioactive. No matter how much money is at stake.

As the old saying goes, "opinions are like farts – everyone has 'em, and they all stink". But when I first started covering the nuclear issue, I didn't really have much of an opinion one way or the other. Sure, I remembered Chernobyl. But that was in a place where you had to line up for bread ... surely something like that couldn't happen here?

Off I went to an event in Saskatoon where guest speakers had been brought in – NDP politician Peter Prebble, a man from Port Hope, and a scientist who disagreed with the industry.

I left with images of how people in Port Hope were trying hard to battle a dragon – a nuclear dragon who breathed out toxic waste that lasts thousands of years longer than any containers we've been able to build so far.

Every person in the province of Ontario has a monthly surcharge on their bills for the incredible debt the province has run up, in overpriced and unreliable nuclear technology that leaks radioactivity into the ground and water.

Other images: First Nations Dene communities - their men who were, if it's not too strong a word, exploited, to mine and transport radioactive uranium and tailings on barges – many of them, not knowing the dangers, resting right on the bags during the trips back and forth.

A generation of cancers in both communities – and in the First Nations communities, these men were already dead, and their widows growing old.

Some people say, "we have new technology and awareness now." (especially the nuclear industry).

But a German pediatrician was at RUH earlier this year with some of that new technology and awareness, a study carried out and released just over a year ago by pro-nuclear scientists in Germany who did a double-blind study 23 years long – comparing kids near reactors, and kids away from them, expecting their theories would play out – there is no harm from nuclear plants.

But childhood cancers and leukemias increase 120 per cent – to a distance measureable in METRES. The closer you are, and they only measured within 50 km, the sicker the kids are. Aerial views also show this in surrounding vegetation, noted the good doctor.

A nuclear physicist at the U of S debated Dr. Jim Harding – Harding is a man you may want to listen to. The physicist ran around with a radioactive device saying everything emits radiation, and that it is natural. Dr. Jim Harding made a comment along the lines that so was water – and you can still drown in it. What is emitted from nuclear plants is not naturally occurring radiation.

Speaking of water: those in the know say it will be what the next wars are fought over. Canada has fresh water in abundance, and our neighbours to the south covet it already. Did you know that nuclear energy requires MASSIVE amounts of water in order to keep cool the immense heat given off by the reaction?

France, one of the only developed nations still investing in nuclear energy – (contrary to Bruce Power and Cameco reports, countries are wholesale bailing out of this overly expensive, unreliable, hazardous, and toxic waste-producing method of energy production, and so these companies are desperate for new markets) – has had several plant shut-downs due to drought. When you consider that the average plant takes billions more to build than is initially quoted and then has to be constantly upgraded, repaired, go down for maintenance, and ultimately be decommissioned – you begin to realize that the Nuclear Industry is actually hiding a lot of their costs when they talk about affordable renewable clean energy.

In fact, they're hiding a lot of things. Anybody want to trade some shiny glass beads for your future, the future of our planet, and the future of the next 77 generations?

- Andrea Ledding

Almost true tales of man-eating buffalo ... and more

There is the persistent story of an elderly First Nation woman, who is out in the bush smoking a moose hide. It's one of those dry hot days where the danger of forest fire is high.

A passing aircraft spots smoke and reports it to the DNR who dispatch a Canso water bomber. The big, lumbering plane supposedly drops a full load on the poor old lady soaking her and her moose hide in pink fire retardant.

Then there is the story of the American hunter who is afraid to get lost in the Canadian woods. He takes a big ball of string along with him and ties one end to a tree. He then walks into the bush unraveling the string as he goes. When it's time to return he simply winds the string back up again and follows it out.

These stories sound a tad far fetched but there's enough to it that they just may be true. There is also a certain cross cultural tension at play.

There is the story of a Beady's First Nation character who meets a tourist at Duck Lake. They get to talking and the crazy guy convinces the tourist there is excellent fish to be caught in Duck Lake. As you may know, Duck Lake is an over-grown slough. They spend an afternoon fishing in 24 inches of water.

Here's another slightly different tale. A group of hikers are walking in the mountains. They come across a forest fire burn a few years old. They leave the trail for whatever reason and come across the skeleton of a scuba diver complete with mask, rubber suit, air tank and flippers. They realize to their horror the poor fellow must have been swimming in a lake when a water bomber intent on putting out the fire swooped down and sucked him up along with full load of water. He was then dumped on the fire only to found by the hikers years later.

Some First Nations people living long ago are crossing the prairie when they come across the skeleton of a buffalo. They are surprised to see the skeleton of a person inside the buffalo bones. They believe the buffalo ate the man. They quickly leave the area worried other man eating buffalo may be around.

The bizarre bones are explained by another story. It turns out a man is freezing to death in the bitter cold of winter. He comes across a buffalo. He shoots the buffalo, guts it and crawls

inside to keep warm. He falls asleep and finds to his horror that upon awakening the buffalo carcass has frozen rock hard trapping him inside and so he dies.

A man comes back from snaring



Common Ground
John Cuthand

rabbits. He skins them and places them in a big stainless steel bowl by the kitchen sink. One rabbit is only stunned and comes back to life. It jumps out and hops into the living room. The man's mother-in-law is watching TV. She sees the naked rabbit, lets out a scream and dies of a heart attack.

Could these events really have happened? Enquiring minds want to know.

Strange things are happening in the North. House cats have been mating with bush rabbits in Beauval. They have been having offspring too. The cabbits have the face of a cat and the ears of a rabbit. They hop when they hunt mice and purr when they lay in the sun.

Lake Trout pulled out of Wollaston Lake have been found growing fur. It is believed global climate change is to blame. The news is being kept quiet as the Canadian government is worried European anti-fur demonstrators may confuse the fuzzy fish with baby seals.

There was this First Nations woman who married a big black bear. They were truly in love but the people were afraid of her grouchy husband. Her old people spoke to them. They told them the people were afraid and it would be best for everyone if they lived a little ways off the reserve. This way she could still see her family and everyone would feel safe.

The arrangement worked fine. People grew used to them coming and going. Then one day they saw the woman had a big belly and she was moaning and groaning. She rode on her husband as he rushed along the trail to her parents place. People gathered. They heard a baby cry. One brave man snuck over and peeked in the window. He rushed back and told the people, "That woman had a baby and it has bare feet!"

Not quite an Urban Legend but a decent tale worth relating anyway.

Message from the Minister

I am pleased to welcome Toby Greschner as First Nations and Métis Relations Assistant Deputy Minister responsible for Northern Affairs. I believe northerners and our Ministry will benefit from the fact that Mr. Greschner makes his home in La Ronge.

Mr. Greschner has spent many years serving northerners in his previous work with the Ministry of Education. His past experience will enhance our government's valuable connection to thriving northern communities.



Honourable June Draude
Minister of First Nations
and Métis Relations



Toby Greschner
Assistant Deputy Minister -
Northern Affairs Division



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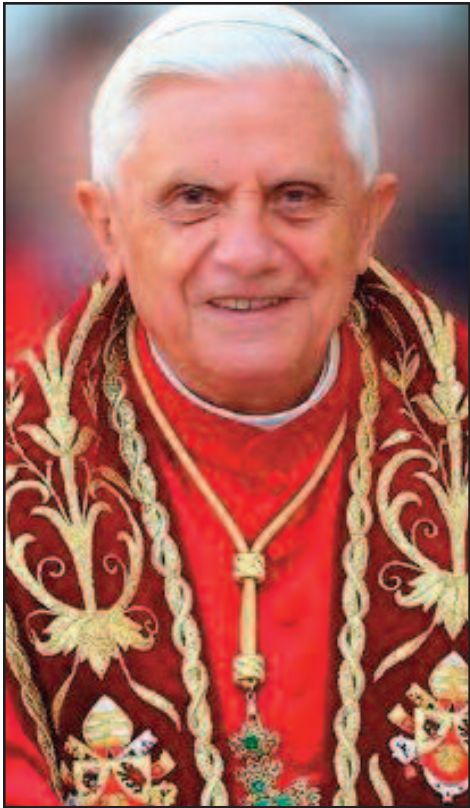
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Fontaine says audience with Pope closes the circle

VATICAN CITY – Assembly of First Nations National Chief Phil Fontaine and a delegation of First Nations Elders, residential school survivors and Aboriginal leaders met with Pope Benedict XVI at the Vatican recently to discuss the legacy of the Indian residential schools era and the need for reconciliation.

“As we approach the one year anniversary of the Government of Canada’s apology on June 11, this visit with the Holy Father closes the circle of reconciliation,” Fontaine said.



POPE BENEDICT XVI

“In the past, we received apologies from the Anglican, United and Presbyterian churches and the Government of Canada for the residential schools. Today’s expression of understanding, acknowledgement and emotion by His Holiness on behalf of the Catholic Church closes the circle,” stated the National

Chief.

The Vatican issued a two-paragraph statement on its website prior to the meeting.

“Given the sufferings that some indigenous children experienced in the Canadian residential school system, the Holy Father expressed his sorrow at the anguish caused by the deplorable conduct of some members of the church and he offered his sympathy and prayerful solidarity,” the statement read.

“His Holiness emphasized that acts of abuse cannot be tolerated in society. He prayed that all those affected would experience healing, and he encouraged First Nations peoples to continue to move forward with renewed hope.”

The entourage attended an outdoor general audience in St. Peter’s Square. Included in the delegation, at the invitation of the National Chief, were Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami President Mary Simon and Métis National Council Vice-President David Chartrand.

Following the general audience, Chief Fontaine and four AFN delegates, as well as five representatives of the Catholic Church, met the Most Holy Father in a private meeting that lasted approximately 20 minutes.

In this historic meeting Fontaine stated: “Our struggle has reached a decisive moment. While the past must never be forgotten, our destiny lies in building a future with enduring foundations, the cornerstone of which must be forgiveness.”

The delegates presented His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI with a number of gifts that symbolized the diverse culture and spirituality of First Nations peoples: an eagle feather, traditional beaded moccasins and gloves, a porcupine quill box designed with the AFN insignia, a Bible translated into the Dene language

and a silver crucifix specially designed and commissioned for the occasion that symbolizes reconciliation between First Nations and the Catholic Church.

The National Chief stated that the meeting was a moving and extraordinary moment for all involved, and is a

highpoint of his own lifelong work to bring resolution to the legacy of the Indian residential schools.

The Catholic Church operated approximately 75 per cent of the Indian residential schools in Canada.



NDP Leadership Candidate Ryan Meili on partnering with First Nations and Métis people

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Visit to Vancouver's Downtown Eastside a sobering experience

By Darla Read
For Eagle Feather News

Youth from the Clearwater River Dene Nation had an eye-opening experience last month. Twenty-five Grade 10 students toured Vancouver's notorious downtown eastside, which has become known as North America's worst skid row.

Clearwater River's Chief Roy Cheecham and 11 other chaperones traveled with the students for the 48-hour tour that's called Scared Straight. Tour guides led them through the area during the day as well as at night.

Cheecham says the idea was to teach the students what can happen if you get involved with drugs.

"People do sleep outside and go hungry and many bad things happen to good people. And we wanted these kids to understand that before, you know, if they're using now, we're trying to get them to quit and if they're thinking of through peer pressure and the like, starting alcohol or drug abuse, maybe we can prevent these people from doing that."

One of the students, November Raine, says they were all really excited when they first got to Vancouver. She says that excitement quickly faded.

"When we first stopped and seen the first woman, and we introduced her and asked her questions, nobody seemed pretty pumped about it anymore. They were all just shocked, and most of them were getting sad," Raine says.

"We were on the streets, walking around, looking at all these people," she explains. "They were all homeless, and there was a bunch of them standing in the rain, and it just wasn't cool."

The hardest part for her was seeing a relative on the street. She didn't know he was homeless and says it hit her really hard.

"It really hurt you know to think like the rest of your family had just walked out on him and left him there. I don't know. Right when he seen us all, he just wanted to go home. He told us to take him home. He just wanted to go home with us. He was just crying, and people started crying."

Raine says she wanted to help him but didn't know how to, so she gave him her grandmother's phone number.

She says it was really tough seeing people in those kinds of situations, but says it was a definite learning experience – and says now she's not so interested in doing drugs or alcohol. "I just felt glad that I had a home and everything. They were telling us to stay in school. I just felt very sorry for them."

NDP leadership race rocked by membership buying allegations

By Darla Read
For Eagle Feather News

A provincial leadership race has taken some twists and turns lately so the front-runner has been left with some explaining to do.

A few weeks ago it was revealed that Dwain Lingenfelter's campaign to lead the New Democratic Party paid for 1,100 memberships, mostly from the Flying Dust and Waterhen Lake First Nations, but when the party phoned people, many weren't aware they had been signed up and didn't want to join.

Lingenfelter wrote it off as an over-exuberant volunteer, calling it a mistake. He says it is common to pay for memberships if it is a financial hardship for people, which is why his team paid around \$10,000 for them.

The party cancelled all 1,100 memberships due to allegations they may have been improperly obtained, kept the money spent on them, and hired Swift Current lawyer Robert Hale to investigate the matter, something Lingenfelter says he welcomes. When the party outlined its terms of reference for Hale, it became known that the memberships were paid for in 10 and 20 dollar bills.

Lingenfelter hopes this incident does not make First Nations voters lose their trust in him or the party.

"But on the other hand, I've got to work even harder to earn the respect

of First Nations and others in the province. But having said that, I have a very, very large team of people working. And while we're all disappointed at this issue and this problem and mistake that was made, I think we're all determined to work even harder to win the leadership."

Chief Jim Norman of Flying Dust issued a statement, saying its council "did not, and have not committed, nor paid for any individual's membership within the NDP party."

Norman says council honoured a request by Lingenfelter to address them, which is the reserve's standard practice with politicians.

Finally, he says there are people in their community who have worked on provincial and federal campaigns in the past, some of whom have since passed away. He says it's unfortunate to see their hard work "sullied by the suggestions that it is a standard practice to have wholesale memberships issued without people's knowledge or consent."

Lingenfelter has promised to fully cooperate with the investigation. Hale is supposed to submit a report to the NDP by 5 p.m. on May 12, and after that, the party will decide what portion of the report will be made public. The other three leadership candidates, Yens Pedersen, Ryan Meili, and Deb Higgins, are calling for it to be made public.



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Dying without a will is murder on survivors

Where there's a will there's a way! Nobody likes to talk about it – but everybody dies.

Even when our family members have been diagnosed with terminal illnesses we still don't like to talk about death.

Planning for death is like planning for any other event we may plan in our lives. Everyone should prepare a will listing their wishes upon their death. If you die without a will it makes things so difficult for your family in an already tough time.

Take the time to sit down and write your wishes down, let your family know where you keep your will so that upon your passing they can find it and fulfill your wishes. It's not an easy task, but very important.

My mother died without a will and what a mess she left behind. Family was fighting over her house because she didn't take the time to write down who she wanted to leave the house to. Now compare that with my dad who had a will when he died, he let us know who was getting what, what type of funeral he wanted. It sure made things easier for me and the rest of my

siblings.

Some people might believe that only those folks with money should write a will but that's not true. Everyone should have a will.

For example, a young parent might tell you who they want to continue raising their children, who gets the house, or life insurance.

Whatever your situation, it's important to take the time to write a will – you're never too young or too old.

I recently asked my auntie (she's dying) if she had a will – her reply: "I'm never going to die."

That was her way of not dealing with the reality of life. Whatever the reason, my aunt and many other Aboriginal people are leaving this world without a will. If you are a status Indian living on reserve a will is a relatively easy thing to prepare.

There are four things that must be included in your Will. First, the document/letter must be identified as a will. Your opening sentence should

say something like "This is the last will and testament of John Doe." Second, the will must be dated, signed and include your witness' signature.

Third, the will should say how your assets will be disposed of (who are you leaving your stuff to?) The final step is to appoint an executor, the person who is going to ensure that your wishes are fulfilled.

That's it. Simple, right! It can be written on a napkin as long as it has all the components I just listed. The process is a little different for those of us who live off-reserve. There are a couple of extra steps.

You can make an appointment with a lawyer and have them write your wishes or you can purchase will kits at the store and fill them out yourself and then have a lawyer look it over. If you're looking to save money on lawyer fees I recommend that you ask for a lawyer who is articling at a law firm as their fees are often less. Whatever you choose – just do it and save your family the hassle and

heartache.

Many things in our lives can change at the drop of a hat. Perhaps the person you chose as the executor has died or you longer want that person as your executor. Maybe you have divorced and no longer want to leave your possessions to your ex, just know that you can change your will at any time, it's not written in stone.

You can change your will as often as you like. In fact, it is a good idea to read it over from time to time to make sure it is accurate and up to date. You should change your will if, for example, there is birth of a child, divorce, change of residence, death of someone mentioned in your will, or if you acquired new valuable articles.

You should always initial all changes or additions and have them witnessed.

Information on Wills and Estates can be found in Sections 42 -50 of the Indian Act.

Thanks for your emails. I enjoy hearing from the readers.

Send your comments and questions to Sandee Sez C/O Eagle Feather News P.P. Box 924, Station Main, Saskatoon, SK S7K 3M4 or email s.ahenakew@yahoo.ca



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Ambitious plan will see Batoche open year round

By Andrea Ledding
Of Eagle Feather News

The development of Batoche as not only a museum site but as a living, breathing part of the vibrant Métis community and homeland continues, as the 125th anniversary of the 1885 Resistance draws nigh.

Julie Wriston, Communications Officer for Métis-Nation Saskatchewan (MNS), shared some of the details.

"The idea is to keep Batoche running year round," said Wriston.

Key to that are cultural demonstrations: hide tanning, scraping and stretching; birch bark biting and bead-working; and smoking or drying fish and meat.

"A family or class can participate and leave with something hands-on, a lasting memory of the Métis."

Three new cabins have been added to the existing two, and can be rented out for \$60 per day. A brand new kitchen and concession facility has also been added, opening up the winter site, just north of the Batoche National Park Museum. Groups can stay longer year round, with better amenities, or utilize the site for events such as reunions, weddings, or family get-togethers. Besides basic tenting grounds there are electric sites available.

"Schools can bring the kids out year round," she added.

MNS leader Robert Doucette observed that often school groups from northern Métis communities are bussed for hours, rushed through the museum for only an hour or so, and then must make



Métis jiggers perform on the main stage at last year's Back to Batoche celebrations. Last year saw record crowds, a record that is expected to be broken again this year. (Photo by John Lagimodiere)

the long return trip home. An option to camp means a fuller experience of the site.

"It's important to be able to spend some time on the land and bring back the spirit of the gathering place, actually have it be a gathering place year round," noted Wriston. "For so many of us, it's a reconnection to our roots, a place of healing and a spiritual connection to our ancestry."

Kitchen and facilities rentals also help generate modest revenue throughout the year while providing public access. Wriston noted a very positive shared management exists with Parks Canada

and the various levels of governments. In April, as part of the Federal Government's Economic Action Plan, \$3.7 million was designated to Batoche to renew the visitor reception centre and heritage presentation. Wriston said Saskatchewan Tourism, Parks, and Recreation is also very supportive of the attraction and historical significance of the site.

"It's an added value partnership, and it's good for everybody," she noted.

"Batoche is a place of pride and it rekindles that spark of pride – it's a place to pass on traditions down to the next

generation, and experience that sense of belonging."

They are hoping to open on the May long weekend, and in June the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly will be held on-site with all elected officials for two days.

Back to Batoche Days will be held July 23 to 26 - the Métis Nation's most important celebration, memorializing and paying homage to heroes, and celebrating who we are as a nation today. Visitors are welcome to camp, pitch a tipi, tent, or sleep under the prairie skies like so many Métis settlers did centuries ago. Gate admission has been lowered to \$10 per day or \$20 for the whole weekend to make it more accessible.

"Twenty dollars for four days in a campsite is pretty cheap," she noted.

Electrical sites are higher, and available on a first-come, first-served basis.

"It's family-oriented, drug and alcohol-free, and everyone is welcome."

The festival blends jigging, music, fiddling, and bannock baking contests with slo-pitch tournaments, chuckwagon/chariot races, and square dancing events. While there is an excellent lineup for the main stage, for the first year ever, there will be a "Métis idol contest".

"People can come and show off their singing and musical talents," noted Wriston.

The always moving traditional Sunday procession to the gravesite of fallen Métis fighters from the Northwest Resistance will wind down the festivities.

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Papal apology served a useful purpose

On Wednesday, April 29, National Chief Phil Fontaine, accompanied by Elders and other Indian Residential School survivors met privately with Pope Benedict XVI at the Vatican. There the Pontiff is reported as having expressed sorrow at the role of some members of the Catholic Church in the tragic story of the residential schools.

Phil views the Pope's words as a clear statement that wrongs were done; that the abuses are intolerable.

The event ignited the dynamic debate on the value of apologies. One thing is clear, regardless of the view one takes: April 29 will be an historic date in Aboriginal relations in Canada.

On the negative side, one view that is well publicized is that this 'Age of Apology' is not something desirable. And the argument goes on that today's citizens did not do it and so should not be apologetic.

On the opposite side, as it were, are those who say that the exact words are important: the word 'apology' is a necessary ingredient in the recipe for contrition.

Then there are people like yours truly who take a functional view and keep asking of anything: what is it for? What is it good for? What does it do?

This approach seems to help to find out exactly what we are dealing with. On this view, the label that we put on a thing is not the most important issue, although labels themselves have a whole lot of useful functions, but that is a story for another day.

The linguist and philosopher Wittgenstein is well known for urging us not to be seduced or bewitched by the word. Too many conversations go round and round in circles with good folks arguing over words.

For a long time I was a bit of a skeptic about apologies. I could not quite see what they were good for. I thought of

the image of the young boy who is forced to apologize to his little sister for hitting her, which he does, while harbouring thoughts of doing it again the very first chance he gets.

I wondered if formal apologies by leaders of states like Canada could be seen in that light. Surely there must be more than the mouthing of words to make an apology meaningful.

And experience shows the fragility of reliance on particular words. In Australia the popular movement to apologize for the Stolen Generations, the Down Under equivalent of Indian Residential Schools in Canada, adopted 'Sorry Day' to express itself. Those of you who watched the closing ceremonies of the 2000 Sydney Olympics will recall that the members of a popular musical band bore the word 'Sorry' on their pants.

There is more evidence that the use of particular words may not mean all that much in the field of apologies. One of the memorable and powerful images in the field of reconciliation happened in Warsaw, Poland on December 7, 1970.

On that day, the German Chancellor Willy Brandt attended a commemoration of the Jewish victims of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising of 1943.

Although it had been decades since the historic uprising and the end of the Holocaust, Brandt spontaneously dropped to his knees before the commemoration monument, a profound act of apology and repentance.

Although he spoke no words, the image of this silent apology, seen in the news by so many Poles and Germans, had a powerful effect on both nations.

Brandt himself has been said to have reflected on the moment and said, "I did what people do when words fail them."

So what can we learn from our experiences and thoughts about apologies and their meaning or significance?

What are they good for? My own reflections have led me to believe that a formal apology by the head of a state can play a very important role.

It is a firm assertion that the former things that were condoned by the state will no longer be tolerated: "Not under our watch will you ever be treated like that again!"

No one can seriously argue against that. Where great wrongs have been committed under the watch of a government, it is extremely useful for leaders who follow to denounce the wrongs and assure citizens that they need not fear that the intolerable will happen again.

This has nothing to do with the strange idea that apologies imply the personal guilt of individual citizens today and should be resisted on that account.

The idea that apologies by state leaders have merit is not some fancy

post-modernist thinking: the first duty and *raison d'être* of the state is to protect its citizens.

It requires no magical formula to make this statement but the actions must match the words.

And that is where the supporters and opponents of the Pope's expression of sorrow seem to be agreed. This is evident in the public debate as reported.

Critics who put all the weight on the word 'apology' nonetheless hoped that the Pope's apology will spur the government to begin helping First Nations people to heal. In his reported remarks the National Chief thought that the influence of the Catholic Church in Canada is an advantage which the AFN can use.

The views of religious leaders still matter because they carry moral weight that can influence secular governments.

The alternative source of moral authority in Canada today seems to be the judges on the Supreme Court of Canada and federal government bureaucrats who design policies.

Which group's opinions ought to matter most is a red-hot topic that I may perhaps have left alone. Sorry.



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Artists changing the cultural landscape

By John Lagimodiere
Of Eagle Feather News

SaskCulture committed itself to engaging Aboriginal people in a meaningful way when they hired Damon Badger Heit to be their Coordinator of First Nation and Métis Initiatives. That investment over two years ago has begun to pay off for the community in many ways.

Aleyna May is a visual artist who makes music videos, documentaries and engages youth. The Cree/Métis from Prince Albert recently ran a very successful SaskCulture funded program at PAVED Arts Studio on 20th Street in Saskatoon.

“Burden of Truth” was the pilot project which was a hip hop production. Then we did a program called Killa B’s and had an outdoor hip hop show at White Buffalo. That was a great event,” said Aleyna May over a coffee.

“It really was a project for the community. We worked with lots of young people from all different walks of life and we had success, and to me that means the community



This little fella took to the main stage to be with the hip hop artists from PAVED Arts at an out door concert at the White Buffalo Youth Lodge in Saskatoon. (Photo PAVED Arts)

supported it. The documentary we made during it showed at Imaginative and ran on CBC. We were very proud.”

Badger Heit is an artist himself. From acting to painting murals with students, the self proclaimed “Jack of all trades artist” is now working the other side of the fence. And he likes it.

“All these experiences taught me a lot. Now I get to work where the money comes from. And when I go see the outcomes, it feels good” said Badger Heit, a member of the Mistawasis First Nation.

“With Aleyna’s program it was an opportunity for her to practice her profession, get paid for it, and qualify for Employment Insurance and Pension. Lots of artists don’t get the chance to do that, and it benefits the organization by enhancing its reach and allowing it to do different programs that attract youth and gives them outlets.

“Some of her youth came and performed at our SaskCulture AGM and they were professional. I think it showed our board members and volunteers what our programs can do in the community.”

And ultimately it is the community that benefits from a thriving arts environment.

“The community where we did our project on 20th, I think the kids can now access positive venues,” said Aleyna.

“It was media arts as the tool. This position I had, it was important for the young kids to relate to me.

“Just because they are down on their luck, doesn’t mean that they can’t be successful at music, or video or photography. I share my experience with them about my mentors and my drive that got me here.

“I apply what I know. It was new for all of us what we did. But the place is now part of the youth and the youth are a part of PAVED because it is an artist run coop and



Aleyna May and Damon Badger Heit see the return to the community of the SaskCulture investment in youth cultural programs. (Photo by John Lagimodiere)

they are members.

“I think in North America, Aboriginal young artists are going to change the landscape. By bringing people together through arts, society is going to change because it is a positive. It does not hold us down. It is letting people actually create.”

And Badger Heit agrees with Aleyna because he is witnessing it first hand.

“There are a lot of things changing in this province. The McKenzie Art Gallery this year, for the first time ever, the entire upstairs was Aboriginal artists. And a lot of them are from Saskatchewan,” added Badger Heit.

“We should be celebrating those kinds of things. Cultural arts people are catalyst for change. They allow diverse people to come together and learn from each other. That is very powerful.

“And I get to see so much of that and share with it other people. I’m very lucky”

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Generoux finds his place in film and TV

Cory Generoux is fast becoming one of Saskatchewan's, if not Canada's, frontrunners in the film and TV biz. A director, writer and actor – I assume he's a producer too – Generoux feverishly pumps out the work in a variety of genres.

Dogz Lyfe: Burdens of a Gangsta Rapper is a documentary Generoux made about Saskatchewan hip hop artist Robin Favel. Word on the street is that it's pretty darn good. So good, in fact, it's been nominated for a prestigious Golden Sheaf Award at this year's Yorkton Film Festival.

"It has been nominated in the Aboriginal category, along with CBC's Last Bannock Standing," Generoux said from his Regina office recently. "It (Dogz Lyfe) also premiered on APTN."

Last Bannock Standing is a CBC documentary about the comedy troupe Bionic Bannock Boys, of which Generoux is a member. The film is a play on the popular Comedy Central reality show, Last Comic Standing, and follows the troupe as they search for a new member.

Not only did the Boys find the new addition to the troupe, they also developed a TV pilot with APTN.

"We wrote it, shot it, edited it and it aired on APTN HD and will be airing on the mainstream APTN channel in the fall.

"In fact, APTN believes in the program so much, we signed a series deal to do Bionic Bannock Boys Season One with some ace up our sleeves special guests and a dream team crew."

And the projects don't stop there. Generoux has a few things on the go and says it's "hectic but manageable."

Pow Wow Thunder is a documentary about pow wow through the eyes and words of pow wow announcers and how they view the world of competitive traditional dancing.

"We filmed it last summer and fall at various celebrations across the prairies and U.S. It is currently in post-production and features music by Nakoia Heavy Runner, among a few others."

Then there's the Late Late TAPWE Late Show with Wisakecahk, a short film that spoofs late night talk shows in true Bionic Bannock Boys fashion. Generoux urges one and all to check out www.BionicBannockBoys.com/lateshowmovie.htm for more info, trailers and pics.

With such a range of creative talent, it's no wonder Generoux is going to be a familiar face at this year's Yorkton Film Festival.

The Aboriginal category at the Fest has only one stipulation: fittingly, filmmakers must be Aboriginal. Whether the films are shorts, documentaries, dramas, or whatever, they are all entered in the



The Bionic Bannock Boys are Sean Dean, Keon Francis and Cory Generoux. (Photo supplied)

same category. Having such a wide variety of films in the same category could be frustrating for the filmmakers entering their work.

Generoux doesn't think so.

"At festivals like these, with this particular category, a film might be seen by a broadcaster or producer that wouldn't otherwise have seen it. Opportunity can arise from

that. And quite frankly, given the Aboriginal ancestry of the area and land, it is only fitting to have such recognition at the festival."

Lisa Lanigan, office manager for the Yorkton Film Festival, feels the Aboriginal category is a much needed component, regardless of the wide range of films entered.

"The Aboriginal category plays an essential part in our Festival's success. There are some incredible Aboriginal films being made in our country – something we should all celebrate and be proud of."

True enough. But aren't Aboriginal people typically grouped into one category? Either you're Aboriginal or you're not. It's not often the hundreds of different cultures, languages and traditions are recognized as unique in mainstream society.

Lanigan was very diplomatic as she smoothly put me in my place.

"The Aboriginal category is open to all Aboriginal filmmakers, regardless of the topic of the film, as a way to recognize their achievements. The (Aboriginal) filmmakers also have the option of entering the film into any one of our other categories."

Wait. Now I don't have anything to complain about. Generoux did his best to try and sympathize.

"Yeah I think possibly the use of sub categories in the 'aboriginal genre' would help matters. Short, drama, doc ..."

"The (Yorkton) Festival promotes and celebrates Canadian short film, which is essential to the film and television industry," Lanigan said in the middle of a whirlwind of things to organize.

"That is certainly evident by the exceptional entries the Festival has received over the past 62 years. And counting!"

Even though he begrudgingly agreed with my whining about sub-categories in the Aboriginal section of the Festival, Generoux feels Yorkton is second to none when it comes to hosting the prestigious event.

"My experience at Yorkton (Film Festival) is and always has been a good one. The people are very welcoming, I have an opportunity to meet new filmmakers and broadcasters from all over. And, of course, watch some good films I wouldn't otherwise get to see."

The Yorkton Film Festival runs from May 21-24. Please go to www.goldensheafawards.com for more information.

Wapos Bay Finishes Production on Fourth Season

Even though every dire effort was made to correct an error in last month's edition (wink, wink Johnny), Eagle Feather News A & E mistakenly reported Wapos Bay was shooting its third season. In fact, Wapos Bay just wrapped shooting its FOURTH season and are now into post-production. And word has it, we can all expect a fifth!



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Agecoutay experiences a growth spurt

Creeson Agecoutay has made a good first impression with viewers of Indigenous Circle on CTV. Agecoutay has been helping Nelson Bird do interviews and chase stories for the past year as a student intern. Once he is done he intends to go back to university or another broadcast school to obtain a degree or diploma. His ultimate goal is an Indian Communication Arts certificate and a Journalism degree with a possible English degree as well. He was recently honoured back home on Cowessess.

Tell us about the honouring ceremony at your home reserve?

I first heard I was going to be honored at the Cowessess Honoring Elders and Youth Round Dance a couple months ago and I thought it was great and I would definitely be there. In Regina I was always busy with university and working two jobs so I never really had the time to go home except for holidays like Christmas and Thanksgiving. In that sense coming home to see all my family, teachers and old friends was great. Not only was I being honored but I got to emcee with Winston Bear and Nelson Bird. I also got to sit beside a big gun celebrity, Gordon Tootoosis, which was awesome. When they brought me up to the front the Cowessess Health Round Dance Committee read my bio, handed me a Cowessess jacket that had 'honoree' and my name on it. Just hearing everyone clapping for me was a reward in itself. It was difficult when my old Grade 6 teacher, Maria Sparvier, got up and told a story about me in Grade 6. It was about how I was the shortest kid in the class and we were doing a test. I suddenly sat up in the classroom and said "One day I will be taller than all of you." And Maria said, "And in a sense, today he is." After that she gave me a big hug and said good job. That right there was hard, leaving a lump in my throat.

Was it cool to be honoured in such a way?

Being honored among Elders is just a huge honor in itself. I don't consider myself anything big at all. I just do what I believe is right and that's pursuing an education and a career. Cowessess is my home and it's

learning experience.

Any special interviews or stories that stick in your mind from the year working for CTV?

It was hard doing the Sundance Stonechild fire story. Here is this single mother with her children and she loses everything in a house fire. Nelson and I went to see her the day after the house fire and she was still in tears figuring out what to do. She later found a house and people of Saskatchewan pitched in and donated a lot which made me happy for her. Those are the stories that stick in my mind vividly.

What has the Indian Communication Arts program at FNUC done for you?

The INCA program made me realize what I want to do in life. It gave me a job that is nationally recognized. It gave me the foundational educational tools that I needed to begin a career in journalism. I

recommend everyone to take it whether it is for a credit or to upgrade your marks even if you don't want to pursue a career in journalism. It helps you how to tell a story and more. Communications also covers a broad range of jobs so journalism is just one of many jobs you can get with an INCA certificate.

What tips do you have for students who want to become journalists?

I'll take the lessons I have learned from my teachers and from the little experience I have. Here's a few! Always listen and stay focused. Stay informed! Research if need be and do a checklist in your head and write on the go! Know what clips you want when you hear them, know what shots you want to use when you shoot, and think of lines in your head that work while you're shooting. One thing that comes with time is writing your story in your head while on the job. I still have difficulty with that but sometimes it just all comes together.

What is it like to work with a person who is such a big deal as the one and only Nelson Bird? I grew up watching Indigenous Circle and seeing Nelson reporting on the news thinking, "I want to do that job." My mom would tell me jokingly, "You should get into journalism; Nelson is probably the only First Nations reporter in Canada!" At the time she may have been right. Now I'm working with him every day and he is a great friend and teacher. Nelson isn't this 'big deal' like you say he is. He is just an ordinary guy with a job like everyone else. The only exception is that he is seen on TV. But working with him every day, again, it's truly a great and huge

learning experience.

What tips do you have for students who want to become journalists?

I'll take the lessons I have learned from my teachers and from the little experience I have. Here's a few! Always listen and stay focused. Stay informed! Research if need be and do a checklist in your head and write on the go! Know what clips you want when you hear them, know what shots you want to use when you shoot, and think of lines in your head that work while you're shooting.

One thing that comes with time is writing your story in your head while on the job. I still have difficulty with that but sometimes it just all comes together.



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Shannon Worme, Kawacatoose First Nation

No substitute for practice says this champion pool player

Cass Burns, a member of the James Smith First Nation northeast of Prince Albert, has emerged as one of the province's top pool players. He shares some secrets with Eagle Feather News readers.

What is the title that you just won, where was it and how many competitors were there?

I just won the Sask Provincial 9-Ball Tournament over 31 players and at the beginning of April I also won the Sask Provincial 8-Ball Tournament. There were 27 players there. I am the first player to win both events in the same year.

How long have you been playing pool and how did you learn the game?

I started getting into pool when I was 18, I learned the game from my dad as he is a good pool player.

Lots of people associate playing pool with dark, seedy bars and sharks. But you are like professionals ... what has playing pool done for your life?

I have met a lot of people from playing pool from all over and I've been to the States for pool tourneys and also in Canada there are lots of nice friendly people to meet that play pool.

Is this the biggest tournament you have won?

Yes these two tournaments I just won are the biggest titles I have won.

Can you win cash?

Yes you can win money playing. I have won a few tournaments and had some extra cash from playing pool.

What's next in the pool career?

I am leaving to play in the BCA mens masters 8-ball event in Las Vegas on May 7. Play starts May 9 and ends May 12. Then it's the Canadians where I will be representing Saskatchewan in Toronto the 8-ball event runs August 15,16,17 and the 9-ball runs Aug 18,19,20.

Other than pool, what do you do in your spare time?

I like to spend time with my partner, Michelle, and my son, Leighton, going on family trips.

What is the trick to being a great pool player? Can you share any tips?

Practice, Practice, Practice.



Cass Burns lines up a shot headed for the corner pocket.



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Life spoken here.



SIIT students showcase their ideas

By John Lagimodiere
Of Eagle Feather News

The students paced and chatted nervously in the lobby, preparing to enter their version of the Dragons' Den. But this wasn't on TV. It was for school, and potentially a few hundred dollars.

The SIIT Diploma in Management Studies students were to face a panel of judges in their business plan competition that was a culmination of their two years of training.

Kevin Caisse is the SIIT Dean of Management Studies and Information Technology and he has been with these students for the past two years and has seen the impact of their education.

"This is the capstone event of their training with us," said Caisse. "All the skills they have been taught are put to use today."

"It is so nice to see the change from meek and mild new students to these refined and eager potential business people who are self confident and capable."

The contest had nine different plans from individuals or teams and ranged from business plans for a bar in Prince Albert to owning the Sundown Drive-In outside Saskatoon. The event is sponsored



Chad Peekeekoot and Leigha Taypotat pitched their idea for a pub on the "top of the hill in P.A." to the panel of judges.
(Photo by John Lagimodiere)

by Community Futures and brings some prize money for the three best plans. Extra money at the end goes to future scholarships.

Leigha Taypotat was nervous and she and her business partner Chad Peekeekoot prepared to go pitch their idea for a bar in

Prince Albert.

"I am scared, but we learned lots about finance, marketing and HR in our course, so we should be okay," said Taypotat who is from Kahkewistahaw but attends school in P.A.

"The planning process was really eye

opening as to how much work really goes into opening a business. You have to know your stuff, but you also have to get along with your partner."

Taypotat and Peekeekoot did not wind up on the podium this time, but the skills they learned will certainly lead to success in the future.

"All the plans were really well put together and presented," said Caisse. "The judges critique them and help to refine the plans and some are more viable than others. Some of these young people intend to take these ideas, and turn them into businesses right away."

"And, you know what, with the opportunities out there right now for Aboriginal young people, they have a great chance of success. The rest is up to them."

...

1st Place (\$600 winner) - 'Family Matters' Restaurant by Mike Stushnoff (Saskatoon Campus)

2nd Place (\$400 winner)- 'Terra Luna Tea House' by Sean Turner (Prince Albert Campus)

3rd Place (\$200 winner) - 'Sundown Drive-in' by Cherrilyn Martel (Saskatoon Campus)

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Schreyer brothers open for business

By John Lagimodiere
Of Eagle Feather News

The restaurant has the chairs up on the table and the kitchen is yet to be put together, and there is a bit of dust, but one can feel the energy and you know that soon the savoury smell of BBQ and the sound of contented diners will fill the air.

The giant new smoker in the middle of the kitchen is a hint at the future aroma and the energy is being emitted from Métis brothers Matt and Jonathan Schreyer, soon to be restaurateurs who want to introduce old time BBQ to Saskatoon through their new restaurant Schreyer's Smoked BBQ Shack located on Millar Avenue just north of 51st Street.

The brothers complement each other naturally. Matt is about the bottom line and business and Jon is all about the food.

"I have been running my smokers for about three years now and working on my recipes. I had a small residential unit that I started on. It worked out good and people started liking the food from there," he explains.

"Basically I got started selling to family and friends. We weren't licensed and open for business like we are now," said Jon as he lights up talking about the process through which he crafts his food.

"We have three trailers with the smoker behind us, too. The process is at least four hours for our food to cook and some, like the double smoked farmer sausage, take way longer. Our pulled pork and brisket take over 12 hours.

"You can't make BBQ quick. We take the time. We deal with whole cuts so not a lot of processed meat or pre-formed hamburgers like fast food, though our food is really fast because it is already cooked. Our chicken is marinated for 12 hours then given a dry rub and cooked for a minimum of four hours.

"Authentic BBQ definition is wood cooked over a burning fire and the heat has to come from burning wood to release the BTUs for the cooking and the smoke for the flavour. Low and slow is the way we like to do things."

Matt, the former Safeway manager and the man who found their mobile kitchen/van on Kijiji likes the economics of the business and the competitive advantage that they have as the only slow cooked BBQ joint in town.

"Taking the van to festivals really opened our eyes to what we can make as a business," said Matt. "After the Fringe, when we counted the profit, I decided to do this full-time and we have moved fast to this point."

Ryan Patterson works for the Clarence Campeau Development Fund (CCDF) and he played a key role in helping move the business from paper, to inside the restaurant.

"One of the things that really stood out in the Schreyer's business plan was the uniqueness of the product they were going to be selling in their restaurant," said Patterson.

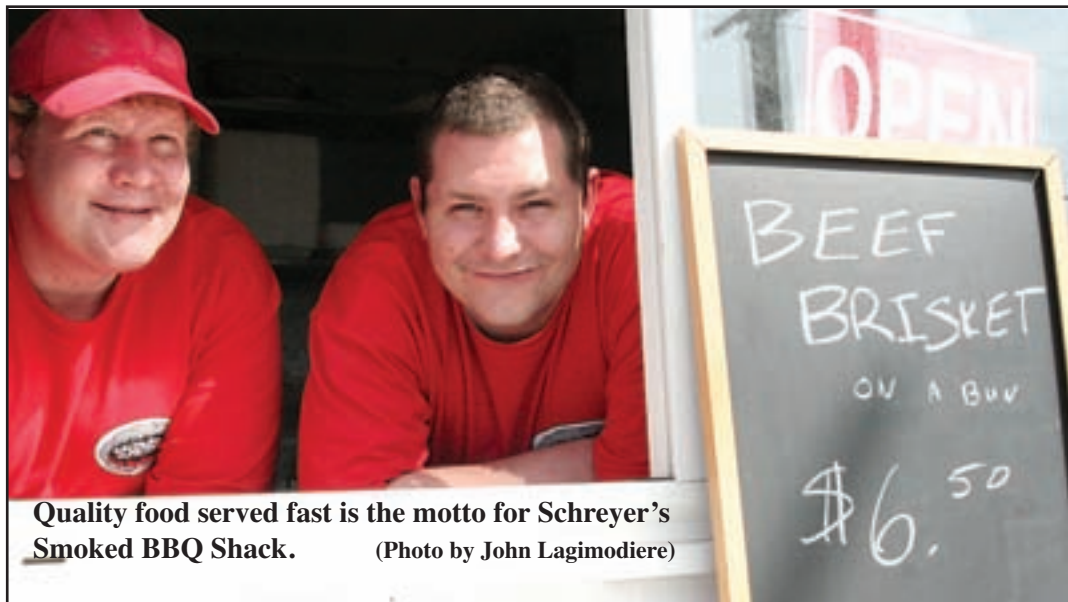
"They also demonstrated how serious they were about this business venture by purchasing the mobile catering van on their own and attending numerous events in and around the Saskatoon area where they made quite a name for themselves and their Slow-Smoked BBQ Products," Patterson noted.

"It was very evident after meeting with Matt and Jon, even after the first meeting, how excited, passionate and confident they were in their business proposal."

The brothers Schreyer had used various funding agencies to get to where they are today.

"Ryan Patterson was great. The folks at CCDF got us an interest free loan. But at CCDF they were really motivated to get everyone like ABC and SNEDCO on board and to get our business plan they really pushed hard because they saw the potential in what we are doing. It was amazing the amount of help they gave us," said Matt.

"The final prep goes into the restaurant this week and then we intend to open in the third week of May. The restaurant will smell like smoked hickory and there will be blues playing in the background and the first thing you see will be our big smoker and the



Quality food served fast is the motto for Schreyer's Smoked BBQ Shack. (Photo by John Lagimodiere)

open kitchen. We have nothing to hide. You can come to our drive-through on the way home and get a smoked rack of ribs to take home for supper or come inside and get something from our deli display of our beef jerky or cold smoked cheeses ... or bring the family in and sit down on the patio and have a beer with your pulled pork."

With that, the brothers had to scramble to a meeting with the local beer rep about setting up the restaurant. They also had to get ready for tomorrow as they sell to a steady line-up in front of their mobile van everyday, getting the locals in the north industrial area talking about the pulled pork and brisket that is to die for.

And as Jon says, "Our motto is quality food served fast. Cooked for 16 hours and served fast. Come try it, you won't go back."

Check the Schreyer boys out on line at: www.smokedbbq.ca



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Ministry of Fisheries
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Consultations

MN-S Fisheries Advisory Committee will be hosting two rounds of regional consultations with Métis citizens to address fisheries issues. The first round will be educational and informative. The second round will focus on developing a Strategy. In both rounds of hearings, citizens may provide input to the Ministry of Environment with respect to their Fisheries Management Plan.

Community Consultations are scheduled for the following:

Friday, May 9th – Cumberland House
Saturday, May 16th – Arcola
Sunday, May 17th – Prince Albert
Monday, May 18th – Meadow Lake

For more information about consultations in your region, please contact your MN-S Regional Director or MN-S Minister of Fisheries, Max Morin at mmorin@mnsask.ca

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REGISTRY UPDATE, COMMUNITY CONSULTATIONS

The Minister of Registry, Minister of Harvesting, Registry Director and Genealogist facilitated community consultations throughout Saskatchewan regarding the MN-S Citizenship Registry Process. There were numerous consultations held in March and April 2009 in Cumberland House, Archerwill, Yorkton, LaRonge, Ile a la Crosse, Prince Albert, North Battleford, Regina, Fort Qu'Appelle and Saskatoon as well as a presentation made to the MN-S Senate. Approximately 300 Métis people attended consultations. The community consultations served two functions, first to update Métis citizens regarding the MN-S Citizenship Registry, Harvesting, Duty to Consult and The Appeals Process, and second to gather feedback for future direction.

These consultations were informative and educational for both the presenters and the participants because everyone had the chance to share and discuss issues that affect all Métis people. There were many vocal opinions stated from the Métis people regarding the MN-S Citizenship Registry. Most Métis communities stated that there is an immense need for an objectively verifiable citizenship registry. Many people were concerned about the difficulty in locating the genealogy documentation and the cost of purchasing their genealogical documentation needed to verify the connection to Historical Métis Ancestry. Others believe that we should grandfather Métis people in since they have already belonged to the Métis Nation for many years, through many generations.

"Overall the community consultations regarding registry were positive and effective because Métis people understand that in order to be one Nation, one People we need to have a credible MN-S Citizenship Registry system that can withstand the rigors of scrutiny, and this system will ensure the growth of the Métis Nation is for Métis citizens," commented President Doucette.

Having a credible system for identifying Métis harvesters will clarify and simplify the partnership between conservation officers and Métis hunters in the eventual implementation and exercise of Powley related rights. It will provide a concrete base of data for the Métis Nation - Saskatchewan to develop policy and procedures regarding Métis hunting rights and other pertinent issues. The Métis Nation - Saskatchewan Citizenship Registry objective is to register eligible Métis citizens in Saskatchewan through a secure, efficient, standardized, and objectively verifiable process. The Registry system needs to be designed to fairly and efficiently register Métis citizens with an objectively verifiable process. Having an objectively verifiable process is the key element from which all other aspects of governance and funding will flow.

The MN-S Constitutional Definition of Métis is utilized in the development and implementation of this objectively verifiable registry.

The Métis Nation-Saskatchewan definition is "Métis means a person who self-identifies as Métis, is distinct from other Aboriginal Peoples, is of historic Métis Nation ancestry, and is accepted by the Métis Nation."

For more information contact Deb Donaldson, Registry Director by phone at 306-343-8285 or toll free at 1-888-203-6959.



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Ryan Meili knows Aboriginal vote counts

By Darla Read
For Eagle Feather News

New Democratic Party leadership candidate Ryan Meili says working with First Nations and Métis people is a priority for him.

His campaign has released its first of five videos with this one focusing on Aboriginal issues.

"It's an extremely important issue for me having worked in northern Saskatchewan and worked in the inner city, and just recognizing how important it is as a province we have a good relationship with the First Nations and Métis people and correct some of the very bad things that have gone on in the past," he says.

Meili says it's an important issue for two reasons, the first being philosophical.

"Everybody matters as much as everybody else, and in this province, we're all in this together. First Nations people have for centuries been excluded or oppressed, and we need to work to make sure that doesn't happen any more, and also to redress the systemic ills that have resulted," explains Meili.

He says the other reason is practicality.

"It's also the smart thing to do for our province. The fastest growing portion of our population is First Nations and Métis.

"We have the minds of the future, the workforce of the

future, the leaders of the future, rooted in tradition, rooted in communities which have many strengths to lead us forward. But if we don't do things right, if we don't work well with those communities and make sure that they're part of deciding our future, then we will have more problems."

Meili says he would do this by working with the communities so they can identify their problems and then possible solutions.

"I think it's a really good model because we move away from what's happened so often in the past where people come from the outside and said, Here's your problem and here's how to fix. And either that results in solutions that people don't buy into, or it results in solutions that are terribly, terribly wrong, like residential schools for example."

Meili worries the membership issue plaguing another leadership candidate will adversely affect relations with First Nations people, and he wants people to know he will work hard for people's trust.

"I'm concerned with this recent controversy that our party will have a lot of bridges to rebuild with First Nations communities. I want people to know I'm committed to doing that, that I believe in a far more democratic process for involving Aboriginal people in helping set the direction of our province."



NDP leadership hopeful Ryan Meili has been working hard to built links to the Aboriginal community.

Gabriel Dumont Institute and partners invest in students



Gillis Lavalley and Gabe Lafond share a laugh at the signing ceremony ensuring more funding for Métis students. (Photo by Marcel Petit)

The Gabriel Dumont Institute trains hundreds of students each year. Much of that training is made available to the students through scholarships and bursaries supplied by community partners. GDI recently celebrated its special partnership and collaborative agreements with SaskEnergy and SaskTel.

Together, GDI and SaskEnergy have successfully put dozens of Métis students through the SaskEnergy Induction Training program. Since 1998, SaskEnergy has provided scholarships to those Métis students who demonstrate leadership, academic achievement, and community

involvement. This agreement was recently renewed.

Under the new SaskTel Métis Scholarship agreement, GDI will administer awards annually to Métis students who are training in accredited postsecondary courses related to SaskTel operations. SaskTel mentors the scholarship recipients and informs them of summer-student employment opportunities. The SaskTel Métis Scholarship partnership is a three-year pilot project.

"These partnership agreements are significant because they reflect the commitment of these employers to support Métis training and employment in Saskatchewan," said Métis Nation-Saskatchewan (MN-S)

Minister of Education, Gabe Lafond.

"They represent proactive steps to address labour force demands and recognize the importance of the Métis population in filling shortages in the job market," he said.

"SaskEnergy is very pleased to support the important partnership objectives of our various agreements with the Gabriel Dumont Institute," said Gillis Lavalley, Manager of Aboriginal Relations, SaskEnergy.

"Our on-going partnerships for induction training and scholarship support have proved valuable to relationship building and human resource development with the Métis community."

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 **SIAST**



Jim Neilson with Lawrence Weenie Cup founder Milton Tootoosis.

Neilson played against NHL greats, Park, Orr and Howe in illustrious 17-year career

Jim Neilson, also known as 'The Chief' played for 17 years in the NHL and over 1,000 games with the New York Rangers. We caught up to Jim at the rink and asked the shy former big leaguer about his career.

Who was the best player you ever played with?

Brad Park really stood up ... very similar to Bobby Orr. Rod Gilbert and Jean Ratelle were also great.

Who was best you played against?

Bobby Orr. I am pro defense. But overall it was Gordie Howe. He was a complete player in every facet of the game.

Biggest change in the game since your time?

I don't watch much hockey any more ... but the speed and conditioning and size of these guys is the biggest change. We went to training camp to get in shape. Now it is all year round staying in shape.

If you had a carbon stick, would you have scored a lot of goals?

Only if they count warm-up! I scored 70 goals and 300 assists in my career. I stayed home on the blueline where I belonged.

How was the money when you played?

I made \$7,000 my first year and had to live in New York. I came home with a thousand bucks. Derek Sanderson broke the shell when he signed for a million with the WHA. We used to have to wrestle for a \$500 raise. It was the owner's game then. You don't like it, they ship you down to the farm. The playoffs gave you extra money, but I was never in the playoffs for the first six years, so I would always get jobs when home. Whatever was available.

Fondest memory from your career?

The friendships. We stuck together. There was no free agency so you played with the same guys all the time. Still friends with lots of those guys to this day.

Best NHL team?

I enjoyed playing for the California Golden Seals. The lifestyle was great. But the 12 years in New York were special.

Any regrets?

Sometimes had too many pops ... but you look back and it is water under the bridge.

Tips for kids who want to make the big leagues?

Work and dedication. Apply yourself 100 per cent to your team and to yourself. It is not about you, it is about the team. And never give up on your dream.

Aboriginal Apprenticeship Initiatives NOTICE is Accepting Proposals Until May 30, 2009



The Aboriginal Apprenticeship Initiatives (AAI) program promotes access to apprenticeship training and understanding of the trades as a career choice. The AAI is accepting proposals which can include a variety of projects, including apprenticeship courses with First Nations and Aboriginal partners, mentoring projects, career exploration and other opportunities. For information about submitting a proposal, contact:

Shelley Michel
(306) 787-2447



Saskatchewan
Apprenticeship and
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Commission

1-877-363-0536
www.saskapprenticeship.ca



2009 SUMMER EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES



The City of Saskatoon in partnership with the Gabriel Dumont Institute, Saskatoon Tribal Council has developed the following 2009 Summer Employment Opportunities for First Nations and Metis applicants. Please declare yourself on your application.

SUMMER CULTURAL PROGRAM LEADERS

RESPONSIBILITIES: Plan, organize, and direct sport and recreational activities for children and youth at the playgrounds, youth centre's and Aboriginal organizations city wide. This includes specialization in the Aboriginal cultural programs in, sports, games, arts & crafts, Tipi Teachings & Tipi Raising, Hoop Dance and other cultural activities. Traditional knowledge is required in program planning and implementation. Training is provided. Must have experience working with Aboriginal children, youth and adults.

QUALIFICATIONS: Preference is given to applicants with one year's post-secondary education in the Recreation/Leisure, Physical Education, Early Childhood Development, Education, or a related field. Experience working with children and possession of a valid first aid certificate and a Criminal Record Check is required. A valid CPR Level C certificate is preferred, and have a valid driver's licence.

DATES OF EMPLOYMENT: June 24 to August 21, 2009.

HOURS OF WORK: Hours of work vary depending on work assignment, evening work is required.

SALARY: \$13.97 per hour.

Deadline to apply to Human Resources for a cultural program leader is Wednesday, May 27, 2009 at 5:00 p.m.

NOTE:

For further information, please contact Mary Johnson at 651-5178.

ACTIVITY LEADER - WEEKEND PADDLING POOL ATTENDANTS

RESPONSIBILITIES: Supervise children attending the paddling pool site and maintain a safe, hazard-free and clean activity area at the paddling pool. Provide excellent customer service to the public.

QUALIFICATIONS: Applicants must be at least 16 years old and have completed Grade 10. One year's related experience (volunteer or work) monitoring or leading recreational activities is required. Possession of a valid Standard First Aid Certificate and valid CPR Level C Certificate is required.

DATES OF EMPLOYMENT: From July 4 to August 16, 2009.

HOURS OF WORK: Saturday and Sunday 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

SALARY: \$12.23 per hour.

Deadline to apply to Human Resources for a weekend paddling pool attendant is Wednesday, May 27, 2009 at 5:00 p.m.

NOTE:

All successful candidates will require a positive Criminal Record Check prior to offer of employment.

Please forward, in confidence, a detailed resume for the above listed positions to Human Resources, City of Saskatoon, 222 Third Avenue North, Saskatoon SK S7K 0J5; Fax (306) 975-3073; Email: careers@saskatoon.ca



While we sincerely appreciate the interest of all applicants, only those candidates selected for interviews will be contacted.



Big changes on the line for commercial fishing

Saskatchewan Cooperative Fisheries Ltd. is about to break the 40-year marketing monopoly currently enjoyed by the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation.

This will allow member fishermen to sell fish on the open market and not be forced to ship to Freshwater's Winnipeg plant as they are under the monopoly, established in 1969.

Two provincial cabinet ministers stated their support for these changes at the annual Saskatchewan Cooperative Fisheries conference in Prince Albert. Speaking at the conference banquet, Lyle Stewart, Minister of Enterprise and Innovation Saskatchewan, likened the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation to the Canadian Wheat Board in how it limits producers.

"You need an open market to get the best price for your product and to explore more opportunities," he said. "As northerners and fishers, you have the right to both the challenges and the opportunities of an open market, like anywhere else in the province. An open market will also allow you the freedom to innovate, to be increasingly competitive, and to prosper in every way".

Stewart committed to asking the federal government to allow dual marketing for Saskatchewan, starting July 1, 2009 for a three-year transition period. If this agreement is not forthcoming, the province is prepared to opt out of the 1969 Freshwater Fish Marketing Agreement effective July 1, 2012. This announcement was welcomed with resounding applause and a standing ovation.

This means fishermen will be free to sell their fish wherever they like, including to Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation if they wish. Saskatchewan Cooperative Fisheries asked the province to make sure Freshwater continues to serve Saskatchewan fishermen during the three-year transition phase.

First Nations and Métis Relations Minister June Draude reiterated Stewart's comments and added some commitments of her own. She promised grant money from the Northern Development Fund to help Saskatchewan Cooperative Fisheries reorganize the company in order to build and operate its own fish plant. She will also consider more operating money to enable Saskatchewan Cooperative Fisheries to hire professional assistance during the three-year transition period.

"It's exciting to be part of a joint effort with you to change, for the better, a way of doing things that has been entrenched for 40 years. It's



Minister June Draude (middle) joined the new board for this historic photo. The new board includes from left Norman Clarke, Wollaston Lake, Albert Pahlke, Pierceland, Merle Hewison, Spruce Home, George Hansen, Beauval, Lennard Morin, Cumberland House, Tom Bird, Southend, Gordon Stomp, Air Ronge, John Beatty, Deschambault Lake, Bobby Augier, Fond du Lac, Arsene Nezcroches, Dillon (Photo courtesy FNMR)

exciting to think of what might come for the industry if we commit to moving forward together. I am proud that you, as fishers, are taking steps to make a brighter future for your families and your communities," she said.

Plant back on stream

The proposed changes will allow Saskatchewan Cooperative Fisheries to go ahead with plans to establish its own fish processing plant in Saskatchewan, and to broaden its product range beyond fresh or frozen fillets. Plans for this plant have been

in the works for several years, but fishermen's hands have been tied by the obligation to sell to Freshwater.

At their annual meeting, Saskatchewan Cooperative Fisheries delegates authorized the board to reconfirm existing financial commitments for the plant, to begin negotiations to make the necessary legal changes, and to seek further investment for a fish processing plant in Prince Albert.

Once the new plant is established, Saskatchewan fish will be marketed under

the brand Wild Northern Fish Company, a name developed and registered by consultant Larry Goodfellow and approved by Saskatchewan Cooperative Fisheries at its annual general meeting.

At the first meeting of the new board, Lennard Morin was elected president and Marie Hildebrandt vice-president. Merle Hewison retains his position of secretary-treasurer. The board will be busy as they get the wheels in motion to make the new fish plant a reality.



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Aboriginal communities to play critical role as minerals and metals industry searches country for trained workers

OTTAWA - One of Canada's most productive industrial sectors faces a serious skills shortage in the next decade according to the Mining Industry Human Resources Council. To address this shortfall, the Council recently launched an awareness campaign to educate Canada's Aboriginal communities and the mining industry on how to work together to find a mutually beneficial solution.

A key player in the global mining industry, Canada is one of the world's largest exporters of minerals, metals and diamonds. Aboriginal peoples represent a significant, largely untapped resource for addressing the expected labour shortfall next decade, when tens of thousands of workers from the baby boom generation are set to retire.

The Aboriginal population in Canada is growing six times faster than Canada's non-Aboriginal population. To address this, the Mining Industry Human Resources Council, an independent, industry-driven organization, has developed several tools including a website (www.aboriginalmining.ca) and two extensive informational guides for Aboriginal communities and industry employers.

"The recent economic downturn has merely lowered projections of the number of skilled workers the mining industry will need to replace," says Ryan Montpellier, executive director of the Mining Industry Human Resources Council.

"But we're asking employers to keep moving at full steam on inclusion initiatives, because the shortage still stands in the tens of thousands and we collectively need to start working on a solution now."

On the demand side, this month the Mining Industry Human Resources Council and the Aboriginal Human Resource Council are launching Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion – a guide for industry, developed to educate and equip mining companies with the knowledge necessary to recruit, retain and advance more Aboriginal workers in the sector.

"Adapting a specialized version of our Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion program and partnering with Mining Industry Human Resources Council to build a product that is specific for the mining industry makes

good sense," said Kelly Lendsay, President and CEO, Aboriginal Human Resource Council.

"Mining is one of the largest employers of Aboriginal people in Canada and well positioned to be the industry leader that will help advance inclusion in Canada."

Canada's Aboriginal communities are part of a multi-pronged effort by Mining Industry Human Resources Council to address the shortage. Proximity is a critical factor as some 1,200 Aboriginal communities are located within 200 kilometers of 220 principal producing mines and more than 3,000 active exploration sites, according to a 2008 report by Natural Resources Canada.

Additionally, half of all Aboriginal people in Canada are under 25 years of age and feature a growth rate more than six times that of the general population, making them one of the fastest growing groups in the country.

A 2007 study suggests the mining industry could lose up to 40 per cent of the existing workforce in the next ten years due to retirement, taking with them an average of 21 years of mining sector experience each. The largest percentage of workers planning to retire within the next 10 years is in the skilled trades group.

Recruitment of new workers to the industry and skills development of the existing workforce is fundamental to meet future human resource demands.

The Mining Industry Human Resources Council remains focused on developing and executing hiring programs to attract a non-traditional workforce, including Canadian youth, women, visible minorities and Aboriginal people to participate in this high-paying sector.

"Attracting Aboriginal people to the mining sector not only makes geographical sense, but it also makes economic sense," says Gordon Peeling, president and CEO of The Mining Association of Canada.

• Continued on Page 23



**Mentorship Program
CALL FOR VISUAL ARTISTS**

We are seeking visual artists as mentors and trainees for a mentorship program from September 2009 to June 2010. Eight trainees will work one-on-one with experienced mentors. The program develops professional practices and support mechanisms for evolving artists and includes professional development workshops and group meetings. The time commitment for mentor and trainee consultations is a minimum of seven hours per month plus group meetings. Trainees are expected to commit additional time to the production and development of their art practice. Mentors must be experienced, professional artists. Trainees must be adults and not registered as students. Mentors and trainees must be Saskatchewan residents. Payment for mentors is \$2500; trainees are paid \$300 for material expenses. Some travel is required.

Deadline for applications is July 15, 2009.
Call (306)522-978
email: mentorprograms@carfac.sk.ca
or see www.carfac.sk.ca

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www.saskatoon.ca, visit us at Human Resources -
City Hall (222 Third Avenue N), or call 975-3261.**



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- Science and Health Aboriginal Success Strategy



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Tens of thousands of skilled positions must be filled

• Continued from Page 22

“Today, mining jobs offer any Canadian a chance at a rewarding and well paying profession.

“These jobs can help sustain northern communities, and by the Mining Industry Human Resources Council helping the mining industry address the labour shortfall, they are helping the industry stay ahead of the curve through Aboriginal inclusion.”

Companies such as Vale Inco, Cameco, De Beers and Suncor have shown it is possible to achieve high degrees of Aboriginal recruitment, retention and advancement.

The Mining Industry Human Resources Council collaborated with

industry, organized labour, educational institutions, Aboriginal community leaders, and other groups to develop the resources and guides for both industry and Aboriginal communities.

“The Guide for Aboriginal Communities, provides a wide range of information that will enable career counselors and other HR professionals to educate young people and prepare Aboriginal communities to more fully participate and benefit when career opportunities arise over the next decade,” says Melanie Sturk, the Mining Industry Human Resources Council Director, Attraction, Retention, and Transition.

“It’s a win-win situation for everyone.”



These Elders are beneficiaries of the mining industry. We are now seeing the mines employ Elders at their sites in order to offer a tie to the community, leadership, an ear to bend and mediation skills. These Elders work throughout Northern Saskatchewan. (Left to right) Pierre Robillard from Black Lake works at McLean Lake. George St. Pierre is from Wollaston Lake and is employed at Rabbit Lake and Noel McIntyre, from English River works at McArthur River. (Photo by John Lagimodiere)

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Taco Time, 1699 2nd Ave W, Prince Albert.

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- Wednesday, May 20 8:00am
TCU Place - Gallery A, 35 - 22nd Street East, Saskatoon
- Saturday, June 13 8:00 am
TCU Place - Gallery D, 35 - 22nd Street East, Saskatoon
- Wednesday, June 17 8:00am
TCU Place - Gallery D, 35 - 22nd Street East, Saskatoon

Physical Abilities Test

- Thursday, May 21 9:30 am
- Thursday, June 18 9:30 am

College of Kinesiology P.A.C., 87 Campus Drive, University of Saskatchewan

saskatoonpoliceservice.ca

Gardiner a legend in the North

By John Lagimodiere
Of Eagle Feather News

The guy's name has been whispered, cursed and cheered in hockey arenas throughout northern Saskatchewan for the past several decades. Even to this day he makes the average defenceman cringe in fear as he comes down the wing, ready to pull something nasty out of his bag of Métis hockey tricks.

Louis Gardiner is still lighting them up in arenas across the North, but for this weekend he's spending time at the curling rink where he is running the National Aboriginal Curling Championships. The only thing lit up in this rink is his eye, which is a mellow shade of yellow and brown, a reminder of an errant puck that hit him the weekend before. Gardiner is the Minister of Sport and Youth for the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan, another volunteer role for the unsung hero who is also the Area Director for Region 3.

His concern this weekend is finding a way to keep youth involved in curling, and further to that, any sport.

"We want to develop a strategy where we get our youth to aim high. Olympics, university scholarships, professional sport, whatever it may be," said Gardiner.

"That was the kind of dream I had. To play in the NHL. Kids can do well in life with what they learn in sport. Chemistry, self esteem and they carry it on and do well in society."

Gardiner's concern is the lack of identifiable resources for youth in Aboriginal sport.

"We need to make sure that SaskSport and the provincial organizations have resources for us. And an inclusive strategy, and we know some do," said Gardiner. "But we are still seeing kids go to jail. How can we do

better and change. It is through partnership."

Gardiner grew up in Ile a La Crosse and modeled his game after Abe Apesis.

"I went to student residence and played lots of hockey. I had a dream of following in Abe Apesis's footsteps and I watched him when he played at Beauval residential school. He paved the way for hockey in northern Saskatchewan.

"But Abe, when he came to Saskatoon, they were going to send him to Kelowna. He had never seen a mountain," said Gardiner. "So just like today, there was little support for northern people in hockey. When I was 15, I came to Saskatoon. I could handle the game on the ice, but not being in the city. I ended up playing some junior hockey with Flin Flon then came back to northern Saskatchewan."

And northern Saskatchewan hockey fans have been grateful ever since Lou came back. He holds an impressive record when it comes to First Nation and Métis hockey around here.

"I am pretty proud that I have been named MVP of the North Battleford Indian Hockey Tournament seven times. I think the next guy has four, but I like that record," chuckled Gardiner.

"But the best Native player I ever saw was Bryan Trottier. When Trottier, Brian Sutter and Ron Delorme were on the same line in Lethbridge, Trottier gave us quite the clinic."

With the skills and teamwork that he learned in hockey, Gardiner is using partnership strategies to engage youth and get them more options.

"We partner with the FSIN for the North American Indigenous Games and the National hockey champi-



LOUIS GARDINER

onships, and now we talk about having a Canadian Aboriginal Games or national Aboriginal senior hockey championships ... pick a couple teams from each province. What the heck," said Gardiner.

"We have to be creative and innovative. We have to stop the crime rates and poor health rates from going up. Sport can stop that."

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After a few year hiatus Mike Tanton and Mason Medynski have brought Saskatoon another premier basketball tournament. The city has been lacking a real good quality tourney since the end of the Kevin Mocassin Memorial.

This time around the hope is that top talent will enter not only from Saskatoon but from across the province.

The tournament is open to people of all ages. Games will be played at the White Buffalo Youth Lodge and Walter Murray.

Fans will be on the edge of their seats and can expect some good quality games. The winning team will be awarded \$2,000 and there will also be a slam dunk and three-point contest over the weekend.

For more information contact Mike Tanton at 653-7676 or Mason Medynski at 241-6399.

Random thoughts

The San Jose Sharks choke so much they should join the UFC!! Uggghhh ... If anyone is going to stop Lebron and the Cavs my \$\$\$ is on the Houston Rockets, yes I am still a Kobe hater ... Alexander Ovechkin is better than Sidney Crosby, send all your hate mail now ... Manny Pacquiao is amazing, Ricky Hatton should retire ... Derek Rope in Ward 3, Derek Rope in Ward 3, Derek Rope in Ward 3.

The Buffalo team proved to be too much for the competition, cruising to a 7-0 win in the final. (Photo by Tina Pelletier)

The final of the Oskana Cup was a blowout. The Buffalos, made up of players primarily from the Kahkewistahaw First Nation, dominated the Keesekoose team. The score when the buzzer sounded was 7-0.

Team captain Layton Alexson and the rest of the squad were dominant throughout the tourney and played some solid hockey.

Tournament MVP Craig McCallum of the Buffalos was pleased with the outcome.

"It was my first time playing here, the hockey was really good and I had a lot of fun."

Teams came from across the province and as far away as Northern Manitoba.

The Ladies Final pitted Winnipeg against Sioux Valley. In the end the team from Winnipeg proved to be too strong and took home the gold.

Aboriginal Basketball Academy underway

Corey Matthews has made a name for himself developing talent on the court in North Central Regina. And his new

program looks to develop elite level Aboriginal players from across the province.

The idea is to gather players and give them the opportunity to experience high level training and get elite level coaching.

Players will be identified at a young age and be allowed to grow while attending the academy for years. It is Matthews' hope that through a systematic, thorough and unified provincial approach that the academy will develop outstanding Aboriginal junior basketball players in the province.

The vision is to become a national leader in Aboriginal basketball development.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact Corey Matthews at northcentallakes@yahoo.ca or call (306)529-1667.

Super Six League Returns to Saskatoon

The Super Six Basketball League has kicked off its third season.

Defending League Champs, the Northend, look to repeat and the Lakeshow will try knocking them off this year.

The league always has close games so participants best bring their A game!

This year the league has added players like Huskie star point guard Showan Glover, Jamal Williams of Regina and welcomed home Nathan Dixon.

The league has joined "the Bike for Breast Cancer" campaign. Super Six staff will bike four kilometers with other participating groups. The league wanted to recognize the personal effort needed to fight breast cancer.

Games are played every Saturday and Sunday at Nutana Collegiate. For more information go to supersixleague.com.

Bridge City Shootout Set for June

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Jacqueline Lavallee is the recipient of a Tom Longboat Award.

Sask athletes honoured with prestigious awards

By Blue Pelletier
For Eagle Feather News

Jacqueline Lavallee is a teacher at Oskayak High School. She has been involved in sports her whole life and has won numerous awards over her illustrious career. But recently she added a very special piece of hardware to her trophy case.

Lavallee was named the 2009 Tom Longboat National Award Winner for female coaching. It was one of four given to National recipients in sport and coaching.

The former University of Saskatchewan Huskie basketball and soccer star has quite the active lifestyle.

Not only does she coach the National under 17 Female National Team, she is also an assistant for the Saskatchewan Huskies Women's Squad and runs the Saskatchewan Center for Performance a branch of Canada Basketball. And in her free time she has recently picked up yoga!

Lavallee attended the awards banquet in Winnipeg. The awards are sponsored by the Aboriginal Sport Circle and coincide with the National Aboriginal Hockey Championships.

The Tom Longboat Award "was a huge honor" according to Lavallee.

She always knew she would coach and that it was a natural transition for her. Lavallee said she "benefited from great coaches and role models growing up" and that now working with Aboriginal youth, she is doing what she loves to do.

Electra Charles was the regional (Saskatchewan) winner for track and field. The 17-year-old Tommy Douglas High School student is a standout in athletics.

She competes in the 400m, 800m, 1500m, and javelin. She is a member of the Riversdale Track Club and hopes to qualify for Nationals in the 800m and javelin.

Charles says she follows in the footsteps of her grandmother Melinda Charles who was a "pretty good runner."

While competing for Team Sask at the 2008 North American Indigenous Games Charles went on to win five gold and one bronze medals.

She says that winning this award "is pretty big to me, I knew about him (Longboat) before getting the award and his name is a big deal."

William Cameron was the third recipient of the Longboat award. He won a regional award for his success in golf.

He said he was surprised and "that I didn't know much about it until Aboriginal Sport called." But they knew about him and his accomplishments.

Cameron has won four of the last seven Provincial Senior Golf Championships, winning the 2008 title in convincing fashion.

The 62-year-old Beardy's native loves the game and will continue to play as long as he can compete. He doesn't know much about the award or Mr. Longboat but says the award is "still quite an honor and it was nice to be recognized."

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Jordyn Burnouf, Dylan Guthier, Danielle Corrigan, and Boddan Desjarlais from Ile a La Crosse won the youth title at the National Aboriginal Curling Championships. (Photo by John Lagimodiere)

Ile a La Crosse cleans house at Aboriginal curling championships

By John Lagimodiere
Of Eagle Feather News

The Saskatoon Granite Curling Club was recently packed with Métis and Indians yelling "Hurry hard" at each other and not one fight broke out. That's undoubtedly because it was the friendly sport of curling that they were participating in.

"We are all friends and have a good rivalry," said Chad Sahyes, of his fellow competitors at The National Aboriginal Curling Championships. Sahyes is the third for the Corrigan men's team which wound up winning the bonspiel.

"The whole idea is to bring teams together and raise money for sport," said Louis Gardiner, Area Director for MN-S Northern Region 3 and host of the bonspiel.

"Next year we are going to have a training camp for youth in the few days leading up to this event, and offer them some really good training."

Boddan Desjarlais played third but threw skip stones for the Corrigan mixed youth team. They wound up winning the title as well, ensuring that two teams from Ile a La Crosse were atop the podium. This, even though they have only played together for a few weeks.

"We curl all the time back home so it wasn't a problem that we were a new team. We have a key to the rink and curl every night for a couple hours," said Desjarlais.

"There can be lots of temptations in the community like drugs and alcohol, but you can't force anyone to do sports. But for sure make it available. We love it."

Desjarlais was planning to go to a volleyball tournament the following weekend.

The bonspiel attracted 45 teams this year and as usual Rod Wuttunee was in the final. He and Lawrence Corrigan have met many times in this bonspiel, but this time Corrigan stole his way to the title.

"I think the turning point was the fourth end where we were able to steal two when they had a chance at two," said winning third Chad Sahyes.

"We stole and we kept stealing after that. But Rod's a great player. I won here with him six years ago. We've been coming here for ten years and we intend to keep coming back for ten more." The winner of the mixed title was Maria Moore from The Pas, Manitoba.

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Former NHL all-star honoured at Weenie Cup

The Lawrence Weenie Cup organizing committee and major sponsors, Affinity Credit Union and the Dakota Dunes Casino, were pleased to recognize an NHL all-star player, Jim Neilson, at this year's tournament.

Neilson played professional hockey for 17 years, suiting up for over 1,000 games with the New York Rangers in the early '70s making him the longest playing professional hockey player ever of Aboriginal ancestry.

He was born in Big River, Saskatchewan, and later grew up in an orphanage where he went to school and learned the sport of hockey. He played his junior hockey with the Prince Albert Mintos before being invited to play for the New York Rangers in 1962. He ended his spectacular career with the Edmonton Oilers of the World Hockey Association (WHA) when Wayne Gretzky was just starting his professional career.

Neilson was feted at a luncheon at the historic Bessborough Hotel where he was joined by two other Aboriginal all-stars. Reggie Leach, also known as the 'Riverton Rifle', has been a big supporter of the Lawrence Weenie Cup organization. This NHL all-star player who played for eight seasons with the Philadelphia Flyers has won numerous awards and had set many NHL records, some of which still stand including most goals, 19, in the playoffs. Leach is alcohol and drug free, and dedicated to helping Aboriginal communities and youth in their journeys to clean, healthy living.

Also to grace the head table and to offer closing comments at the luncheon was Fred Sasakamoose. He was the first ever Treaty First Nation person to suit up for an NHL game for the Chicago Blackhawks in 1953 where he played 16 games. This was indeed a feat for anyone when you take into consideration that there were only six teams in the NHL at the time.

He later continued his hockey career and played in New Westminster, Calgary and Chicoutimi before returning to Western Canada. He ended his professional career in the Okanogan Hockey



In the recreational division, it was Keeseekoose over Muskeg Lake in the final by a score of 9-4. (Photo by Ted Whitecalf)

League with the Kamloops Chiefs. He returned home on the Ahtahkakoop First Nation to serve his community as a councilor for several terms and as Chief for six years. He was inducted to the Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame in 2007.

The Lawrence Weenie Cup was founded by Chief Lawrence Weenie's son, Milton Tootoosis, nine years ago where he hosted an all-Native masters hockey tournament event in North Battleford and was moved this year to Saskatoon. With the success of this year's event, the Lawrence Weenie Cup may move from city to city in the coming years and include a contact division. Tootoosis thanked the major sponsors Affinity Credit Union and the Dakota Dunes Casino as well as all the volunteers who made this exciting event a success.

Chief Lawrence Weenie was a Royal Canadian Air Force veteran in the early 1950s and later became a Chief and council member of the Poundmaker Cree Nation for many years. He was also a radio broadcaster always in support of Native sporting events. Fred Sasakamoose knew him as the 'Foster

Hewitt' of Native hockey.

The 9th Annual Lawrence Weenie Cup tournament hosted 12 teams in total. In the masters division, the Enoch River Cree Falcons defeated the Cumberland Cree in the final by a score of 7-3 to capture the championship title. The Saskatchewan Indians placed third overall, losing to Cumberland Cree in an exciting 4-3 overtime shootout.

Cal Cote (Enoch River Cree Falcons) was selected as the masters MVP. In the recreational division, it was Keeseekoose over Muskeg Lake in the final by a score of 9-4. Keeseekoose edged out the Gordon's Westside Hawks 3-2 in another OT shootout to advance to the final. The MVP in the rec division was Craig Straightnose (Keeseekoose). For complete details visit www.oskanacup.org



The Enoch River Cree Falcons defeated the Cumberland Cree for their third straight LWC championship. (Photo by Ted Whitecalf)

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