

Eagle Feather NEWS

FREE

Olympic torch ignites Wanuskewin

Youngsters flock to see Olympic symbol at Heritage Park

More than 600 students and dignitaries assembled at the newly renovated Wanuskewin Heritage Park to welcome the Olympic flame.

(Photo by John Lagimodiere)



Newly re-opened Wanuskewin welcomes Olympic torch

By John Lagimodiere
Of Eagle Feather News

The Olympic torch that has lit many athletes' dreams across Canada has helped spark the renaissance of the Wanuskewin Heritage Park.

After sitting empty and without a heartbeat other than jackhammers for two years, the newly renovated Wanuskewin was host to 600 students, dignitaries, athletes, security and two torches as the Olympic torch passed through on its way to Vancouver to open the Games in February.

Dana Soonias, CEO of Wanuskewin was all smiles. He has just led the Park through the final stages of a long shutdown and renovation and he was pleased to put the new site through its paces.

"It is a beautiful feeling to have this kind of event again. The place has a beat of its own today," he said. "We were expecting lots of kids, but not this many. The day has gone really well. The staff is feeling the excitement too.

"We are back. What a great way to open the Park."

Children ran and screamed throughout the building, again bringing life to a place that was once so important to the Aboriginal community and the City of Saskatoon

but was almost ruined. With the clean-up over and the \$5.6 million in bills paid by the federal government, Wanuskewin opened her arms to the children again who were wild in anticipation of the star of the day, the Olympic Flame.

"The public are coming back to Wanuskewin. It is great to have the warmth here again where the place is buzzing and kids are playing and there is laughter," said Soonias. "The pulse is back."

Wanuskewin has been a vital resource in teaching people about the First Nations people of this territory and has been a keen resource of many schools. Cort Dogneiz, Coordinator of First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education for Saskatoon Public Schools welcomed the return.

"The kids are excited to be out here and not just because of the torch. You walk onto this land and you know there is something special. The kids feel it," said Dogneiz.

"When we talk about other ways of knowing, being and doing, when you are in the classroom, an environment they are always used to, it is harder for the students to accept other ways," he says.

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MEETING THE RIFLE

Visitors to a showcase of Aboriginal hockey got a chance to meet NHL legend Reggie Leach recently.

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Cameco came up with a huge Christmas present for St. Mary's Community School.

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YOUTH AWARD

SaskTel Youth Award winner Emily Key is one amazing young lady.

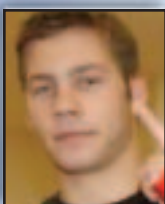
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Red Pheasant Artist Lionel Peyachew has won a prestigious award.

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Welcome to our
New Year's Issue
Coming In February :
Health & Wellness Edition
CPMA #40027204

Re-energized Wanuskewin perfect setting for Olympic torch celebration

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“When we bring them out here where they are in touch with the land, they already know coming out here that there is a different expectation and they are way more responsive.”

And responsive they were. The students wound up circling the Olympic torch bearers before the flame arrived creating a mini mob scene that had the Vancouver Olympic logistical folks throwing a small fit, but everyone toed the line when the Olympic Flame arrived. Eight teepees stood vigil along the entrance road, each with its own fire that welcomed and led the torch into Wanuskewin.

When the torch bearer, Asia Youngman, a Cree/Carrier woman from British Columbia carried the Torch into the reception area of the Park, the children parted like the Red Sea and the torch was welcomed with a blessing by Elder Leona Tootoosis, O Canada, sung by Falynn Baptiste in Cree and greetings by Chief Felix Thomas, FSIN Vice Chief Morley Watson and Métis Nation President Robert Doucette.

After the ceremony, Youngman lit Olympic medal-winning French figure skater Phillippe Caneloro’s torch and he proceeded to carry the Torch out of Wanuskewin and it was off to Duck Lake to continue its tour to Vancouver.

The children returned to their busses and it was back to business as usual at Wanuskewin, cleaning up after a very successful public event.

“The renovations are done, the staff is really energized and the building is now just so efficient, both for business and for the visitor,” said Soonias.

“Now we just want to welcome everyone back.”



Torch bearers Asia Youngman and Phillippe Caneloro were mobbed by kids who were caught up in the Olympic moment. (Photo by John Lagimodiere)



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Showcase honoured Aboriginal hockey stars

By John Lagimodiere
Of Eagle Feather News

The World Junior Hockey Championship took over the Saskatoon and Saskatchewan during the Christmas holidays. Despite the Silver Medal finish for the home team, the event was a huge success in its execution, profit and inclusion.

As part of the week's long celebration of hockey, the BHP Billiton Family Hockey Fest was held from Dec. 17 to Dec. 22 at Saskatoon's TCU Place.

The hockey fest featured 20,000 square feet of displays from the Hockey Hall of Fame and included numerous interactive games for kids.

The Hall also had on display the RBC Cup, the Memorial, the Hart, the Calder and the granddaddy of them all, the Stanley Cup.

A dedicated group of Aboriginal hockey supporters assembled a brilliant showcase of Aboriginal hockey memorabilia and stars past and present for the Aboriginal Hockey Showcase day.

The event included Eugene 'Bird' Arcand's unique Aboriginal hockey card collection that included a Freddie Sasakamoose original and the cards of almost all former and current Aboriginal NHLers. The showcase included unique signed jerseys and vintage photos of



Freddie Sasakamoose, the first Aboriginal person to play in the NHL, posed with the Holy Grail of Hockey, the Stanley Cup with young admirers. (Photo by John Lagimodiere)

legends Freddie Sasakamoose, Jim Neilson, Reggie Leach, Bryan Trottier, Scott Daniels and Richard Pilon, all players who have roots in Saskatchewan.

"The Aboriginal Hockey Showcase was an incredible undertaking with very challenging circumstances. Overall, it was very well assembled and received" said the co-chair of the group, Milton Tootoosis.

"Without the input and commitment

by many people and our sponsors, it would not have been possible."

The six day event was capped off with an autograph session by each of the legends present; Freddie Sasakamoose, the first Indian to play in the NHL, Jim Neilson who had a 17 year pro career, and Reggie Leach who is an NHL record holder, former Team Canada member and Conn Smythe trophy winner. They were joined by Saskatoon Blade Jeremy Boyer.

The inclusion of Aboriginal people in an International Ice Hockey Federation World Junior Championship event is very likely a first.

"We are encouraged that the local host committee invited our participation and have acknowledged the contributions of Aboriginal people to the game of hockey," said Tootoosis. "We educated the public on the success of Aboriginal players at all levels of hockey," he said.

The IIHF World Junior Championship host committee also included and honoured many local legends during the tournament by dedicating each game to one player.

Freddie Sasakamoose (Ahtakakoop), Jim Neilson (Big River) and Ron Delorme (Cochin) were featured on game day admission tickets, banners were hung up with their images, their bios were mentioned over the public address system during their dedicated game and they presented game star awards after each game.

The inclusion of Aboriginal people in this international sporting event at this magnitude was a first.

The host committee needs to be commended for acknowledging the contributions of Aboriginal people to the game of Canada's national sport.



Jeremy Boyer of the Saskatoon Blades joined legends Freddie Sasakamoose, Jim Neilson, Reggie Leach and author Don Marks made themselves available to sign autographs. (Photo by John Lagimodiere)



Philadelphia Flyer legend Reggie Leach poses with Willow Lagimodiere and Riel Lagimodiere.

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Editorial

Year of the Métis

The year 2010 is significant for the Métis of Canada as it is the 125th Anniversary of the Northwest Resistance at Batoche and the hanging of Louis Riel in Regina. The Province of Saskatchewan named 2010 the Year of the Métis in November and now this phenomenon has gone national.

In December, MPs voted unanimously to pass a motion in the House of Commons in Ottawa. Introduced by Regina member of parliament Ralph Goodale the motion recognized 2010 as Year of the Métis Nation. The motion called on the Government of Canada to use next year to celebrate the invaluable contributions of the Métis Nation which have enriched the lives of all Canadians.

At the recent Métis National Council General Assembly, in recognition of the important milestone, representatives of the democratically elected Métis Nation government proclaimed 2010 Year of the Métis Nation as well.

"The Year of the Métis Nation will be an opportunity to commemorate the Métis who fought defending their people at the Battles of Duck Lake, Fish Creek, and Batoche 125 years ago," said MNC President Clem Chartier. "It will also be a year of celebrating the Métis culture and heritage which now flourishes in this country."

Métis Nation Saskatchewan President Robert Doucette is excited about the many events that will take place in 2010 and also about the impact the awareness of the Métis people and our shared history will have on Canadian citizens.

"I would like to thank our members of parliament for unanimously supporting this historic motion in our nation's capital. Having the leaders of this great country recognize the Métis people's contributions to this great country signifies a new era of moving forward together and understanding, not only for Métis citizens but for all Canadians."

In order to celebrate the Year of the Métis and to help create awareness, Eagle Feather News has partnered with the Gabriel Dumont Institute to bring our readers a year of perspective on Métis history surrounding the Northwest resistance. GDI is an amazing educational institute with access to some of the wisest Métis academics in the world.

Each month, in the middle spread, we will bring you historical articles on the Métis of 1885, a timeline of events surrounding the Battle of Batoche, the aftermath and the trial and execution of Métis leader Louis Riel.

We will also cover current events tied into the Year of the Métis celebrations. Did you know there are many Métis and First Nation people going to Vancouver to work at the Olympics and to perform and share our culture with the world? We will bring you those stories.

Did you know that back to Batoche celebrations will go for a full week in July with crowds of over 20,000 expected? You will find all the coverage here at Eagle Feather News. We look forward to sharing those stories with you as we learn about and celebrate the history of Métis and Canadian people.

Women in leadership

When Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations Chief Guy Lonechild stated after his election win that he intended to focus on women and children during his tenure, the folks here at Eagle Feather News could not have been happier. We have always admired the role of women and have been frustrated at the treatment of Aboriginal women in the last 100 years.

We always dedicate our March edition to women and we try to ensure they are represented in the pages of Eagle Feather News. In order to reinforce that commitment, we have commissioned Regina writer Desarae Eashappie to profile women in leadership for the next year. She will profile leaders in politics, education, sports and business. She starts off this year with a profile of Muskowpetung Chief Liz Pratt.

Oops

In last month's issue we incorrectly stuck Theo Fleury with an addiction that he did not have. We referred to him as a crack addict. Unfortunately, that was a misunderstanding. Theo was a severe cocaine addict who at one time had to go to a crack house in Chicago in order to score cocaine. He also had a \$2,000 a week cocaine habit for over three years after his career dried up.



Thirteen-year-old Tyson Poulin with the Olympic Torch. (Photo: Gabriel Dumont Institute)

Torch run thrill of a lifetime for Métis youth

Tyson Poulin was one of approximately 12,000 people in Canada who had the privilege of carrying the Olympic Torch. Tyson is a 13-year-old Grade 8 student at Fairhaven School who is an athlete and leader. He volunteers his time on the Green Team and at the Parkridge Centre.

At one time, doctors and his family were worried he would never be able to talk because at the age of two he was diagnosed with a pervasive development disorder which is a form of autism. He was chosen to run the Torch because he is a leader and role model for other Métis youth.

Tyson had the thrill of his lifetime carrying the Torch.

"This was absolutely the most amazing thing ever," said an excited Tyson shortly after

his 300 meter run. "I was tingling all over even before I got off the shuttle and to have people cheering for me made me tingle more.

"What was cool was that everyone wanted to touch the Torch or have their picture taken with me. And I certainly let them."

As he reflected on the short historic moment, the ecstatic Tyson said he enjoyed the 300 meter run the best and he has some special memories from the once in a lifetime chance.

"I get to keep the Torch," said Tyson. "We will make a trophy cabinet and put it there. But it is a really good feeling just to know that the flame I carried was going to be at the Olympics in our own country."

Good job Tyson.

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NEWS

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THIS ISSUE...LAST ISSUE...PAST ISSUES.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission offers hope

There's a lot of interesting things going on in Indian/Métis country these days.

Among them is the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) which has its roots in the "Statement of Reconciliation" of 1998 worked out between the Assembly of First Nations and the federal government, the Prime Minister's 2008 Apology to residential school survivors, and the 2008 Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement which also provided the funds for the TRC. After a few kinks were ironed out, three new commissioners were appointed last June.

For the first time in Canadian history, we have a commission made up entirely of Aboriginal People – the Honourable Justice Murray Sinclair is Commission Chair, and Chief Wilton Littlechild and Marie Wilson are Commissioners. All three have long distinguished careers working for and with their own people and have received many awards for their good work.

The TRC has a five-year mandate and a \$60 million budget to provide residential school survivors and their loved ones the opportunity to tell the truth about what went on at those schools and how it impacted not just the survivors but their families and

communities. The ultimate goal of the TRC is to "guide and inspire First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples and Canadians in a process of truth and healing leading toward reconciliation and renewed relationships based on mutual understanding and respect."

The objectives of the TRC, or what they plan to do to fulfill their mandate, are to conduct a series of Statement Gatherings across the country where people can come and share their experiences, host seven national events across the country, participate in and support community events, research, public education, and support commemoration activities for survivors. These commemorations are also intended to "pay tribute in a lasting manner, in partnership with INAC" but I'm not sure what role INAC is playing in all of this – INAC is not represented on the Commission and it is not clear if INAC will be attending any of the TRC activities, so how we get INAC to reach a mutual understanding with us and respect for us and our experiences is yet to be seen.

In any event, the TRC promises to allow

us to tell our side of the story and will do its best to make sure all Canadians are informed, and that in itself is a worthwhile cause.

The TRC sponsored a Researchers' Forum which was hosted at the University of Toronto in December. Twenty-four researchers from across Canada were invited to this one day forum to help the TRC develop its research strategy. Four of us were from Saskatchewan including Dorothy Myo from SICC, Paul Chartrand formerly of U of S and Dr. Jim Miller from U of S. Researchers from other parts of the world where Indigenous Peoples had similar experiences, also participated.

Through a series of Dialogue Circles we were asked to share our ideas and recommendations on how to map out a research program, what kinds of research projects we thought would be useful, and how to set up a national research program. While we all participated and shared our experiences and ideas, we also learned a lot from each other.

The TRC has already started participating in community events and will host the

first national event in June 2010 in Winnipeg. Within the next month or so the TRC will have its research strategy developed and soon after that will develop its national Statement Gathering timetable.

For more information on the TRC you can check out their website at: <http://www.trc-cvr.ca>.

This website is full of up-to-date information and has a number of activity sites including an on-line "memory book" where survivors and others impacted by the residential schools can share their experiences.

I've heard lots of criticisms and opinions against the creation of the TRC and criticisms will always arise when new initiatives come along. Then there are the folks who don't want to bother educating Canadians at all. But in the big picture we have nothing to lose and something to gain from this effort.

I come from a family of residential school survivors and would rather my grandchildren and great-grandchildren learn about the residential school experience from our peoples' own voices and perspectives, in our own words. I want to know that my families' experiences will not be forgotten, not so we can continue blaming and acting like victims, but so we can face the pain and grow in strength as individuals and as a People.



Indigenous team will compete at Olympics one day

Happy New Year to all readers. It is a new year and I start it with a new focus, having offered comments on policy issues in the last few months. I leap into 2010 with one of my favourite topics: sports.

In my experience, Indigenous folks have always been keen sportsmen. Books have been written on the lives of great Aboriginal athletes and on historical insights such as the origins of lacrosse in 'baggataway'. In the short space of this column I will stick to winter sports and add something about developments.

The World Junior Hockey tournament held in Saskatoon this year stimulated the interest that Canadians have in ice hockey and also highlighted some Indigenous players in local pre-tournament promotional events. The game is called 'ice hockey' internationally especially where 'field hockey' is popular, such as Australia.

I have some good memories from the days when I played 'ice hockey' in Australia, of games played under palm trees on an open hockey rink situated next to a swimming pool in Sydney, or in the rink located on the second floor of an old movie theatre in Melbourne. The bottom strip on the boards was made of steel and the sparks really flew when you fought for the puck in the corners.

It was good to catch up with old buddy Jim Neilson, a teammate from my

tournament hockey days in the 1980s with Sagkeeng "Old-Timers" in Manitoba. Jim, who is from Big River Saskatchewan, played 15 years for New York Rangers and finished his career with Gretzky and the Oilers, but that should not be held against him.

Also at the pre-tournament events was the 'Riverton Rifle', from up-the-road where I grew up, Reggie Leach of the Philadelphia Flyers. Other indigenous players who were recognized at the World Junior events include Saskatchewan's legendary Fred Sasakamoose and Bryan Trottier of the Stanley Cup-loving New York Islanders, and legends like George Armstrong, captain of the Toronto Maple Leafs in the old six-team NHL. You can read all about them and others in Don Marks' book "They Call Me Chief: Warriors on Ice".

In every province I think you will find a group of dedicated individuals who are the engines that drive volunteer organization and sponsorship of amateur hockey and other sports. In Saskatchewan that includes folks such as Chief Darcy Bear of Whitecap Dakota, Eugene 'Big Bird' Arcand, Milton Tootosis and Morley Watson and I am

sure there are many others I have not met, being an original outsider from Manitoba.

Before I leave ice hockey I have to tell you this one. Since we did not play only in Aboriginal tournaments the name 'Sagkeeng' seemed to present problems of spelling and pronunciation for many tournament organizers in Canada and Europe. My favourite written 'faux-pas' was the tournament schedule that had us listed as the 'Sagging Old-Timers"! Isn't that perfect for a team of men who had reached and passed their 'best before' date and are playing 'Old-Timers' hockey?

The focus of winter sports next month will be on the Winter Olympics in Vancouver. At the time of writing the Olympic torch is winding its way west in the Prairies and helps me recall my little run with the torch back in 1988 for the Calgary XV Olympic Winter Games.

Indigenous sports are growing nationally and internationally and it may be only a matter of time before we see an Indigenous Team competing in an Olympic sport. At the forefront of development is the growing Indigenous Games phenomenon, which has spread

to the North American context and promises to expand worldwide.

This has been one of Willie Littlechild's pet projects since the 1970s. The former member of parliament, lawyer and current Truth and Reconciliation Commission member from Hobbema studied Phys Ed at the University of Alberta and competed with the Golden Bears.

In conjunction with his work at the United Nations he has garnered a lot of support for his vision of a World Indigenous Games which he is working on through W.I.N. Sports (World Indigenous Nations).

Willie knows his way around the international circles and has even tabled a document at the UN that outlines developments towards the World Indigenous Games.

Willie, who still competes successfully at the Masters level in swimming recently told me that he has growing support for an Indigenous team at the Olympics and expects that will happen in one sport or another before long. And the Indigenous Games are being touted as events that will incorporate cultural elements as well.

Already I have run out of space for some of my winter stories.

Maybe next month I will write about summer sports. Or maybe I will wait for the time when the frogs start to sing.



Not easy being a leader

The ideal First Nation leader has a heart of gold and a skin of iron. There are many people who have given so much for so long that their health has deteriorated and they enjoy few rewards for their many years of hard work.

It's not only Aboriginal political leaders but social workers, grandparents, single mothers and a multitude of care givers.

Chiefs and political leaders are often criticized for receiving high salaries that are tax free. Their wages may not be so high when the benefits and salary of a government bureaucrat are considered. The bureaucrat also follows a prescribed career path and enjoys job security. An Indian leader does not.

Bureaucrats go quietly about their work while Chiefs are subjected to unrelenting lateral violence and crisis. They are expected to do more with less. This dilemma is especially true with an often hostile federal government in power. There are some corrupt Aboriginal leaders whose excesses flare up in the media from time to time. The hard work and dedication of the many, however, is most often overlooked.

There was a time when Indian Affairs provided the reserves with match stick houses, cold in winter and hot in summer. These substandard houses were replaced by much better CMHC homes. Families were required to pay a reasonable portion of their income toward housing. Some tenants paid for awhile then simply stopped.

Chief and council were stuck with covering costs they could ill afford. Homes were over-crowded to begin with and they did not have the heart to evict. These families often had no place else to go.

Chief and council paid what they could. The government stepped in and made sure outstanding debts were paid. A humanitarian gesture became a source of howling criticism to the many who did understand the predicament many First Nations face.

Funding is often slow in coming. First Nations must then take from one program to pay for another until funding is received.

This situation is another source of misunderstanding and unfair criticism. One year funding arrived so late the Saskatchewan Indian Winter Games were held in June.

Aboriginal leaders do not retire to the lower Fraser Valley or the Okanagan. If they are lucky they may find themselves on First Nations boards where a per diem can become a source of income beyond an old age pension.

The caregivers are often the ones who suffer the most. Social workers are the fire department of the care giving

field. They work with crisis. Many Aboriginal families and communities are embroiled in crisis. This stress takes its toll.



Medical conditions such as ulcers, depression, arthritis, burn out and heart conditions are all too common occurrences.

Social workers often don't last and those who do can easily turn cynical and ineffectual. It's a very hard field to be in and it is especially hard when the caregivers work within their own communities. The rewards are few and the stress is high. A life span is often shortened.

Maggie Hodgson has received the Order of Canada. She worked for decades in the addictions and wellness field. She, like many others does not receive a pension beyond the benefits awarded all Canadians. She must continue working in a time when others can rest and enjoy their retirement years.

The aboriginal leaders and caregivers have the added responsibility not only to meet the predominant society's standards, but to excel beyond them. This desire, if not need, is little understood beyond Aboriginal circles. Aboriginal people remain a distinct people with distinct needs other peoples cannot full fill and so must strive to develop an Aboriginal care giving culture while meeting the standards of another people.

This is an ongoing struggle but a struggle most caregivers would agree is most worthwhile. There was a time when an Indian Social Work degree took four years to complete while a regular degree took but three. Unfair or not more was and is expected from the Indian Social Worker than their peers.

There are Aboriginal people who spend their whole life looking after children. They are the little mothers. The oldest daughter looks after her siblings while the parents are away. They often have children at a young age they must look after. Then there are the grandchildren and the children of relatives who, for whatever reasons, are unable to raise their own children. Their sacrifice often goes unheralded.

Grandmothers are often the glue holding families together that would otherwise be split apart.

Sometimes it takes super human strength for those in responsibility to not only hold their people together but to find a way forward.

Their efforts need recognition.



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Call for Nominations in MN-S Bi-Election

During the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly in November 2009, the Provincial Métis Council was given a mandate to proceed with a bi-election for the position of Provincial Regional Director in Northern Region 1.

Closing date for nominations is January 17th, 5:00pm. The bi-election will be on February 17, 2010.

For more information about nominating a candidate, please contact:
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Chief Pratt following in father's footsteps

**By Desarae Eashappie
For Eagle Feather News**

Muscowpetung Chief Elizabeth (Liz) Pratt is one of approximately 12 woman chiefs among the 74 First Nations across Saskatchewan. Pratt's vision for a stronger and healthier community is similar to that of other chiefs, but she says her journey to realizing this vision, began years before she stepped out of her comfort zone in 2008 and into an entirely different atmosphere.

"I would have been comfortable staying as a bus driver and staying in school, eventually opening my own business. But I felt in my heart that I needed to do something and I stepped out of my safety zone. I took a step of faith to do something better for my community, says Pratt.

"It took many years of thought for me to make sure that if I was going to run for this position, then I would do what felt right in my heart," she says.

Besides bettering her community, Pratt says one of her greatest visions is for her community to have something that cannot be taken away from them: education and independence to contribute to society.

"I think that as First Nations people, we have a lot to offer," she says.

"Even though we are a nation that has come through a lot of hardships and turmoil ... we are still survivors."

Recently, Muscowpetung First Nation hosted their first powwow in

can't go forward without a foundation – the Elders. I really believe that the Elders have a lot of knowledge and wisdom that needs to be transferred to the young people. I believe that our

system. She says she carries the teachings of her late dad, World War Two First Nation veteran William Pratt, with her today.

"I spent a number of years traveling with my dad. I was mentored by my dad and he had great beliefs and strong family values. All of (her sibling's) careers have been with helping people," she says.

One of the most valuable attributes that Pratt says she has carried with her, passed on from her dad, is being able to sit and listen to what people have to say.

"I sit and listen a lot. He always taught us to sit and listen, and to not be so eager to jump up and speak, because there is always somebody that is more educated and has more knowledge than you," she says.

As a representative of the small number of women chiefs in Saskatchewan, Pratt encourages other First Nations women to "step out of their safety zone. We've been given that

same measure of strength as men," she says.

"If other First Nations women feel in their heart and they have a vision for the community, then they should walk with their vision and be strong in it."



Chief Liz Pratt decided the time was right to assume a leadership role in her community. (Photo by Mike Dubois)

over 30 years, where she was honoured by the community. Pratt says events within the community, such as the powwow, are important for youth in the community.

"When we talk about the future, we

young people will be more successful if they carry that pride and dignity that our Elders pass down to them," she says.

Pratt comes from a large family, including 15 siblings, and says she grew up with a strong family support



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New Year begins with healthy resolutions

Over the last year many of our readers wrote in or sent emails. Here is my blanket advice for those I was unable to answer – you know who you are.

Don't behave like a jerk when you have too much to drink. This year make the decision to tell your drunken friends and family what jerks they can turn into when they have too much to drink. Just make sure they're sober when you tell them.

Quit complaining about having to pay child support. Quit having unprotected sex. If you don't want children, use condoms or birth control (duh...).

Don't ask someone you just met, "Do you know who I am?" Unless you wear a name tag all the time don't expect that a complete stranger is going to know who you are.

Don't hit your spouse or treat them badly. Shame on you. I bet you're kinder to strangers than your own family and friends, aren't you?

Make 2010 the year you make changes to laugh more and spend more time with family and friends and remember hands are for helping not hurting.

Be kind to your children – they may have to take care of you when you're old.

Don't ditch your children to play at the casino or bingo ... ever sick. Tapwe! People have really done that!

Make an appointment with your family doctor and dentist. There are way too many toothless Chiefs out there! Exercise your treaty right to good teeth! Make 2010 the year you take your health into your own hands and be proactive instead of reactive.

Gentlemen take care of your bodies, have regular checkups for your prostate.

I understand that it's an uncomfortable procedure but better than dying of embarrassment.

Women, do you know what the symptoms are for a heart attack? Ask your doctor or pick up pamphlets from

the pharmacy or search the Internet. It could save your life.

My family recently lost our aunt to a heart attack. She was so funny, loving,

welcoming and understanding and she will be forever missed in our family.

Auntie made sure that we came together as a family to share meals, play cards, and

celebrate life. Once again we were reminded to enjoy our time here on earth because it really is too short.

A new year brings new opportunities to make changes in our lives, some will

choose to quit smoking and others may decide to get more exercise.

Whatever

you choose, make it a healthy choice.

Don't forget that being a healthy person includes mental, emotional and spiritual well being, so don't forget to

take care of all aspects of your life. Consider volunteering for community organizations or at your kids' school – it feels good helping others by doing so it makes you a healthier person.

Take time to check on the Elders in your community they will appreciate the time you spend with them and you just might learn something.

Talk to your children and find out how things are going in their lives, Often parents get so busy they forget to talk to their kids remember you brought these children into the world and it's your responsibility.

Give them daily chores and teach them how to take care of themselves. Encourage your children to stay in school so that they can be independent because it sucks living on social assistance.

Last but not least, participate in your band, municipal, provincial and federal elections. It is your right.

Thank you for your emails and letters over the past year. Keep them coming.

You can write to me at Eagle Feather News P.O. Box 924 St Main Saskatoon SK S7K 3M4 or email sandra.ahenakew@gmail.com

New year brings new opportunities to make changes in our lives.



Sandee Sez
Sandra Ahenakew



When Winter Hits

What you need to know about the City's Snow & Ice Program

Snow Route Temporary Parking Ban

Snow accumulation on high traffic Snow Route streets can be cleared more quickly and efficiently when parked vehicles are removed.

When a Snow Route Temporary Parking Ban is declared, **you have 8 hours to remove your parked vehicle from the Snow Route.** If your vehicle is not moved within that time, it will be ticketed and towed to a street nearby. When required, a Snow Route Temporary Parking Ban will be declared starting at 7:00 a.m. or at 3:00 p.m., and will be in effect for 72 hours.

Register to receive Snow Route e-notifications: snow.route@saskatoon.ca.



Sidewalk Snow Clearing

Uncleared sidewalks not only limit mobility ... they can be dangerous.

Residential sidewalks must be cleared of snow and ice within 48 hours of a snowfall. Sidewalks in certain commercial/suburban areas must be cleared within 24 hours of a snowfall.

Be a Snow Angel. If your neighbour is elderly or has health/mobility restrictions, lend a hand by clearing their sidewalks.

For updates on Snow Route Temporary Parking Bans or to report an unsafe winter sidewalk, call:

**Snow & Ice Hotline
975-2491**

For more information visit saskatoon.ca and look under "S" for Snow & Ice Program or call the Snow & Ice Hotline at 975-2491.

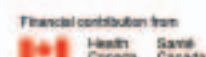
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*photos from iStock

Christmas came early at St. Mary's School

**By Darla Read
For Eagle Feather News**

Students and staff at St. Mary's Community School received an early Christmas gift last month.

A week before Santa was due to arrive, Cameco Corporation's President and Chief Executive Officer Gerry Grandey presented the school with a wrapped gift that two students eagerly ripped open. Inside they found a cheque

for \$500,000 that will go towards the pediatric wellness clinic that will be a part of the new St. Mary's School.

Grandey says corporate responsibility is important to Cameco, but said that means more than just the company's bottom line.

"It's about a lot more than just jobs and economics. It's also about supporting programs and projects that contribute to the quality of life in our community. It's

about getting involved in important projects, and it's about supporting those who need it most."

He says this project was something Cameco just had to be involved in.

St. Mary's opened a pediatric clinic in 2007 in partnership with the University of Saskatchewan and the Saskatoon Tribal Council.

At this presentation, STC Tribal Chief Felix Thomas praised the donation, noting the demographic of St. Mary's closely

reflects that of many First Nations.

"That's why it's important to invest in this school, as well as other inner city schools. Far too often when business expands ... and more families move out to the suburbs, that need overshadows some of the need that's in the inner cities."

The new St. Mary's school is part of the larger Pleasant Hill Revitalization Project, which will also include new affordable housing and renewed park space.



Elders Mike Maurice and Betsy Henderson presented Cameco CEO Gerry Grandey with a Star Blanket after Jonathon Tait, Cody Bear and Diane Boyko, Chair of the Saskatoon Catholic School Division opened the Cameco gift of \$500,000. (Photos by John Lagimodiere)

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2010 - The Year

Rose Fleury: Proud to represent Métis



Rose Fleury knew the best way to represent the Métis people while carrying the Olympic torch was to ride in a wagon. (Photo: Gabriel Dumont Institute)

Métis Elder Rose Fleury was honoured to be an Olympic torch bearer as it passed through her hometown of Duck Lake. An active community member, Fleury's work compiling statistics for Métis genealogy has created a legacy enabling thousands of Métis to trace their ancestry.

Her tenacity and commitment is not unlike that of Olympic athletes, all of whom make personal sacrifices and dedicate their time and energy to pursue goals and inspire others.

Born Rose Garipey near MacDowall, Saskatchewan on November 26, 1926, she grew up on a homestead north of Duck Lake. She learned to read, write and became keenly interested in history while attending school in Duck Lake. An equally valuable education came at home from her grandmother's stories of travels, work and families, underpinned with a reminder to "never forget where you come from or who you are. Listen to your Elders."

Working hard all her life, including a trapline in her youth, she lived at home until she was 17, and married Ernest Fleury at 21.

"I've kept track of my life in journals," noted Rose. Deaths, births, weddings, and happenings of the day have been faithfully recorded.

"Unfortunately, my early journals were lost when our house burned in 1960."

When she broke her leg and was confined to a wheelchair in 1967, she began genealogy research, starting with her own families – Garipey and Fleury, Par-enteau and Lafond. Breaking her hip and left leg again gave her time to compile her research into a family history.

"Now I am 83 and have a genealogy centre at Batoche," she said, adding it's disheartening that many people don't know their ancestors beyond three generations.

"This is why I am putting my whole heart into this project. It's important for our people to know where they came from, how we traveled, where were our ancestral homes, what kind of work was done to provide food, shelter and clothing."

History, stories, and entertainment are the backbone of the Métis culture, adds Rose. "I am dedicating my history books to all our lost people who are still in limbo as they research the history of their ancestors and cultural background."

She added it is an honour to be selected to carry the Olympic torch on behalf of the Métis people and her community.

"It was very awesome ... I don't even know who put my name in, but I guess there was quite a few angels in Duck Lake."

Fleury said given her age, she wasn't going to accept but her kids talked her into it, saying it was a once in a lifetime opportunity. Cutting short a trip in B.C. – she said she'd had enough of the mountains anyway, and liked getting back to her flat country – she came back to carry the torch while riding in a wagon, her own stipulation.

"I said I don't want to go in a truck, that's not my thing – since I'm representing the Métis I should ride in a wagon."

Starting at the Duck Lake town hall, she carried the torch to the Duck Lake Interpretive Centre, with many relatives and friends watching proudly – she has even lived to see her fifth generation, in two great-great-grandchildren. Her family chipped in to purchase the torch she carried, and are getting everything framed including the suit, mitts, and toque.

She calculates they must have two or three hundred photos they snapped.

"It's once in a lifetime," Fleury said, adding that even if another Olympics comes to Canada in her lifetime, "You don't get to do it a second time – there's always somebody else who needs to have a turn."

- Written by Andréa Ledding

Métis Did you know?

* Cumberland House is the oldest Métis community in Saskatchewan? The Hudson's Bay Company's Samuel Hearne established it in 1774.

* Did you know? In 1776, Alexander Henry and Joseph Henry of the North West Company began to trade in the Ile-a-la-Crosse region.

* Did you know? The Cree and Dene in what is now northwest Saskatchewan met at an annual lacrosse game, which Benjamin Fro-bisher saw around 1777. This event provided the community with its French name, Ile-a-la-Crosse.



GABRIEL DUMONT
of Native Studies

War of the Métis



1885 Resistance:

Why did it happen?

The 1885 Resistance occurred because the Batoche-area Métis were frustrated that the federal government did not address their lack of formal title to their lands and their desire for proper political representation. Having escaped ethnic and religious discrimination in Manitoba after 1870, the Métis desperately wanted title to their lands because they did not want to be dispossessed like they had been in Manitoba.

As a result, dozens of petitions were sent, from the mid 1870s until 1885, to government authorities. The federal government's response was inaction, including to one in 1882 signed by all of Batoche's residents. Throughout the later 1870s and early 1880s, the Batoche-area Métis were represented politically by Manitoba Métis or local Euro-Canadians who, in the end, did not serve to adequately address their grievances.

After years of government inaction, the Batoche-area Métis organized politically to address their grievances. In 1883-84, a committee of the District of Lorne's leading Métis inhabitants drew up a list of grievances, and voted in favour of sending a delegation to Ottawa, and for bringing Louis Riel to Batoche.

Later that summer, the Batoche-area Métis petitioned Prime Minister Macdonald demanding that the North-West Territories become a province with a full responsible government, that the Métis be granted full title to their lands, that these lands be surveyed in the Métis' river lot land-holding system, and that Louis Riel's leadership be formally recognized through either his appointment to the territorial council or to the Senate.

In 1885, Louis Riel drafted a new petition, which had the same principles as the preceding ones, but was more urgent in tone. The government responded in January 1885, saying it would not negotiate with Riel and would only consider the Métis' demands if they were presented at the proper time and place. It is for this reason that Louis Schmidt and other Métis felt that the federal government had precipitated the outbreak of the 1885 Resistance.

On March 18, 1885, the Batoche-area Métis established a provisional government and a 20-member people's council or "Exovorate." After the Battle of Duck Lake on March 26, 1885, the federal government finally took action and sent in the Canadian Army, under General Middleton, to crush the Métis' resistance.

In the end, using the military to address the Métis' grievances proved tragic not only because many lives were lost, but also because the Métis would become even further socially, economically and politically marginalized.

- Written By Gabriel Dumont Institute: David Morin and Darren Prefontaine

Chronology of the 1885 Resistance ...

1872

The Saskatchewan valley Métis petitioned for an inalienable colony of 1,800, 000 acres.

1875 (August)

The North-West Mounted Police forced the Batoche-area Métis to abandon their form of local self-government, "le conseil de Saint-Laurent" or the "Council of St. Laurent." With Gabriel Dumont as its president, the council's last edict tried to enforce The Law of the Prairie's conservation measures.

1878 (February 1)

The Métis at St. Laurent (Batoche) prepared a list of grievances. In a letter to the Lieutenant-Governor David Laird, Gabriel Dumont asked for local schools to be subsidized by the territorial government, assistance for Métis farmers,

and the appointment of a French-speaking magistrate, a Métis member of the territorial governing council, and a land grant to extinguish the Métis' Aboriginal title.

1878

Prince Albert Métis and non-Aboriginal settlers sent a petition to the Governor General regarding their land rights with one hundred and forty-eight signatures.

1878 (January 15)

Prince Albert Métis and non-Aboriginal settlers sent a petition, with eighty signatures, to the Minister of the Interior.

1878 (February 1)

Gabriel Dumont and the St. Laurent Métis sent a petition to Lieutenant-Governor David Laird.

To be continued next month ...

Prepared by the Gabriel Dumont Institute with material developed by Darren Prefontaine, Leah Dorion, Ron Laliberté, and Father Guy Lavallée.

Calendar of Events

February

Saskatchewan Aboriginal Storytelling Month

National Aboriginal Day
June 21

Back To Batoche
July 18-25

John Arcand Fiddle Fest
August 12-15

Louis Riel Day
November 16

Send your event to: johnl@eaglefeathernews.com





Kaiswatum carries flame in Fort Qu'Appelle

By Jarrett Crowe
For Eagle Feather News

Alyssa Kaiswatum, a 20-year-old student athlete at First Nations University of Canada, was one of 12,000 torchbearers chosen to be a part of the 2010 Olympic Torch Relay.

She ran the initial leg of the relay in Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan on January 9, running from the All Nations Healing Hospital to the Treaty 4 Governance Centre.

Thrilled at the opportunity to run with the Olympic flame, she not only ran for herself but for others including her late Kohkom.

"She passed away two years ago. She'd be so proud of me, of the things I've accomplished, especially at a young age."

"It was amazing," she says of being cheered on by family, friends and the public as she started her run.

"When (my family) found out that I was going to run the torch they were really happy for me. They cheered me on and

really supported me. I just want to thank my family because they are everything to me and (they're) the best."

Torchbearers across the country run approximately 300-400 metres during their part of the relay. They also have the opportunity to purchase the torch that they carry. Kaiswatum chose to do so and will keep hers as a memento of this occasion.


Kaiswatum plays for the University of Regina Cougars softball team that was the 2009 Alberta Intercollegiate Women's Fastball League champion. This team also competed in the 2009 National Championships in Kitchener, Ontario this past October.

Kaiswatum will use her experience as a stepping stone to her dream: to one day play at the Olympics. She will be attending tryouts for Team Canada in June.


"I promised my family that I would reach the Olympics some day. It doesn't mean right now. Maybe when I'm 36, it (age) doesn't matter but I want to get there someday."

Alyssa Kaiswatum was thrilled to be one of the torchbearers when the Olympic flame arrived in Saskatchewan in January. Cheered on by family and friends, Kaiswatum knew her late Kohkom would be proud.

(Photo by Jarrett Crowe)




GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE
of Native Studies and Applied Research



The Gabriel Dumont Institute Board of Directors congratulates its Publishing Department, Wilfred Burton, Anne Patton, Sherry Farrell Racette, and Norman Fleury for their achievements at the 2010 Saskatchewan Book Awards for the children's book, *Dancing in My Bones*, which received the Award for Publishing, First Peoples' Publishing Award, and the First Peoples' Writing Award!

February is Aboriginal Storytelling Month and to celebrate, the Gabriel Dumont Institute is holding a launch for *Dancing in My Bones* at McNally Robinson in Saskatoon on **Saturday, February 13 at 1:30 pm**. Wilfred Burton will do a reading of the story with live music by John Arcand, "Master of the Métis Fiddle."

Dancing in My Bones, the sequel to the highly successful book *Fiddle Dancer*, returns us to the story of a young Métis boy named Nolin as he continues to discover his Métis heritage.



Lovingly written by Wilfred Burton and Anne Patton and vividly illustrated by Sherry Farrell Racette, *Dancing in My Bones* will take you on a journey to discover Moushoom's first moose hunt, red lipstick kisses, Uncle Bunny's fiddling, and the return of the "Bannock Jig." But most importantly, by the end of the story, you might feel like you have dancing in your bones!

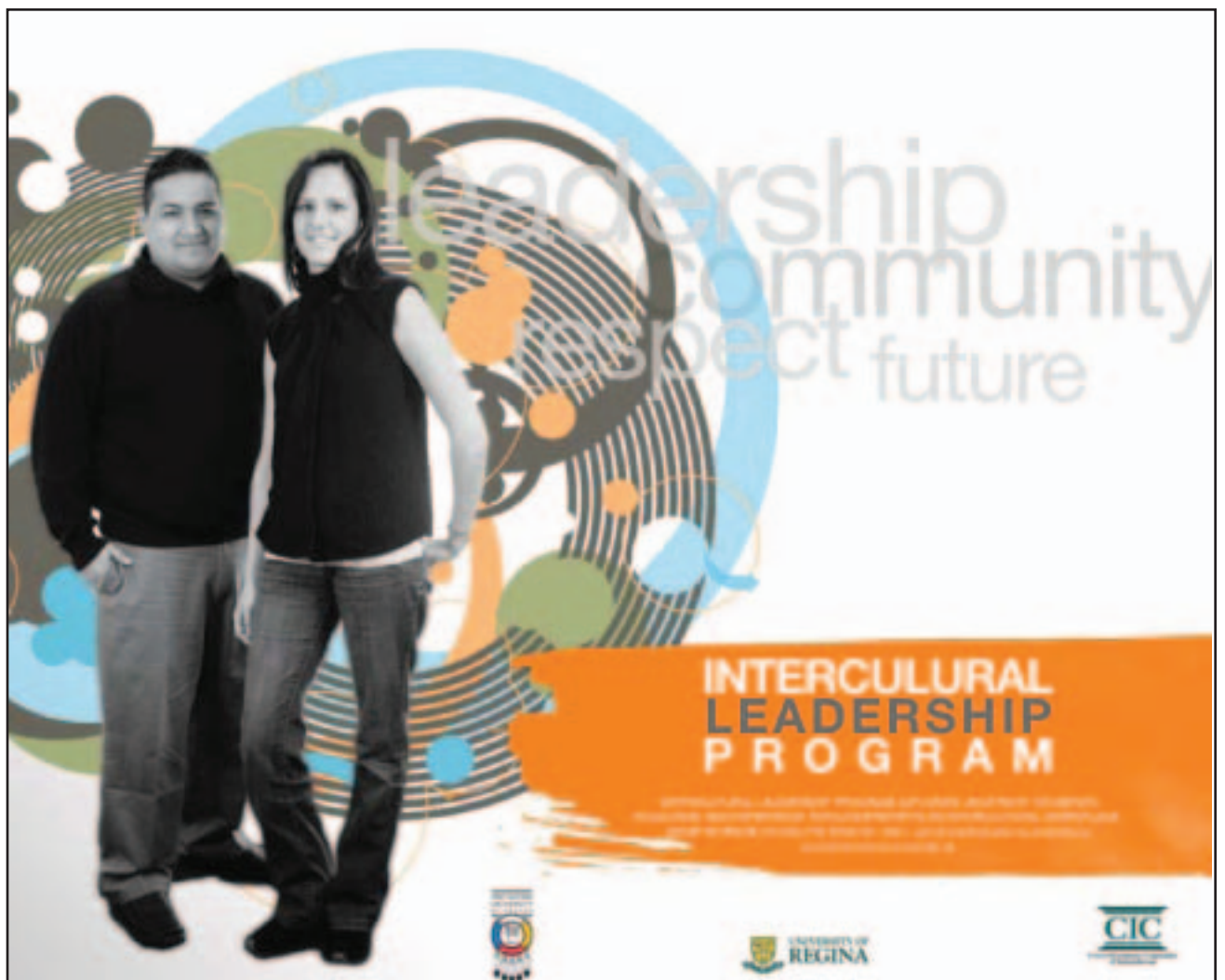
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Emily Key received the Sask Tel Youth Spirit Award from Ken Cheveldayoff representing the Province.

Honour student working on her dream

By **Andréa Ledding**
For Eagle Feather News

Emily Key, recipient of the Sask Tel Youth Spirit Award for 2009, was only 15 years old when she assumed responsibility for her entire family, including four younger sisters and a baby brother.

"Emily has to overcome much adversity in her young life, but her spirit is what is supporting her and her family, and we wish to recognize Emily for the great young woman she is," said Minister Ken Cheveldayoff, representing the Province of Saskatchewan at last June's awards.

The eldest of six, Key has managed to maintain a home for them all since their grandmother, the main caregiver, passed away in 2008. Her four sisters are now aged 14, 12, nine, and eight. Her brother turns three in February.

Her school guidance counsellor recommended her for the Spirit Youth Award, which is co-sponsored by the Government of Saskatchewan Ministry of First Nations and Métis Relations, knowing of this exceptional young woman who remains modest, hard-working, and focused on her goals, while keeping her family together.

She continues to look to the future, and to focus on her studies while keeping the home fires going. She is now in Grade 11 at Archbishop O'Neill High School in Regina.

"Yeah it's hard work," she admits, but says sheer determination has kept her going.

"I'm working towards making my dream come true because that's what my grandmother wanted."

She adds that she receives moral support and en-

couragement along the way – especially from her friends – and receiving the award was not only inspiring to her, but encouraged her to keep pushing herself harder towards success.

"The whole experience was really great for me," she said, adding the win was completely unexpected. "The biggest smile spread across my face, apparently – I was speechless."

In 2009 she continued to receive high marks, with an average of 92 per cent overall, school activity participation, and selection for the Student Senate at Regina's Archbishop O'Neill High School.

She says her experience with the Student Senate was great, the highlight being a program suggested by one of the other Senate members.

"It was for exchange students and aboriginal students – a place where they can go and talk about their culture," Key explained.

Meanwhile, her average remained right up in the same high range, and she said she does sacrifice her social life to study hard, but it's worth it. Her advice to others: "Work hard and get involved with whatever interests you ... you can never start too early, getting prepared."

She also joined the pre-profession club in the medical section, which provided an opportunity to chat with a doctor and receive advice. She encourages others to "Get things that look good on your applications. Show your interest."

A member of Gordons First Nation, Emily hopes to attend university in nursing or medicine, ideally doing her pre-med at the University of Regina and a medical degree in Vancouver, one of the best medical schools in Western Canada.

Happy New Year!

Applications are now being accepted for fall admission in the following programs:

- Aboriginal Life Transitions • Adult Education • Addictions
- Accountancy • Business Administration
- Educational Assistant • First Nations Child Care
- Health Care Aide • Information Technology
- Process Operation Technician
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Tribal councils building construction alliance

Two Saskatchewan tribal councils have entered into the construction management industry. Headquartered in Saskatoon, First Alliance Construction Solutions is a consortium between the Saskatoon Tribal Council, Battlefords Agency Tribal Chiefs and American construction management professionals K-Mech Constructors (K-Mech) from Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota.

"This consortium is all about providing construction management services to our own communities and creating economic development," Saskatoon Tribal Council Chief Felix Thomas said.

"Saskatchewan's economy is poised to rebound, despite the recession, and we are positioning ourselves to take advantage of the business opportunities, especially where private sector projects are concerned."

First Alliance Construction Solutions (FACS) will offer construction management and project management services, and will compete for both First Nation capital projects and private sector contracts. FACS plans to market its services to tribal council and band capital projects, mining and industrial sectors, Crown corporations, health care facilities and the renewable energy industry.

The Battlefords Agency Tribal Chiefs believes FACS not only fulfills a need within the First Nations community, it is an excellent opportunity to position First Nations in Saskatchewan for the future.

"We are literally going to help build Saskatchewan through this new construction management firm, starting with some of our own First Nation communities. Our

people also need a construction management firm that understands its culture and the communities we serve," said Chief Sheldon Wuttunee of the Battlefords Agency Tribal Chiefs.

Wuttunee and other leaders believe it is the right time to enter into construction management due to the enormous potential for capital projects and other industry expansion in Saskatchewan. The leader's confidence is due in part to the partnership with K-Mech Constructors from Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota.

K-Mech is a joint partnership between two U.S. building management construction and mechanical engineering firms, Knutson Construction Services and Corval Group, respectively.

K-Mech was established to join the synergies of two U.S. construction organizations and seek out opportunities in the U.S. and Canada. K-Mech entered into the Canadian market through the construction management of a canola crushing plant in Saskatchewan. Since that time the company has been looking for further opportunities in the province, which led to the partnership between K-Mech, STC and BATC.

"We couldn't be more excited about the partnership that has been established," stated Michael Ahern, President of FACS.

"We see aggressive and proactive partners in STC and BATC, with a strong focus toward long-term business growth. By combining nearly 200 years of construction experience (in K-Mech) with the rich history of the First Nations bands, we believe we are offering the perfect construction solution to the province of Saskatchewan."



STC Chief Felix Thomas and Chief Sheldon Wuttunee of BATC are excited about the partnership. (Photo by John Lagimodiere)

First Alliance Construction Solutions will now be the vehicle for K-Mech Constructors to team with First Nations in Canada, especially on projects involving other First Nation communities, business and industrial projects.

First Nation leaders believe FACS will fulfill an important role in the evolution of a strong First Nations economy. The company's growth and expansion into the market will create much needed capacity in construction management, engineering, education, training and the development of the First Nation labour pool.

"We believe one of the solutions to our youth's social problems is a job," said Chief Thomas. "We need to provide as much opportunity for our young people to learn a skill and start a career. A construction firm like FACS will enable us to offer those types of opportunities to our youth."

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First a new name, now a new home for SMEDCO

By John Lagimodiere
Of Eagle Feather News

The SaskMétis Economic Development Corporation, or SMEDCO, has been offering assistance to Métis entrepreneurs for over 23 years. In the past, they were referred to as SNEDCO, as in SaskNative Economic.

its 23 years of existence, they have disbursed 1,132 loans totaling \$27.9 million for 610 Métis owned businesses in Saskatchewan. These businesses have created or maintained employment for almost 2,000 Métis people.

“One year we had a very big client. We did some math and that client had over

likes how SMEDCO is positioned.

“First off, the move was a good idea for everyone,” said McLeod. “That building was falling apart and we had no money to fix it. And SMEDCO is ready for the boom we are seeing in Métis business.

“But you know lots of our business comes from our current clients who come in for loans for expansion. That shows that our clients are successful. There are lots of positive developments,” says McLeod.

Ultimately it is about creating wealth in the Métis community and the reward for Fofonoff and his staff is the success of a business.

“We all get excited when someone succeeds,” he added.

“Ultimately we would like to see a provincial report that shows the amount of wealth in Métis communities being equal to that of everyone else.

That would be very rewarding.”



SMEDCO has a new home at 406 Jessop Avenue in Saskatoon.

They changed their name to SaskMetis to better reflect their client base. If you can't find them, you are likely one of the many souls that are looking up at the old MN-S building by the airport in Saskatoon where there are no Métis organizations now. The MN-S, SMEDCO and MACSI have all moved to new digs in Sutherland on Jessop Avenue, a few blocks from the FSIN.

The move, though time consuming, has been a good thing for SMEDCO.

“It is nice to be in a building that is in better shape,” says SMEDCO CEO Greg Fofonoff referring to the old buildings penchant to leak and be moldy.

“Being here with the MN-S and other affiliates does give us some profile and allows us to deliver better for our clients.”

And SMEDCO has many clients. In

a half million dollar payroll,” said Fofonoff.

“The taxes the business and employees were paying were more than what the government gave us at SMEDCO to operate each year. Those numbers indicate the success of our programs.”

SMEDCO steps up to help Métis entrepreneurs who often have the skills and desire to succeed in business but are lacking capital.

“There is a lack of family wealth in the Métis community,” said Fofonoff. “This leaves them with no equity for down payments. Our equity requirements are a bit less severe than banks and that allows us to help.”

Bob McLeod is the Area Director for Western Region IIA and the MN-S Economic Development Minister and he

CCAY 2010-2011

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Cultural Connections for Aboriginal Youth

The Aboriginal Friendship Centres of Saskatchewan are issuing the 2010-2011 Call for Proposals for the Cultural Connections for Aboriginal Youth Initiative.

Please download the online 2010-2011 CCAY Application and Guidelines at:

www.afcs.ca

*All 2010-2011 CCAY Applications are due by February 1, 2010 at 4:30 pm CST

For more information, contact the CCAY Regional Desk at (306) 955-0762 or email: sandyjoan_b@hotmail.com

Send proposal submissions to:

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Lionel Peyachew with Buffalo Run, a piece that celebrates the importance of the buffalo for prairie people. (Photo by Jennifer Dubois)

Red Pheasant artist selected for Aboriginal Art Bottle Program

By Jennifer Dubois
For Eagle Feather News

One hundred Aboriginal artists were in competition to display their art on a giant Coca-Cola bottle. Lionel Peyachew, from Red Pheasant First Nation, was one of the 15 artists selected for the Aboriginal Art Bottle Program.

Coca-Cola presented Payachew's artwork at the First Nations University of Canada on January 7. The bottles will be unveiled regionally across Canada throughout the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Torch Relay.

Peyachew said the art piece, which is titled Buffalo Run, speaks for itself when explaining the meaning of the buffalo for the prairie province.

"I thought it's a good time celebrate this magnificent animal at the Olympics where, probably, a lot of the visitors would not have ever seen such an animal which is such an integral part of our history," said Peyachew.

He said his inspiration comes from teaching traditional arts at the First Nations University of Canada.

"Working with hide and various elements using natural objects was what inspired me to do something like this. It's something different which is not usually a conventional element that's used every day," said Peyachew.

Kirsten Mihailides, manager of Public Affairs and Communications for Coca-Cola, said they were influenced to come up with the bottle concept by the variety of Aboriginal art across the country.

"We wanted to represent what Canada really is and Aboriginal artists are really our truest form of art and we are really excited to be able to do this and there are so many incredible mediums that are practiced with in the Aboriginal artist community and they are very well represented on the bottles that we have for display," Mihailides said.

The bottle will be auctioned off during the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Winter Games. Proceeds will go towards the Vancouver 2010 Aboriginal Youth Legacy Fund to support sport, culture, education and sustainability initiatives for all Aboriginal youth in Canada.



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The ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS COALITION OF SASKATCHEWAN is holding a public session about the repeal of Section 67 of the *Canadian Human Rights Act*. Section 67 shielded some *Indian Act* decisions and provisions from challenges of discrimination by Aboriginal peoples.

On June 18, 2008, Canada passed Bill C-21 which removed Section 67. It provided for a transition period where organizations could seek out the needs and understandings of the people who will be impacted.

We want to ensure that the interests of off-reserve, non-status and status Indians and non status people of Saskatchewan are heard, recorded and considered.

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More highs than lows among the peaks and valleys in a great '09

Every year each of us experience our fair share of ups and downs, peaks and valleys, high and lows. A lot happens over the span of 365 days. Here's what stood out for me in 2009...

Movie of the Year:

The Hangover. I never thought a comedy could ever top Ace Ventura (on second thought maybe it doesn't) but The Hangover had it all. Even though you could foresee what was coming next, the cliches worked and every scene delivered hilarious turns, merry mix-ups and dialogue on the verge of raunchy without going too far.



I was even fortunate enough NOT to watch the trailer and had no idea Mike Tyson was in the movie – singing In The Air Tonight by Phil Collins no less!

If you haven't seen it and are in the mood for a whirlwind Vegas journey, rent The Hangover – you won't be disappointed.

Live Show of the Year:

O'Death at Lydia's. On a beautiful June evening I was driving back to Saskatoon from Regina. It was a rare occasion – I was by myself.

With the wife out camping with her friends and the boy hanging with Grandma in Regina, I had the weekend to do whatever I wanted. But the onset of boredom soon followed ...

That is until my old friend Simon Moccasin called wanting to paint the town. What started out as a night to review old scripts I had shelved months and even years earlier, turned into one of the most memorable live shows I had ever witnessed.

O'Death – a bluegrass/punk/country band from New York – was on a break from their tour with Les Claypool and decided to play a gig in Toon Town.

They heard we had quite the music scene and were eager to find out for themselves what made it so great.

The minute Moccasin and I walked in, I was glued to the stage – these boys could play!

O'Death is an eclectic, on-the-verge

of strange, cast of characters: a Bob Dylan-esque singer, a bearded country boy playing the ukulele and banjo, a hardcore punk bassist, a crazy fiddle player with even crazier hair, and a drummer who looked like he should be playing in Matchbox 20.

What resulted was one of the most awe-inspiring, jaw-dropping and exhausting displays of music how it should be played: intense, thoughtful, daring and tight. Throughout O'Death's show, passers-by continuously migrated to the small pub and before long, there wasn't an inch of space to spare. By the end of their third encore, O'Death ran out of songs to play for us.

Lucky for me, I purchased every CD available and am able to relive that memorable night as often as I want.

Highlight(s) of the Year:

Although I'll never admit it to his face, since first pitching him a story five years ago I've always looked up to the publisher of Eagle Feather News, John Lagimodiere.

He's a hardworking, take no guff family man who enjoys life, provides opportunities for people and does more than his part to make Saskatoon a better place to live.

It was with great honor and admiration that I watched him accept the 2009 Abex Award for Aboriginal Business of the Year.

I know his partner, Dee, is responsible for at least 51% of the Award but needless to say, it is a profound pleasure to work for and be friends with Johnny and Dee – they're both class acts. Once again, way to go!

The year also afforded me the opportunity to work with Jordan Wheeler – son of the late, great Eagle Feather columnist Bernelda Wheeler.

He was hired as story editor for Cashing In Season II (which airs February 23 on APTN – check local listings) and I have to admit I was a little intimidated by the prospect – I heard rumors he rips the hearts out of writers who can't deliver.

I decided to work tirelessly on my script so as to keep my heart safely in my chest and it worked! I can safely say Wheeler and I have a strong working relationship and I look forward to future projects with him.

Watching my son, Luka, grow from



Cashing In director Norma Bailey (in orange hat) watches as special guest star Derek Miller (holding guitar) rehearses a scene. Cashing In airs February 23 on APTN.

a chubby little baby to an active, smart and confident little boy tickles my heart strings on a daily basis.

Not only is the little bugger a highlight of the year, he's the highlight of every day. And in March he'll have a baby sister!

Disappointment of the Year:

After writing 12 solid scripts, the Rabbit Fall writing team was devastated to learn the TV series was

cancelled due to the economy. Enough said. But it didn't kill us and I truly believe it made me a better writer while opening doors on other opportunities.

And as I look forward to 2010, I welcome another year of ups and downs, highs and lows, peaks and valleys – experiencing the good and bad makes us who we are.

Have a happy, safe and productive 2010!!



Native Sons soccer team stresses positive lifestyle

By Blue Pelletier
For Eagle Feather News

The tryouts started in August. And when it was all said and done the Native Sons Soccer Team was formed. The team is made up of 18 and 19 year olds who are the best First Nation soccer players the province has to offer.

They currently play in the 3rd Division of the Saskatoon Men's Turf League and are tied for first.

This team will travel to Europe in the summer for three tournaments, the Gothia Cup in Sweden, and the Dana and Brandby Cup in Denmark.

All the members of the team signed contracts and agreed to stay in school, live a drug and alcohol free lifestyle, and to be good citizens in their respective communities.

While in Europe the players will be showcasing First Nations culture. Some of the team will be drumming and singing while the



The Native Sons team includes: From Beardy's and Okemasis First Nation: Troy Okemaysim, Dwayne Fox, Bradon Gardypie, Tyson Desjarlais, Nathan Baldhead, Lucas Seesesquasis, Dustin Mike, Raymond Cameron. From Poundmaker First Nation: Dakota Tootoosis, Tanner Tootoosis, Shane Antoine. From Big River First Nation: Quentin Dreaver (captain) Wally Rabbitskin, Tyrone Thomas, Eric Johnstone, Jedner Morin, Mike Bear, Brody Morin, Ryan Morin. From Little Pine First Nation: Tanin Nighttraveller, Scott Sokapwanace. From Red Pheasant First Nation: Jordan Nighttraveller. From Mosquito (Lean Man, Grizzly Bear Head) First Nation: Brennan Wahobin. From Thunderchild First Nation: Jackson Graham. From Starblanket First Nation: Andrew Starblanket. Métis Nation: Blade Bray. From Waterhen First Nation: Cody Fiddler, Mikwan Mistickokat. From Muskeg Lake First Nation: Tony Greyeyes.

remainder will be dancing for all those in attendance.

The idea came when coach Corey

Bugler was at the North American Indigenous Games and recognized how good Saskatchewan was at soccer.

"A lot of these kids have never left the country or their reserves," explains Bugler. "It's important to show them where sports can take them. They are amazing soccer players. And through sport and culture they will see there is another way to succeed in life."

"Hopefully they can all come back and be leaders in their community," he says.

The team is struggling to garner funding for the trip. They have done numerous fundraising efforts such as steak nights, selling food and the FSIN Soccer Championships, and banquet dinners.

The next one will be January 30. The team will have a banquet dinner and the Dirt Road Maniacs will be performing. The event will be at the Saskatoon Indian and Métis Friendship Centre.

For tickets call Coach Corey Bugler at (306) 292-2237.

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Big River boxer suffers bad break

Canada falls short at 2010 World Juniors

“Things seem to be healing fast and it seems to be on the mend,” says Big River’s Stu Twardzik.

After breaking a bone in his hand, the 2008 Junior National Boxing Champion at 155 lbs, is quite optimistic he will be able to fight at Nationals this year on January 25-30.

If he doesn’t, he will lose his opportunity to make the National team. And worse, a chance to train with them for the 2012 Olympics.

He says “it really sucks, it’s an important year for me I wanted to rack up international experience and get some exposure.”

Twardzik says not all will be lost if he doesn’t get a chance to fight this year at Nationals. He would still have two years left to make the National Team before the 2012 Olympics.

But he would rather lose that chance in the ring and not because of injury. He wants to fight, but won’t risk his career to do it this year at Nationals. The final decision on whether or not he fights will come down to him.

Stu is also the 2008 World Commonwealth Youth Games Champion at 155 lbs. He trains out of the Big River Boxing Club.

The 2010 World Junior Hockey Tournament was supposed to be Canada’s to win. And after going undefeated all the way to the Gold Medal game things certainly seemed that way.

But the boys from south of the border ended our party. In what was a definite classic, team USA won a 6-5 overtime thriller.

The game went back and forth. And with just a few minutes remaining it looked like the game was over. That’s when Kid Canada Jordan Eberle took over. He scored two goals in a matter of minutes and sent the game to overtime.

Eberle, who was named the tournament’s MVP came up big once again. He has a knack for scoring the big goal and is Canada’s all-time leader in goals at the World Juniors.

In overtime, John Carlson ended Canada’s hopes of winning a record sixth straight gold medal in this tournament. His wrist shot all but silenced the arena and the thousands of Canadian fans in attendance at Credit Union Centre in Saskatoon were stunned.

Team USA will look to repeat next year when the tournament will be played in Buffalo, New York.



Stu Twardzik’s dream of making the National boxing team suffered a blow when the Big River boxer broke a bone in his hand.

happened to Jonathon Cheechoo and Jordin Tootoo? ... The Penguins are just like the Oilers of the ‘80s, and will win

three more cups ... UFC is here to stay and if you haven’t become a fan yet, start watchin!

2010 BRIT final a fight to the finish

Pitt Meadows fought off a courageous group from Vancouver College to win the 42nd Bedford Road Invitational Basketball Tournament 62-56.

It was a great start for Pitt who came out strong and jumped out to the early lead. Vancouver College continued to keep it close and Pitt never was able to pull away.

In the dying minutes it was Pitt’s blend of size and skill that proved to be the difference.

I’ve been to every BRIT since 1989 and was quite disappointed in the turnout for this year’s final. Maybe next year it will get back to being a packed house and make that tournament what it should be.

Those who were there saw a great game. BRIT never lacks for excitement and is definitely one of the highlights of the sporting calendar in Saskatoon every year.

Random thoughts from 2009

My trip to the Summer Games was definitely a long one but once there it was great to see all those kids playing so hard and being greeted by the wonderful community that is Onion Lake ... Manny Pacquiao is the greatest fighter of our generation, I doubted him for a while but he continued his reign this year and will be remembered as a better fighter than Floyd Mayweather ... The Lakers won it all and I still hate Kobe, Raptors in 2027...The Riders found yet another way to frustrate their fan base, losing the Grey Cup on a stupid stupid penalty...The Steelers and Cardinals played the best Super Bowl I have ever seen ... What

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Dumais, Fiddler proud to wear the maple leaf

By Blue Pelletier
For Eagle Feather News

It may have been a disappointing tournament for Team Canada West at the Under 17 World Hockey Challenge. But for Two Saskatchewan-born players the experience was once in a lifetime.

Wilson Dumais of the Peter Ballantyne First Nation and Todd Fiddler of Waterhen not only played on the team but on the team's top line.

For Dumais it was a learning experience.

"I had a bad attitude before I left, it helped change me and I am doing what I can now to become a better hockey player," says Dumais. "It was a great experience to play against really good international players."

And friends and coaches have noticed a difference in him since he returned to Tisdale, where he plays for the Trojans of the Saskatchewan Midget AAA Hockey League.

When Team West hit the ice for their first game Dumais was put on the fourth line. That lasted till about midway through the second period when his coach saw something in him and put him next to Fiddler. He responded by notching four goals in the tournament to go along with three assists.

Next year he plans to play for the Prince George Cougars of the WHL and says his game is sort of like that of Mike Richards of the Philadelphia Flyers.

His linemate and friend, Todd Fiddler, also loved the experience.

"It was a fun challenge playing against such good players."

Fiddler plays for the Beardy's Blackhawks and is leading the Saskatchewan

Midget AAA League in scoring with 62 points including 29 goals thus far.

At the World Hockey Challenge he finished just behind Dumais with five points.



Wilson Dumais and Todd Fiddler were integral members of the Team Canada West team at the Under 17 World Hockey Challenge.

"I would like to make it to the NHL but if not I would like to go to school," Fiddler says.

Both Fiddler and Dumais stand about 5'10 and weigh in at around 185 lbs. But their games are slightly different. While Dumais doesn't mind getting his nose dirty and has the skill to put the puck in the net, Fiddler is more of a scorer. But they enjoy playing on the same line and who knows they just may get that chance in the NHL some day.



Jacquie Lavallee lit the Olympic cauldron in Saskatoon. Lavallee is a teacher at Oskayak High School in Saskatoon.

(Photo: Gabriel Dumont Institute)

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