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# Wind speaker



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**'Colossal failure'  
by police left Pickton  
free to kill  
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**Sprawling  
omnibus bills  
spark lawsuit  
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**Political will  
and all of Canada  
needed to drive change  
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## Idle No More

A group of Dakota drummers lead a song of prayer for hunger striking Chief Theresa Spence, at a 600-strong Idle No More rally in Vancouver, B.C. on December 23.

Please see more of our coverage on pages 10 and 11.

Photo by David P. Ball

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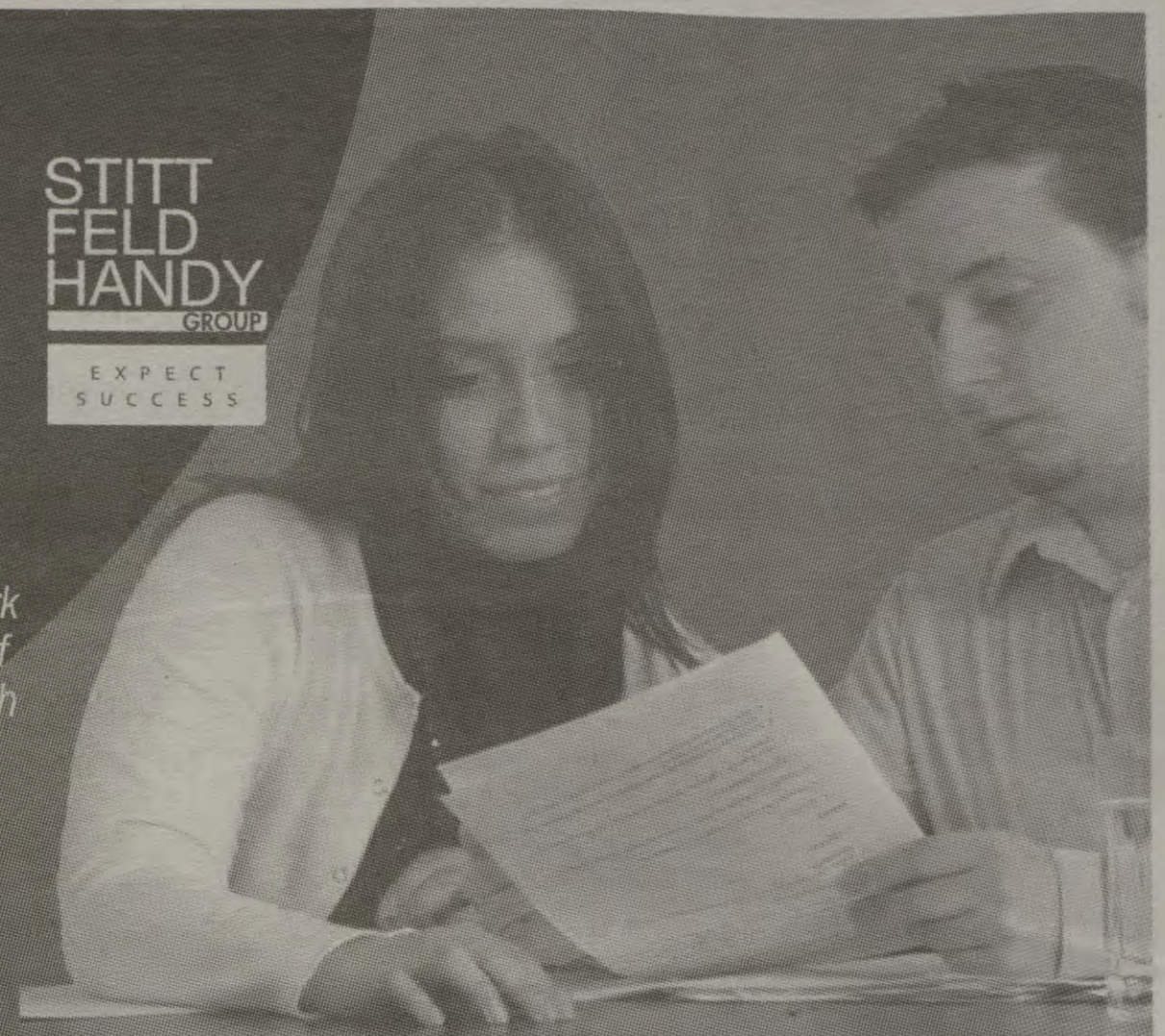
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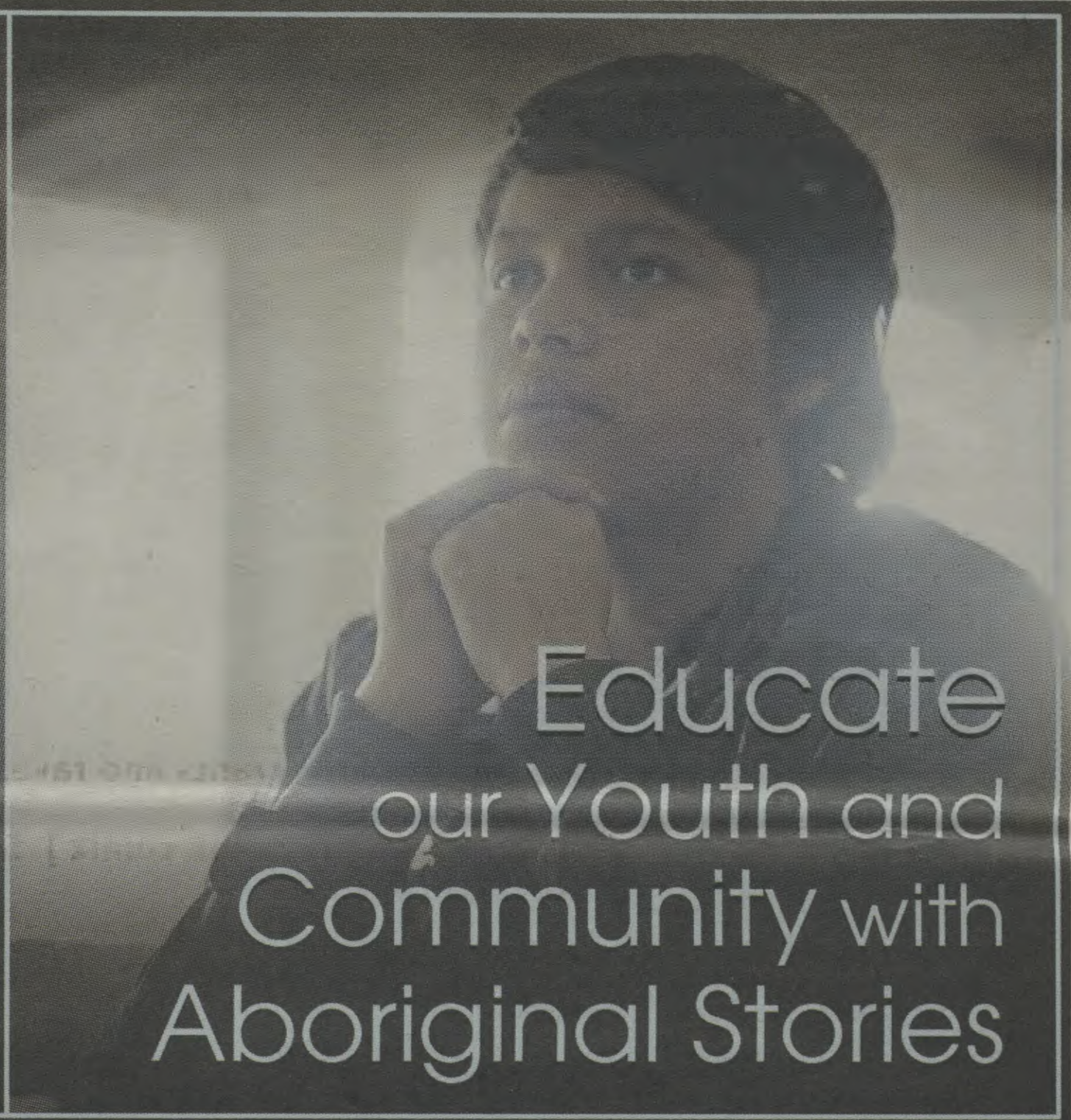


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Success is not defined by a single meeting with the Prime Minister. Success is about what led up to the Jan. 11 meeting with him and what will follow.

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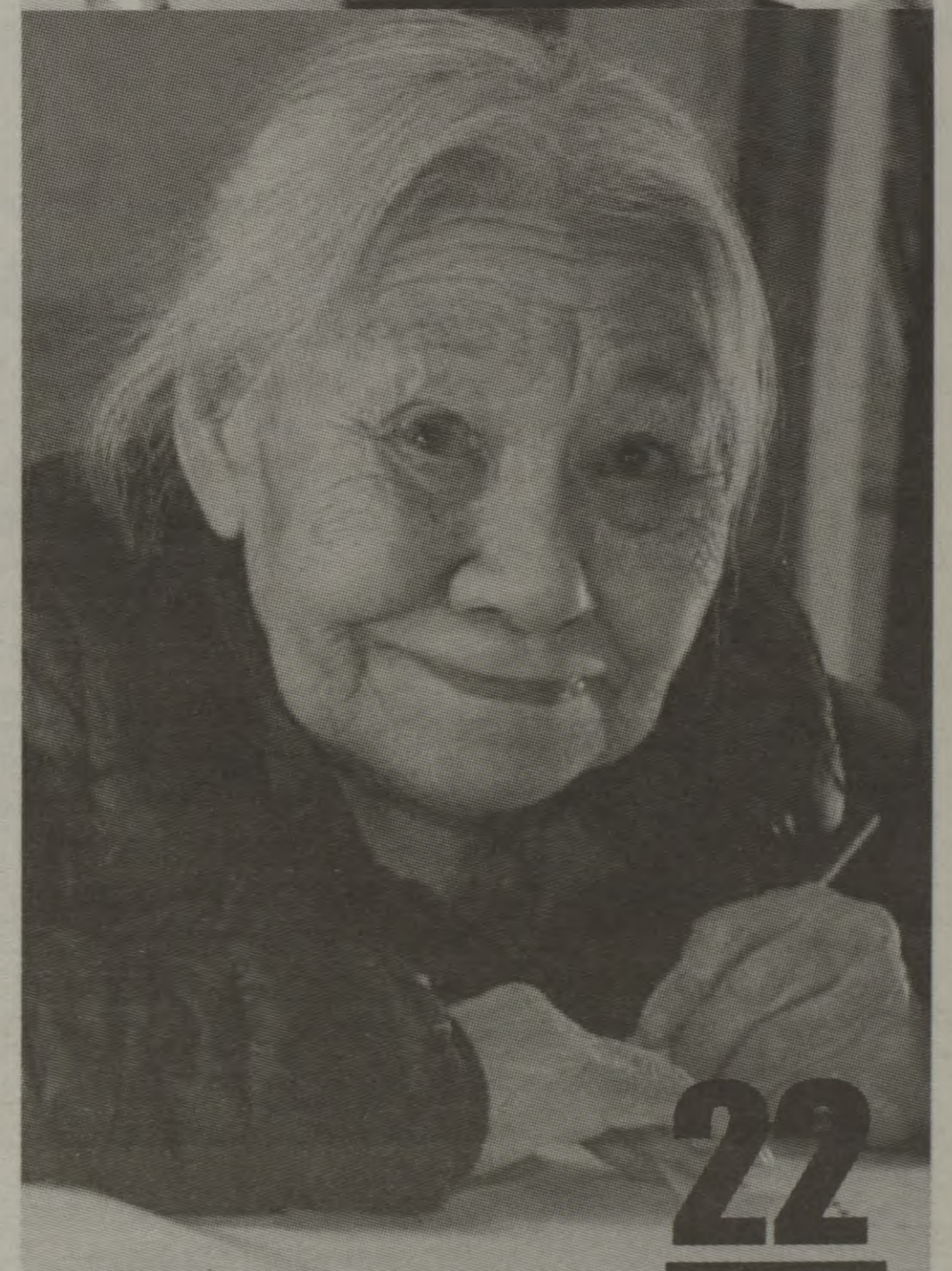
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As lung cancer sapped the strength of Inuit artist Kenojuak Ashevak, best known for her colorful image of The Enchanted Owl first produced on Canada's 1970 six cent stamp, she unfalteringly created art.



Windspeaker is published by the Aboriginal Multi-Media Society (AMMSA)  
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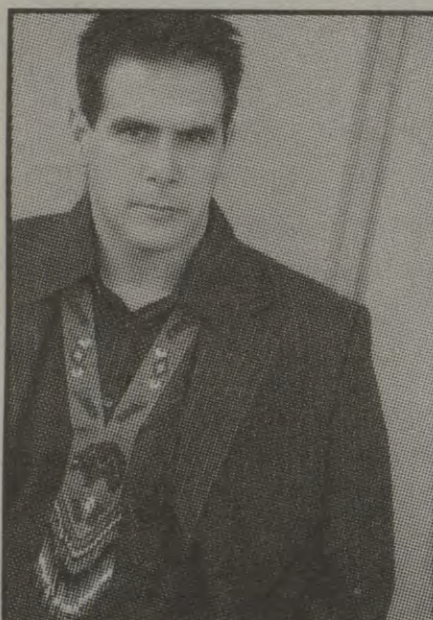
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Physical Activity Advisor  
Alberta's Future Leaders Program  
903 Standard Life Centre  
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**AFL Arts Mentors**

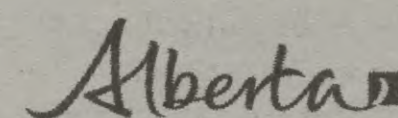
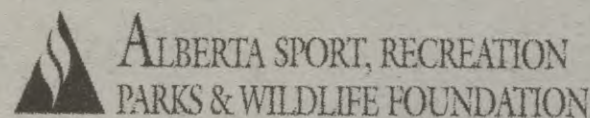
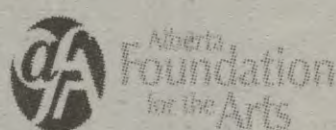
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# A short window to make change

We once had a columnist—a cranky old man, at times—who bristled when we talked about Canada's need to learn about Aboriginal people. Someone would say something like 'Canadians have no understanding of us or our issues' and 'we should be educating them.' He would grumble and say he couldn't care less about what Canadians understood about his people. He wrote, he said, so that

his people could understand his people.

Chief Spence, we think about you with this lesson in mind.

Outside of that comment, however, we have to say that there has been no end to the eye-popping revelations over the past eight weeks since Chief Wallace Fox led a delegation Dec. 4 to the House of Commons. There he challenged the government on its omnibus legislation, getting caught in a scuffle with security over the matter.

Since then it's been a bright, funny, smart, disturbing, worrying, whirlwind of a damn-fine-ride that we believe has changed our world significantly, despite what those out there would tell you. Think of the empowerment; think of the discussion we've had; an astounding sea-change has happened in our collective consciousness and in our communities. It's not enough for the federal government to sit up and take notice of all of this. The sand has shifted under the feet of our very own leaders as well, because their grassroots members have found allies who will raise alarms that will sound around the world if there is trouble. This network of comrades has been created and strengthened and that is something a chief will ignore at his peril in future.

As we go to press there is a lull; a healthy time as people prepare for next steps; lick wounds; restore; a time to reflect. What viciousness there was; a peaceful movement, except for when it came to our own. Not very strategic to fight too many fronts at once. And especially since the Idle No More movement was showing a more gentle way forward.

INM is a beautiful, unprecedented thing. A phenomenon. Never before has there been anything like it. And it took so many different people working at the peak of their skills individually to create it, sustain it, nurture and grow it. Right from that first round dance—Aboriginal culture at its most joyful. Right from that first poster—artists demonstrating the clarity of the message. No to Bills C-38 and C-45. Film-makers, photographers, deep thinkers, powerful communicators, jokesters and satirists, all came together to add their part to a wider grassroots dialogue.

Rest now, because we're going to need you all in the very near future. Just one look at the eight-points of priority the National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations has presented to Prime Minister Stephen Harper will tell you we'll be back on the streets in force in no time. The bills that got us out in the cold winter air with our placards and our drums aren't even on the agenda.

We've consulted now, and we're sticking with the bills, said Minister John Duncan, a wet blanket if ever we saw one. We'd say he should be replaced, but we'd prefer if he just sat quietly in the corner for now. A change in ministers—that old ploy to halt the work being done so another minister can learn about the file—is the last thing that we need right now.

We're sticking with the bills, said Peter Van Loan, leader of the Government in the House of Commons, that paragon who had to apologize for instigating a "near-brawl" on the House floor Dec. 5 during a vote on Bill C-45. Besides, he said, Aboriginals are the ones that will benefit the most by the gutting of environmental protections on our lakes and streams, clearing the way for job creation when industry digs up or paves over our territories.

And as for that priority list... Wait. Can you hear it? The legislatures across the country are being barred and shuttered as we speak. Revenue sharing? "No." Slam, goes the door to Saskatchewan. Thanks Premier Brad Wall for keeping your mind so open. Revenue sharing? "No." Slam, goes the door to Alberta. Premier Alison Redford, you're a peach. Sharing with First Nations is a non-starter, she has said.

There is no optimism here that we will see any real movement on this priority or others in the near future, though bones will be thrown. What's the stated timeline that National Chief Shawn Atleo has given? Only months for some substantive action? Let the politicians have their time to get something done. It will give the rest of the country the space to prepare for what's next.

If this is another in a long line of stall tactics or distraction, as we suspect it is, just know from the onset the people are unprepared to play these games any longer. The feds and the chiefs should know that there is a brief window of opportunity to get something done while people are still in a talking mood. They should also know that elected leaders must move us off this dime we have been stuck on since 2006, because if they don't we fear, the grassroots, will push them off of it.

And unceremoniously, at that.

*Windspeaker*

[ rants and raves ]

## Page 5 Chatter

### THE SASKATOON POLICE SERVICE

said they cannot let unsubstantiated claims of "starlight tours" to stand unchallenged or uninvestigated. The service is calling on the man who leveled an allegation against, them to come forward. He claimed that he had recently been taken on one of the infamous tours, driven outside the city and forced to walk home in freezing temperatures. The 19-year-old man has not filed a formal complaint, but Police Chief Clive Weighill said "We want to try and put the pieces together to find out if this is a legitimate complaint or not." Weighill said it is a serious claim to make, given the history of the force. "We can't just sit by and let people drop a bomb on Facebook and have them walk away from that." The police said a review of all in-car camera video from patrol and traffic units during the time alleged uncovered no evidence that the man was ever inside any of the units. The in-car video is activated when the back door of a patrol car is opened, Weighill said. "Social media is a great outlet for people and we use it ourselves, but to make these allegations on Facebook and walk away, anybody can say anything," Weighill said. "Unfortunately, an allegation like this in Saskatoon means a lot. That's why we've taken strides to have the GPS and the cameras in the car, so that if an allegation comes forward we can look into it."

### BATCHEWANA FIRST NATION IS

working towards creating a First Nations wind farm partnership with Calgary company BluEarth Renewables. The groups have just completed the renewable energy approval application for the 60-megaWatt Bow Lake Wind Project and if all goes well construction on the first phase of the wind farm could begin this year. Batchewana Chief Dean Sayers said the community will sell the energy into the power grid and will use revenues for education, housing, infrastructure, healthcare, as well as language and culture preservation. The First Nation has a 50 per cent stake in the \$240-million project. The wind farm would consist of 36 turbines, generating close to 60-megaWatts of electricity, once completed.

### SASKATCHEWAN PREMIER BRAD WALL

is rethinking his government's engagement with First Nations. The premier said there could be change in the air, and Wall is considering less facilitation not more, and more direct action in such areas as job training. "What's missing is not necessarily more facilitation or more roundtables with FSIN or chiefs," said Wall. "In fact, you might see us moving away from those kinds of things." But Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations Grand Chief Perry Bellegarde said any plan to extinguish rights, marginalize or exclude First Nations was a relic of the past. "Respectful and thoughtful dialogue is what's needed with the Government of Canada and the Province of Saskatchewan. As always, I remain committed to processes that bring about effective solutions to these long-outstanding issues."

### INDSPIRE, THE FORMER NATIONAL

Aboriginal Achievement Foundation, will receive \$1.1 million over the next 20 years from partner NextEra Energy, ULC. to put towards the *Building Brighter Futures: Bursaries and Scholarship Awards* program. It is the largest ever corporate donation of its kind for Indspire. Last year Indspire awarded \$6,288,735 to more than 2,200 First Nation, Inuit and Métis students nationwide. In total, Indspire has disbursed more than \$50-million to over 14,000 recipients since its inception. Indspire offers financial assistance (scholarships and bursaries) through four major categories: Post Secondary Education, Fine Arts, Health Careers, and Oil & Gas Aboriginal Trades & Technology.

### THUNDER BAY, ONT. HAS ITS FIRST

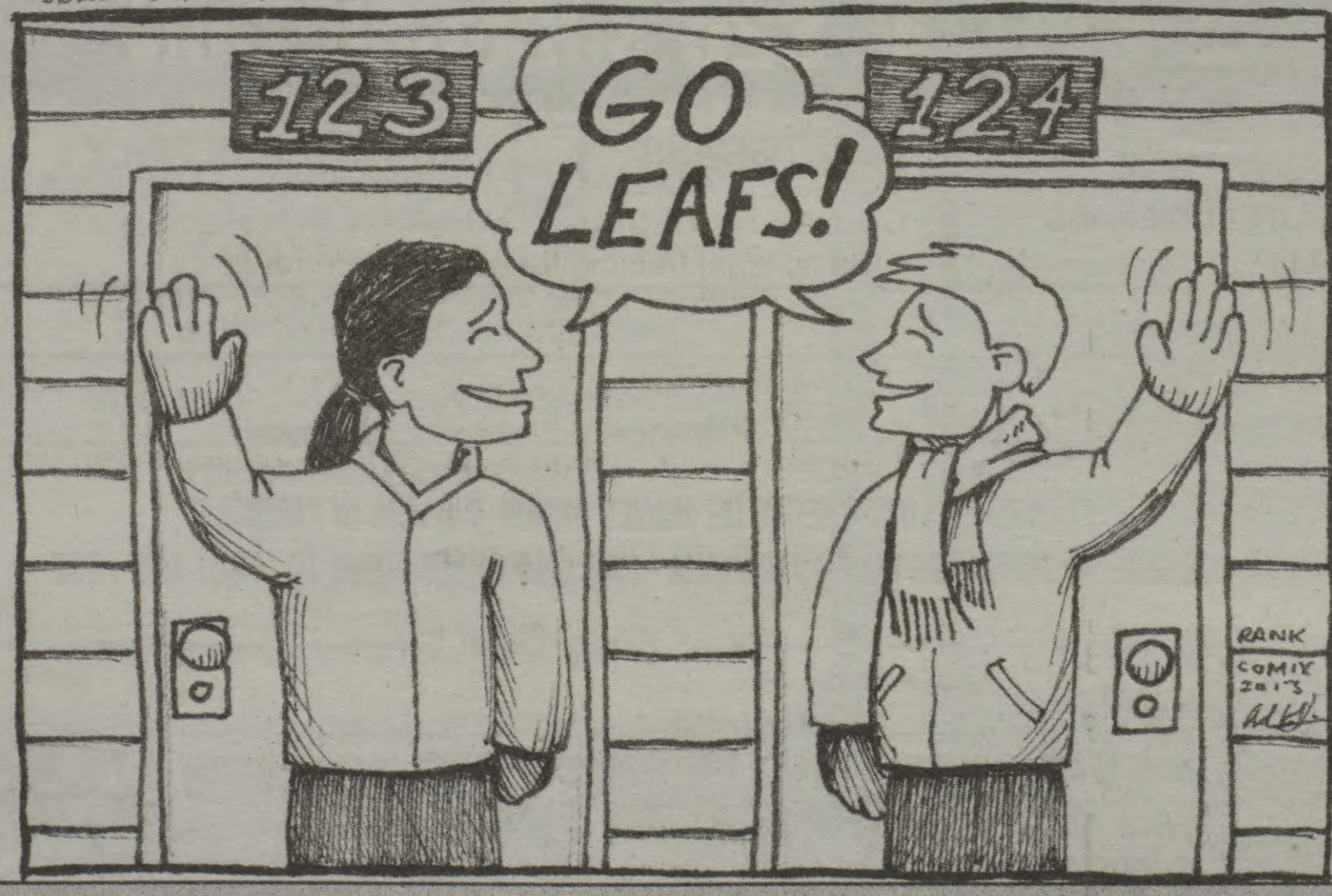
Aboriginal Liaison. Anna Gibbon has been appointed Justice of the Peace to the Ontario Court of Justice by the Ministry of the Attorney General effective Feb. 6. "We know that she will bring the same depth of commitment and valuable skill set to the position of Justice of the Peace, as she did as the city's inaugural Aboriginal Liaison," said Mayor Keith Hobbs. Justice of the Peace Gibbon is one of seven newly appointed Justices of the Peace in Ontario and has been assigned to Thunder Bay in the Northwest region. Gibbon has been the Aboriginal Liaison for the City of Thunder Bay since 2008. She has several years' experience as a human resources manager and more than 16 years' experience as a correctional officer with the former Ministry of Correctional Services. She has been a council member for the Thunder Bay Indian Friendship Centre and a committee Member for the National Aboriginal Day Organizing Committee. John Hannam, City Clerk, said Gibbon had "played a key role in fostering an improved relationship with the urban Aboriginal community. She's helped build a growing understanding of Aboriginal issues within the Corporation."

## Rank Comix

by Adam Martin



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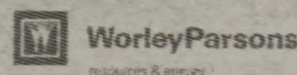
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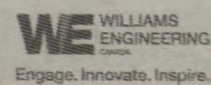
February 27-28, 2013 at the River Cree Resort and Casino, Edmonton

Join us for this year's conference, which will bring Wab Kinew (host of CBC's 8th Fire), and many others to share their stories.

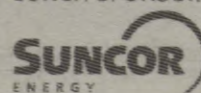
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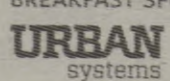
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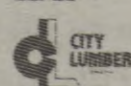
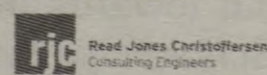
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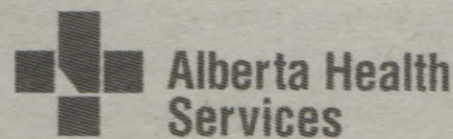
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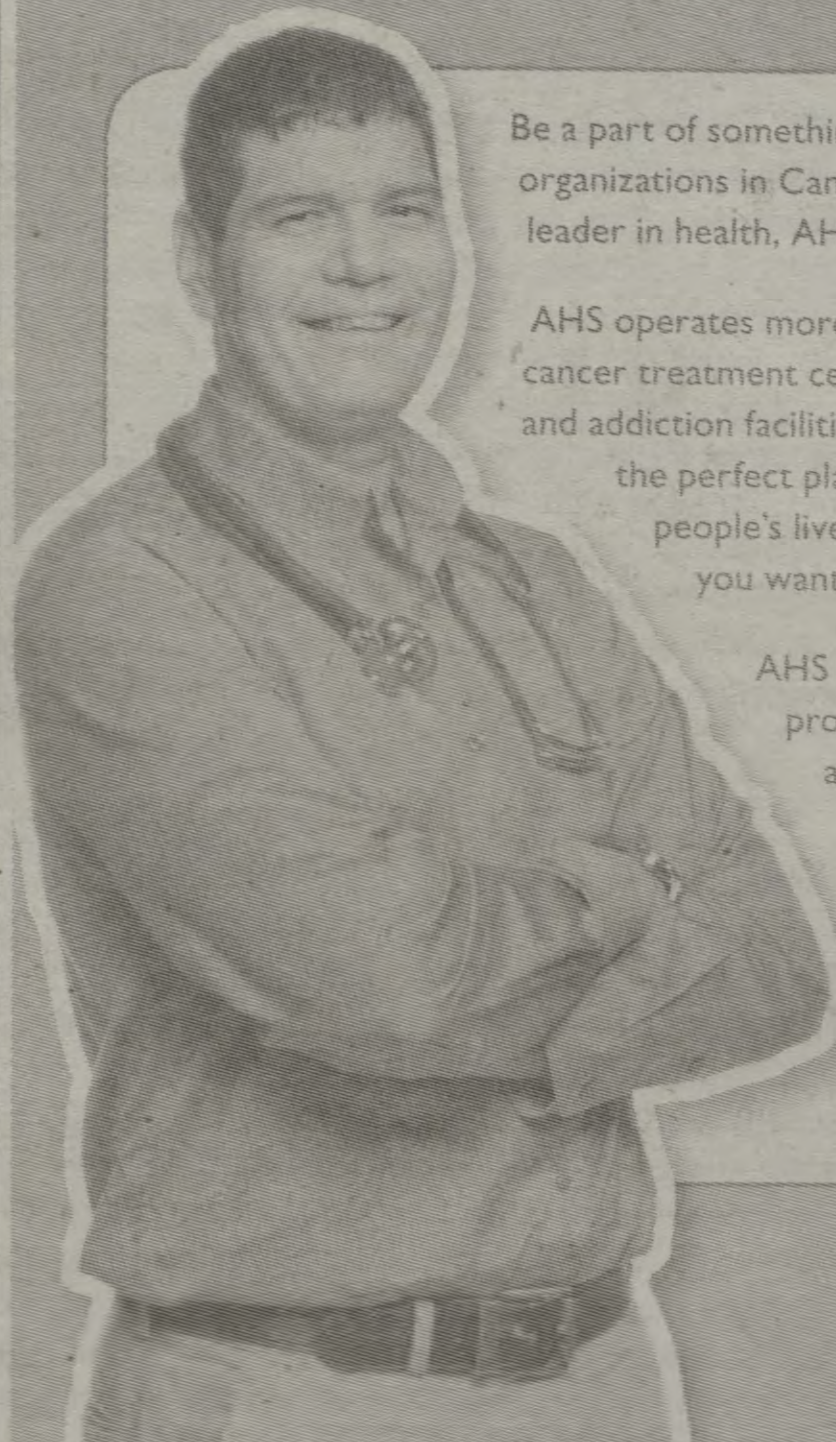
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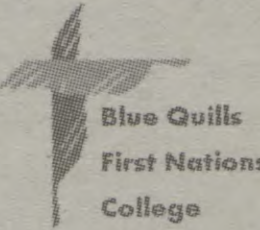
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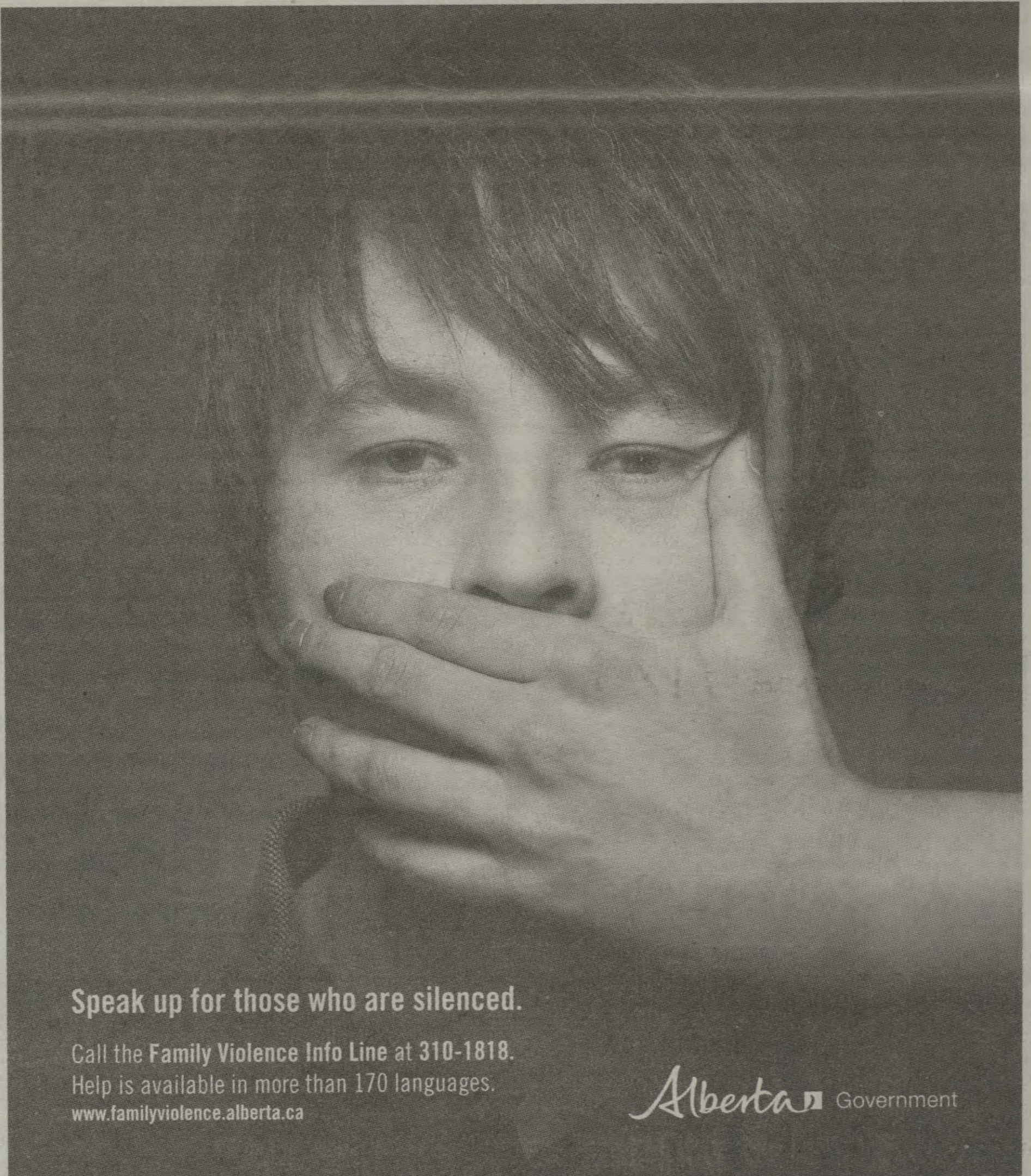
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# Métis group joins Save the Fraser Declaration against pipeline

By David P. Ball  
Windspeaker Contributor

**VANCOUVER**

Could the battle against Enbridge's Northern Gateway pipeline have a parallel in the North West Rebellion, the 1885 uprising of Métis and First Nations which led to Canada's infamous hanging of Louis Riel and others?

"That's the only time that we've ever known the First Nations and Métis to get together," said Lyle Campbell-Letendre, president of the Kelly Lake Métis Settlement Society, B.C.'s only historic Métis settlement. "This is huge; over 100 years later, that we're fighting for nearly the same thing, for recognition and to save the future of our land."

"This pipeline starts right at our trapline. I've been fighting this thing and trying to protect our land since it started five years ago. It's going to come through our traditional area, through some of the most pristine land in this province."

On Dec. 13, the BC Métis Federation (BCMF), a membership-based organization, signed the Save the Fraser Declaration, a more than 130-nation coalition which vows to block pipelines from Alberta's oil sands.

Letendre's great-great-grandfather—Xavier Letendre dit Batoche—founded the Métis settlement of Batoche, Sask., a decade before the village became the site of the Battle of Batoche in May 1885. Then Riel and fellow Métis leader and statesman Gabriel Dumont were defeated by a Canadian army force three times larger, alongside allied Cree chiefs Pitikwahana piwiyin

("Poundmaker") and Mistahimaskwa ("Big Bear").

"I'm not sure if everyone in the media recognizes the significance of our Métis people coming together with First Nations on such an important topic," Keith Henry, president of the BCMF, told Windspeaker. "We've never done that before in B.C. The relationship between First Nations and Métis in B.C. hasn't always been constructive... We stand shoulder to shoulder and need to work together on these issues that are very important to our future."

"And it's only happened once before: in 1885, with Louis Riel and the Battle of Batoche. A lot of people think that was a Métis story exclusively, but it wasn't; there were a lot of First Nations leaders that sat with Métis at the time. We haven't seen anything like this [since]. I'm not trying to stretch the metaphor here, but the fact is, this is very symbolic."

Attending a signing ceremony with tribal chiefs from the Yinka Dene Alliance, a coalition of First Nations who have vowed to create an "unbreakable wall" against both Enbridge—whose half-a-million barrel-a-day, 1,172-kilometre proposal is currently under review—and Kinder Morgan's soon-to-be reviewed pipeline, Henry added his organization's name to the struggle.

"We're with you," Henry told the audience of the Yinka Dene Alliance, the mayors of Vancouver and Smithers, and the leadership of the Assembly of First Nations.

"And when the time comes, we'll be with you on anything you need to do to help work together to straighten this mess out."

Interviewed after the ceremony, Henry explained why the BCMF opposes the pipeline, citing oil spill risks, Enbridge's history of accidents such as the 2010 Michigan rupture, and solidarity with First Nations.

"We've got untapped wilderness," he told Windspeaker. "We've got people practicing harvesting and traditional practices on the land, and there's a lot more here to risk."

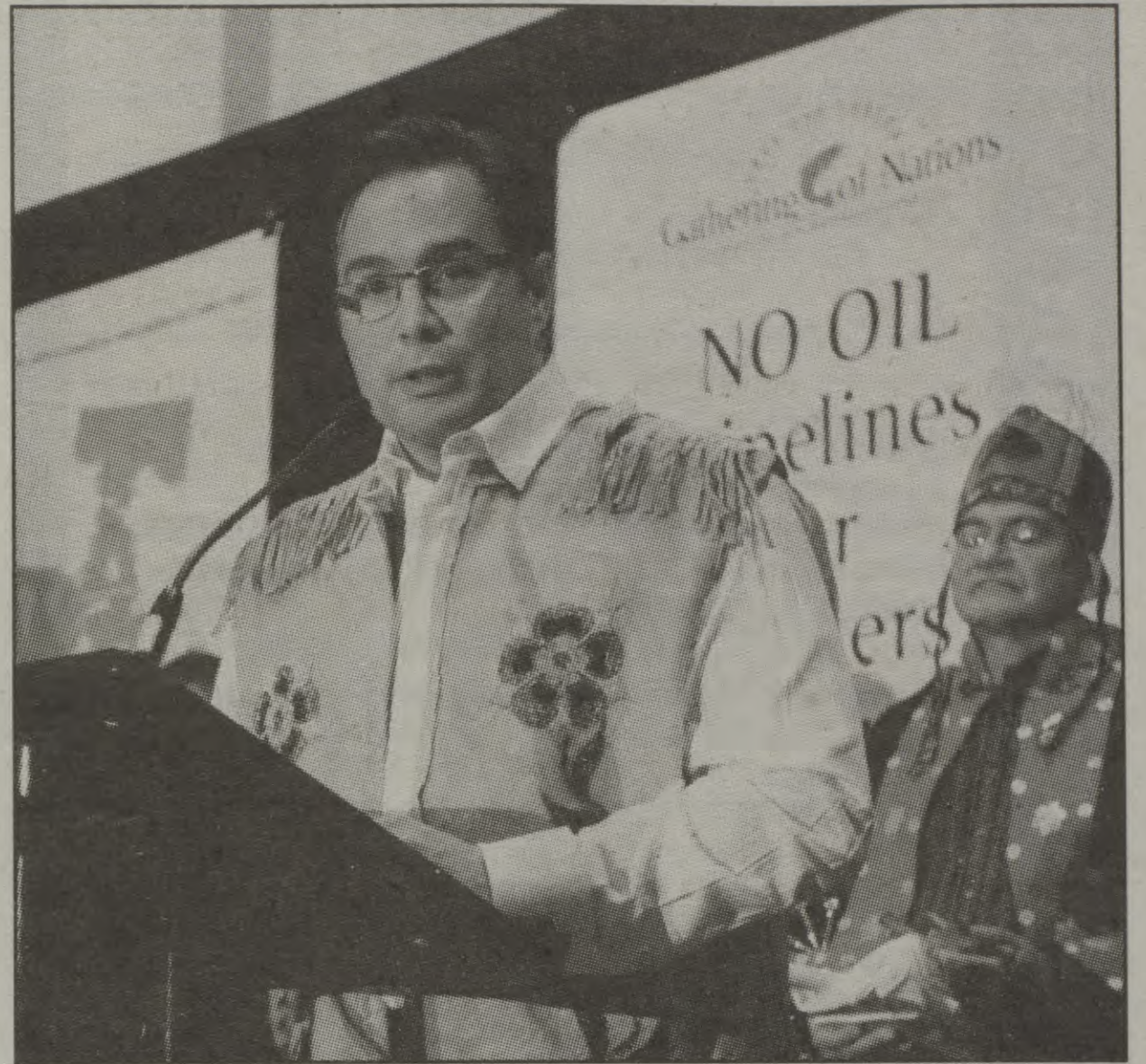
"For what? A couple jobs and some beads and blankets? This is about not expanding a sector that's about the most dirty energy product you could have on the planet. [We] don't believe the way to the future for our generation is through more carbon emissions and further pipeline expansion."

But not all Métis leadership are in agreement over the controversial project. The official, government-recognized representative of the province's Métis—the Métis Nation British Columbia (MNBC)—signed a deal with Enbridge last year, to the chagrin of its rival, BCMF, which formed in 2011.

The Enbridge announcement led four top MNBC figures to resign in outrage. Its vice-president Dave Hodgson, women's representative Susie Hooper, northwest youth representative Katherine Wolfden, and Terrace-based president Alan Sauve, who called the decision-making process "a dog and pony show."

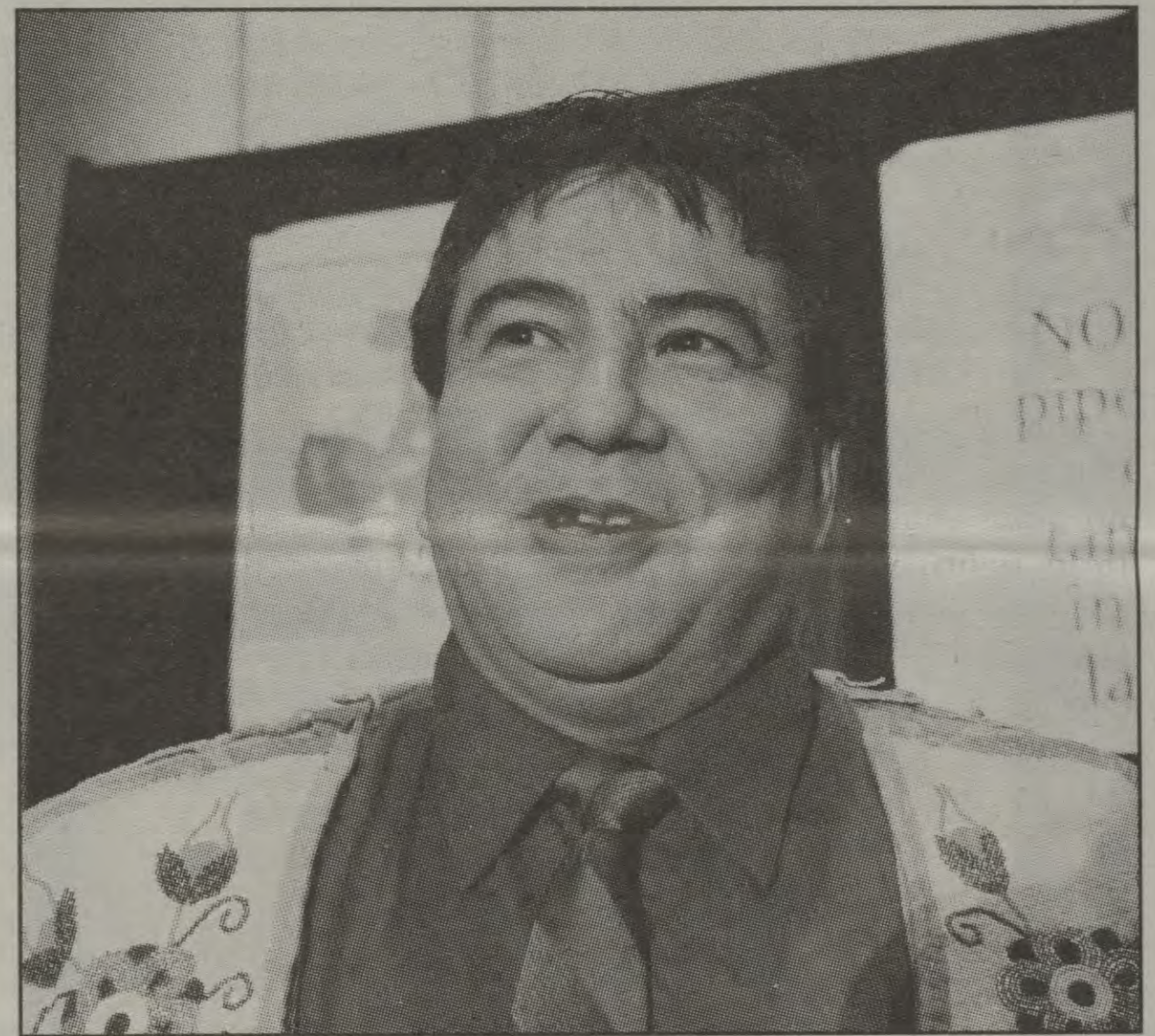
According to a May 26, 2012 letter from Bruce Dumont, MNBC's president however, the alliance of 35 chartered Métis communities signed the deal to "take advantage of an equity ownership interest" in the Northern Gateway Project limited partnership.

(See *Métis* on page 16.)



PHOTOS: DAVID P. BALL

Keith Henry, President of the BC Métis Federation, joined the Yinka Dene Alliance and other Aboriginal leaders in signing the Save the Fraser Declaration on December 13.



Lyle Campbell-Letendre, President of the Kelly Lake Métis Settlement, opposes the Enbridge Northern Gateway pipeline and attended a Dec. 13 signing of the Save the Fraser Declaration.

# 'Colossal failure' by police left Pickton free to kill

By David P. Ball  
Windspeaker Contributor

**VANCOUVER**

The release of Wally Oppal's scathing final report from B.C.'s missing women inquiry was met with sobbing, drumming, and anger on Dec. 17 as families and friends began the next stage of grieving for their lost ones, and rights groups rallied around the call for a Canada-wide investigation.

The commissioner concluded more than a year of testimony, reports and controversy, ruling that "systemic bias" by RCMP and Vancouver police had repeatedly "forsaken" dozens of missing Native women.

In response, B.C. Attorney General Shirley Bond appointed former Lt. Gov. and former Stó:lo Nation chair Steven Point to

"champion" Oppal's recommendations.

But with more than 600 missing and murdered Native women documented countrywide, (some speculate that number might be as high as 2,000) rights groups are pressing on with demands for a national inquiry.

"This inquiry dealt only with the failure of police around Vancouver to investigate and prosecute William Pickton in a timely way," said MichÈle Audette, president of the Native Women's Association of Canada. "The Oppal inquiry did not deal with all of the murders and disappearances of Aboriginal women and girls even in the province of British Columbia, and the murders and disappearances have continued."

"The Oppal inquiry did not focus specifically on Aboriginal



PHOTOS: DAVID P. BALL

Hundreds of women from the Downtown Eastside flooded into press conference releasing the Missing Women Commission of Inquiry's final report, drumming, singing and decrying the exclusion of women's organizations from the process.

women and girls, and the multiple factors which cause the epidemic of extreme violence against them. Because of this

limitation, we need a national public inquiry that is focused on the murders and disappearances of Aboriginal women and girls in



Michele Pineault, mother of 20-year old Pickton victim Stephanie Lane, looks out over the Burrard Inlet at the end of the missing women inquiry.

every part of Canada, which will deal with the systemic patterns and causes of the violence."

(See *Colossal* on page 23.)



# “The straw that broke the camel’s back” Sprawling omnibus bills spark lawsuit

By David P. Ball  
Windspeaker Contributor

## OTTAWA

As Idle No More explodes across the country—galvanized, at least initially, by controversial omnibus legislation—two First Nations in Alberta have taken the federal government to court over the matter.

On Jan. 8, arguing that the Crown’s “failure to consult” on the sweeping bills—affecting everything from the protection of waterways, fisheries, industrial development and more—violated their treaty rights, Mikisew and Frog Lake first nations launched a legal challenge against the newest legislation, Bill C-45, and its equally controversial predecessor, Bill C-38.

“There’s been so much legislation pushed by us without any proper consultation with us over the years,” Chief Steve Courtoreille of Mikisew First Nation told Windspeaker. “It’s impacted our treaty rights. C-38 and C-45 were just the last straw that broke the camel’s back.

“The federal government continues to ignore us. They have put us in a position where we have no other choice to protect our treaty rights, and also to protect the environment. It put us in a reactive mode; we had no other choice than to take a legal challenge.”

At a press conference in Ottawa, Robert Janes, the lawyer representing the two bands, told reporters that Mikisew and Frog Lake bands depend on waterways and lakes that could be endangered under the two bills.

The omnibus legislation reduces the number of protected rivers in Canada, guts fish habitat safeguards, speeds up the environmental assessment process, and more, he argued.

“There are literally thousands of rivers and streams, small lakes—including Frog Lake—that are no longer protected,” he said. “If we look at the area around Mikisew, it’s essentially a vast inland delta; it’s actually the second-largest inland delta in the world.

“And there are a vast number of navigable waters, many of which don’t have formal English names, which are no longer protected. Many of these would be dug up, covered, or otherwise changed by oilsands development, other development. It’s literally in the area of thousands of rivers and streams.”

In 2005, Mikisew First Nation won another court case over the government’s failure to consult it on the construction of a road through its territories. And while Janes acknowledged the current lawsuit is unlikely to overturn either omnibus legislation, the case could set a precedent by

forcing the government into consultations over legislation more generally.

Both communities are located in the vicinity of the controversial oil sands megaproject—considered the largest industrial project on Earth—affecting a vast swathe of Boreal forest. With extraction projects often tied up in environmental reviews and application processes, Courtoreille believes the federal government is sending a message that Indigenous territories are open for business.

“These bills have gutted environmental protection [for] our traditional territories and the Canadian environment as a whole,” he told Windspeaker. “They’ve done this with no consultation with us or any other Canadian.

“There’s a big push from [industry] to give them a green light in areas they want to go, instead of going through a host of community consultations. They want a green light, and that’s what the government is doing by passing these two bills..., reducing federal environmental protection for Canadian waters and lands.”

Many Indigenous activists, analysts and leaders alike have raised alarm over the two massive omnibus bills, both of them hundreds of pages long and containing dozens of unrelated pieces of legislation.

“We’re concerned that changes in regulatory regimes—efforts to “streamline”—would overstep our rights,” Assembly of First Nations National Chief Shawn A-in-chut Atleo told Windspeaker. “Those efficiencies can’t be obtained by overstepping First Nations treaty rights, not only the common law on consultation and accommodation, but more importantly the higher international standard of free, prior and informed consent.

“Governments are continually and unilaterally determining legislation like this... It puts our First Nations in a deeply reactive position. It can only result in conflict if our rights are not being respected, if the right to free, prior and informed consent is not there.”

Likewise, Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, president of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, railed against the omnibus legislation.

“It’s going to impact us in a profound way,” he said. “And it’s certainly going to provoke a reaction in terms of us being hard-pressed to protect the integrity of the environment of our territories.”

Aboriginal Affairs declined Windspeaker’s request for comment, arguing that the matter fell under the departments of Fisheries and Oceans, and Transport. The government has yet to respond to the court case,

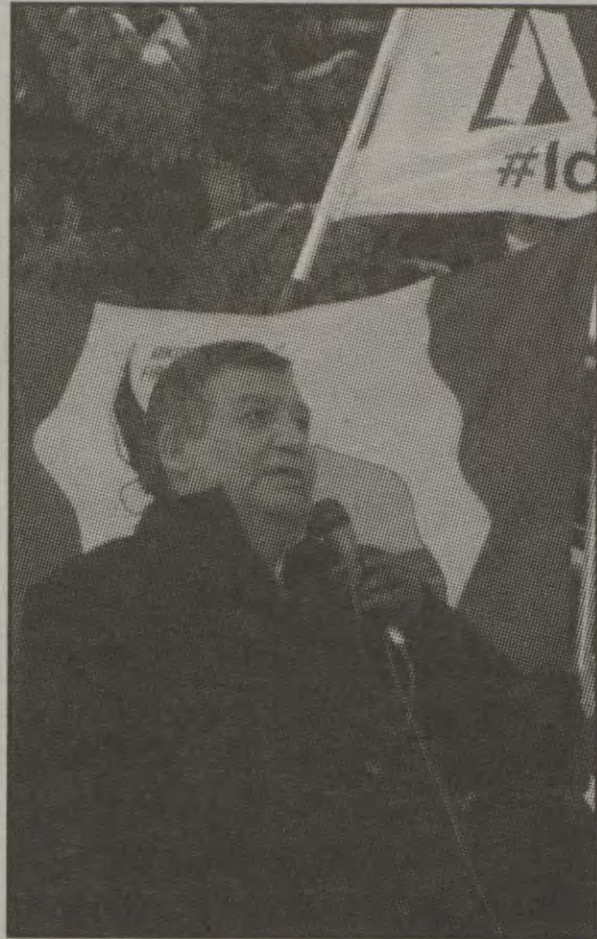


PHOTO: SHARI NARINE

Chief Steve Courtoreille of Mikisew First Nation

Courtoreille said.

But after the high-profile meeting with chiefs in Ottawa on Jan. 11, Aboriginal Affairs Minister John Duncan said that his government will not repeal either Bill C-45 or Bill C-38.

“We’re quite comfortable that we have met our constitutional obligations with those bills and we believe there is every reason to proceed,” said Duncan.

And while the Idle No More movement has expanded its focus more broadly on decolonization since its first day of action on Dec. 10, it saw its genesis in teach-ins against Bill C-45, as well as a now-infamous chiefs’ scuffle with security on Parliament Hill a week earlier.

Courtoreille said that while the current lawsuit is focused on his nation and Frog Lake, other nations will undoubtedly be impacted, and could join on as interveners.

He added that plans for the lawsuit were already in the works when Idle No More launched, but that he supports the movement’s goal of uniting Canadians and Indigenous peoples behind a common agenda.

“Our lawsuit was already in discussions [when Idle No More began],” he explained. “We knew it was coming down but we didn’t know how soon.

“The Idle No More movement is a non-political movement at the grassroots level. We support [them] for what they’re doing, raising awareness and consciousness.”

The Mikisew leader said he hopes all Canadians—not just First Nations—wake up to the dangers of Bills.

“All Canadians should be looking at this very seriously and be concerned about what the government is doing,” he said. “It’s not only a First Nations issue, but an issue for all Canadians.

“It’s time now the country pulls together on this very issue to make the Government of Canada rethink their plan.”

## Windspeaker News Briefs

### A SMALL FIRST NATION ON

Vancouver Island has filed documents in federal court to stop the ratification of the Canada-China Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection Act. Hupacasath band councillor Brenda Sayers said the federal government did not consult with First Nations despite the fact that Chinese investors would control resources and other assets on 232,000 hectares of unceded Aboriginal territory. Sayers said extraction of resources by foreign firms would strip negotiating powers for First Nations such as hers, which are involved in the treaty process. “Some modern treaties negotiated with British Columbia and Canada address Canada’s obligation to consult prior to entering into international agreements which may affect treaty rights,” the notice of application says. “The government proceeded without any input from First Nations, or Canadians for that matter, so this isn’t just a First Nations fight. It just so happens that First Nations are one of the parties that can stop the FIPPA,” Sayers said. “The other party is the premiers of each province who have not stepped up to the plate.” The Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs (UBCIC) and Serpent River First Nation in Ontario were quick to lend their support. In a press release, they announced they had filed an affidavit in support of the application. They said they have “reasonable grounds to believe that the FIPPA, if ratified and implemented, will have serious negative effects on First Nations’ Treaty and other rights.” Said Serpent River Chief Isadore Day, “In the wake of the #IdleNoMore movement taking place throughout the world, I am particularly pleased that we are able to undertake a specific action to uphold First Nations’ Treaty rights.”

### THE FUTURE OF KAPYONG BARRACKS,

a 160-acre property in Winnipeg that has sat empty since 2004, remains in limbo as the federal government takes steps to appeal a court ruling that ordered consultation with area First Nations over the development of the land. First Nations want to develop it for their own purposes, including the creation of an urban reserve with mixed housing and commercial space. The federal government has spent \$15 million over the last eight years to maintain the 41 building on the site once home to the Princess Patricia Light Infantry Unit. In 1997, Treaty One First Nations signed an agreement giving them the right of first refusal on surplus federal land. When Kapyong Barracks was declared surplus in 2007, the federal government said it planned to sell the site to a Crown corporation to redevelop the land for homes and business. Treaty One nations challenged that decision in court. In 2009, a federal judge ordered the freeze of any sale of the land until First Nations were consulted, but that decision was overturned in 2011 and returned to the lower court for a second hearing. Another federal judge ordered Ottawa to consult, a decision again under appeal.

### THE NEED FOR A NATIONAL

Public Commission of Inquiry on Violence against Indigenous Women and Girls was one of eight issues raised with the Prime Minister when delegates from the Assembly of First Nations met with Stephen Harper on Jan. 11. In December, the AFN unanimously passed a resolution at the Special Chiefs Assembly calling for action if the government continues to refuse to move forward on the inquiry. The AFN is to coordinate political rallies on Parliament Hill and the offices of political representatives where First Nations leadership and families of victims would come together. The resolution also directed the AFN to “examine legal strategies, including a Canadian Human Rights Complaint against the federal, provincial governments and policing services.” The call for action is a welcomed move for Gladys Radek, co-founder of Walk4Justice. “I’m tired of hearing we’re having more meetings to talk about this. We need a national action plan,” said Radek. Her niece Tamara Chipman went missing along the Highway of Tears in 2005. “Radek says little attention is paid to investigating these disappearances because the women who go missing are Aboriginal. Radek said talks with the federal government need to lead somewhere. “At the rate this is going this is a genocide against the First Nations people. You take away our women, our men would not be here. We would not be able to stand here in solidarity. We are the lifegivers of our society,” she said. Despite resolutions passed by the AFN in 2010 and 2011, and a National Aboriginal Women’s Summit held last October with provincial and territorial ministers, the inquiry has yet to get any commitment. The Women’s Summit resulted in the ministers agreeing to bring the issue to a meeting of the Council of the Federation Aboriginal Affairs Ministers Working Group in April 2013. “In my role as national chief I’m often asked to support legal and political action and stand with families to support them in their grief. What our people are saying is that we are pledging that we must end violence,” said Shawn Atleo. Atleo broke down during a news teleconference in late December when he spoke about accompanying a family to the morgue to identify the body of a loved one. “We once again find a sister tragically taken,” he said. “It is absolutely horrific.”



[ idle no more ]

# Only one way forward, says White—Together

By Shari Narine  
Windspeaker Contributor

OTTAWA

Success is not defined by a single meeting with the Prime Minister. Success is about what led up to the Jan. 11 meeting with him and what will follow.

"At the end of the day, what's most important is that we had an eight-point consensus document but it's only going to mean something if we continue to gather strength and keep the pressure on," said Snuneymuxw Nation Chief Doug White.

It was delegates from a divided Assembly of First Nations that met with Prime Minister Stephen Harper for four hours. Chiefs from Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario boycotted the meeting, although there were chiefs from those provinces who attended on their own.

"It was not a simple straightforward meeting, for sure. There was a lot of complicated stuff around it," said White.

Only days after AFN National Chief Shawn Atleo requested a meeting with Harper, the Prime Minister agreed. Chiefs met for two days and hammered out a statement of issues to present to Harper. The eight points raised were: the establishment of a framework for the implementation of treaties; reformation of the comprehensive lands claim policy; resource revenue sharing; legislation consistent with Sect. 35 of the Canadian Constitution and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; a fiscal relationship that removes caps to funding; national inquiry into violence against Indigenous women and girls; improved education services; and a new

government mechanism to address the work that needs to be undertaken.

AFN Regional Chief Perry Bellegarde helped lead the strategy sessions that resulted in the eight-point presentation, but Bellegarde, as head of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, did not attend the meeting with Harper.

"I didn't go in out of respect for my Saskatchewan caucus," said Bellegarde. The caucus boycotted the meeting to show its disappointment with Harper's decision to limit the number of presenting delegates and Governor General David Johnston's decision to not attend.

Convincing many of the chiefs to boycott the meetings was Attawapiskat Chief Theresa Spence, who had begun a hunger strike on Dec. 10. Cross Lake Elder Raymond Robinson joined Spence one day later. Spence addressed the chiefs, and stressed that Johnston needed to be at the meeting.

"I see it as a logistics," said White, "and I think she sees it as substantive."

White is clear that he supports and respects Spence in her hunger strike, understands the symbolism of her struggle, and appreciates the attention her actions have brought to the conditions First Nations people live in.

Johnston hosted his own meeting, ceremonial in nature, on the evening of Jan. 11. Spence, Bellegarde and other boycotting chiefs attended.

While White doesn't believe Johnston plays a role in the changes that need to occur, Bellegarde believes differently.

"He's the Queen's representative here in Canada and our relationship as treaty people is with the Queen ... so our



PHOTO: PMO JASON RANSOM

National Chief Shawn Atleo speaks as Aboriginal Affairs Minister John Duncan (right) and Prime Minister Stephen Harper listen.

relationship with the sovereign is very important," said Bellegarde.

Dissension among AFN members is not new.

AFN Regional Chief Roger Augustine points to 1982 when the Constitution was repatriated.

"We were in a similar situation. We had folks outside protesting we shouldn't be in there negotiating ... We had our own people outside and I was one of them. And we had other powerful and influential leaders sitting around the table," he said. "It happens and it's all part of the organization's mandate. There's always people who feel we're not moving fast enough or strong enough."

Augustine, who openly declares himself an Atleo supporter, doesn't see what is happening as unhealthy.

"People have a right to question

any leadership and they have a right to protest and they have a right to form an opposition. Intelligent oppositions create a smarter leadership in terms of listening and moving towards a direction," he said.

Bellegarde is quick to point out Atleo's success as a leader.

"When is the last time that we had the eye of the Prime Minister and Cabinet for treaty implementation? When is the last time we had the eye and focus that we can look at new mechanisms on behalf of the Crown for treaty implementation and deal with comprehensive claims so there's no further extinguishment of Aboriginal rights and title? When did that happen last time? It hasn't," said Bellegarde.

Augustine attended the meeting with Harper.

"I walked out of there feeling we had made the right decision to meet with him," he said. "We dealt with policy issues, but mainly we focused on setting the tone for future talks... and if it's any indication, if that is the tone for our future meetings, I think we're going to move along fairly quick in getting things done."

Harper responded to each point and committed to a high level political process on treaty implementation and comprehensive claims policy, as well as ensuring that his office and the Privy Council would oversee these discussions.

White doesn't share Augustine's outlook.

"I am absolutely not convinced (there will be changes) and that's why it's not an issue of optimism," said White.

(See *Only* on page 16.)

## "Creative resistance" continues battle with "dangerous" policies

By David P. Ball  
Windspeaker Contributor

SASKATOON, Sask.

"The way we see it," Sylvia McAdam tells Windspeaker, "we're just going to keep moving on until our goal of Indigenous sovereignty and the protection of land and water is in place."

As one of the four Saskatchewan women who founded the Idle No More movement late last year—a phenomenon which in only two months has transformed the conversation in Canada around Indigenous People—McAdam has faced a steep learning curve about social activism, political manoeuvring, and media spin.

Hailing from Big River First Nation, the Cree woman never quite expected the series of teach-ins and events she organized with

Nina Wilson, Sheelah Mclean and Jessica Gordon to explode in the way it has: massive round dances, a full-scale powwow Grand Entry in the West Edmonton Mall, and demonstrations overseas and a 44-day hunger strike in the shadow of Parliament Hill.

"At first, we were seeing all this political stuff happening," she ponders, when asked what's next for the movement. "I think we're moving past that, and I believe that the voice of Idle No More—the voice of grassroots people—will become clearer and more focused, in terms of its direction and its vision."

"I think this is where people are mistaking Idle No More as an Indigenous movement; really, it's a grassroots movement for all people. It's an energetic movement, and it's bound to inspire all walks of life. It's a

beautiful movement and people want to be a part of it. It's inspired grassroots people to be creative in their resistance. When we speak of water and the protection of water and land, of course it's going to motivate and inspire people to want to protect that for our children and the generations to come."

Lofty goals, McAdam will admit—ones that mainstream media commentators and political elites have frequently declared vague, unrealistic or even entirely unachievable.

But the movement's aims, which have oscillated between the repeal of federal omnibus bills C-45 and C-38 to a much more transformative vision—the decolonization of Canada—have clearly touched a nerve among a substantial number of people.

That passion for change is no surprise to McAdam, a cultural

educator and author of the book *Cultural Teachings: First Nations Protocols & Methodologies*. Growing up on the Prairies, McAdam has experienced both the heights of Native culture and the depths of injustice.

"My parents very much lived off the land, when I was growing up in the winter," she revealed. "In the summer, we were sent to Alberta to work."

"I've [since] spent a whole summer just going back onto the land and seeing first-hand—witnessing—the devastation... I've seen many injustices done through the Indian Act towards Indigenous people. I recognize the injustice of Bill C-45, and it's not just Indigenous people that this injustice is directed at; it's now directed at Canadian citizens as well. There's an injustice happening, and people have a right to know."

Some Indigenous activists—particularly those pouring their efforts into Native rights and land defence struggles which long preceded Idle No More—were at first puzzled by the founding women's choice of names, spawning a rival Twitter hashtag, #NeverBeenIdle.

But McAdam admits it was the founders who they felt needed to be kicked into action. She cites as inspiration the Defenders of the Land cross-country grassroots network, Mikisew First Nation's 2005 court victory over treaty rights violations, and the struggle against oil sands and pipelines in western Canada.

"When Idle No More came to be, the name itself didn't mean to dishonour previous activists," she explained. "It meant, at the time, that the founders were idle—we were idle!"

(See *Creative* on page 11.)



# Political will and all of Canada needed to drive change

By Shari Narine  
Windspeaker Contributor

## OTTAWA

The 13-point declaration that ended Attawapiskat Chief Theresa Spence's hunger strike on Jan. 24 is neither a way for her to save face nor an unrealistic set of goals.

"It's an absolute victory," said Danny Metatawabin, spokesperson for Spence.

Metatawabin helped draft the declaration, which he said was not prompted by pressure placed on Spence or Cross Lake First Nation Elder Raymond Robinson to end their hunger strikes. The declaration was signed by the Assembly of First Nations, federal New Democrats and Liberals, and the Native Women's Association of Canada.

Metatawabin said Spence received full support across the country, including from the Attawapiskat First Nation, and brought international attention to the situation of First Nations people.

Spence was unable to attend the press conference that announced the end to her 44-day hunger strike as she had been admitted to hospital the previous night.

Robinson, who joined Spence at Victoria Island a day after she began fasting, told about his own experience at the hospital the night before. He said he was treated with such disrespect and condescension, he left without an

examination.

"Where is my place in Canadian society? Why did I have to receive that kind of tone when I needed medical attention?" asked Robinson. The treatment he received underscored one of the reasons why he, Spence and Jean Sock undertook their hunger strikes.

"These are the things still plaguing us as First Nations people."

Sock, from Elsipogtog First Nation, ended his hunger strike after 28 days, citing his mother's ailing health as his reason.

Robinson, who also agreed to the declaration, said he and Spence "quit on our own terms. We were happy with the result we made as a collective... Now we're letting our leadership take over."

Regional Chief Perry Bellegarde, who represented the Assembly of First Nations, said the declaration builds on the eight elements an AFN delegation presented to Prime Minister Stephen Harper at the Jan. 11 meeting. Neither Bellegarde nor Spence attended.

NWAC President Michelle Audet, who spent days with Spence during the chief's hunger strike, said that while she respected Spence's decision to boycott the Harper meeting, she had hoped Spence would attend and make her statement to Harper. But Spence refused to attend the meeting because the Governor General would not be there. Spence's stand on the

meeting influenced numerous chiefs to boycott as well.

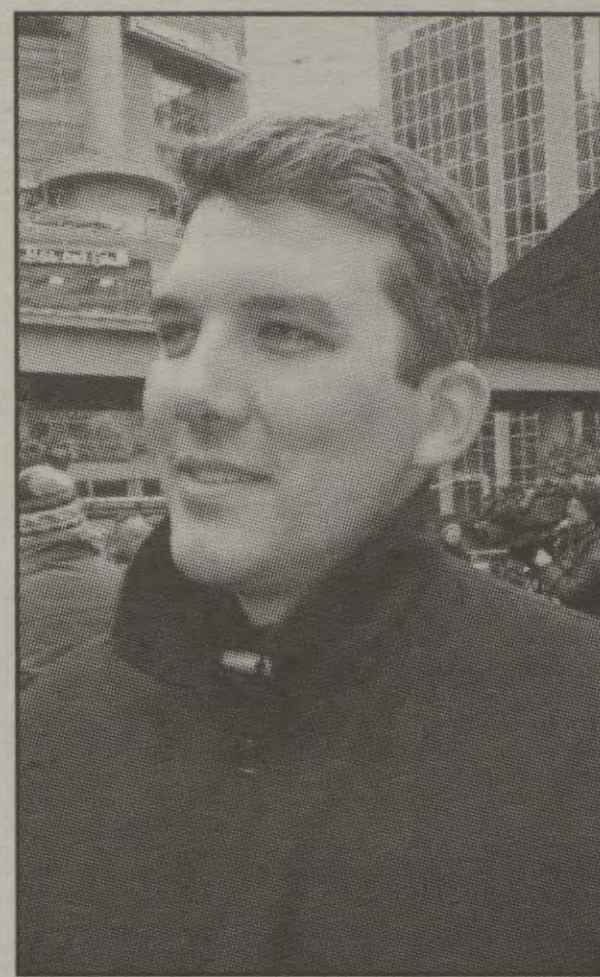
Audet said the difference "a woman and two Elders managed to make ... (is) so warm in our heart that there is hope."

"The (declaration is) an expression of political will on our part and on the part of the AFN and on the part of the New Democratic Party and ... on behalf of a lot of other Canadians. I think there are a lot of Canadians who want us to move forward," said interim federal Liberal leader Bob Rae. He said his party will raise concerns in the House of Commons as well as engage broadly with Canadians. Romeo Saganash, representing the federal New Democrats, said his party will also bring forward initiatives in the House of Commons.

Neither of the political leaders believe the declaration will result in quick, wholesale changes—especially considering the Harper government has not signed it.

"These are things that are going to take time. These are things that are going to require work," said Rae, "but it is an absolutely realistic assessment of the steps that need to be taken in our lifetime if we are in fact going to achieve... reconciliation."

Rae also noted that much of what the declaration called for, such as "free, prior and informed consent of First Nations where inherent and Treaty rights are affected or impacted," was



Hayden King, Assistant Professor of Politics at Ryerson University and member of Beausoleil First Nation at Dundas Square Flash Mob Round Dance on January 11, 2011



Artist and political activist Wanda Nanibush is one of the organizers of the Idle No More Toronto teach-ins at Toronto Council Fire

already supported by the Supreme Court of Canada.

"When there is political will to change things we can move pretty fast when it is necessary," said Saganash.

That political will can be helped along by educating the general Canadian public about the conditions on First Nations reserves, as well as the challenges facing the environment with the passing of Bills C-38 and C-45, said Bellegarde.

"I think through all of this dialogue, this focus on treaty rights and inherent rights and Indigenous self-determination,

people across Canada are opening their eyes," he said. "There are things that can happen but it needs the political will and we're going to have to drive that ... not only Indigenous peoples but everybody in this land."

He also pointed out that those changes are needed, especially if both federal and provincial governments want to move ahead with resource development.

"The land and the resources cannot be exploited anymore without the full inclusion and involvement of Indigenous peoples," said Bellegarde.

## "Creative resistance" continues battle

(Continued from page 10.)

"We honour all the previous activists. In fact, I believe it's because of their work that Idle No More came to be. They're the ones who planted the seeds out there. It was just a combination of the right message and the right timing, I think, and the people were ready to hear the message of Bill C-45's impacts and implications—all these different things—I think that's why Idle No More has become such a force, the way that it is."

While the movement's message—and its signature round dance flash mobs—have spread via online social media, McAdam has struggled with its portrayal by the corporate media. She herself has faced controversy, after media outlets reported that she had distanced the movement from Chief Theresa Spence, Aboriginal leadership and blockades alike. She insisted many comments were inaccurately reported.

"You know, it's a thing that one can expect," she said. "It's been taken out of context."

"I'm not media-savvy at all. I'm not a politician by any stretch of the imagination. I am very much grassroots... This is what I'm

trying to convey to the media. And unfortunately, the mainstream media is not doing a very good job. This is how come we're trying to reach out to those grassroots media, and inviting them to be our voice."

In particular, the Idle No More founders' cautious approach to Native leadership—in particular, the key role the Assembly of First Nations played in the Jan. 11 federal meetings—was seen by some as an assertion of grassroots direction, and others as unnecessarily divisive.

"For people to say that we've excluded leadership, that's not accurate," she said. "There are leadership that supported us right from the very beginning, and they did that without trying to take over the voice of Idle No More... and have been in the background."

"The thing about movements like Idle No More: history has shown that, once leadership takes over, the movement shifts. The thing that's unique about Idle No More is we're not limited by anything—except for your usual laws, the ethical, moral and legal boundaries—but for leadership they're limited by their political and Indian Act limitations. Idle No More doesn't have that."



PHOTO: IDLEMORE.COM

The four Saskatchewan women who founded Idle No More. From left: Sheelah McLean, Nina Wilson, Sylvia McAdam, and Jess Gordon.

With the movement holding its latest day of events across Canada and the U.S. on Jan. 28—and McAdam herself flying to the UK to address allies there—the Saskatchewan founders are confident that Idle No More will continue evolving and pushing for change. But the support isn't solely about bodies in the street or at a

round dance:

"I want to ask the elders and all of the churches—all the denominations—to say a prayer, and to join us," she said. "The environmental assessment threshold has been lowered and in some cases totally removed from some waterways. This puts all of our water at risk. I think that's

devastating and very dangerous for all people.

"If you're thinking about joining this movement, whether you're Indigenous or non-Indigenous, I ask that you put the past injustices aside, and join Idle No More for the love of our children, and for the love of all of our lands and our waters. That's what we ask."



[ strictly speaking ]

## The winter of our discontent

Paraphrasing a fellow playwright, "Now is the winter of our discontent, made glorious by this son of..." I think it's supposed to be the son of York, but many Native people in the Idle No More movement believe it actually refers to a different 'son of a...'. Fill in the Prime Ministerial blank yourself.

The ongoing protests against Bill C-45, which culminated in Jan. 16th's Day of Action, have certainly given various Native causes a higher profile. From Kingston to Windsor, to Portage la Prairie to Vancouver Island, the evening news was tinged red. And the dust hasn't settled yet.

Talk about your Indigenous perfect storm. There was the Idle No More movement's protest to Stephen Harper's unilateral changes to the Indian Act, Chief Theresa Spence's hunger strike regarding horrid conditions in Attawapiskat, and the recent federal court ruling that says non-status and Metis are Indians in regards to the law. According to William Shakespeare again, "A rose by any other name, would smell as sweet."

Federal Court Judge Michael Phelan obviously felt the same in his landmark judgment, handing



### THE URBANE INDIAN Drew Hayden Taylor

the federal government yet another defeat. Evidently, the courts of Canada feel a Native by any other classification would still smell the same. Not quite as poetic but you get the idea. Putting all this together, it may seem to many that the media has quickly become the "all Native, all the time!" channel.

Add this to other recent less than positive news items like the accusations of police abuse towards Native people in Thunder Bay and the rising swell of dissatisfaction against National Chief Shawn Atleo, it leaves many to believe the old adage from those old westerns is coming true: The Natives are restless.

Or perhaps more accurately, it seems the media is getting

restless. They know a good thing when they see it, ever since Ipperwash and Oka. On Jan. 16, I attended one of the Idle No More events outside the British Consulate in Toronto. Organizers logically pointed out that most, if not all, of the treaties historically signed by Aboriginal Nations were with the Queen of Great Britain, not actually the Canadian government which really did not exist at the time. Therefore, the belief is the current Queen has an obligation and onus to see those promises are kept.

When I first arrived at the Bay Street location, it seemed like there were more camera crews and radio journalists pacing back and forth impatiently than actual protesters, all with a lean

and hungry look in their camera eye. Once a sizable crowd had gathered upon the chilly concrete, the multitudes of reporters began circling and isolating indigenous individuals like sharks in a school of tuna.

Nary a Native person escaped un-interviewed, often by several different reporters. It was like a feeding frenzy. There is a commonly held belief that traditionally Native people were uncomfortable with having their picture taken. Supposedly they were afraid the camera would steal their spirit. If this was true, there shouldn't have been any noticeable spirit around for the next three blocks. Instead, these were the most spirited people I had seen in a long time. It almost seemed to add spirit to the cause.

But still, despite the cold, the famous Indigenous sense of humour was evident, though not on camera. Ironically, the protest took place in an open square adjacent to a mall, where most predominantly, a large drug store was situated facing the protest. One Native man indicated it looked like there were 80 irate Indians protesting the Pharmaplus. The poor workers

inside must have been confused. This man even tried to start a half-hearted "Pharmaplus is Pharmednegative" chant, but with little success.

All this frustration and acting out has landed at the feet of our illustrious Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Stephen Harper. It has been a long time since a single man has stirred up so much ire of so many Native People. I used to believe that in order to get a place in the Aboriginal Wall of Shame, your last name had to start with the letter 'C'. For Example; Columbus, Cabot, Cartier, Champlain, Cortes, Custer, and some might argue, Christ (or more accurately, some of his followers and institutions). The jury is still out on Chretien and his infamous White Paper. We may have to add the letter 'H' to that Wall.

There's an old joke in the Native community. Why do Indians hate winter so much? Because it's white and all over our land. Now we're all over the television, newspapers and I'm sure a few water coolers. There was a time we were referred to as the poor vanishing Indians.

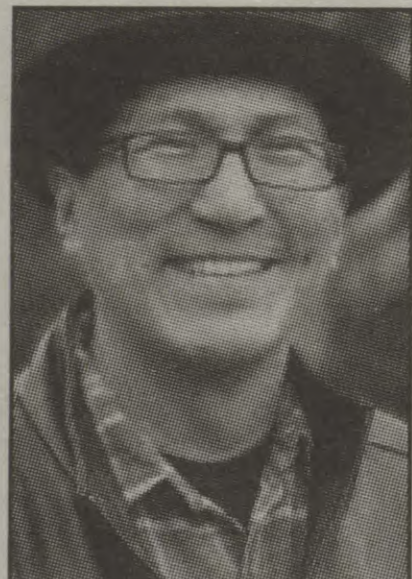
My, how times change.

## Time and the opportunity to learn about yourself

I turned 57 years old in October. There's a lot of dust from a lot of roads on these boots and it sometimes feels as though I've been around an awful long time. I suppose when you've been around long enough to assemble a ton of recollections that it feels the same for everybody. But I'm always so busy that I seldom take the time to reflect on where I've been and what I've done.

Nineteen-fifty-five in Northern Ontario was a completely different world from now. When I consider the sheer amount of change that has occurred, its mind boggling. Rotary phones, dot matrix printers, telex machines, V8 engines in 20-ft cars, the Quebec Nordiques, all of these came and went in the time I've been here. But some things never seem to change and that's what strikes me as I ponder adding another year to my resume.

I've never really been much of a guy's guy, a man's man or any of those buddy buddy things a man is supposed to be. I learned



### WOLF SONGS & FIRE CHATS Richard Wagamese

to be a loner when I was a kid and the lesson never really left me. I always felt better and safer on my own.

It's the same these days. As a writer I spend a lot of time alone and I feel wonderful during those productive work hours. But I enjoy the feel of solitude as a matter of course, really.

I was never drawn to most of the things a guy learns to do. I never learned how to tinker with an engine, never learned to use power tools, never really developed an appetite for the NFL or NASCAR. When I quit drinking beer, well, that was about all she wrote. My world was books and actually sitting

and listening to music. My world was long solitary walks. My world was active observing of things and it has been since I can remember.

I found it hard being around men. I'm pensive. I give things a lot of thought. I consider my position on things. So it made it really hard to fall into banter, chat or good old boy small talk or the small lies and tall tales we tell each other. Even in the bad old days of being a lounge lizard, quaffing draft and shooting pool I wasn't much for chatter. Words always seemed to feel better forming in my head than rolling off my tongue.

The funny thing about being

a loner is that you always think that you're the only one. Hence, the word loner, I suppose. But you never really think that there's anyone else like you and so you never search out anybody who's a loner too. The truth is that there are a lot of us out there. Loners seldom advertise. Others might not be as cozy as I am in my solitude but there are still a lot of guys who value their privacy and the comfort of their own thoughts at their own time.

I like walking. I like being able to set out on the land and just be, with only the dog and my thoughts for company. A lot of guys are like that. I like to do hard, sweat inducing solitary chores like cutting, bucking and stacking firewood. I used to like to fish. Hell, nowadays I even love watering the flowers in our yard because it gives me time to stand on the land and think.

There's no one to miss then. There's no one else's thoughts to consider and no one else's agenda to satisfy. Loners understand the sanctity of those moments, but the truth is that we're not true

loners. It's just a label we learned to apply.

I cherish the moments I spend with my guy friends. I love the idea of working together at something or shooting the breeze about movies or books or music or the ideas that sometimes sit unexpressed in our heads. I love the fact that I live with a beautiful woman and that we have a host of great and wonderful people in our lives. I love that as much as I love the moments I am alone, happy with all of it.

One good buddy and I headed out to cut firewood. We chain hauled huge timbers from a slash pile the loggers left, bucked it up, hauled it back to where our wives were visiting and waiting at home. Then the four of us went out in the boat on a perfect early fall day and cruised and swam and chatted. I felt enormous and filled and elevated. When they left I felt curiously lonely.

A true loner wouldn't feel that. So I guess the truth is that I love solitude but cherish company. As they say, older is wiser.

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# Wawmeesh George Hamilton — [ windspeaker confidential

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

He's consistently drawn attention to issues like war, famine and social upheaval.

**Wawmeesh George Hamilton:** Family. Being as close — if not closer — than family.

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

**W:** What is it that really makes you mad?

**W.G.H:** Hold my composure while taking pictures at crime and fire scenes, or documenting difficult court proceedings.

**W.G.H:** Corrupt Indian politicians that ruin it for those leaders who legitimately toil for their people.

**W:** What is your greatest accomplishment?

**W:** When are you at your happiest?

**W.G.H:** Being a husband to my wife and father to our five children, and not just being a guy she married or someone who fathered kids.

**W.G.H:** When I'm with my family, ferreting out then assembling a story, or behind my camera shooting.

**W:** What one goal remains out of reach?

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

**W.G.H:** Witnessing and documenting struggles in Egypt, Syria and other conflict zones.

**W.G.H:** Thriving — to be my best.

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

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

**W.G.H:** Trying to do what I do today.

**W.G.H:** Documentary photographer James Nachtwey.

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

**W.G.H:** You're not at an assignment to support a cause or mourn and console. You're there to witness and document then let people make up their own minds afterward.

**W:** Did you take it?

**W.G.H:** Every time I'm at an assignment.

**W:** How do you hope to be remembered?

**W.G.H:** As someone who raised awareness and made a difference with his writing and photography. And as someone who compelled others to look at and think about things they'd rather turn away from.

Wawmeesh, George Hamilton is a married father of five who is a member of the Hupacasath First Nation in Port Alberni, B.C. Hamilton earned a BA in philosophy and liberal studies from Vancouver Island University and a certificate in journalism from Langara College. He works as a journalist/photographer for the mainstream publication Alberni Valley News, and has won provincial and national awards for his photography.



Wawmeesh George Hamilton

PHOTO: SUPPLIED

## OUR PICK

**Artist** — D.M. LaFortune  
**Song** — Minuet For the Staircase Children  
**Album** — Beauty and Hard Times  
**Year** — 2012



This is one of those albums that is surprising because of the depth of the content, both lyrically and musically. D.M. is the phonetic spelling of Diem LaFortune, who is clearly a poet, a singer and a musician. The music is a marriage of both Aboriginal culture and human experiences with a variety of mainstream music styles such as folk, blues, some rock and

even Celtic compositions including waltzes and even a little jig. The songs are paintings of a variety of lives and people, in a form that is rare except from an artist that is both matured and at their creative peak. One can only guess how long Diem took to refine the telling of these stories in song. The space for this review cannot begin to share the themes of these songs other than to say the music composition is up to meeting the needed vehicle to relay them to us. Fortunately Diem has a cast of qualified musicians who play all manner of instruments that weave the threads of this musical tapestry. From one song to the next, some are complex in musical layers while others keep a simplicity that compliments their subject matter most effectively. As many hard times that are shared in the lifetime struggles within these stories, they truly make the sum of the true beauty real lives are, as well as being an overall musical master piece that will demand you listen to this album over and over before you truly comprehend how good it really is.

Review by : K. Kanten

## [ radio's most active ]

# ABORIGINAL RADIO MOST ACTIVE LIST

	ARTIST	TITLE	ALBUM
1	The Napoleon Collective	Purple Mountains	The Napoleon Collective
2	Franklin McKay	Destiny	Just Sayin'
3	Don Amero	Turn These Grey Skies Blue	Heart On My Sleeve
4	Nathan Cunningham Ft. Rayen...	3 Wise Men	Interwoven Roots
5	Will Belcourt	Love Shines	Epoch
6	Christa Couture	Parasite	The Living Record
7	Janet Panic	Sweet Music	Most Of What Follows Is True
8	Shy-Anne Hovorka	The Glue	Interwoven Roots
9	Donny Parenteau	Can't Afford To Love You	Bring It On
10	Vinnie Sixx	Can't Let Go	Single
11	Liv Wade	Big Bear	My Great
12	Sherry St. Germain	If This Is Love, I Hate It	Kick Out The Lights
13	Billy Grind	I Don't Mind	Billy Grind
14	Christine	Made For More	Made For More
15	Tim Cruly	You're Not Really Gone	Single
16	Brandon Solomon Feat. Kelly & Poj	60's Scoop	Single
17	George Leach	Carry Me	Surrender
18	Jace Martin	Brand New	Falling Stars
19	Alexander McKay Jr.	Come and Save Me	New Cowboy In Town
20	Elisapie	The Beat	Traveling Love

CONTRIBUTING STATIONS:





[ education ]

# University offering new options for art students

By Barb Nahwegahbow  
Windspeaker Contributor

TORONTO

OCAD University is getting set to launch a program that is the first of its kind in Ontario, according to Bonnie Devine, founding chair of the Aboriginal Visual Culture Program.

Starting in September, students will be able to get a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree with a major in Aboriginal Visual Culture.

Devine was hired in 2008 to develop the program. She assembled an Aboriginal Education Council made up of 26 art and design specialists from across Canada to serve as advisors. Architect Douglas Cardinal, filmmaker Alanis Obomsawin, painter and filmmaker Shirley Cheechoo, and curator and painter Tom Hill are some of the members.

The program focuses on two things, said Devine. One is how to make art, and the second is the history of that practice and how that work has evolved from very early times and how contemporary artists take those practices and move it forward into something like digital art, for example. Indigenous people have been creating art since very early times, she said, like the petroglyphs and cave paintings.

"We want to develop the kind of student who is aware of the value of creative work and how

to be good citizens and use their education, talent and skills for the common good," said Devine. One of the ways that the program reinforces the traditional Aboriginal value of individual responsibility to the collective is a mandatory summer course. Students are given the opportunity to share their artistic gifts by engaging in a community project to teach youth, for example.

Devine is enthusiastic about OCAD U's commitment to Aboriginal students. She has moved from a shared office space in 2008 where she was the only staff. Now Aboriginal Student Services has a meeting room, a research room with a computer for student use, a reference library and three staff in addition to Devine. Photographer and OCAD graduate Keesic Douglas is the Outreach Coordinator. Melissa General, also an OCAD graduate in Photography is the program assistant, and David General, curator, sculptor and former chief of Six Nations is the mentor/advisor for the students.

Out of a student population of 4,500 at OCAD, 87 have self-identified as Aboriginal. In 2008, there were only about a dozen. The increase is likely attributable to the increased Aboriginal support services.

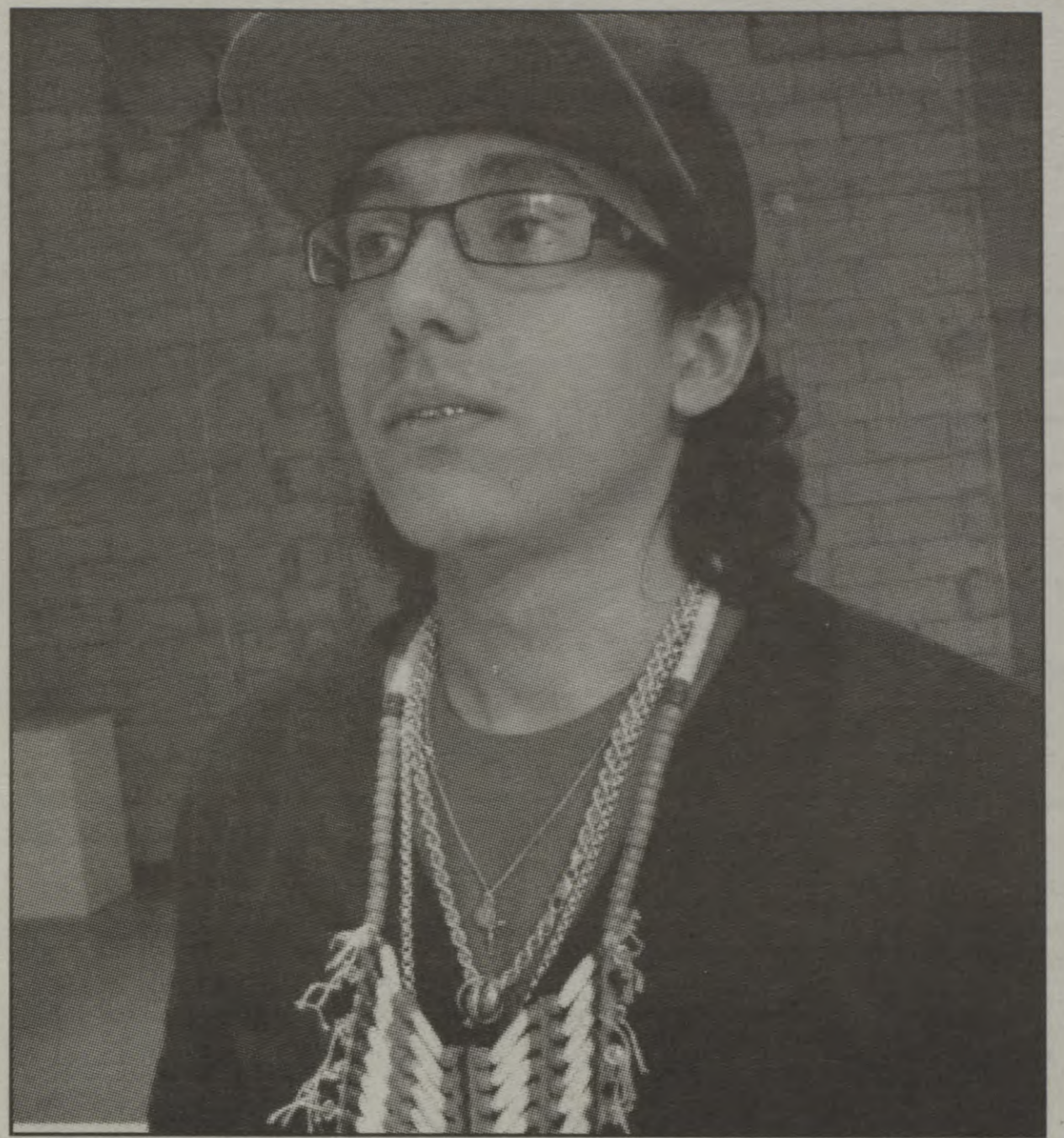
"We encourage the students to find their own personal voice," said Devine. "Many of them are mixed heritage and are just beginning to explore their

Aboriginal identity."

Devine said several successful Aboriginal artists have graduated from OCAD. Cynthia Lickers-Sage is one of them. She founded the imagineNATIVE Film Festival which celebrated its 13th anniversary in 2012. Another graduate is Georgina Toulouse who Devine said was very influential at OCAD. She lobbied to have an Aboriginal person teach the Native Studies course which brought artist Robert Houle into OCAD. She also formed a Native Students Group. Toulouse is now a successful entrepreneur who owns and operates Bebamikawe Studio in her home community of Wikwemikong, Ont.

One other development that Devine is excited about is OCAD U's partnership with Laurentian University in Sudbury. Starting in September, Aboriginal students in the north will be able to take the first year of OCAD's Bachelor of Fine Arts Program at a satellite campus at Laurentian. Students will take the same first year courses offered at OCAD in Toronto. However, extra support will be given to the students to prepare them for their eventual move to Toronto.

Courses that will be offered in the new program include Metis Cultural Practices from Riel to Nationhood, Aboriginal Ways of Storytelling and Story of Us, a survey of Aboriginal art practices across North America. One of Devine's long-term goals is a



Alexandre Nahdee, artist and student at OCAD University in Toronto.

Master's degree in Aboriginal Visual Culture offered by OCAD U.

Since 2009, students have been able to get a minor in Aboriginal Visual Culture. Twenty-two-year-old Alexandre Nahdee is one such student who will be graduating this year.

Along with his hip urban wear and silver grill on his teeth, he wears a striking traditional breastplate made in the Contemporary Aboriginal Sculptural Practices course

taught by Devine. The bone and glass beads are from his father's and uncle's collections and the clear crystal beads are from his mother.

"I honour both sides of my heritage," he said, accomplishing this in designing the breastplate. His father is Ojibway from Walpole Island First Nation and his mother is Portuguese.

"Students are encouraged to tell a story with their work," said Devine. "That gives the object power."

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### Special section providing Aboriginal news from Saskatchewan



PHOTO: ROY POGORZELSKI

Protestors take to the steps of the Legislature building as First Nations demand action from the Harper government.

## Saskatchewan Chiefs divided on meeting with Harper

By SHARI NARINE  
Sage Contributing Editor

OTTAWA

Both Chiefs helped to lay the ground work but when it came time to meet with the Prime Minister, only one went.

"I've always dared to be different from other Chiefs," said Chief Marcel Head, of Shoal Lake Cree Nation. "I saw this as an opportunity ... and we had a mandate from the people to seek ways to get the government to engage in a dialogue to start implementing treaties."

Head was among 20 or so Saskatchewan Chiefs to take part in the Jan. 11 meeting with Prime Minister Stephen Harper, despite the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nation's decision to boycott the meeting.

FSIN head Perry Bellegarde, who is also a Regional Chief with the Assembly of First Nations, led the meetings that resulted in the eight points presented to Harper, but didn't attend the four-hour long meeting.

"I didn't go in out of respect for my Saskatchewan caucus,"

said Bellegarde.

Head says there was a fair amount of confusion from when he arrived in Ottawa, three days prior to the meeting, to when a delegation of Chiefs met with Harper.

That confusion, he said, came following a number of appearances from fasting Attawapiskat Chief Theresa Spence, who urged the Chiefs to boycott the meeting with Harper because Governor General David Johnston would not be attending.

"All along we had an agreement to send at least a delegation," said Head. "Thursday night was a 180 degree turn. Everybody started to speak out in support of Chief Spence. It turned from sending a delegation to meet the Prime Minister to boycotting the meeting."

But prior to arriving in Ottawa, Head was part of a 160-Chief conference call with AFN National Chief Shawn Atleo, in which Head says Atleo was given a strong mandate to set up the meeting with Harper.

"Nobody spoke against it,"

said Head.

In the end, Chiefs from Saskatchewan, Ontario and Manitoba as a collective, decided not to attend.

"I see boycotting a meeting like this not doing any service to the people who elected you," said Head, who was in contact with his council back home to ensure that with the new developments, his community still wanted him to meet with Harper.

Head is optimistic that something will come from the meeting and holds that it had a different atmosphere than the Crown-First Nations gathering which took place January 2012.

"Overall, I think (the meeting) went well," said Head. "I think the significant part of the meeting was to have continuous dialogue, not just the one deal, the one meeting."

Unlike the Crown-First Nations gathering where there was no follow-up of issues raised, Head says this time there was "agreement (there) has to be some fundamental changes (made) to remedy the relationship between the

government and the First Nations across the country."

Head, who had a chance to address Harper, says he was approached by a number of boycotting-Saskatchewan Chiefs and asked about the meeting.

"They said they would have loved to have met with the Prime Minister, but they were thankful someone did go out and meet with them from our province," he said. He added he did not receive any pressure after from having gone against the Saskatchewan caucus.

In the evening of Jan. 11, Head was joined by boycotting Chiefs, including Bellegarde and Spence, in a meeting with Johnston at Rideau Hall.

"He's the queen's representative here in Canada and our relationship as treaty people is with the queen ... so our relationship with the sovereign is very important," said Bellegarde.

Head says he was disappointed with the ceremonial meeting with Johnston, in which they received no commitment.

But not everything is riding on meetings with the Prime Minister or Governor General.

Bellegarde says the FSIN is considering joining two Alberta First Nations, who have begun legal action against the federal government's omnibus bills C-38 and C-45.

Bellegarde also holds up the work undertaken by the Idle No More movement.

"It's a grassroots movement and it's a spiritual re-awakening of our people," he said.

The Idle No More rallies and demonstrations have gotten the eye of the Saskatchewan government. Last month, prior to announcing joint federal and provincial funding for a First Nations training program, Premier Brad Wall alluded to a change in government funding to the FSIN.

In a written response Bellegarde chided Wall for "negotiating through the media." Bellegarde also said that First Nation's rights were a "constitutional certainty (which includes) our involvement in any decision-making that affects our territories and our people."





## Police investigate alleged "starlight tour"

The Saskatoon Police Service's Professional Standards Division are investigating a complaint that on Jan. 21, Drayton Bull, 19, was picked up by police, dropped off on the outskirts of the city, and forced to walk in below -30 C. When he arrived at his father's home, he was taken to hospital and treated for a concussion. In a news release, the SPS said that an initial investigation has shown that no SPS patrol units were outside the Saskatoon city limits within the time frame alleged. All police cars are equipped with GPS. The SPS will also be checking in-car camera video, which is automatically activated when the back door of a patrol car is opened, to determine if Bull was inside a patrol car. APTN reports that Bull "doesn't remember much of what happened, including if he was in the back of a cruiser." Bull said he was "highly intoxicated" when he left to walk to his father's home. He recalls seeing a police car, being chased by a man in black pants and waking up at his father's door. All his recollections are interspersed with black-out periods. The late-night practice of police officers dropping Aboriginal people off at out-of-the-way locations was dubbed "starlight tours" following the 2003 provincial government inquiry into the 1990 death of Neil Stonechild.

## NIHB billings raised as concern with optometrist

Newly-released documents show that a Saskatchewan optometrist's billings to the Non-Insured Health Benefits program raised concerns for Health Canada. The March 2012 report describes the apparent difficulties that Health Canada staff experienced when they tried to look deeper into allegations about the unidentified optometrist's billings. The report makes recommendations for Health Canada's regional staff who work on the NIHB program. Health Canada has come up with a plan to address the issue of apparent shortcomings among NIHB staff in the province although no details have been released. The optometrist case is just the latest across the country where there have been other allegations of misuse of federal funding for Aboriginal health care. The police have been involved in investigating for incidents and the Canada Revenue Agency is involved in one case.

## New funding for Aboriginal programming announced

The federal and provincial governments have teamed up to create the Skills and Partnership Fund, which is aimed at helping First Nations people find fulfilling long-term employment. The federal government will kick in \$7.9 million and the province \$1.5 million through the Ministry of the Economy as an investment in Northern Career Quest. Additional funding for the project will come from industry partners, including Cameco, Areva, and Northlands College. "Our government's top priorities are job creation, economic growth and long-term prosperity," said MP Rob Clarke in a press release. "That is why we work with organizations like Northern Career Quest to ensure that Aboriginal people are able to take full advantage of economic opportunities." Northern Career Quest will provide Aboriginal people in the province with classroom and on-site training and work experience in the mining industry. In two years, the organization will train 800 people for positions such as mining technicians, heavy equipment operators, welders, and office administration.

## Pringle reiterates call for national children's advocate

Saskatchewan's Child and Youth Advocate Bob Pringle

is renewing the call for a national children's advocate and voiced his opinion in a recent letter to Prime Minister Stephen Harper. Pringle wrote Harper asking him to visit some Indigenous communities to see and hear the issues up close. "We believe that that is the number one human rights issue in this country, is the condition of Indigenous children," said Pringle. The Harper government has continued to reject the call for a national children's advocate.

## FSIN hosts first of three education forums

The Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations will be hosting the Future of First Nations Education forum, Feb. 19-21, at the First Nations University of Canada in Regina. "The province predicts a need for 18,000 workers by 2018 and is presently building their labour force strategy. And the federal government is focussed on improving the Canadian economy. The timing for the forum couldn't be better," said Vice Chief Simon Bird. "The FSIN has a mandate to build capacity for full participation of First Nation people in the labour force through education. Today, there are more graduates than ever before but the graduation rate still lags behind the general population. This is unacceptable." Two more forums are planned over the next two years.

## SIGA reports record profits

For the 2011/2012 fiscal year, the Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority earned \$267.2 million, with a profit of \$81.6 million. The revenue total represented an increase of 27 per cent over the previous year's net earnings. SIGA's net earnings have been boosted by expansions, which were undertaken from 2006 to 2009. In that time span, SIGA expanded operations with the openings of Dakota Dunes Casino at Whitecap Dakota First Nation and Living Sky Casino in Swift Current. SIGA also rebuilt Painted Hand Casino in Yorkton. Every project was created in partnership with a First Nation. "Those projects have doubled the company's size, created 800 additional jobs and resulted in approximately \$125 million in on-reserve economic investment," said Zane Hansen, SIGA president and CEO. SIGA now employs over 1,900 people and with over 1,300 First Nations employees, SIGA is one of the largest First Nations employers in Canada. All profits from SIGA's gaming operations are administered by the Province of Saskatchewan with a portion meted out to First Nations.

## Pinehouse, Kineepik Metis Local sign uranium mining agreement

The northern Village of Pinehouse and Kineepik Metis Local Inc. have signed a collaboration agreement with Cameco, Areva Resources Canada Inc. to guide future co-operation and sharing of benefits from uranium mining operations. The agreement builds on 25 years of co-operation between the community of about 1,000 people and the uranium mining industry and sets out specific commitments by the mining companies with respect to workforce development, business development, community engagement, environmental stewardship and community investment. The potential value of the agreement is estimated to be approximately \$200 million over the next 11 years with the largest benefit from employment income and business development, and the remainder from community investment.

## Three charged in Red Earth death

Three people have been charged in the Jan. 1 death of

## Low-risk warning issued by First Nations University of Canada

Students who participated in a blood-testing program at the First Nations University of Canada between 2002-2011 are being urged to get tested for possible blood-borne pathogens such as HIV, hepatitis B and hepatitis C. During this time frame, lancets, which are double blades used to pierce the skin and cause the finger to bleed, were cleaned in alcohol and used a second time. Standard practice now calls for the entire lancet to be used once and then disposed of. "We've been compiling their addresses and have been mailing letters out to them and will be e-mailing them if possible," said Anthony De Padua, director of health sciences. "Through this advisory report, this will be another way for the students to recognize that they perhaps need to look at this particular issue." This is only a precautionary measure, and the university is not aware of any students who were involved in these tests having any type of blood-borne pathogen in that period of time.

PHOTO: FIRST NATIONS UNIVERSITY

Duril McKay, 20, of Red Earth First Nation. Police went to the reserve at around 2 a.m. after receiving a report that several people were fighting outside a residence. Ambulance workers found McKay unconscious. He was taken to hospital where he was declared dead. Charged with second-degree murder are Lenny Head, 20, Tyson Whitehead, 26, and Douglas Head, 19, all of Red Earth First Nation. "Since the tragedy, the community has since begun to come to terms with what has happened and to accept and appreciate the immense affect it has to not only the McKay family but on the rest of the membership," said Red Earth First Nation Chief Ian McKay. "We are very thankful for the outpour of support from everyone and the words of encouragement and comfort several members and friends from other communities have already offered to all our families during this difficult time." Duril's family is calling for support, forgiveness and for wide spread community healing.

## Onion Lake Cree joins FNFSMA

Onion Lake Cree Nation is one of 11 First Nations and the only Saskatchewan First Nation to be the most recent additions to the First Nations Fiscal and Statistical Management Act. In 2012, 26 First Nations opted to participate in the FNFSMA bringing the total to 95. The FNFSMA, which came into force on April 1, 2006, established the First Nations Tax Commission, the First Nations Finance Authority, the First Nations Financial Management Board and the First Nations Statistical Institute. By opting to be added to FNFSMA, First Nations are able to access the services of these institutions. "With 95 First Nations participating, the FNFSMA is becoming recognized as a true legislative gateway to improved fiscal planning and economic growth," said C.T. (Manny) Jules, Chief Commissioner of the First Nations Tax Commission.

## Funding received for literacy program

READ Saskatoon is one of 12 organizations to recently receive funding from the TD Financial Literacy Grant Fund. "Eighty per cent of the clients at READ Saskatoon are employed with most earning a low income," said Sheryl Harrow, Executive Director, READ Saskatoon. "The TD Financial Literacy Grant will ensure our community has increased access to mainstream financial education opportunities. It will also help us to position financial literacy as an essential skill, alongside reading, writing, and numeracy, allowing for systemic change within families and more broadly within our community." Administered by Social and Enterprise Development Innovations the fund provides grants to charitable and non-profit organizations that support and promote financial literacy for low income and economically disadvantaged people in Canada. Since the fund's inception in 2010, it has awarded approximately \$5 million to 67 community organizations. Grants are awarded for innovation, research and development, and strategic program development of community-based financial literacy initiatives. "Improving the financial literacy and acumen of Aboriginal peoples is like putting in place an essential building block in the foundation of our Aboriginal communities. It is important that we understand that many of the day-to-day choices we make have a financial impact on us.... Improved financial skills lead to improved decision-making," said Terry Goodtrack, President and CEO of the Aboriginal Financial Officers Association of Canada.

Compiled by Shari Narine



## \$21-million for claim settlement

Members of the Sakimay First Nation voted to accept a \$21-million settlement for land that was flooded in the 1940s. A referendum vote taken on Jan. 30 had 307 of 328 ballots cast in a favour of the settlement. The claim

was over a water control structure built on Crooked Lake in the Qu'Appelle Valley east of Regina. The Indian Claims Commission ruled in 1998 that there was no proper authorization to build the structure or to flood reserve land. The land still remains under water. Under the settlement agreement,

the band's 470 members will each receive \$1,000 and \$19 million will be invested in a bank-managed trust. Four per cent of the trust will be drawn on annually for revenue, said Chief Lynn Acoose.

## Muskowekwan approves deal

## with Encanto

On Feb. 25, members of the Muskowekwan First Nation voted to approve a proposal from Encanto Potash to expand designation of mineral rights. Eighty per cent of those who voted cast their ballots in favour of the development. The vote was the second taken by the First Nation after the first try failed to achieve the necessary number of voters. In 2010, a joint venture agreement was signed between Encanto and Muskowekwan, in which Encanto would put up the money for exploration while the First Nation received royalties, which are expected to run between \$50-\$60 million annually. Muskowekwan will also receive preferential employment and contracting opportunities

while Councillor Bryan Tootoosis was defeated. The three men were among nine members, either present or past councillors or band trustees, to originally face 47 charges of theft, fraud and breach of trust relating to misspending of Treaty Land Entitlement funds back in 2004. Antoine, Favel and Tootoosis were each charged with two counts of theft over \$5,000, two counts of fraud over \$5,000, two counts of breach of trust by a public official, and one count of criminal breach of trust. They pleaded guilty to lesser charges. Sentencing has yet to occur.

## Cote Nation members receive payment

In mid-June, members of the Cote First Nation started receiving cheques as part of a land claim settlement reached with the federal government in fall 2011. Members were eligible for a lump sum payment of \$20,000 as part of a comprehensive land claim settlement valued at \$130 million. The deal also included provisions for the band to purchase 15,000 acres of land to add to the reserve. A portion of the settlement money will go into a trust fund to ensure there is an ongoing source of revenue for the band.

## LOU starts "transformative change" for child welfare

On Sept. 18 a ceremony was held unveiling the formal relationship between the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and Saskatchewan's Advocate for Children and Youth. The Letter of Understanding was a step in bringing about "the transformative change to child welfare" that First Nations and many community-based organizations have been calling for over the years, said FSIN Vice Chief Dutch Edward Lerat. Eighty per cent of children in provincial care are First Nations. The framework focuses on keeping children out of care by ensuring children and their families receive increased support services, which are culturally-responsive and delivered at the community level.

## TRC brings national event to Saskatoon

From June 21-24 the Truth and Reconciliation Commission held its second largest ever statement gathering event. There were 68 statements presented in the panels, 29 in circles, and 143 private statements. More than 15,000 residential school survivors, a record, registered for the event. Forty to 50 per cent of those who attended the TRC event were non-Aboriginal. "To the non-Indigenous community we sincerely, sincerely thank you for your understanding. When you leave here today, don't leave here with a heart that has any pity in it. That's not what we want. We want your continued understanding, to pass it on to your colleagues, to your children, to your grandchildren, so that one day we will achieve the true principles of coexistence," said Eugene Arcand, member of the IRS Survivors Advisory Committee.

(See Review on page 4.)

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Application Deadline - March 8, 2013

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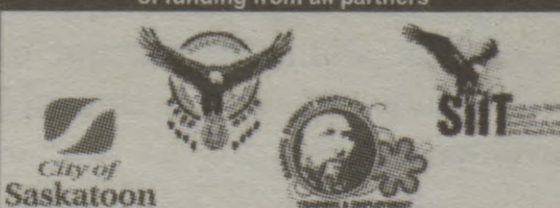






PHOTO: TRC

(From left) Commissioners of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Wilton Littlechild and Marie Wilson with chair Justice Murray Sinclair in the grand entry in Saskatoon that began the fourth national event.

## Students march to protest hikes in education fees

Students and community members ended their march in support of post-secondary education at the First Nations University of Canada. Two hundred strong took to the streets in Regina on Feb. 1 to protest the cost of higher education and insufficient government funding. At the core of the march was the federal government's two per cent cap on the Post-Secondary Student Support Program, which funds Aboriginal students.

## Doucette returned for second term as president

On Sept. 8, Robert Doucette was returned in an overwhelming victory as president of the Metis Nation-Saskatchewan. He ran against five others. Doucette said he had been given a strong mandate to continue to tackle the "bannock and lard" issues that face the Metis in Saskatchewan, including health, housing, employment, and education. Gerald Morin was elected as vice president and Louis Gardiner was returned as treasurer. Voting turnout was low, which Doucette said was an issue that needed to be addressed.

## Survey shows little change in attitudes

In October, the University of Saskatchewan released the results of *Taking the Pulse of Saskatchewan*, which contained questions that related to Aboriginal issues. While the questions were not identical to a survey conducted in 2001, there were enough similarities to draw a correlation. "It seems that when it comes to Aboriginal issues, there seems to be some sort of block that individuals just can't get past," said Jason Disano, director with Social Sciences Research Laboratories with the U of S. "I honestly don't know why ... but lack of education is part of

it." The attitude of Saskatchewan residents has changed little in the past decade toward Aboriginal issues.

## Bellegarde new FSIN Chief

Perry Bellegarde took over as new Chief for the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, knocking out interim Chief Morley Watson during elections on Oct. 25. "The election is over. We need to come together, north, south, east and west. We need all of our treaty territories ... to work together. We need all of our nations ... to come together again now," Bellegarde said in his address. Also elected was Kim Jonathan as First Vice Chief, the first woman to serve on the FSIN since its restructuring in 1982. In by acclamation as Third Vice Chief was Edward (Dutch) Lerat. Rounding out the executive were Bobby Cameron as Second Vice Chief and Simon Bird as Fourth Vice Chief. Elections were not held for their positions.

## Nekaneet collects GST

In October, the Nekaneet First Nation became the second Saskatchewan band to collect GST. "It's more income for the band ... and it will allow us to reinvest in our economic development opportunities," said Chief Jordi Fourhorns. The bulk of that tax revenue will come from the Living Sky Casino, which Nekaneet operates in Swift Current, and urban property in Regina that the band owns. GST will be charged and while both First Nations and non-first Nations will have to ante up the additional five per cent, Fourhorns said the majority of the people dishing out the extra dollars will not be Nekaneet band members. Chief and council took the proposal of collecting GST to the membership through community meetings and received full support. Fourhorns expects the additional revenue to be reinvested in economic development.

## Northern Bear Casino goes online

On Nov. 6, the Northern Bear Casino went online on the GEObet Tribal Gaming Network. The provincial government said it would monitor the operation of the online casino to check out the legalities. Provincial approval is required by Canadian gambling laws and the province has not given the go-ahead to the venture. "I'm establishing our jurisdiction," said Bernie Shepherd, CEO of Northern. The online casino is being run by the White Bear First Nation. "We have inherent rights - treaty rights and constitutional rights. In our minds, this is legal." Shepherd said the new casino was an opportunity to provide jobs and create revenue for the First Nation.

## LaRonge provides full child, family services to off-reserve members

An agreement signed between the provincial government and the Lac La Ronge Indian Child and Family Services Agency came into full effect on Dec. 1, giving authority for child and family services for both on- and off-reserve residents to the La Ronge band. The agency took over child protection and foster care services to off-reserve residents in La Ronge, Air Ronge, Pinehouse, Brabant Lake, Southend and Stanley Mission in October. "This is probably one of the most historically significant developments in child welfare in Saskatchewan," said Dexter Kinequon, ICFS executive director. ICFS will be receiving funding from the province to undertake work off-reserve. Federal dollars will continue to be used for child welfare work carried out on the reserve.

## Fox leads Chiefs to Parliament Hill

Tired of First Nations meeting,



PHOTO: FILE

Chief Wallace Fox (left) with Samson Cree Elder Cecil Napoose took part in the countrywide Idle No More movement and also led Chiefs in a march to Parliament Hill.



PHOTO: CBC SASKATCHEWAN

Jacob Pratt (right) was congratulated by Brett Wilson chosen in April as the inaugural winner of Boom Box, CBC's competition for Aboriginal entrepreneurs.

hearing the same speeches, and proceeding in the same manner, Onion Lake Cree Nation Chief Wallace Fox took action on Dec. 4. On the first day of the Special Chief Assembly for the Assembly of First Nations he took 250 Chiefs and Elders across the river from Gatineau to Ottawa, where the group was led by pipe and drums as they marched to the House of Commons. They were denied access to the House chamber.

## FNBC gains independence two years early

By year's end the First Nations Bank of Canada had cut its strings with The Toronto-Dominion Bank two years ahead of schedule and was independent. "Every time you expect to do something before you plan to and especially when it's a positive change, it feels good," said Keith Martell, chair and CEO of FNBC. The bank, an alliance between Saskatchewan Indian Equity Foundation Inc., Federation of Saskatchewan Indians, Inc. and TD, was created in 1996 as a means toward Aboriginal economic self-sufficiency. By late 2009, a share conversion was completed with TD and resulted in Aboriginal shareholders from Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Quebec

taking ownership and control of over 80 per cent of the FNBC. "It's not like TD is telling us we have to leave earlier. They gave us a lot of flexibility and they gave us a lot of leeway to be able to plan this to take longer, but we have to think we've got the capacity and the time is right to do it now," said Martell.

## New competition selects top young entrepreneur

Jacob Pratt (right) was congratulated by Brett Wilson chosen in April as the inaugural winner of Boom Box, CBC's competition for Aboriginal entrepreneurs. Pratt, a third year business student at the First Nations University of Canada, won with his pitch for Wambi Dance, which is both a talent agency registering a wide variety of Aboriginal artists and a central agency that event planners and organizations can turn to for Aboriginal artists. Along with winning \$2,500, Pratt received three months of mentorship. Wilson, a *Dragon's Den* veteran, teamed up with CBC, putting up \$5,000 in prize money. Winners were selected through a combination of online voting and committee selection. Jennifer Dubois was second and Heather Abbey third.

Compiled by Shari Narine



# Talking Stick reaches a happy milestone

By **Cara McKenna**  
Raven's Eye Writer

## Vancouver

Talking Stick, a Vancouver festival showcasing Aboriginal art, writing and performance, will celebrate its 20th anniversary this year. It runs in various venues around the city, and will run from Feb. 19 to March 3.

The festival was started through Full Circle performance group in 1992, a group that aims to provide opportunities for Aboriginal artists working in different mediums.

"Full Circle has taken 20 years to get this far, and it's been a hard 20 years, quite frankly," said Margo Kane, artistic managing director of Full Circle.

"It's rewarding. It's going to be 20 years and finally after 20 years I feel like I can pause and reflect on what's been achieved and be proud of what we've managed to achieve."

Among other performances, this year's festival will feature three one-person shows.

"We use all the [artistic] disciplines to organize our festival," said Kane.

"This year we've had more of a push to have theatre presented because there is more theatre being toured now. This year it's all one-person shows so it's a little bit easier to manage financially. But that's just where the community is at right now."

Tumit, a one-woman play being shown as part of Talking Stick, tells the story of a woman who struggles to break the negative generational pattern of her family.

Tumit is written and performed by Renalita Arluk, who is of Inuvialuit, Gwich'in and Chipewyan-Cree descent, and who is originally from the Northwest Territories.

"I never labeled it Northern, and I never labeled it Aboriginal, even though I am Northern and I am Aboriginal," said Arluk.

"I just wanted the audience to see how they saw themselves within the piece. But they said this is definitely a Northern play, and this definitely is reflective of our culture."

Arluk added that she is thankful for Talking Stick because it gives the small Aboriginal theatre community the opportunity to showcase their work.

"Our stories are very powerful and our stories need to be taught and carried forward. That's ultimately how I became an actor. I just really believed in the power of our stories," she said.

"[The Aboriginal theatre world is] small. That's why Talking Stick festival in itself is kind of an amazing thing. It's kind of a grand festival and goes over two weeks. [Margo Kane] is presenting three theatre productions and that's just an

amazing feat as far as the Aboriginal arts community goes."

Kane said that one thing that surprises her about Talking Stick each year is the small number of Aboriginal artists that come out to the festival to view other artist's work.

"I would wish that more artists would come out to see each other's work. I would really encourage the Aboriginal arts community to come out and see their artists. And that other artists come and see other kinds of work."

Tickets for Talking Stick range from \$12 to \$25, with pay-what-you-can performances as well.

Tickets to the opening night gala on Feb. 19 are \$40 each.



Renalita Arluk in Tumit



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# Sechelt elder arrested with Sunshine Coast logging protesters



PHOTOS: DAVID P. BALL

About 600 people rallied in Vancouver at an Idle No More event on December 23, where speakers demanded the repeal of federal legislation they said guts environmental protection and Indigenous rights.

By David P. Ball  
Raven's Eye Writer

## Sechelt

Court cases continue for 10 protesters after controversy over logging on B.C.'s Sunshine Coast escalated to an injunction and arrests on Dec. 7.

The protesters—including 79-year-old Shish'lh nation elder Xwu'p'a'lich (Barb Higgins), who was one of those arrested—argue that logging by the Sunshine Coast Community Forest (SCCF) threatens a thriving ecosystem, and they want an investigation into the SCCF's forestry practices.

"This is the second time this coast has had such a brutal logging spree on it," she told Raven's Eye. "They've taken millions of dollars of logs out of B.C. You can't go on doing that forever."

"When I first went up Mount Elphinstone, I couldn't believe it. It's like a spiritual experience when you walk in there. I don't see how loggers could go in there and just drool at cutting down a tree like that. Our band gave them a contract to let them log in four areas. I don't blame my band. When you look at this from the big picture, this is Sechelt land."

Xwu'p'a'lich said she has found several rare medicinal plants in the area slated for logging, including ooaakslie (pronounced "oo-ack-sally") and rattlesnake plantain, and she described the forest as thick with water-logged moss and old trees. Salmon spawning beds are also a concern to protesters.

"Your feet feel like they're walking on a big sponge," she said. "There are probably five or six different kinds of mosses that grow there that retain the waters.... It's like a great big

reservoir. The moss and trees themselves hold that water. There are plants up there that are medicinal plants I haven't found anywhere on Sunshine Coast.

"They like to say it's not an old-growth forest, but it is. It's low elevation old-growth. One hundred and thirty years ago a fire burned through, but it didn't burn the oldest trees."

Chief Garry Feschuk said SCCF consulted Shish'lh nation, whose land use plan allows logging in the areas facing protesters.

"I understand where they're coming from," he said. "But them saying they speak for the band, I don't know how true that is."

"We have a self-government agreement with the province, and we have elected leadership who speak for the band... I did meet with the Elders, and told them that we're working on a bigger picture: we're going through litigation, we're seeking title over the whole territory."

Meanwhile, band archaeologist, Elders and researchers signed off on cutting outside their watershed, Feschuk explained: "We're not supporting the Community Forest. We have our own issues with the government around the Community Forest. But on those blocks, we did go through a consultation process."

For the chair and president of the SCCF, Glen Bonderud, the band council's support for his operations—which are governed by a community board of directors—and environmental assessments are support enough to continue logging.

"We have a protocol signed with the Sechelt Indian Band," he said. "They signed off on our cut; it's not like we went against

them.

"We advise them, they look through and do archaeological studies in case anything comes up—like gravesites or culturally modified trees. They have the right to say, 'We want to change this.'"

He said that the "peace camp" activists have not been satisfied with SCCF efforts to reduce their environmental impacts, or engage with the local community. But the issue is more complex than simply environment-versus-logging.

"We're a small operation—20,000 cubic metres a year," he said. "That's not a huge number. "It's not a David and Goliath thing at all... We hope we're through the worst part. Hopefully we won't have to go back to confrontational stuff, but you never know."

Xwu'p'a'lich decided to support the peace camp protest after a spiritual vision of her great-grandmother, who encouraged her to protect her nation's territory—even without the band council's support.

"Some will think I'm weird, nuts, crazy—all those other adjectives," she said, chuckling. "But the Creator said to do it, so I did it."

"I was at my computer writing and heard my great-grandmother saying, 'Mena!' She died in 1954. No one was there. Another minute or so passed, and I felt her hand on my shoulder. I looked, and she was standing there. She said, 'The time is now; stand and hold.'"

Xwu'p'a'lich went up to the Mount Elphinstone protest camp and requested four "warriors" to place flags the four colours of the medicine wheel—red, yellow, black and white—in the directions around



PHOTOS: DAVID P. BALL

Once more than 100-million strong, this year's Fraser River salmon run could be even more dismal than the 2009 collapse that led to the Cohen Commission inquiry on declining Fraser River salmon stocks.

the mountain, she baked a salmon and held a ceremony declaring the land Sechelt territory.

"I'm coming here to do some work," she told the protesters. "This is Sechelt territory, and I want to reassert our right. I want

to put up flags saying this is Sechelt land."

"[They] dreamed someday someone would walk up the mountain and say that... to walk up mountain and say, 'You're doing a good job and this is our mountain.'"



### THE SEMIAHMOO FIRST NATION

has given notice that it plans to take court action against the City of Surrey or B.C. Lottery Corp. if a gaming licence is approved for a proposed \$100-million casino resort in south Surrey. Semiahmoo band Councillor Joanne Charles said the nation was not properly consulted on the project and faces an economic loss, because it too has thoughts of building a hotel, conference centre and casino on its land near the U.S. border. "We may not be able to have that option because this one will be located right there," Charles told the Vancouver Sun. She said the area can't support both projects. "We'll take whatever legal action might be necessary to protect our legal rights and title." Surrey City Council heard arguments for and against the project, with its 60,000-square-foot gambling floor, 200-room four-star hotel and 27,000 sq. ft convention and entertainment centre. The project requires city council's approval before a gaming licence can be issued.

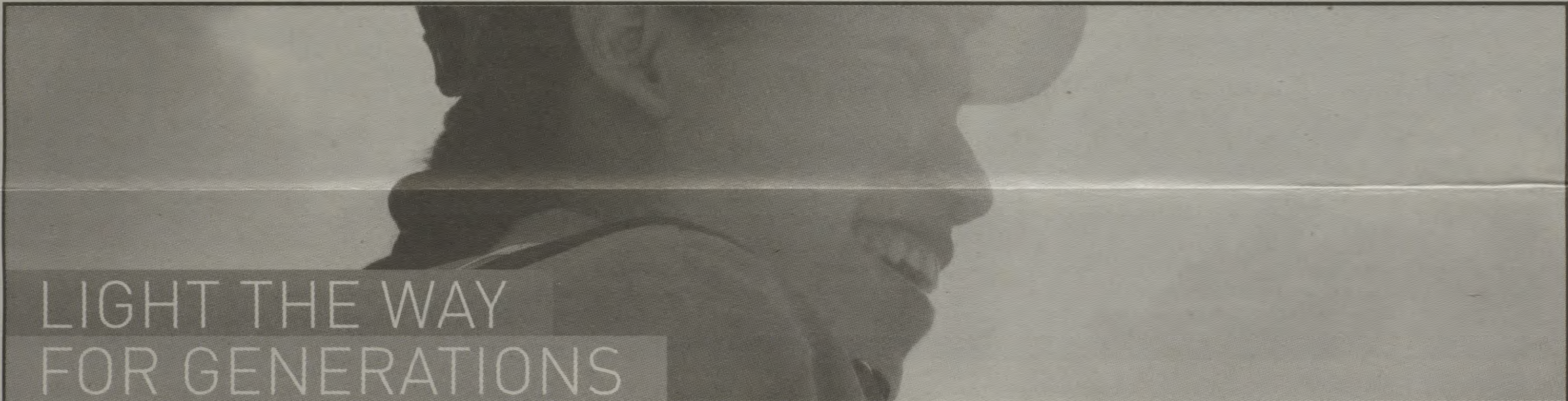
### A REVENUE-SHARING AGREEMENT

has been reached by the government of BC and four Ktunaxa Nation communities. The agreement is the fourth Economic and Community Development Agreement (ECDA) in the province and fulfils the B.C. government's commitment to reach 10 new non-treaty agreements under the BC Jobs Plan by 2015. The ECDA will enable the Ktunaxa Nation, comprised of the four communities of St. Mary's, Tobacco Plains, Lower Kootenay and Akisq'nuk First Nation, to share revenues from new coal mine projects in the Elk Valley. The agreement also links to the Strategic Engagement Agreement between B.C. and Ktunaxa Nation, which provides for a decision-making and project-review process to ensure the Ktunaxa Nation continues to be involved in decision-making about

new mine projects. The agreement replaces the Ktunaxa Nation Council's existing Forest Revenue Sharing Agreement. The ECDA provides stability and greater certainty for coal mining operations in the Elk Valley. The agreement is one step toward addressing the Ktunaxa interest in being recognized as a government in the Ktunaxa Territory, being appropriately accommodated for potential impacts on Ktunaxa Nation's asserted Aboriginal rights, including title, achieving a greater role in the regional economy and supporting Ktunaxa community development initiatives. "The Ktunaxa Nation is pleased that we have reached this agreement with the Province of B.C.," said Ktunaxa Nation Chair Kathryn Teneese. "It is one step toward the resource revenue-sharing arrangements that must be reached with all B.C. First Nations. This agreement will further our goal of achieving the Ktunaxa Nation's vision statement, and provide current and future generations a benefit from the resources extracted within our territory. Through the provisions in the agreement, Ktunaxa will continue their stewardship obligations to manage the land within our territory, which includes consultation of future projects." Said Ida Chong, B.C.'s minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, "Under the BC Jobs Plan, we made a commitment to deliver 10 non-treaty agreements that bring benefits more quickly to First Nations communities. Not only does today's announcement fulfil that promise two years early, but we expect to see many more such agreements in the months and years ahead."

### A FIRST NATIONS GROUP

will sell carbon offsets from the Great Bear Rainforest to fuel local economic development. Under the plan, reports the Globe and Mail, revenue from the carbon offsets from trees that absorb carbon would be split between Coastal First Nations and the province, said coastal nations spokesperson Art Sterritt. "It is part of a plan that we have been putting together over the last dozen years." The rainforest comprises about six million hectares of land from Alaska to the tip of Vancouver Island. It's unknown how much the income from the offsets would be, but estimates put revenues at about \$1 million per year. Funds would go to forest management and investment in other ventures, such as ecotourism and aquaculture. BC Hydro has submitted its Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed Site C energy project to the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency and the British Columbia Environmental Assessment Office, an important milestone for the Site C project. The impact statement describes the project rationale, potential effects and proposed measures to avoid or mitigate these effects. It also includes the benefits Site C would provide to customers, Aboriginal and northern communities and the province as a whole, a press release says. The proposed Site C project requires environmental certification and other regulatory permits and approvals before construction begins. In addition to this, the Crown has a duty to consult and, where appropriate, accommodate First Nations. The proposed project is a third dam and hydroelectric generating station on the Peace River in northeast B.C. Site C would provide 1,100 megawatts (MW) of capacity, and produce about 5,100 gigawatt hours (GWh) of electricity each year, enough energy to power the equivalent of about 450,000 homes per year.



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# RAVEN'S EYE

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## Enbridge says new pipelines "national priority," as whistle-blowers arrested



PHOTOS DAVID P. BALL

Frank Brown of Heiltsuk First Nation at Bella Bella tells the Enbridge pipeline demonstrators that humans can't keep taking and taking from the land without regard for sustainability.

By David P. Ball  
Raven's Eye Writer

### Vancouver

More than 1,000 people protested against the controversial Enbridge Northern Gateway project as its public hearings moved to Vancouver on Jan. 14, the largest anti-pipeline demonstration since the 4,000-strong "Defend Our Coast" protests in Victoria last October.

The next day, five demonstrators were arrested inside the hearings, where they blew whistles and spread "Climate Crime Scene" tape in defiance of the National Energy Board's (NEB) decision to close proceedings to the public. NEB instead video-streamed the hearing in a separate chamber to avoid protests.

"After the huge demo... a few of us decided it was disappointing not to get in," said Kim Heartty, one of those arrested. She has since had her assault by trespass charges dropped.

"The reason we did it was to further expose the illegitimacy of the hearing process because, of course, when the public gets arrested for going to a public hearing, that really speaks to

how undemocratic it is... It signified an escalation and a continuation of the resistance to the hearings."

Later this year, the NEB's Joint Review Process will make recommendations about Enbridge's proposed \$5.5 billion, 1,172-kilometre Northern Gateway pipeline, a project which would transport diluted bitumen from the oil sands in Alberta to a tanker port in Kitimat, B.C.

With environmental organizations gearing up for civil disobedience to stop the project, which they say has too great a risk of oil spills, supertanker accidents, and climate change, the latest demonstration also rallied against last year's federal omnibus legislation, which stripped the NEB of its binding decision-making at the end of industrial reviews, allowing for a federal veto.

But with First Nations in the province vowing to put their bodies on the line to create an "unbreakable wall" against the proposal, Heartty said the joint review hearings are irrelevant, since Indigenous peoples have never given their consent any way. A spokesperson for the anti-pipeline Yinka Dene

Alliance agreed.

"This pipeline is not going to be built, regardless of what they say," said Chief Jackie Thomas of Saik'uz First Nation. "Our waters, our salmon, our animals and the plant base our people still depend on, as a normal practice and a preferred way of life, are at risk; that risk is too great from oil."

"The people in my community have decided no... If the proposed pipeline gets built, they're going to increase oil sands production by 30 per cent, so it affects the tar sands, it affects us right here on our land, and it will affect the coast. It's all connected."

Outside the hearings, Frank Brown of Heiltsuk First Nation told a crowd of Idle No More demonstrators that Enbridge is a major threat to the land.

"From the beginning of time, since the Creator put our ancestors down on the Earth, as a Heiltsuk, our continuous occupation of our lands goes back 10,000 years," he said. "We would like to continue to be here for another 10,000 years, not only for ourselves, but for the rest of Canada to do things in a more sustainable way. We can't just keep taking and taking and taking. We know

this isn't sustainable."

Nearby, earlier demonstrators had erected a large white plastic whale—which they named "Hope—visible to the hearings. Passersby paused to scribble messages about sustainability, respect and future generations on its sides.

Several floors above, the NEB's hearings continued their months-long tour of the province, where hundreds of residents have testified, the majority against the proposal. Some First Nations have not participated in a process they see as illegitimate, while others have used the opportunity to share histories, cultural knowledge, and way of life with the three joint review panelists.

Though Enbridge has been represented by observers at the hearings, the company has pumped millions of dollars into a large-scale advertising campaign to promote its project to the public.

"New pipeline capacity is critical for Canada's economic health and should be a 'national priority,'" wrote company spokesperson Janet Holder, Enbridge's executive vice president Western Access, in a December article. "Building the energy infrastructure necessary

to promote fair-market value for our most lucrative commodity is in everyone's best interests.

"It creates jobs, boosts economic development and government revenues which are essential to supporting the services we rely on such as education, health care and infrastructure."

As the NEB hearings moved into a new phase in late January, hearing testimony specifically on spill risks and tanker accidents—and with B.C. preparing for a May provincial election which has seen the pipeline bantered about as a campaign issue—the opposition grows as opinion polls show an increasingly skeptical public.

But with uncertainty over whether the board's recommendations will even be heeded by the federal government, many are vowing to stop the project with an increasingly unwavering resolve.

"If necessary, we will take both legal means and other means necessary to ensure we protect the traditional territories from which we come," Brown said. "Why should we let quarterly profit margins dictate the future of not only First Nations, but of humanity?"



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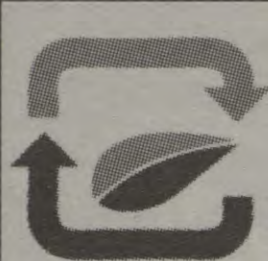
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## Only one way forward

(Continued from page 10.)

"What the issue is, is how do we behave on our side now? How do we continue to make sure that we're doing everything we can to advocate in the strongest possible way? To ensure that change happens? I think the pressure has to be kept high.... We have to be in the position to clearly and consistently go to the federal government and say, 'This is what is required by our people. These are the changes that are needed.' And to lay it out with clarity and specificity, to illuminate a new pathway for them to walk down."

That also means, says White, that failed candidates for the AFN leadership need to stop politicking.

Bellegarde agrees with White's assessment.

"There's also a degree of politics here. The July election has come and gone ... and ... there's always that political jockeying for positions," said Bellegarde.

White says that First Nations people are at a crucial point.

Leadership is important and anything less than working together will result in a "weakening of advocacy."

"What needs to be on the minds of chiefs across the country is the basic idea that rests at the heart of organizations like the Assembly of First Nations... which is the basic idea that myself as a chief in service to my own people here at Snuneymuxw, there is an understanding or realization I also have to be concerned about all of the Aboriginal peoples across the country because we matter to each other, we've got important shared history and working together we can achieve greater things," said White.

White's sentiments are echoed in a statement released by Atleo on Jan. 21. Atleo urged First Nations to "remain united behind these demands, the agenda adopted by our peoples in one Assembly after another.... we must ensure that dialogue does not prevent us from seizing this moment to achieve change."

## Métis group joins Save the Fraser

(Continued from page 8.)

"Being on the inside working with the company on all aspects of the project, including ensuring adequate safeguards are in place for the environment and generating economic opportunities for our people is much preferred over being simply another critic on the outside and gaining absolutely nothing for Métis citizens," he wrote. "This challenging decision represents a valuable step towards providing for the current and future needs to the MNBC and Métis citizens of British Columbia and continued strength of the Métis Nation."

But while Enbridge touts MNBC's participation as evidence of a majority of Aboriginal support for its proposal, Henry disputes the claim and questions how representative its decision was. He said that BCMF canvassed Métis communities through surveys and online forums and found opposition to the Northern Gateway.

"These companies have come in and completely divided our community with the promise of jobs and a few dollars along the way," he told Windspeaker. "It's unethical."

"Industry is not only pitting Métis against Métis; it's pitting Métis against First Nations and other groups. And until we decide there's a bigger picture going on, it's going to continue that way."

Enbridge has offered Aboriginals in the province incentives to support the project, touting jobs and economic benefits.

"I got a deal from Enbridge on paper, but I wouldn't even sign it," Letendre said. "I sent it back to them."

"There was money involved, and a percentage [of profits] as part of that. It's bribery. I sent it back to them, 'We'll not sign it!' Ninety-five per cent of our diet is from moose, deer and elk, and we still live the lifestyle we did 100 years ago ... You figure out what impact it's going to do to

me!"

Sundance Chief Rueben George, of Tsleil Waututh Nation, celebrated the addition of both BCMF and the Tahltan nation to the Save the Fraser Declaration.

"This is a very important moment of bringing solidarity between our nations and our people," George told the signing ceremony. "It's time, at this juncture, that we need to come together and send a message to the Canadian people who are numbed by some of the changes our government is making that continue to cause destruction to our lands and to our waters: It's too much to risk. We stand together."

## Wider perspective required before B.C. students graduate

By Cara McKenna  
Windspeaker Contributor

### VICTORIA

Education groups in B.C. are pushing the Ministry of Education for mandatory Aboriginal studies courses. This would require high school students to take B.C. First Nations Studies 12 or a First Peoples course outside of regular social studies.

A graduation requirements review sent to the Ministry of Education from the B.C. Teachers' Federation (BCTF) in January states that mandatory Aboriginal education classes "may begin to rectify the historic

failings of the public education system with Aboriginal students, and help further the goal of reconciliation in society as a whole."

The First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) also wrote a letter to Education Minister Dan McRae Jan. 7 asking for mandatory Aboriginal studies classes in B.C. schools.

"A curriculum offered in a sustained way, a respectful way, will go far in the long term in respectful relation building in Canada," wrote Deborah Jefferey, executive director of FNESC.

The Education ministry is currently reviewing the B.C. graduation program.

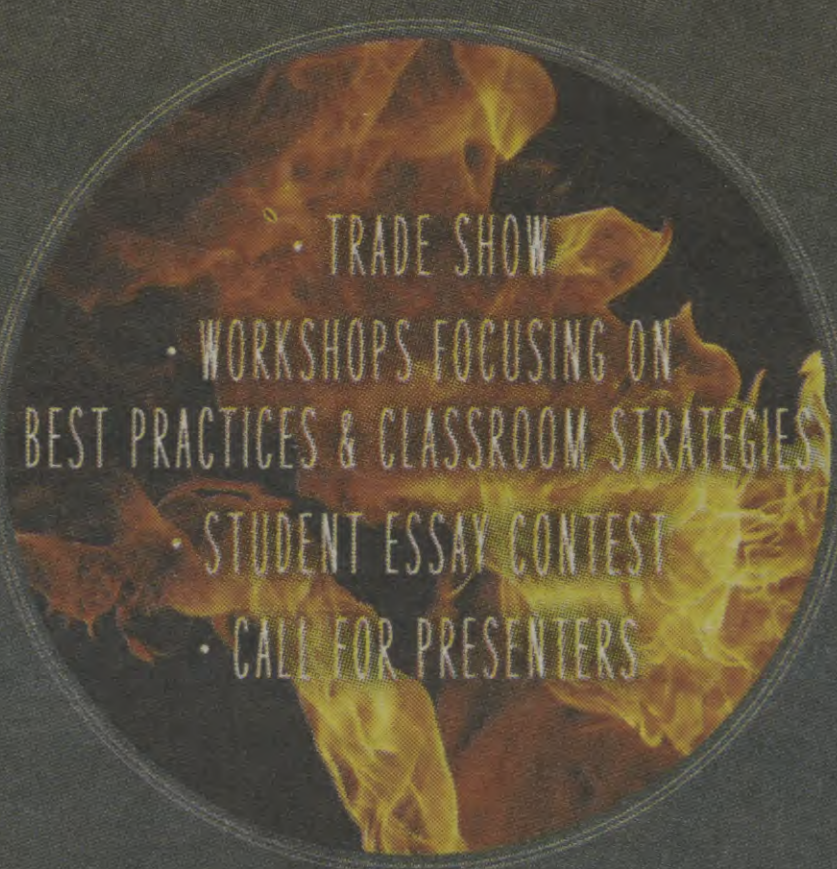
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Ontario Birchbark: Special Section providing news from Ontario

# Club promotes good food, good friends and partnerships

By Shari Narine  
Birchbark Writer

**Windsor**

The Turtle Island Garden Club, started in spring 2012, is about more than growing vegetables.

Joanne Mitchell began her own garden work a number of years ago when personal problems became too much. After realizing the "healing experience" of working with her hands and growing things, she pitched the idea of a garden club to the Can Am Urban Native Homes.

"There were so many dynamics to the project," said Elayne Isaacs, liaison for Can Am. "It was very, very social and interactive."

Can Am applied to the City of Windsor for grant dollars. After successfully acquiring funding, as well as forming partnerships for seeds and gardening tools, Can Am supplied space on the grounds of one of its housing units creating five raised beds, each three feet by eight feet and the Can Am Indian Friendship Centre donated space for two plots. The boxes were planted with squash, corn, beans, peas, tomatoes and a variety of other vegetables. Even wild edibles were grown.

"One lady with a lot of knowledge of Indigenous plants, she took one garden bed," said Mitchell. "She had invaluable knowledge. She taught us that these kinds of plants were actually what Indigenous people would have eaten prior to colonization."

Elders were among the participants, as were children and young families. Participation totalled about 30.

"We came together as a community," said Mitchell. "Friendships were formed and it was really nice."

Elderly people used the group to socialize; others with health issues learned about healthy habits and how to grow their own food; and young families learned about healthy eating.

"It was very multi-faceted and a lot of different partnerships developed through that," said Isaacs.

Can Am partnered with the Southern Ontario Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative, training front-line community workers in southwestern Ontario about the benefits of gardening and incorporating healthy lifestyle living and eating choices.

Information about the garden club was included on the friendship centre's Facebook page, and through the electronic word more relationships were formed. Garden tips and health information were shared, new members were recruited, traditional gardening promoted and the progress of the project was tracked.

The on-line group has over 180 members from a variety of communities.

Throughout the season, potlucks were held as another way for healthy ideas to be shared and friendships formed. A fall harvest potluck was held in October that ended the growing season.

The project was "manageable" this year, said Mitchell, who would like to see it expanded next year. She would also like to see people who have backyards or even smaller spaces available plant their own vegetable gardens.

"A lot of times, people who are on low-income and even getting out (to a community garden) can

be a hardship for them," said Mitchell.

She adds that homegrown usually leads to healthier eating and saving on food bills.

"I would like to see it expand. Talking to more community members, more people are learning about it and I see that people are getting excited about it. So I'm hoping more people will get involved next year," said Mitchell.

Isaacs said the raised boxes are all ready for another round of planting, with some of the seeds used coming from seeds harvested from this season's gardens.

Wendy Sickles does some weeding with the Turtle Island Garden Club.



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# TRC, feds in court over millions of residential school docs

By Shari Narine  
Windspeaker Contributor

## TORONTO

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission is waiting on a decision from the Ontario Superior Court that could compel the federal government to provide documents as outlined by the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement (IRSSA).

Kimberly Murray, executive director with the TRC, said she is hoping for a timely decision from Justice Stephen Goudge.

"Just knowing the way he works, he likes to get his decisions out quickly, but I'm also wondering about the climate right now," she said. "If it's not going to be a decision supportive of the TRC, maybe he's not going to release it at a time like this. (Judges are) aware of a climate and what their ruling might do if it gets released at the wrong time."

Murray was alluding to the fall out that could occur to add fuel to the Idle No More movement, blockades and demonstrations that are sweeping the country.

On Dec. 20 and Dec. 21, counsel for the TRC, supported by the Assembly of First Nations, Inuit representatives, counsel for the plaintiffs and independent counsel, argued that the federal government needed to provide documentation from the national Library and Archives as well as documentation that referred to the "legacy" of residential schools.

Murray noted that while church representatives were present in court, the churches were silent, not filing papers in support of the federal government. She also said some people wore shirts declaring, "I'm with the United Church. Give the records to the TRC."

Taking legal action against the federal government is the latest step in what TRC Chair Murray Sinclair characterizes as a "difficult relationship that is evolving with the federal government."

Limited results from ongoing dialogue with the federal government to produce documentation beyond the one million pieces compiled for the class action law suit which led to the settlement agreement, repeatedly missed deadlines for the handing over of documents from the archives, and continuously cancelled meetings with Library and Archives Canada prompted the court action.

"Then it crystallized to us where they came out and told us, 'We don't think it's our responsibility to give you Library and Archives Canada records,'" said Murray. "That was like a shocker to us."

Not only have the records not been retrieved from the archives, they have not even been organized, she said.

At the heart of the matter is Schedule N of the IRSSA, which states, in part, "In order to ensure the efficacy of the truth and reconciliation process, Canada and the churches will provide all relevant documents in their possession or control to and for the use of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission."

Canada is claiming that the term "relevant" is being used too broadly by the TRC and that the TRC needs to undertake the work itself.

It would be impossible for the TRC to hire staff to collect those documents, given the commission's limited budget, said Murray, nor was that the intention of the agreement.

During the court process, Canada said it had close to another five million pieces of documentation that pertained to the Indian residential schools.

Presently, TRC has records that come mainly from Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada. However, the archives include documentation from at least 24 other departments that connect to the Indian residential schools, as well as RCMP records.

Murray said the government is also refusing to provide documentation on what is being referred to as the legacy of residential schools.

"Their position all of a sudden was when a school closed, you aren't entitled to any records after that," she said.

That means documentation such as cemetery exhumations or plough-overs, policy decisions around programming, is not being made available.

"This is pretty significant," said Murray. "(Canada) basically just wants the commission to write about, to just focus our research and final report on the day-to-day operation of the school."

If the TRC is successful in getting the government records, Murray said there will not be enough time to sufficiently analyze the information for it to be included in the TRC's final report. The TRC's mandate expires in 2014.

"But more important to us is the records getting out of the

hands of the defendant and being put into the National Research Centre," said Murray.

The TRC is in the process of negotiating with a successful bidder, an existing institution which has formed a consortium with other institutions, to establish the centre.

"If we still don't have all the records by the time we close our doors, well, you won't be surprised if we are in front of another judge saying that we want an order that those records continue to be produced for the National Research Centre," said Murray. "At the end of the day the idea behind the National Research Centre was that these records, the history of Indian residential schools, needs to be taken out of the hands of Canada and the churches so that it's accessible."

Ry Moran, director of statement gathering and the National Research Centre, said his best estimate has the TRC in receipt of about one-third of the documents in the churches' archives.

"One thing that is relatively consistent across the country is that there are still not firm estimates of the number of documents out there," he said.

The TRC has all the documents from the Presbyterian Church, which had records for one residential school, and the United Church is well on its way to providing all its documentation by next year's deadline.

However, Moran is not as confident when it comes to collecting on time from the Anglican Church or the Catholic Entities. He adds that if the two bodies had begun to organize and compile the documentation when the IRSSA first came into place, they would not be in the situation they are in now. His concerns have been taken to the all-parties group "at the most senior level."

Moran would not go as far as to say the TRC would engage in similar court action against the churches as is now being undertaken against the federal government.

"We are conveying the seriousness of the situation we're in to the churches right now," he said, "and they are aware we are in court."

**Editor's Note:** We received this just before we went to press: The Ontario Superior Court of Ontario has ruled that the federal government must disclose all documents to the TRC regarding Indian Residential School.

## Health Briefs

By Shari Narine

### Racism, mistrust keep Aboriginal people from health care

*Empathy, dignity, and respect: Creating cultural safety for Aboriginal people in urban health care*, a report recently released by the Health Council of Canada, highlights some of the reasons many Aboriginal people do not seek care in mainstream health care settings and describes key practices that are working towards positive change. The report is based on a series of meetings held across Canada with health care providers, many of whom were First Nations, Inuit, or Métis. Many Aboriginal people do not trust and therefore do not use mainstream health care services because they experience stereotyping and racism. "Aboriginal people often feel uncomfortable, fearful, or powerless when they try to use the health care system, and some avoid going for care even when they are sick," said Dr. Catherine Cook, who is Métis and a councillor with the Health Council of Canada. "While these issues would be a concern for any population, it is a particular concern for Aboriginal people, who have the poorest health and shortest life expectancies of all Canadians." Across Canada, provinces and territories are at different stages of development in cultural competency efforts, which include changes to policies, governance, education and training. The report calls for a major shift in the way health care is provided to Aboriginal people, calling for policy changes and structures and processes to be put in place to support and formalize culturally safe health care environments.

### Dene health survey conducted in own language

A survey conducted of the Dene Nation in the Northwest Territories reveals that 90 per cent of respondents indicated that at some point they or their family have gone hungry. The survey was conducted from 2008 to 2010 and involved Aboriginal workers in 17 communities going door-to-door and speaking with people of all ages in their language. Other highlights of the survey indicate that 60 per cent of Dene smoke; three quarters of the homes are smoke-free; alcohol and drug abuse top the list of concerns; and family values rate high.

### New measures put in place to make access to cancer care easier

An Aboriginal Patient Navigator and a Regional Aboriginal Cancer Lead offered by the Regional Cancer Care Northwest and Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre will help improve cancer care among First Nation, Inuit and Métis communities in Northwestern Ontario. The two services are identified in Cancer Care Ontario's three-year Aboriginal Cancer Strategy II as vital components for helping Indigenous people access and make their way through the cancer system and to enhance their knowledge, awareness, and experience throughout their cancer journey. "The health outcomes of Aboriginal people are disproportionately lower than those of non-Aboriginal Ontarians," said Alethea Kewayosh, director, Aboriginal Cancer Control Unit, Cancer Care Ontario. It is believed that these new resources will work together to change that. The Aboriginal Patient Navigator will facilitate and coordinate access to culturally appropriate cancer services, work to address the cultural and spiritual needs of patients and their families, and network with FNIM and non-Aboriginal partners, while the Regional Aboriginal Cancer Lead will focus on successful engagement and collaboration across varying primary care settings and advocate for and address the primary care needs of people in their regions.

### Needs assessment to move on to implementation stage

The NunatuKavut Community Health Needs Assessment was recently unveiled by the NunatuKavut Community Council. The assessment provides a comprehensive and thorough review of the health of NunatuKavut residents on the south coast of Labrador. It identifies factors that influence health, determines gaps in health-related services and the appropriate ways to address them. The assessment began in 2009 and is the result of collaboration involving the NCC, the Labrador-Grenfell Health Authority, government, community members, non-profit organizations, Dalhousie University and Memorial University of Newfoundland. "Our hope from the outset of this project was to help inform Labrador-Grenfell Regional Health Authority how it can adapt its services to better meet the needs of our people. In order to start this process we needed to identify what some of our health needs included," said NCC Health and Social Sector Manager Darlene Wall. The assessment found that Inuit knowledge about health was dismissed in favour of non-Indigenous approaches and didn't take into consideration the Inuit belief of interconnectedness. The next phase of the project will be to strike a steering committee to implement recommendations. Some of the recommendations require significant financial, social, human, and time resources to implement, while others require significantly fewer resources.

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## Sports Briefs

By Sam Laskaris

### Boxer makes list

Ojibwe boxer Mary Spencer, who represented Canada at the 2012 London Olympics, has once again made a prestigious list. Spencer was one of the 20 individuals or teams named to the Most Influential Women in Sport and Physical Activity List for 2012.

The list, which has been announced for the past 11 years, is annually published by the Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity (CAAWS).

There is no limit to the number of times one can be named to the list. Spencer was also on the 2011 list. And prior to that she had been on CAAWS's Ones To Watch list in 2010.

Those on the most influential list, which includes athletes, coaches, officials, professors, administrators and volunteers, are recognized for being women who have influenced others towards sports and physical activity through their efforts not only in Canada but on the international stage as well.

Spencer, a 28-year-old who lives in Windsor, Ont., competed in London last summer, where women's boxing made its Olympic debut. She was one of 12 entrants in the women's middleweight category.

Spencer had been considered a medal contender heading into the Olympics. But after receiving an opening-round bye, she was eliminated after losing her quarter-final bout against Li Jinzi of China.

Though her plan had been to retire following last year's Olympics, Spencer had a change of heart because of her performance in London. Her goal now is to continue boxing for a few more years and hopefully represent the country at the 2016 Summer Olympics, which will be staged in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

### Minor pro stars

Three Aboriginal hockey players that were Canadian junior stars are making a name for themselves in the East Coast Hockey League this season. Colton Yellow Horn, a 25-year-old Blackfoot from Brouck, Alta., was leading the minor pro league in scoring in late January.

Yellow Horn, a member of the California-based Ontario Reign, had a league-high 51 points (32 goals, 19 assists) in his first 42 games this season.

Despite leading the ECHL in scoring, Yellow Horn did not participate in the league's all-star game, which was held Jan. 23 in Loveland, Colorado. That match featured the ECHL all-stars against the host Colorado Eagles.

The all-star squad included Casey Pierro-Zabotel, who has Bonaparte ancestry, as well as Francis Verreault-Paul, who is Montagnais. Pierro-Zabotel is a member of the Georgia-based Gwinnett Gladiators while Verreault-Paul is toiling for the Bakersfield Condors in California.

In the ECHL all-star contest, Pierro-Zabotel, 24, and Verreault-Paul were members of the winning squad. The league all-stars defeated the Eagles 7-4.

Pierro-Zabotel had a pair of assists that night while Verreault-Paul was held pointless.

Yellow Horn had started off his junior career in his home province, with the Lethbridge Hurricanes of the Western Hockey League (WHL). He played three years with the Hurricanes and then concluded his junior days by playing two more seasons with the WHL's Tri-City Americans, a squad based in the state of Washington.

Yellow Horn had started his pro career by playing 11 games for a team in Austria. Since then he's also played for a pair of other ECHL squads, the Elmira Jackals and Stockton Thunder. And before joining the Reign this season he spent the previous three years toiling in the Central Hockey League with the Texas-based Allen Americans.

Pierro-Zabotel is in his fourth pro season. A graduate of the WHL's Vancouver Giants, he has spent the majority of his pro career in the ECHL. But this is his first season with the Gladiators, where he racked up 43 points in his first 44 matches.

Verreault-Paul, who is 25, is in his first pro season. He had played five years in the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League with the Chicoutimi Saguenéens. And he spent the past four seasons starring with the Montreal-based McGill University Redmen.

Verreault-Paul led the Redmen to the Canadian university championship this past March.

As for this season, he started the year in the ECHL with Greenville Road Warriors in South Carolina before being traded to Bakersfield in late December. Verreault-Paul had appeared in a total of 41 games for the two squads and had 32 points.

### New home for Cheechoo

The Cheechoo Train is now running out of Oklahoma. Jonathan Cheechoo, a former NHL star, signed a one-year deal with the American Hockey League's Oklahoma City Barons in mid-January. Cheechoo led the NHL in goal scoring with 56 goals during the 2005-06 season when he was a member of the San Jose Sharks. But Cheechoo, a 32-year-old Cree from Moose Factory, Ont., has struggled since then. This marks the fourth straight year he's playing in the AHL.

[ sports ]

# Howard on the fast-track to Olympic dreams



A grant from the Dreamcatcher Foundation helped Aliya Howard buy longtrack speed skates that were suited to her more advanced ability than the rental skates she had been using. The skates she is holding cost about \$1,200.

By Sam Laskaris  
Windspeaker Contributor

KINGSTON, Ont.

Aliya Howard was just six years old when she was first mesmerized by speed skating while watching the 2006 Winter Olympics on television.

At the time, her mother Melanie didn't think too much of her daughter's comments of how she'd like to take up the sport.

"Then, in the fall of that year when September came, we started looking for activities for her to do," the elder Howard said of her daughter.

An advertisement in a Quebec-based newspaper that a speed skating club in Laval was seeking new participants caught her attention so she signed her daughter up.

And now Aliya, a 13-year-old Mohawk who was born in Kanehsatake, Que. but who now lives in Kingston, Ont., has her own Olympic dreams.

"I hope to make it to the 2022 Olympics," said Aliya, a Grade 7 student at Calvin Park Public School.

Despite her young age, Aliya, is already making a name for herself in the sport. She was recently named to the Ontario speed skating long track development team.

Those on this squad—four females and four males—are chosen for their perceived future greatness in the sport.

Aliya is three years younger than the second youngest member on this year's team. And her mother, the president of the Kingston Striders Speed Skating Club, believes her daughter might also be the

youngest ever named to the club.

Aliya was chosen for the Ontario development squad primarily for her efforts this past season. This past February she captured four medals (one gold, two silver and a bronze) in her 11-year-old age group at the Canadian long track championships, which were staged in Fort St. John, B.C.

Though she's already turned 13, Aliya will compete in the girls' 12-year-old category at this year's nationals, set for Feb. 9 and 10 in Winnipeg. Competitors at the nationals enter the age grouping they were in as of July 1 the previous year.

Aliya will take part in four events at the national championships. She'll skate in the 100-metre and 500-metre Olympic-style events, in which two participants skate off at a time. And she's also entered in the 300-metre and 3,000-metre mass start races.

Aliya's favourite distance to race at is 500 metres. That's the event she won gold in at the 2012 Canadian age group championships.

"It's sort of like a middle distance," she said of the 500-metre race. "I don't like sprints when you don't have time to get into your technique. And I don't really like the long distances. You're dead tired by the end of it."

A year ago the nationals were indoors. But this time around they'll be outdoors—a fact Aliya is not that keen about.

"It's probably going to be freezing cold," she said. "When it's indoors you don't have to worry about the ice conditions and there is no wind."

Yet she still has some high expectation for the upcoming

national meet.

"I would like to maintain the title (in my 500-metre race)," she said. "And I want to get some good times."

Kelly Ball, Aliya's coach with the Kingston club, has been working with her young skater for three years now. And she believes Aliya has a bright future in the sport. But she can't be sure at this point whether Aliya will go on to become an Olympian.

"She has the potential and she has the skill," Ball said. "It's going to come down to what she has inside and if she wants it. It's a lot of work."

Melanie Howard said her daughter had struggled somewhat in the sport, up until this past season when she had a breakout campaign.

"Speed skating is probably 70 per cent technique," Melanie said. "Once you get a handle on that and your muscles can be used efficiently, things start to happen."

And though somewhat surprised with her recent results, Howard isn't shocked to see her daughter excelling in a sport.

"She has pretty good base athletic skills," she said. "She's always been a fast runner. And she's naturally very athletic. It all came together for her last season."

Besides speed skating, Aliya has also competed in track and field events for her school. And she's also dabbled in the sport of fencing.

But most of all she enjoys being out on the ice.

"I really like how we go really fast on the ice," she said. "I enjoy skating overall. And I also like it because it is different. I like to be different. Everybody else seems to like doing sports like hockey, basketball and soccer."



# Café Daughter reveals the secret and a dream

By Barb Nahwegahbow  
Windspeaker Contributor

TORONTO

Métis actor PJ Prudat delivers a brilliant performance in *Café Daughter*, a play by Cree playwright Kenneth T. Williams and directed by Yvette Nolan.

*Café Daughter* tells the story of Yvette Wong, a girl of mixed heritage growing up in Saskatchewan in the 1950s. Her father is Chinese and he runs a small town café. Her mother is Cree. When Yvette is 10, her mother extracts a promise from her. She must never tell anyone she is Cree. Yvette holds this secret close to her heart along with a dream. She wants to be a doctor.

*Café Daughter* is a one-woman show and Prudat inhabits no less than a dozen characters, some of them male, including Yvette's Chinese father, a bullying racist classmate, a supportive teacher who later turns on her, and her Cree grandfather.

There are no missteps as Prudat deftly weaves in and out of the characters. One minute she's wide-eyed 10-year-old Yvette dreaming about visiting the pyramids in Egypt and in the next she's a prim and prejudiced British schoolteacher teaching Yvette how to be a "proper Indian" for a school play.

Then she's Yvette's Chinese father, broken after his wife's death. Facial expressions, body language, a change of voice are the tools Prudat uses very convincingly. The story takes us through the trials, heartbreaks and triumphs of Yvette's young life as she encounters racism, confusion, death and drinking. The audience laughs and cries

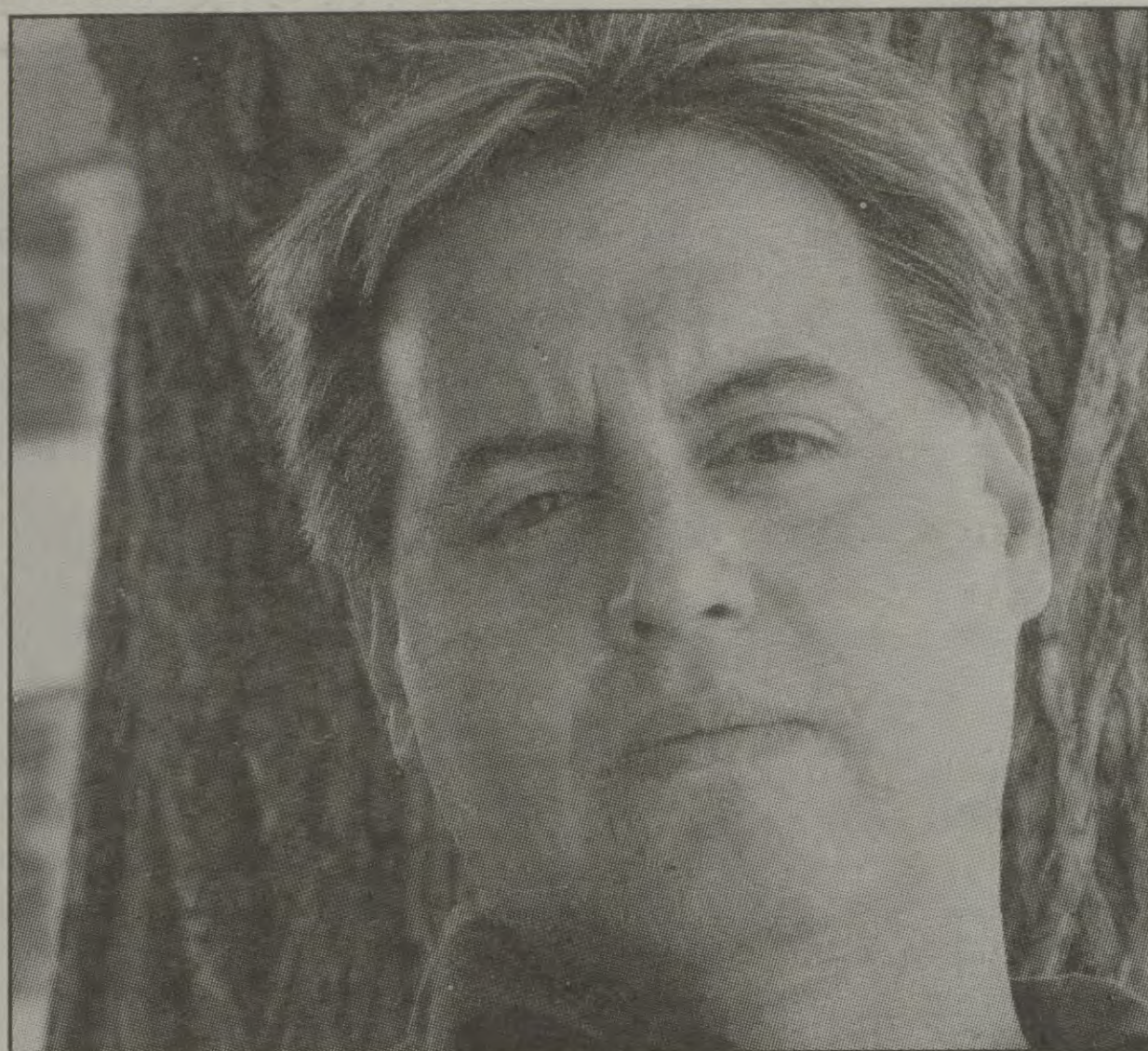


PHOTO: STEFEN WINCHESTER.

Kenneth T. Williams, Cree playwright who wrote *Café Daughter*.

with her and silently cheers her on.

"I had a bit of fear on the first day of rehearsal," said the talented actor who hails from Meadow Lake, Sask. and claims Cree, Saulteaux, French, Scandinavian and Metis roots.

"From there, it was getting into the heart and soul of each character to give them truth and depth. But Kenneth has written such an honest, beautiful work. He's made it easy for me," said Prudat.

She said she knew at the age of 12 that she wanted to be an actor. Her first semi-pro job was in the musical *West Side Story* when she was 16 and after that, there was no holding her back.

"This is the most challenging role I've ever had," she said of *Café Daughter*. An actor's job, she said, involves the constant exploration of the character you're playing.

"With 12 characters," she goes on, "it's an even greater challenge, but I do love it."

Playwright Williams based *Café Daughter* on the life of Dr. Lillian Eva Quan Dyck. In 1999, he became aware of her story when he was working for the Aboriginal Achievement Foundation, researching nominees. One of the nominees was Dyck, an internationally-renowned doctor of neuroscience who is of Chinese and Cree descent with roots at George Gordon First Nation in Saskatchewan, the same community as Williams.

He was fascinated by her story, particularly when she said that when she was growing up she told him it was against the law for Chinese men to employ white women. That's how First Nations women ended up working in Chinese-owned cafes, marrying their employers and losing their



PHOTO: PIERRE GAUTREAU

PJ Prudat, actor from Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan who plays Yvette Wong and other characters in the play *Café Daughter*.

Indian status under the Indian Act. This law, enacted in 1912 to protect the morality of white women, remained in the books until the 1960s.

"I felt compelled to tell the story," Williams said. "Lillian followed her mother's commandment not to reveal that she was Cree until she was 36, the same age her mother was when she died," he said. Dyck started to question what she was so afraid of and began exploring her Cree identity and getting to know her mother's family.

*Café Daughter* had its world premiere in 2011 at the Gwaandak Theatre in Whitehorse, Yukon. Williams has been pleased with the reaction to the play although he acknowledges, "Lillian's reaction was the most important. I was sitting next to her and she was very moved."

Dyck did achieve great success

academically. In 1981, she obtained a Ph.D. in Biological Psychiatry from the University of Saskatchewan. She was a full professor in the Neuropsychiatry Research Unit, Department of Psychiatry and Associate Dean, College of Graduate Studies & Research at the University of Saskatchewan.

In 2005, she became the first female First Nation Senator when she was appointed by Prime Minister Paul Martin. That same year she was honoured with two eagle feathers.

*Café Daughter* was presented by Native Earth Performing Arts at their Aki Studio Theatre in Toronto from Jan. 15 to 20. It's currently on national tour and will be in Thunder Bay at the Magnus Theatre until Feb. 9, and then at the Courtyard Theatre in Kitchener from Feb. 14 to 16.

## Artist gets the experience of a lifetime in Kandahar

By Cara McKenna  
Windspeaker Contributor

Vancouver

Blackfoot artist Adrian Stimson premiered *Holding Our Breath*, an exhibition based on his first-hand experiences and observations at a military base in Afghanistan, at the Grunt Gallery in Vancouver Jan. 4.

Stimson received a grant through the Canadian Forces Artist Program that allowed him to spend three weeks on a military base in Kandahar.

"For me it was an opportunity as an experiential learner and an artist to really get in there and sort of get a view of what that conflict really is about," said Stimson.

"Basically [the Canadian Armed Forces Artist Program] gives you an opportunity to go wherever the forces are stationed, and in my case it was near the end of the Afghanistan crisis."

Stimson's exhibition focuses on Aboriginal soldiers. He comes from the Siksika Nation in southern Alberta and his family

has a long history of involvement in the military.

His multi-media exhibition includes video, photography, paintings and large-scale installations.

"The soldiers I met by coincidence were two First Nations soldiers, so I was able to spend time with them and have discussions around them," he said.

"When I arrived at the forward operating base I met Master Corporal Jamie Gillman, who is the First Nations soldier from Saskatchewan. Incidentally, I'm currently living in Saskatchewan, and the exact same time I arrived he received a package from an Elder in Canada that had those four elements. So for me it was this really interesting sort of coincidence because none of that was set up."

Stimson said this coincidence sparked his inspiration when creating art for *Holding Our Breath*.

"It was coincidental but also very beautiful, so I wanted to honor that history of Indigenous service in the military and what

that means. And I think the four directions, the medicines and stuff like that are a part of that history."

One piece called *10,000 Plus* shows the four colors of the Medicine Wheel painted on four large boards, which are adorned with sage, sweetgrass, tobacco and cedar.

The piece "indicates that there are 10,000 recorded First Nations, Metis and Inuit soldiers that have taken part since the beginning of the forces, but then the 'plus' is that there are a lot who are never identified. So there's probably a lot more. So it's interesting because you take a look at that history and it's a tenuous one. It becomes a very touchy and a very complex subject."

Kalvin Smith, a window cleaner who got a peek of the exhibition while cleaning the windows of Grunt Gallery, came to the Jan. 4 opening to get a better look at Stimson's art.

"I like the four colors that represent the First Nations people all across Canada," said Smith.

"I really like the fact that the soldiers haven't been forgotten by



Blackfoot artist photographed life on a military base in Afghanistan. His multi-media exhibition runs at the Grunt Gallery in Vancouver until Feb. 18.

the artist community. It's a different kind of take on everything over [in Afghanistan]."

*Holding Our Breath* is being shown at Grunt Gallery until Feb. 18.



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**Employment Opportunity**

**Mamowe Opikihawasowin  
Tribal Chief Child and Family Services West Society**

Competition Number: 18012013 – MOTCCFS  
Position: Child, Youth and Family Assessor  
Department: Mamowe Opikihawasowin Tribal Chief  
Child and Family Services West Society  
Deadline: March 1, 2013

*Mamowe Opikihawasowin Tribal Chief Child and Family Services Society, a dynamic, growing Cree and First Nation organization, has provided services over the past decade to children and families in need of support and protection so that they can become positive healthy contributing members in their perspective communities.*

**POSITION SUMMARY:**  
Reporting to the Senior Supervisor, the Assessor is responsible for determining whether a child requires intervention services as defined by the Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act and shall be responsible for the following duties:

- Gathering information through personal interviews & collateral contacts to determine the need and degree of risk to the child;
- Negotiate goals and determine appropriate programs and services to meet the child and family needs;
- Make referrals to support services and community resources;
- Attend Court, preparing and presenting evidence;
- Provide smooth transition for the child and family from investigation to family enhancement services or protection services.

This challenging opportunity requires an individual with well-developed interpersonal skills, investigative skills, excellent organizational skills and the ability to work with children, youth and families.

**QUALIFICATIONS**  
The successful candidate must have all of the following:

- Bachelor of Social Work Degree, or a Social Work Diploma and/or a minimum of 2-years experience in Child & Youth Services Equivalencies maybe considered.
- Excellent interviewing, assessment and analytical skills.
- Excellent written and verbal skills as well as computer knowledge (a must).
- Own transportation, as travel is required, and a valid driver's license.
- Undergo the following mandatory requirements: a recent Criminal Record Check, and an Intervention Record Check.
- Knowledge of the Cree Culture and the ability to speak Cree an asset.

**Please forward résumé and reference to:**  
**Mamowe Opikihawasowin Tribal Chief Child and Family Services West Society**  
Box 196, Goodfish Lake, Alberta T0A 1R0  
Phone: (780) 645-6634 • Fax: (780) 645-6647  
Attention: Teresa Steinhauer

We thank all applicants for their interest; however, only those selected for interviews will be contacted.

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# [ footprints ] Kenojuak Ashevak

## Draw, draw, draw and keep on drawing

By Dianne Meili

As lung cancer sapped the strength of Inuit artist Kenojuak Ashevak, best known for her colorful image of *The Enchanted Owl* first produced on Canada's 1970 six cent stamp, she unfalteringly created art.

"There she would be on her mattress, lying on her stomach, drawing, drawing, drawing," said nephew Tim Pitsiulak. "Northern houses become cold quickly and the heat is not always there" so bed was the best place for the frail Ashevak, who passed away Jan. 7 at 85.

"Few people have witnessed her process as I have, and for that I'm eternally on cloud nine," said the 45-year-old Pitsiulak, whose artwork is sought after and who artistically leads his generation, though his work differs greatly from his aunt's. Where Ashevak captured the enigmatic spirit of the natural world, Pitsiulak documents modern Inuit life, as in his drawing of a family of eight flying down the road on an all-terrain vehicle.

"My aunt definitely had the gift. She had such a special way of seeing the people and animals she liked to draw. She would sit and look at the blank paper, and then whatever was in her head came out."

Observers say Ashevak's hand was impeccably sure, and she never used an eraser.

"She encouraged me to sit before that blank paper, no matter how hard it was, and let something come. Maybe we didn't talk so much, but her message was to continue drawing. From her I learned good work ethic. Even if life is hard, keep drawing."

Life wasn't always easy for Ashevak. Born in an igloo in Ikerrasak in 1927, a campsite on south Baffin Island, she endured rapid change in her community's nomadic lifestyle when the federal government forced relocation to Cape Dorset.

She gave birth to seven children, adopted seven more, and was taken as a young mother against her will to a Quebec hospital to be treated for tuberculosis for several years, leaving her family behind. Some of her children died while she was

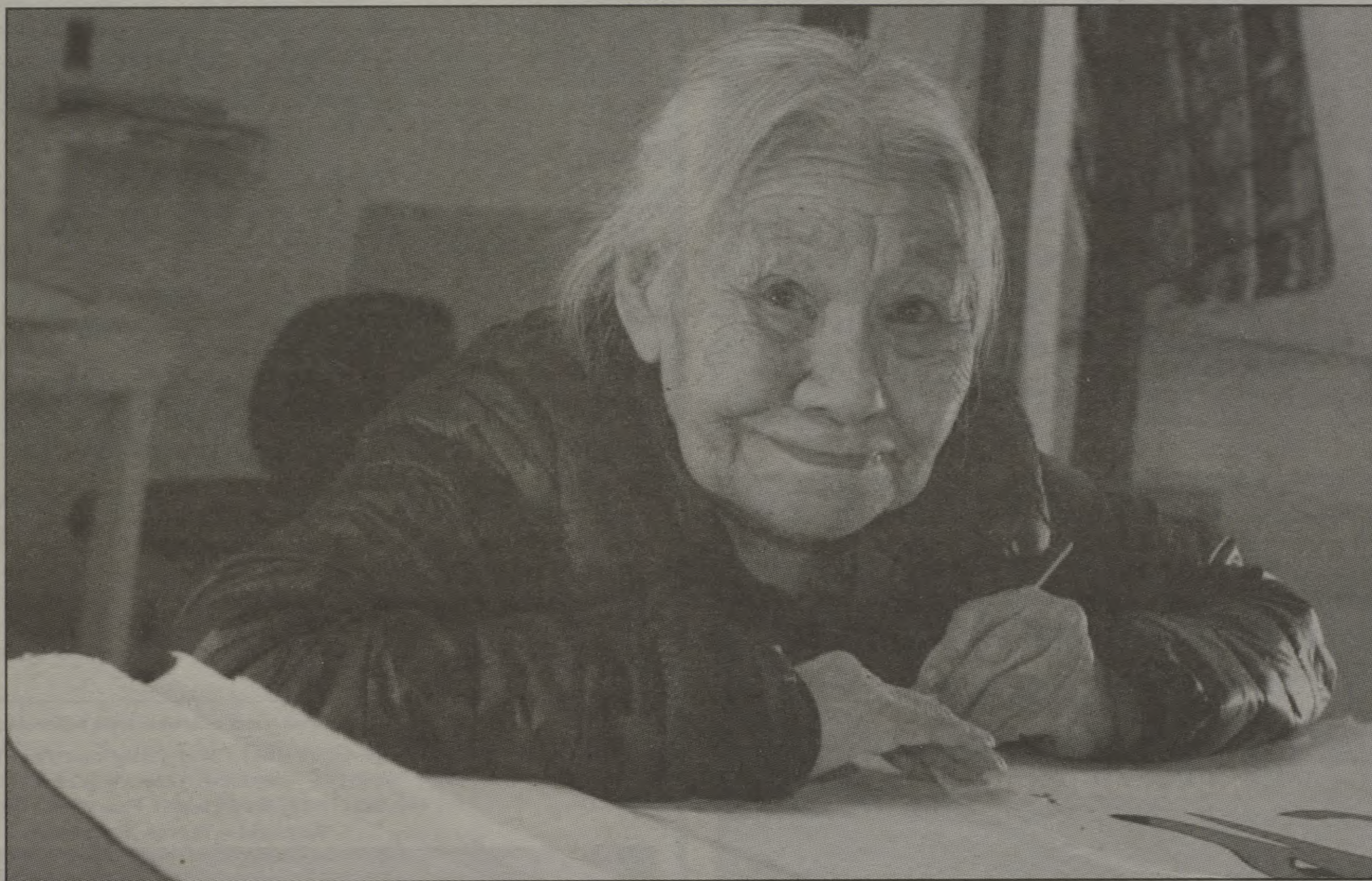


PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Kenojuak Ashevak

away yet her spirit remained resilient.

One of the outsiders helping her people to adjust to a more sedentary existence was government administrator James Houston, who saw a way for Inuit to make money from their art. When he first met Ashevak in 1958, he enquired about an appliqué design on her sealskin bag. She explained it was of a rabbit thinking about eating seaweed.

He asked her to draw it on paper with a pencil, and then he traced it onto a stencil. Rabbit Eating Seaweed became her first print.

After that, she regularly brought drawings into the locally-owned West Baffin Eskimo Co-operative to be made into prints. She outlined her subjects in pencil and ink, and tinted them with coloured pencil. In her early work she liked to feature women in traditional parkas and leggings interacting with birds and foxes as they moved across the land.

Toronto art dealer Pat Feheley,

of Feheley Fine Arts, has known Ashevak since 1968. She flew to Cape Dorset for the funeral and said about 500 people attended. "It was a beautiful ceremony. She was such an inspiration for generations of artists. She was buried beside her first husband Johnniebo."

It was with him that Ashevak travelled to Japan when the two of them were asked to paint a mural for the Canadian Pavilion at the 1970 World's Fair in Osaka. She showed works in Europe and the United States; received honorary doctorates from Queen's University and the University of Toronto; and in 2008 received the Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts.

Daughter Silaqqi described the occasion of her mother's earning of a star on Canada's Walk of Fame in Toronto.

"There were so many people. Everyone was crowding around her. Back here in Cape Dorset, she's just my mom. She was a very small, happy woman. Even though she was small, she could

tackle anything."

Silaqqi noted her mother was a storyteller who often told of the days of living in snow houses. She encouraged her community, especially young people, to preserve Inuit values, traditions and the Inuktitut language, and to stay in school.

Approaching her late 70s, Ashevak branched out from creating prints and designed a stained-glass work for the Appleby College chapel in Oakville, Ont. in the mid-2000s. Two years ago, she began making large scale drawings in her tiny home, literally filling it with six foot by eight foot drawings.

In her bio on the Feheley Fine Arts Web site, Ashevak is quoted as saying: "My work has changed quite a bit since I started. At first, it was just in pencil; there was no colour. When I'm doing graphic work, sometimes I have to hold the paper and look at it and feel it, and then the work starts to come out," she explained. Of the carvings she once made she said: "It's easier to do the carvings because you

can see the shape three dimensionally before it's formed. ... but I prefer to work on drawings; the stone can be hard, and you have to be outside carving."

Her art is described on the Web site as imagery which "emphasizes motifs of nature and places design above strict concerns for realism. Her steady hand traces a fluid line where positive and negative space interact."

Of all the remarkable Inuit artists who helped Canada gain its identity in the 60s when Inuit art and artists became globally appreciated, Ashevak is probably the best known and most acclaimed, according to a story on Canadian Art's Web page. Her drawings anchored the famed annual collection of prints from Cape Dorset between 1959 and 2012 and are now valued as high as \$25,000. She survived all of her 1959 exhibition cohorts, and may be the last renowned Inuit artist born and raised on the land.

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## 'Colossal failure' by police

(Continued from page 8.)

Oppal's report also concluded that police could have caught serial killer Robert "Willy" Pickton five years before his arrest, if charges had not been mysteriously dropped in the pig farmer's attempted murder of a sex trade worker known as "Ms. Anderson" in 1997. He later confessed to killing 49 women, at least 19 of whom disappeared after 1997.

That was also the year that Stephanie Lane, a 20-year-old Métis woman, disappeared, only to have her DNA discovered on Pickton's farm after his arrest. Lane's mother, Michele Pineault, was 38 at the time, just a year older than her daughter would have been if she were alive today.

"There is no healing," Pineault told Windspeaker. "We're broken families."

"I've lived through a huge portion of my life without my daughter. It seems like sometimes I never even had a daughter, because it's been so long."

For Pineault, Oppal's refusal to hear from a number of key police and Pickton farm witnesses, requested by Cameron Ward, lawyer for her and other families, or allow any discussion of widespread cover-up allegations against the police meant the final report's release brought no closure or healing.

"We went in hoping to find out a lot of things that we didn't find out, a lot to do with Oppal's [not] letting Cameron call in witnesses he needed to call in," she said. "There's a lot of unsatisfied question about the way the whole thing was run. It was a joke."

The report's release came only days after another tearful press conference on Musqueam First Nation, in which Aboriginal leadership mourned the death of 16-year-old CJ Morningstar Fowler of Gitanmaax band, found murdered in Kelowna.

"As a society, we can and must do better to protect the vulnerable among us, to protect all our citizens against violence," said Jody Wilson-Raybould, newly re-elected BC regional chief of the Assembly of First Nations. "We must seek justice for our murdered

and missing women, girls, and men. We look to the public to assist us, and pledge with us to end violence... and to stand with the families of all the murdered and missing women and girls across this country.

"I look to you, Mr. Prime Minister, to assist us, and we call for a national inquiry into the murdered and missing women."

Ernie Crey, a frequent spokesperson on Aboriginal fisheries and Senior Policy Advisor at Stó:lō Tribal Council, lost his sister Dawn to Pickton. For years he was among many families arguing for a public inquiry. Crey applauded Oppal's report as "comprehensive" and a "left, right and upper-cut delivered to policing agencies for their terrible failures."

"It went well beyond what I thought he would offer," he told Windspeaker. "It went to great depths examining the issue of what became of the women, and where police fell well short of the mark."

"Even though he's submitted his report, to me, it doesn't end here. We're going to have to work with Steven Point... with the government itself, and with the police agencies, to give legs to some of the recommendations, to make sure they're implemented."

As each year passes, the pain of missing and murdered women continues to haunt many of the families. For Pineault, Christmas and Jan. 11, the day her daughter was last seen in 1997, hold tragic significance.

And while the inquiry brought her no solace, the Vancouver resident is discovering that projects like Butterflies in Spirit—a dance troupe of missing women's family members—and the installment of "memorial stones" around the city have been an important part of her healing journey.

Also important, she revealed, is her own re-discovery of her Indigenous roots and culture.

"I never would have said this two years ago," she told Windspeaker, pausing. "But for me, I want to start getting Aboriginal healing."

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