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Volume 26 No. 9 • December 2008

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Aboriginal Multi-Media Society (AMMSA)

Publications Mail Reg. No. 40063755

ISSN 0834-177X

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Wind speaker



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Celebrating her "coming of age", tiny Isabella Marjorie Georgia Shaughnessy was given her Kwakwaka'wakw name at an early November ceremony in Victoria, BC. Proud grandfather, Chief George Shaughnessy, Maxwxwidiy, of Wakeman Sound held her as she received her name.

See story and photos on page 19

Photo Credit: Bert Crowfoot

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Swirling Butterfly Photographed by:
Leah Lalonde Calgary, AB

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Windspeaker and Scotiabank would like to thank the hundreds of people who entered our Photo Contest for the 2009 edition of the Aboriginal History Calendar.

The decision is getting tougher each year, but one look at the two selected photos will convince you that our judges made excellent choices.



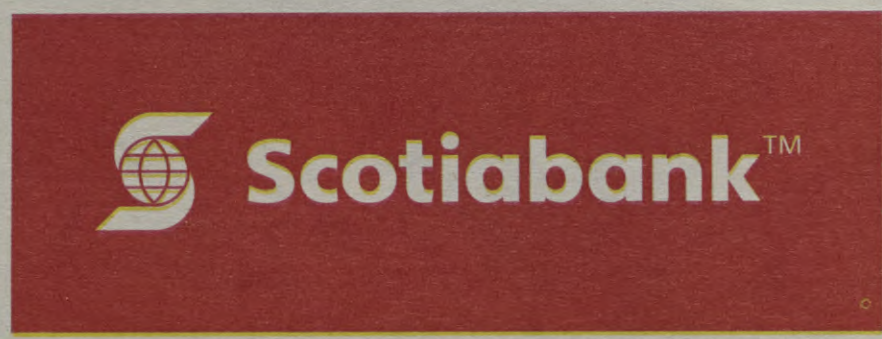
Ernie Philip Photographed by:
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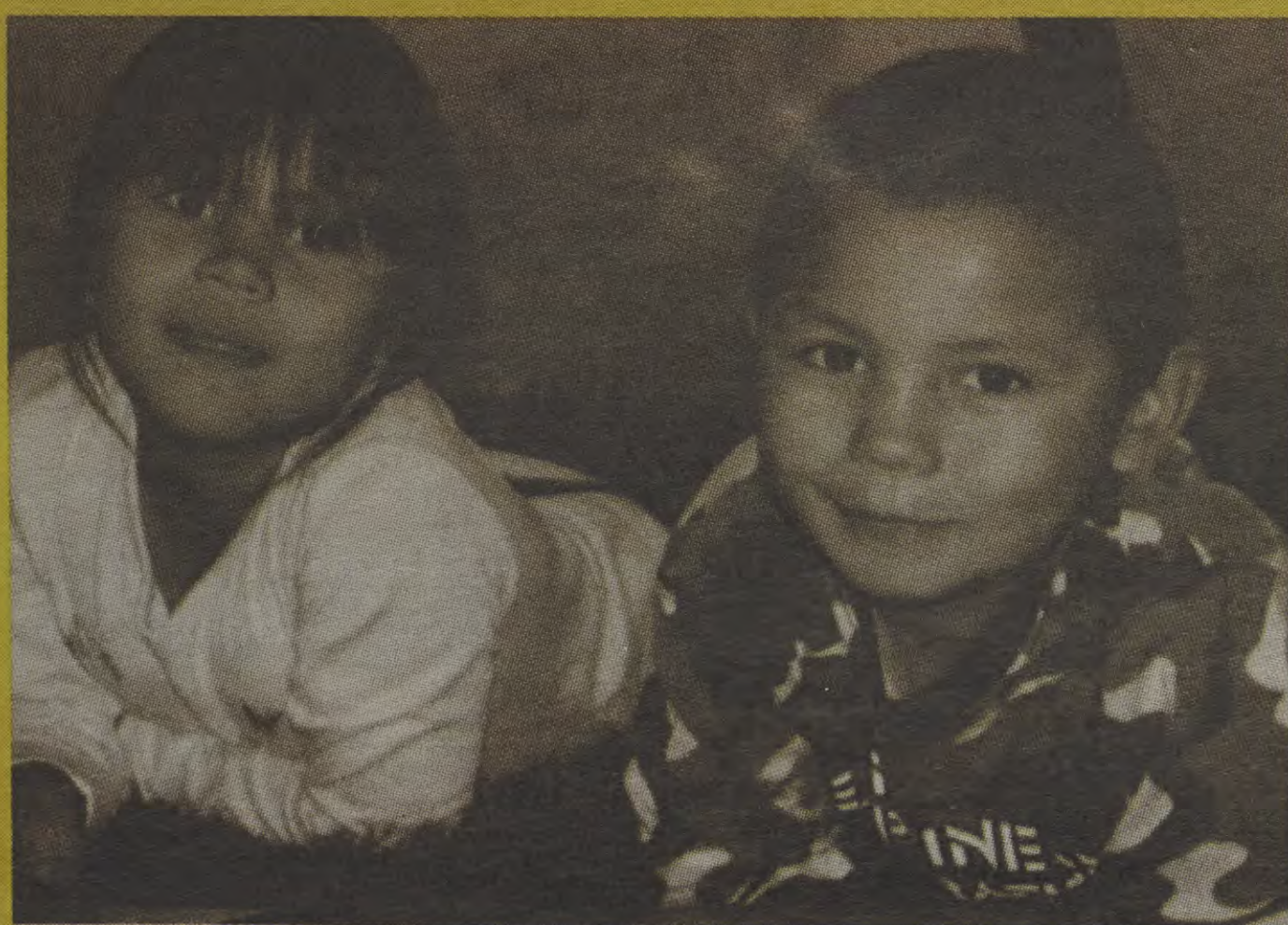
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Monthly Circulation: 24,000
Guide to Powwow Country (June): 25,000
Windspeaker 1-year subscription: \$50.00+GST
Published since 1983, *Windspeaker* is
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Letters to the editor and all undeliverable
Canadian addressed copies can be sent to:

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13245 - 146 Street NW,
Edmonton, Alberta T5L 4S8

Comments E-mail: letters@ammsa.com

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Canada

Features

Key to prosperity on reserve is self-government 8

A report released in November by the Canadian Taxpayers Federation is "probably extremely misleading to the uninformed," contends Westbank First Nation Chief Robert Louie.

Information flows, despite tight-lipped approach to Iacobucci meetings 9

After the October resignation of Justice Harry LaForme as chair of the Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), closed door meetings have been held to decide how the commission should proceed.

Struggle continues for Jacobs despite personal accomplishments 10

In 1929, with a decision in the landmark "Persons Case," women became legally recognized as "persons" under Canadian law. Nearly 80 years later, Beverley Jacobs is still fighting to ensure that Aboriginal women receive that same level of respect.

Pope provides the comfort survivors need to move forward 12

A wink and a wave from Pope Benedict XVI was all that members of Indian Brook First Nation (Nova Scotia) needed to make their trip to Rome in October worthwhile.

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- [footprints] **George Blondin 26**

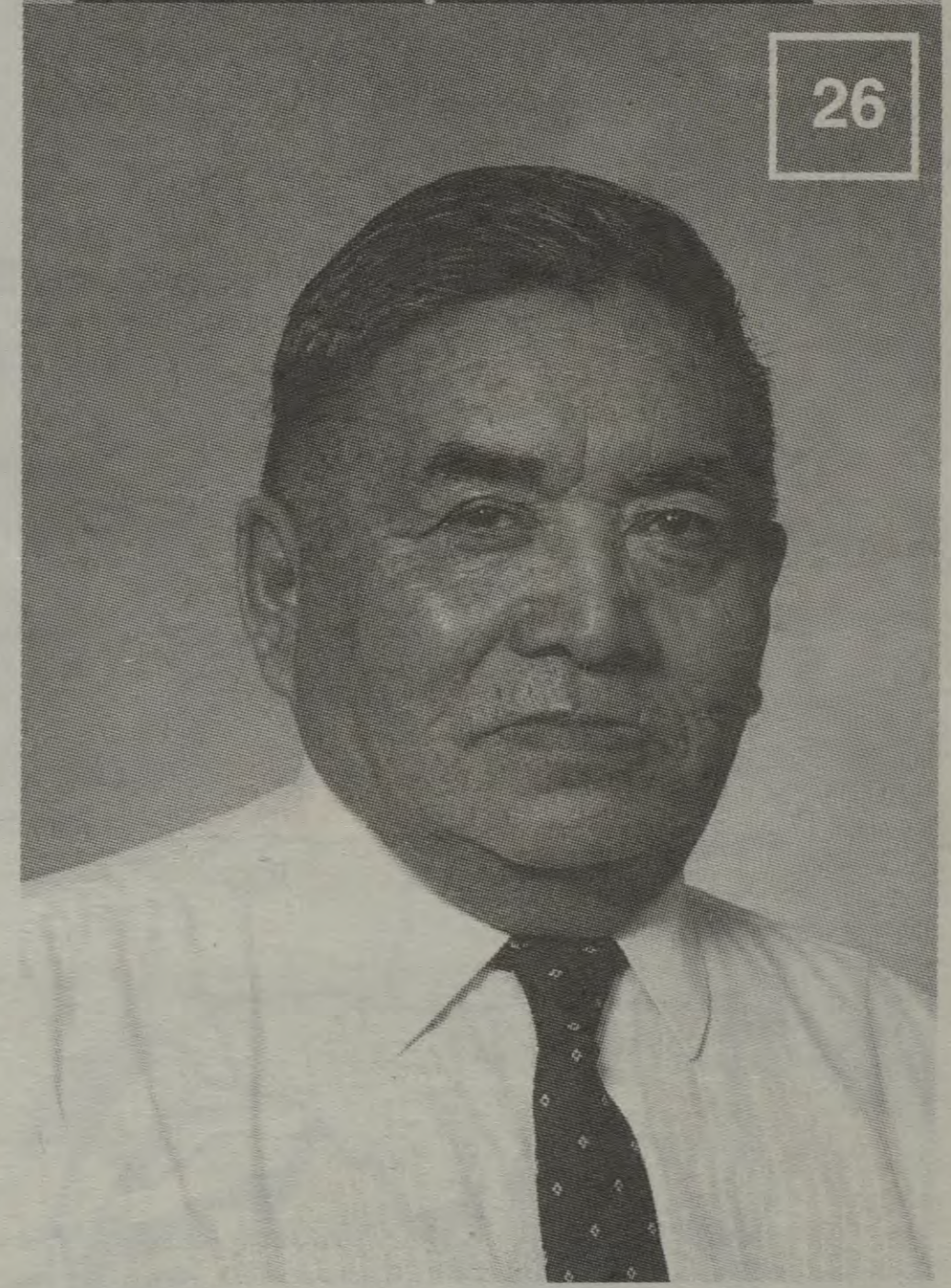
Dene author George Blondin was one of few Aboriginal people who spoke openly about medicine power because he felt young people should know where they came from. The prolific writer passed away at the advanced age of 87 on Oct. 12 after suffering a stroke this year in his Northwest Territories home.



10



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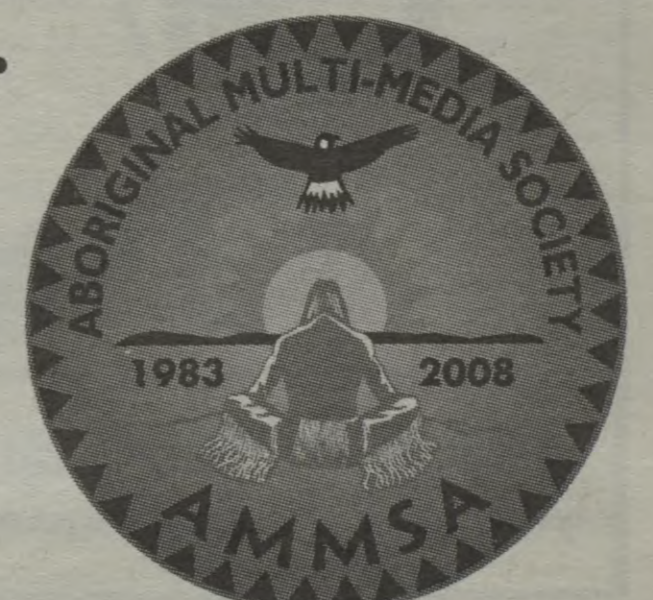


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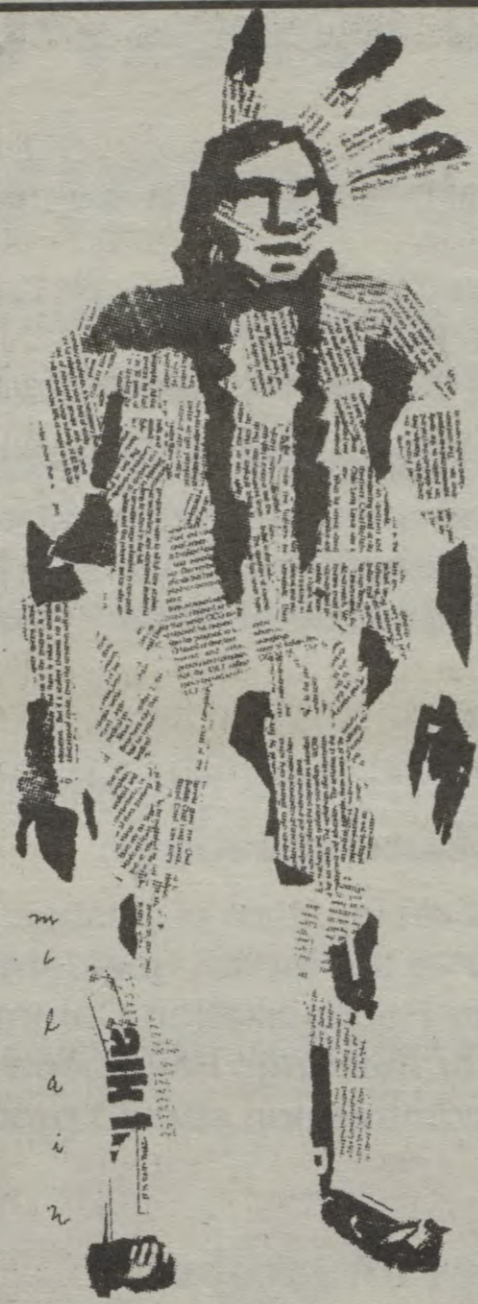
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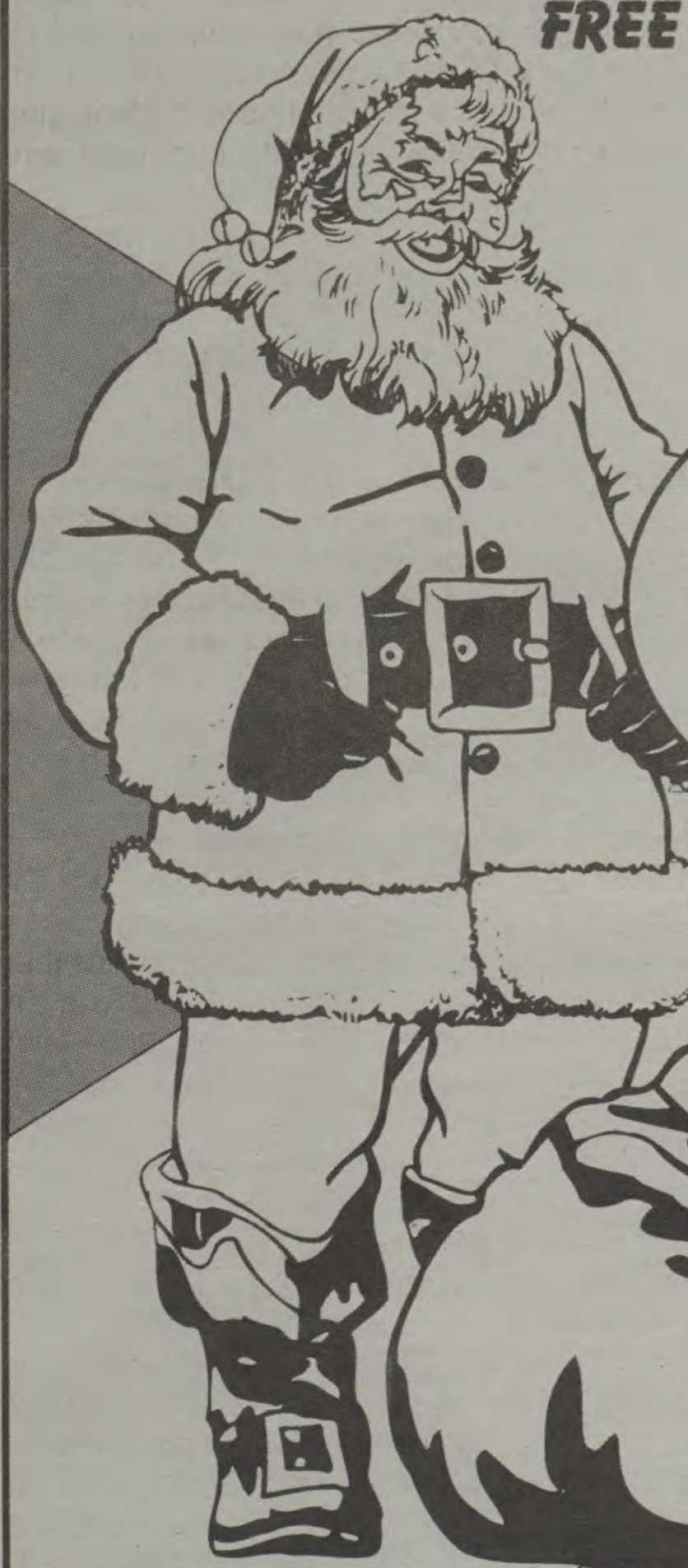
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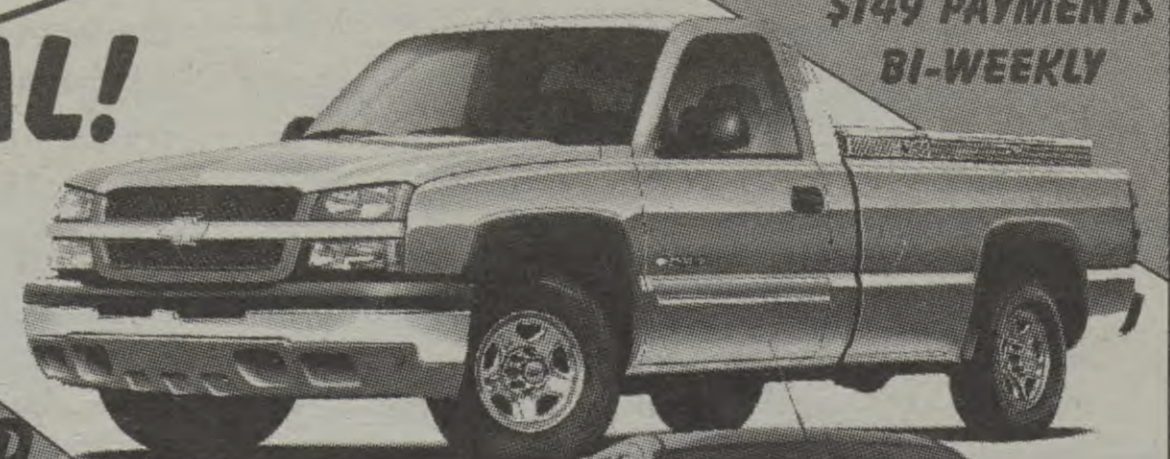
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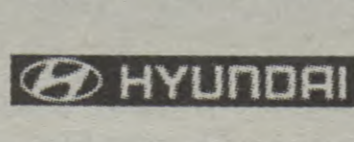


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First Nations experience undeniably distinct

We have to take issue with a column published by The StarPhoenix on Nov. 7 written by Doug Cuthand, who, in his backhanded way, was attempting to congratulate President-elect Barack Obama on his historic win on Nov. 4 in the United States.

The column begins "It is said that when something is useless and worn out, it's given to the coloured folks."

Cuthand writes that George Bush has left the United States in such a mess that no white man would want to be president. The columnist concludes that now that the U.S. is involved in two wars, is mired in debt, has a crippled economy and a tattered reputation, the reins of power are now merely being handed over to this "minority" because they are no longer of any value.

In his attempt to be provocative, Cuthand dismisses the monumental effort of Obama, his supporters and the American public, to wrestle the White House out of the icy grip of the Republican Party and to break the hold of the special interest groups that sought to use that highest office to further their own particular agendas.

Cuthand also diminishes the exhaustive struggle of Obama to win the nod to lead the Democratic Party into the presidential race; a win that came at the expense of Hilary Clinton, who had that top post all but sewn up heading into the primaries. She held on until the bitter end in an attempt to scratch out a win, but the aggressive juggernaut that supported her bid to take the White House was no match for the legions of Americans who had had enough of the business as usual approach to U.S. politics. Their decision was to vote for a man of change, not just a man of color. The color of his skin was not what America voted to support. It was Obama's promise of change that was central to his appeal.

Cuthand reduces the extraordinary Obama to the ordinary; just another black man fighting over scraps left behind by the whites. On the contrary, Obama wasn't only a black man running for president. He is first and foremost a man with a vision for a new future, a man with a philosophy, a man who could cut through the racial divisions in the United States and make people truly believe. Such a man is more than black or white or Asian or Christian or Muslim. Such a man transcends those things.

Cuthand goes on in his column to say that Native people in Canada have also been receiving the white man's castoffs and "surplus junk" for years, including programs that Indian Affairs wears out and unloads on Native governments across the country. And again, we have to jump in here and say that Cuthand diminishes the concerted effort and personal sacrifice of many individual Native people who worked very hard to pry control of these very programs away from Indian Affairs and the federal government.

Think of the sit-ins of the 1970s at Blue Quills school as Elders insisted that they could do a better job of educating Indian children in Indian schools. Think of the protests and marches, the lobbying of

governments, the handstands and back-flips done in an effort to wrest control of social welfare programs on reserves, of mental health programs, of some authority over lands and resources. Think of the struggles in the courts that continue to this day that are grounded in the dream of self-determination.

It is this dream of self-determination that is fundamental to the experience of First Nations peoples, and makes the struggles of Native nations distinct from the collective experience of the African American.

Cuthand writes "Aboriginal people in Canada are the equivalent of the blacks in the U.S.," and this is categorically untrue. Yes, there has been oppression of these two groups. Yes, there has been, continues to be, similar racism against us, but our histories are rooted in very different places, and these roots have informed the development of our peoples over the generations in very different ways.

The African American was stolen away from his homeland and has had his ties to that territory severed forcibly. That group's effort has been to carve out a place in this new home among the mainstream. First People remain separate and apart from the mainstream, despite great effort and many government initiatives to absorb us.

We were not removed from our territories for the most part, but relegated to small parcels of it. We continue to have a physical and legal attachment to the land, still work to protect it and have some say over its development. We watch as the territory is logged off, or fished out, or explored for minerals without our consent or consideration. We fight to regain it, fight for a share of the benefits that accrue from it. The stories of the African American and the First Nation person are different, and to ignore this is to do us both a disservice.

Since the election of Obama, there have been many in Canada musing about whether this country could ever elect an Aboriginal person as prime minister, as if this would be the equivalent of the United States overcoming its troubled racial past to elect a black man to its highest office.

Noah Richler for the National Post writes "If Canada is to experience its own extraordinary, galvanizing political progression, it will not be because it has elected a black to high office. That would be pleasing enough. But no, our own Obama moment will occur when Canada upholds a candidate from the First Nations as prime minister. Then we shall have confronted our own national shame. Then we shall have surmounted our own historical disgrace."

This arrogantly assumes that the ultimate prize to be obtained by First Nations is Canada's highest office.

In fact, this is not the ultimate prize. What would prove an equivalent measure of maturity in Canada is a return of the autonomy that Native nations once enjoyed over their societies, their economies, their territories, and their future.

Windspeaker

Letter: Remember Aboriginal Efforts

An open letter for Remembrance Day:

On a day when Canadians from all walks of life paused and reflected on the supreme sacrifices of so many men and women who fought and died for our freedom, the First Nations Leadership Council (British Columbia) joined with them in recognizing and saluting the contribution of veterans, and specifically First Nations veterans, to serving their country and fellow citizens.

The contributions of First Nations soldiers to Canada's armed forces cannot be understated. From the 1800s to the present day mission in Afghanistan, First Nations soldiers have been on the front line in Canada's military.

More than 7,000 Aboriginal men and women volunteered to serve in the First and Second World Wars as well as the Korean War. More than 500 First Nations soldiers lost their lives in the conflicts. At least 68 medals for bravery were awarded to First Nations soldiers in the First and Second World Wars.

In 1943, King George VI bestowed British Empire Medals upon four Aboriginal bands, including the Kitkatla Band in B.C. for their contributions to the war effort. To this day many First Nations soldiers lay buried in the battlefields of Europe.

Unfortunately, many First Nations veterans faced discrimination upon returning home from the world wars and Korea. Though eligible for certain benefits, many did not receive them because of bureaucratic hang-ups, or unfriendly Indian agents. Other benefits

like land settlement money and education were denied.

Such discrimination spurred First Nations veterans to organize and lobby the government to make changes to the Indian Act and federal policy. In fact Native veterans were instrumental in status Indians finally receiving the right to vote in 1960. After years of lobbying, the government of Canada finally offered a settlement package to veterans or surviving spouses in 2002. It was too late for many, too little for some, but it was finally an acknowledgement that many brave soldiers did not receive the hero's welcome they deserved.

Today First Nations participation in the Armed Forces continues with Aboriginals making up about 1.4 per cent or almost 1,300 of the members. Theirs is a service born of the pride of their ancestors, and nation. They carry with them the warrior spirit and proudly serve with distinction and honor. They are today's role models, and tomorrow's leaders.

On the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, commemorating a moment 90 years ago when troops laid down their arms to end the First World War, we joined all Canadians in paying tribute to the courage and valour of those who served, and those who serve today. We ask all First Nations to remember and honour the legacy of their Armed Forces veterans.

On behalf of the First Nations Summit; the Union of BC Indian Chiefs; and the B.C. Assembly of First Nations.

[rants and raves]

Page 5 Chatter

GLOBE AND MAIL COLUMNIST

Margaret Wente has pushed the envelope with her commentary on Aboriginal peoples before, but nothing like when she came charging to the defence of McGill University Chancellor Richard Pound for his remark that Canada was a land of savages 400 years ago; a comment that resulted in Canada-wide condemnation.

Wente said the remark was stupid, because in today's politically-correct environment such discourse isn't allowed, but Pound's stupidity did not detract from the fact that his remark was nonetheless true: The lives of First Nations pre-contact could not compare in value with those of Europeans.

"They had not developed broader laws or institutions, a written language, evidence-based science, mathematics or advanced technologies," she wrote. Wente has subsequently suffered such wrath that has never before been directed toward a Canadian newspaper columnist, and no doubt has Pound screaming to himself 'Stay off my side!'

"Reading this stuff almost blew my socks off" writes Rauna Kuokkanen at <http://rauna.wordpress.com:80/2008/11/09/savage-backlash/>.

"Wente dismisses several decades of evidence-based research from disciplines ranging from gene and other biology, archaeology to linguistics, literature, history and anthropology to make sweep(ing) statements about Aboriginal histories, practices and philosophies."

Kuokkanen is an assistant professor in the Department of Political Science/Aboriginal Studies Program at the University of Toronto who complains that Wente's views are informed by a single book by F. Widdowson and A. Howard entitled *Disrobing the Aboriginal Industry*, which to Kuokkanen "sounds like (the) sloppiest scholarship on Aboriginal people in recent years." She said "the problem is that this kind of haphazard, ignorant and arrogant writing (and scholarship) seems to be gaining ground."

Consider, she said, that the "poorly argued book" *First Nations? Second Thought* has just gone to reprint. We all recall that the author of that controversial, widely-repudiated book is Tom Flanagan, Prime Minister Stephen Harper's trusted advisor.

In her blog, Kuokkanen sets out to correct the factual errors in Wente's argument, and takes on the "racist, Eurocentric rhetoric that eerily resonates with social Darwinism." In the U.S., she writes, "social Darwinism helped to create a legion of doctrines and ideologies such as Manifest Destiny to justify conquest and expropriation of land."

Now see *Windspeaker's* story on the study commissioned by the Canadian Taxpayers Federation on page 8. Their conclusions? Phase out the Indian Act, eliminate reserves, and extend private property rights.

CONCERNED ABOUT THE POSITION

taken by Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations Vice-Chief Morley Watson who has called for a public inquiry into the police shootings of First Nations people in the province, joefox at joefoxmytwocents.blogspot.com argues that if Morley's people weren't out committing crimes, then they wouldn't get shot. "If your people could control themselves and get working, etc. instead of just trying to squeeze money out of the government, then maybe these problems would take care of themselves." It's not racism, writes Joe. It's reality. "Stop committing crimes people and you won't get shot." He also complains that Morley's people's population is exploding in Saskatchewan. "We have the highest per capita (sic) concentration of Indians in the country. Not something I'm proud of," writes joefox.

Don't worry Joe, we aren't blaming you.

MAÑANA BROTHER

If you're an Aboriginal person living in the Penticton area, don't you worry about filing your taxes on time. The Canada Revenue Agency office there is giving you a pass because you are incapable or unwilling to meet a deadline. The Vancouver Sun reports that a memo written by a CRA employee on the file of Inuit artist Jonasié Faber Quarqortoq, whose work can be found in such fine institutions as the Museum of Civilization, said "As is typical of Natives, he doesn't have the same sense of urgency as we would have in complying with a deadline. I likened it to the 'mañana' (maybe tomorrow) attitude that prevails in South and Central American countries."

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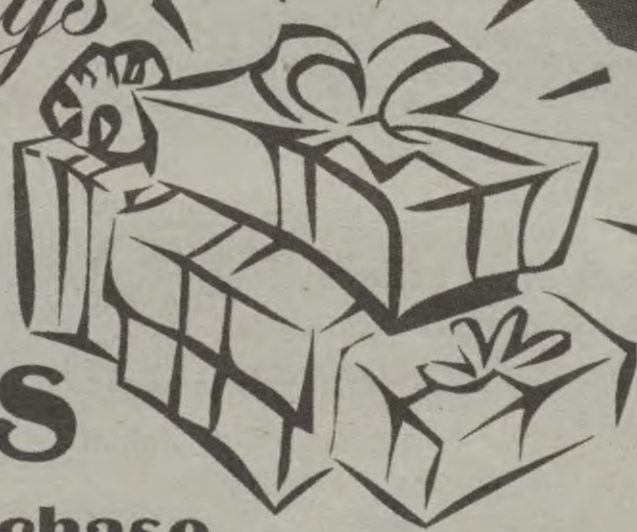
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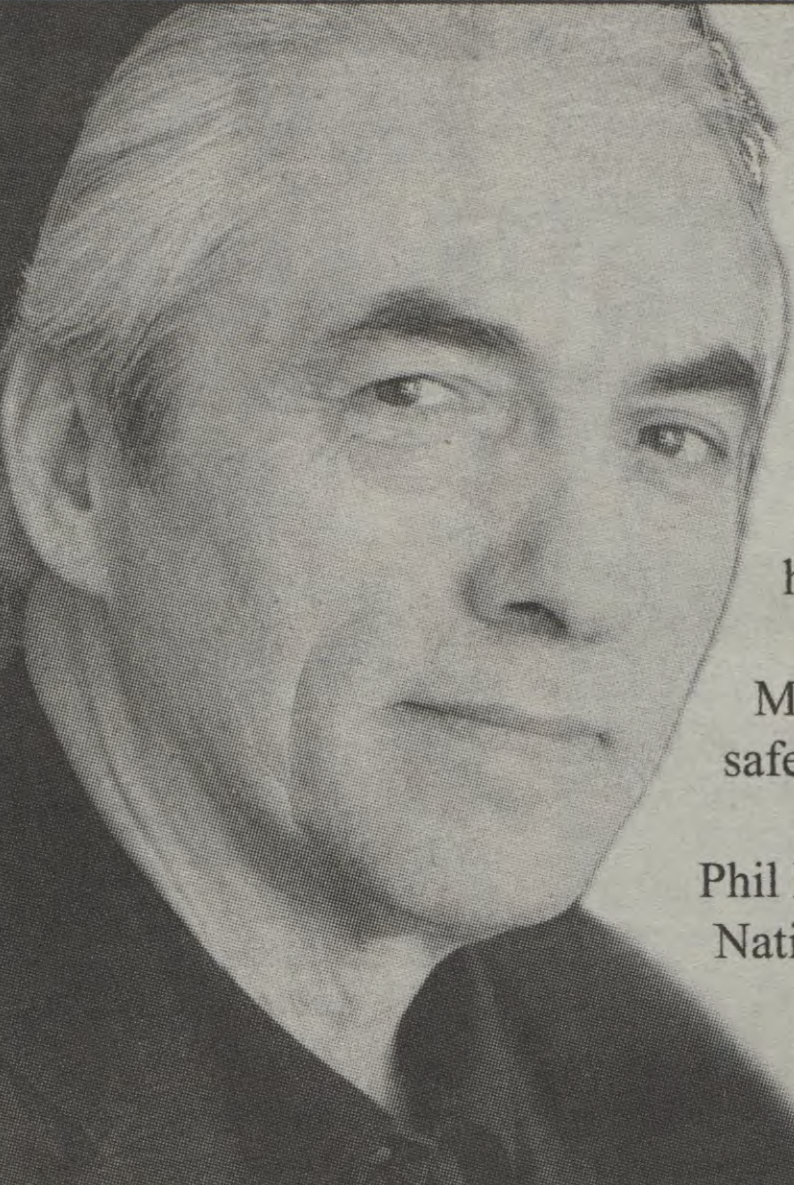
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AFOA CANADA NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Previous listing was incorrect. The correct date and location is:
February 24-26, 2009, Calgary, AB
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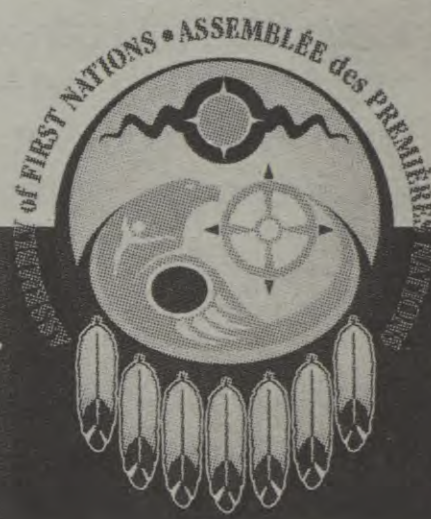


Season's Greetings!

On behalf of the Assembly of First Nations and AFN Regional Chiefs, I hope you enjoy a happy and festive holiday season.

May the Creator keep you and your loved ones safe and healthy throughout the New Year.

Phil Fontaine
National Chief



The Assembly of First Nations is the national organization representing First Nations citizens in Canada.

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Look for your free 2009 Aboriginal History Calendar inside this issue of Windspeaker!

Public Notice.

TransCanada's wholly owned subsidiary, NOVA Gas Transmission Ltd., is proposing to construct the McDermott Extension project in northern Alberta, consisting of approximately 12 kilometres of pipeline 508 millimetres (20 inches) in diameter and an associated meter station. The proposed project is required to transport sweet natural gas to the Fort Hills bitumen extraction mine and processing facility, approximately 90 kilometres north of Fort McMurray, and would extend from a point on the existing Ells River Extension, at LSD 8-22-96-11W4M, to a new Calumet River Sales Meter Station at LSD 16-5-97-10W4M.

TransCanada intends to seek approval to construct the above pipeline extension, in accordance with existing legislation, and plans to submit an application to the Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC) and with Alberta Sustainable Resource Development (ASRD) in January 2009. Construction of the pipeline extension project is anticipated to begin in November 2009 and be completed in April 2010. The pipeline extension is expected to be in service by July 2010.

To assist in developing project plans, TransCanada invites public input with respect to these proposed facilities.

Any person having a bona fide interest in the proposed project is encouraged to forward concerns or areas of interest prior to December 8, 2008, to:

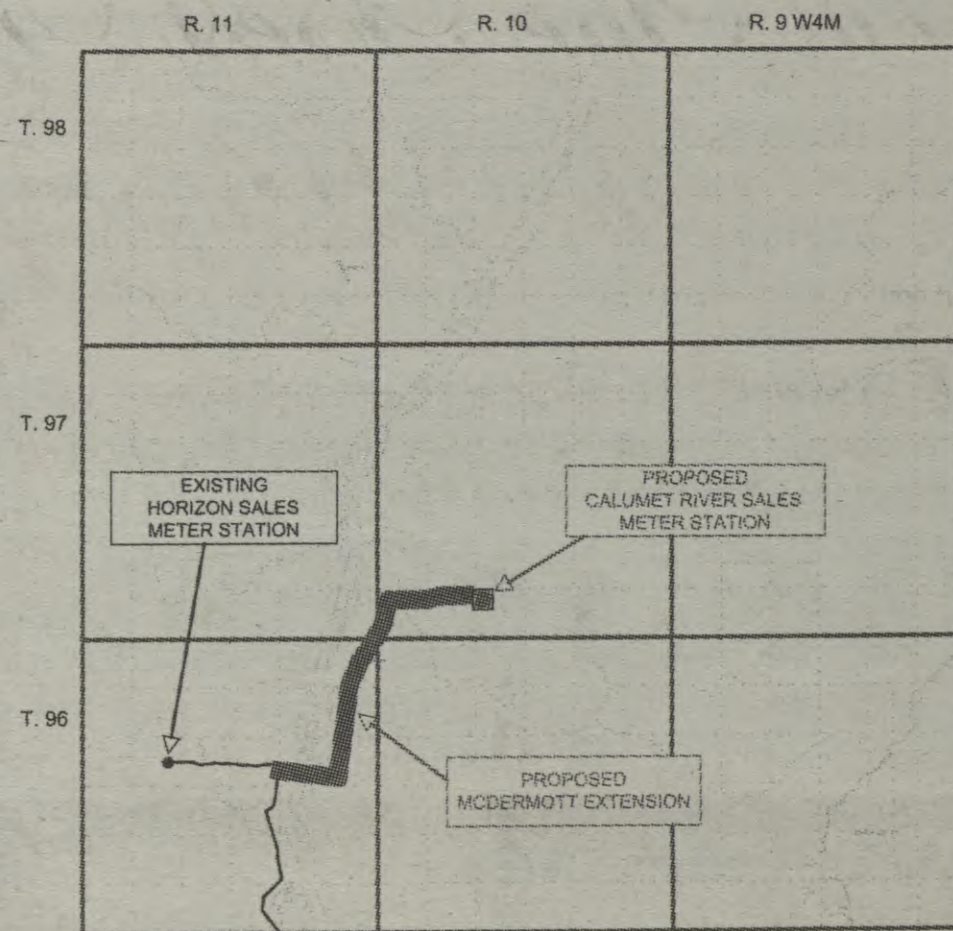
McDermott Extension
Chris Peltó, Project Manager
1.800.361.6522 or 403.920.6624. Email: chris_pelto@transcanada.com

Calumet River Sales Meter Station
Craig Rautenberg, Project Manager
1.800.361.6522 or 403.920.6742. Email: craig_rautenberg@transcanada.com

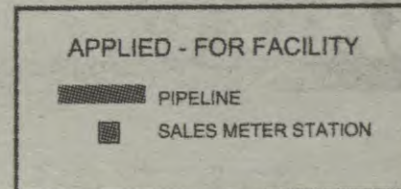
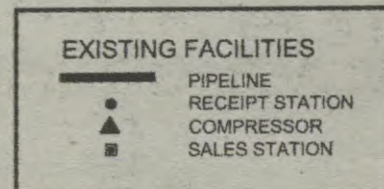
Or write to Chris Peltó or Craig Rautenberg at:
TransCanada
450 - 1 Street S.W.
Calgary, Alberta T2P 5H1

In case of emergency call TransCanada 1.888.982.7222.

www.transcanada.com



**Proposed
NPS 20 McDermott Extension
LSD 8 SEC 22 TWP 96 RNG 11 W4M to
LSD 16 SEC 5 TWP 97 RNG 10-W4M
And Calumet River Sales Meter Station
LSD 16 SEC 5 TWP 97 RNG 10-W4M**



Windspeaker news briefs

THE CHIEFS OF ONTARIO

honoured Sam George at a gala and benefit concert held Nov. 19 during their Special Chiefs Assembly in Toronto. Sam George was lauded for his work in seeking justice for his brother Dudley George and the community of Kettle and Stony Point. Dudley was shot by a police officer while involved in a land protest at Ipperwash Park in 1995.

"Sam George has set the greatest example for us in the struggle to see justice," said Regional Chief Angus Toulouse. George pursued justice for Dudley by every means possible until government finally agreed to establish an inquiry to examine the shooting death. The result of the inquiry was a four-volume report that included 100 recommendations designed to bring positive change in Ontario. George was recently diagnosed with cancer and in an effort to support George and his family, the funds raised from the event will be used to offset medical costs. The gala event included a silent auction, appreciation dinner and benefit concert hosted by Carla Robinson.

OSCAR LATHLIN, MANITOBA'S ABORIGINAL

and Northern Affairs minister, passed away in the early hours of Nov. 7 after being rushed to a hospital near his cottage at Clearwater Lake, north of The Pas. He was 61. He had been suffering from respiratory illness for a long time, but his condition had worsened over the last 18 months, colleagues in the legislative assembly reported. Lathlin was born and raised at Opaskwayak Cree Nation and worked a trapline from the age of 12 after his father passed away. He served for a time as chief of Opaskwayak, and was elected MLA of the area in 1990. He is survived by a son and daughter and his wife Leona.

THE 42-MEMBER ANISHINABEK NATIONS

and Ontario's Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs have signed an agreement establishing a protocol roundtable that is designed to strengthen the Anishinabek relationship with the provincial government. The agreement was signed at Chippewas of the Thames First Nation on Nov. 12. Health and social issues, education, lands, resources and environment, government relations and communications are the broad subject areas that the table will tackle.

"As we work towards self-government, there will always be a need for First Nations to maintain good working relationships with Ontario. This roundtable process will allow us to formally track and implement our joint work plans," said Grand Chief John Beaucage. The Anishinabek Nation has similar agreements with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources that led to the establishment of the Anishinabek-Ontario Resource Management Council and the Anishinabek-Ontario Fisheries Resource Centre.

METIS WRITER JOSEPH BOYDEN,

author of the acclaimed novel *Three Day Road*, has won the Scotiabank Giller Prize for fiction for his novel *Through Black Spruce*, a story of a Cree woman and her search for her missing sister. The Canadian literary award comes with membership to an elite group of writers, including Margaret Atwood, Michael Ondaatje, Alice Munro and Mordecai Richler and a \$50,000 payday. The award was announced at a gala event held in Toronto on Nov. 11.

ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

regional chief for British Columbia, Shawn Atleo, has said he is willing and ready to accept a nomination to run for the position of national chief when that race opens in May 2009. Atleo said that he has been approached by many chiefs and elders from across the country who told him they would support his candidacy. Atleo returned to his community of Ahousaht to seek their support before making the announcement. Atleo is in the final year of two terms as a regional chief and decided he would not run for the position again. The election will take place in Calgary in July at the AFN's annual general meeting.

[news]

Key to prosperity on reserve is self-government

By Shari Narine
Windspeaker Contributor

CALGARY

A report released in November by the Canadian Taxpayers Federation is "probably extremely misleading to the uninformed," contends Westbank First Nation Chief Robert Louie.

Report author Mark Milke, former director with CTF and presently director of research for the Frontier Centre, makes no new recommendations in the report entitled "Life is Better in the Cities: How Canada's Aboriginal and general populations fare on reserve and off-reserve." He notes however, that "past studies from the Canadian Taxpayers Federation and others have recommended a litany of changes to reserves, including their abolishment. This paper serves ... as a reminder to those on reserves, and those concerned about reserves, about the actual conditions..."

In an interview with *Windspeaker*, Milke states that as towns and cities "let natural forces take effect and abolish themselves when an industry dies," so should reserves.

"You're not artificially propping up towns and villages, but reserves are functioning on federal money propping them up," Milke explained. "If you have incentives to stay on reserves, I think that's the most cruel thing you can do. It's simply not going to be very helpful for anyone's personal development."

Milke's report is based on 2006 census data in which he concludes "for those who live on reserves, economic and social indicators consistently rank below those of Aboriginals in urban (non-reserve) communities and of non-Aboriginal Canadians. In general, Aboriginals on reserve fare the worst, Aboriginals off-reserve fare better, and the general population (also off-reserve) fare the best."

According to 2006 statistics, median earnings for those living on reserve was \$29,014 compared to \$37,447 for those living off-reserve.

Louie agrees that economically "on the whole" many First Nations people do fare better in the larger centres than on First Nations land. He also agrees with Milke's reasoning that the isolated living conditions and the remote locations of many communities are two key factors impacting the ability to thrive economically.

But abolishing reserves and giving up rights to land is not going to happen, said Louie.

"If you took it to most of the First Nations, you're not going to see First Nations across Canada say, 'Well, we'll throw in the towel, give up our reserve lands.' I think they'd rip up that paper and throw it in the garbage, because that's not going to happen."

Both men point to the quality of governance as having a substantial impact on Native living conditions on reserve, but have entirely different perspectives on the subject.

"There's no mystery that some reserves are badly governed and not accountable," said Milke.

But it's the lack of self-governance that Louie contends is the reason why First Nations don't thrive.

Milke singles out Westbank First Nation and Osoyoos Indian Band as examples of "laudable exceptions and examples of reserves in Canada that have defied the statistical stereotype and succeeded."

Both Westbank and Osoyoos make economic development a priority and self-governance has made that happen.

Westbank started its move toward self-governance a number of years ago with its own land code under the Land Management Act, and later rolled that land code into Westbank's self-governance structure.

"That means we have jurisdiction over our lands, our resources and our people, and the people include all residents, non-Natives as well," explained Louie.

With jurisdiction came taxation and control over what developers do on reserve lands. This in turn has accelerated the growth of development in Westbank First Nation. Louie points out that Westbank accounts for as much as 25 per cent of development in the 633 First Nations across the country.

"Self-governance has taken (development) out of the realm of the (federal) Department of Indian Affairs and the red tape of bureaucracy and put it into our hands as a governing First Nation. That has done things like promoted and accelerated the rate of growth by providing security and comfort for third party development," said Louie.

There are only a handful of First Nations that are self-governed, although almost two dozen have begun taking incremental steps in that direction.

Louie admits that, unlike many other First Nations, Westbank also has location as an asset. Situated in a growing urban centre in the heart of the Okanagan Valley, Westbank has a population of 9,000 to 10,000 souls, and with infrastructure in place and self-governance, Westbank has been able to capture non-Native investment.

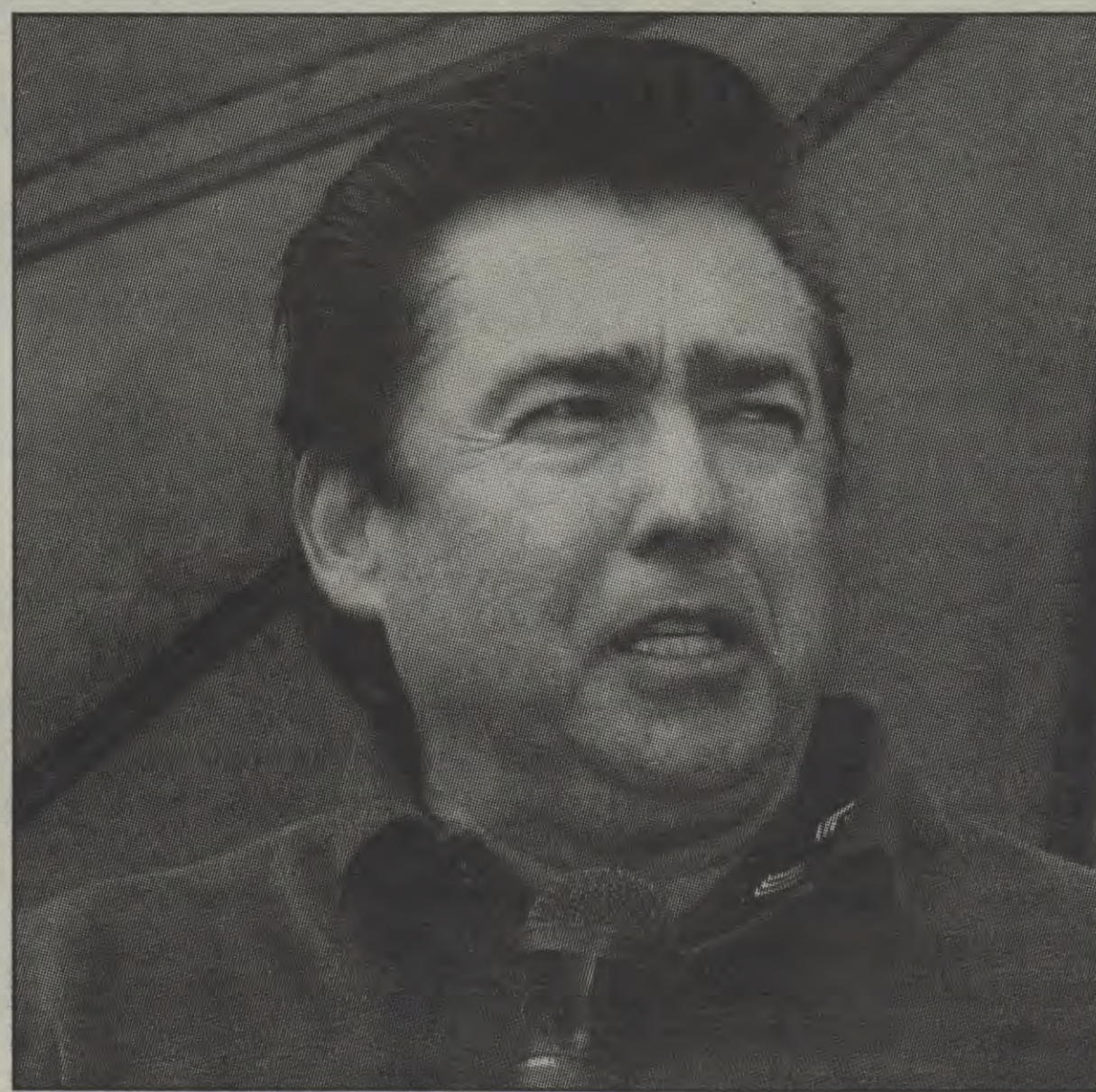
While location helps, it isn't everything. Louie points to McLeod Lake Indian Band, an isolated First Nation two hours north of Prince George, B.C. that has begun its move toward self-governance.

McLeod Lake has implemented its Land Codes, which gives it jurisdiction over its resources, including \$10- to \$20-million worth of timber, for which they issue their own timber mark and set up their own forestry laws.

"If they didn't have that, they would have to rely on provincial jurisdiction and that would slow them down immensely," said Louie.

In his study, Milke further contends that "an over-reliance on immediate culture (one's own) and separateness now regrettably hampers success for many of Canada's Aboriginals; it is a separateness that is encouraged by some Aboriginal leaders... a separateness which goes beyond the useful sense of mutual dependence and ethnic solidarity... to one that hampers the possibility of economic opportunity, higher living standards, and better social conditions."

But, said Louie, "We're living proof that what works here really works. You don't need to get rid of our reserve lands. We'll never do that. Our people are very strong on that point."



Chief Robert Louie of the Westbank First Nation

Information flows, despite tight-lipped approach to Iacobucci meetings

By Shari Narine
Windspeaker Contributor

OTTAWA

After the October resignation of Justice Harry LaForme as chair of the Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), closed door meetings have been held to decide how the commission should proceed.

The meetings, held on Nov. 7 and Nov. 20, were facilitated by Justice Frank Iacobucci, who was instrumental in the development of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. This agreement mapped out compensation for the victims, and has as a very unique component to the TRC, which will be put on the record of the abuses that occurred in the schools.

Iacobucci sits at the table with representatives from the Assembly of First Nations, Inuit organizations, the Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian and United churches and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

Noticeably absent from those meetings is representation from the TRC itself, which still has two of its three commissioners in place, Jane Brewin Morley and Claudette Dumont-Smith.

In his resignation letter, LaForme accused the two women, a lawyer and a Native health care worker, of colluding to undermine his authority, outvoting him at every turn. LaForme also criticized their too close connection to the AFN, and had complained in the past that that organization, through its National Chief Phil Fontaine, was attempting to exert influence on the commission's work.

Nancy Pine is the spokesperson for the TRC, and it must be said, has a long history with Chief Fontaine, acting as the communications advisor in his office.

"We're not at the table because INAC has gone back to the original parties that negotiated the settlement agreement," she said, explaining the TRC's absence from the table to *Windspeaker*. "I'm not saying or suggesting they're starting at square one," she said in response to calls for the resignation of the two remaining commissioners to renew the process and refresh the commission's reputation.

Also absent from the discussion table is the National Administration Committee (NAC), a body which "flowed out of the original talks," said solicitor Tony Merchant, who is a member of NAC and who also participated in negotiating the residential schools settlement agreement. Merchant Law Group LLP from Saskatoon represented 14 of the 17 class action suits against the government and the churches, making up half of the

residential school survivors involved.

Merchant is surprised that the TRC is not represented in the new round of meetings and disappointed that NAC wasn't asked to be involved.

"The National Administration Committee was certainly a part of what happened in terms of selection (of the commission members), so (to not be included, the government is saying,) 'Things have gone wrong and now we're going to take it back into the halls of government and keep it quiet.'" (Neither the agendas for the meetings, nor the outcomes of the discussions, are being officially commented upon, though there have been leaks of information to the media.

Ken Young, the AFN special advisor on residential schools, a man who toured the country to speak with survivors about the residential schools settlement, is being publicly chastised by boss Fontaine for speaking about the meetings facilitated by Iacobucci.

In an unprecedented move by the AFN chief, Fontaine released a statement to the media on Nov. 16, urging them to respect the "confidential nature of the sensitive discussions," and dropping the hammer on those "close to the commission" sources that are disclosing information.

"This was improper and should be immediately stopped by those responsible," Fontaine wrote. He called the comments by Young in a *Globe and Mail* article on Nov. 15 "speculative, personal and solely his own." Fontaine said they did not represent the official position of the AFN in the discussions.

Young reported to the *Globe and Mail* that the table is discussing the idea of an expanded commission panel, seating five commissioners instead of three. Young said INAC Minister Chuck Strahl did not oppose the idea when the national chief raised it with him. Young also disclosed that First Nations Summit Chief Ed John is considered the front runner to replace LaForme, though John wasn't the table's first choice.

Louise Arbour, the former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, was approached, but declined the position.

Fontaine is insistent that the table be allowed to maintain its confidential work in re-establishing the commission or the task of repairing the damage done as a result of the LaForme resignation as it "becomes much more time consuming and difficult."

"In these discussions, time is our enemy," he told *Windspeaker* in an e-mail interview. "There is enormous pressure to get the Truth and Reconciliation Commission up and running because sick and elderly survivors are dying every day, being denied

the opportunity to tell their stories. In order to move the process along quickly, the parties have agreed to maintain confidentiality. Fontaine said that "for the most part" residential school survivors haven't expressed concern about having the Iacobucci-facilitated meetings held behind closed doors.

"Survivors appear to understand that it is not desirable to try and negotiate sensitive matters in the media," Fontaine said.

Merchant isn't totally opposed to the discussions being private, but he does admit there are reasons to be cautious.

"The disadvantage of keeping things private is that you then don't get input from people. There are a lot of organizations who could be giving meaningful input but they can't if they don't even know what anybody's talking about," Merchant said.

Mike Cachegee heads one such organization that would like a say. Cachegee is the executive director of the National Residential School Survivors Society (NRSSS).

"There has to be engagement by survivors across the country, asking for their assistance in setting this thing up and bringing some credibility to it. As it appears now, I, as a survivor or a member of the general public, have no input as to how this thing is going to work." Cachegee goes a step further stating concerns that the fate of survivors is being put in the hands of the AFN and Inuit organizations, who "along with housing, water, economic development, human rights, already have a 1,001 things in their mandate."

NRSSS has as its primary focus the needs of survivors.

"As a survivor organization it is critical to us, as our survivors are passing away," said Cachegee. He doesn't want the final word on the issue, but said he wants to cooperate with others "to make sure this thing gets up and running as quickly as possible. We've said publicly we're willing to work with whomever to get this thing to work."

"The problem with organizations that have to deal with the government on an ongoing basis," said Merchant, is "they have tradeoffs that will limit them on specific issues in being effective."

"As long as I can remember, (residential school survivors have) always been a priority of the Assembly of First Nations as a whole. The AFN has the knowledge, the continuity, the commitment and the resolve to see the settlement agreement through to its ultimate implementation." While Merchant knows his clients want to be able to share their experiences, and he understands the importance of having a fully

functioning commission as soon as possible, he is concerned that moving too quickly on the TRC could result in the same "inherent conflict" that brought about LaForme's resignation.

In LaForme's letter of resignation, he stated that while he put the priority on reconciliation, commissioners Dumont-Smith and Brewin Morley put their emphasis on truth.

"The court function of truth is different from this reconciling function and so there's an inherent conflict in the concept of truth and reconciliation; one is different from the other," said Merchant. He isn't shy in taking his share of the responsibility in not being critical enough as the truth and reconciliation component of the settlement agreement was being negotiated. He said an "absence of forethought and an absence in planning" resulted in three people being placed to work together without knowing in which direction the commission was heading. Cachegee believes it would be difficult for a new

commissioner to join the existing commissioners and would like Dumont-Smith and Brewin Morley to "do the honourable thing (and) resign." Young said in the *Globe and Mail* article that there was a national campaign afoot to have these commissioners removed from their posts, and a motion will be brought forward in this regard at the AFN assembly in Ottawa in December.

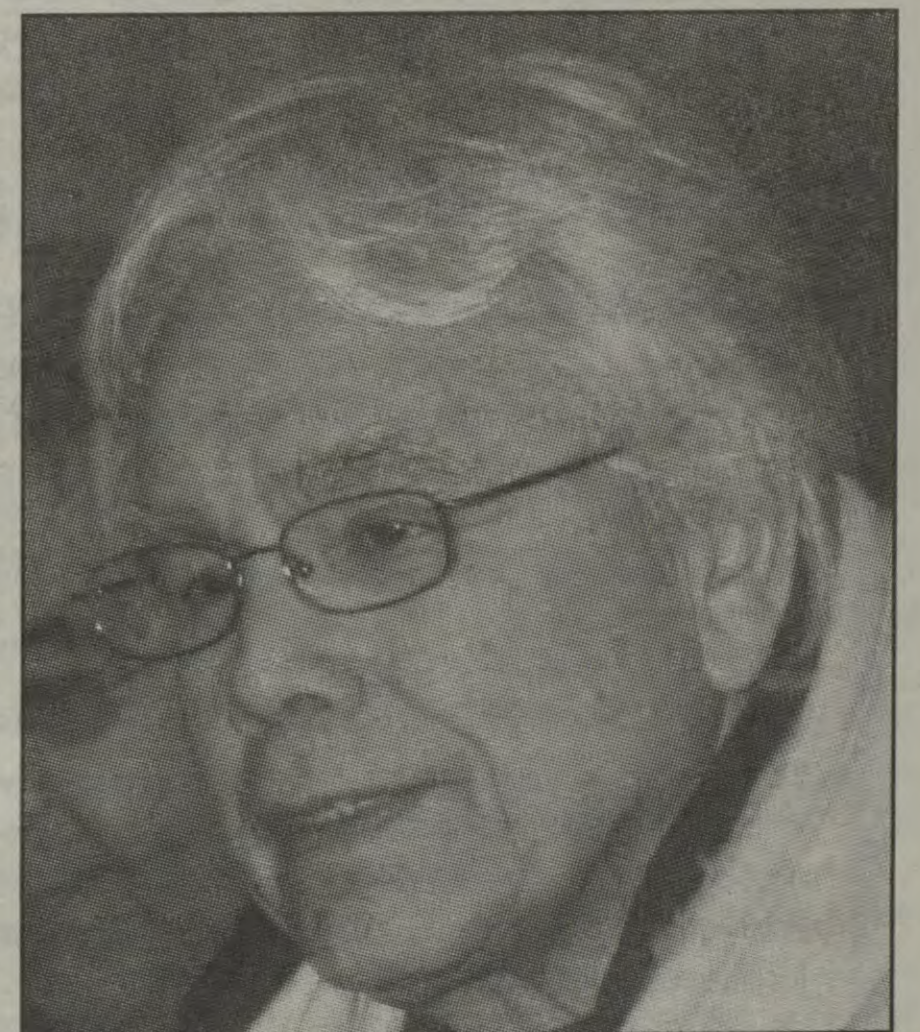
While Fontaine will not comment on whether the group is looking at a wholesale turnover of the commission, he does say "that the AFN will continue to strongly advocate that a third commissioner be appointed by the federal government as soon as possible. Fontaine also declined to comment as to whether the new commissioner would also serve as chair of the TRC.

He did note that the group was "not tied exclusively to the existing pool of candidates. We want the best possible Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement speaks to a very clear process with respect to the nomination of candidates and the settlement agreement will be followed." Cachegee is also concerned with the TRC's arms-length position from the workings of government that the court insisted it to have. Cachegee said that if the chief commissioner is answerable under the federal Financial Accountability and Privacy Acts that came into force after the TRC was created, then "in essence it removes the independence of the commission and turns the chief commissioner into a deputy minister. If the commission is no longer independent it has to follow the government's existing guidelines and you can only go so far with that," said Cachegee.

"We don't know (what's) being addressed because everything is being kept quiet," said Merchant.



First Nations Summit Chief Ed John is said to be the front-runner to replace Justice Harry LaForme as chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.



Ken Young, AFN special advisor on the residential school settlement, has been publicly chastised by National Chief Phil Fontaine for comments made to a *Globe and Mail* reporter about the Iacobucci meetings.

Struggle continues for Jacobs despite personal accomplishments

By Carmen Pauls Orthner
Windspeaker Contributor

OTTAWA

In 1929, with a decision in the landmark "Persons Case," women became legally recognized as "persons" under Canadian law.

Nearly 80 years later, Beverley Jacobs is still fighting to ensure that Aboriginal women receive that same level of respect.

On Nov. 7, Jacobs, president of the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC), received one of the country's highest honours, the Governor General's Award in Commemoration of the Persons Case. The award is presented annually to five people who have made a significant contribution to the advancement of Canadian women.

The award commemorates the "Famous Five," a group of women who led the fight for recognition in the Persons Case.

According to the Governor General's Web site, in 1927, Emily Murphy, Nellie McClung, Irene Parlby, Louise McKinney and Henrietta Muir Edwards asked the Supreme Court of Canada if the word "person" in Section 24 of the B.N.A. Act included female persons? After five weeks of debate the Supreme Court of Canada decided that the word "person" did not include women.

Shocked by the decision the women continued their fight taking the Persons Case to the Privy Council in England which at that time was Canada's highest court.

The decision of the five Lords of the Privy Council stated "that the exclusion of women from all public offices is a relic of days more barbarous than ours. And to those who would ask why the word "person" should include females, the obvious answer is, why should it not?"

Only a handful of Aboriginal women, including Bertha Allen, Mary Two-Axe Early and Sandra Lovelace Nicholas, have been

among the award's recipients since it was established in 1979. Jacobs was both surprised and humbled to have been chosen.

"I'm someone who just does what needs to be done, so to be recognized for that is overwhelming," she said. "It was an honour."

Jacobs has served as NWAC's president since October 2004, and, as such, is the country's most visible spokesperson for Aboriginal women's rights. She holds a master's degree in law and has been accepted to the bar, and, in a past role with Amnesty International, authored the groundbreaking report "Stolen Sisters: Discrimination and Violence Against Indigenous Women in Canada."

She is also the grieving aunt of Tashina General, a young Mohawk woman who went missing in January and was found murdered a few months later. On hearing the news, Jacobs said she was so angry she was ready to quit her advocacy work. She admits that while they have begun to heal, the experience changed both her and her community at Ohsweken.

"It's a lot of trauma that occurred," Jacobs said. "She was only 21, and pregnant... and the majority (of on-reserve band members) are her age, so it has caused a lot of internal struggle here in our community on how to deal with it."

For Jacobs, there is pain in knowing that she wasn't able to be there for her own family during their grief, because she was busy helping other families going through similar trauma. But there is knowledge that her loss has deepened her ability to be an advocate for those families.

"I've learned first-hand what it feels like (to have a loved one murdered). I think that helps in pushing for more that needs to be done."

Jacobs' passion for her work stems both from the growing trend of violence toward Aboriginal women in Canada,

and from first-hand experience dating back to long before her niece's death.

As a Mohawk from the Six Nations "I come from a very strong matriarchal society... and I've seen even in my own community the impacts of colonization on our women," she said.

She is "one of those women," as she puts it: abused as a child, later molested, suffering through several violent relationships because she didn't know she had a right to be treated any differently.

"Once I got past the ugliness, [I] realized there were a lot of things that happened that were beyond my control," she said.

Jacobs' legal studies taught her how even the law had been used as a "tool of assimilation," but that those tools could be reclaimed. She has also developed a deeper awareness of First Nations history, languages and traditions, and she sees educating people—both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal—about the truth of the First Nations' experience as key to healing the wounds of colonization.

"A big part of what I do is trying to revitalize that and re-empower that (cultural heritage), and (teaching) that women were a big part of. They were highly respected in our tradition, our culture," Jacobs said.

One of the most powerful experiences of her career was responding, as a representative for Aboriginal women, in the House of Commons to Prime Minister Stephen Harper's historic apology for the residential school system.

"It wasn't until afterwards that I realized the impact that had, not only on myself, but on all of our people."

She says there is still much to do, especially in the area of preventing the disappearances and deaths of so many Aboriginal women.

"It seems to be worse than it's ever been, and so I'm really frustrated about that," Jacobs said.



PHOTO CREDIT: JOSHUA KIRKEY

Beverley Jacobs, president of the Native Women's Association of Canada, received the Governor General's Award in the Commemoration of the Persons Case at Rideau Hall in Ottawa on Nov. 7.

"That has been the fight for me for the last four years.... I want to see more political will, to (see government) actually want to assist in making that change."

There is also a continued need for education at all levels, as Jacobs re-discovered during her time at Rideau Hall, where she found herself educating even some of her fellow award recipients that gender equality was inherent in her Mohawk culture.

"It was the impact of colonization that caused inequality, and that we (as Aboriginal people) were not included in the Persons Case."

"It's not mandatory for anyone (in Canada) to learn about the real history of our people... You learn about the colonizers. You don't learn about the people they colonized," she said. "I think that's part of the struggle of bringing awareness of all of this. It's not required."

"What I try to do is say, 'This is the truth. This is the reality of our history and the situation we're in today,' and that it's important that everybody knows," she said. "Start from kindergarten, and then

maybe we won't be living in a racist society."

The other 2008 award recipients are Shelagh Day of Vancouver, an international authority on women's human rights and the founding President of LEAF (Women's Legal Education and Action Fund); Frances Ennis of St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, who is a social activist, educator, author and rug-hooking artist who has devoted her life to advancing equality for women; Maureen A. McTeer of Ottawa, a lawyer, author and expert on issues of women's rights and health and those of law, science and public policy; and Mair Verthuy of Montreal, a researcher, activist and distinguished academic who co-founded Concordia University's Simone de Beauvoir Institute, home of Canada's first women's studies program.

A youth award recipient was also named. Ben Barry of Ottawa is an international modeling consultant, women's health advocate and author of the Canadian bestseller *Fashioning Reality*.

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Register today at www.foa.ca/conference/2009 - SAVE \$\$\$\$ Early-bird registration fee until December 31, 2008

Stepping stone approach to treaty celebrated

By Debora Steel
Windspeaker Contributor

TOFINO

On Nov. 13, the Premier of British Columbia danced with the children of Tla-o-qui-aht in celebration of a new kind of treaty agreement their leadership had negotiated with the province.

Gordon Campbell was wrapped in a black shawl bordered with the small, painted hand-prints of the young people before he signed what is being hailed as the first-ever incremental treaty (ITA).

He joined the hereditary chiefs of Tla-o-qui-aht, elected Chief Councillor Francis Frank, Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation Mike de Jong and a couple of hundred Tla-o-qui-aht members for an afternoon of festivity and feasting.

Tla-o-qui-aht is a nation of about 900 people who lay claim to some of the most wild and wonderful territory on Vancouver Island's West Coast.

In Tofino, a tourist town known internationally for its long, protected stretches of pristine ocean front and pounding surf, its whale-watching and bear sightings, the Tla-o-qui-ahts gathered in the conference centre of their award-winning hotel, the Tin Wis Best Western Resort, to bear witness as their hereditary chiefs put pen to paper to sign the ITA.

The agreement, they hope, will provide the incentives and good will needed to go forward to negotiate a fully-formed treaty.

Treaty making in the province has a less than glorious record of achievement with only one treaty given full effect in law since the establishment of the BC Treaty Process in the early 1990s. Another has been ratified by five First Nations and the province, but is awaiting ratification by the federal government. There are currently 58 First Nations negotiating treaties in B.C., with 42 of them having only reached stage 4 of a six-stage process.

The problem say some is that the process is too long and onerous without benefits seen in



PHOTO CREDIT: DEBORA STEEL

From left to right: Mike de Jong, Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, B.C. Premier Gordon Campbell, Elmer Frank, a hereditary chief of the Tla-o-qui-aht nation, and elected Chief Francis Frank shake on the signing of the first ever Incremental Treaty Agreement negotiated in the province.



PHOTO CREDIT: DEBORA STEEL

Premier Gordon Campbell looks on as hereditary chief Bruce Frank prepares to sign the Incremental Treaty Agreement. His daughter Hannah sits with him.

the communities for all of the money and time being spent.

Incremental treaty is designed to tackle that problem, providing the opportunity to benefit earlier by building incentives into the process to reach treaty milestones.

At the signing, the Tla-o-qui-ahts received a parcel of land that measures about 16 hectares in an area of Canada where land is hard to come by and expensive to acquire.

In this first increment, the Tla-o-qui-ahts also received first right

of refusal to purchase another parcel of land, if it is no longer required by the Village of Tofino for an emergency reservoir. Tofino's tourist population swells so much in the peak summer months that it has in the past run out of water.

Upon signing the agreement, the Tla-o-qui-ahts also received a cheque for \$100,000 so they can begin to develop their newly acquired land.

As the province and the Tla-o-qui-ahts progress toward treaty,

more "pre-treaty benefits" will accrue to the nation.

Upon achieving an agreement-in-principle, for example, the stage of treaty making where many agreements in the last decade of treaty negotiation have fallen apart, the province will transfer another 16 hectares to Tla-o-qui-aht. Elected Chief Francis Frank says he hopes to reach this stage in a few months.

Upon initialing of a final agreement, the stage before the agreement is sent to the

community for ratification, another dangerous time in treaty making, 12 more hectares of land will be transferred.

When the final treaty agreement is signed, Tla-o-qui-aht will receive 18 more hectares of land in Tofino.

The incremental treaty agreement is a four-year plan to reach treaty. The land transfer alone has an estimated worth of more than \$19 million, plus the province has promised a total of \$600,000 in cash to be transferred, also in increments, as milestones in the treaty making process are reached. It is considered an advance by British Columbia of the provincial share of a future settlement package.

The next big step in the process is the substantial completion of the land selection chapter of the final agreement. Chief Frank was very clear on Nov. 13 that the land transfers of the incremental treaty agreement were not the entire land selection being negotiated.

The road to land selection may not be an easy one however. Tla-o-qui-aht must meet with neighboring tribes, Ahousaht and Hesquiaht, to hammer out boundary details. Other First Nations in British Columbia who have reached this stage of treaty making have been hung up on overlap issues, and can spend years in court fighting friends and family when they have failed to get inter-tribal boundary agreements in place.

There are also disagreements to contend with from within a nation. And much communication needs to be done with the Tla-o-qui-aht citizens if the process is to move forward smoothly.

Before celebrations were begun on Nov. 13, Tla-o-qui-aht nation member Ruth Ogilvie read a letter on behalf of people who feel "ignored in this BC Treaty Process."

She said she was speaking because the others were too afraid and intimidated to present any other view than a supportive one on the day set aside to celebrate the ITA.

(See Treaty on page 25.)

History was made, and Canada was watching

By Thomas J. Bruner
Windspeaker Staff Writer

WASHINGTON, DC

The United States made history on Nov. 4 when its citizens elected Barack Obama, an African-American, as their president.

He did it for his Democratic Party in convincing fashion as well, winning the popular vote handily, and the Electoral with more than 360 votes compared to Republican John McCain's 170-plus.

As that country worked to overcome its troubled racial history with the first person of color to be elected to their top

post, the achievement leaves people wondering in Canada if such a thing could happen here. Many are now daring to dream of one day having an Aboriginal prime minister.

Betty Lafferty, an Elder at Ben Calf Robe Catholic Native School, said anything is possible.

"I think that just gives them a boost (to) say 'yes we can and we should.'" Lafferty, who is also with the Council of Elders of the Edmonton Catholic School District said, "There's lots of hope. Without hope we don't have anything."

Nishnawbe Aski Nation Grand Chief Stan Beardy said Obama's election "sends a message of hope

to people around the world." Obama's victory shows how far African-American people have come after facing years of discrimination and intolerance. He compared that discrimination to that which is still faced today by Canada's Aboriginal people.

"This is a great message for Canada, that our differences can become our strengths when we unite to work for a better tomorrow," Beardy said.

With his eyes on tomorrow, Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) Chief Lawrence Joseph challenged Canadian leaders to follow Obama's example in terms of his dealings with Native Americans in

the United States.

"Barack Obama plans to set aside time to meet with Native American leaders. He talks about treaty as paramount law," said Joseph.

Obama promised he would appoint a Native American advisor to the highest ranks of his administration.

The President-elect also said he intends to be a strong voice for Native Americans on their issues, and many hope that he will sign the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which is something that Canada's Prime Minister Stephen Harper refuses to do, following in the footsteps of outgoing Republican President

George W. Bush.

"It was just easy to believe in him," said Sandra Louie, a member of the Osoyoos First Nation with dual citizenship.

"He's all for change and that's what was really needed. I just had a lot of faith in him."

"He stressed quite a bit of Native American issues during the elections," said Joseph Pakotas, a resident of Washington. "He spent quite a bit of time in rural America and some reservations just being educated on some of the issues of treaties."

Pakotas did admit that during the primaries he actually voted for Hilary Clinton.

(See American on page 13.)

[strictly speaking] Ugh! Kill'em de white man. Pass the salt.

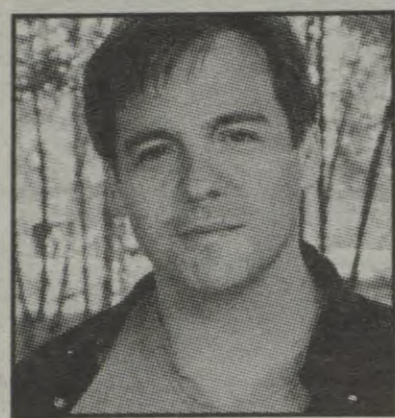
Canada's Native population lives in lucky times. Today's film and television glows with fairly accurate

Aboriginal representation. Some days it's like you can't turn on the television without seeing Gordon Tootoosis, Adam Beach, Tantoo Cardinal, Graham Greene or Gary Farmer staring back at you.

Not that many decades ago, almost all the Indian faces on screen were not in fact Indigenous people... at least not to this country. They were... colour-enhanced.

I, like many Native people of my generation and older, spent a lot of my youth looking for images of real Native people on the big screen. Instead, what did we get: Rock Hudson as a square-jawed Chiricahua warrior. There was also Jeff Chandler as a Jewish Cochise in Broken Arrow. Chuck Connors gained fame in his role as Geronimo. What was doubly ironic was that a lot of these cinematic savages, including Connors, sported blue eyes. They say the camera adds 10 pounds. It also anglicizes.

What became even more bizarre was how art didn't imitate life. It redesigned it. And then life



THE URBANE INDIAN

Drew Hayden Taylor

began to imitate the redesigned art.

I have memories of middle school, where us Native students would get a special hour of Native arts and crafts. We would sit in the classroom, sewing cheap leather into headbands, with vaguely Aboriginal designs beaded on the front. Any excuse to get out of algebra.

It should be noted that, essentially, most Native people never wore headbands. At least not the kind Western civilization associates with Native culture. It was a creation of Hollywood.

It seems that when the wardrobe department dressed up Rock Hudson and Jeff Chandler as Indians, they gave them those ridiculously thick wigs with braided pigtails that represented so many Native cultures.

The wigs were uncomfortable and tended to slip under the

sweaty hot lights. So some guy whose name is lost to fashion history came up with the cool idea of using headbands to keep the wigs on tight, even when the actors were riding their horses. Thus a legend was created.

Jay Silverheels, better known as the Lone Ranger's sidekick Tonto, is perhaps the best known Canadian Native actor to have existed. Though he died on March 5, 1980, his appeal has spanned more generations than Chief Dan George, and had more of an affect on the dominant culture's perception of Native people (rightly or wrongly) than all other actors combined.

What is less known is that his real name was Harry Smith and he was from the Six Nations Reserve near Brantford, Ont.

That's why Jay/Harry made an appearance a few weeks ago at the imagineNATIVE Film + Media

Arts Festival in Toronto, part of an exhibit at the Trinity Square Video called HOW: Engagements with the "Hollywood Indian."

An icon of pop culture, Jay/Harry appears, voice only, in the more modern form of a video installation piece, directed by artist Greg Staats. It is titled Harold J. Smith, Jay Silverheels, Tonto.

Essentially, the short film is an unedited home video of a slow drive along the 7th line river road on the Six Nations Reserve, metaphorically the path taking Jay/Harry home. In the background is the soundtrack of an interview the actor did on The Jack Paar Show back in 1960.

There is a popular Rez story about Jay/Harry that I once heard. After he became practically the only working Indian actor in the 1940s, before he hit it big as Tonto, he would always find himself playing the generic Indian warrior or chief in a series of Westerns.

The story has the director placing him on a hill or bluff overlooking a vulnerable wagon train, directing him to address his brave warriors in his own Native

tongue, urging them to attack and kill.

Even though he was Mohawk, Jay/Harry's grasp of the language was somewhat tenuous. There he would sit, on his magnificent steed, urging on his band of dangerous and lethal Indian warriors.

As the story continues, all his family and friends from Six Nations would go to Brantford to see his movies when they were released. They would sit in the audience enjoying Jay's success. And then, when this big scene came on, the theatre would erupt in laughter. There would be Indians killing themselves, literally, laughing in the aisles.

Like many of us who are not very proficient in our ancestors' tongue, most of us learn common words or short phrases first, rather than the whole lexicon of the language. So there was Crazy Horse/Sitting Bull/Geronimo, speaking in stilted Mohawk, encouraging his savage warriors to "pass the salt. What time is it? It's raining. One. Two. Three. Four. Five. Six. Dog. Cat. I love you. Hello. Goodbye." And so on.

I don't know if this story is true, but if it isn't, it should be.

Pope provides the comfort survivors need to move forward

By Shari Narine
Windspeaker Contributor

ROME

A wink and a wave from Pope Benedict XVI was all that members of Indian Brook First Nation (Nova Scotia) needed to make their trip to Rome in October worthwhile.

Forty-eight people made the 10-day trip. The group included 14 survivors from Shubenacadie Indian Residential School and half a dozen day school survivors.

There were also elders, family members of school survivors, and first generation descendants of school survivors (ranging in age from 15 to 50 years old), support staff and two priests.

"It wasn't about getting a formal apology," said Violet Paul of the trip. She is a senior policy analyst with the Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs, a family member of a survivor from the Shubenacadie Indian Residential School, and was a support person for the residential school and day school survivors. "It was important for them to go on a healing journey."

The trip to Rome began as a trip for the Indian Brook First Nations youth. When Paul found out about the trip, she got to thinking, and dreaming. She discussed with Mark Boudreau, Atlantic Policy Congress communications person, the possibility of residential school survivors making the trip too. It was a "pie in the sky" dream, said

Paul, but after speaking to a number of survivors, she realized the trip to see the Pope was integral to their healing process.

"The dream for them became reality," she said, and she would like other residential school survivors to dream big and do what they need to do in order to heal.

Elders rose early in the morning on Oct. 15 to get front row seats to see the Pope. The Indian Brook First Nation group was the first in line among the thousands of people who filled St. Peter's Square in Vatican City.

While Benedict XVI does not grant private audiences or interviews, he did acknowledge the survivors with gestures. Cardinals, who spoke, "acknowledged the pilgrimage from Indian Brook Nation," said Paul and the group also received VIP seating.

"The meeting was indescribable," said Paul, whose voice still shakes almost a month later when she talks about it. "The survivors were very, very touched. They didn't need for (the Pope) to come over personally and say 'hi'. Just being in his presence was enough for them. It was overwhelming for them."

And it took their healing journey, which began many years ago, a step further, she added.

Being in the Pope's presence was only one step on the path.

In Rome, the group visited holy sites and then returned to their hotel to debrief in a talking

circle.

For many of the survivors, it was the first time they talked about their experiences in the Catholic residential school. There were times when the sharing became so intense that the youth were taken out of the room.

Many of the survivors forgave the church and, what's more, said Paul, it brought the youth and elders closer together.

Paul recounted the tale of a training session after their return to Indian Brook where a survivor was crying and a youth held the survivor's hand.

"The survivor said 'This is the first time in my life I've ever been comforted by a youth. He knew the pain I was going through because we took youth (to Rome) with us.'"

A day was also spent in Paris and provided an opportunity for the survivors to relax after eight intense days of healing and sharing. The last debriefing session took place on the Eiffel Tower.

"Someone said 'Who would have ever known, 40 odd years ago, we were sitting as little children in these chairs being physically, sexually and psychologically abused, and now we're standing on top of the world.'"

From the trip, Debbie Paul stated, the Atlantic Policy Congress has "a pretty good idea of where we need to go in developing a healing strategy for our people."

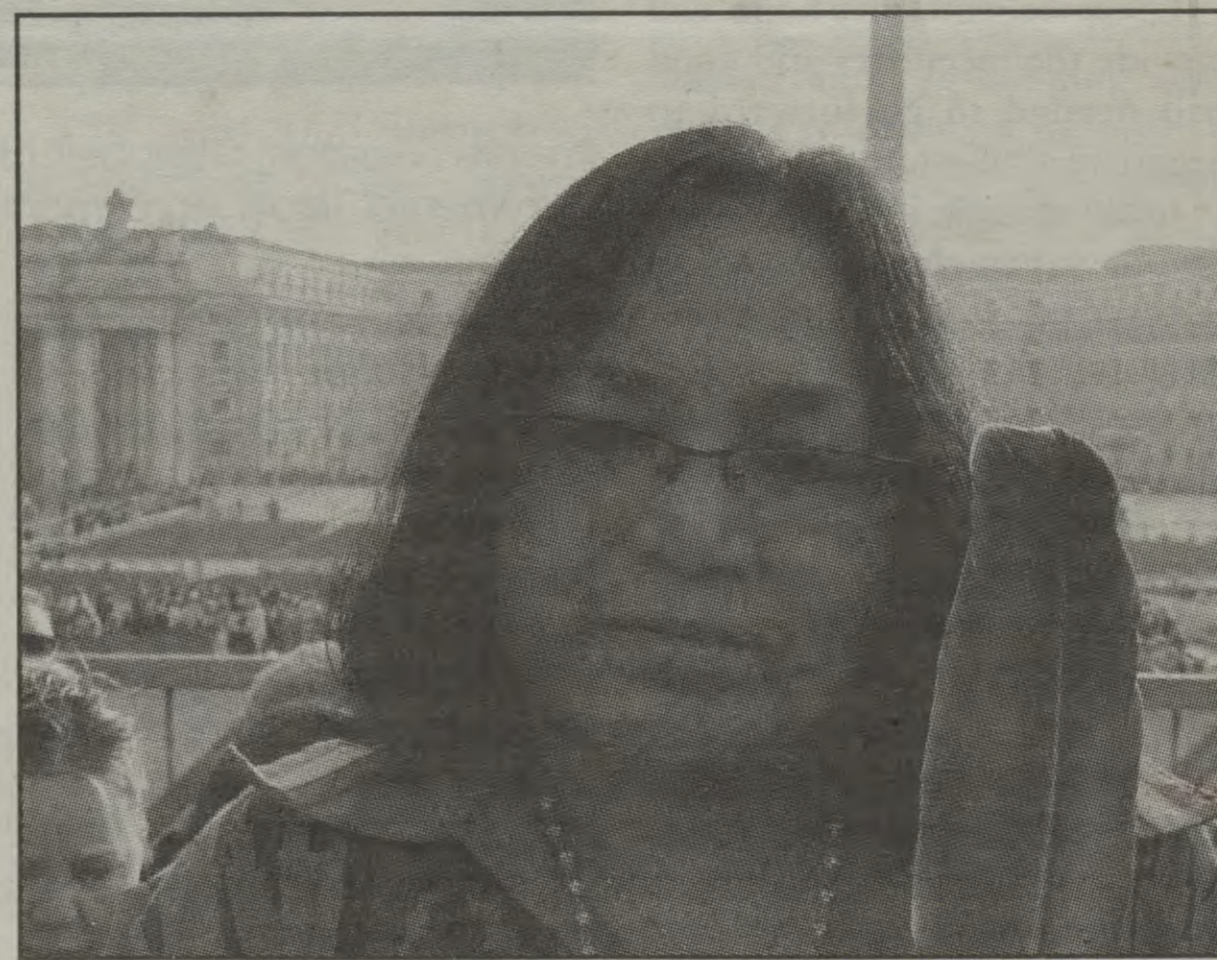
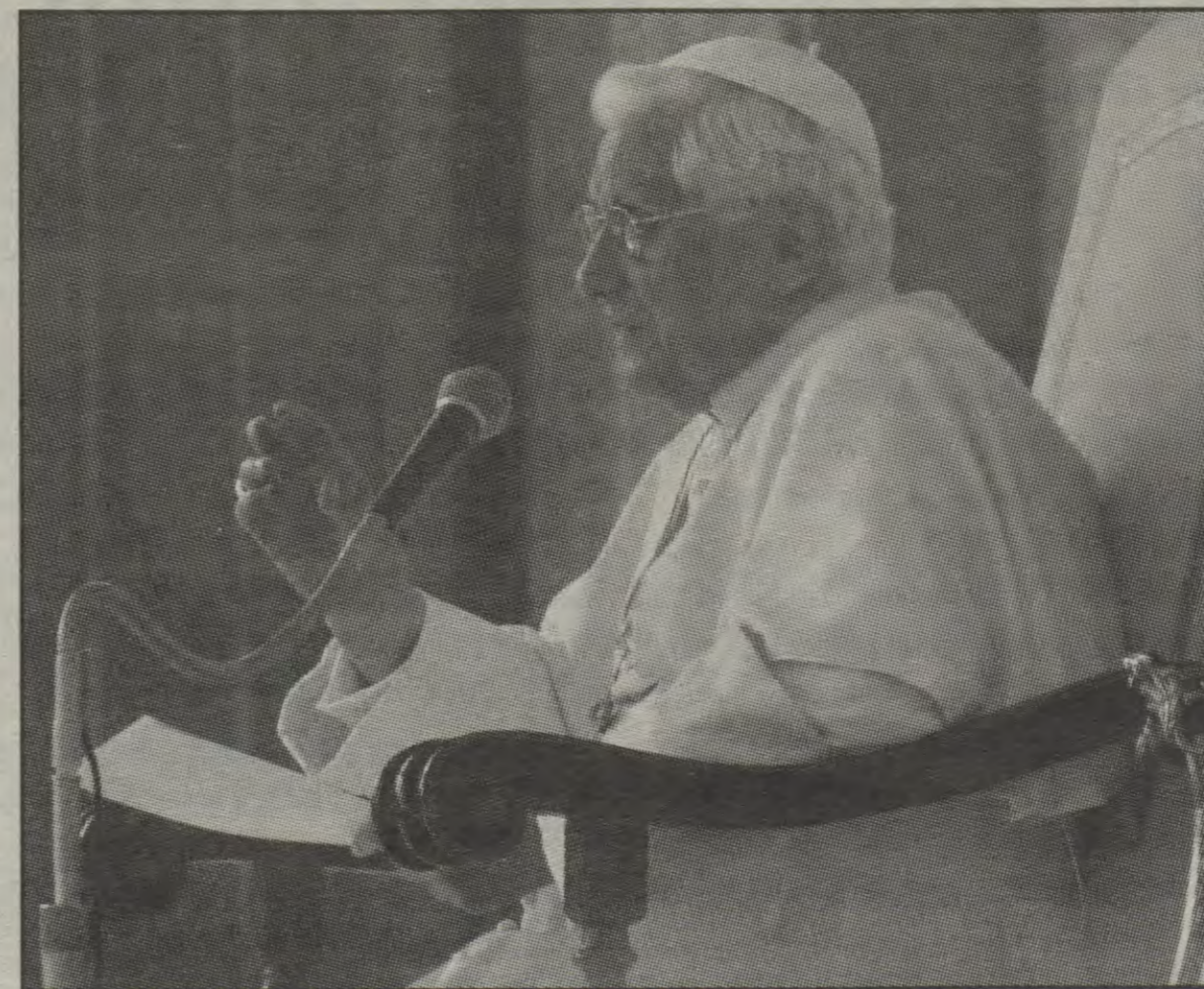


PHOTO CREDIT: MARK BOUDREAU

Debbie Paul, from Indian Brook First Nation, was one of 48 people, including 14 survivors from Shubenacadie Indian Residential School who travelled to Rome in October.



Pope Benedict XVI

A 600 year-old Huron-Wendat village unveiled to students

By **SHAUNNA GRANDISH**
Windspeaker Writer

SCARBOROUGH

New plaques commemorating a 600 year-old Aboriginal village site were recently unveiled before a group of eager Ontario secondary school students.

Students packed into the library where a special ceremony was held at Scarborough's Mary Ward Catholic Secondary School on Nov. 14 to recognize an ancestral Huron-Wendat village that was unearthed during a 2001 archeological dig. The school is adjacent to the site of the former community. This is the first time in the Greater Toronto Area that one of these villages has been commemorated in this fashion with Huron-Wendat participation.

The plaques were unveiled after the presentations and will later be installed in L'Amoreaux Park located next to the school.

The 600 year-old village was three to four acres in size. The site was excavated in advance of a housing subdivision. Ontario has strict legislation stating that an archeological assessment has to be taken before all land development or disturbance.

Among the presenters who enjoyed the ceremony was Chief

Archeologist and managing partner of Archeological Services Inc. Dr. Ron Williamson. He was hired by the developers to assess the site before development and was responsible for the dig.

Dr. Williamson said he was very excited when this site was discovered because many people don't believe that there is this kind of archeological substance and history to be found in their city.

"Whenever we find these sites we are excited because it's another opportunity to catch one of these sites before they are destroyed by development," said Williamson after the presentation.

He added that provincial legislation is very powerful and helpful in assuring the recording of the very rich archeological record in Ontario.

Six hundred years ago, approximately 800 to 1,000 people — ancestors to the Huron-Wendat nation — called the village home. Their village was discovered under a farmer's field and was called the Alexandra site in 2001. The original name for the community has been lost over time.

Nearly 20,000 artifacts were recovered during the eight-month excavations. Among the site's artifacts found were beads made of seashells from the east coast, which is evidence that extensive

trading took place. Also uncovered were imprints made from sweat lodges and 17 longhouses, which are large wooden-framed house structures covered in bark. Day to day items, such as pottery fragments, were found inside these structures.

According to Williamson, pottery fragments are important discoveries because they help to date the site and identify the cultural group. The pots also have carbon incrustations of food debris, which help researchers to gain knowledge as to what kind of foods were consumed by the villagers. Cultivated fields of corn, beans, squash, sunflower, and tobacco surrounded this agricultural community.

Remains of deer, trout, and wild berries, among other wild animals and plants, also suggest that this community hunted and gathered as an additional means to support themselves.

"Animal bones and remains of cultivated foods put together a very clear picture as to what people were eating and how that changes throughout time," added Williamson.

First Nations' Elders also assisted the researchers in identifying the artifacts and to discuss the meaning that these objects might have.

Artifacts found on this site were



PHOTO BY DAINA STEVENS

Dr. Ron Williamson (left) and Luc Laine stand beside two new plaques that commemorate a 600 year-old Aboriginal village.

available for viewing by students. Currently, many of the artifacts are housed at the University of Toronto.

The ceremony held at the school was used as an opportunity to teach the students about Huron life in the past and present, according to Williamson.

"So it was good for these students to understand the ancestral history of the Huron right on this land," said Williamson. "And of course, when this gets media attention, it allows us to use this as a model for how other sites should be commemorated in the same way."

Many students asked

interesting questions after the presentations, said Williamson. One student asked if every site is the same and why do researchers go back to each site.

"Well, I said, 'Is your house identical to the house of your best friend or another friend? Is every city you visit the same? Is every town you visit the same?' I made the point that every site is different. Different people live different ways. Although there may be similarities, people live very complex lives and it's important to get as complete of a picture as we can," added Williamson.

(See History on page 24.)

American Election

(Continued from page 11.)

"I know when her husband was president, Bill Clinton was president, Native American needs were overseen quite a bit. He did help Native Americans quite a bit during his presidency and I was just assuming that Hilary would carry that forward," Pakotas explained.

The long race to the White House, including the run through the primaries between Obama and Clinton, had many exhausted by the process.

Pakotas' first reaction to the Obama win was that he was glad that the 2008 election finally had an answer and an end.

"After two years of politicking, it was great to have it over with. And it was great to have a new president and not necessarily what has been going on for the last eight years."

What's happened over the last eight years, of course, has been the presidency of Bush, and many believe he has made a mess of things, leaving wars to be fought, an economy in near ruin, and the American reputation in tatters.

"There was a comedian in the States saying that the country is in such a mess (that) no white man would want it," said Doug Cuthand, an Aboriginal writer and documentarian.

Although the comment was made in jest, it commands some thought, he has written. Does Canada have to be in truly rough shape before an Aboriginal person

can call 24 Sussex Drive home?

"It's the combination of the times. What people are ready to accept (and) who's in power before you," said Cuthand. "Very often, one leader will pave the way for the other."

In Cuthand's article, featured in the Star-Phoenix, he put forth that now that the U.S. has done two extraordinary things—elect an African-American president and move to the left side of politics once more—Canada now looks like "northern red-neck country bumpkins."

"We can only elect Aboriginal people right now in constituencies of a clear Aboriginal majority voter base," he said.

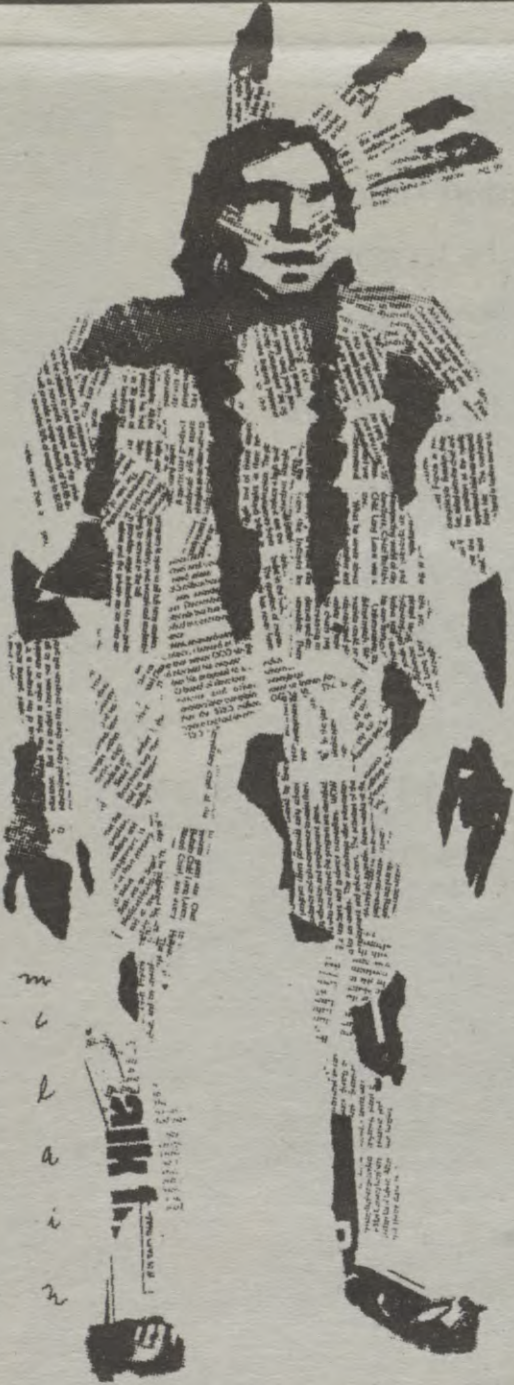
Needless to say, Cuthand believes it will be awhile before Canada's Aboriginal population can look to have one of their own occupy this country's top political seat.

Cuthand said, however, there are plenty of sturdy Aboriginal shoulders on which to stand in Canada.

"You gotta look back on people like Harold Cardinal or George Manuel. These were pioneers in their own right. (They) fought for what they felt was right," he said.

Lafferty points to Elijah Harper as a modern maverick, but adds there is still not enough leadership or role models for Aboriginal people to look up to or fall back on.

"We need more," she insisted.





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CHRC get involved in child welfare challenge

By Thomas J Bruner
Windspeaker Staff Writer

Ottawa

After years of complaints and pleas to correct the inequities in the child welfare system, the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC) will be reviewing the situation. Perhaps more important, the CHRC may impose corrections that the government failed to see through.

It was over a year ago that the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) along with the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society (FNCFCFS) filed a complaint with the CHRC regarding insufficient funding for First Nations child welfare. After 12 years of lobbying for equal funding, the AFN concluded that a formal complaint with the CHRC was the best way to go.

On Oct. 16, the CHRC announced they would hold a tribunal regarding the matter. If the CHRC decides against the federal government, in theory it would ensure definitive action.

"The bonus that the Human Rights Commission brings is that not only can they make a

determination as to whether discrimination is happening, but even more importantly for us they can order a remedy to that discrimination that is binding in federal court," said Cindy Blackstock, the executive director of FNCFCFS.

Blackstock addressed that it's essential that the CHRC take a position on this case when looking at the fact that the government of Canada has known about discriminatory child welfare funding for well over a decade.

"It's been documented by three independent reviews. Most recently, by the Auditor General herself who completed a review in May of 2008 and found that the federal government funding of child welfare on reserves is inequitable," explained Blackstock.

The two other reviews were the 2005 Wendge Report and the AFN's 2006 Leadership Action Plan on First Nations Child Welfare.

"Despite all of this, the federal government has not moved to ensure that every First Nations child on reserve is provided with equitable child welfare funding."

Blackstock, a member of the Gitksan Nation, has been involved in the child and family services field for over 20 years. One of her key interests is exploring the overrepresentation of Aboriginal children in child welfare care.

"We do a lot of advocacy here at the Caring Society. We have two rules and one is we will never do anything to embarrass the children and number two is we will never do anything to embarrass the ancestors," explained Blackstock adding, "having that said, we're not going to wait for Canada to give us equality, we'll take it."

She explained that the Canadian government has already acknowledged the growing rates of First Nations children going into care is linked to their inequitable funding.

"What we know is between 1995 and 2001, the number of status Indian children going into child welfare care increased 71.5 per cent, even though the population of status Indian children dropped one per cent during that same timeframe."

She compared those numbers to the '60s scoop, or even the residential school period.

"We have three times the

number of First Nations children in child welfare care than we did at the height of the residential schools. We know it's not due to abuse. It's only due to neglect fueled by poverty, poor housing and care giver substance abuse which can be traced back to residential schools," explained Blackstock.

During this era's slow going process of healing from the past, inequities such as these only serve as another hill to climb.

"It makes me wonder about the apology that was offered on June 11th 2008. I was very pleased to see that apology occur, but I've been taught that when you've done something wrong you're first obligation is to learn. Not just to apologize, (but) to really understand what happened in a way that stops you from repeating that again."

Blackstock expressed that if the government of Canada was truly learning from the experience of residential schools than it would be, "unconscionable for it not to provide equal treatment for First Nations children." She said that it applied to, not just child welfare, but also education, health, culture and language.

Blackstock also noted that it

could be a good start towards healing if the government of Canada rectified the wrong system. Unfortunately, it appears the government of Canada may not yet be ready to go beyond the apology, as they've already made technical objections throughout the ordeal and they could very well appeal this in court in order to delay the hearing.

"Our message to the Minister of Indian Affairs and to the Prime Minister of Canada is that an accountable and responsible government would allow this case to be heard on its merits," said Blackstock. "We are urging the Prime Minister to allow this case to be heard without any further judicial appeals, etc, that are unnecessary going into federal court."

The CHRC is expected to hold the tribunal within ten months. Blackstock urged those who want to be heard regarding this matter should log onto their Web site at www.fncfcs.com where they'll find six ways to make a difference for Aboriginal children. Furthermore, the AFN and the FNCFCFS will be holding a fundraising campaign to alleviate the costs of this endeavor.

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[education] Vibert appointed to operate Brighter Futures program

By **CHEREISE MORRIS**
Windspeaker Staff Writer

LIIDLIL KUE FIRST NATION

As the coordinator for the Brighter Futures Program, Bob Vibert would like to see change in Liidlil Kue First Nation, but said that he needs input from the community.

"I wanted to help the community. I'd like to see more healing taking place, more gatherings, that sort of thing with people wanting to come together. I would like to generate a lot of healing initiatives," said Vibert. "But I would like more input from the community about what they want to see."

The Brighter Futures program was established in the early 1990's to help Inuit and First Nations communities develop community-based approaches to better health. Currently, most of the communities have this program or the Building Healthy

Communities Program.

The program is made up of five components—mental health, child development, parenting, healthy babies and injury prevention. First Nations and Inuit communities have the opportunity to determine which community-based programs or services they will provide in their location.

"The goal of our program is to help people in three areas: mental health, child development and positive parenting and also to help people reach their full potential and become independent," said Vibert, who was recently appointed to the position in early October.

Vibert originally from Calgary brings 27 years of experience in various fields to this program, which he believes will assist him in his new position.

"I think because I have had a variety of different experiences in different fields I understand the cross cultural issues," said Vibert.

He said the program is involved in a wide range of supportive events and programs.

"Helping people, assisting with fundraising, attending cultural events and anything to do with community awareness like national addiction awareness week is a good example of what the program is involved in during the year. We support the FASD program, the kids corner daycare and also with child development. We have a healthy breakfast program in the school," stated Vibert.

As part of the healthy breakfast program, the children can purchase a breakfast for 25 cents. The Building Healthy Communities program is similar to the Brighter Futures but with solvent abuse and mental health crisis as the two main components of the program.

For more information about the Brighter Futures Program or the Building Healthy Communities Program go to, www.healthcanada.com.

Aboriginal education in need of attention

In the ongoing efforts to strengthen Canadian Aboriginal people's education, the Canadian Education Association (CEA) has associated with Dr. Shauneen Pete, the vice-president of First Nations University of Canada.

The CEA was founded in 1891 and its mandate is to put forth optimal education practices through a process of research and dialogue with many levels of knowledgeable intellectuals.

By attaching Pete to the organization, it helps ensure that Aboriginal peoples' education is recognized and approached in a culturally sensitive manner. With the recent rash of First Nations education marches throughout Canada, the timing is impeccable.

The First Nations University of Canada was established in 1971 to assist Aboriginal people in completing their education in a system alternate to mainstream education programs.

Pete is lauded for her efforts in education for Aboriginal peoples with her regimen of hard work, organization, and stick-to-it-ness.

She brings to the table 20 years of experience in education.

"I'm really humbled by my nomination and the recognition of my contributions to Aboriginal education," said Pete in an interview with the Leader-Post in Regina.

With education levels being lower than the average Canadian juxtaposed with the dropout rate being much higher than the average Canadian, Pete's task is nothing less than a daunting one. Pete noted that although academic knowledge is paramount, knowledge of the communities must go hand in hand.

"(Pete) has a strong understanding of Aboriginal education," said Penny Milton, the CEO of the CEA, in an interview with the Leader-Post. "Not only what it is now, but what it should be."

Milton also added that although Pete is a strong asset to the organization, she is not expected to one-handedly address First Nation education needs.

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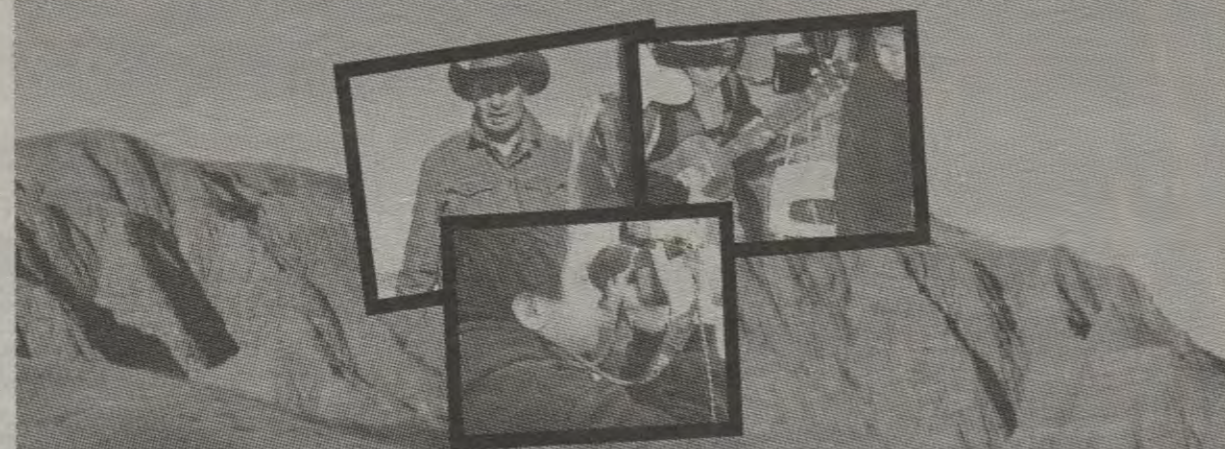


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Aboriginal knowledge could save species at risk

By THOMAS J BRUNER
Windspeaker Staff Writer

OTTAWA

Canada's Aboriginal peoples have long been known to be the watchdogs of Canada's environment and its inhabitants. To assist the Aboriginal peoples to do just that, one program is putting out a call for proposals.

With the New Year looming ever closer, so too are the deadlines for Aboriginal Funds For Species At Risk (AFSAR), a program designed to help preserve Canada's endangered species.

In 2003, the Species At Risk Act (SARA) was proclaimed in an attempt to prevent the extirpation or extinction of Canada's Indigenous species. The following year, the Aboriginal Funds For Species At Risk (AFSAR) was implemented to benefit SARA by finding capacity for funding.

"We're always aiming for more proposals that we can potentially fund," said Carmen Callihoo, Aboriginal specialist for the prairie and northern region of AFSAR.

Since its inception, AFSAR's growth had been both steady and

encouraging.

"We've consistently got additional funding each year since the beginning of the program. In 2004 and 2005 we had, nationally across Canada, \$278,000 for capacity building and \$135,500 for critical habitat protection," explained Callihoo. "Last year we had about \$2.3-million totally, so it's grown."

The fact that AFSAR's yearly budget is continually growing is good news on two fronts, one being that it is indicative of society caring, and the other being that it helps AFSAR stay on par with the continually growing species at risk.

The list is perpetually changing, the numbers almost always vary, but the amount of species that are extinct, extirpated, endangered, threatened or vulnerable is always in the hundreds.

Species such as the spotted owl, located in B.C. are expected to be extirpated within a few years. The woodland caribou, once prominent in Canada, is considered a threatened species. Even the polar bear is now considered vulnerable, with global warming being listed as its primary nemesis. Additionally,

animals are not the only things in Canada with its existence in question. The list of species at risk also encompasses plant life.

The Slender Bush Clover might not be so lucky for much longer as it has spent over twenty years as an endangered plant. And Eastern Canadians may have bid adieu to the gorgeous flower commonly known as van Brunt's Jacob's ladder. Perhaps the next generation may never lay their eyes on a homegrown Blue-eyed Mary as that is listed as extirpated in Canada. The list is as troubling as it is extensive. Callihoo suggested that everyone should refer to the SARA Web site to find out everything they can. Another helpful and enlightening Web site is the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC).

"The SARA registry is the bible. It has all the updated lists," expressed Callihoo.

"What province it is in. What habitat it likes. If there's a recovery strategy, it lists the teams and the contacts for the teams. What are the threats to the species," Callihoo listed as the information one could find on all the species at risk.

"A fish is wildlife, a plant is

wildlife, and so the registry classifies everything," said Callihoo.

Callihoo said that endangered species takes precedence over all other species.

"Endangered is the highest. If we don't do anything to help the species they could be either extirpated or extinct, so all of the endangered species is the highest priority."

As with most government agencies and organizations, bureaucratic methods make getting on the list of species at risk almost as trying as getting off. Even special projects take some time to be approved.

"The projects undergo a review process. I review the projects as well in partnership with other members of our regional management team or committee. We have representatives from Parks Canada agency, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and other SARA funding departments. We also have participants from Indian and Northern Affairs review projects. We review them on how they match with our regional and national priorities," explained Callihoo.

One unique initiative that was adopted was the inclusion of

traditional Aboriginal knowledge as a means to recover the species at risk.

"The department is currently meeting with the National Aboriginal Council Of Species At Risk (NACOSAR) which has all five national Aboriginal organizations involved," said Callihoo, adding that NACOSAR provides advice to the Environment Minister Jim Prentice.

"Information such as changes the people have seen in a species such as caribou over time or potential threats that they've seen or population sizes or body conditions, it's all potentially Aboriginal traditional knowledge that may help," stated Callihoo.

"We've got all the western science down. We've still got work to do with listening to Aboriginal people and seeing that their knowledge as well goes into recovery of species at risk."

Callihoo stated that due to the elections, the call for proposals came out later than they would have preferred. The deadline for proposals is December 12.

To learn more about species at risk, and what can be done to help, go to www.sararegistry.gc.ca or www.cosewic.gc.ca.

Rajotte brings traditional gardening into the spotlight

By CHEREISE MORRIS
Windspeaker Staff Writer

WINNIPEG

Hosted by Coleen Rajotte, a Cree and Métis award-winning journalist and producer, a new 13-part television series is airing on the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN). Vitality Gardening debuted on Nov. 1.

It's focused both on the merits of traditional gardening and how anyone can garden no matter where they are located. From her backyard to the northern territories, Rajotte said where there is a will to garden there is a way.

"I think that as Aboriginal people no matter where we live, whether it is in the city or in a remote community, it is important that we go back to the old ways and we learn how to grow our own food. And not be so dependent on the grocery store because our ancestors would go out into the bush gathering wild plants as medicine and we didn't rely on a pharmacy or Safeway for survival. We depended on ourselves," said Rajotte.

She is no stranger to health related shows as this is her second piece of work on the topic. The first was a show called Vitality Television a health and wellness program that also aired on APTN in 2007. It was hosted by Rajotte and featured advice and information on how to live a healthier, fulfilling and balanced life.

As part of the program and one

of the themes of the show, which is that anyone can garden anywhere, Rajotte learns how to garden. In her first show, Rajotte plants a garden in her own backyard for the very first time using the 'mound system' which her expert and teacher Audrey Logan, a Métis from Edmonton, showed her. She said this system requires hardly any watering or weeding because of the structure of the system. The mound system or three sisters is a traditional Native American way of planting corn, beans and squash.

The three crops benefit from each other. The squash surrounds the other two acting as a 'living mulch' monopolizing the sunlight to prevent weeds creating a microclimate to retain moisture in the soil. Another benefit is that the prickly hairs of the vine deter pests. The beans put nitrogen back into the soil that the other plants need and are able to climb the corn, eliminating the need for poles.

Rajotte who had never gardened before launching the show had some concerns about the work as would any new gardener, but as she was introduced to it, she found that it was easier than she thought and found satisfaction from seeing the fruit of her labour.

"I read that it was very soul satisfying to see your own food grow and it really is when you put a seed in the ground and you water it and give it a little bit of attention and something grows from it. It really is an amazing thing. And I think that people think that gardening is going to

take hours and they will be sweating, weeding and digging. But it is not that way, if you plant the way that our ancestors did in the mound system, which is how I learned in my backyard and it is not a lot of work," stated Rajotte.

Her shows are also being considered for a part in an upcoming museum exhibit called 'First Nations as First Farmers'. Leigh Syms, the associate curator of archeology at the Manitoba Museum of Manitoba and Nature has plans to open the traveling exhibit next year. Syms confirmed that he would be using some of her research and part of her history show on the immigration of Mayan corn. The exhibit is his brainchild and he is very passionate about creating awareness about the traditional role First Nations had and have in agriculture.

"The purpose is to take the message to many communities throughout Canada and the United States, that First Nations have a long rich history of cultivating and domesticating a wide range of plants that have had a tremendous impact on the world," said Syms.

Syms has conferred with Rajotte and he expressed that her work is almost an extension of his own.

"I think what she is doing is just absolutely phenomenally important. It is going to do a number of things, it is going to raise awareness among First Nations and also help those traditionalists who are struggling to reintroduce traditional plants.



Coleen Rajotte host of Vitality Gardening

I'm hoping that her work will get people back into gardening and raising traditional plants in general and particularly young people and help the current traditional elders do that. And one area that I see that having a tremendous impact on is the reduction of diabetes. It's always been established that once you get into healthy foods there is a drop off in type 2 diabetes," expressed

Syms.

Rajotte founded the 100 per cent Aboriginal owned and operated Rajotte productions Inc, in 1999.

With this latest gardening production, Rajotte proves that not every gardener needs to have a green thumb or even experience to have the ideal garden.

Check local listings for air times of Vitality Gardening on APTN.

Métis dance used as a method of storytelling

By **AMBER GILCHRIST**
Windspeaker Writer

VANCOUVER

The 3rd Annual Louis Riel Day Celebration hosted by Vni Dansi took place at The Roundhouse in Vancouver on Nov. 15.

Over 175 people ranging from children to Elders were present to enjoy an evening of festivities including dance, music and oral tradition from the rich culture of Métis heritage.

Comedian and musician, Winston Wuttunee emceed the evening with special guest Jules Chartrand a Métis historian from St. Laurent Manitoba.

Métis poet Greg Scofield recited his poetry and two solo dances were performed by Vni Dansi's own Yvonne Chartrand and Madelaine McCallum.

The night was complete with storytelling by Wuttunee and an acoustic performance by Juno award winner Wayne Lavallee.

To the music of a live band comprised of fiddle, guitar and keyboard, the Louis Riel Métis Dancers of Vni Dansi performed

a traditional dance and the evening ended with a Red River jig that the audience was invited to join in on stage.

Vni Dansi is a company in Vancouver formed in 2000 by Yvonne Chartrand, Métis dancer and teacher. Chartrand is dedicated to teaching and performing Métis dance.

She has keenly recognized the need to preserve Métis cultural dance and the celebration of it and is focused on passing the teachings to Aboriginal youth in many communities.

Vni Dansi provides more than 100 workshops to communities in B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ontario. The workshops are intensive using traditional Métis perspectives and incorporating them with what Yvonne has learned from Elders over the years.

Vni Dansi also offers regular classes taught by an experienced teacher in a welcoming and fun atmosphere, which is a great way to meet new people and to stay active.

In 2001, Yvonne began the Louis Riel Métis Dancers, a professional dance ensemble that

"I love it (Métis dance), it's fun and it gives me a chance to meet new people."

—*Kehew McCallum*

is trained extensively in Métis dance and performs regularly across B.C.

Two young dancers that are a part of the Louis Riel group are Jordan Crowell and Kehew McCallum, both 14 years old. They are proof that culture lives through the youth and are considered as role models for other young Métis people.

McCallum is originally from Maple Ridge. She said she is fortunate to have an older sister Madelaine who is gaining a lot of recognition as a Métis dancer and is someone that she can learn from. She said they both inherited the love of Métis dance from their dad.

McCallum has been dancing with the group for two years and has gained knowledge of every Métis dance from the broom dance to the red river jig.

"I love it, it's fun and it gives me a chance to meet new people,"

and Scandinavian reels and waltzes combined with First Nation dances, and is considered one of the most complicated dances of all First Nations.

As with all other First Nations, Métis people have a belief in their kinship to the earth and animals. Their dance is a reflection of this celebration and is a way to express certain times of the year such as spring or harvest.

Traditionally, communities would gather for large rendezvous with dances throughout the night. Many Métis people have memories of kitchen parties where dancing and music filled the house until the wee hours of morning.

Children learned from their family and friends how to, not only dance every dance, but to make new steps and combine steps in new ways.

The types of dance have a way of telling a story and that is how contemporary Métis dance uses traditional moves to tell stories of Métis history. Through companies like Vni Dansi, this method of storytelling will continue as long as Vni Dansi does.



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FOR GENERATIONS

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

Reviving the culture through naming ceremony



Frances Dick (top) warming her drum up. She is the daughter of the speaker Adam Dick and is a well known artist and singer.

Kwaxisitala, Clan Chief Adam Dick (left) speaker for Chief George Shaughnessy, asks permission to conduct the ceremony on Coast Salish territory.

The Coast Salish welcome includes: Greg Sam, Marilyn Sam, William White, Wes Edwards, Harry Dick, Clarence Dick and Bradley Dick.

Celebrating her "coming of age", tiny Isabella Marjorie Georgia Shaughnessy was given her Kwakwaka'wakw name at an early November ceremony in Victoria.

"Traditionally, Kwakwaka'wakw babies weren't given names until they were ten months old. That's because many died before reaching that age," explained proud grandfather, Chief George Shaughnessy, Maxwxwidziy, of Wakeman Sound.

A child's naming ceremony is especially joyous because it signifies they have chosen to stay here on this earth, he explained. "When a child is finally given their name, it reflects a term of endearment, like "Gift of Heaven", for example."

Because the ceremony was held outside of Kwakwaka'wakw territory, planning for the event began four months ago.

"We followed protocol in respect to the Coast Salish who live here," said Shaughnessy, describing the meticulous attention paid to the guest list and the eagle down that Speaker for the ceremony Chief Adam Dick, who is Kwakwaka'wakw, placed on the ground before using the Mungo Martin Bighouse (Wawadit'la) for the ceremony.

Nine men chosen for their good character wore handkerchiefs around their heads and were painted with ochre before they danced around the floor holding Isabella. Following their lead, Shaughnessy was the last to dance with his granddaughter and held her as she received her name. Daisy Sewid-Smith was Potlatch recorder, assisted by Kim Recalma-Clutesi.

Following the naming, the Shaughnessy family and their 200 guests sat down to a traditional seafood feast.

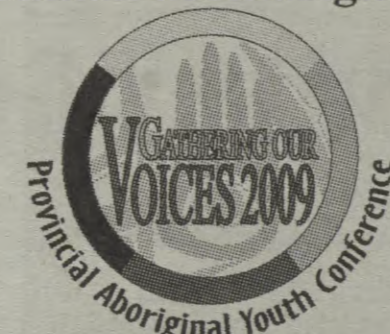
It's only in the last three or four years that people have been reviving this timeless ceremony, Shaughnessy commented.



Kwaxisitala, Clan Chief Adam Dick places Owums on Isabella's face to prepare her for her Hilt'low'gwa'la (naming) and he simulates plucking of her eyebrows. This part signifies that she will have physical beauty.. She is held by her grandfather, Chief George Shaughnessy, Maxwxwidziy.

**ALL PHOTOS BY
BERT CROWFOOT**

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[windspeaker confidential] — Crystal Favel

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

Crystal Favel: I value my husband's commitment to make my heart beat with harmony, hope and inspiration.

W: What is it that really makes you mad?

C.F.: When community members call me names and try to bully me for being different. It also hurts when you trust someone with your story/ music and they betray you with ulterior motives. Does honour not have its place in this world anymore?

W: When are you at your happiest?

C.F.: I love to visit the mountain I was born on; it grounds me. It takes me from my lowest feeling to my highest inspiration. I especially love speaking from the heart, it opens so many doors for me. I feel like I could reach out to the world.

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

C.F.: I am very tearful when I'm triggered by my past.

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

C.F.: I admire my business partner because there isn't one skill we don't cover as a team. He pushes me to push my limits and

I love that.

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

C.F.: Blazing trails is the most difficult thing I've done because by the time I've broken down barriers, I'm usually licking my wounds at the same time. It's bittersweet. I have also had to give up "the fight" to save my own life. It's hard to walk away.

W: What is your greatest accomplishment?

C.F.: I have touched the hearts and minds of thousands of people through my personal story of survival and my niche — DJ skills. I went from DJ-ing to motivational speaking and the combination empowers me to successfully move on in life. I am also a CEO of a corporation that uses multimedia to inspire the world. Did I forget to mention that I DJ'd for over 380,000 parade attendees this year in Vancouver on a moving float. That's going to be hard to top.

W: What one goal remains out of reach?

C.F.: I am attempting to write an autobiography, but I have no idea how to start.

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

C.F.: I would dedicate my life to the protection of every single

frog in the world.

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

C.F.: Nothing ever worth it in life ever came easy.

W: Did you take it?

C.F.: I sure did, I have the scars to prove it.

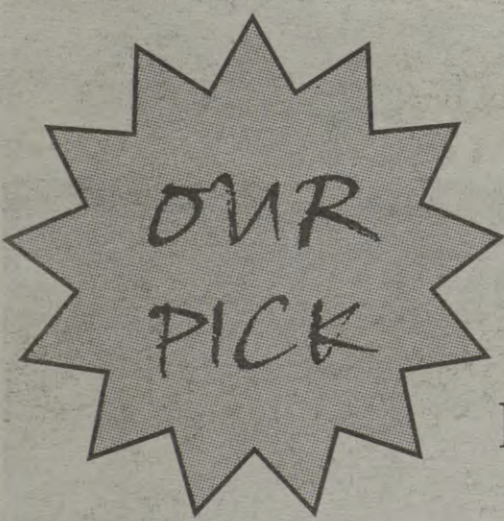
W: How do you hope to be remembered?

C.F.: Trail Blazer, Wax Warrior and "The One You Could Trust."

Crystal Favel is the CEO of Urban Indian Productions and is a proud member of the Métis nation. Favel is also known in North America as DJ Kwe — an award-winning DJ and cutting edge music producer who incorporated her own production company. Her trail-blazing ideas and projects exude innovation, excellence, and sharp-shooting organizational standards. She is known for her ability to inspire thousands of people through her ambitious vision. "The world awaits me," she proudly exclaims.



Crystal Favel also known as DJ Kwe



Artist—C-Weed
Album—Redemption
Song—Redemption
Label—Independent
Producer—Tom Dutiaume

C-Weed credits their friendship for longevity of band

After 28 years of producing countless albums and receiving many awards, C-Weed continues to do what others have sought to do and that's put out great music. The group credits their friendship to the longevity of their music. The current line up for the band includes group founder Erroll Ranville his brother Donn Ranville, Tom Dutiaume, Trevor Smith and Marc Arnould—all hardworking and dedicated musicians. C-Weed has also played a huge part in helping launch the careers of some of the Aboriginal music scenes key performers. Mitch Daigneult and JC Campbell who are artists making fine music of their own are two former members of C-Weed.

C-Weed's CD was officially released on Aboriginal Day, June 21, 2008 in Yellowknife, N.W.T. The title track and first single is entitled "Redemption", which was inspired by National Chief Phil Fontaine and his work with the Residential school Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The track "Redemption" follows the difficult journey of the Aboriginal people, and embraces the beginning of a "brave new world". The release came 10 days after The Prime Minister acknowledged and accepted responsibility for the atrocities endured by the Aboriginal peoples in the former residential school system.

Other songs on the CD include Live and Let Live and a Traditional version of Redemption with a drumming song performed by Michael Sr. and Kevin Esquash of the Spirit Sands Singers. "Redemption" is available on the bands Web site at www.cweedband.com.

[radio's most active]

ABORIGINAL RADIO MOST ACTIVE LIST

ARTIST	TITLE	ALBUM
Holly Vee	One Kiss	Love, Spurs & Rock N Roll
McKinley Matters	Such A Fool	The Seventh Day
Crystal Shawanda	My Roots Are Showing	Dawn Of A New Day
Mitch Daigneault	She Wants	Driving All Night
Ashley Robertson	Deep In The Night	Woman In The White Dress
Billy Joe Green	Honey Girl	First Law Of The Land
Highway 373	For All Time	No Limits
Mark Jacob	The Sweetest Thing	Can U Believe It
Jordan Dunning Band	Cake Walk Into Town	Roots At Hand
John J. Cook	Hey! Hey!	Of Love And Life
Shane Yellowbird	Life Is Calling My Name	Life Is Calling My Name
Angus Jourdain	Warriors	Single Release
Robby Romero	Who's Gonna Save You	Painting The World
Art Napoleon	Addicted	Siskabush Tales
Little Hawk	I Want To Cry	Home And Native Land
Wayne Lavallee f. Holly McNarland	Jealousy	Rock n Roll Indian Cowboy
C-Weed	Black And White	Redemption
Rick Stavely	To Fly Again	Single Release
Nadjiwan	Close My Eyes	Philosophy For The Masses
Michelle Boudrias	I Like It Like That	Single Release

CONTRIBUTING STATIONS:



Poetry book breaths inspiration and reflection

Shedding Skins
By Trevino L. Brings Plenty, Steve Pacheo, Joel Waters, and Luke Warm Water
Michigan State University Press
123 pages (sc)
\$15.95

In order to illustrate the power of poetry, one should have passion, must know pain, and must be able to breathe it onto the page. *Shedding Skins* is poetry in the truest sense of the word.

Shedding Skins is the brilliant result of a consortium of four Sioux poets. Each one of them bring something unique and powerful to the pages. Some of the poems play with the mind, while others punch you in the stomach with their brutal honesty.

"I don't dream anymore, I only remember." – an excerpt from *Building Rooms To Sell Dreams*, by Trevino L Brings Plenty.

The first of the poets is Trevino L. Brings Plenty, who not unlike

his name brings plenty of thoughts to the book. His poetry is both clever and sharp, in the way that he conveys a thought and could force one to either laugh or cry, but at the same time, could have you shaking your head in disbelief at how he managed to say it. His poetry manages to be the words when everyone else is speechless.

"The afternoon smell of fish frying in the kitchen, masking the smells of the night before" – excerpt from *Indian Country*, by Steve Pacheo

Steve Pacheo, as second contributor to this book, cleverly speaks of old family memories, and you kind of get the feeling that he wishes that his past didn't hold so much pain and dysfunction while at the same time you sense a thinly veiled fondness for it as well. It is yesterday's memories spoken from today's mind.

"I will never put anything before the importance of my own

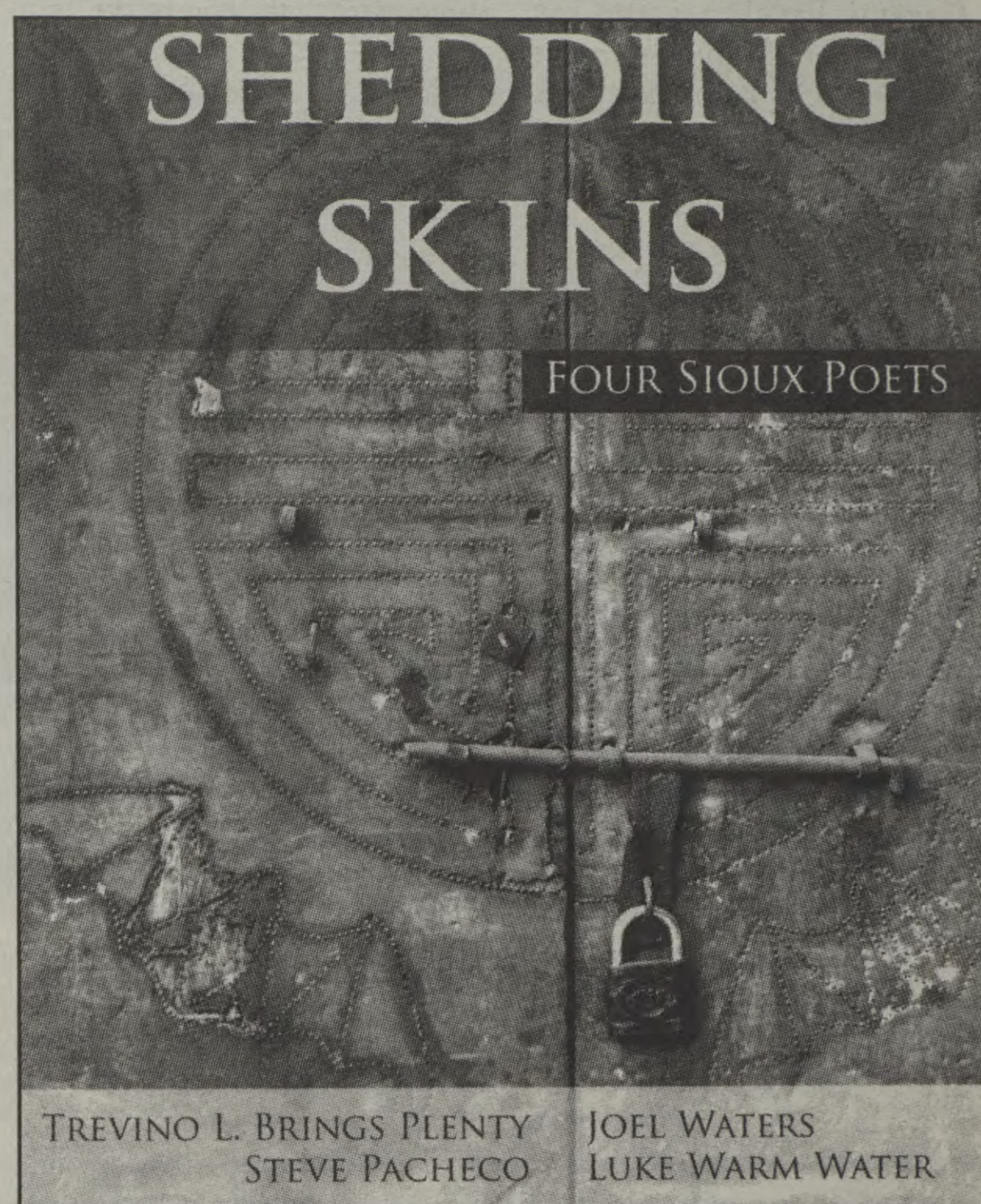
skin" – excerpt from *Wannabe*, by Joel Waters

The third poet is Joel Waters who conveys either the pride of being Native American or the lack thereof. The anger, pain, or impatience with the world can be felt with every carefully chosen word.

"This has been the gospel according to Luke Warm Water" – excerpt from *The Jesus Of Pine Ridge*, by Luke Warm Water

Last, but certainly not least in the quartet of poets is Luke Warm Water who appears to be the most seasoned of the poets. His poems are the "full meal deals" of poetry and require a sit down and read regimen to gather the true meaning. *Shedding Skins* is like walking through four abandoned homes with every memory in tact. All four poets are brilliant regarding their ability to turn something as ugly as the past into something as beautiful as a poem.

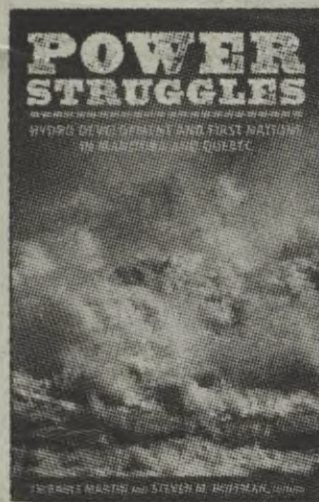
Review by Thomas J. Bruner



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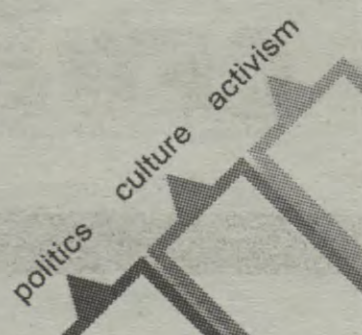
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Book examines the history of the Rock Cree through stories

Traditional Narratives of the Rock Cree Indians

Compiled by: Robert A. Brightman
Canadian Plains Research Center

185 pages (sc)
\$29.95

Traditional Narratives of the Rock Cree Indians was first published in 1980 by the Canadian Museum of Civilization and later released in 2007 by the Canadian Plains Research Center.

The stories presented in the book were compiled by Roger Brightman and are narratives from the Rock Cree in northwestern Manitoba. There are over 100 narratives. The folk literature includes medicine stories, humorous stories and stories of animal marriages and transformation.

The folklore narratives included in *Traditional Narratives of the Rock Cree Indians* are told to Brightman in English, some related to him in Cree and translated to English. Some of the narratives were from either Cree or English transcriptions.

The Cree expressions used by the narrators are retained in the Cree dialect. Some of the narrations are presented completely in the Cree dialect with the full English translation following.

Brightman includes a short history of the various dialects of the Rock Cree and in which regions these dialects are located. He includes a discussion of the structure and sequencing of *w+sahk+chk* the trickster-transformer stories between the different versions of some stories told.

ROBERT A. BRIGHTMAN

ācaḏōhkīwina
and ācimōwina



Traditional Narratives of the
Rock Cree Indians

Compiled by Roger Brightman, the stories told in *Traditional Narratives of the Rock Cree Indians* are presented in the Cree dialect with English translation. The expressions explore medicine stories, myths, legends and history of the Rock Cree from northwestern Manitoba.

Brightman includes bibliographical references within the text of the book and a list of the citations at the end.

Traditional Narratives of the Rock Cree Indians is for anyone who has a serious interest in

learning more about the Rock Cree, their myths, legends and history through the stories and discussions presented in this book.

Review by L. Christine Suthers

[books]

Children's book promotes culture and respect

Meshom and The Little One
By Elaine J. Wagner
Illustrated by: Marie-Micheline Hamelin
Theytus Books
56 Pages, (sc)
Ages 3 and up

Meshom and The Little One is published by Theytus Books, a First Nations publishing house based in Penticton British Columbia. Theytus Books produces and promotes Aboriginal authors, illustrators and artists. *Meshom and The Little One* is Elaine J Wagner's first book.

It is full of vivid descriptions of landscape and expresses the feelings of her characters' with we can relate. In *Meshom and The Little One*, Wagner has found a way to enlighten us to some of the Ojibwa culture and language that adds an educational element and enhances the story.

The illustrations in this book are the work of Marie-Micheline Hamelin. They complement the story of *Meshom and The Little One* perfectly. The drawings are playful and full of life. Hamelin has captured the essence of the story and the love shown by the characters in her drawings.

Meshom and The Little One is a story about a young Ojibwa girl, Shawna, and her difficult time adjusting to moving across the country with her mother. Her new home is very different from what she is use to. The small town on the prairies in Manitoba changes to a city near the mountains of British Columbia. Ten-year-old Shawna is sad and lonely. She misses her friends and cousins but she misses her grandparents the most.

Shawna sees her Meshom (Grandfather) and Kokum

(Grandmother) when they fly in to visit and to celebrate her birthday. Her grandfather gives her an unpainted plaster figure of a Ka-agashinshidig, a Little One, to watch over and protect her. He explains to her how the Little Ones' were tricksters and how they liked to play jokes and mischievous games. Meshom told Shawna that the Ka-agashinshidig was as unique as she was and that she should paint it by herself.

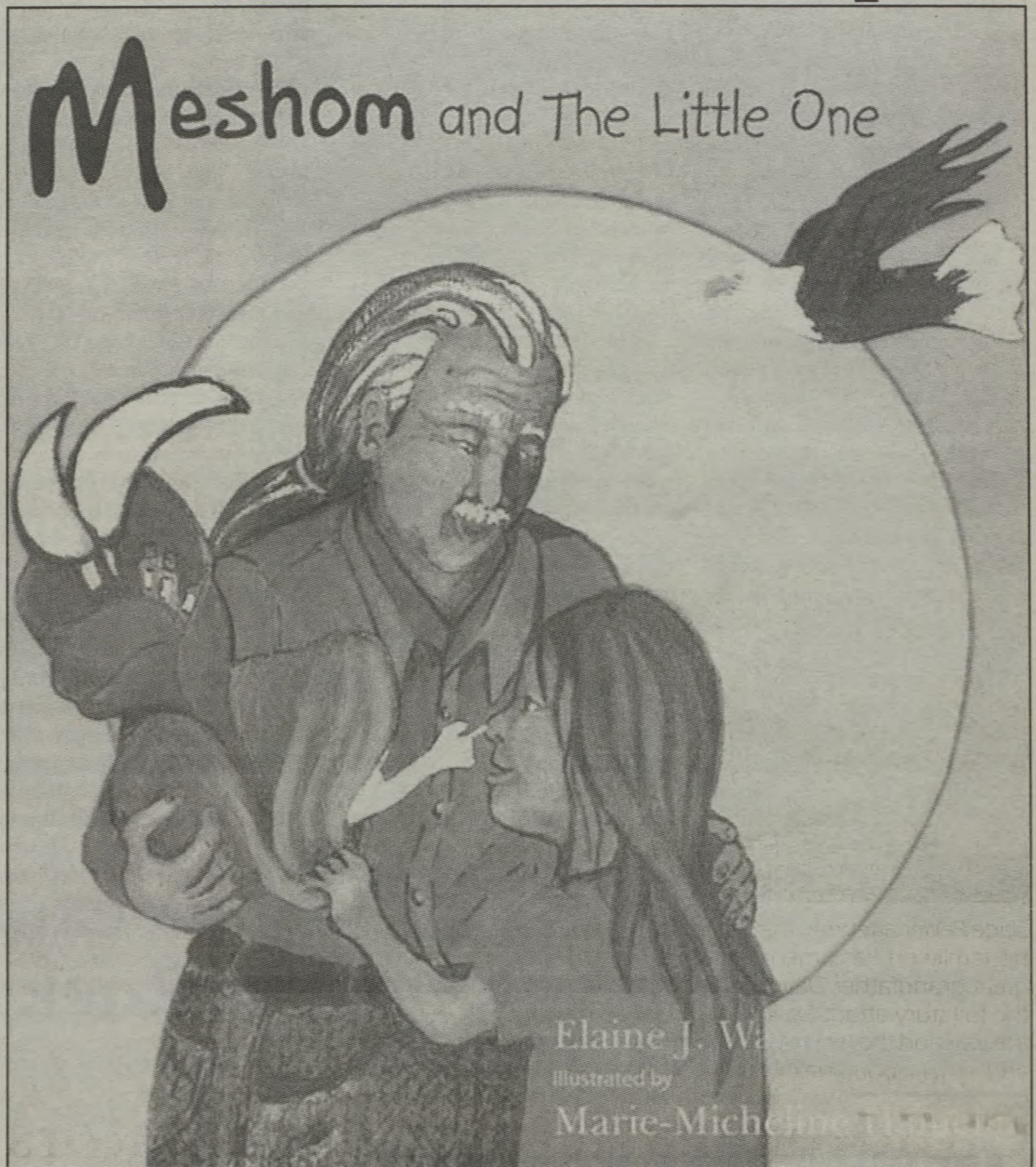
After her grandparents leave, Shawna and her mother visit a craft store and buy paints. Shawna sets about painting her Little One. She paints him in the colours that remind her of the traditional clothing of the Ojibwa. While she is painting she thinks of her Meshom and Kokum, the Elders, the lake her grandfather fished, and the colour of her father's eyes who died when she was very young.

Shawna talks to the Little One while she is painting. She tells it of the colours she is using, what she is feeling, and the friends she was looking forward to making when she started school. Shawna was happy.

She names her Little One Ogi-ma, which means Man of Esteem. As Shawna finishes painting Ogi-ma, Meshom and Kokum surprise her with a return visit. Her grandfather brought another a Ka-agashinshidig to paint and as a friend for Ogi-ma. Shawna names her new Little One Ogi-ma-kwe which means Woman of High Esteem.

Meshom and The Little One is an endearing story with characters full of love for each other and the Ojibwa culture. You and your children will enjoy this book. It is definitely worth the read.

Review by L. Christine Suthers



Meshom and The Little One tell the story, of a young Ojibwa girl, Shawna and her difficult time adjusting to a move across the country. The lonely feeling of missing her friends, cousins and grandparents seem to fade as she is visited by her Meshom and Kokum. She is given an unpainted plaster figure to paint. Shawna's Meshom explains to her the meaning behind the figure, which is a Ka-ahashinshidig, a Little One. It is meant to watch over Shawna. Author Elaine J. Wagner and artist Marie-Micheline Hamelin combine their talents in the children's book *Meshom and The Little One*. This story is aimed at children aged three and up, providing youngsters a chance to learn about appreciation and a chance to learn a bit about the Ojibwa culture.

A refreshing tale told with imaginative short stories

Shoot!
By George Bowering
New Star Books
253 pages (sc)
\$19.00

Shoot! Is set in the late 19th century in British Columbia and focuses on the little known McLean gang which was notorious in their day.

Shoot! begins with the McLean boys' parents background, going on to pieces of the boys lives, then illustrating how their hatred for rich ranchers and 'land grabbers' eventually leads them to their execution.

The McLean gang consisted of three McLean brothers Allan, Charlie, Archie and one friend Alex Hare; they are all Métis and come from abusive or negative parents. Raised with no real place in the world the boys seek to carve out their own place with lives full of crime and bragging.

They rampage across the high Chilcotin ranch country of

British Columbia in the 1870s, cattle rustling, stealing and eventually murdering two men in cold blood; this act sparks the change from wanted posters to a posse of over 100 men giving chase. At the time of their execution the youngest of the gang was 14 years old.

With approximately 60 books under his belt the British Columbian, award-winning author George Bowering began writing fiction novels in 1967. Born in 1935 with a B.A. in history as well as a M.A. in English literature, Bowering has been recognized as one of the foremost Canadian writers of his generation.

The book has so many threads of different 'side' stories, readers will have to pay close attention to grasp the complexities of the tale. At random, the book will wander from the McLean's to provide imaginative short stories in the same premise of the times, further illustrating the

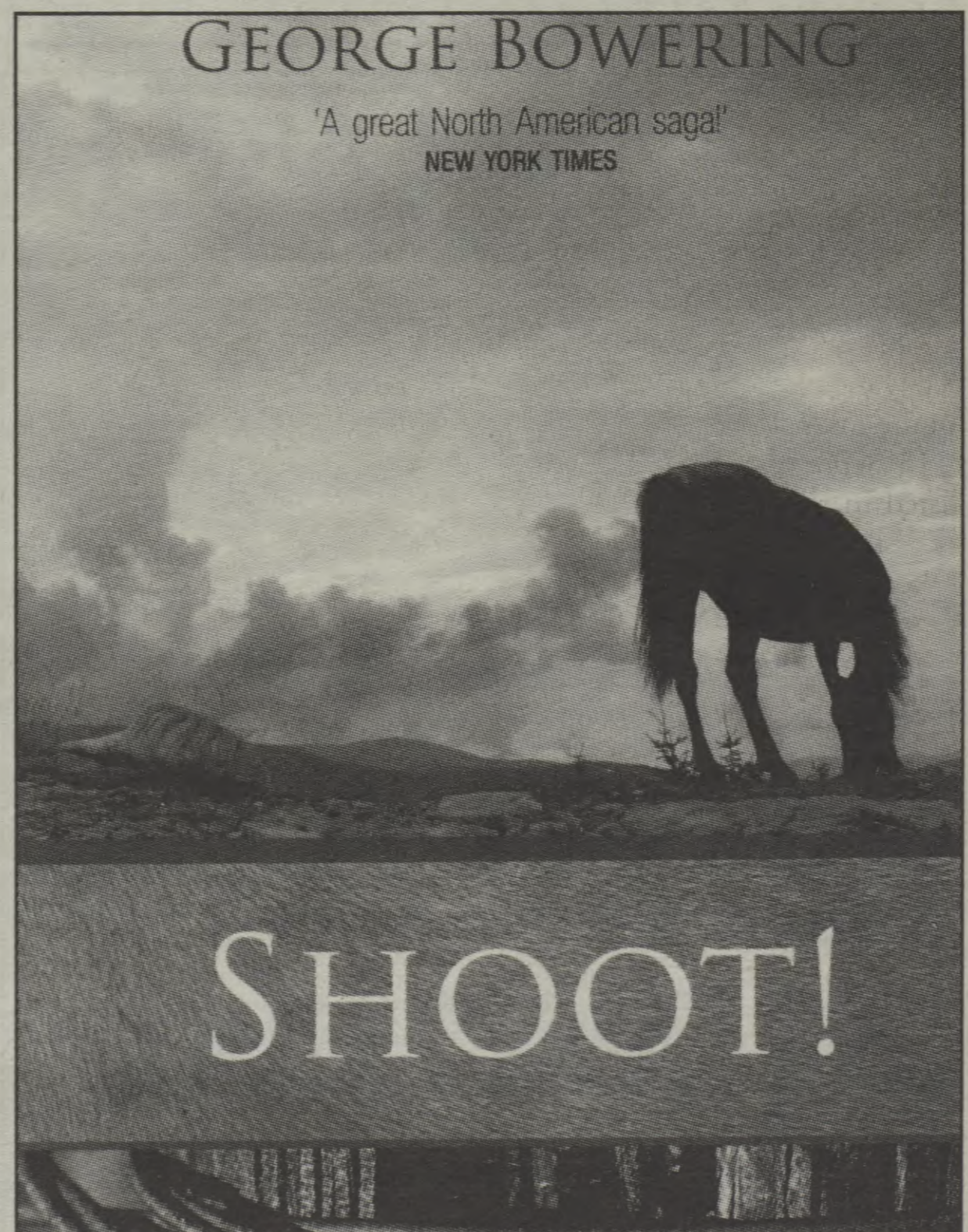
machinations of the storyline.

Shoot! is a book of historiographic metafiction filled mainly with examples of the prevalent prejudice of that century and followed closely by injustice, greed and violence.

The book is loaded with examples of racism in part when referring to the Mclean brothers. Near the end of the novel, when the judge is 'explaining' to the courtroom the 'epidemic' of 'half breeds' and states that the mixture of the white man with an Indian woman provides the offspring with a level of 'training' from the fathers blood but still not up to the 'father's grade'.

Shoot! is made interesting by the detailed attributes of each member of the gang, provided or imagined by Bowering, which when mixed with the little published facts about the gang makes for a refreshing tale.

Review by Chereise Morris





Slade Peltier attended the Remembrance Day ceremonies with his family on Parliament Hill Nov. 11. He holds a sign for his great grandfather David O. Peltier, an Aboriginal veteran. For the full story about David and his two brothers who served in the war and the long overdue recognition of their contributions and other Aboriginal veterans, turn to page 23.



PETER MOON

More than 60 Canadian Rangers from 14 First Nations from across Northern Ontario observed Aboriginal Veterans Day on Nov. 8 in a ceremony near Sioux Lookout. It was the first time Canadian Rangers in Ontario, who were on a week-long training exercise at Ojibway Provincial Park, have joined together to observe the day. Canadian Rangers are part-time reserve soldiers.

"What I saw today far exceeded my expectations. It was a phenomenal ceremony. I was totally moved by it," said Major Guy Ingram, commanding officer of the 3rd Canadian Ranger Patrol Group.

The Canadian Rangers marched behind an eagle staff carrier and a Royal Canadian Legion colour party and formed a circle around a sacred fire to the sounds of an Aboriginal drum group. Several Canadian Rangers carried the flags of their home communities. Ralph Johnson, an Ojibway Elder from Sioux Lookout, spoke about the many sacrifices made by Aboriginal veterans on behalf of Canada. "It's nice to see Aboriginal veterans honoured in this way," he said. "For so long they weren't"

(Inset) Several Rangers wore national decorations awarded them in recognition of their military service to Canada.

Children learn of their ancestors who served in the war

By **ANDRÉA LEDDING**
Windspeaker Writer

OTTAWA

According to Veterans Affairs Canada, at least 3,000 status Indians - including 72 women - enlisted in World War II; the numbers of Inuit, Métis, and non-status are unknown, but can be assumed significant.

In Wikwemikong located on Manitoulin Island, recognized as the only unceded reserve in Canada, over 350 men enlisted. All three Peltier brothers signed up - Andrew, the eldest, enlisted in World War I at age 19. The first war was over before he saw action; he was sent home to farm as an essential labourer in World War II. But younger brothers Leo and David O. Peltier went to Sicily together - and soon parted in the midst of battle.

In September 1943, Leo was listed in the *Globe and Mail* as "missing" - the family received a letter - and for close to two years, assumed dead.

"I was young myself, I didn't realize what the situation was and how it hurt my mother - she was always praying for them," said Georgina Roy, their youngest sibling, in a phone interview. Much later, a short letter arrived. "We didn't know for the longest time - but he said he was alright, not to worry, but everyone was worried."

A prisoner exchange of 84 men was made in 1945, but two years in Birkenau left Leo close to death, said Georgina, who saw

the German concentration camp many years later.

"He was nothing but skin and bones, they had to fatten him up in England. He used to talk about it, but not too much - it made him sad," she said, describing the harsh conditions. "There was a huge kettle of water and they'd throw one cabbage and a few carrots in for soup, that was all. It was terrible."

He arrived in Toronto the same day as David, and their happy reunion was reported in the *Toronto Star*.

"When they finally got home, they walked quite a bit at night - they'd get up and walk the floor - they still had trauma, it went on quite a while," noted Georgina. By the time they returned, she was married and had a child. Her brothers were happy to return to their own wives and the young children they'd left behind. Supporting families during the Depression was one of the main motivations of many soldiers. "They didn't want to talk about it, what happened, the friends who were shot and killed. It was too hard, I guess we really don't understand war until we're right in it. Those men went through a lot, all those men in the army. A lot."

Georgina said many today don't think of it - war is just a word for them. A young vet recently returned from five years in Afghanistan, bringing memories of her brothers.

"All you'll see is tears running down their faces when they think about it. I'd advise people to

really think about and have respect for these men."

David's son Alex, noted other veterans got land grants while Native veterans received nothing. Georgina agreed David had gotten just enough to buy a plough and horse team.

"They decided in the last ten years to compensate, but a lot had died already - my dad didn't get to see his compensation, so the family received nothing," noted Alex - his dad wasn't happy about it, but mentioned it only once that he can recall. "So the government paid off the few that managed to live until 2000 and figured that was good enough."

In Wikwemikong, kids are taught in school and at home about the great sacrifice of so many local men - vets from both World Wars, Korea, Vietnam, and current wars - but he thinks overall, there isn't enough awareness in Canada of the fight for country and liberty. His father always used to say that we have our freedom now because of the war, and what they fought for.

"I know I've always taken my kids to Remembrance Day and told them about their grandfather," he said.

They're now passing it on to the fourth generation; a recent picture of his two year old grandson Slade holding a picture of great-grandfather David on the cover of a *Montréal* paper brought tears to his eyes. "My dad had a lot of courage. He'd seen it all. He was right in the front lines."

And Slade's father, Alex Jr., and

wife Katelin are determined to teach children Lexie, Slade, and Brooke, about their legacy. Living in Ottawa, they've looked up archives and attended memorials with their kids.

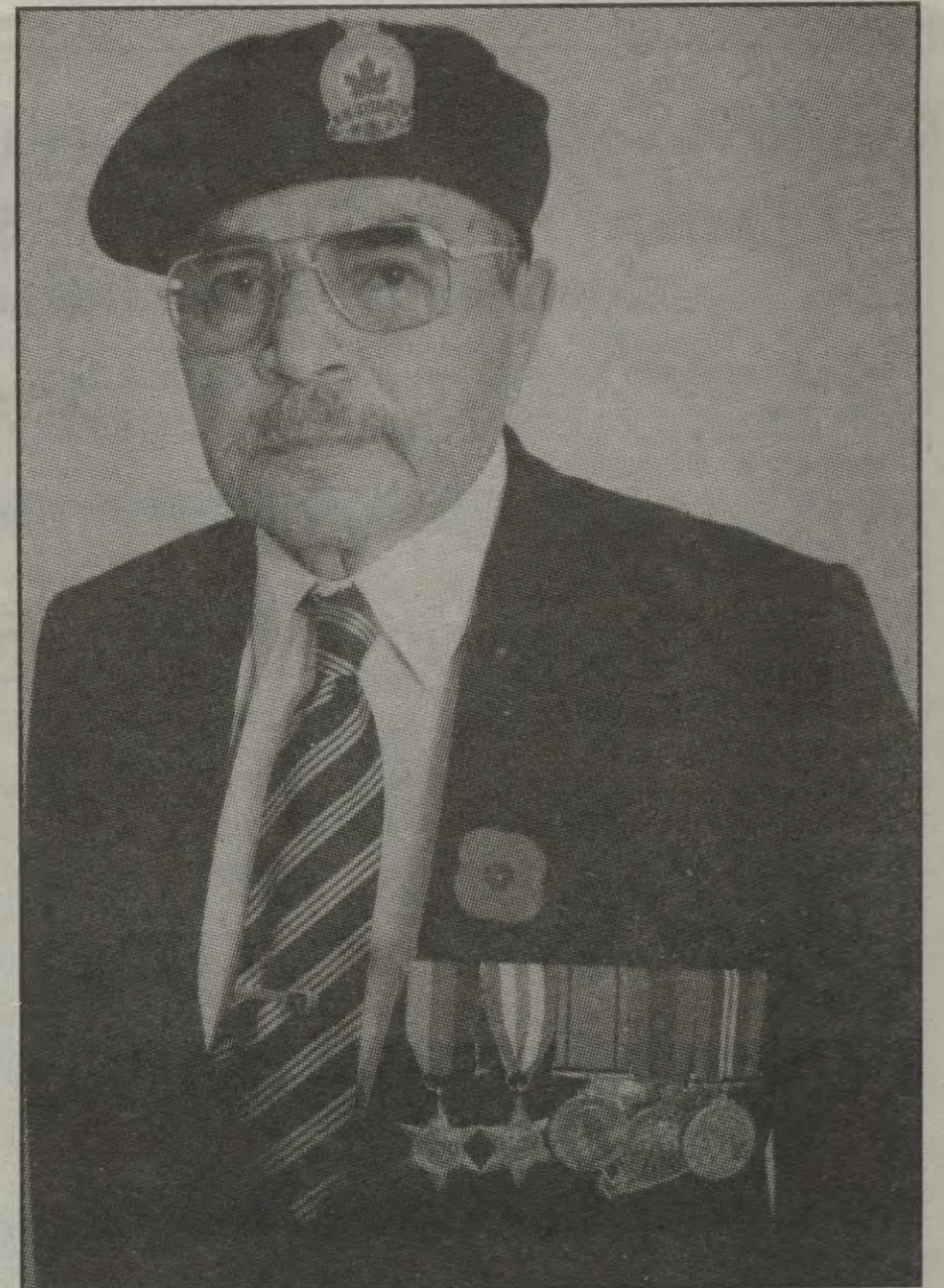
"They have a statue now, right near Parliament dedicated to all the First Nations vets that fought in World War I and II - it's quite amazing - eagle, wolf, and bear, we take the kids out there to see that every now

and then," Alex Jr. said, adding there is little else in the way of acknowledgment. "From the stories I hear, they used a lot of Natives on the front line - they were a lot of the first ones to get killed."

His grandfather was instrumental in teaching him to be a man, take responsibility for his family, and respect his own parents, Alex Jr. adds.

"When he was working for the band council he'd always try to get work for unemployed people."

He adds, although his



David O. Peltier was an Aboriginal veteran who served in Sicily.

grandfather never talked about it, inequality during and after was apparent. He used to drive his grandfather to the Legion to visit with some of his old war buddies.

"He also mentioned to join the army now, it's different, they train you a lot better to be a soldier. Back then, they basically gave you a gun and sent you out there and you [didn't] know what to do," he said.

And if Slade wants to follow in his great-grandfather's footsteps? "If my son wanted to be a soldier, I'd respect his choice and back him up anyway I can."

History of Huron village honoured

(Continued from page 13.)

On average, one village like the one found on the Alexandra site is discovered in the Toronto area every year.

Williamson said he finds it wonderful, dealing with children because they are very honest and direct with their observations and questions. One child, who looked at the artifacts after the presentation, inquired why she never knew about this history and why does she only have to read it in a textbook when this site was here all along.

"And she kept going on about how it wasn't right that she didn't know about this history. I wish governments could see how this history was important to her, and she was of Asian decent. It's the history of where she lives," added Williamson.

Luc Laine, whose ancestors called the ancient village their home, also spoke to the students.

"For me, I was very pleased and honoured to be part of this ceremony and to meet the people who are interested in knowing more about us," said Laine.

Also, it is important that upcoming generations will know about the Huron people in Ontario. The students at the ceremony seemed open-minded and eager to learn about the history. The presentations gave the teenagers the opportunity to learn about archeology and to know that this kind of history happened in their backyard.

"I think for them, it was eye-opening and they will remember this for the rest of their lives," added Laine.

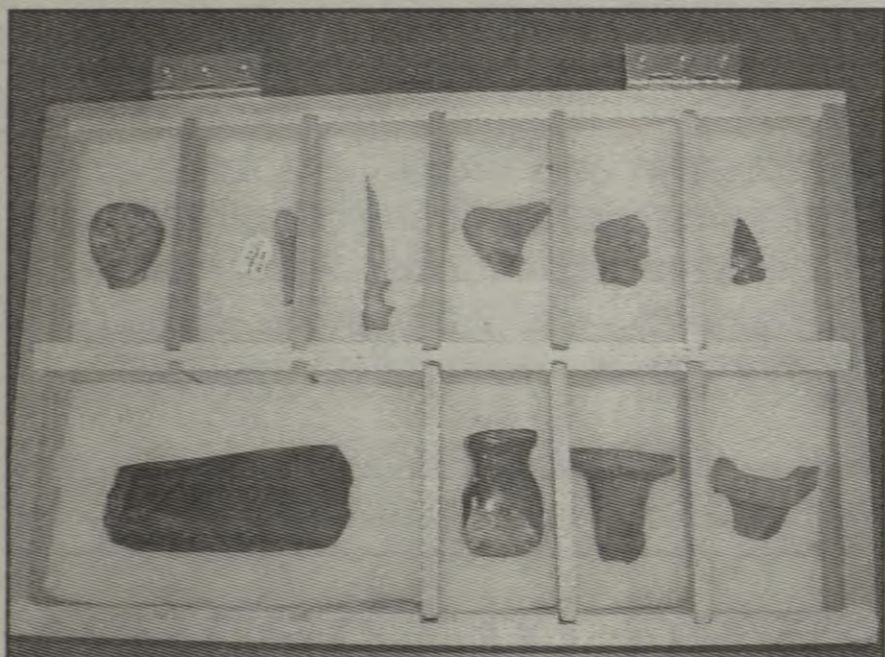


PHOTO BY DAINA STEVENS

Artifacts found on the Alexandra site were on display for students to view at Scarborough's Mary Ward Catholic Secondary School on Nov. 14.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Alexander First Nation Health Services Community Health Nurse

Alexander Health Services is seeking a Registered Nurse, who will, under the direction of the Health Director & Community Health Nurse will assist in the following duties

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Professional Qualifications:

- Experience in Community Health preferred
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BC treaty process

(Continued from page 11.)

"The Tla-o-qui-aht muschim (common people) are withdrawing their consent to the illegal theft of Tla-o-qui-aht territory through what is known as the ITA," she read.

She said the Tla-o-qui-ahts have 276,000 acres of land that they claim in their ha'houlthee (territory) and the agreement has been pushed forward without proper consultation.

"We are disturbed as we continue to hear that this ITA is going through without due process of a vote as in previous years. It's simply undemocratic."

Chief Frank thanked Ogilvie for having the courage to come forward to voice her concerns, and promised to sit with the group to share information about the ITA and the ongoing process.

Frank described the agreement as "one of many important building blocks to achieve the

ultimate goal of a modern-day treaty."

"This is only a starting point," said Frank. "It isn't at the end. It isn't in the middle... It's the start of what we need to do," to secure a future for the people of Tla-o-qui-aht. "Each day that passes is an opportunity lost."

He said the ITA is an opportunity to protect the interests of the Tla-o-qui-aht and a future for Tla-o-qui-aht's children.

This agreement is one way forward, said Premier Campbell.

"The Tla-o-qui-ahts are taking a leadership position. You are the first. And sometimes it is frightening to be the first this first step can lead to a second step, which will lead to a third step, which can lead to a treaty that can make a difference in the lives of every single one of you, in the province, and in the country as well."

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Keyano College is currently seeking an experienced, dynamic individual to assume this full-time faculty position commencing December 2008. Originally opened in 1965, Keyano College is a board governed community college located in Fort McMurray. The College employs over 400 full and part-time employees in faculty, support and administrative positions, and provides services to over 9,000 credit and non-credit students at three campuses and several regional learning centers.

The Keyano College Counseling & Career Services department is a comprehensive center which provides personal, career and academic counseling, disabilities services, co-operative education and career services. The successful candidate will work with Aboriginal students to assist them with personal, educational and social concerns. Duties include working with Aboriginal students in the development of individualized educational and career plans, providing support with financial planning and assisting with the organization and implementation of cultural events. You will work closely with instructors and other college personnel to provide appropriate support for students. Travel to the regional campuses is required.

QUALIFICATIONS: Master's degree in educational psychology, counseling or social work with a minimum of three years experience working in a college counseling center, with demonstrated understanding of the needs and issues of college students. Professional designation such as Chartered Psychologist or Registered Social Worker, and member in good standing (or eligible of membership) in professional organizations such as the College of Alberta Psychologists or Alberta College of Social Workers is preferred for this position. The successful candidate must demonstrate the ability to multi-task, take initiative to develop program ideas and collaborate with colleagues. Excellent communications skills and a commitment to working in a team environment are required. An understanding of Northern Native communities and Aboriginal cultures is an asset.

COMPETITION NUMBER: 0809-ABC-083

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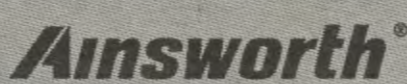
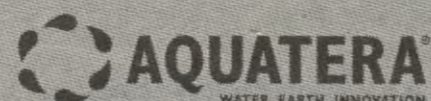


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[footprints] George Blondin

His family, Native tradition and caring for others mattered most to Blondin

By Dianne Meili

Dene author George Blondin was one of few Aboriginal people who spoke openly about medicine power because he felt young people should know where they came from.

The prolific writer passed away at the advanced age of 87 on Oct. 12 after suffering a stroke this year in his Northwest Territories home.

Blondin was candid about the past, going so far as to reveal his own medicine power story in his first book *When the World was New*. At five years old he was sent to get water early in the morning when an "old man with long white hair" rose from the lake and startled him. Dropping his pail, he raced back to the family tent and his mother's lap.

Since he had not naturally embraced the spirit, his parents resigned themselves to the fact he wouldn't be a medicine man and stopped trying to help him get power. Blondin writes that he should have welcomed the power-bringer, but instead, resigned himself to working hard in a mundane life like most people.

"My father wasn't trying to be disrespectful when he spoke of these things," said Blondin's son, Ted, who explained his father grew up in times extremely different from today. Even in 1923, when he was born in the Great Bear Lake region of the Northwest Territories, people relied on medicine power – not money. Having medicine power meant having a successful life – perhaps being a good hunter or healer, or knowing about events before they happened.

"My father wrote about these things because they are important to being Dene," said Ted, and he wanted young people to realize

this part of themselves. "Medicine power is a phenomenon that is hard to understand and so it is not spoken of openly. But my father meant only to preserve this knowledge and he worked hard to explain it. He knew young people weren't sitting around the fire listening and talking to the old people so much anymore, and so he wrote down stories so they could read them."

Blondin preserved countless stories of life before contact in minute detail, indicating how precise his memory was right up until his passing.

"A lot of his stories describe how people could interact with animals, and how the spirit of a man could change into a caribou, for example. This man would then learn of caribou nature – how they reacted to certain things, how they moved on the land and where they liked to stay. Then, back in his human spirit, he would have a good idea of where to hunt for them," Ted explained.

Due to mutual compliance, good hunters never failed to perform certain rituals for animals when they died so they could be reborn, thanking them for sacrificing their lives so humans could live.

Interpretation of the way the world works has been lost, Blondin believed, and so he published three books conveying stories with spiritual themes. The public is receptive to them, and his latest title, *Trail of the Spirit: Mysteries of Dene Medicine Power Revealed*, published in the fall of 2006, sits on publisher NeWest Press's bestseller list.

"I found more of my father's papers in a briefcase when I cleaned out his apartment," said

Ted, explaining his father was an incessant writer who had a fourth book in the works and enough material for a fifth. Many of his stories were also printed in a long-running weekly column in *Yellowknife's News/North*.

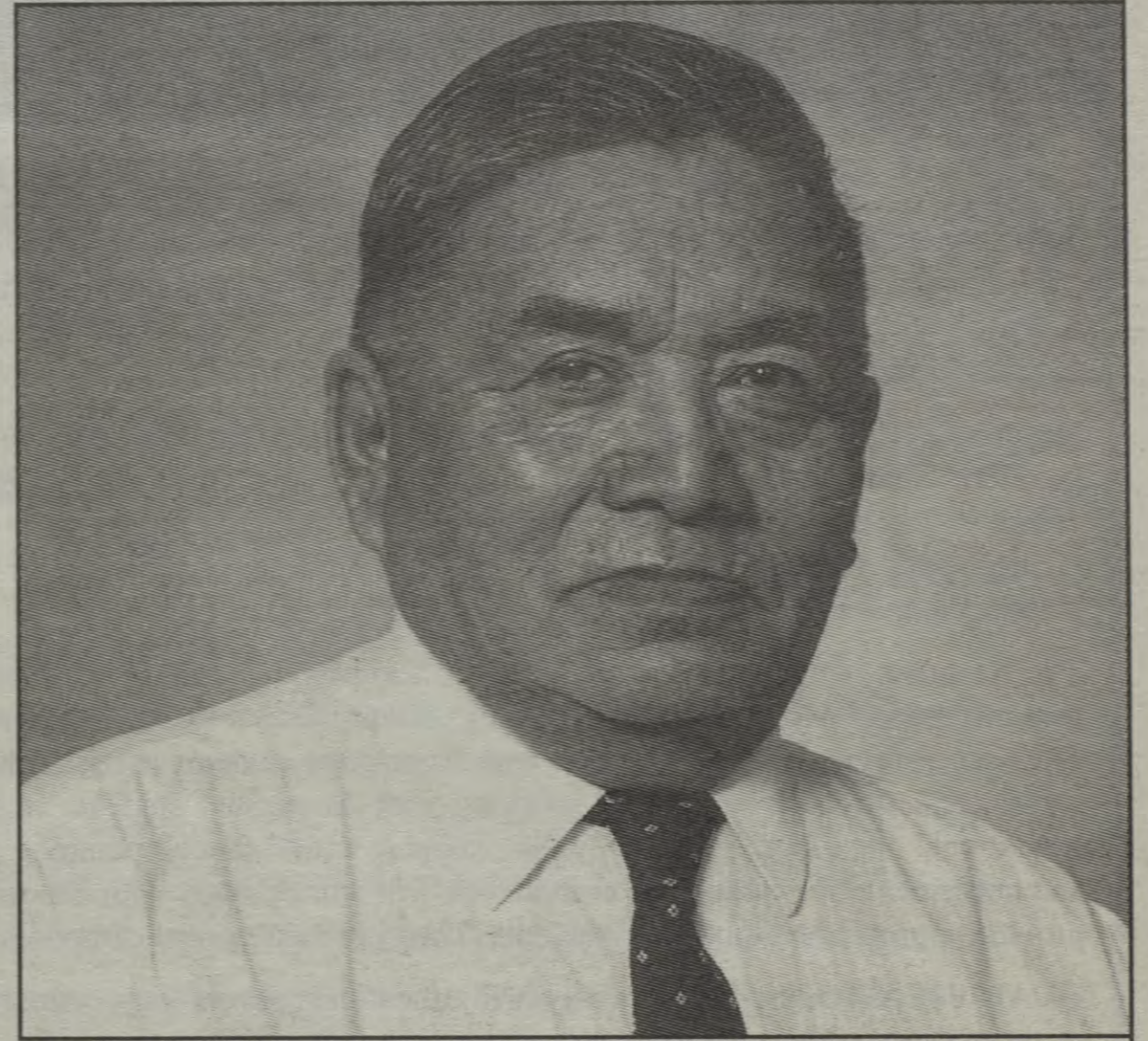
"My father might be washing the dishes and thinking about something when he'd get the urge to write it down," said Ted. "One time he left the water running and sat at the table scribbling away. When the water wet his feet, he just lifted them up and kept writing, that's how focused he was."

"And he had a story for everything. At a bookfest in Whitehorse, he was interacting with his audience when someone asked him what earthly good were mosquitoes. Not missing a beat, he was able to launch into a story about a hunter sitting on top of a hill, near a lake, on a very warm day, looking to hunt a moose to bring meat to his family. Pretty soon, the swarms of mosquitoes drove the poor moose into the lake's water and the hunter made his kill there. He was able to illustrate to the crowd how the mosquito is a hunter's best friend."

For his storytelling efforts, Blondin received the Ross Charles award in 1990 for Native journalism and was inducted as a member of the Order of Canada in 2003.

Keenly interested in the future as well as the past, Blondin attended political meetings dealing with issues from land protection to jobs in the Northwest Territories.

"He was set to attend an economic conference just before he died," explained Ted. "He really cared about his people and



George Blondin

he made sure all of his children were educated so we could go on to help people."

But Blondin's first love was the land, and he abandoned hunting and trapping only when he lost his first son to pneumonia in 1958. After that, he moved to Yellowknife to be closer to the hospital and schools for his other children. He holds no malice over the fact he was given underground jobs at Giant Mine that no one else wanted to do, because he was Aboriginal he surmised, and simply moved back to Deline (Fort Franklin) to resume hunting and trapping as soon as his children finished school. It didn't take long for him to be elected chief of the Deline First Nation in 1984, and to serve as Dene Nation vice president later.

At the time of his death Blondin was living

independently in Behchoko (Rae-Edzo) just outside of Yellowknife, though residential management didn't want him cooking for himself.

"I took him a fresh whitefish and when I got to his unit, no one was there. Except there was this pot smoking away on the stove," Ted recounted. "When I saw dad later, he laughed and said he had heard about a drum dance in the community – then just grabbed his coat and left."

That was just like dad, getting all excited about a cultural event and forgetting about everything else, Ted said.

Predeceased by his wife Julia, sons Walter and John, and daughter Georgina, Blondin is survived by his children as well as many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. He was laid to rest in Yellowknife on Oct. 15.

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Eagle and Hawk won "Aboriginal Entertainer of the Year", "Best Duo or Group", "Best Rock CD" for *Red Road Stories* and "Best Song Writer" at the 2008 Aboriginal Peoples Choice Music Awards in Winnipeg, Man. held on Nov. 7 as part of the Manito Ahbee Festival. Eagle and Hawk's Gerry Atwell (left), Vince Fontaine (center) and Jay Bodner accept their awards.

Crystal Shawanda was also a multiple award winner. Crystal received awards for "Best Country CD" for *Dawn of a New Day*, "Best New Artist" and "Single of the Year" for *You Can Let Go* at the 2008 Aboriginal Peoples Choice Music Awards held at the MTS Centre in Winnipeg, Man.



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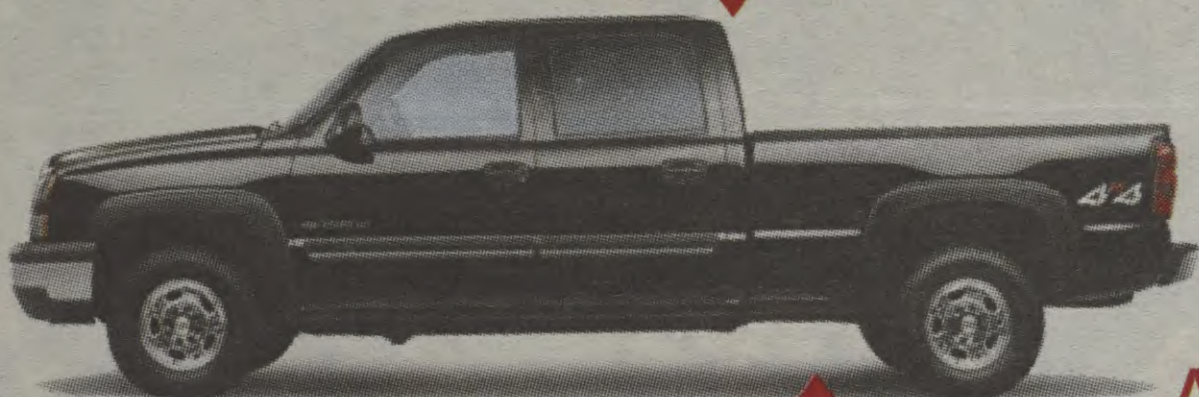


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“Swirling Butterfly” Photograph submitted by Leah Lalonde Calgary, Alberta



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