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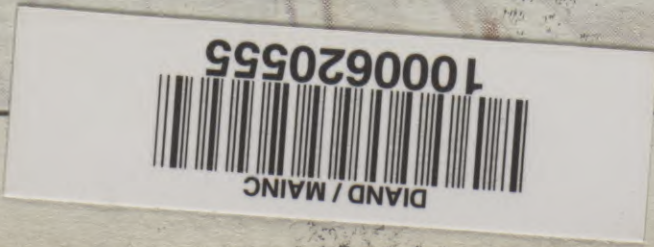
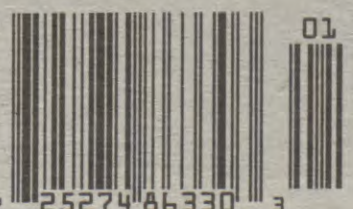
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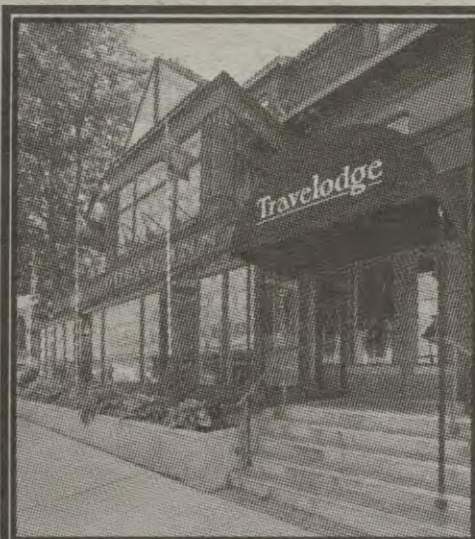
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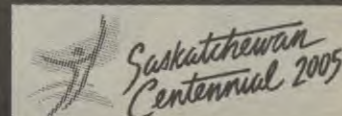


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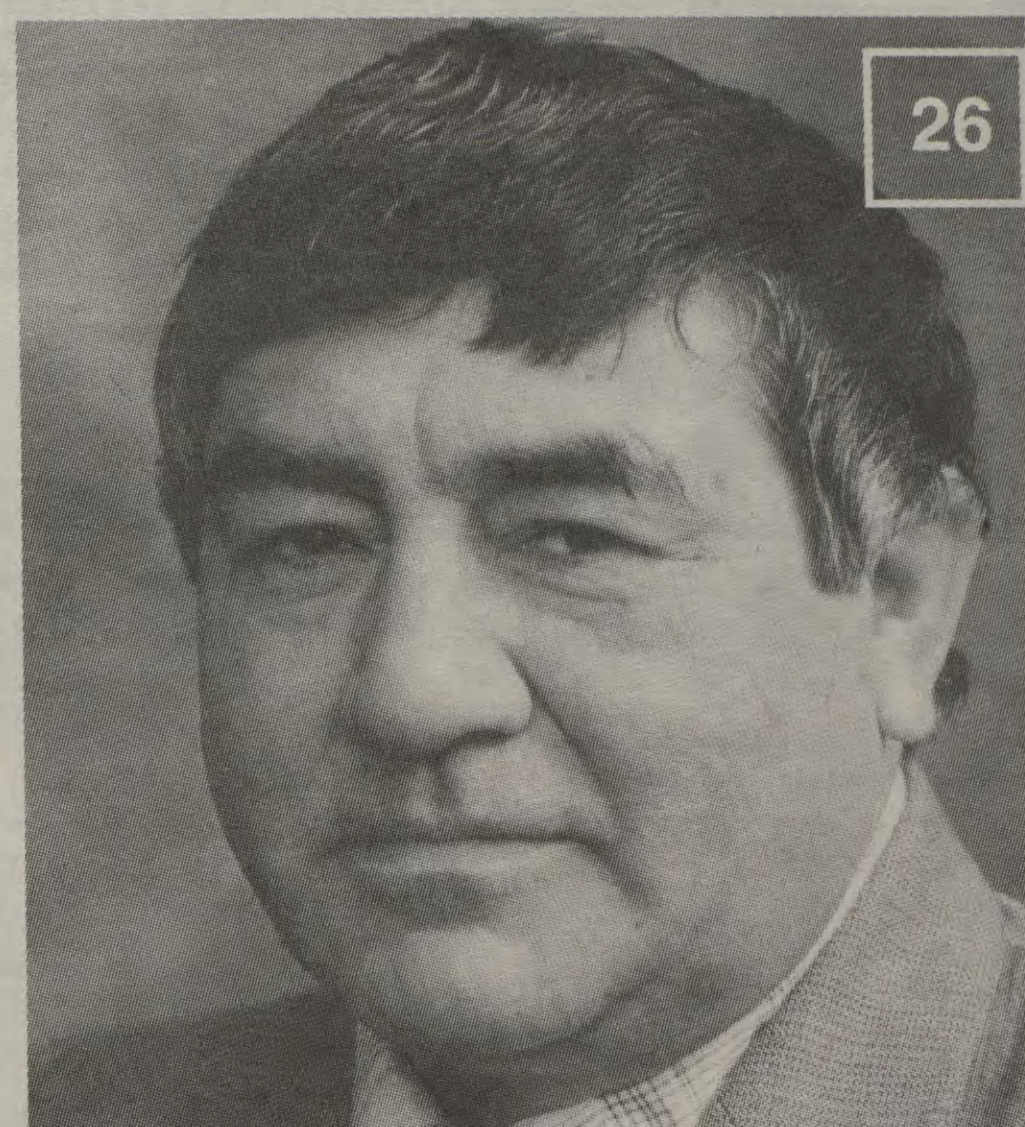
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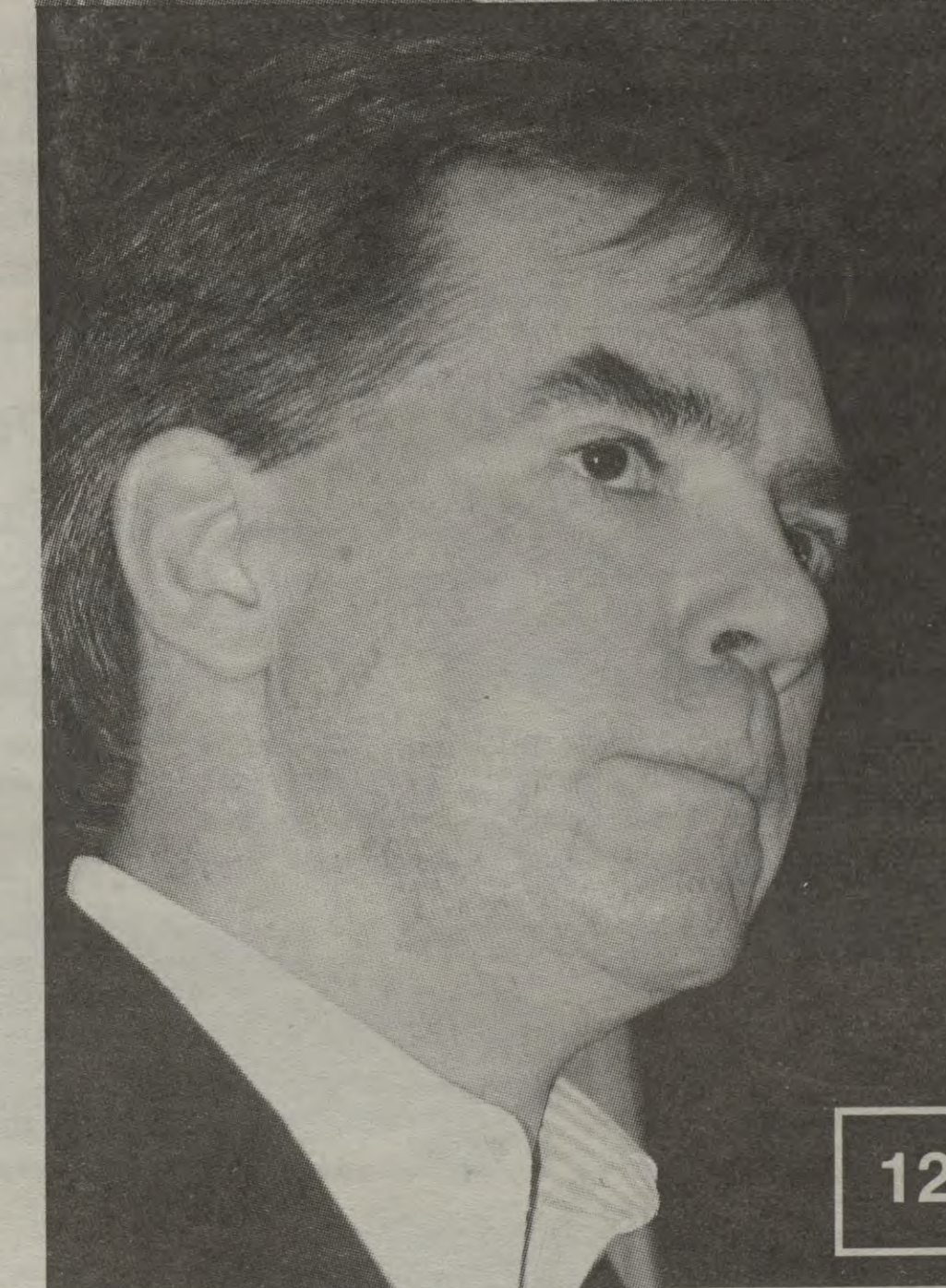
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for more information.We acknowledge the assistance of the Government
of Canada through the Publications Assistance
Program toward our mailing costs.**Canada****Features****First ministers' deal a go with chiefs 8 & 9**It was a big month for Aboriginal people on the
political front. The threat to bring down the Liberal
government before the planned first ministers'
meeting in Kelowna could be held made people in
power squirm, but the meeting with Aboriginal
leaders happened and promises were made. Now
we'll see what an election brings.**A "matter of weeks" for some 11**Those former residential school students who
turned 65 after May 30, 2005 can expect to see an
early payment of the compensation announced in
November sometime in January. So says the
national chief of the Assembly of First Nations.**Showdown over accusations in the House 12**When Conservative MP Jim Prentice showed up to
the special assembly of chiefs in Ottawa in
December to pitch his party's election platform, he
had a surprise waiting for him—a man whose
reputation he's been bashing in the House of
Commons took the opportunity to confront him.**See Windspeaker's special
focus on festival week in
Toronto—the music awards,
the powwow, the fashions and
more... Pages 14 to 16****Departments****[rants and raves] 5**Call it a late holiday gift from Windspeaker to the
Assembly of First Nations leadership. We actually
have nice things to say this month and offer our
congratulation on a job well done. A tip of the hat
from us to them.**[what's happening] 7****[radio's most active] 13****[book report] 13****[strictly speaking] 17****[footprints] 26**Sam Sinclair was a fighter, there's no denying that.
He fought on the battlefields in Europe during the
Second World War for his country, he fought in the
boxing ring for personal glory and he fought in the
political arena to bring Metis people recognition in
the Canadian Constitution and build the Metis
Nation so that others wouldn't have to fight.

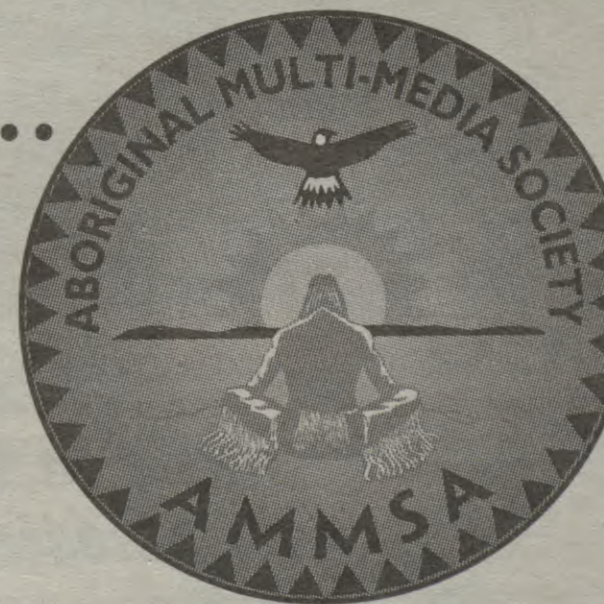
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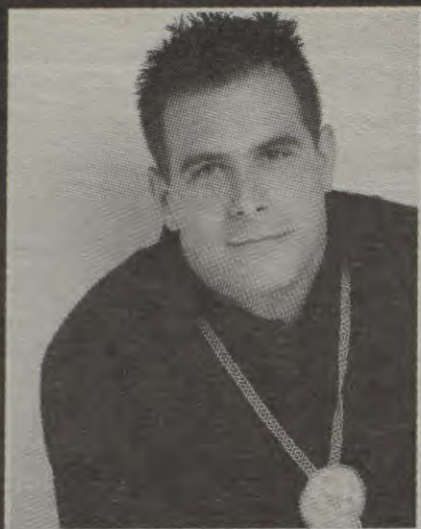


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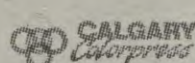
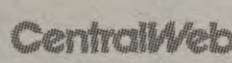
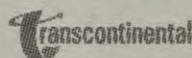
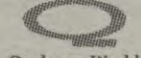
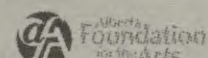
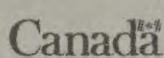
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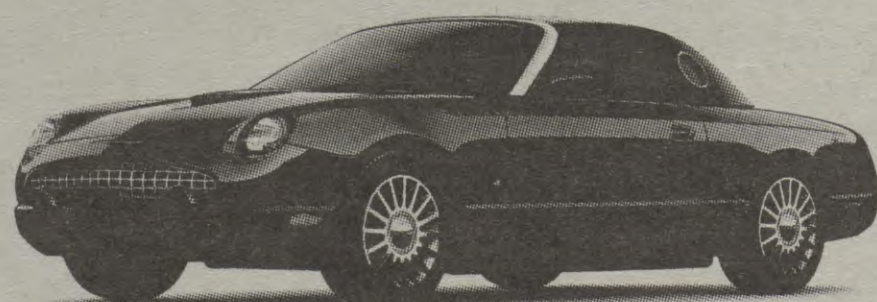
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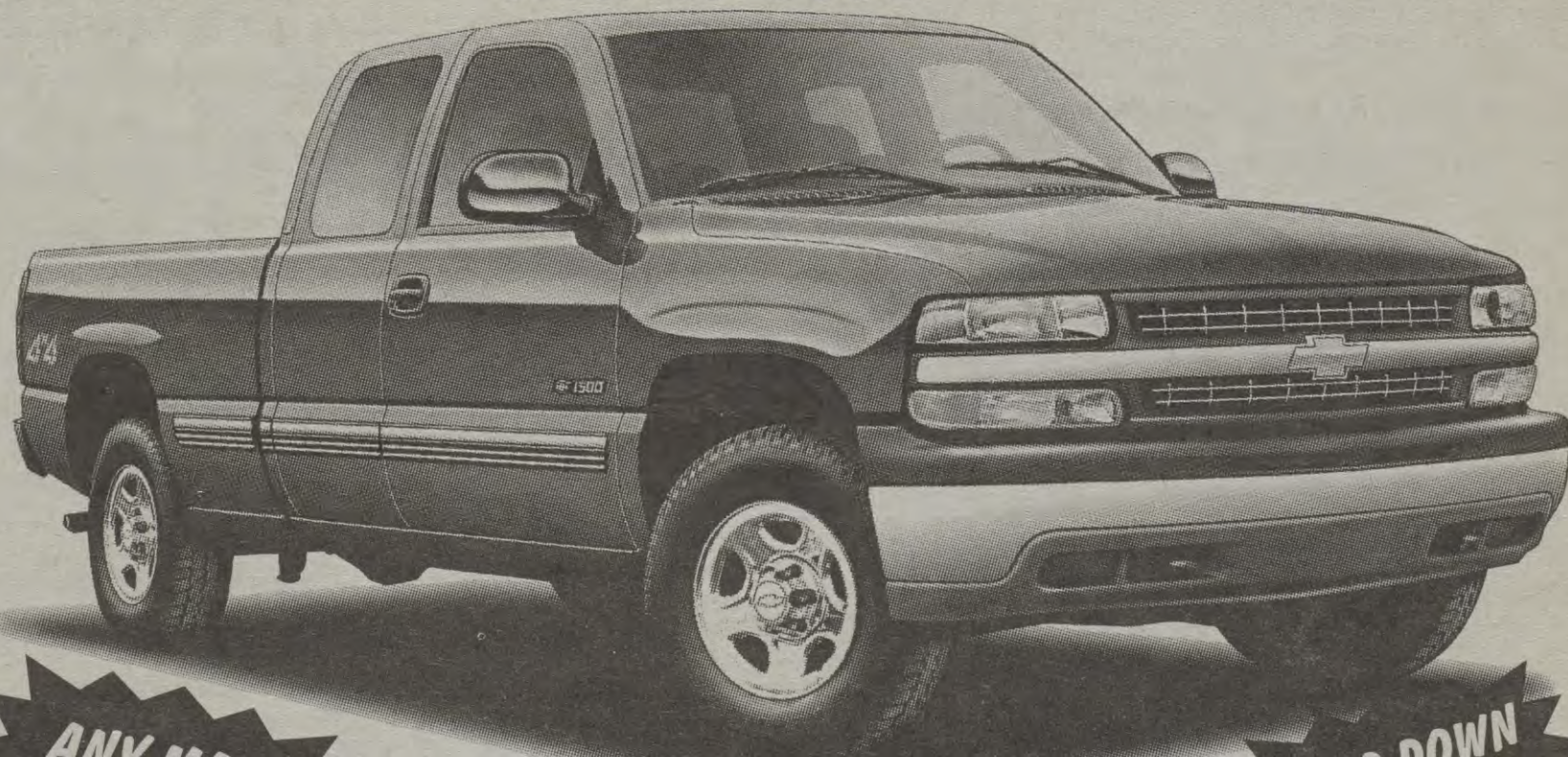
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Read it here first —Chiefs shine

The conduct of the chiefs as demonstrated at a recent special assembly held in Ottawa has given us hope for the future of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN).

There, we said it. And we'll freely admit it's a strange feeling now that it's out there, because optimism is just plain counter-intuitive in a newsroom.

Our job is to look at events with critical eyes, to look for holes, be vigilant against self-serving agendas. There is no shortage of those in politics. The chiefs, however, want us to be their cheerleader. They expect we will take everything they say at face value, not roll it around in our heads, examine it against other perspectives, analyze its worth. In doing our work in such a way, some have accused us of being anti-Phil Fontaine or anti-AFN. Our purpose is either misunderstood, or is used against us as a political ploy designed to knock us off our game. No problem there; that's the way the game is played. Politics is a rough sport.

But it's one thing to be critical as a matter of principle and another thing to be critical for the sake of being critical. Only the former makes for good journalism.

It's been a long time coming, but the First Nation leadership has finally given us something to cheer about, a chance to prove that we do not exist just to be pugnacious. The December 2005 chiefs' confederacy distinguished itself as one that was positive and productive. This one was different. Things got done.

Thirty odd resolutions, all of the resolutions that were put forward by the chiefs, were passed. More remarkable, they were passed without a single dissenting voice. Resolutions that might have sparked disagreement were worked out respectfully by the parties. Gone, for the most part, was the grandstanding, the empty, nauseating rhetoric that has marred many AFN gatherings.

What was witnessed from Dec. 6 to 8 in Ottawa were delegates facing a series of difficult challenges that were taken up and disposed of with class.

We were impressed with how the Quebec delegation very respectfully stated it could not endorse the national executive's approach to engaging the first ministers in Kelowna. The Quebec chiefs stood united behind their regional chief Ghislain Picard as a sign of respect for their fellow chiefs and for the AFN as an organization.

Just as impressive was the British Columbia delegation's answer to Quebec. Once again, respect for diversity of opinion and approach, and a strong sense of honor, were the hallmarks of that moment.

Then Six Nations (Ontario) Chief Dave General and First Nations Summit (British Columbia) leader Doug Kelly iced the cake. Ontario and B.C. have been at each other's throats at just about every AFN assembly in recent memory. But by working together behind the scenes and coming to an understanding over a couple of crucial resolutions, Ontario and B.C. avoided the usual brinkmanship that usually ensues.

As for the national chief, Fontaine received a standing ovation for his performance on the residential school compensation file and there was a sense it wasn't mere political theatre. Even though Fontaine himself recited a long list of shortcomings and potential criticisms that could be directed at that agreement, the bottom line is that there is now something there where before there was nothing.

So, there it is. Praise for the AFN from *Windspeaker*. We know it will cause howls of outrage among the many who work to oppose Fontaine for either political or philosophical reasons. Their response is of no consequence. We do this for our readers; to let them know that we saw something positive and add our voice to the congratulations that has been directed towards the national chief and his executive.

We are aware of the criticisms that surround the initiatives spearheaded by the AFN—residential school compensation, the Kelowna accord. We are aware that Fontaine's political opponents contend there is a poison pill at the centre of those agreements, that he is giving the government exactly what it wants in exchange for short-term gain. Only time will tell who's right on that question and we know that. If a federal government that is willing to follow through on the commitments made in Kelowna is elected and then it turns out Fontaine's led us astray, you can be sure we'll be very well motivated to tell that story in great detail.

—*Windspeaker*

Think of the Elders

Dear Editor:

I wanted to share a gift giving idea for this season specifically for our Elders. I know it may not make your December issue, but I think that it is an idea that can be used throughout the year.

I believe that the gift of time is the most important gift that we can give during this season. Our Elders would appreciate the gift of our time more than they would cherish electronic equipment, dust catching knick knacks or even more moccasins.

To give the gift of time is as easy as frying up a dozen bannocks, bagging them, tying them with ribbon and including, maybe, a basket of different teas. Bring them over to an Elder's home.

Sit with an Elder, drink a cup of hot tea, eat some jam covered bannock and share stories with them. (Remember, you don't have to be related by blood. Any Elder will do.) This present never sits unused in a closet and it's never forgotten. It makes for fond memories and also a great tradition.

I wanted to share this idea because the Elders in our community are sometimes forgotten. With all the hustle and commercialization of this time of year, our Elders are usually not able to take part in all the activity, like shopping at a busy mall, cooking large meals, attending holiday parties, probably due to failing health or plain 'old age and old bones.'

We have to remember our Elders during this busy and hectic season. Let's include them and keep them active in our lives.

Happy holidays to everyone at AMMSA!

*Sandra LaFleur,
Calgary, Alta.*

Protest threatened

Dear Editor:

We would like to congratulate the Aboriginal leaders in British Columbia and across Canada who worked so hard and so patiently to secure a tripartite accord with the federal and provincial governments at the Aboriginal Summit held in Kelowna on Nov. 24 and 25. Now we would like to request all the Aboriginal leaders to unite and support us so that we can make sure that this \$5 billion in new funding announced by the federal government is not controlled and administered by bureaucrats who consider Aboriginal Canadians as lower class citizens of this country.

While the Aboriginal people of Canada may be led to believe that they live in a free society, the reality is that arrogant, corrupt and racist bureaucrats are working hard to strip the Aboriginal people of this country of their dignity and self-respect. Every time the Aboriginal people of Canada try to unite to work together for common causes, these bureaucrats use the government funds and resources to turn one First Nation against the other by randomly allocating resources to some while denying access to the others.

The Kwakiutl Territorial Fisheries Commission in the North Vancouver Island is one of the First Nations organizations that has experienced bigotry and racism by bureaucrats in the department of Fisheries and Oceans. These bureaucrats have tried very hard to destroy this organization, because we dared to stand up and speak for our people.

While DFO has tried to break this organization to prevent us from speaking, we believe that for a better future for our people we must speak up. We have, therefore, decided to publicly stand up to expose the racist bureaucrats in this department who are determined to subjugate the First Nations that once were proud, prosperous and self-reliant people.

To bring our case to the Canadian people, immediately after the federal election and the swearing in of the new cabinet, we will begin a "peaceful" sit-in at one of DFO's offices on Vancouver Island or lower mainland and our managing director, Joseph Khan (Tla'liskasoo), will begin a hunger strike to make our plight known. We hope to free the souls of the Aboriginal people from these bureaucrats and rally the Aboriginal people of this country.

We are beginning a new era for the Aboriginal people of this country; an era of peaceful struggle to expose the racism in DFO and other government departments as these bureaucrats will not stop destroying the Aboriginal communities until they are brought in front of the people of this country.

*Fred Glendale, President
Kwakiutl Territorial Fisheries Commission*

[rants and raves]

CAP will be there

Dear Editor:

Your recent editorial ("Getting it right" Page 5, November 2005 edition) on the attempts currently underway towards renewal of the Assembly of First Nations, cut to the heart of the matter in respect of the legitimacy of national Aboriginal organizations.

In a perfect world in which Aboriginal self-government flourished, and where Aboriginal and treaty rights were understood, revered and respected, there would be no need for national Aboriginal organizations of any kind. Sadly, this is not the case, and thus, organizations such as CAP, the AFN, the ITK, NWAC and the MNC must each continue their respective traditions of advocacy, service and support to their constituents.

In the case of the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples, this means off-reserve and non-status Indians, and Métis across Canada, regardless of Indian status or where they live.

It is indicative of the extent of misinformed supposition within the AFN—which at present is threatening the very unity of the Assembly of First Nations—that some in the AFN ranks choose to believe that CAP's legitimacy is merely imagined.

The Congress of Aboriginal Peoples is a nationally incorporated umbrella organization that represents the interests, nationally, of its provincial and territorial affiliate organizations across Canada. In effect, CAP's members are its affiliate organizations. Each affiliated organization (PTO) is a provincially or territorially incorporated organization that has legally associated itself with CAP at various times since 1971. The size and numbers of the affiliate administration vary widely with the size of the province and numbers of members. Each of these regions or zones has its own board or council elected by their respective local associations. Assembly delegates selected by each organization elect the provincial president or chief by assembly of the PTO affiliate.

The CAP is a grassroots organization, representative of literally hundreds of local community organizations right across the country, from Metis locals in Labrador to First Nation locals throughout B.C.

CAP's annual general assembly is the body that sets the general policy of the organization and, through its motions and resolutions, determines much of the activity of CAP for the next year. The national assembly consists of the national executive, and 16 delegates from each affiliate organization—most often each delegation includes the affiliate's executive officers, its board of directors or council, and community elected members for a total number of 16.

In election years, all of the delegates vote by secret ballot for a national chief and a vice-chief for a three-year term. Every delegate is entitled to bring forward motions and resolutions for a vote of the assembly. Our delegates' process is not unlike those of major national political parties. These measures are put in place to ensure that the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples remains effective, accountable and reflective of the will of its constituent members across the country.

Until others in the First Nation, Metis and Inuit communities who seek to speak for the Forgotten Peoples put aside their own partisan-based wrangling and commit to building critical mass across jurisdictions and political affiliations, CAP will be there doing our utmost to make sure that all of Canada's Aboriginal peoples have the opportunity to lay claim to their share in this country's prosperity and success as we have been doing for the past 34 years.

*Dwight A. Dorey, M.A.
National Chief
Congress of Aboriginal Peoples*

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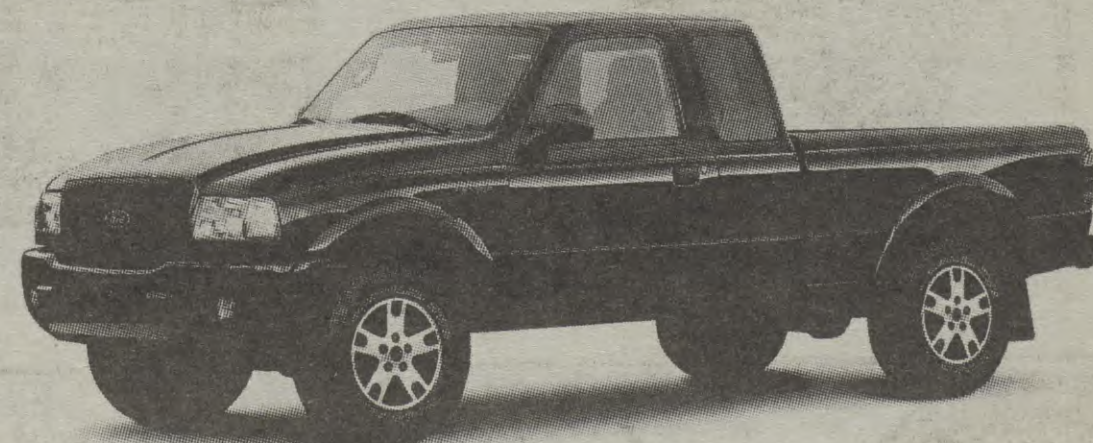
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Windspeaker's Special Section Serving the Aboriginal People of Ontario

Community gets cultural funding

BY CHERYL PETTEN
Birchbark Writer

WIKWEMIKONG

Members of cultural organizations on Wikwemikong Unceded Indian Reserve will be able to spend less time trying to raise funds and more time planning and holding events in 2006, thanks to funding from Canadian Heritage.

The money—a maximum of \$500,000 according to the press release from Canadian Heritage—comes along with the community's designation as one of five Cultural Capitals of Canada for 2006 and is to be used to fund cultural and artistic activities.

Doris Peltier is program manager of the Wikwemikong Heritage Organization (WHO), the organization that submitted the winning application to Canadian Heritage. Peltier stressed that putting together the application was a team effort, with a number of community organizations contributing. That same team effort will be present throughout the year as each of funded activities takes place.

Some of the funding will be spent on the community's annual cultural festival, which celebrates its 46th anniversary in 2006. The festival, scheduled to be held Aug. 5 to 7, will not only provide a showcase for the songs, dances, arts and culture of the Anishnabe people, but will also feature exhibitions of Inuit culture.

"We'll be doing Inuit dance and drum demonstrations and will also be providing Inuit traditional games as workshops to the youth of the community."

Organizers of the festival try to feature different cultures in the event each year, Peltier said. "I think it helps provide not only the visitors to the community, but our community members, with the option to see different cultures that might not be accessible to get to."

A seven-week cultural awareness conference is also planned, scheduled to run from June 21 to Aug. 4. There will be a different theme for each week of the conference, based on the Seven Grandfather Teachings—love, respect, humility, bravery, honesty, truth and wisdom.

"We'll start off with lodge building, and hopefully once the lodge is completely covered,

that's where we will conduct most of our workshops," Peltier said. "The Seven Grandfather Teachings workshops will be done within that teaching lodge, as well as talking about the seven clans—the origins of the clans, the different clans—so that people can come in and begin to understand what their clan is and what their responsibilities are."

The conference will also teach participants about moccasin making, traditional dance, traditional arts, harvesting of wild plants and traditional cooking.

The Wikwemikong Agricultural Society will be hosting a rodeo as a way of recognizing the important role agriculture played in the history of the community, Peltier said. In addition to the rodeo events themselves, there will also be opportunities for people to learn more about that agricultural tradition.

"They will be having information booths set up and talking about 4-H and how we want to bring that back to the community, and things like that."

Wikwemikong artists will also take part in commemorating the Cultural Capital of Canada designation by hosting an art show.

Currently these are the only events in the works, but Peltier is hopeful the funding from Canadian Heritage will allow the community to organize even more cultural and artistic events throughout 2006. To keep track of any new events or activities added to the schedule, she advises people to check in periodically on the WHO Web site at www.wikwemikongheritage.org.

The other cultural capitals of Canada for 2006 include Saskatoon, which will receive up to \$2 million, St. John's, which will receive up to \$750,000 in funding, and Saint-Joseph-de-Beauce, Que. and the District of West Vancouver, B.C., which will each receive a maximum contribution of \$500,000. The 2006 cultural capitals of Canada were selected by an advisory committee comprised of representatives of the 2005 cultural capitals of Canada—Algonquins of Pikwakanagan, Ont., Toronto, Victoria, Annapolis Royal, N.S. and Saint-Jean-Port-Joli, Que.



BERT CROWFOOT

World champion hoop dancer Lisa Odjig, from Wikwemikong Unceded Indian Reserve, was just one of the colorful performers featured during the Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards on Nov. 25. The awards were one of many events making up the Canadian Aboriginal Festival, held in Toronto Nov. 25 to 26. For more images from the festival, turn to page 3.

Evacuees home for the holidays

BY CHERYL PETTEN
Birchbark Writer

THUNDER BAY

After spending more than a month away from home, the last evacuees from Kashechewan First Nation were expected to be back in the community in time for Christmas.

About 1,000 of Kashechewan's 1,900 residents were flown out of the community at the end of October after Ontario's minister of Aboriginal Affairs, David Ramsay, declared a medical emergency on the First Nation. Earlier in the month, routine tests done by Health Canada had detected elevated levels of E.coli in the water supply.

The problem that caused the contamination has been rectified, said Susan Bertrand, acting manager of media relations and operations with Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) in Thunder Bay, although the boil water advisory community members have been living under since 2003 is still in effect.

"The water treatment plant has been producing clean and safe water since Oct. 17 with acceptable levels of turbidity and zero presence of E.coli," Bertrand said. "The boil water advisory is remaining in effect as a precautionary measure until repairs to the system are

completed. One of the things that they need to do is to flush the lines and that can't be done right now because of frozen fire hydrants."

Upgrades to the plant are underway, and had already begun when the contamination problems occurred in October, Bertrand said. "The upgrade will bring the plant into compliance with the province of Ontario drinking water standards."

Northern Waterworks, a company based in Red Lake that specializes in water and wastewater treatment, is currently overseeing operation of the plant and will be providing training to First Nation operators to upgrade their skills and knowledge regarding plant operation, Bertrand said.

Emergency repairs within homes in Kashechewan have already completed and, once the winter road opens up, INAC will be bringing in trailers to provide temporary accommodation for the families living in the 60 homes that require extensive renovations.

Repairs are also being done to Kashechewan's elementary school and high school. Mould is being removed from both schools, and repairs to the heating system and sprinkler

system are being done at the elementary school.

"We're anticipating having both schools open by the time school reconvenes in January," Bertrand said.

In addition to the work already being done, the federal government has promised to build new houses and to improve health and social services available to Kashechewan residents.

"The people of Kashechewan have had to endure deplorable living conditions for many, many years and the federal and provincial government officials have known about it for many, many years. So this particular situation has deteriorated over the years as a result of underfunding for First Nations for infrastructure and training and a lack of co-ordination between the federal and provincial government," said Angus Toulouse, Assembly of First Nation (AFN) Regional Chief for Ontario. "I guess from my perspective ... it's going to take Kashechewan many years to rebuilt and restore their families and, not only that, the community well-being. And there's just so many First Nation communities in Ontario, and no doubt across Canada, that live in the same kind of deplorable conditions."

(See First Nations page 7.)

Business achievements recognized by NAN awards

Celebrating business success was on the agenda on Nov. 29 as the Nishnawbe Aski Development Fund (NADF) handed out its annual Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) Business Awards in Thunder Bay.

Among the winners of the 2005 awards were Bruce Brunette, who was named Business Man of the Year, and Laureen Wassaykeesic, named Business Woman of the Year.

Brunette, a member of Fort Albany First Nation, is owner and operator of B & M Auto in Cochrane. When he started the business in 2001 he was the sole employee. Now he employs a second mechanic part-time and operates a two-bay garage, which he is considering expanding to three bays to meet demand for his services. He also provides First Nation people from Moosonee and Moose Factory with outside storage space where they can store their vehicles. Brunette is on the board of directors of the Cochrane Food Bank, donating both time and money to the organization.

Wassaykeesic is no stranger to the NAN business awards, having won the Business Woman of the Year Award previously in 2000 and 2001. A member of Mishkeegogaming Lake First Nation, she has been owner and operator of Laureen's Grocery &

Gas on the First Nation since 1998. The business sells groceries, gas and fuel, confectionery items and dry goods, and has recently added a post office to the list. In July 2005, Wassaykeesic became a band councillor. She also contributes to the community by sponsoring youth groups and women's events.

Darcy Kejick received the Youth Entrepreneur of the Year Award and his business, Darcy and Susan's Gas, was named Partnership of the Year.

Kejick, a member of North Spirit Lake First Nation, started his business in 2001 with three 200 litre barrels of gas. There already was a well-established business selling fuel in the area at the time so Kejick had to find a way to give customers something they weren't already getting. He did this by having his business open 24 hours a day during the winter road season to better serve travellers. When a fire forced his competition to close in October 2002, Kejick bought his fuel tanks and pumps. His business has continued to grow, the latest expansion coming in March 2005 when he bought two 50,000 litre tanks and additional inventory with help from the NADF.

The Partnership Award recognized the efforts of both Kejick and his wife, Susan Rae,

to provide fuel to community members at a reasonable price, and their contributions to the community. In addition to sponsoring youth activities, Kejick also volunteers his time to take youth on hunting and fishing trips in order to educate them about traditional ways.

It was also a big night for the Attawapiskat Development Corporation, with the corporation being named Development Corporation of the Year and its CEO, Thomas Tookate, receiving the award for Executive of the Year.

The development corporation has been working to co-ordinate economic development opportunities, create employment and provide training for community members since 1997. The corporation currently has seven full-time employees and generates revenues of more than \$1 million annually. The organization has recently brought improved cable and Internet services to Attawapiskat and is currently working to bring a new mall, a post office and banking services to the community. Through the fundraising efforts of its staff, it supports community organizations such as the Junior Ranger program, the safe house, the high school graduation, Elders feasts and local sporting groups.

Tookate has been CEO of the

development corporation for four years, during which time he has turned the organization's financial situation around, brought in new policies, recruited and trained new staff and established a new board.

A member of band council, Tookate holds the land resources portfolio for the First Nation. He headed up the community's negotiations with De Beers Canada regarding the impact benefit agreement for the Victor diamond mine, and is joint venture negotiator for Attawapiskat Resources Inc. He is also founder and chair of James Bay Employment Training Inc., which will work to train Aboriginal people to work on the Victor diamond mine project. Construction on the mine is expected to begin in early 2006.

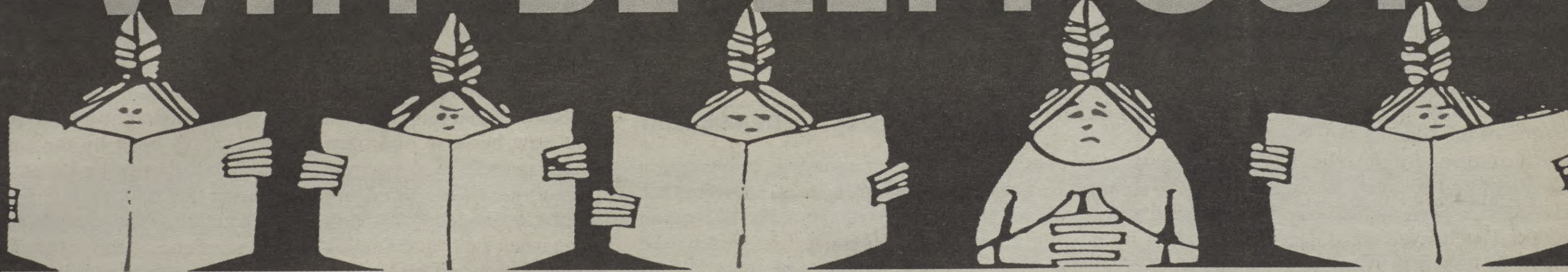
The Building Communities Award was presented to Bamaji Lake Development Corporation and the newly-established NeeChee Achievement Award, which recognized business achievement in the 1850 Robinson Superior Treaty and Treaty 3 areas and within Metis Nation communities, went to Long Lake #58 General Store.

Since 1993, the Bamaji Lake Economic Development Corporation has been responsible for operating the public works department of Slate Falls First Nation. Those responsibilities

include housing renovations, new housing construction, yearly winter road construction and maintenance of sporting facilities. The corporation works to ensure staff have access to the most up-to-date training in first aid, operations and maintenance and develops workshops to provide career-related training to community members. The corporation also donates money to community groups and events, provides food and beverages for community feasts and provides assistance to seniors.

Long Lake #58 General Store, operating since 1994, is one of three businesses owned by the Azaadi-Wag Economic Development Corporation. The business, which sells groceries, gas and fuel and tobacco products, was created as a way to provide employment and training for band members and currently has four full-time and five part-time employees. The employees are currently completing a Retail Sales Associate Certification Program and two employees are being trained on gas pump maintenance. The store gives back to the community by providing funding for children's programs and youth sporting events, and recently provided financial assistance to a family with a child undergoing cancer treatment.

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Dig Your Roots wants to hear from Aboriginal artists

By **HEATHER ANDREWS MILLER**
Birchbark Writer

OTTAWA

A project being organized by the National Campus and Community Radio Association (NCRA) is giving up-and-coming Aboriginal performing artists a chance to have their music heard.

Dig Your Roots—Aboriginal will showcase the talents of up to 100 Aboriginal artists from across the country, who will have their work featured on the Dig Your Roots Web site. Out of those 100 or so performers, 15 will be selected to appear on CD compilations and to take part in a series of regional concerts that will air live on the NCRA's member radio stations.

"Artists have until January 26, 2006 to get submissions of their work to us," said Melissa Kaestner, national co-ordinator of the NCRA. "The demo can be on a CD, tape, or mini-disc, and all the information the artists need to know is on our Web site at

www.digyourroots.ca or by calling toll-free at 866-859-8086. They must also submit a bio and a photo so if they are successful, it will all be posted on the site and a link to their track will be provided as well so folks can listen."

Dig Your Roots began in 2002 and the first year hip hop was featured.

"It is a five-year initiative that takes advantage of commercial broadcasters' contributions to a fund to develop Canadian talent," Kaestner explained. "Every year we've focused on a different genre, such as spoken word, roots and electronic dance, with jazz being the feature in 2007. This year is different in that we're saluting a specific culture and there will be many genres represented within that culture."

One of the reasons for the focus on Aboriginal talent is to dispel the myth that traditional and powwow music are the only genres in which Indigenous artists excel. "That's not true at all. The range goes from classical, to jazz, to hip hop and heavy

metal so we hope to get submissions from every genre," Kaestner said.

The submissions will be reviewed by an all-Aboriginal jury of experts, including the award-winning, multi-talented Elaine Bomberry and singer-songwriter Wayne Lavallee, both well-known and highly respected in the Aboriginal community. The jury will decide which selections will be featured on the Web site and which will be included on the CD compilation. Finalists will be chosen from each region across the country—B.C./North, Prairies, Ontario, Quebec and Atlantic.

There will be a forum for members of the public to share their opinions about which songs on the Web site should be featured, Kaestner said.

"The public can listen to tracks on the Web site and submit comments so they'll have some input. They aren't actually voting but their participation will be rewarded by their names being entered in a draw for various goods." Some names and comments of

respondents will be printed in the CD liners and on the Web site.

Artists selected by the jury won't receive any money in return for their involvement but will get all kinds of local, regional, and national exposure through NCRA's intensive promotional campaign. Those artists selected to be on the CD will receive equal cuts from the admission fee for the regional show they play.

Kaestner, who is a singer and musician in her own right, said the individual artists will receive great exposure in the press releases and sample CDs that will be sent out to media across Canada, and through air time on campus radio.

"The series of live concerts will be held in June and will feature the artists, and it's broadcast coast to coast on our member stations, so it's really exciting," she said.

NCRA's members are located at universities across Canada, and have always been seen as fertile ground for burgeoning independent acts. Over 35 member stations are

listed on the project Web site. "The campus and community stations enjoy promoting local artists and they feel it's part of their mandate. They go a long way in helping to establish fledgling music careers," she said.

The project has received good feedback from both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities.

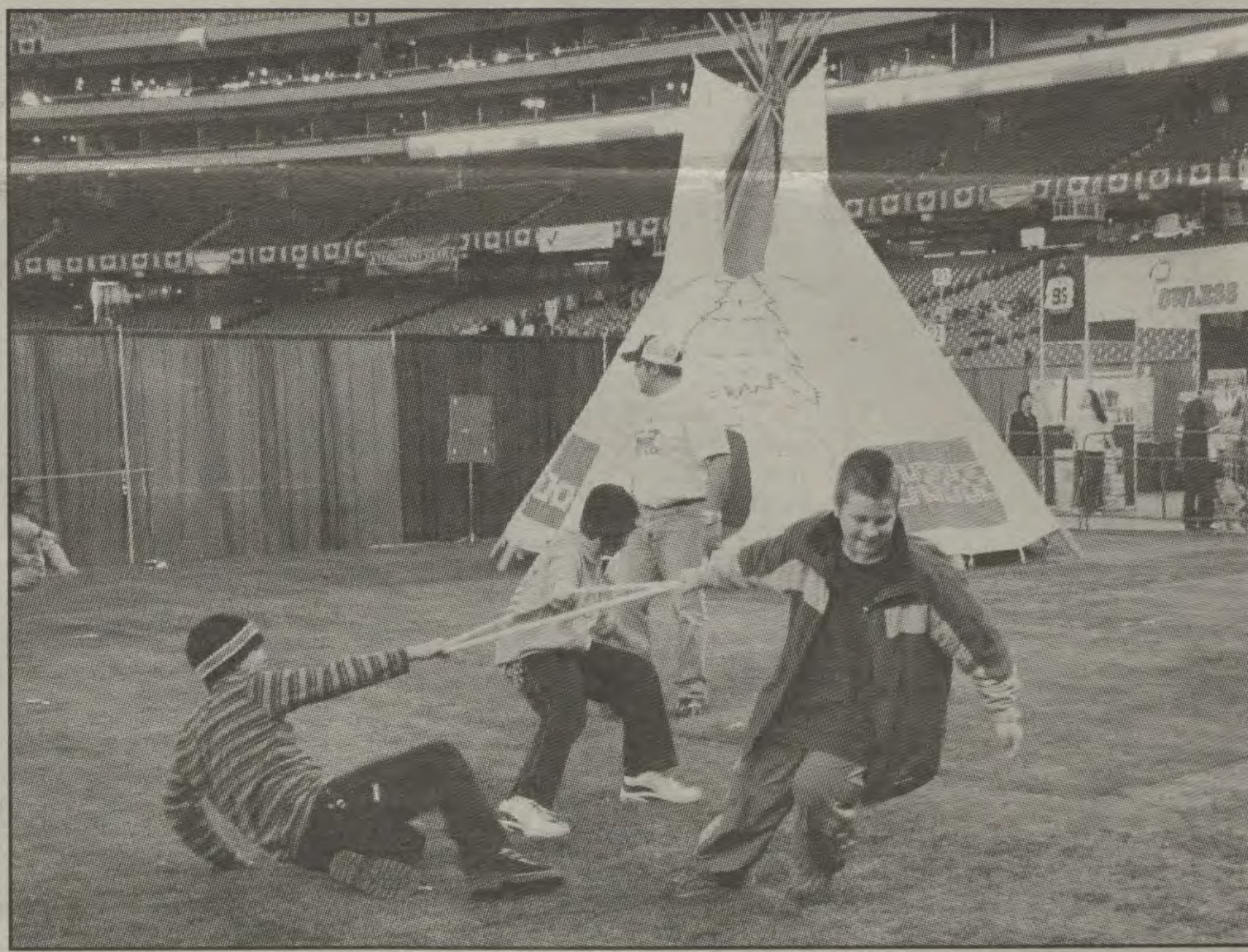
"We're really happy that everyone is behind us on this initiative and together we can bring some good publicity to these up-and-coming talents," Kaestner said.

"Dig Your Roots is all about developing and promoting new Canadian music from the four corners of this culturally diverse and musically rich country. We encourage everyone to enter a submission and take this opportunity to let Canada hear the unique and wonderful music of our Aboriginal artists. Join with us in exploring our roots as a country and promoting the multicultural facets of our culture."

Culture celebrated and shared during annual festival

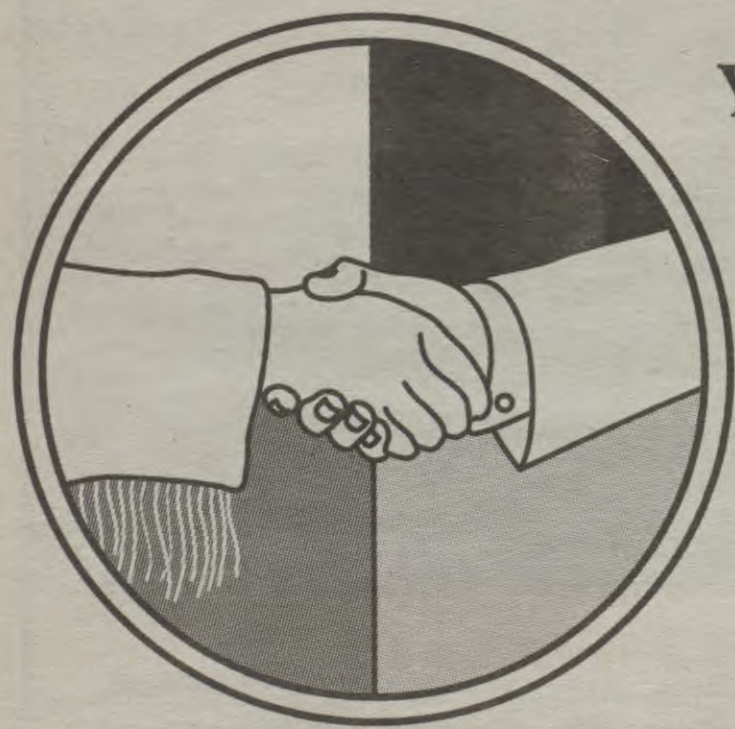


Marc Nadjiwan was one of the performers who entertained at the Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards after-party. The awards ceremony held during the Canadian Aboriginal Festival in Toronto, which ran from Nov. 24 to 26.



PHOTOS BY DEBORA STEEL

Young people attending education day at the Canadian Aboriginal Festival Nov. 25 take part in a traditional game of three-way tug of war, designed to test a participant's strength, endurance and desire.



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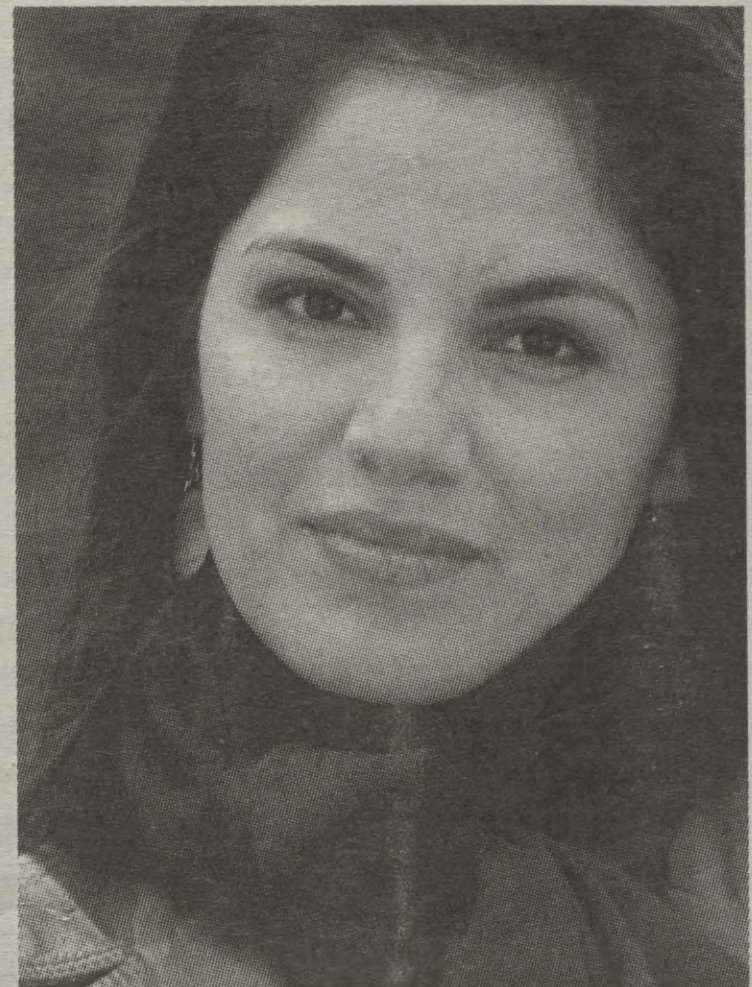
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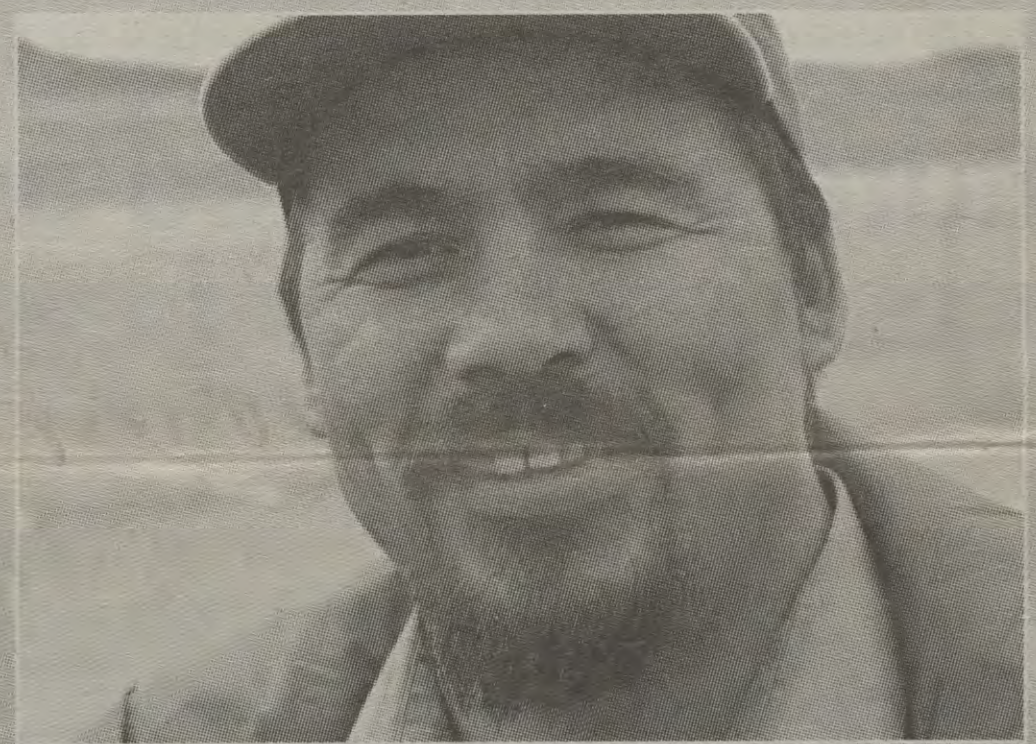
Miss Six Nations Dakota Brant stops to talk to two RCMP officers at the trade show held during the Canadian Aboriginal Festival.

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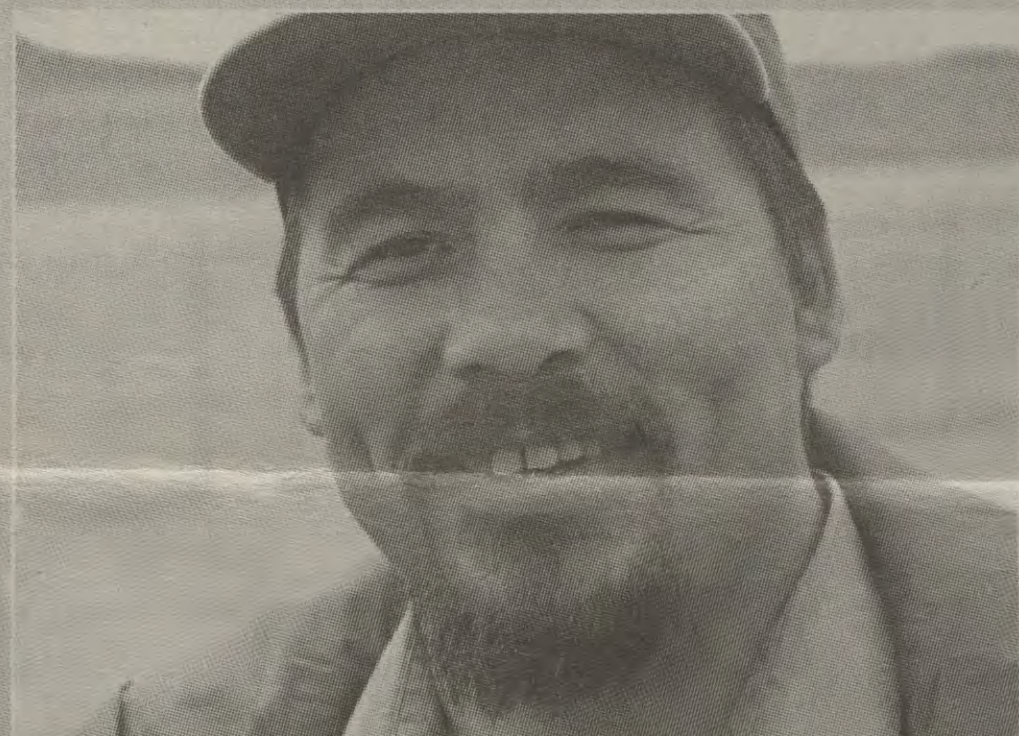


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Campaign provides information about cancer risks

By CHERYL PETTEN
Birchbark Writer

TORONTO

Cancer Care Ontario's Aboriginal Cancer Care Unit (ACCU) and the Ontario division of the Canadian Cancer Society are teaming up on a campaign aimed at educating Aboriginal people about cancer.

The campaign, Let's Take a Stand Against Cancer NOW!, had its launch in Sudbury on Dec. 12. The aim of the campaign is to provide information about cancer and to educate people on what they can do to decrease their cancer risk.

The main tool in the campaign is an information kit made up of eight fact sheets: Cancer in Ontario's First Nations People; Cancer Facts for Men; Cancer Facts for Women; Facing Cancer—With Help, which provides information about what cancer is and advice on how to cope after being diagnosed with cancer; How You Can Help; The Canadian Cancer Society is Here to Help; Seven Teachings to Health, dealing with preventative measures you can take to decrease your risk of developing cancer; and Tobacco, Keep it Sacred, which includes information about the ACCU's Aboriginal Tobacco Strategy and outlines the differences between sacred and commercial tobacco.

"The information is to help Aboriginal health professionals

and professionals that provide services to the Aboriginal community," explained Carmen Jones, director of the ACCU. "This is a kit to help them make presentations."

The information in the kit focuses mainly on colorectal cancer and lung cancer because occurrences of those two types of cancer are increasing dramatically within the Aboriginal population.

In 1968, when Dr. Loraine Marrett, a researcher with Cancer Care Ontario, first began her research into cancer rates among Aboriginal people, there were very few cases of these types of cancer, said Jones.

"And now, over the last 40 years, colorectal cancer is now at the same level as the general population and it looks like it's going to go above. And lung cancer has been rising at the same rate and now we're at the level of the general population. So we are concerned about these particular cancers, because they're preventable," she said.

"I just think that this is a very, very important initiative. And I think one of the things that strikes me about this is that we have an opportunity to prevent cancers and not have an epidemic like we've seen in other areas, like diabetes."

While it's still too soon to gauge how the information kit will be received by care providers in First Nation communities, reaction from

those attending the campaign launch was positive.

"We had very, very good response from people that were at the launch," Jones said. "We had cancer survivors there, we had people from the Aboriginal health access centres and people from the regional cancer centre there. So it was a very well attended launch and people were very pleased to see information like this going out."

Let's Take a Stand Against Cancer NOW! falls under the health promotion portion of the ACCU's four-point Aboriginal Cancer Strategy. The other three points include the Aboriginal Tobacco Strategy, research and surveillance, and outreach.

The idea of creating the campaign came out the needs assessment undertaken by the ACCU in 2002, which pointed to a need to develop culturally-appropriate materials to be used to educate members of the Aboriginal community about cancer.

To get a copy of the information kit, call the Canadian Cancer Society toll-free at 1-888-939-3333 or send an e-mail message to info@cis.cancer.ca.

The kit will be available online on the Aboriginal Cancer Care Unit's Web site by going to www.cancercare.on.ca and clicking on Aboriginal Cancer Strategy, and on the Canadian Cancer Society Web site at www.cancer.ca.

How to reduce your risk

The following tips, included in the Let's Take a Stand Against Cancer NOW! information package, can help you reduce your risk of developing cancer.

- 1.) **Don't smoke**—about 30 per cent of all cancer deaths in Canada are linked to smoking.
- 2) **Eat healthy food**—eat at least five servings of fruit or vegetables each day. Eat foods high in fibre and low in fat. Limit alcohol intake.
- 3) **Be active**—regular exercise can help you stay healthy.
- 4) **Be sensible in the sun**—protect yourself and your family members from sun exposure. Check your skin regularly and report any changes to your doctor.
- 5) **Follow cancer screening guidelines**—regular screening tests, such as mammograms, pap tests and breast exams for women and testicular and prostate exams for men, can detect cancer early.
- 6) **Report changes in your health**—visit your doctor or dentist if you notice a change in your normal state of health.
- 7) **Use caution with hazardous materials**—follow health and safety instructions when using, storing or disposing of hazardous materials.

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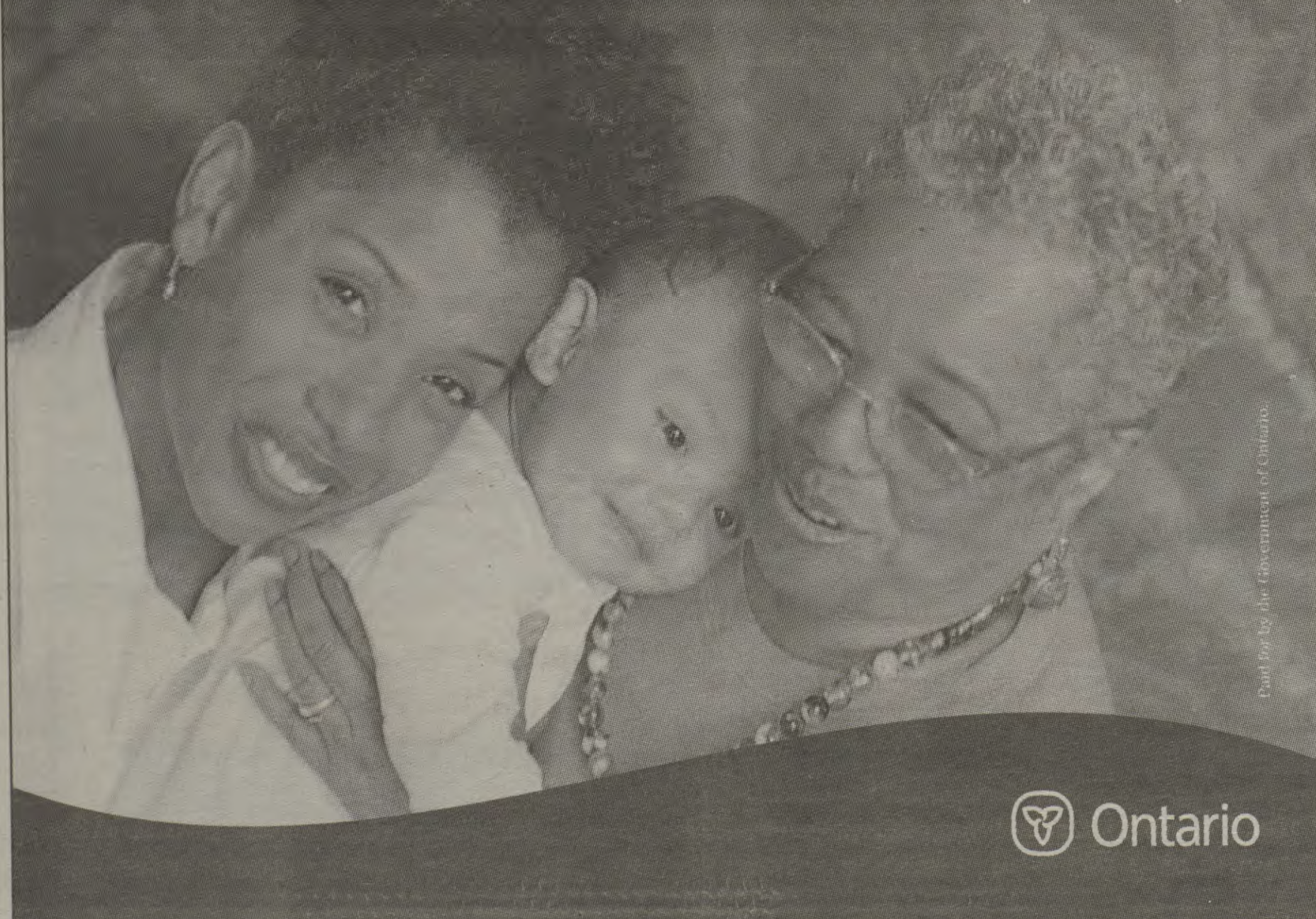
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 Ontario

Belcourt to receive Aboriginal achievement award

Only one person from Ontario has made the list of outstanding people from across the country who will receive National Aboriginal Achievement Awards in 2006.

Tony Belcourt, president of the Metis Nation of Ontario, will receive the award for public service in recognition of the many years he has dedicated to fighting for Metis rights and working to promote and preserve Metis culture.

Belcourt has been involved in Metis politics since 1969 when he was elected vice-president of the Metis Association of Alberta. In 1971, he was one of the founders of the Native Council of Canada, now the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples, and served as the organization's first president. He was one of the key players involved in the creation of the Metis Nation of Ontario (MNO) in 1993 and has held the position of MNO

president for four consecutive terms. He is president of the Metis Nation of Ontario Economic Development Corporation and chairs the MNO Cultural Commission.

Belcourt is a member of the Metis National Council's board of governors and serves as the council's minister for International Affairs.

Other 2006 award recipients include Aboriginal leader and activist Jim Sinclair, from Saskatchewan, who has spent the last 40 years fighting for Indigenous rights and who will receive the Lifetime Achievement Award. Lawyer James (Sakej) Youngblood Henderson, also from Saskatchewan, will be recognized for his contributions in the area of law and justice.

Nova Scotia's Andrea Dykstra will accept the award in the youth category. Scholar and author Taiaiake (Gerald)

Alfred from B.C. was chosen to receive an award in the education category.

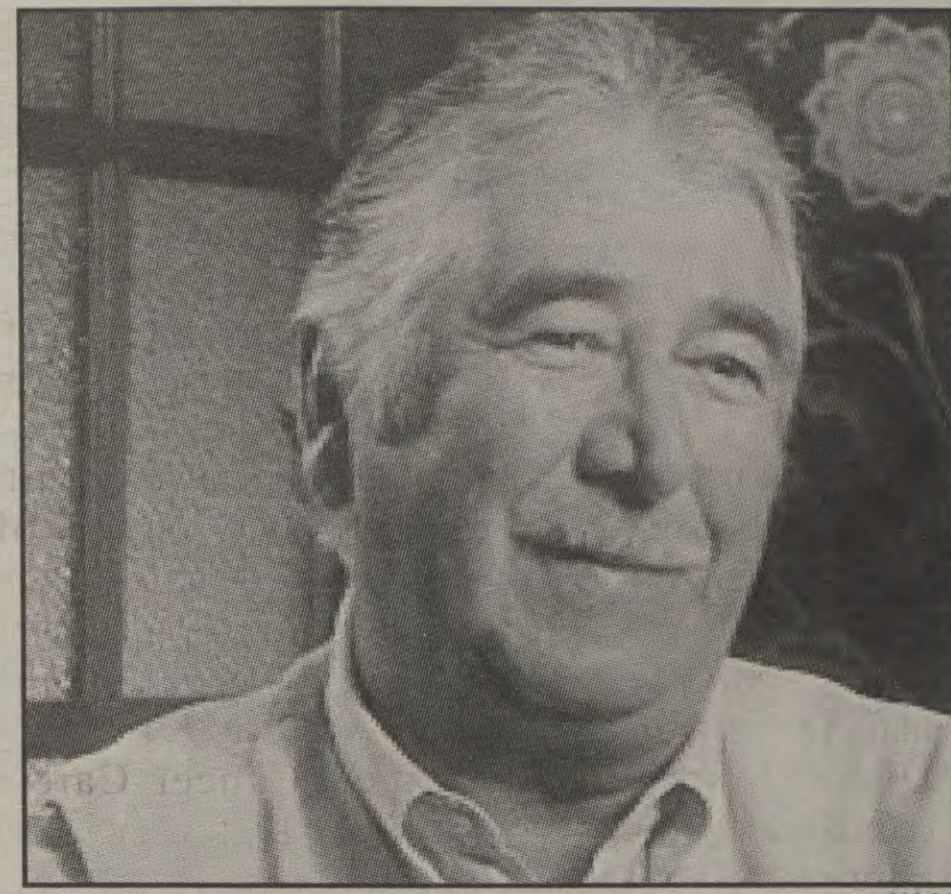
Dr. Herb Belcourt from Alberta, the founder of CaNative Housing Corporation, will receive an award in the housing category. The business and commerce award will go to Bernd Christmas, CEO of Membertou First Nation in Nova Scotia. Elder Gladys Taylor Cook of Manitoba will be recognized in the heritage and spirituality category.

The environment award will go to Elder Billy Day of the Northwest Territories in recognition of his work to protect Inuvait culture, rights and natural environment. The community development award will be presented to Wendy Grant-John of B.C. for efforts to bring economic and social development opportunities to her home community.

Olympic skier Shirley Firth

Larsson, from the Northwest Territories, will receive a National Aboriginal Achievement Award in the sports category. Artist Jane Ash Poitras of Alberta will be recognized for her contributions in the area of arts and culture.

Two awards will be presented in the media and communications category, one to broadcaster turned communications consultant George Tuccaro of Alberta and one to Quebec broadcaster Myra Cree who



Tony Belcourt

NAAF

passed away in October, the first time an achievement award has been awarded posthumously.

The 14 recipients will receive their awards during the 13th annual achievement award gala to be held in Vancouver on Jan. 27, 2006.

First Nations must be involved in finding solutions

(Continued from page 1.)

It's estimated there are about 37 First Nations in Ontario currently under boil water advisories, and close to 100 across the country, Angus Toulouse said.

Although the situation is somewhat stabilized in Kashechewan and news about the living conditions on First Nations has fallen off the front page, Toulouse hopes the problems won't be forgotten by the Canadian people.

"Just because this was front

page and headline news some time ago, Canadians in general shouldn't forget about or relinquish their outrage with regard to the plight of the First Nation communities across Ontario and across this country."

He also hopes the commitment the provincial and federal governments showed in their handling of the crisis in Kashechewan will extend to other First Nations as well, because the problems that exist can't be fixed

by addressing them in just one community.

"We're not going away, so I don't think the situation is going away," Toulouse said. "I think the federal and provincial governments are really, again, way out to lunch if they think doing this one community is going to resolve First Nation issues and concerns."

The need for infrastructure improvements in First Nation communities across Ontario is quite significant, Toulouse said,

but a lasting solution to problems like those experienced in Kashechewan needs more than just an influx of government money to repair schools, houses and water treatment plants. What are also needed, he said, are some fundamental changes in the relationship between First Nations and federal and provincial governments. Recognition of First Nations governments and allowing First Nations to share in the revenues earned from resources taken from their traditional territories would go a long way toward closing the gap between First Nations and the rest of the country, he said.

These types of changes in relationship are included in the First Nations-Federal Crown Political Accord on the Recognition and Implementation of First Nations Governments, finalized in May during a meeting between Prime Minister Paul Martin, key cabinet ministers, AFN National Chief Phil Fontaine and a number of AFN officials. An implementation plan designed to help meet the objectives of the accord was

developed at the First Ministers and National Aboriginal Leaders Meeting held in Kelowna, B.C. in November.

"Talks about the responsible and long-term action by federal and provincial government leaders really has to start with talking and sitting down with First Nation leaders. We're part of the solution and yet there seems to be this whole government bureaucracy that believes that only they can provide the solutions without talking to First Nation leadership," he said. "We're sick and tired. We've been there, done that, for many, many years. And I think First Nation leadership throughout the province and this country, I think, are saying, let's talk about this new relationship, since they keep talking about it, but not the status quo. Not what we've seen for the past 100 and some years ... nothing's really changed. But to sit down and talk about the jurisdictions and talk about the rights we have, I think, are part of the solution to a lot of the crises that we've seen in Kashechewan and in many other communities."

Volunteers needed for crisis task force

The Matawa First Nations Management Health and Social Special Projects department is looking for volunteers from across northwestern Ontario to become members of a regional crisis task force that would serve the Matawa First Nations communities of Aroland, Constance Lake, Eabametoong, Hornepayne, Marten Falls, Neskantaga, Nibinimik and Webequie.

Eighteen volunteers are needed for the task force, which will provide essential support services to families through home visits, intervention, mentoring, spending time with

children and working on community social projects. The task force members will be divided into two teams, with nine people to a team. The teams will be sent out to communities whenever a crisis arises and will remain in the community for up to five days.

No previous experience is required, as training will be provided to all volunteers. All travel and related expenses will be covered by the First Nation Inuit Health Branch.

For more information contact Luke Sagutch by phone at (807) 344-4575 or by e-mail at lsagutch@matawa.on.ca.

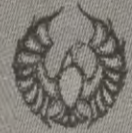
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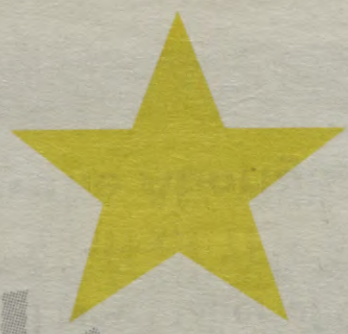
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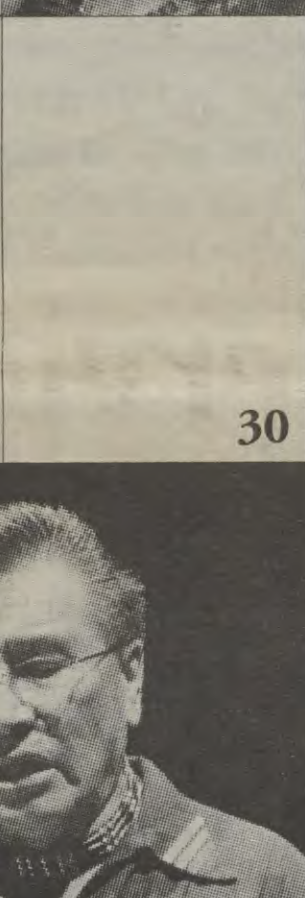
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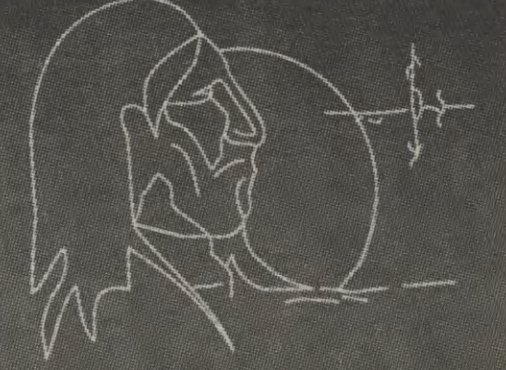
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Detailed plan of action comes out of FMM

By Paul Barnsley
Windspeaker Staff Writer

KELOWNA

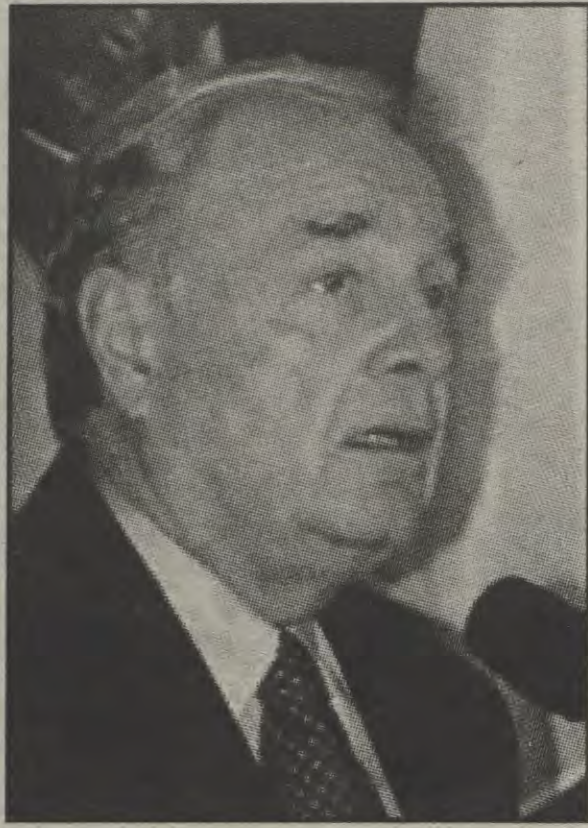
Only one region—British Columbia—actually sat down and signed an implementation agreement (the Transformative Change Accord) with the province and federal government after the two-day first ministers' meeting (FMM) on Aboriginal issues was held in Kelowna Nov. 24 and 25. For the rest of the country, things will be worked out in the coming months and years.

But the prime minister of Canada and the premiers of her provinces and territories issued a communiqué as their historic meeting with Aboriginal leaders concluded. While it showed generally how much money will be committed toward improving the lives of Aboriginal people in the country and where it will go, their words spoke of their commitments made to progress.

As the press and public were admitted to the main room at the close of the meeting, it was clear the mood was buoyant, even celebratory.

Prime Minister Paul Martin kicked things off.

"I believe that we have an unprecedented step forward. Aboriginal Canadians have no desire for more rhetoric. They have needs and those needs demand attention. It's as simple as that. That's what these two days have been about. And that's what all of the work that went into this



Prime Minister Paul Martin

gathering over the last year-and-a-half has been about. We all know that there are serious problems in too many Aboriginal communities.

"Here in Kelowna, we have agreed to a detailed plan for action. A plan that will include concrete, five and 10 year targets for better health, better education, economic opportunity, housing and clean water. Put simply, targets mean progress. And progress means a better way of life for First Nations, Inuit and Métis people. What we seek to do will cost money. It also requires, however, an effective partnership, innovative solutions, the objectives to measure and ensure results, and full accountability, transparency and good governance. This is the course that we are pursuing.

"The future of Aboriginal Canadians ... is an issue that I care about very deeply, and I know

	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
Education	95 million	264 million	408 million	484 million	549 million
Housing/ Infrastructure	500 million	275 million	275 million	275 million	275 million
Relationships/ Accountability	39.5 million	32.5 million	32 million	27 million	39 million
Economic Opportunities	40 million	40 million	40 million	40 million	40 million
Health	137 million	218 million	309 million	320 million	331 million
Total	811.5 million	829.5 million	1,064 million	1,146 million	1,234 million

this: the federal government will not solve the challenges facing Aboriginal Canadians by fiat or decree. We have the prime fiduciary responsibility. It is our responsibility and we will live up to that responsibility in full. We will succeed because of the drive of the Aboriginal leaders and of the Aboriginal communities themselves with the co-operation and the very strong commitment of the provincial and territorial leaders that were here.

Alberta Premier Ralph Klein, the chairman of the Council of Confederation, the premiers group, praised B.C. host Premier Gordon Campbell for his efforts in pushing the FMM forward.

Campbell singled out National Chief Phil Fontaine for his "exceptional leadership." The B.C. premier reminded his colleagues of the need to follow through on their commitments.

"Minutes from now this table will be empty, this room will be

empty and there will be silence. Our job now and our abiding commitment to one another and to the citizens we serve is to ensure that the memory of this moment finds its voice and its force in history through our actions," he said.

"Our duty now is to ensure that when this room goes dark, the light of hope that has been lit over the last two days lives on and burns brighter month after month, year after year, in our hearts and in Canada's corridors of power. Mr. Prime Minister, the honor of the Crown depends on our meeting these commitments. The honor of the Crown has been a silent partner in this room here and now and with our words its import is at stake."

Campbell said jurisdictional overlaps or uncertainties should not be an excuse for inaction.

"Constitutional wrangling must not become a refuge or an apology for inaction."

Assembly of First Nations National Chief Fontaine seemed overcome by emotion at one point as he discussed the residential school compensation announcement that preceded the FMM.

"We've reached a landmark agreement on residential schools this week. We must now deal with issues like land claims, treaty making and treaty implementation. We've seen how far we can go in just two days. Imagine how far we can go in 10 years. We must close the gap in the quality of life between our people and other Canadians. That will be our legacy to the coming generations. There's a lot of hard work ahead of us but it is a workload we will share with our partners in Confederation just as we originally agreed to share the riches and the beauty of this incredible land," he said. (see Women's group page 12.)

Protests mounted outside first ministers meeting

By Paul Barnsley
Windspeaker Staff Writer

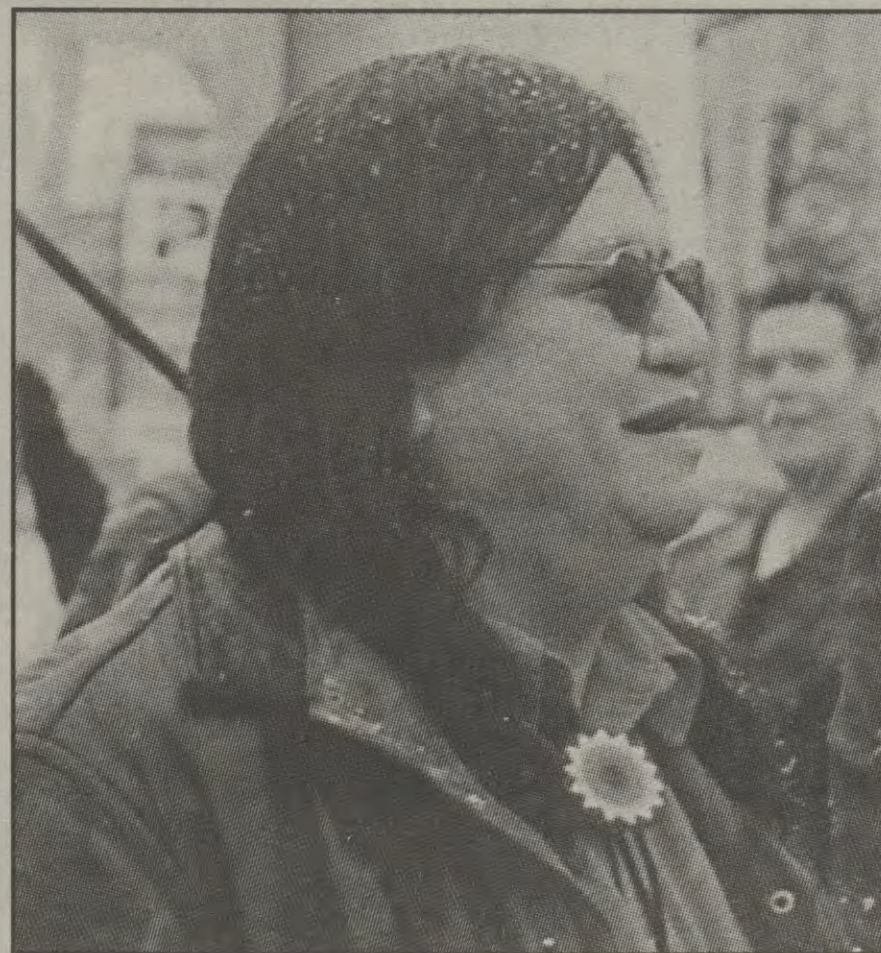
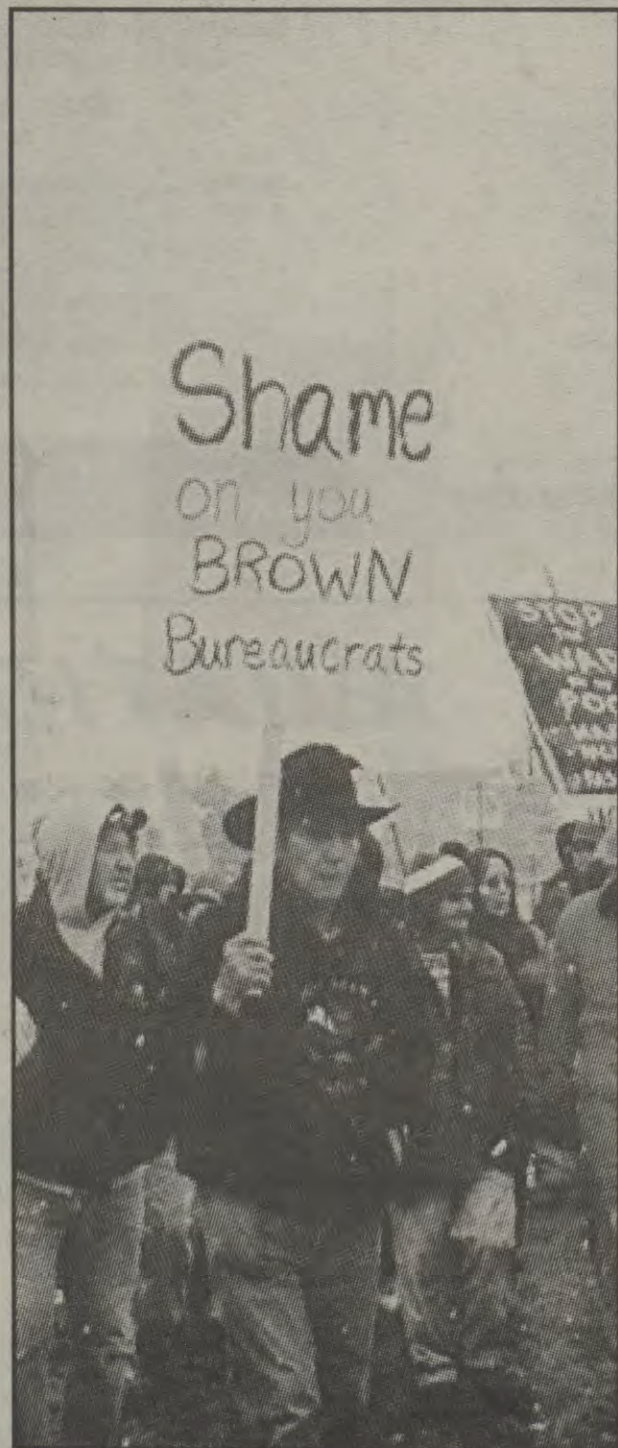
KELOWNA

Two Aboriginal groups held protests outside the site of the first minister's meeting (FMM) on Nov. 24 and 25.

The first day saw friendship centre employees and supporters vying for attention against a protest mounted by federal correctional officers who were there to criticize Prime Minister Paul Martin because his government has not satisfied their demands for better pay and working conditions. The friendship centre group braved snowy weather to protest the fact that the National Association of Friendship Centres was not one of the national Aboriginal organizations meeting with the first ministers.

Former chief and tribal council chairman Art Manuel organized a grassroots protest that arrived on the second day of the meeting. There were between 60 and 100 people in the group. Protest signs from various regions of western Canada were visible in the crowd that rallied around Manuel.

"They're coming from across the



PHOTOS BY PAUL BARNSELY

(Left) Protesters took to the street in Kelowna on Nov. 24 and 25. Grassroots groups say the money promised at the first ministers meeting will be gobbled up by the brown bureaucracy. (Middle) Art Manuel says the Assembly of First Nations is taking the wrong approach in dealing with government. (Right) Friendship centre devotees protested the fact they weren't invited to take part.



country, but with grassroots it's really tough," he said. "None of us is federally funded or provincially. None of this comes from anywhere except the grassroots' money. We put our money in the gas tank and

we come down here." Manuel said that regional grassroots networks are trying to organize nationally. "All of these people are community-based activists. That's

what really the Grassroots Peoples' Coalition is all about. These people are talking about joining together and becoming a more solid organization from coast to coast," he said.

Manuel said Assembly of First Nations National Chief Phil Fontaine was taking "totally the wrong approach" by meeting with the first ministers. (see 'Bad Indian' page 24.)

First ministers' deal gets chiefs' approval

By Paul Barnsley
Windspeaker Staff Writer

OTTAWA

At a special assembly held in Ottawa in December, a resolution that essentially endorses the agreement reached at the first ministers' meeting (FMM) in Kelowna on Nov. 24 and 25 was passed unanimously by consensus, if you don't count the Quebec chiefs who abstained en masse.

Resolution 3 is a carefully-crafted three-page document that took a great deal of negotiation to finalize.

Although National Chief Phil Fontaine publicly and repeatedly defended the multi-billion dollar, 10-year plan hammered out during the FMM that is designed to reduce poverty and close the gaps in quality of life for Aboriginal people, most of the bargaining over the fine points of the resolution happened away from the assembly floor.

Six Nations Chief Dave General told *Windspeaker* that Fontaine supporters and the senior staff in the national chief's office worked hard to ensure that the chiefs-in-assembly would pass the resolution. General said he was able to negotiate a number of items that he wanted in the resolution and therefore was able to support it.

"The fact the chiefs will have final approval of the financial commitments of the FMM was a real positive," he said.

The resolution stated that the



PAUL BARNSELEY

The British Columbia delegate stand as Chief Ed John discusses Quebec's refusal to sign on to the agreement reached at the first ministers' meeting held in Kelowna on Nov. 24 and 25. The discussion to approve the commitments made at that meeting was held in Ottawa at a special chiefs assembly.

chiefs view the money for First Nation issues promised during the Kelowna meetings "as an important first step." The resolution also contains language that seeks to remind the federal government of its fiduciary obligation and protect against erosion of treaty rights.

But, despite the willingness to include a number of clauses that satisfied the concerns of a number of regions, the national chief and his officials couldn't get everyone on board.

Quebec Vice-chief Ghislain Picard stated his region's position on Day 2 as the resolution was being debated. As Picard stood at one of the microphones located in the conference hall, the Quebec delegation rose to stand behind him.

The Quebec chiefs had decided in Regina, while attending another special assembly in late October, to refuse to participate in or support the FMM. Picard said a lot of pressure had been applied to the Quebec delegation after they made that decision.

"In Quebec most people don't make a difference between sovereigntists and separatists. As far as we're concerned as First Nations, there's a difference. As First Nations we are sovereigntists. We are not separatists," he said. "I guess it's probably important to say this morning that the position coming from the First Nations' perspective in Quebec and Labrador has nothing to do with 'us against you' or us against all

of the regions across the country. We stated in Regina that we have too much respect for our sister nations across the country to get into that."

In his statement, he explained the Quebec chiefs' vision that seeks respect and implementation of their treaty and Aboriginal rights, and recognizes full access, control and jurisdiction over their lands, territories and resources.

"It is the only sustainable means to alleviate the deplorable social and economic situations of many of our people. The negotiation processes required by the [AFN-Quebec and Labrador] to realize this vision must respect Canada's constitutional framework insofar as it creates a fiduciary obligation upon the federal government to act in our best interests," he said.

He said the chiefs' relationship with the provincial government in Quebec is not an easy one and the idea of involving provincial governments in the FMM initiatives was one his region could not accept.

"The involvement of the Quebec government in such discussions is subject to conditions suitable to the realignment of current arrangements," he said. "The FMM agenda was wrong. The discussion with the provinces and the federal government should have focussed in rights, jurisdiction, lands and resources."

He also stated that sitting at the table with other Aboriginal groups was a concern to his region.

(see Quebec chiefs page 23.)

FMM—It's all about the election now

By Paul Barnsley
Windspeaker Staff Writer

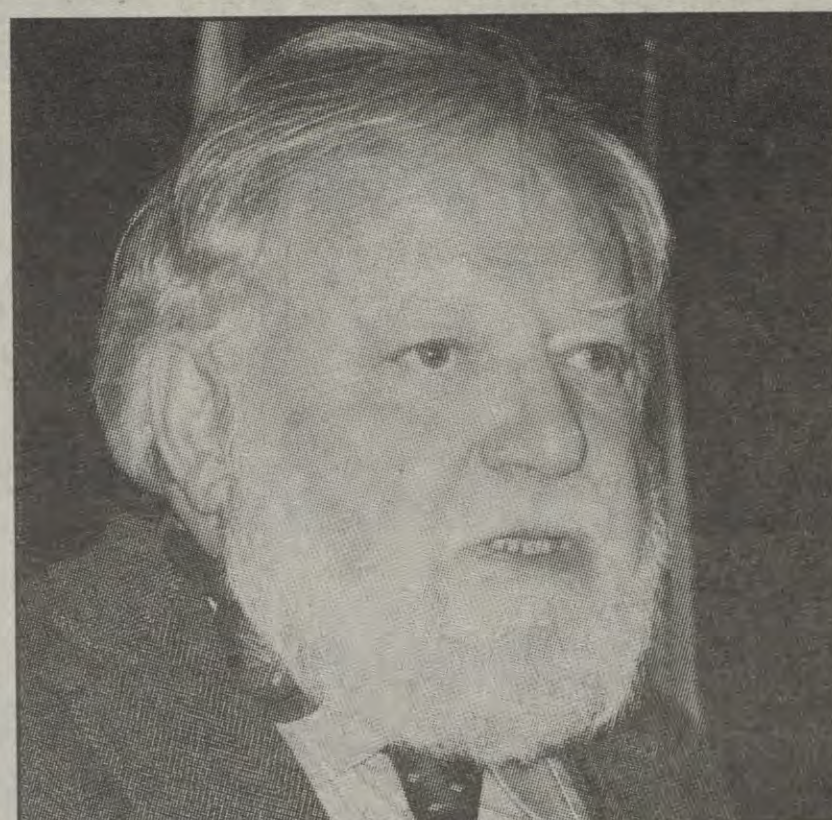
OTTAWA

Over and over again in Ottawa in early December, the message was "get out and vote."

With close to \$9 billion worth of commitments—when you combine the figures from the residential school compensation agreement and the promises made during the First Ministers' Meeting (FMM) in Kelowna—the only thing left to bring it all to fruition is the election of a government that will follow through. That was National Chief Phil Fontaine's message and it was repeated frequently throughout the three-day special chiefs' assembly that wrapped up on Dec. 8.

Fontaine pointed out that 63 federal ridings have at least five per cent First Nation population, while 15 ridings have 10 per cent. If First Nation people actually went out to vote for a candidate that will support the FMM initiative, they're votes would make a difference, he said.

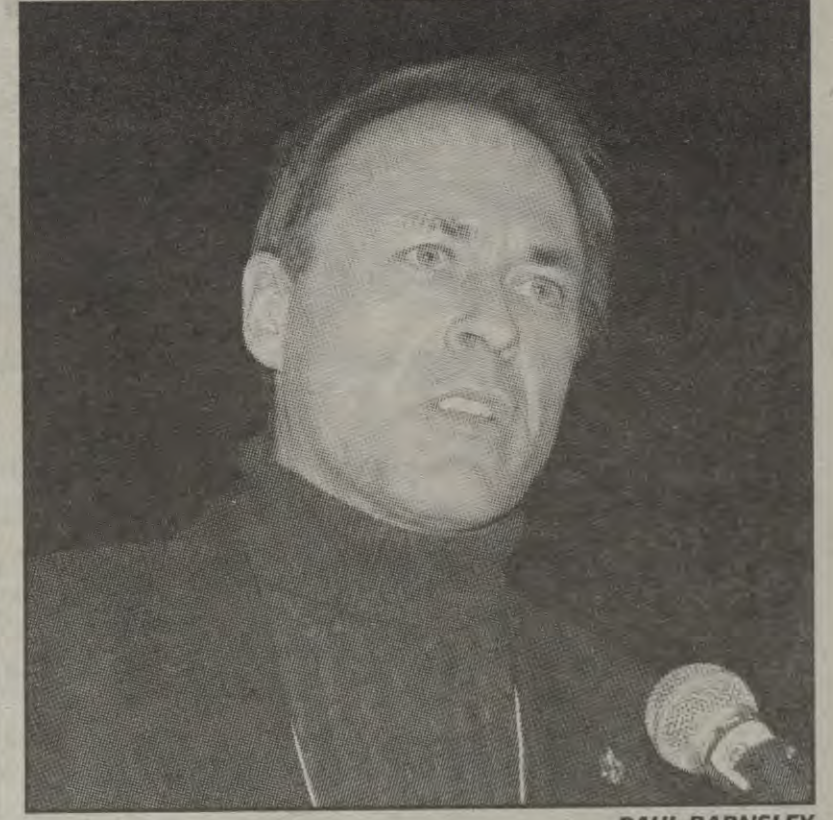
During a Dec. 2 phone press conference, Fontaine said the fact that the Liberal government was in its last days during the FMM was a concern, but he felt that the commitments made by the prime



The Bloc Quebecois' Bernard Cleary



Liberal Justice Minister Irwin Cotler



The NDP's Pat Martin

PAUL BARNSELEY

minister and the premiers would hold together despite the election call. He pointed out that 18 different parties, representing political parties of all stripes, participated in the FMM.

"One thing in our favor was that this was a very public and transparent process. The entire country was watching the FMM. The commitments made there were public and it will be very difficult for any government to retreat from the commitments," he said.

The Assembly of First Nations followed through on its election emphasis by giving representatives of five political parties a chance to address the

chiefs. That group included three Aboriginal Affairs critics—the NDP's Pat Martin, the Conservative Party of Canada's Jim Prentice and the Bloc Quebecois' Bernard Cleary—along with Liberal Justice Minister Irwin Cotler and Barb Wardlaw, interim leader of the newly-minted First Peoples National Party of Canada (FPNP).

The chiefs-in-assembly put each of the visitors through an intense workout.

The Bloc Quebecois' Cleary, a citizen of the Mashteuiatsh First Nation, was the first to appear. He sent chiefs hustling to the back of the room to pick up their

head set translators because his entire presentation was in French.

He said the Bloc shared First Nations' concerns about protecting their traditional languages and wanted to "combat injustices" faced by Indigenous peoples. He acknowledged that the social and economic conditions of First Nations needed to be addressed.

Urged by Grand Chief Doug Kelly to hold the next federal government to the commitments made at the first ministers' meeting, Cleary responded, "The Bloc Quebecois will continue to work on those files."

Pat Martin followed the next day.

"By way of a message from [NDP leader] Jack Layton, I can tell you categorically that the NDP will use any and all political influence that it may have in the next Parliament to ensure the implementation of the commitments made at the first ministers' meeting," he said. "Let me make it abundantly clear that the NDP does not believe that the \$5.1 billion announced at Kelowna is anywhere near adequate to make up for the need created by years of negligence."

He also told the chiefs that the \$5.1 figure included some money that had already been announced.

(see Parties page 10.)

Parties make their pitches

(Continued from page 9.)

"I do have to make it abundantly clear as well that the \$5.1 billion is the figure being used has within it—as we now know from the minister's office—the \$1.2 billion that was negotiated by the NDP in the 2005 budget. That's \$700 million towards housing and \$500 million towards post-secondary education. I should point out that there was no spending in the 2005 budget until Jack Layton negotiated that money into the budget," Pat Martin said. "So that leaves \$3.9 billion over five years to deal with the overwhelming need and the squalid social conditions right across the country. We should make it clear in all of our messages that we do not view that as an overwhelming amount of money."

As an example, he put the housing dollars into context.

"It should be common knowledge that INAC spends \$261 million per year for housing right across the country and that includes construction and renovation of existing housing. And that figure hasn't changed since 1992," he said. "There's been nine years of record surpluses in that time. So the \$700 million that Jack Layton negotiated into the 2005 budget over two years, represents \$350 million a year. That more than doubles the total contribution for housing. I condemn the government of the day for going through nine surplus budgets and never allocating one nickel for housing in their INAC budget. I believe that's negligence that borders on cruelty, frankly."

Irwin Cotler did not discuss the election but instead talked about justice issues. He ended his remarks by saying that Aboriginal justice would be a priority for "me personally and the government."

"I'm delighted to be able to be here and to participate in what I take to be the common cause that brings us together at the most profound existential level and that is the struggle against injustice as part of the larger struggle for justice," he said.

He told the chiefs the first thing he said publicly after being appointed justice minister "was that I would be guided in my work by one over-arching principle and that is the pursuit of justice and within that the protection and promotion of equality."

The chiefs listened politely to his remarks and then took full advantage of the opportunity to question Canada's Justice minister on tactics employed by his officials against the assertion of Aboriginal rights.

Due to changes in the scheduled time for her remarks, *Windspeaker* was not present when Barb Wardlaw, the First Peoples National Party's (FPNP) interim leader, addressed the chiefs. In an e-mail message after

the assembly, she told us about this new party.

"The Canadian political environment is very volatile and fragile at this time and the people are looking for honest relief. I believe that the FPNP will initiate positive change that will meet the needs of the very diverse people and territories/communities."

Jim Prentice reassured the chiefs that his Conservative Party of Canada is ready to follow through on the FMM commitments.

"I just wanted to assure you that my door is always open and that we will work together to deal with all of the issues that were talked about at the First Ministers' Meeting. A Conservative Party in government will be committed to fighting Aboriginal poverty and I look forward to working with all of you in the future," he said.

He took on what he called the "mythology" that a Conservative government would not be good for First Nation people.

He listed a number of positive developments over the years that happened under a Conservative government. The treaty-making process was a Conservative invention, he said.

"It was a Conservative government that removed the prohibition that prevented Aboriginal people from hiring lawyers," he said.

Registered Indians were given the right to vote under a Conservative government, he said, adding that the BC Treaty Commission was created by Brian Mulroney.

He then turned to the FMM.

"I was there. I've been through the documents. There is not a single word in the communiqué that I disagree with or that I think, frankly, most Canadians would disagree with. The issue is the spending commitments that were set out in a single-page document that was circulated at the end of the meeting. I spoke to many of the premiers and I spoke to many of the Aboriginal leaders and I could find no consensus on how the money which was under discussion is going to be spent," he said. "I think the FMM was an important meeting but it is very much a work in progress. There was no consensus as to how the money will be split up amongst the Aboriginal groups. There was no consensus as to how it will be split up between on-reserve and off-reserve issues, how it will be divided amongst the provinces and the territories that were at the table. I also think, from my point of view, that there is some confusion as to which of that money is new money and which of it is an existing spending envelope money which has already been approved by the government of Canada."

He did say that \$5 billion was not enough to solve the problems.

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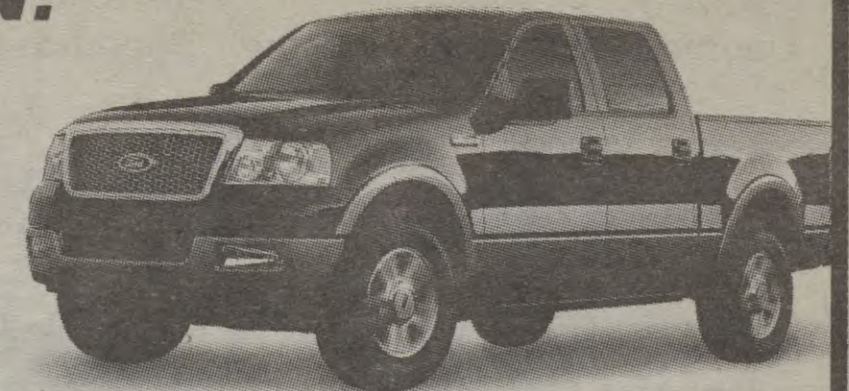


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Windspeaker

"Matter of weeks" for some till first payment

By Paul Barnsley
Windspeaker Staff Writer

OTTAWA

It will be close to one year before most of the compensation money that will be paid to survivors of residential schools will be distributed, but those over 65 years of age will receive payment much earlier.

"There will be an early payment to the elderly, meaning in this case 65 and over, in a matter of weeks," said Phil Fontaine, National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), in early December.

AFN communications director Don Kelly explained further that the Roman Catholic Church has agreed to allow access to its archives as part of the Nov. 23 reconciliation and compensation agreement for residential school survivors. Between church, government and AFN archives it is seen as a fairly easy task to

identify which former students are 65 years old or older as of May 30 of this [2005]. If you attended a school covered in the agreement, you qualify for an \$8,000 advance payment.

If you believe you qualify and are concerned that your current address is not known to the government or to the AFN you are invited to call Shannon Swan at the AFN offices in Ottawa. Her numbers are 1-613-241-6789 ext. 332 or toll free at 1-866-869-6789.

Kelly said the first cheques should be on their way sometime in January.

As for younger survivors, it will take a bit longer.

"Now with the settlement agreement there are time deadlines that can be enforced by the court. The settlement agreement calls for all serious abuse claims to be completed within nine months of being started and there must be a minimum of 2,500 claims settled per year. This speeds up the

settlement process significantly," Fontaine said. "We're assuming that the courts will approve the settlement agreement for all the survivors. So the lump sum payments will start to be paid out November 2006."

As with all bureaucratic processes, things take time.

"The reason it will take this amount of time is because it will take a few months to draft a full settlement agreement and the related documents. These have to be filed in all the courts across the country," the national chief explained. "And the target date for final Cabinet approval of the full settlement agreement is March 31, 2006. And the date the agreement will then be filed in all regions of the country is on May 1, 2006. The law requires that once the agreement is filed there must be a six-month mandatory waiting period for people to decide whether they are in or out, meaning simply whether they accept the agreement. Payment will then be

after the end of this process and only after all the settlement conditions are met."

And Fontaine said discussions are now underway to address another aspect of residential school compensation and reconciliation that was not in the agreement for legal reasons.

"There's no court in the country that can direct a minister of the Crown or a prime minister to apologize. We knew that. And because this is a legal agreement, it'll be court supervised. The apology is outside that," he told *Windspeaker*.

"So we are now negotiating the tone and substance of the apology. There will be a full apology from Canada and it'll be in a significant public ceremony. Our thought is the Parliament."

Asked if he meant that the goal is to have the prime minister make the apology in the House of Commons, Fontaine said, "Yes."

Former Supreme Court Justice

Frank Iacobucci was the government's agent on this matter. He was expected to report to the Justice minister in the spring. But Fontaine said he made one report to Cabinet in October and things started heating up after that.

"The negotiations just gathered momentum and it became clear that it was possible to come up with an agreement that was satisfactory to all the diverse parties at the table and was clearly a fair and just proposition for the survivors. So we ended up working long into the night to do the deal and we were able to bring this in before the call was made," he said.

The issue of governments reducing pension or social assistance payments when survivors receive this compensation is still not completely dealt with, the national chief admitted, but the AFN is working on it.

(see Residential page 23.)



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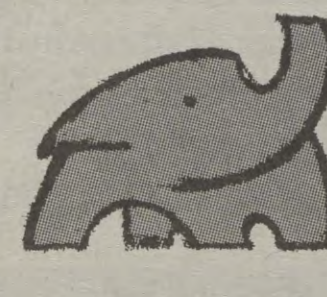
PUBLIC HEARING ANNOUNCEMENT

The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) has issued an official Notice of Public Hearing, available at www.nuclearsafety.gc.ca, that it will hold a one-day public hearing on the application by Canadian Light Source Inc. (CLS) for the renewal of its particle accelerator operating licence. The facility is located in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, on the University of Saskatchewan campus. The hearing will be held in the CNSC Public Hearing Room, 14th floor, 280 Slater Street, Ottawa, Ontario, on **March 30, 2006**.

Persons who wish to participate must file a request to intervene with the Secretary of the Commission by February 27, 2006. Hearing documents (submissions) are not available on-line and must be requested through the Secretariat at the address below. For more information, instructions on how to participate in this public hearing process or the complete text of the official Notice of Public Hearing, see www.nuclearsafety.gc.ca, and refer to Notice of Public Hearing 2006-H-02, or contact:

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Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission
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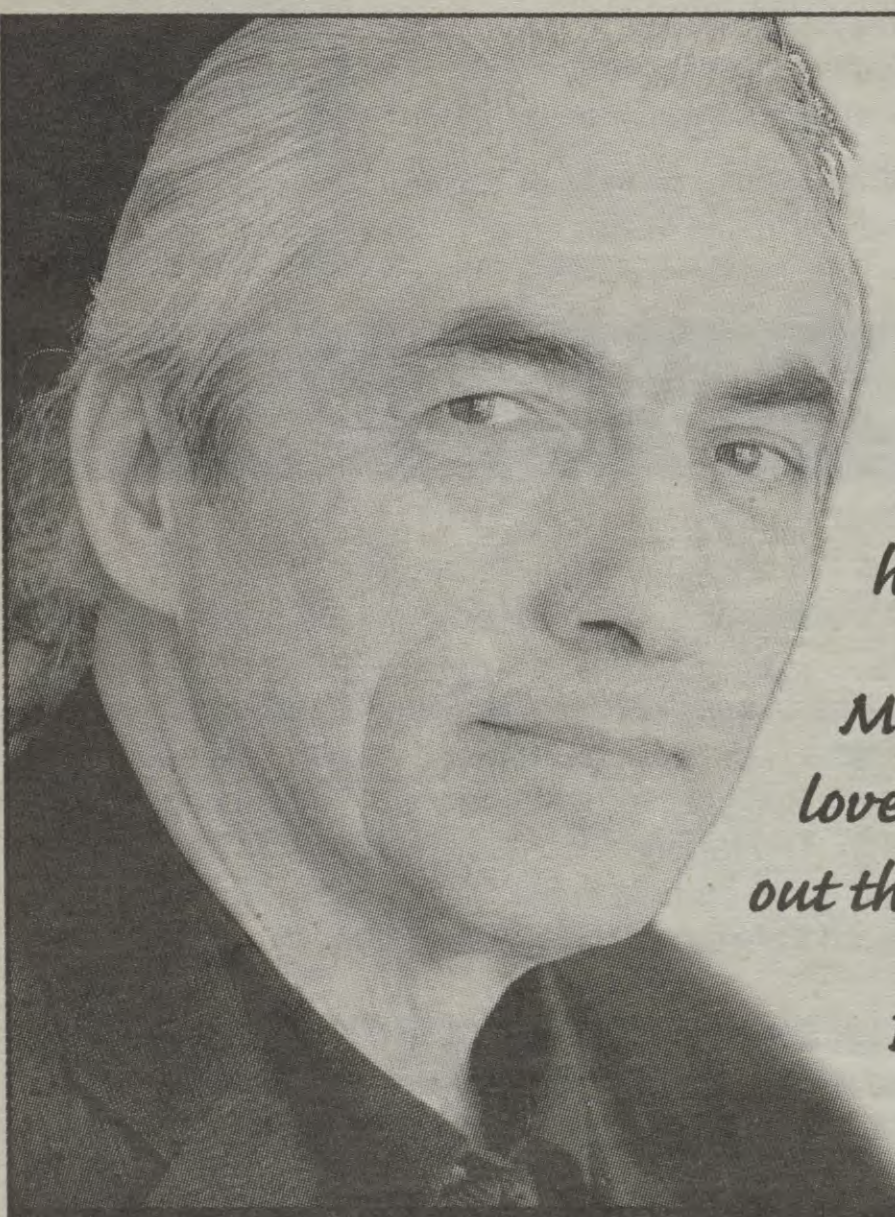
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First Nations and AFN Regional
Chiefs, I hope you enjoyed a
happy and festive holiday season.*

*May the Creator keep you and your
loved ones safe and healthy through-
out the New Year.*

*Phil Fontaine
National Chief*



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Accusations in the House catch up with MP

By Paul Barnsley
Windspeaker Staff Writer

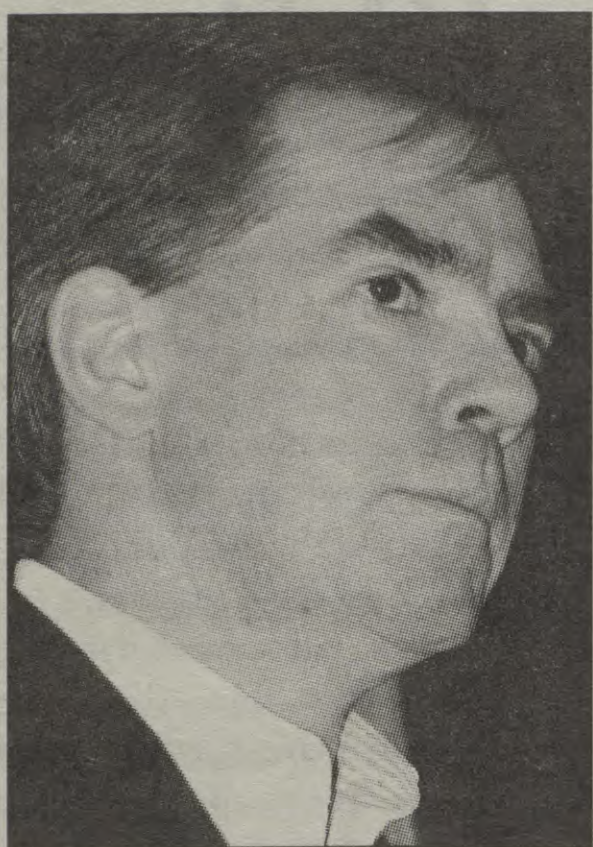
OTTAWA

Those who follow the goings-on in the House of Commons knew that a storm was brewing when Ted Quewezance took his place in front of the microphone and patiently waited for Jim Prentice, Conservative Party of Canada Indian Affairs critic, to finish his presentation to the chiefs-in-assembly on Dec. 8.

Quewezance, the former chief of the Keeseekoosewa First Nation in Saskatchewan, had seen his name bandied about during Question Period a few weeks before when the Conservatives were badgering the Liberals about charges related to missing band trust fund money.

Prentice and several of his fellow Conservatives had gone after the Liberals in the Commons, suggesting the government was refusing to release an audit of the band's education fund to protect Quewezance, who ran for the Liberals in the last election.

"During the time between 1995 and 2001, over \$600,000 was systematically looted from its education fund," said Prentice in the House on Nov. 14. "The department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development has known about this since 2002 and this minister [Andy Scott] has known since he was appointed, but the minister refuses to help the new chief and council get to the bottom of this. What is the minister hiding?"



"Will the minister admit today that he is trying to protect the former chief because he was the chief when the money was stolen and because he was the prime minister's Liberal candidate in the last federal election? Is this why the minister will not produce a forensic audit?"

—Conservative MP Jim Prentice, in the House of Commons Nov. 14.

Why will he not produce a forensic audit that shows who stole the Keeseekoosewa children's trust fund?"

After Minister Scott said that a routine audit had uncovered some irregularities that had been investigated by the RCMP who laid the charges it saw as appropriate, the Conservative Indian Affairs critic continued his assault.

"Will the minister admit today that he is trying to protect the former chief because he was the chief when the money was stolen and because he was the prime minister's Liberal candidate in the last federal election? Is this why the minister will not produce a forensic audit?" Prentice asked.

Scott dismissed that allegation as "ridiculous."

Garry Breitkreuz, the Conservative member for Yorkton-Melville, took up the questioning.

"Mr. Speaker, Mr. Quewezance, the former chief, was president of

the St. Phillip's Rangers hockey team when it received repeated direct transfers from the school account. He knew what was going on and the Liberals recruited him to run as their candidate in 2004 while failing to investigate complaints made to Indian Affairs about this matter in 2002. The Liberals have hit a new low in stealing money from schoolchildren while protecting one of their own from investigation. Is this the new standard of ethics the prime minister promised us in 2004: nominating candidates who steal money from schoolchildren and then covering it up?" he said.

"Mr. Speaker, the new low is across on the other side. That is a ridiculous and scandalous thing to say," Scott replied.

Prentice, now in attendance at the chiefs' special assembly to make the case for voting for his party, found himself in the same room as Quewezance and a showdown ensued.

"Mr. Prentice, you and I have never really met, officially," said Quewezance. "Yet, two weeks ago you made some derogatory remarks about me in the House of Commons. You publicly accused myself as former chief of the Keeseekoosewa First Nation, and the council, of stealing \$600,000 from my First Nation. Mr. Prentice, I challenge you to explain the evidence that you used and the reason why you would attempt to destroy a First Nation individual by utilizing hearsay. The question I ask, Mr. Prentice, are you still of the opinion that the Keeseekoosewa First Nation education fund was systematically looted by myself as chief and my council between 1995 and 2001?"

Quewezance had predicted earlier that Prentice would not repeat the allegation against him outside of Parliament where he would not be immune to civil action for slander.

"Look at the facts, Mr. Prentice. You haven't got parliamentary privilege here. Only weasels hide in the House of Commons and make accusations like the way they

do to First Nations communities and to leadership. Stand up here today and make those accusations, Mr. Prentice," he said.

Prentice fielded a number of other questions from other chiefs before responding to Quewezance's challenge.

"I would say in response to Mr. Quewezance that we were responding to information and requests that we received from the chief in the community. The questions that we raised in the House of Commons were directed to the minister to produce the audit information that the community had been asking for. So we were doing the best job that we could with the information that we had. Those are the questions that we asked," he said.

Later, Prentice was seen huddled with Quewezance, Kettle and Stoney Point Chief Tom Bressette and Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations Vice-chief Morley Watson. Contacted on Dec. 19, to see if their differences had been settled, Quewezance said, "no."

"He just denied everything. He hid behind parliamentary privilege. The sad part about it is things like that that people say in the House of Commons, they could ruin people's lives," he said.

He denied any role in any wrongdoing in his home community and said the Opposition showed it had no concrete evidence of his involvement with Prentice's response outside the House of Commons.

"You're in a no-win situation. If you keep quiet you're guilty and if you make noise you're hiding something," he said, explaining why he took on the Conservative Party member in public.

Women's group gets summit commitment

(Continued from page 8.)

Manitoba Premier Gary Doer praised Paul Martin and the Aboriginal leaders for the positive outcome of the meeting.

"This prime minister and the Aboriginal leaders have made more progress in bread and butter items—or bannock and butter—in the last week when you count residential schools, than I've seen over my political life and reading history in the last 20 or 30 years," he said. "It is not going to reverse 100 years of Canadian history but... let's give credit where credit's due. The prime minister has made more significant bread and butter commitments that will make a difference for Aboriginal people than, I think, any Prime Minister in the last number of decades."

And it was Doer who reminded the prime minister of the strong presentation made during the meeting by Native Women's Association of Canada President Beverley Jacobs.

"Beverley Jacobs raised some very, very, I think for all of us, very disturbing analysis of the situation in Canada for Aboriginal women," Doer said, adding that the federal government has agreed to hold a summit on the disappearance of Native women and other related issues.

"I should have raised that," Martin said. "What has happened here is just overwhelming conviction that this country, rich as it is, simply cannot allow the condition of a huge gap in health care and education and

opportunity and housing to exist in one segment of society. This is a moral issue. We will meet as often as it takes to make sure that those gaps are eliminated. I think that the point that was raised in terms of Aboriginal women, as Gary has just said, is one that I think struck every one of us and whatever the issue, let there be no doubt, we're going to solve it."



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PUBLIC HEARING ANNOUNCEMENT

The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) has issued an official Notice of Public Hearing, available at www.nuclearsafety.gc.ca, that it will hold a two-day public hearing on an application by New Brunswick Power Nuclear Corporation (NB Power Nuclear), for the renewal of its licence to operate the Point Lepreau Nuclear Generating Station. The facility is located southwest of Saint John, New Brunswick, on the Lepreau Peninsula. The hearing will be held in the CNSC Public Hearing Room, 14th floor, 280 Slater Street, Ottawa, Ontario, on **February 16, 2006**, and **May 18, 2006**.

Persons who wish to participate must file a request to intervene with the Secretary of the Commission by April 18, 2006. Hearing documents (submissions) are not available on-line and must be requested through the Secretariat at the address below. For more information, instructions on how to participate in this public hearing process or the complete text of the official Notice of Public Hearing, see www.nuclearsafety.gc.ca, and refer to Notice of Public Hearing 2006-H-01, or contact:

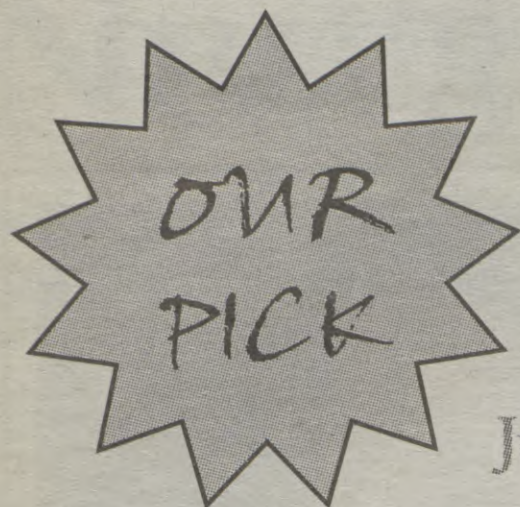
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 Juan Hernandez; Ancestors
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Award-winning CD combines tradition & innovation

Tanya Tagaq Gillis was in her fourth year of the bachelor of fine arts program at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design when she began to develop the distinctive sound that has garnered the attention of music fans both in Canada and further afield. Missing her home in Cambridge Bay, Nunavut, she would listen to the tapes of throat singing her mother had sent to her and began to try to recreate what she heard. What developed was a unique amalgamation, with Tagaq's soft, sweet vocals meshing with the rhythmic sounds of throat singing.



Tagaq's album, *Sinaa*, which refers to the place where the water meets the edge of the ice, has won her much praise, as well as a few awards. Tagaq was one of the performers at the Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards held in Toronto at the end of November, and took home the award for Best Female Performer. The CD also won for Best Album Design and Best Producer. Tagaq was featured on Bjork's last album, *Medulla*, and the Icelandic artist returned the favor, performing alongside Tagaq on the song *Ancestors*, as well as producing the cut. The Inuit songstress has been busy performing at venues across Canada and Europe and that will continue in 2006 when she starts off the new year by touring with the Kronos Quartet.

[radio's most active]

ABORIGINAL RADIO MOST ACTIVE LIST

ARTIST	TITLE	ALBUM
Crystal Shawanda	Maybe Someday	Cutting Room Floor
D.L.O.	Northern Hillbilly	Single Release
Heritage	Designated Man	Evolution
Billy Simard	Now That You're Gone	20 Aboriginal Hits 4
Shane Yellowbird	Beautiful Concept	Single Release
Les Shannacappo	From Dusk 'Til Dawn	Single Release
Priscilla Morin	Already Gone	Single Release
Dominique Reynolds	The Rifle	Coming Home
Slo-Mojo	Superman	Single Release
William Osbourne	It Ain't Been Easy	Single Release
Gabby Taylor	You're The One	Single Release
Mike Gouchie	Somethin 'Bout A Bad Boy	Bad Boys & Angels
Ray Villebrun & Red Blaze	Make Our Mamas Proud	Been Awhile
Don Constant	Northern Lights	Two Mending Hearts
Just The Boys	Shotgun Rider	Shotgun Rider
Tracy Bone	Games	Single Release
Forever	One More Time	Something To Dream Of...
Carl Quinn	Ni Ototem	Ni Ototem
Hank Horton	I've Told You Leona	Honky Tonk Heartache Blues
Donny Parenteau	The Great Unknown	Single Release

CONTRIBUTING STATIONS:



[book report]

Non-fiction account reads like a novel

Starlight Tour: The Last, Lonely Night of Neil Stonechild

By Susanne Reber and Robert Renaud
 Random House Canada,
 427 pages, \$35 (hc)

Review by Suzanne Methot

On Nov. 29, 1990, Cree teenager Neil Stonechild was found frozen to death in a field in an industrial area outside Saskatoon. Fourteen years later, a public inquiry would find clear evidence that Saskatoon police had Stonechild in custody before his death, and that the officers in question had been deceptive about their involvement. *Starlight Tour* covers the ground in between, painting a shocking picture of police incompetence, citizen and media indifference, and a cover up at the highest levels.

Authors Susanne Reber and Robert Renaud, both investigative journalists for the CBC, researched the Stonechild case for three years. They conducted exhaustive interviews with the Stonechild family, their legal team, and other people involved in the case, and they accessed legal evidence, confidential documents, and photos used in the inquiry. The result is a rock-solid factual

examination of Stonechild's life and death, the freezing deaths of five other Native men, the half-hearted investigation conducted by the Saskatoon Police Service, the subsequent RCMP investigation, the inquests into several of the deaths, the trial of the officers involved in the unlawful confinement of one Native man, the inquiry, and the dismissal of the officers who had contact with Stonechild on the night of his death.

But don't let that scare you away from *Starlight Tour*. Although it presents the facts, it is not a dry, journalistic examination of events. The authors create and maintain a novel-like rhythm and tone, primarily through the use of a character-centred storytelling technique.

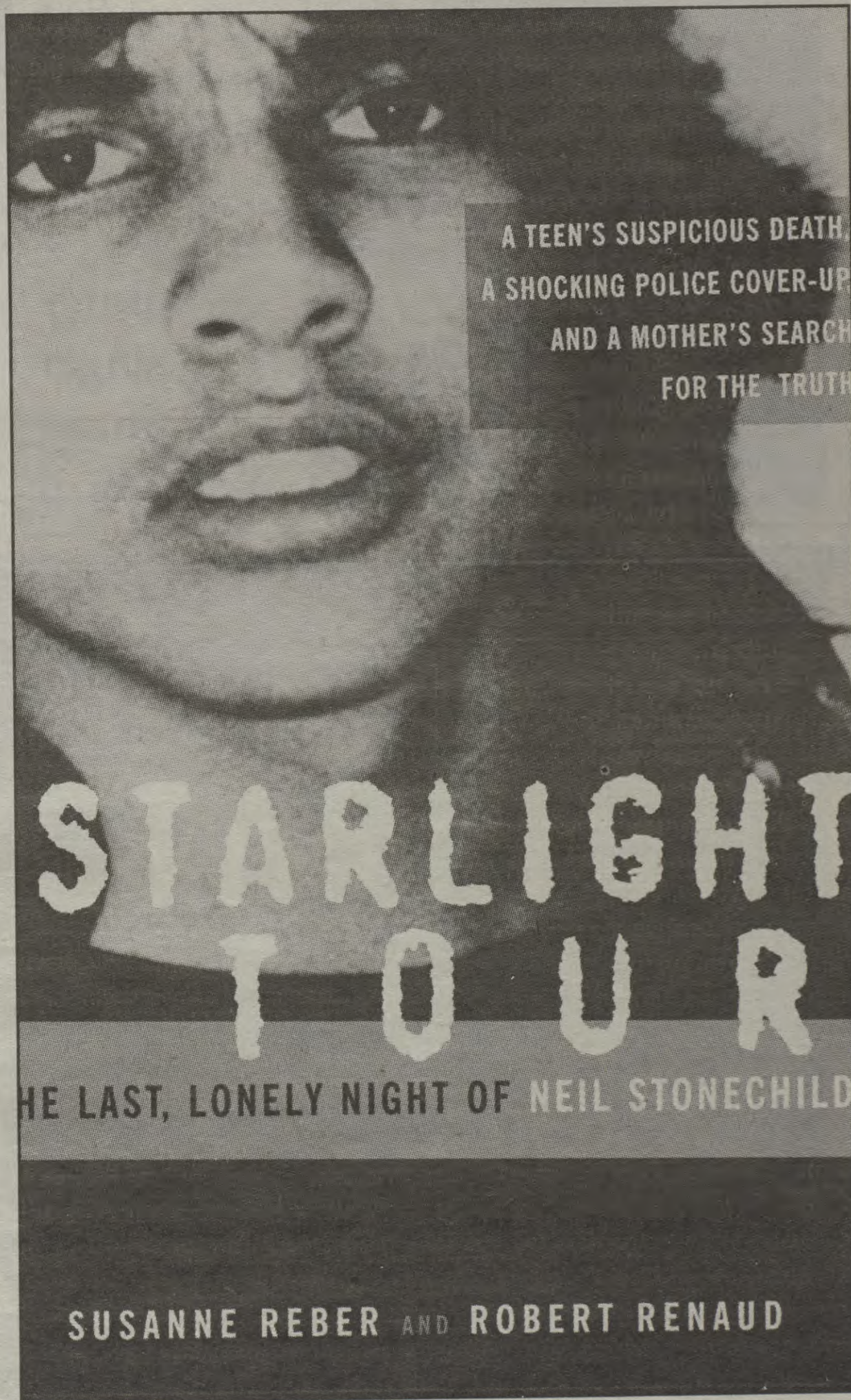
Reber and Renaud recreate entire conversations, writing dialogue as if they had been there. They write about inner thoughts as if they were inside the heads of the people involved. This kind of creative non-fiction—first used by Truman Capote in his groundbreaking book *In Cold Blood*—allows readers to enter the story and gain intimacy with the proceedings. The people in the story become much more than mere names on a page.

This turns out to be a vital part of *Starlight Tour's* success. The

story is told with an eye to the emotions and individual tics of the personalities involved, as opposed to a dry recount of official transcripts. Several principal players in the Stonechild affair—especially lawyer Don Worme and principal witness Jason Roy—become almost like characters in a novel. At one point, the authors write about how the weather on a particular day during the inquiry made Stonechild's mother's "temples ache." This seemingly small detail—and others like it—give readers a sense of the humanity of the people involved, a humanity that would not be present in a run-of-the-mill non-fiction book.

Unfortunately, creative non-fiction can also be problematic: in a few scenes, especially one written from Roy's point of view and one written from a cop's point of view—where the "characters" inner thoughts seem to veer from accepted fact—readers might wonder if what they're reading is fact or just an attempt by the authors to avoid showing bias.

Unlike many non-fiction books, where the facts pile up into a big, blurry mess, *Starlight Tour* is a masterpiece of pacing and structure. Especially effective are the compelling prologues to each of the four sections of the book. (see *Starlight* tours page 21.)



Powwow just a part of week-long fun

If you think the international powwow and the Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards gala are the only activities worth talking about during Canadian Aboriginal Week in Toronto, you've got another think coming. In recent years, people involved in a variety of industries have taken advantage of the huge draw of festival week setting the time aside to hold gatherings of all sorts.

There was a business conference, and a language symposium. A book was launched (Brian Wright-McLeod's *Encyclopedia of Native Music*), as was a dance company (Santee Smith's Kaha:wi Dance Theatre.) A comedy night featured Charlie Hill, Don Burnstick and Gerry "The Big Bear" Barrett. And there was the fashion show.

From Culture to Couture provided an opportunity for six notable names in fashion to put their wares on display and raise money for a local women's shelter to help the children living there.

Adam Beach and Jennifer Podemski hosted the night that featured the work of Dorothy Grant, D'Arcy Moses, Angela DeMontigny, Pam Baker and Dene Fur Clouds. Some of the creations were interesting, while others were over-the-top, as is the style of runway shows, but the word of choice that best describes the fashions that night is spectacular. The event, however, would have benefited greatly

from some commentary about the designers, the materials they were using, and the inspiration for their work.

Friday in Toronto was reserved for students of area schools to attend the Rogers Centre for lessons on all things Aboriginal. Mini cultural workshops were held in the bleachers and

interactive attractions were held on the sports floor.

Children participated in such traditional games as three-way tug of war, which tests strength, endurance and desire, and Poison Circle, an elimination game that originates from the Metis voyageur days.

(see Festival week page 20.)



"The Aboriginal Festival is just really 'knock your socks off.' It's really great."
—singer
Joanne Shenendoah



(Right) Inuit artist Ohito Ashoona demonstrated soap-stone carving at the Nunavut tradeshow booth in the Rogers Centre in Toronto. (Left) Melvin and Rosa John introduced the trickster stories to young people during education day at the Canadian Aboriginal Festival.



PHOTOS BY DEBORA STEEL

The powwow portion of the Canadian Aboriginal Festival attracted not only Indigenous people from North America, but dancers from countries further afield. Here a cultural group from Siberia put on an impromptu demonstration.

Janice Lavallee of Barrie, Ont. models a creation, designed by D'Arcy Moses, at a fashion show Nov. 24. The show featured the country's top Native designers, including Angela DeMontigny, Pam Baker and Dorothy Grant.



"It's my first time here. I'm loving it."

—country singer
Shane Yellowbird

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Northern artist steals the show

By Debora Steel, with files from Wally Desjarlais
Windspeaker Staff Writer

TORONTO

The north wind blew into Toronto on Nov. 25, and riding in on a gust was a huge talent called Tagaq. The Inuit throat-singer took to the stage during the Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards and took the audience's breath away with an aggressive performance of her contemporary



DEBORA STEEL

Best female artist—Tagaq

take on the traditional women's vocal game.

A standing ovation greeted the performance, but she couldn't see it, blinded by the lights in the John Bassett Theatre. It wasn't until she was off stage that she heard how well received her performance was.

"I ran off like a chicken. People told me later, and I was just absolutely thrilled."

Tagaq (Tanya Gillis) won in the Best Female Performer category for her album *Sinaa*, on which the eccentric Bjork collaborates and produces a track. Tagaq has been featured on a past Bjork CD.

"I am dreaming," said the northern diamond in her acceptance speech. "I put my soul into it," she said of the CD. She thanked her family, who had travelled from Nunavut to attend the show. *Sinaa* also won for Best Producer (Juan Hernandez) and Engineer (Jose [Triki] Trincado), and for Best Album Design (Oscar Poza & Montse).

Tagaq's performance topped off

a women's medley performed in turn by Asani (Sherryl Sewepagaham, Debbie Houle and Sarah Pocklington), ElizaBeth Hill and Donna Kay. The woman, all of them nominated in some category or another that night (Asani won Best Female Traditional Roots Album) were among a long list of impressive performers that demonstrated the depth and breadth of the Aboriginal music industry.

A demonstration of fiddle virtuosity set the tone for the evening with an opening number performed by Ryan D'aoust, 16, of Norway House, Man., John Arcand, Donny Parenteau and C.R. Noble.

D'aoust, a left-handed player, would go on to win for Best Fiddle Album (*Southside Of The Strings*), which he dedicated to his late father Stan D'aoust.

"I've been playing the fiddle for about five years," said D'aoust. He put out a demo to raise funds for *Southside*, his first full CD, so the win was a big nod of approval for his efforts.

D'aoust also was presented the Galaxy Rising Star award, which came with a \$2,000 cash prize. He plans to put the money toward the purchase of a piano, and set aside some money for a new CD.

The award ceremony was hosted by the always poised producer of the *Sharing Circle*, Lisa Meeches, and Gerry "The Big Bear" Barrett, a radio personality working in Winnipeg, who is also a comedian of some



PHOTOS BY BERT CROWFOOT
Ryan D'aoust won best fiddle album for *Southside Of The Strings*, and was named Galaxy Rising Star. (Right) Lisa Meeches and Gerry Barrett played host to the Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards Nov. 25 in Toronto.

note. Barrett relied, however, more on foolishness and funny faces than on wit for his contribution to the evening's entertainment, while Meeches played it straight, albeit a little stiff.

J.C. Campbell performed a ballad from his nominated album *Life Up Til Now* after losing the nod for Best Country Album to long-time entertainer Hank Horton for *Honky Tonk Heartache Blues*.

Todd Burnell of Sunshine Records, the label that produces Horton's work, said the artist would be "tickled pink" after "struggling away up in northern Manitoba playing weekend gigs," all these years.

Perennial favorite Burnt Project 1 was named Best Group or Duo. Cape Breton's own Forever nabbed Best Rock Album with *Something To Dream Of*. The group thanked Eskasoni First Nation for flying them to the event. Forever also won for Best Video. Soft-spoken Little Hawk won

Best Folk Album and Best Album for his CD *1492-1975*.

Manitoban Kimberley Dawn won in the best song single category for *Spirit Of Our People*.

"I was a little bit overwhelmed because I was up against some

heroes of mine, Edward Gamblin and Eagle and Hawk, and was really quite willing to step aside for them to take this award. It was quite a shock and I'm very happy to bring it home," she said.

Beatrice Deer won in the Best Inuit Cultural Album category for *Just Bea*. Blackstone won in the Best Powwow Contemporary category for *Back In The Day*. And Eekwol won in the Best Hip Hop category for *Apprentice To The Mystery*.

Joanne Shenandoah of New York State won Best International CD for *Skywoman*. And for her, it was just another day at the office.

"Awards are always a strange time, because everybody is like 'Oh, I hope you win,' and they

get their hopes up. For me, after so many awards, you know, you begin to not like the word 'nominee' very much, because, you think, 'OK, we probably should go.' And it's exciting for up-and-coming artists and it's important to support the awards, I mean I have 10 Native American music awards... and I've been up for the Grammy a couple of times... life has been good to me... last night was wonderful."

Albertans Carl Quinn, the powwow group Painted Horse, and the Northern Cree Singers all walked away with hardware.

Quinn was recognized as best songwriter for the title song *Ni Ototem* off of his CD *Ni Ototem*. Northern Cree won Best Hand Drum Album for *Sweethearts Shuffle*.

And Painted Horse were very excited about their win for Best Powwow Traditional for *Blackfoot Songs*.

Members of the group had driven 72 hours from Calgary to attend the awards presentation. They were up against powwow powerhouses High Noon and Walking Spirit.

The Keeper of Tradition Award was presented to northern Alberta's Allan Beaver.

Diga, a Dogrib musician from Fort Rae, N.W.T., was named Best Male Artist.

(see Music Awards page 20.)



Best male artist—Diga

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If you weren't there... here's what you missed

JUST A PRETTY FACE ... What do the words articulate, eloquent, polished and professional all have in common? They are all words that would not be used to describe Adam Beach's presentation performance at the Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards in Toronto on Nov. 25. Beach (*Smoke Signals, Windtalkers*) accompanied Much More Music's Richard Cazeau (*The Loop*) onto the stage of the John Bassett Theatre to present the award for Best Fiddle Album.



Much More Music's Richard Cazeau and Adam Beach.

Beach stared blankly at Cazeau when the videographer asked the name of the movie the actor had just shot with Academy Award winning director Clint Eastwood. Further attempts to engage Beach in conversation were greeted with the actor's trademark wide smile and a look of terror in his eyes as

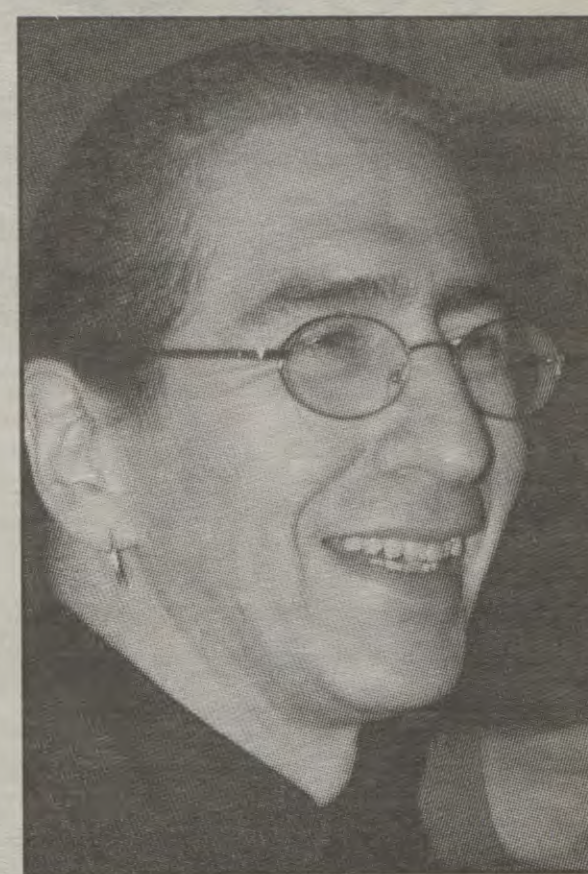
though he had just been asked to explain quantum physics.

"Don't worry Adam. I still love you," was the shout out by one woman in the audience. Beach responded to the back-handed compliment by lifting his thumb and pinky-finger to his face and mouthing the

words 'Call me.'

Beach made an equally compelling appearance the night before when he co-hosted a gala Native fashion show with Jennifer Podemski. Beyond some public lecherous overtures made to the actress, Beach didn't have much to contribute there either.

MISSING IN ACTION ... Music Industry Award winner Brian Wright-McLeod is a laid-back kind of guy. The syndicated radio host and author of the *Encyclopedia of Native Music* is so laid back, in fact, that he missed the announcement of his Canadian Aboriginal Music Award and had to be brought on stage later in the program to make his acceptance speech. "Talk about your invisible minority," he said, dry as toast, before accepting, belatedly, the special honor. Wright-McLeod wasn't the only no-show at the podium for his moment in the sun. Alberta's Asani was MIA when they won in the Best Female Traditional Roots Album category for their CD *Rattle & Drum*. Presenter Ron Jamieson said he would accept the award on Asani's behalf because they were unable to attend the ceremony, which confused the audience a bit because Asani had already performed twice during the gala event. Apparently the group was off somewhere rehearsing the final number, the new theme song of future award galas that was being rolled out that night. Now that's dedication for you.



Brian Wright-McLeod

NORTHERN CANDOR ... Media training might be in the future of Inuit throat-singer Tagaq. After her win in the Best Female Artist

category at the Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards, and the stand-out performance that received a standing ovation from a very eclectic audience, the press, of course, were drawn to the woman. When Wally Desjarlais of Alberta's CFWE, The Native Perspective radio caught up with Tagaq at the awards after-party he tried to draw the singer out to discuss her music, her performance and her first CD, *Sinaa*, produced in about a week in Spain, she said.



Tagaq

When Desjarlais asked what took Tagaq to Spain to record, she said "I got knocked up by a Spanish man." When asked what her plans were for the future, she responded "I'm going to sing some more and maybe get knocked up again."

Well, now we know what causes it.



Asani's Sherryl Sewepagaham, Debbie Houle and Sarah Pocklington

POWWOW FAUX PAS ... On the day that Toronto was burying its latest victim of gang violence—a young man gunned down in a church during the funeral of a co-hort—Assembly of First Nation regional chief for Alberta, Jason Goodstriker, was inviting gang members to join in the grand entry at the Toronto International powwow.

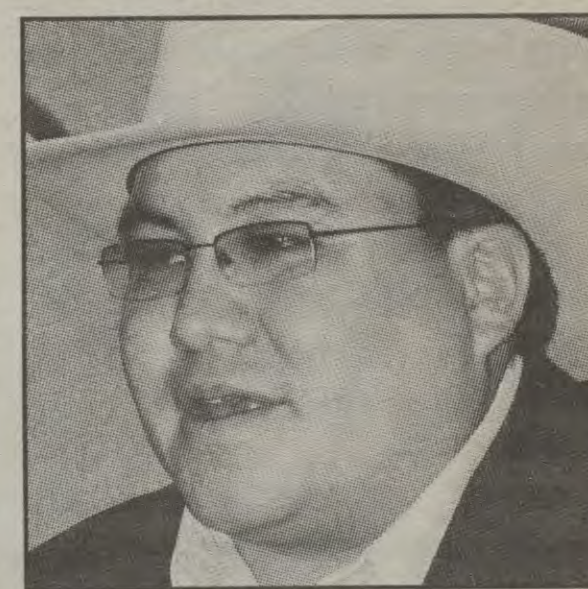
The flip comment left his lips when Goodstriker was moonlighting as commentator of Saturday's 7 p.m. demonstration of colors, encouraging dancers to gather. He called on First Nations leaders, municipal leaders and

gang leaders to join the grand entry.

And if that comment wasn't enough, he continued to joke, over the loud speaker resonating through the Rogers Centre, that a member of one of the visiting drum groups was part of a notorious Manitoba Indian gang.

One of reasons the annual powwow in TO is held is to introduce non-Native people to the beauty of Aboriginal custom, so the bleachers in the famed stadium where the Toronto Blue Jays play were taken up by scores of locals interested in how a powwow operates. Goodstriker's

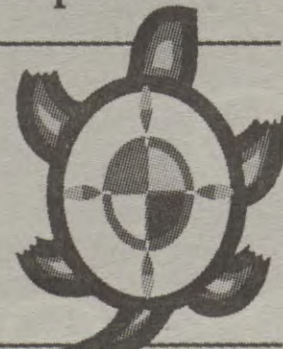
remarks, considering the purpose of the powwow and the sadness of the day on which the comments were made, seemed wildly inappropriate.



Jason Goodstriker

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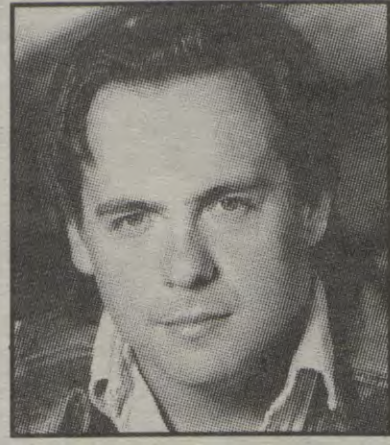
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The stomach-turning reality of abuse

Just the other day I had an uncomfortable demonstration of two different types of stupidity demonstrated by two different types of men. Unfortunately, I was one of them.

It didn't happen recently. In fact it happened several years back, but it was only a few days ago I found out about it. And it's left me feeling... I guess odd would be the best word.

I have an acquaintance. For the sake of argument, let's call her Mary. In the community I work in, that of the writing field, I would occasionally bump into her, every couple years or so. Evidently, the last time I came into contact with her was during a book tour I was on some time back where she interviewed me and got me to sign her book. I'm not even sure what I wrote, but being genuinely fond of her in a platonic sense, and in a playful



THE URBANE INDIAN

Drew Hayden Taylor

and teasing mood, it ended up being something to the effect of "Mary, you're fabulous. Let's run off together and get married. Drew." And then she disappeared for another few years.

I ran into this woman again, after several years, at an arts function. After some brief salutations, Mary filled me in on the intervening years. After our last encounter, she said, she took the book home and proudly showed it to her boyfriend. He read my inscription and, using her words, proceeded to "beat the

crap" out of her. Because of my flippant dedication, he automatically assumed there was more to the joke than there was, and decided to register his disapproval in a physical manner.

When she told me this, my jaw dropped. Immediately feelings of anger, guilt, surprise and a host of other powerful emotions swelled up inside me. Basically, I was responsible for a woman being beaten by her spouse. Always fervently opposed to domestic abuse, the news struck me to the core. I was stunned.

Unfortunately I've been in situations before where I've said or done something in a joking fashion that was wildly inappropriate, only to have it result in embarrassing repercussions. I think everybody's been in a situation like that. But this, by far, took the proverbial cake for me.

Mary then told me that for the next year or so she was furious and very angry with me, and looked forward to confronting me about the result of my clever and witty little comment. Had I known all this had happened, I would have gladly presented my neck for ritual decapitation.

Instead, to my surprise, she thanked me. Once more I was stunned. Because of this horrible, violent act, she said, I saved her life. I'm paraphrasing Mary, but evidently it took her a while to properly assess the environment

she had been in. She had placed herself in a situation with a very controlling man that was both her fiancé and tutor for school. The assault precipitated her leaving the relationship. It was then that she had the time, and the distance, to better reflect on what had happened. Her friends, who had always had concerns about the man, supported and told her she was lucky to get out when she did.

Mary doesn't blame me anymore for what happened. All I did, Mary says, was force the issue to the surface where she could see him for what he was. Basically, my attempt at humor forced him out of the closet, so to speak. In fact, she hugged me after our talk. Now she's off on her own, having a wonderful and exciting career. So, I guess it was a good thing that it happened. I guess...

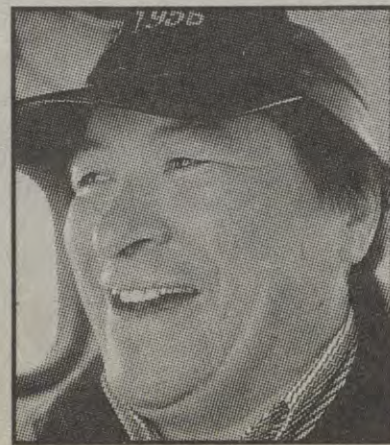
(see Conflicted page 25.)

Kelowna a triumph, and a credit to all

One has to take pause to appreciate the sheer amount of work and preparation that must have gone into pulling off the First Ministers' Meeting (FMM) on Aboriginal issues, held Nov. 24 and 25 in Kelowna, B.C. The dynamics of securing commitments from the federal, provincial, and territorial governments to deal tangibly with Aboriginal issues is a supreme accomplishment in itself, above and beyond the results of the gathering.

Back in the 1980s, governments in Canada sat down with Aboriginal leaders at four First Ministers' conferences (FMC) on Aboriginal affairs. These meetings were mandatory under the provision recognizing the Indian, Inuit, and Métis people in Canada's repatriated Constitution. Some jurisdictions attended those conferences only because they were required by law to do so. Had they any other option, I'm quite sure several governments would rather not have attended.

The FMC's of 1983-87 did not accomplish the recognition by



NASIVVIK

Zebedee Nungak

governments of the Aboriginal right to self-determination. But one of their great by-products was general public education about the Aboriginal fact in Canada. With the conferences televised for all Canadians to see, everybody could start to understand just how low in Canada's national political totem pole Aboriginal people were embedded. This state of affairs could not be left uncorrected forever.

A political mountaineering journey of sorts was launched with those 1980s FMC's, even if several of Canada's provinces were dragged up the slope, vigorously resisting all the way to its summit. The jurisdictions did not arrive at the summit all at the same time. But that they had all eventually reached a common

political station was demonstrated by what was accomplished in Kelowna.

No politician, Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal, can belittle what was achieved at Kelowna. Agreement to commit over \$5 billion over five years for education, housing and infrastructure, relationships and accountability, economic opportunity and health care, is a political watershed, reached to everybody's credit. After this, we might all dare to hope to live more adequately, if not happily, ever after.

But never again in Canada's national political life should such a First Ministers' Meeting be held under the conditions and circumstances in which this meeting was conducted. People

might ask, "Why? Shouldn't we be thankful that the meeting was even possible, and held?" No! And here is why:

The Kelowna FMM teetered on a "Will It? Won't It?" seesaw for several anxious days as the life of the country's Parliament hung in the hands of various political gods who would determine when to pull the plug on the life-support systems Parliament was gasping its last from. Did NDP leader Jack Layton get up in a good mood that morning? Were other politicians feeling particularly merciful that day? Kelowna's fortunes hinged upon such whims.

Imagine other vitally important national issues being wrestled with in the same turmoil-saturated atmosphere: Military allocations. Health care. Gun control. Same-sex marriage. Woe to anybody who might put any of these at risk! Meanwhile, on another track, some bills were not merely fast-tracked, but bullet-trained through the legislative process. Politicians can work incredibly fast when they set their minds to it. They can also be dim-witted dullards on subjects that

really matter, when they're left to their own devices.

Kelowna's life or death pendulum swings underlined another glaring deficiency in Canada's political life: The great lack of Aboriginal Members of Parliament. Presently, there's no identifiable Aboriginal caucus among the parties that can influence a Kelowna-like situation for the better. The handful of Aboriginal MPs, now there by seemingly accidental aberration, could not have saved Kelowna if the political constellations had aligned themselves against it.

One of the next great tasks at hand for Aboriginal leaders is persuading Parliament to design a special accommodation for a block of Aboriginal seats in Parliament. To help de-mystify such a concept, I've often trotted out New Zealand's practice of reserving seven of its Parliament's 120 seats for its Indigenous Maori population. An enlightened, civilized fellow country in the Commonwealth has already dared to do this.

(see Set-aside page 24.)

Teenage love leads to an unwise marriage

Dear Tuma:

A couple of weeks ago, our chief was sick and asked me to attend a meeting as his proxy. I went and after the meeting the secretary came up and gave me a cheque. I asked what the money was for and she told me that it was an honorarium. I'm not sure what to do with the cheque. Should I keep it? Should I give it to the band? Tell me what to do.

Holy Honorarium

Dear Holy:

An honorarium is a payment that is made to an individual for attending a meeting of a board, committee or organization. It is usually used to cover the



PRO BONO

Tuma Young

individual's costs associated with attending the meeting, such as mileage, hotel, meals, incidentals, etc. It can also be used to cover other costs such as lost income from losing a day's pay to attend a particular meeting.

Many meetings of boards, organizations, etc. will give a base honorarium with mileage

without requiring any supporting documentation or receipts. Just the fact that you are at the meeting will suffice.

If you are a salaried employee of the band with no travel budget and the band deducts you for a day's pay for attending the meeting, then by all means keep the honorarium. It is intended to

cover your costs. Do not feel guilty about accepting it.

On the other hand, if the band provides travel for you and does not deduct or make you use your vacation or sick days to attend the meeting, then you need to give the honorarium to the band.

Dear Tuma:

I got married at a young age and quickly had a baby. My husband and I were really too young and didn't know what we had gotten ourselves into. Shortly after the baby was born, he told me that he wanted go back to his home reserve in British Columbia. I told him I would not go and he left. Other than the

occasional phone call on my daughter's birthday and on holidays, I don't hear from him and have done well without him. Now, after seven years, I've found a new man. One that is good, working and treats my daughter and me well. I want to marry him. What do I have to do in order to get a divorce? I do not want child support. I just want to forget that I was married.

Blushing Bride (Again)

Dear Blushing Bride:

When I was a teenager (not that long ago), all my friends were running around getting married and having kids.

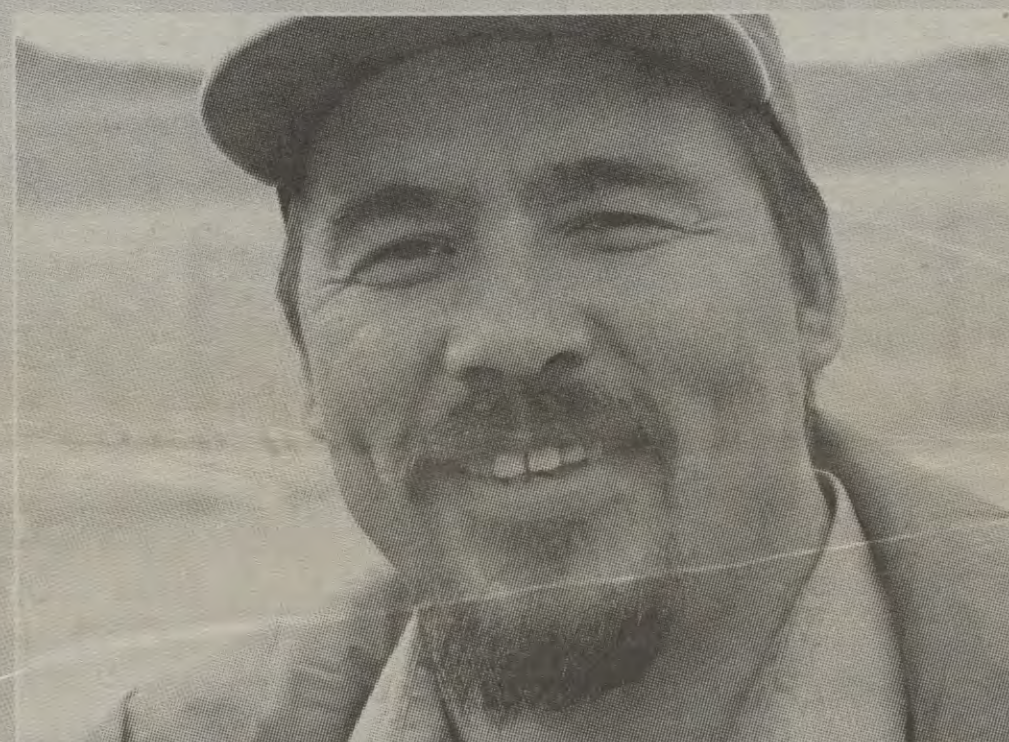
(see Blushing Bride page 24.)

Je suis *fière*
de mes *origines.*



J'ai un passé à *honorer*
et un avenir à *bâtir.*

J'ai mes *idées.*



Je peux *faire*
un geste qui *compte.*

Je suis Autochtone et j'ai choisi d'exercer mon droit de vote à l'élection fédérale.

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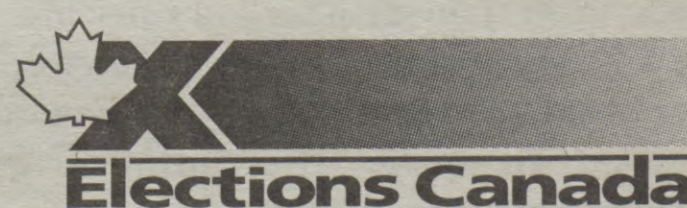
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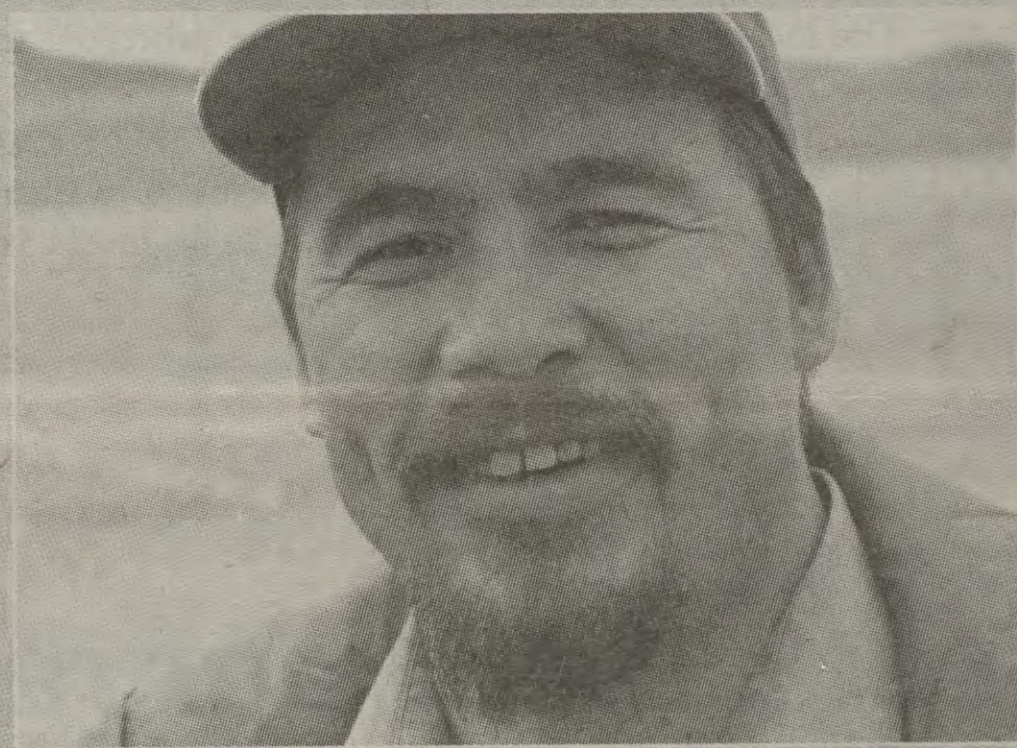


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where I come from.



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and a future to
nurture.

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Music awards will travel

(Continued from page 15.)

Diga was surprised at the win, saying he had written an acceptance speech but fully expected to use it after the awards to light a fire. Standing in his flat cap and lumberjack shirt, he thanked Treaty 11, his friends in Yellowknife and the Creator, adding "May his name be revealed some day." This prompted some laughter from the audience, to which Diga responded "No, I'm serious."

The Music Industry Award went to long-time radio host Brian Wright-McLeod, who missed the announcement and had to be brought on stage later in the program to accept his award.

Wright-McLeod is the recently published author of the *Encyclopedia of Native Music* (UBC Press) and its companion CD *The Soundtrack Of A People*. Asani was also a no-show when their award was called. They explained they had been rehearsing another number for the show, which turned out to be the first public performance of the new music awards theme song, *Celebrate*. The location of the awards will now move each year, with Manitoba hosting in Winnipeg in early November 2006.

BERT CROWFOOT



Cape Breton's *Forever* won Best Rock Album and Best Video for *Something To Dream Of*.

Manitoba artists received the lion's share of this year's award nominations, and the province was well represented by artists at the awards show and at the tradeshow held that weekend in the Rogers Centre. A Manitoba stage was created where musicians from that province could perform. Eric Robinson, provincial minister of Culture, Heritage and Tourism, has been a huge supporter of the awards in the past and will be instrumental in ensuring the integrity of the awards gala will be protected in 2006.

"Manitoba seems to be just flowering with so much musical and so much artistic levels in

Manitoba now," said Kimberley Dawn. "Manitoba is very, very proud to be hosting such a... spectacular awards show next year."

Singer, songwriter, musician, playwright, artist, director, and First Nations ambassador Willie Dunn was honored with the Lifetime Contribution to Aboriginal Music Award. Instead of a long, drawn-out speech of acceptance, Dunn said he preferred to put his feelings of gratitude to music. He performed a song for the audience accompanied by guitarist Raven Kanatakta, a fitting conclusion to an emotion-packed evening for the award winners.



DEBORA STEEL

Pinock (left) of Kitigan Zibi, Que. gets a hand from Mark Roote of Saugen, Ont. while demonstrating his birchbark canoe building techniques during education day at the Canadian Aboriginal Festival in Toronto.

Festival week

(Continued from page 14.)

Young people seemed engaged and intrigued as Melvin and Rosa John told Trickster tales in a cozy tent off to one side of the tradeshow booths that served up arts and crafts for sale.

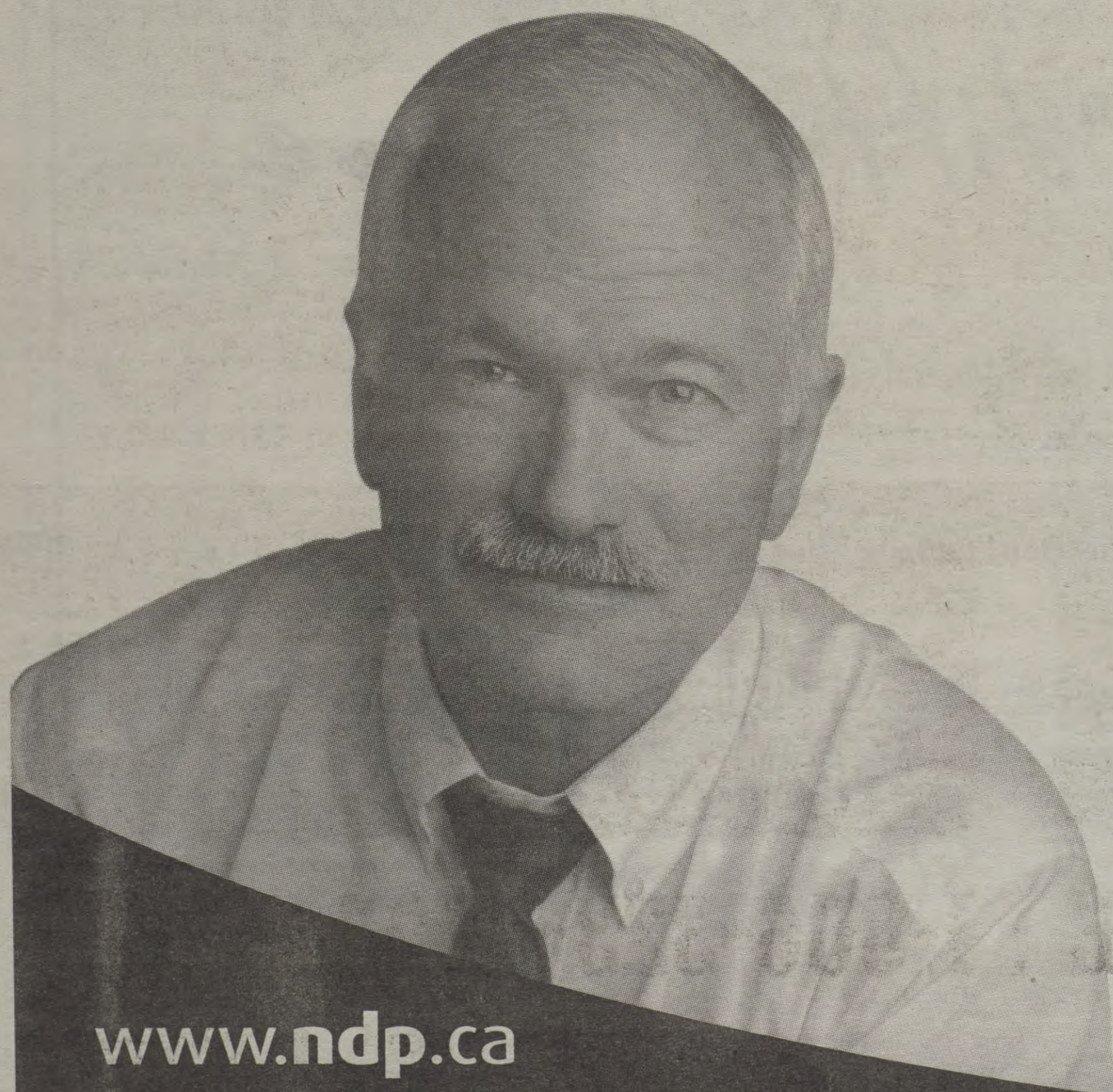
Children strolled the aisles looking for sweet treats to buy or giveaways from Native organizations hoping to raise

their profile in Ontario's capital city. A demonstration of the different powwow dance styles topped of the day's activities.

Saturday saw the beginning of the competition powwow, with members of the public watching the colorful spectacle that is grand entry and enjoying the varying styles demonstrated at the drum from groups that attended from all parts of Canada.

"Let's meet our responsibilities to Canada's Original Nations."

- Jack Layton, Leader of Canada's NDP



Canada's First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples make remarkable contributions to the economic, social and cultural life of our nation.

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Nerves controlled as former instructor looks on

By Sam Laskaris
Windspeaker Contributor

MONTREAL

Mike Martelle has won national martial arts championships in the past, but his most recent title has added significance. That's because the Mohawk Native was able to capture a Canadian title with his very first martial arts instructor, Kwok Chang, in attendance.

Martelle participated in this year's Canadian tai chi and kung fu championships held in Markham, Ont. in October. He won the super heavyweight (over 205 pounds) category in the Tui Shou discipline. Tui Shou is a style of Chinese wrestling.

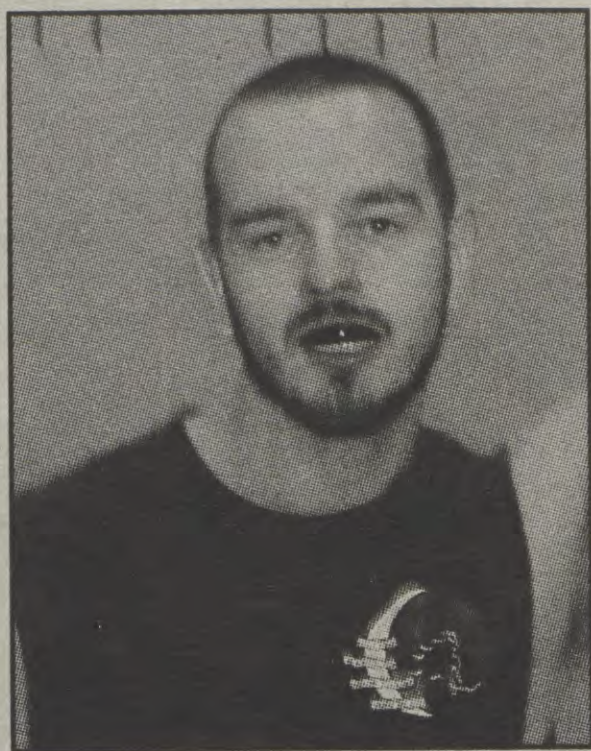
There were eight entrants in the super heavyweight division at the nationals. Martelle won all three of his matches en route to his gold medal.

"The latest one means the most to me," said Martelle, a 31-year-old who is living in Montreal. "It was a really special occasion to me."

Martelle said it was a nerve-racking experience simply calling up Chang, a Toronto resident, and inviting him to come watch this year's nationals.

Chang had helped launch Martelle's martial arts career almost two decades ago, while both were living in Kingston, Ont.

"I was often bullied," said



Mike Martelle

Martelle, explaining how he got interested in martial arts at the age of 13.

Martelle trained with Chang for seven years, studying a style of kung fu as well as tai chi.

As might be expected, Martelle said he was no longer the target of any bullying, soon after his introduction to martial arts.

"Not that long," Martelle said when asked when the bullying stopped.

Besides wanting to impress his former instructor at this year's nationals with his own abilities, Martelle was also nervous contacting Chang because he was bringing along a pair of his students and he knew their performances would be a reflection on his coaching.

Martelle teaches martial arts at the Kingston YMCA, as well as at

a community centre in Montreal.

The two Kingston athletes Martelle brought to the nationals both won medals in their Tui Shou categories. Travis Smith took home the silver medal in his middleweight (155 pounds and below) class while Mike Ketchum captured the bronze medal in his lightweight (125 pounds and below) division.

Martelle's triumph at the nationals was a bit of a surprise. This marked the first time in about a decade that he had entered the Tui Shou competition at the nationals.

His previous best Tui Shou result at a Canadian competition was a fourth-place finish in 1994.

Martelle also won three other medals—a silver and two bronze—at this year's nationals in other disciplines.

Martelle had won his first national title in 2000 in Pankration, a full contact martial art with Greek origins. He also won two national Pankration championships in 2001.

Another highlight in his career occurred last year when he captured a silver medal at the world championship in Tokyo.

During his career, Martelle has participated in about 90 competitions. Besides last year's event in Japan and numerous meets across Canada and the United States, he has also competed at events in Mexico and Greece.

But he's not certain when he will next enter an event, in part because he seems content simply passing on his martial arts knowledge and watching the progress of his

students.

"It's hard to say (when I'll compete next)," he said. "I'm really enjoying the success of my students right now."

Starlight tours

(Continued from page 13.)

The prologues—two recreated events in flashback and two document reproductions—are brilliant setups that inform the Stonechild story even though they are connected only peripherally to it.

The book has many devastating moments. The authors recreate Stonechild's death. There is no warning when readers turn the page and are confronted with an autopsy photo of Stonechild's battered, frozen face. And then there is Roy, who was with Stonechild on the night of his death, and who has always maintained that he last saw Stonechild in the back of a police cruiser, handcuffed, bloody, and screaming that the police were going to kill him. He suffered years of guilt for not helping his friend that night. (He has also endured police surveillance and intimidation, and was moved to another town and placed under RCMP protection as a result.)

In the end, though, *Starlight Tour* is an uplifting book. The

dignity of Stonechild's mother, Stella Bignell, and the dedication of the Stonechild family as they sought the truth is simply inspiring. Bignell's presence in the book uncovers a second theme quite apart from her son's death: How women are the glue holding Native families together.

The book isn't only about the Stonechild story. Darrell Night was taken on a "starlight tour" and dumped on the outskirts of Saskatoon in 2000. He survived his ordeal, and he was brave enough to tell his story and speak truth to power. Without him, the true circumstances of Stonechild's death would never have been uncovered.

The police officers who dropped Night off were convicted of unlawful confinement and kicked off the force. Although the officers who had contact with Stonechild were also kicked off the force, no charges have ever been laid in Stonechild's death. *Starlight Tour* speaks its own truth to power by presenting the full story for Canadians to read.

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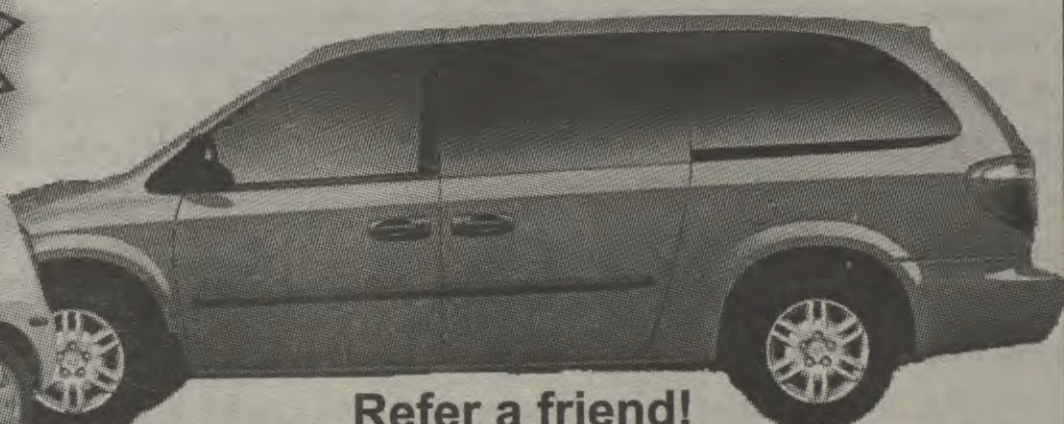
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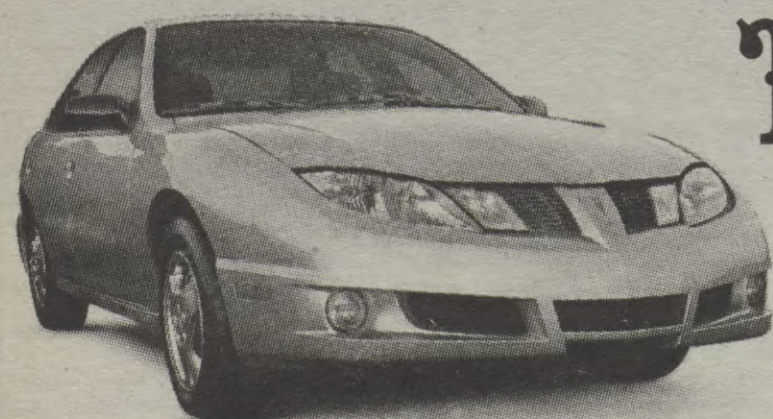
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Unique rights and relationship require certain processes –Chief

(Continued from page 9.)

"The unique historical relationships and rights of the First Nations require distinct discussions involving the First Nations exclusively without involving other Aboriginal peoples or groups. The multi-lateral and pan-Aboriginal process established at the FMM poses a danger to the status and rights of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador (AFNQL). The FMM will make it difficult for the AFNQL to secure its own appropriate processes because the parameters for intergovernmental interaction have now been set," said Ghislain Picard.

Saying the Quebec region "will continue to participate in the AFN for the time being," Picard added that Quebec "will also assert its rights to a fair share of new program resources announced at the FMM."

Shortly after Picard completed his remarks, British Columbia Grand Chief Ed John invited the B.C. chiefs to stand as he spoke "because they did the honor of standing as they presented their comments to us."

"We know in Quebec that there are still many land issues to be resolved, as there are in British Columbia," John said. "When we saw the first ministers' conference agenda and the tremendous focus on the social and economic gaps to our people, we decided it was important for us to address that issue. But we also noticed very keenly, because we have been involved in negotiations with Canada and British Columbia on the land rights and treaty rights issue, that we needed to have some presence around that issue. We spoke to the national chief to ensure that there were statements, and in fact his opening statements dealing with Aboriginal and treaty rights were very strong. We, in fact, wrote those paragraphs into the opening presentation because of the concern that we had, the exact concern that you expressed here this morning."

John said the B.C. region had struck a very positive regional FMM implementation deal with their provincial government that addressed the concerns raised by Quebec.

In an effort to promote unity, John recognized the gesture of respect shown by the Quebec chiefs.

"I think it's really important to ensure, at least from the chiefs in British Columbia, that we take this opportunity to raise our hands to the Quebec chiefs

with the honor that you've done to us and the commitment that you've made that you will consider all of the options that you have in front of you," he said.

The Regional Chief for Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, Rick Simon, told Picard he was having a hard time understanding the Quebec position.

"I respect the position that the Quebec chiefs have put forward here and I say this with all due respect. I'm trying to find an understanding. My understanding, of what we negotiated leading to this FMM and the approach that the assembly tried to take was to empower the regions, my region, every region of this country, to be able to engage as we see fit," he said.

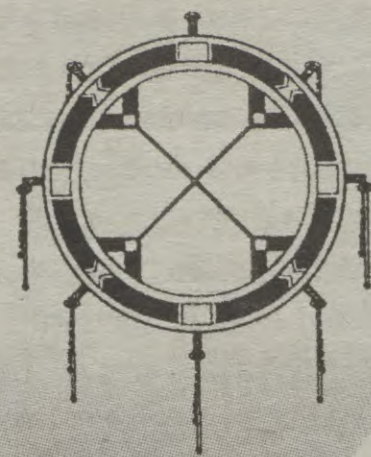
Simon said it is very important that the AFN be united.

"The enemy is not within the room. I truly believe that. We may not see eye to eye. We may have differences. But at the end of the day, by talking or trying to understand we can come out of here and stand side by side and be stronger. I do support the idea of you choosing your own path, just like we choose our own path," he said. "I believe that the only way we're going to move the bar, and I think we moved the bar in Kelowna and unless we can talk and understand our differences by talking, we're just going to create divisions that other people are going to use against us. It'll take away from the good work that collectively as a national organization we're trying to do."

British Columbia Grand Chief Doug Kelly drew the discussion to a close when he spoke after Simon.

"I do understand what I heard from Regional Chief Ghislain Picard. They're here. They're going to stay here until they decide otherwise. They're concerned about the government of Quebec. They're concerned about their unresolved land issues. They're concerned about the resources and all the wealth of opportunity that's being harvested and taken away from them on their own lands," he said. "They have those concerns and they're looking amongst themselves to determine how they're going to move forward. I understand and appreciate that. If you need any advice or any support from British Columbia, you'll find we'll be there."

ABORIGINAL EDUCATION PROGRAM



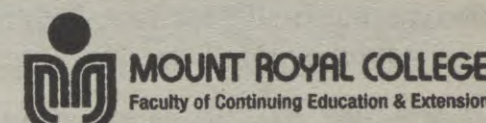
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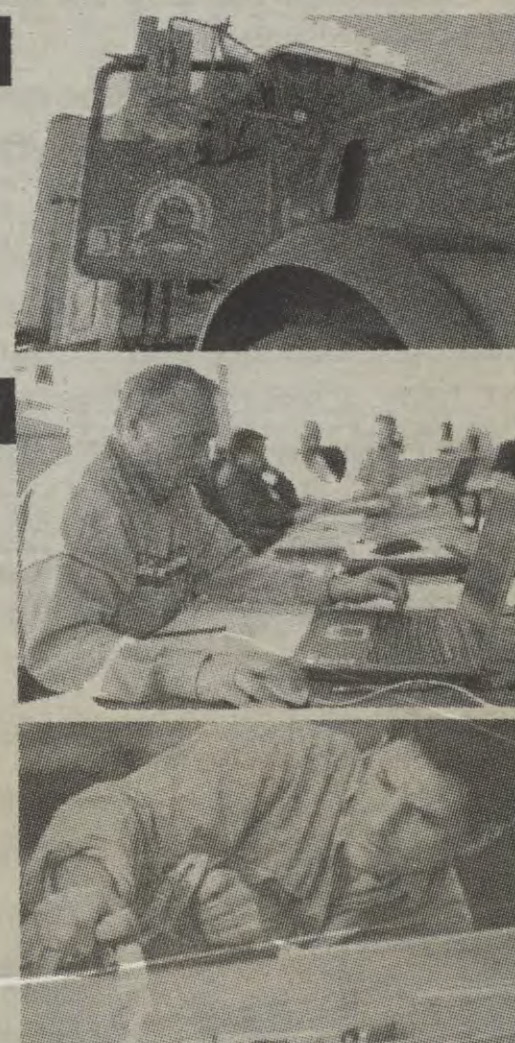


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Residential school compensation cheques coming

(Continued from page 11.)

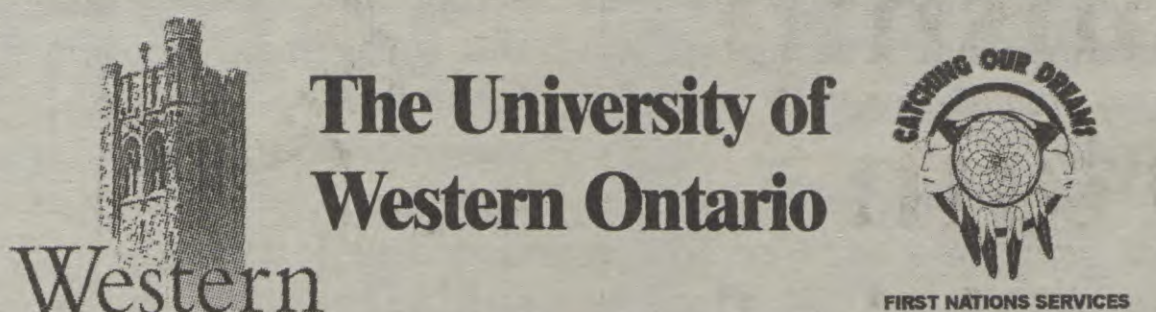
"We intervened in Manitoba when we found out that social services people were forcing

people on social assistance to pay back some of their settlement money. The government here in Manitoba was quick to act. They

passed legislation saying there will be no claw-backs of any of the settlement money," Phil Fontaine said. "It's written into the agreement that the governments will make best efforts to ensure that there is no claw-backs for social benefits. And this is not taxable money. People will not be required to include this in their income tax forms."

Agreements to eliminate claw-backs are being pursued one province at a time.

"We've already started negotiations and discussions," Fontaine said. "The important thing here is that Canada is committed to use its best efforts to obtain agreements with provincial and territorial governments and—this is important—any federal government department, to ensure that the receipt of any payment under the agreement would not effect the amount, nature or duration—I'm reading right from the agreement—of any social benefits or social assistance benefits available or payable to eligible lump sum recipients or eligible claimants under [dispute resolution.]"



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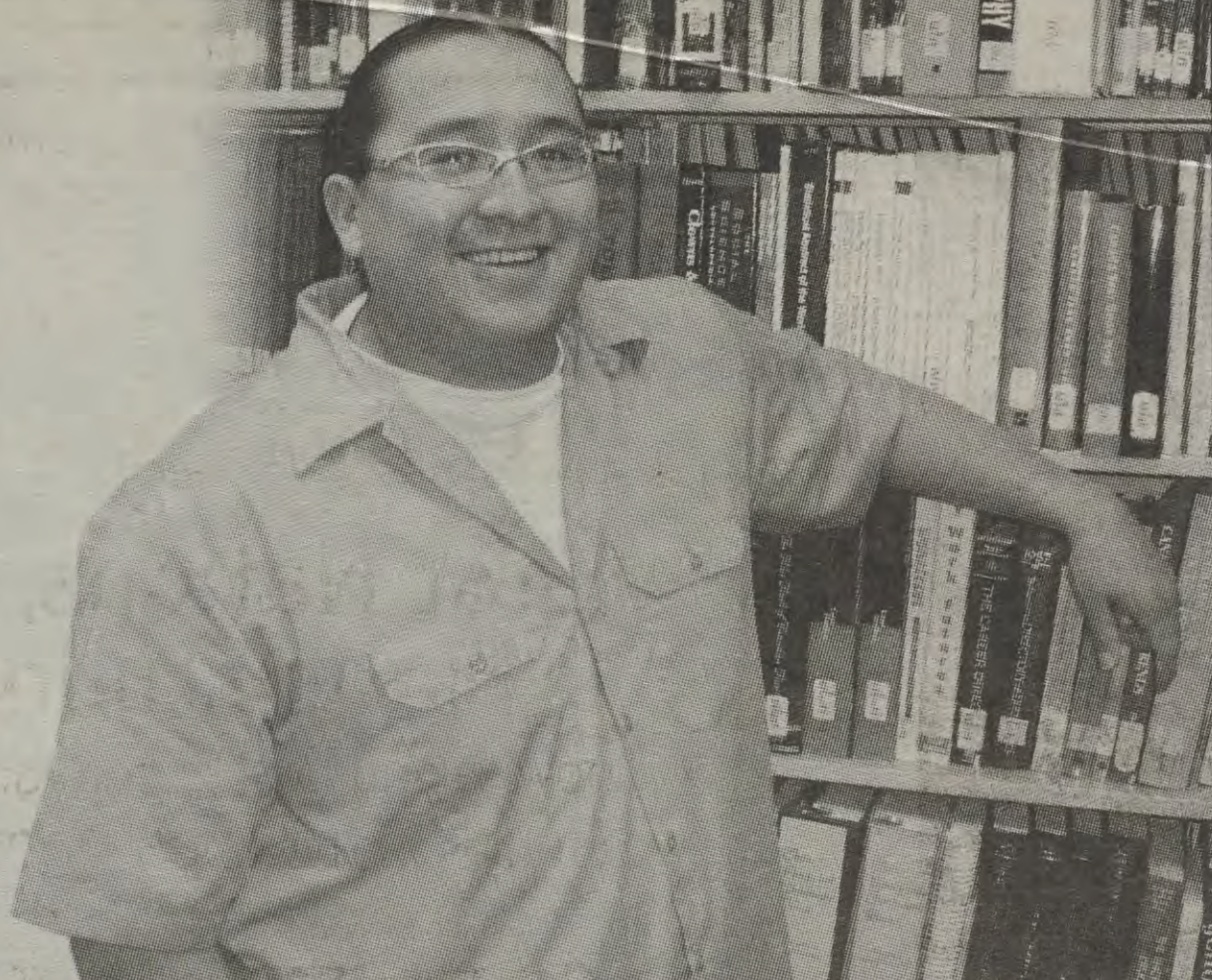
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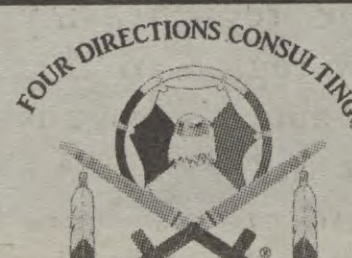
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'Bad Indian' will be the response

(Continued from page 8.)

"That 10-year agreement they signed, it will be used in court against our people here. They'll say, 'Oh, the good Indians said that we'll deal for the next 10 years on housing and education and health care and economic development. You're a bad Indian, so we're going to give you 90 days in jail for fishing or 45 days in jail for standing up to stop Sun Peaks.' So, it's actually going to work against the people," said Art Manuel. "These people inside here, they talk about programs and services. You know, \$4 billion? Not one cent of that will reach my grandchildren. I can tell you that much. It'll be all gobbled up in the brown bureaucracy. Conditions won't change in 10 years if that strategy's adopted in there. The only way you're going to change the conditions of our people is the B.C. government and the Canadian government have to recognize our Aboriginal and treaty rights. No ands, ifs or buts about that. That's what we're struggling for. Programs and services have to be based on our right to the land."

Manuel said he'd read over

the documents related to the first ministers' meeting and it reminded him of a previous meeting that was a long time ago and produced no positive results.

"The last time people ever met on programs and services in Canada was in 1964. That's 40 years ago. Right now the big problem is the federal government's view is that programs and services should be through the province on education and housing. The provinces think it should be with the federal government because it's Indian related," he said. "They're trying to off-load on each other. Nobody's claiming responsibility for programs and services. It's probably going to end that way. Next time anything might be done, maybe it'll be in another 40 years."

Since the current national First Nation leadership is not listening to his advice, Manuel has gone outside of Canada's borders to spread the message that recognition of the inherent right of Indigenous self-government and of Aboriginal title is the only way to go.

"Internationally, what we've

done is we've actually had the World Trade Organization accept arguments on behalf of the Indigenous people that Canada's policy not to recognize Aboriginal and treaty rights is a cash subsidy to the Canadian forest industry," he said. "That means Indigenous people have proprietary rights in their land. That basically means that we're subsidizing the Canadian system. We're not bums off the taxpayers' dollars. And that's what I resent here, too. It makes us look like we're bumming off the taxpayers. I never asked Phil Fontaine to bum money for me in public and make a big spectacle out of it. It's ridiculous. The thing is that money belongs to us. It was stolen from us the minute they harvested resources that were the source of that tax dollar."

Art is the son of George Manuel, a former leader of the National Indian Brotherhood, the precursor organization of the Assembly of First Nations. Art's late brother Bob ran for national chief in 1997. When asked if he would be running for national chief this summer, Art Manuel simply said "No, no, no, no, no, no, no."

Blushing Bride

(Continued from page 17.)

For some, it did not work out and for others it did.

First things first, you need to decide if you need a lawyer. If you think that your divorce will be simple, then you may not need a lawyer. I can tell you from experience, however, divorce can become complicated very quickly. Be prepared. I suggest hire a lawyer. If you cannot afford one, you should contact legal aid to see if you qualify. You should also contact the Indigenous Bar Association to see if any of their members will be willing to do a Pro Bono file. You may not believe this, but lawyers do take on files for little or no money.

If you really think that your file will be simple, that there will be no contest of assets, no contest of custody or no arguing over who will pay child support or the amount, then you can fill out and file the forms yourself. Your local courthouse can supply you with the necessary forms and help you file them. You will then need to serve a copy of the court papers to your husband. You will also be given a court date where you should be prepared to tell the judge why you should be granted a divorce.

In Canada there is only one ground for divorce and that is that there is a breakdown of the

marriage. This breakdown can be proven in three ways: the husband and wife has lived apart for at least one year; one of the parties has committed adultery; or that one of the spouses has treated the other with physical or mental cruelty. In your case, all you have to do is to prove that your husband and you have been living separate and apart for one year and the divorce will be granted on this ground.

Now, you should be prepared to address the question of child custody and child support. You may think that your husband may not contest this, but you will be surprised at how many folks balk at paying child support. Remember child support is not your right, but the right of the child. You may say that you do not want child support, but the judge may not listen to you on this point and order child support anyway. This is where I see your case getting complicated and adversarial very quickly. This is why I, again, advise you to hire a lawyer.

Tuma

This column is not intended to provide legal advice, but rather highlight situations where you should consult with a lawyer. Questions can be sent to tumayoung@yahoo.ca

Set-aside seats

(Continued from page 17.)

By simply adopting New Zealand's numerical formula, Canada would reserve 17.5 Parliamentary seats for Aboriginal people, out of its present 301 seats. These might not be overwhelming numbers, but they'd be enough to swing Jack Layton's fickle moods into the right condition, and to influence key politicians' mercy negatives to just the right balance to keep Kelowna out of the political

danger zone.

One other indicator of positive political development since the 1980s FMC days is B.C. Premier Gordon Campbell's speeches in Kelowna. He's not reading from a scripted text, and looks very much like he's speaking from the heart. Such positive words about Aboriginal issues by a B.C. premier are a genuinely pleasant change. I might have to publicly announce that I am not, repeat not, his speechwriter.

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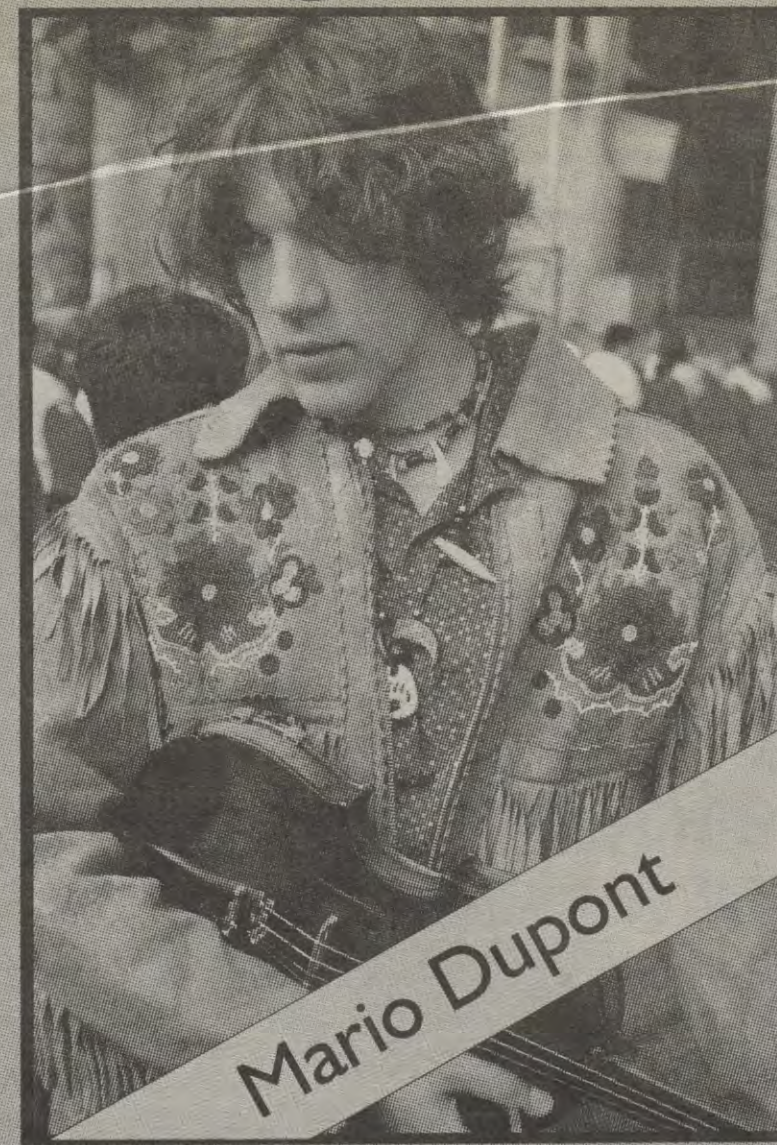
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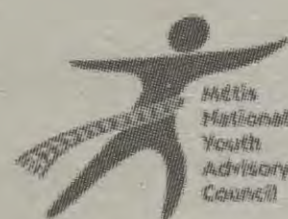
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Fill

Conflicted about role in another's behavior

(Continued from page 17.)

Still, I feel weird, conflicted. Indirectly (or directly) I was responsible for the abuse of a woman. That turns my stomach. It never would have happened if I hadn't written that dedication. She counters that yes, it quite probably would have happened eventually. There would have just been a different trigger, maybe when she wasn't in a position to leave so easily. Using

a bad metaphor, it's something like having heart surgery. It's painful and scary, but it's better than the alternative.

Ironically, I make my living as a humorist (though some might disagree).

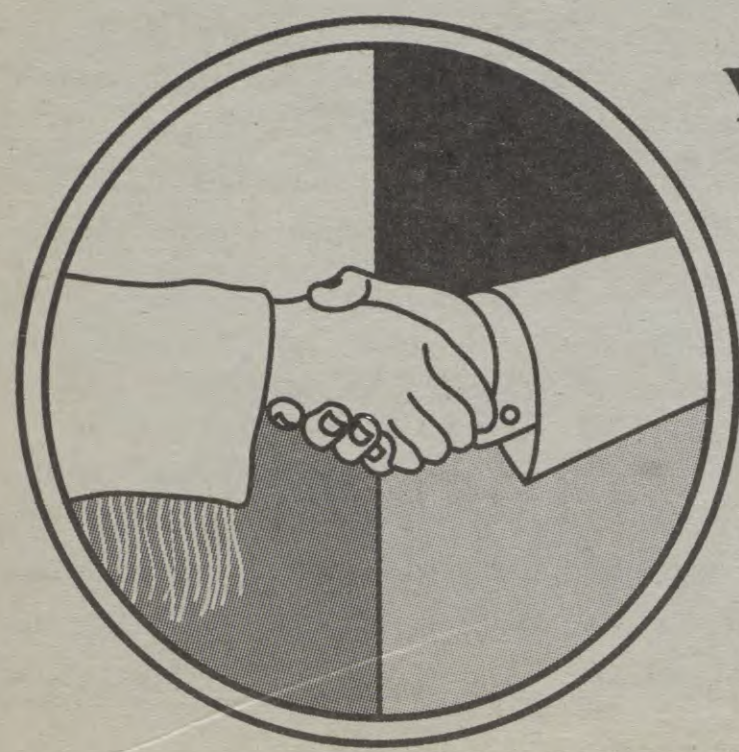
I'm reminded of a comment made by Dick Gregory, one of the two leading and most influential African-American comics (with Richard Pryor) of the 1960s. When he decided to give up the stage, people asked

him why.

"After awhile, things stop being funny" he said.

So Mary's at peace with the world and has got on with her life. Now it's my turn to try and reason this all out. That, and why is it some women never get the men they deserve? And vice versa.

The book I signed all those years ago that started this all... she says she still hasn't read it. I don't blame her.



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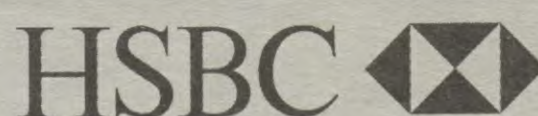
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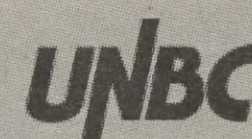
Qualifications: excellent communication, advisory, interpersonal, customer service and conflict resolution skills; understanding of cultural practices in remote Aboriginal communities; demonstrated research, analytical and program/service delivery skills; ability to work independently and on multidisciplinary teams; knowledge of Far North and Northern Ontario economy, and government economic-development programs, policies and priorities; knowledge of/experience using computer applications, including MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook and Internet Explorer; verbal proficiency in Cree, Ojibwa or Oji-Cree; valid driver's licence.

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Assistant Professor Position (One Tenure-Track Position)

The University of Northern British Columbia, in conjunction with the Education Program, is seeking a candidate for a tenure-track position at the rank of Assistant Professor (completed doctorate preferred) with a strong background in First Nations Education and an anticipated start date of July 1, 2006 (subject to budgetary approval).

UNBC has long established partnerships with many First Nations Bands and Councils. Federal and provincial initiatives in First Nations Education teaching and research are expanding, and UNBC is poised to play a significant role in many of these. This is an exciting opportunity to be part of a dynamic university that encourages interdisciplinarity and

community collaboration. Prince George is a city of 80,000 set within a region renowned for all season outdoor recreational activities.

Contribution is expected in the B.Ed. program and in the M.Ed. Multidisciplinary Leadership specialization which focuses on Educational Leadership, Assessment and Evaluation, and Curriculum. The successful candidate will be expected to provide thesis supervision and maintain an active research program. Teaching at Regional Campuses will also be expected. The successful candidate will be registered (or be eligible for registration) with the British Columbia College of Teachers and will also be required to produce a current Criminal Record check.

Please forward your curriculum vitae quoting competition #FAED33-05(Q) to: Dr. J. Howard Brunt, Vice-President Academic & Provost, University of Northern British Columbia, 3333 University Way, Prince George, B.C., V2N 4Z9. Fax: (250) 960-5791. You should also arrange to have three confidential letters of reference sent to the same address by February 1, 2006. Please direct inquiries to: Dr. Dennis Procter, Chair of the Education Program, at Telephone (250) 960-6313, E-mail procterd@unbc.ca. Electronic submissions of CVs can be forwarded to: FacultyRecruitment@unbc.ca. Applications received on or before February 1, 2006 will receive full consideration; however applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply; however, Canadians and permanent residents will be given priority. The University of Northern British Columbia is committed to employment equity and encourages applications from women, aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities.

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Political leader worked for the betterment of the Metis people

By Cheryl Petten

Whether on the battlefields of Europe during the Second World War, in the boxing ring, or in the political arena, Sam Sinclair was a fighter.

Samuel John Sinclair was born in Lesser Slave Lake, Alta. on Nov. 22, 1926. He died on Nov. 29, 2005, just one week after celebrating his 79th birthday.

One of Sinclair's first hard-won battles took place in the schoolroom. He first went to school when he was just five years old, but because he spoke only Cree, the teacher sent him home after just half a day. He ran home in tears and his mother comforted him and told him one day he would show them he was capable of so much more. He started school again the following year, and did just that. He caught on quickly and, determined to give it his all, he completed four grades within two years. That attitude, of working to prove to himself and to others just what he could accomplish, what he was capable of, would continue to drive Sinclair in all that he did for the remainder of his life.

Sinclair was 12 when the Second World War broke out in 1939. His teacher would talk to the class about the battles raging across the ocean, and Sinclair felt compelled one day to join in the battle. A few years later, when a group of young men from the community decided to sign up and encouraged Sinclair to join them he did, despite the fact that he was only 15. He lied about his age and went off to enlist without telling his parents.

When his commanding officers learned that he was underage, he was called in and questioned, but he stuck to his story about being 18. That, combined with a case of mistaken identity that resulted in his birth records being confused

with those of someone else, was enough to keep him in the army.

He spent the first few years of his army career in Canada. Following D-Day, June 6, 1944, the beginning of the Allied invasion of Normandy, the Canadian Forces needed more men on the front lines. Sinclair was sent to train with the Calgary Highlanders. Three months later, he was shipped overseas as part of the 5th Brigade, 2nd Division and served in England, Belgium and Holland.

It wasn't long after arriving in Europe that Sinclair first experienced the horrors of war. His first mission was a night maneuver that required him and two other men to crawl through darkness across enemy territory, scout out enemy positions and crawl back to report the information they had gathered. Years later, Sinclair recalled his experiences that night, of crawling through darkness, being fired upon by the enemy, of losing his rifle in the confusion, and of knowing his outfit wasn't far off, but being too afraid to move to try to get back to it.

Not all the fighting Sinclair did while in the army took place on the battlefield. Some of it took place in the boxing ring. While stationed in Europe, Sinclair, a natural athlete, got a chance to show what he could do. He won the 2nd Division's track and field championship and his abilities in the boxing ring earned him the middleweight championship. After returning home from the war he worked to establish the sport in Slave Lake in order to ensure other young people in his home community could get involved in boxing.

Sinclair's skills in the ring earned him a place in Canada's Boxing Hall of Fame. He is one of only two Aboriginal fighters enshrined there, the other is his

son, Gordon.

In 1946, he became a husband and, later, a father, grandfather and great-grandfather. He and his wife, Edna, would be together until his death.

After the war, Sinclair worked as a truck driver and a laborer before going to work for the provincial government. In 1960 he ran the first training camp in the Slave Lake area to certify Native firefighters. The course was so successful that three years later it served as the model for a provincial certification program for forest firefighters.

In 1971, Sinclair made the move into politics.

Many years of his life were dedicated to working for the betterment of Metis people. He served on the executive of the Metis Association of Alberta for 17 years, eight of those as president of the organization. Under his leadership, the association was transformed from a social club to a political organization. He also negotiated agreements with government that resulted in millions of dollars in funding for Metis housing and economic development projects.

He sat on the board of the Native Council of Canada, which works to promote wellness for Aboriginal individuals, families and communities, and helped create Apeetogosan (Metis) Development Inc., an organization that provides small business loans and business advisory services to Metis entrepreneurs.

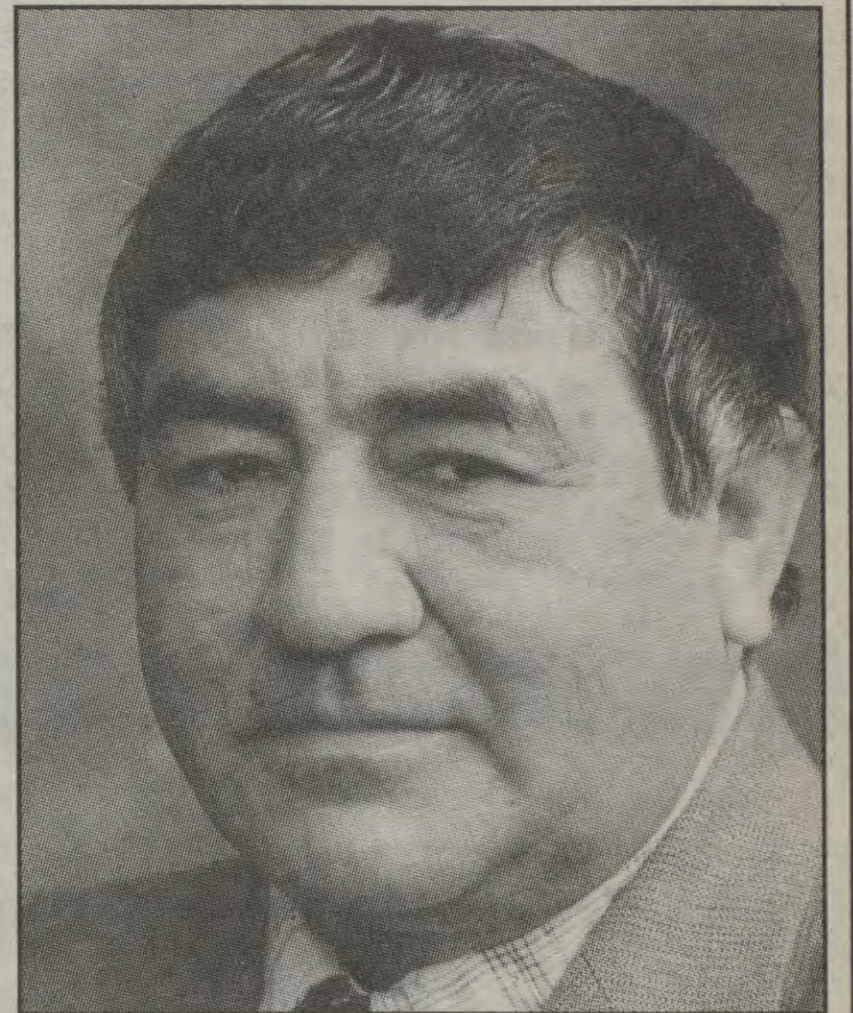
But Sinclair didn't just concern himself with fighting for Metis rights at the provincial level. He was one of the driving forces behind the creation of the Metis National Council in 1983 and, during constitutional negotiations in the 1980s, his efforts helped to ensure Aboriginal and treaty rights would be protected under the

Constitution and that the Metis were included as a constitutionally-recognized Aboriginal group.

He also took his fight to the international stage, attending Aboriginal forums around the world to ensure the fight for Metis rights received international attention. Sinclair was involved in the World Council of Indigenous Peoples, a non-governmental organization made up of representatives from Indigenous groups from around the world that for more than 20 years worked to gain international acceptance of Aboriginal rights. He was also a board member of Indigenous Survival International, a support group that worked to preserve traditional harvesting rights for Aboriginal people.

Sinclair made a run at a career in mainstream politics in 1989 when he tried to earn the provincial Progressive Conservative nomination in Slave Lake. He ended up throwing his support behind fellow candidate Pearl Calahasen, who won the nomination and, later, the riding, and who has held the seat since.

When he'd returned to Canada following the war, Sinclair had the same experiences as many Aboriginal veterans. They did not receive the same benefits granted to non-Aboriginal veterans. When he testified before the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Sinclair told of how, when he had returned from serving in the



Sam Sinclair was a fighter. He fought for his country in war time, he fought for recreation in the boxing ring, and he fought for Metis in the political arena.

war, he had tried to buy a plot of land. He was told he couldn't buy the land because it was in a flood plain, but later saw the land sold to other non-Aboriginal purchasers.

Later in life, he would fight to rectify that situation. As president of the National Aboriginal Veterans Association (NAVA), he fought to have the sacrifices made by Aboriginal veterans recognized and to see them receive compensation for the benefits they were denied all those years before.

Sinclair and fellow NAVA members won a partial victory in their battle on National Aboriginal Day, June 21, 2001, when a monument to Canada's Aboriginal war veterans was unveiled by then governor general Adrienne Clarkson in Confederation Park in Ottawa.

In 2004, Sinclair was inducted into the Order of the Metis Nation in recognition of his efforts to help build the Metis Nation.

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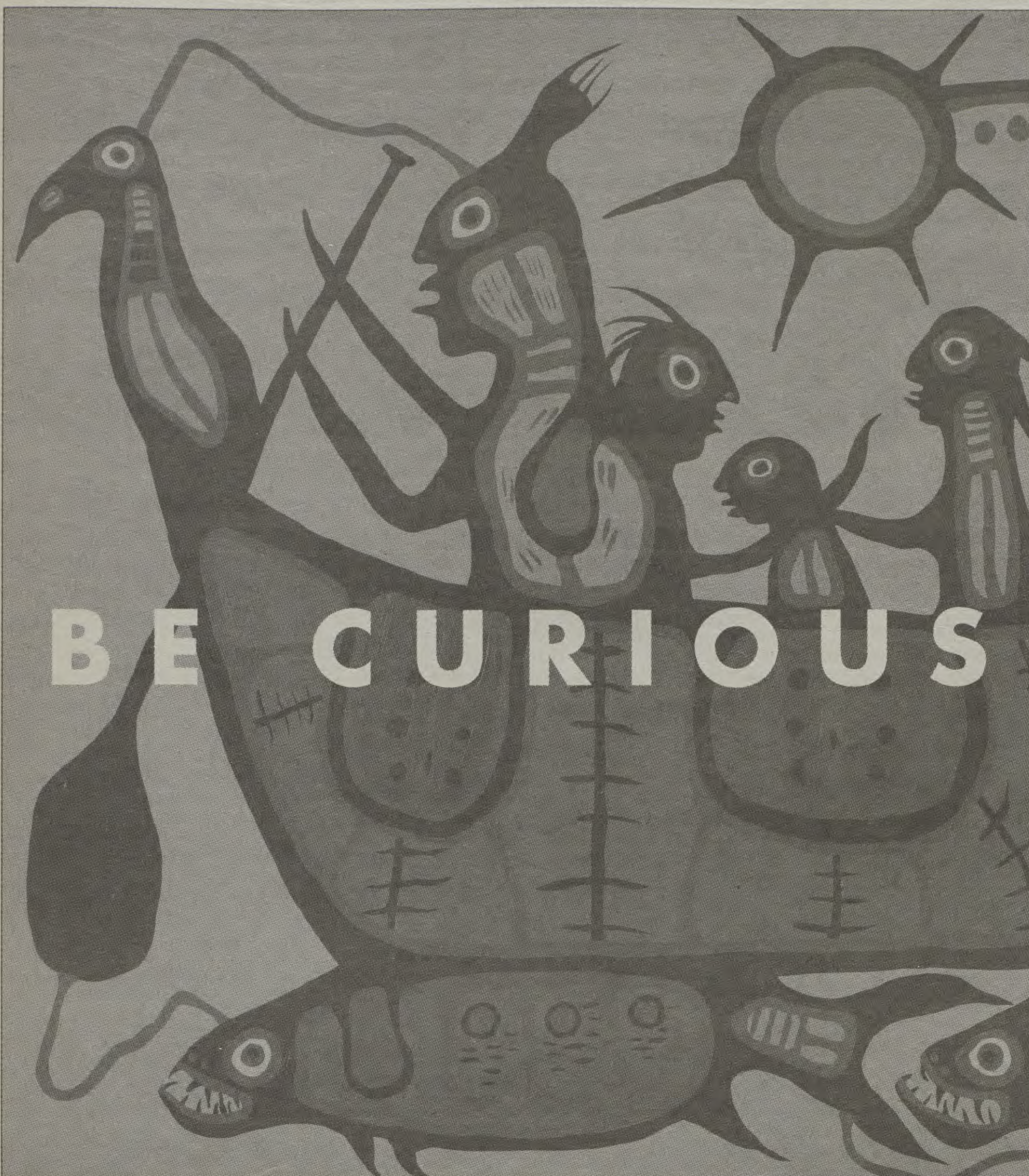
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2 pm to 8 pm at the **Children of the Earth School**
100 Salter Street, Winnipeg

Aboriginal Healing Foundation Board and staff will
present the AHF Final Report. There will also be
updates of Foundation activities and initiatives.
Open forum will follow.

There is **no cost** to attend. All are welcomed. AHF Board
& staff look forward to meeting former residential school
attendees, their descendants, & other community members.
Dinner and refreshments will be provided at no cost.
Participants will be required to cover their travel and
accommodation expenses.



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themselves from the
legacy of the Indian
Residential School System*

<http://www.ahf.ca>

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NATIONAL ABORIGINAL ACHIEVEMENT FOUNDATION

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- Create a focus on evaluation - determining measurable program outcomes and impact.
- Design and implement a Mentoring Framework that aligns youth with key partners in their own communities.
- Build outreach programs that cultivates awareness and excitement within First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities nationally.

Education and Training

- Masters level degree in Education or equivalent.
- At least 6 to 8 years increasingly senior management experience in program delivery and/or education.
- Experience working in an environment that has generated knowledge of and commitment to the educational challenges experienced by Canadian Aboriginal communities.

Functional Experience and Knowledge

- Known as a team player and key contributor to operational and strategic decisions.
- Background in the development of policies, programs and assessment tools.
- Exposure to and/or knowledge of working with a jury and scholarship allocation process.
- Experience in the management and development of a team and associated budget.

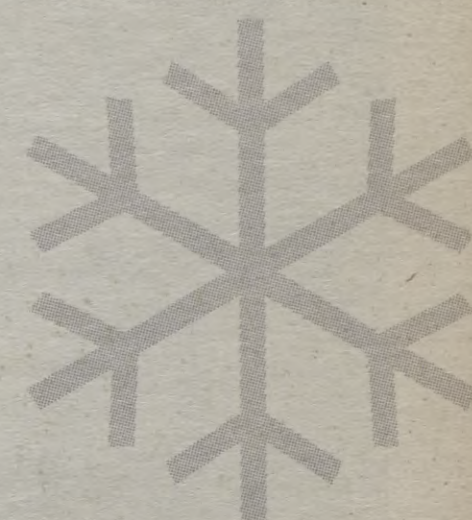
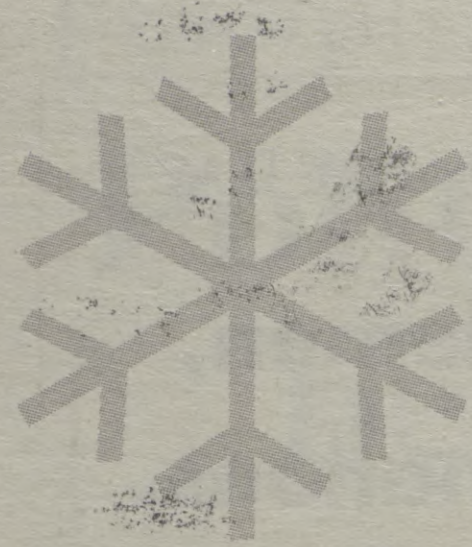
Personal Qualities

- A confident manager, coach and team member.
- Approachable, collaborative and responsive to ideas - a broad, strategic thinker yet able to facilitate detailed, thorough processes.
- An excellent communicator and presenter - both written and verbal - and the ability to negotiate with a professional and respectful manner.

Deadline for submissions is January 27th, 2006.

For more information or to submit your resume, please contact Lynda Ducharme,
416-481-7221, e-mail Lynda@ducharmegroup.ca, www.ducharmegroup.ca





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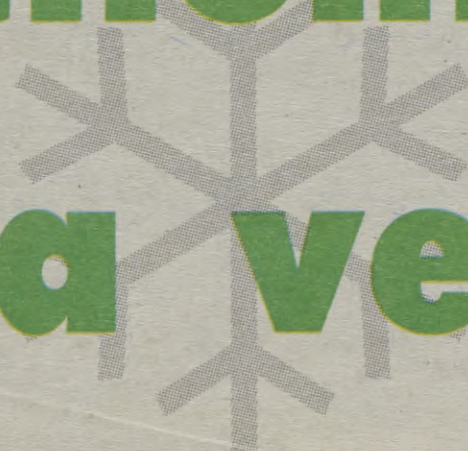
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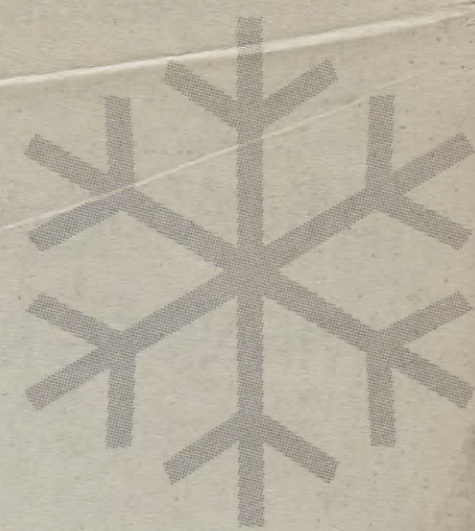
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you for your



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throughout the past year.



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