

Eagle Feather NEWS

Free

Youth gather for historic summit

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Jasmine Bear, Tala Tootoosis, Kari Dawn Wuttunee and Tori-Lynn Wanotch pose with Saskatchewan premier Lorne Calvert.

Youth conference short on Aboriginal participants

Who better to discuss the future of Saskatchewan and the challenges of youth than young people themselves? So it was appropriate that more than 400 young people from all over Saskatchewan gathered at Teachers Credit Union Place in Saskatoon recently to discuss the province's future and their place in it.

Youth were randomly put into groups and then sent to breakout sessions in which they exchanged ideas and thoughts about various topics including: Youth friendly Workplaces, Saskatchewan in the Year 2020, and Cool Communities.

Many of the youth in attendance said they are frustrated at the lack of recognition they receive and often feel their voice on many of the issues affecting them is not being heard.

"You build communities through all of the people in that community and currently the youth voice is not being heard," suggested Tala Tootoosis, who works with Communities for Children in Saskatoon. "And that's tragic because we are the future."

A growing concern in this Saskatchewan is the migration of youth to other places around the country. It was a major focus of the politicians and the business community in attendance. The strategy, one that the provincial government has been aggressively pursuing in recent months, is to showcase the bountiful opportunities that Saskatchewan has to offer.

Premier Lorne Calvert attempted to address such issues and told the youth in attendance that the future in this province is bright.

"Today's Saskatchewan offers youth unparalleled professional, cultural, and lifestyle opportunities and more importantly it offers the opportunity to build a future," Calvert said.

Attendees were also exposed to many successful youth

who currently reside in Saskatchewan. They ranged from Kaveri Bittira who is a journalist for CBC television and host of the Youth Summit to Jason Loutitt who works with the Aboriginal Role model Esteem team and the Government of Canada.

In the end the Summit accomplished many of the goals that organizers had hoped. Youth were talking about the future, not just their future, but their future in Saskatchewan.

The local business sector was able to network with many of the promising youth here in the province. The young people were given the spotlight to voice concerns and opinions on issues that matter.

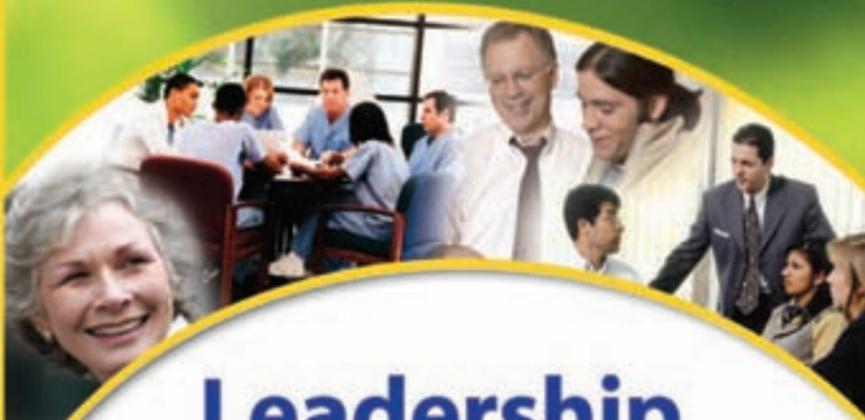
Perhaps the only thing missing was the fact that more Aboriginal youth were not in attendance. As the fastest rising demographic in the province, it was disappointing for organizers that only a few young First Nations and Metis youth participated in the Summit.

Next year, organizers would like to have at least 100 Aboriginal youth in an effort to be more reflective of the true population in the province.

BY BLUE PELLETIER



Entertainer Eekwol, with her brother Mills, performed at the conference. (Photos by Blue Pelletier)



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Feds finally pay for moving northern communities

BY JOHN LAGIMODIERE

The Conservative government recently announced \$15 million to improve the long-term economic viability of four Primrose Lake communities that were moved in 1953 to accommodate the weapons range.

The announcement was made by the Honourable Jim Prentice, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians.



JIM PRENTICE

The funding will be used by the four communities of Cole Bay, Jans Bay, Beauval and Île-à-la-Crosse to promote regional economic development and create economic infrastructure. The funding is intended to promote development in communities located near the Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range.

"This investment in regional economic development and infrastructure will help to build stronger communities in Northern Saskatchewan," said Prentice.

"For example, future projects could include the construction of resource access roads or the installation of business-related high-speed internet which will help to create job opportunities and increase economic prosperity. Through this funding, we will help to improve the lives of residents in the Primrose Lake region."

Gary Merasty, Member of Parliament for Desnethé-Missinippi-Churchill River, welcomed the announcement that

the Conservative government will honour the previous Liberal government's Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range economic development settlement.

"I am very pleased that the Conservatives have finally honoured the agreement reached by the previous Liberal government," said Mr. Merasty. "Most importantly, this agreement shows the dedication and tireless work by everyone involved, particularly the Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range Settlement Committee and its chairman, Beauval Mayor Alex Maurice. I congratulate them and all the residents of the communities involved."

Alex Maurice has worked tirelessly on this file and even used to spend time in his youth writing letters for his father for this issue.

"My dad would always say to me to never forget the Elders," said Maurice. "Well, over the years we received lots of rejection letters, almost constantly. Now that we have finally signed the agreement, I am both sad and happy."

"Sad because we have lost so many Elders since they moved the communities in 1953, but happy that the 15 or 20 Elders that are still alive will get something and their future generations will benefit."

According to Maurice, the committee insisted on a lump sum payment instead of having the money trickle in. And they also insisted that the \$15 million would go right into a trust fund instead of being split into the communities.

Some \$4.5 million, which is the provincial contribution, will be in an operating account, which will have a culture fund. From that fund, surviving Elders will receive \$10,000 each and have their houses updated and repaired. There will also be scholarships and, of course, economic development.

The funds will be transferred to the community-based, non-profit Primrose Lake Economic Development Corporation that, in turn, will place the funds into a professionally managed trust fund account.

The Corporation will use revenues generated by the trust fund to support selected projects based on established eligibility criteria. Community representatives strongly favoured such a fund to allow more direct community involvement in selecting future projects.

Background of Weapons Range deal

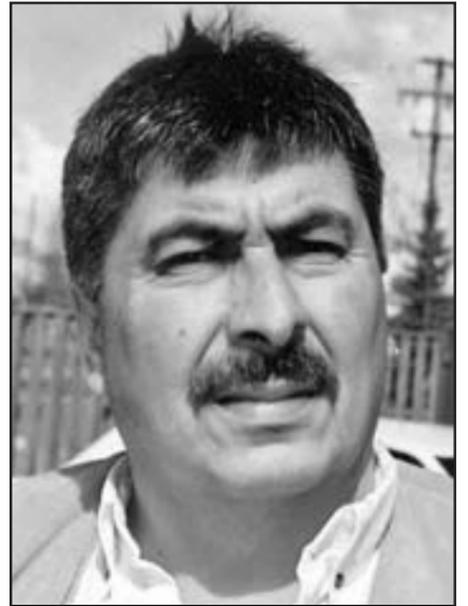
- In 1953, the Government of Canada established a large bombing and gunnery range - the Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range (PLAWR) on Crown land in an area that straddles the Saskatchewan-Alberta border northeast of Edmonton.

- The federal government has provided funding to the Provinces and First Nations to promote economic development in communities located near the Range. Saskatchewan still owns the land and retains the rights to the resources on the PLAWR as well as responsibility for forest fire protection.

- In 1995, the PLAWR Negotiating Committee was created to negotiate an agreement with the federal government. The group represents Métis individuals in four communities near the range: Cole Bay, Jans Bay, Beauval and Île-à-la-Crosse.

- In 2004, the Government of Canada and the Province of Saskatchewan reached an agreement with the Primrose Lake communities whereby the two levels of government would invest \$19.5 million, over five years, towards regional economic development initiatives. The federal share was \$15 million with the Province of Saskatchewan contributing the remaining \$4.5 million.

- Ongoing consultations with the affected communities indicated their strong preference for a single-year transfer to Primrose Lake Economic Development Corporation (PLEDC) and placement into a professionally managed Trust Fund.



ALEX MAURICE

- Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD), with its mandate to develop and diversify the western Canadian economy, will deliver the federal funding on behalf of the Government of Canada.

- The Department of National Defence and the Province of Saskatchewan are planning to amend the principle agreement for the use of the Saskatchewan portion of the Range, and to amend the oil and gas access agreement permitting limited access to the Province of Saskatchewan for oil and gas exploration, development and production purposes.

There is a duty to consult with Aboriginal people regarding the access agreement, and this will be undertaken by DND in the coming months.

Gary Merasty, M.P.
Desnethé-Missinippi-Churchill River

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Holy smokes! That's my face on a billboard

I apologize for having my big misshapen head over-exposed on buses and billboards throughout the province.

It all started because I quit smoking ... again.

This summer I hosted a radio show on CBC called 'As If' and the premise on the last episode was As If I could quit smoking.

And that is and always has been a big AS IF when it comes to me quitting. In fact, I have twice announced I had quit smoking, right in this very space, and both times went right back to that addictive killer.

I must have quit smoking a dozen times in my life. More if you include the times I woke up after a heavy night and swore that was it ... until I had my first coffee and the craving came back.

No matter how repulsive that first taste was or the pain of the initial cough on a bad day, I still choked it down and continued on, forcing my body back to normal levels of poison so I didn't twitch or bitch too much.

What an awful roller coaster of being sick.

Loving the smoking, but hating the health affects led me to quit many times and I have used every single quit smoking aid ever except for those long filters you use to gradually lower the amount of smoke, tar, nicotine and other cancer causing agents.

I figured they looked way too European for me and tried other strategies.

The patch worked once, but the next time I used it to quit, it hurt me. If I wore it on my arm, my shoulder and wrist hurt.

Wear the patch on the butt cheek and my hip, knee and ankle hurt.

That was the end of that ... and right back to smoking.

I tried Zyban, which has proven effective for mental patients, but alas, not for me. It did not help me quit smoking, but I was certainly happy, loopy even. And the dreams, I miss the dreams.

The first time I used nicotine gum to quit did not go so well. This was a while ago and though the gum did minimize nicotine fits, as they say, it tasted like you were licking an ashtray so the trade-off wasn't so great.

Now they have come out with some really nice

tasting fruity gum. So nice tasting, in fact, that I know more than one person that is now a non-smoker but still hooked on nicotine gum.

One guy for four years now.

Better than smoking, but you have to get that monkey off your back eventually.

Allen Carr has the best explanation of smoking, quitting and nicotine addiction in the book 'Easy way to

Editorial

Quit Smoking'. I love this book and anyone who smokes should read it.

He makes you realize that it is not a sad thing to quit smoking and that we are not "sacrificing" anything. We are actually taking control of our health and making ourselves feel better.

I like the book so much I used it to quit three times. Unfortunately, in December at the age of 72 Allen

quitting smoking and suggested I try the Smokers' Helpline. So I did.

There, I met some really nice folk who coached you, congratulated you and cheered you through your entire quit process.

A friendly voice that would recommend a cool glass of water to beat back a nasty nic fit.

A voice that would tell you to go out and do something nice for yourself after a month of not smoking because you just saved \$200 dollars.

So I used the Smokers' Helpline and I am still quit. They were happy about this and asked if I would do a testimonial for them.

Then they asked if I would mind being in an advertisement because they didn't have anyone from Saskatchewan for the campaign ... then they told me it was going to be a mass marketing campaign on billboards, buses and even on bathroom walls. There is even an ad in this paper with my face adorning it.

Anyhow, I am still quit. Over five months now and things are going well. I don't miss it. No more yellow fingers and teeth. The congestion is gone the smokers cough is gone too. Food tastes good. Really good. Fifteen extra pounds good. But that is certainly better than lung cancer and much easier to

I talked about all these options on my radio show and pledged that after the show, I was going to have one last smoke and that was it. So I did it.

Thousands of people will die in Canada this year because of smoking. Over fifty per cent of all Aboriginal people smoke. Over 60 per cent of our youth smoke.

This is not a good thing. Because of this, the Smokers Helpline people have decided to impose my face on the unsuspecting people of Saskatchewan for

no other reason than to encourage you to get help in quitting smoking.

I saw one of my billboards the other day and it is quite surreal to see your own head that large, so please use the Helpline and quit smoking.

They promise that if you do, the billboards and bus ads will come down at once.

And, it is the best thing you could do for your health. Ever.

The Smokers' Helpline number is 1-877-513-5333.

Carr died from lung cancer. He had quit cold turkey 23 years ago, leaving behind his 100 smokes a day habit to go on and write the book, open 100 clinics and help cure over ten million smokers of their habit.

Job well done, Allen.

I talked about all these options on my radio show and pledged that after the show, I was going to have one last smoke and that was it. So I did it.

A couple days later I got a call from Kelly Pierson at the Cancer Society. She had heard me talk about

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We can still have the best of both worlds

Health is not just about the body. It is about creating a healthy human environment where we can live without fear and violence.

Being able to speak out without retaliation, walk down the street in safety, practice our beliefs freely, and be treated with respect and dignity are basic human rights, but we have a long way to go before they will be honored and practiced. We still have a lot of work to do to get there.

The traditional values that our forefathers and foremothers lived by – honesty, integrity, kindness, generosity, humility, compassion, respect, courage, pride – are slowly coming back and many people are working hard to heal themselves and live by those teachings.

On the other side, there is also a lot of lip-service and hypocrisy going on these days. Even worse, “tradition” is often used to cajole, coerce, and bully people into keeping quiet, turning a blind eye, and blindly obeying even when they don’t feel good about it or know in their hearts that it is not just or fair.

Since when did it become “un-traditional” and “white man’s ways” to stand up and ask “how did you spend our money?” When did it become “un-traditional” or “white man’s ways” to speak out against abuse and injustice in our own communities?

As children many of us learned that our “traditional” leaders were kind, generous, and often the poorest people in

the community because it was their responsibility to ensure that the people came first. As children we learned that our “traditional” Elders were gentle and non-judgmental, that they respected difference, were open minded and did not preach or impose their ideas on others. People had the freedom to think for themselves, to make their own decisions, to ask questions, to choose how to live their lives.

When did asking questions, and expecting leaders and others in positions of authority to be accountable for their actions to the people, become “un-traditional”? I think we learned a lot from those old Indian Agents and missionaries when our people were rounded up on reserves and denied their freedom.

In the old days our ancient stories held the teachings and laws that kept

can teach us a lot about how people were expected to behave with one another.

It is important to bring back our “Older Brothers” teachings in a meaningful way. We need his teachings on how to live a good life more than ever today because if we do not start treating each other with the respect and dignity we deserve, pretty soon some may start saying that abuse of power, keeping quiet, turning a blind eye, preaching and imposing our own ideas on others, is “traditional.”

We need to be clear about what we mean by “tradition” as we strive to live a “traditional” life today. I am perfectly happy to wear a skirt to ceremonies.

But really now, just because I wear jeans or joggers now and then does not mean I do not honor or celebrate my Cree womanhood.

We can still live the traditional teachings, go to ceremonies, practice our language PLUS drive trucks, have cell phones, washing machines, computers and drink Tim Horton’s coffee. I honestly believe we can have the best of both worlds if we work hard at practicing our traditional values.

The best of both worlds is what our ancestors prayed and made sacrifices for, and they had total confidence in us that we would find balance, create a space in this new world, and live good lives. We have a responsibility to those who have gone before us, and those who will come after us, to keep working on it.

Introspection

Winona Wheeler



When everyone lived by and practiced those traditional values there was little room for jealousy, power-tripping, corruption, manipulation, and bullying. If anyone out there can come up with Cree or Anishnabe words that mean the same things as these words mean in English, let me know.

The closest Cree term for “bully” we have come up with so far is êmamaskatikookasoot. It describes a person who is acting out of character, someone engaged in outrageous or abnormal behavior.

people in line. The stories our “Older Brother” left for us were often about greed, jealousy, selfishness, violence, meanness, disrespect, incest, and dishonesty and a host of other nasties that created disharmony and dysfunction in our lives and communities.

They are told with humour to remind us that we are only human but can bring great humiliation upon ourselves and families if we behaved inappropriately.

There is also a lot of teachings about how to live in our languages. When we study a word like êmamaskatikootasoot it



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Cabin fever and the art of making do

It's been colder than the dark side of the moon. The snow is deeper than it has been since the sixties but the sun rises mercifully earlier every day.

Not so long ago I was living "La Vida Blizzard". The snow came big time which thrilled the snowmobiler in me from horn to tail.

Trouble was a pipe froze, the wife and daughter abandoned me for the city and I was left alone with the dog and the cat.

The cat's incessant meowing for water dripping from the tap was only stopped when I gave her the last of the milk.

I was snowbound four days waiting for the municipality to clear my driveway but they didn't come so I begged a neighbour with a coveted snow blower to set me free.

My driveway is basically a hundred yard trench that fills in every time a northwest wind blows. Such is life in the country.

Living in the country demands a certain self-sufficiency people living in the city usually don't have. You aren't an acreage type until you've endured a few winters.

Visitors are many in the summer months but not so many people venture forth when the temperature drops and the north wind blows. Plumbers are reluctant to come out to the country when it's forty below. Vehicles need to be newer and well maintained.

Kids are OK with country life until

they become teenagers and their city friends become priority one. Bush parties are to country kids what Raves are to their city kin.

Sad to say there is just as much drugs and alcohol in the country as there is in the city.

There is one man from Fishing Lake First Nation who tried to rig up his junction box but slipped and received a blast of high voltage.

He's in a wheelchair now. Don't even think about trying this.

One year a pipe froze and burst. I

The burning tires saved their life. Clever, I would say.

Running water is something most of us take for granted until we don't have it anymore. I replaced a heat tape and tried to thaw the pipe.

Nothing worked until I stuck a sewer snake down a drain pipe. I felt resistance. I pushed and prodded and finally I heard a glug glug and the sound of rushing water.

Despair to elation in one brief moment. I had running water once again.

The blizzard had one good outcome. I finally found the time to get on the computer and set up my own Blog.

A Blog is a modern day version of a vanity press without the associated costs.

Anyone with a computer and an internet connection can make, post and update writings and photos. It's as creative as you want it to be.

I posted most of my old Eagle Feather News columns and some unpublished works.

To check it out, just go to prairiehawk.blogspot.com

I must say I am very impressed with the Kahkewistahaw web site.

Every First Nation should have a similar site. They even have a community discussion board where band members may post their views on any number of topics.

It makes for interesting and healthy debate. Check out at Kahkewistahaw.com

Common Ground

John Cuthand



I've heard of people on the reserves making small fires under their oil pans in order to start their vehicles on frigid mornings. I wonder how many reserve cars have gone up in flames using this method.

People do what they got to do to get by. Even the bears eat potato chips to make ends meet, it is said.

There are a few people who utilize a very dangerous way of obtaining free electricity after they've been cut off. They use a spoon and a stick to connect to a junction box.

People have died using this method so I won't describe how it's done in any detail. The power coming into a house is much greater than the power inside the house.

couldn't get a plumber to come but one fellow told me over the phone how to make an emergency repair.

I got a length of half inch heater hose, two clamps and a jig saw. I cut out the burst section, stuck on the heater hose and clamped it down. Problem solved.

It feels good to problem solve these crisis situations.

Recently in the news there was one old couple stuck on an ice road somewhere up north. Their vehicle ran out of gas and they were literally freezing to death.

The old fellow finally took some old tires he had and started them on fire. They made good heat and sent a black cloud of smoke up which was visible for some distance.

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Senior governments walk away from Métis election

BY DAVID SHIELD

It's been a tough few weeks for the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan (MN-S). Some could argue it's been even tougher on the Métis people of Saskatchewan.

For months, the beleaguered MN-S had been meeting with the federally appointed Independent Oversight Committee to set an election date. It's been three years since the scandal-plagued election of 2004, and in January, everyone involved with Métis politics seemed eager to get on with the business of electing new representatives.

Everything seemed to be going well. As late as Jan. 17, the Independent Oversight Committee sent out a press release saying the group had finished a comprehensive election strategy, and a Métis election could possibly go ahead as early as this June.

Suddenly, on Feb. 2, the provincial and federal governments pulled their financial support for the election. Stating that the Oversight Committee "did not receive the full support it needed from the Provincial Métis Council," the federal government withdrew its financial support from the election, followed quickly by the Province.

Sadly, it seems like the only people who were surprised by the federal and provincial government's decision was the MN-S executive.

For her part, Independent Oversight Committee Chair Marilyn Poitras says she's still not entirely sure how talks with

the MN-S went off the rails so quickly. Established last year, the Oversight Committee was intended to act as an independent body to help create a fair election process for the next provincial election.

Poitras says the federal government told her they needed MN-S approval for the recently created electoral plan. After a 'long and intense' meeting in December, Poitras said she had difficulty getting hold of the MN-S executive to get their approval for the plan.

"We said, 'We need to hear back. If you guys don't agree with it, we need to hear. If you do agree with it, we need to hear.' And we didn't. So I wrote a letter saying, 'We really, really need to hear back.' And we didn't."

"So I phoned (MN-S President Guy Bouvier) and said, 'We really, really need to hear back.' And basically, I was told that they had nothing to report to me and they had no obligation to be in conversation with me at all," she says.

After that, the MN-S sent out their own press release, stating that the MN-S would be hosting a Métis Nation Legislative Assembly on April 20 and a general assembly on April 21 – without any mention of the Independent Oversight Committee.

That didn't sit very well with the federal government.

"I had to report that information back (to the federal government) because all of our work hinges on this. And the federal government says, 'We tried, they're not interested, that's the end of it.'"

MN-S Treasurer Raymond Laliberte has a slightly different take on things.

"It's shameful that (the federal government) is continuing to play politics with this critical issue that's affecting people's lives. Basically, to have no funding to have an election is causing more division within our own community. Obviously, these divide and conquer politics are not new to Aboriginal government but in the end I believe the MN-S constitution will stand, the process will stand and the Métis government will be stronger," he says.

Laliberte says it was the responsibility of the MN-S to become involved with the election.

"Basically, the (Independent Oversight Committee), as far as the MN-S is concerned, has the responsibility of operating and managing the election. We agreed with that wholeheartedly. How that gets done within the constitution of the MN-S and respecting the process of the MN-S constitution process is our responsibility," he says.

At least part of the conflict stems from the Independent Oversight Committee's plan for calling a general assembly for a new election, rather than a Legislative Assembly. According to Poitras, many people no longer recognize the MN-S after the 2004 election.

"The opinion that the Independent Oversight Committee put together basically said, your constitution says the people change the constitution even if it's at the (Nation Legislative Assembly) level, it has to be ratified by the people. So we



MARILYN POITRAS

thought that working through a general assembly, we could get directly to the people right away," she says.

However, that idea didn't appeal to Métis National Council President Clem Chartier. In a recent interview with CBC Radio, he said the Independent Oversight Committee proposal runs counter to the MN-S constitution, and shouldn't be followed. Instead, he's asked the president of the Manitoba Métis, David Chartrand, to try and forge a new agreement.

"I've appointed him as lead person for the (Métis National Council) to see if we can't get the process back on track. He would be the lead person trying to get the parties together."

However, if Chartier's 'peace-broker' deal doesn't work, what will happen to the MN-S?

• Continued on Page 9



Keri Fox & Grant Pierce

Electricians

Meet Keri and Grant from Moose Jaw – young tradespeople building exciting and successful careers right here at home.



With a hot economy in Saskatchewan, and employment at its highest in 30 years, excellent career opportunities exist all across the province. In particular, the trades – like electrical, construction, plumbing and welding – offer challenging, well-paying careers with a bright future.

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Eashappie-Prettyshield an inspiration for Aboriginal youth

Alberta Eashappie-Prettyshield: Aspiring Actress, Leader, Jingle Dress Dancer and now, role model. The National Aboriginal Role Model Program celebrates the accomplishments of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis youth aged 13 to 30. "Lead Your Way!" inspires Aboriginal youth to strive to reach their goals.

Each year, 12 Aboriginal role models are nominated by their peers. They are selected for their achievements, leadership, and innovation. Throughout the year, the role models will attend celebrations, school functions, workshops, and conferences to share their stories with other Aboriginal youth.

Twelve strong, accomplished and motivated youth were named Aboriginal Role Models at an award ceremony held at Rideau Hall in Ottawa, Ontario on October 16, 2006. It was hosted by Her Excellency the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, Governor General of Canada.

A remarkable young woman named Alberta Eashappie-Prettyshield is the Saskatchewan representative this year. A passionate youth from the Carry the Kettle First Nation in Saskatchewan, Alberta is eager to bring the Nakoda language back to her community. At every opportunity, the 19-year-old encourages other youth to speak their language. Alberta is equally passionate about promoting her culture and is an accomplished jingle dress dancer.

Alberta graduated from the Nakoda Oyade Education Centre in 2005 and was named Second Valedictorian of her class. She enjoys working with community groups, and has volunteered as a teaching assistant for elementary students and as a receptionist for the band office and health clinic in her community.

In 2006, Alberta was named the Nakoda Oyade Education Centre Idol. Her goal is to become a marine biologist. Alberta's message to youth is: "With the power of God, anything is possible."

Team Diabetes Canada looking for runners for Hawaii marathon in Dec.

There are over 50,000 people in Saskatchewan with diabetes and more than 3,000 new cases diagnosed each year.

Physical activity is one of the best ways to prevent or delay the onset of Type 2 diabetes, which is why an exciting new program is so valuable to the Canadian Diabetes Association. Not only do the participants raise funds for the organization, they also get active and change their lifestyle for the better.

The Canadian Diabetes Association is looking for a First Nations team of 40 people for Honolulu, Hawaii in December of 2007. The Honolulu Marathon is one of the largest marathons with over 26,000 entries participating in 2005. Participants may run or walk the full marathon or 10K – there is no half marathon.

This event is runner and walker friendly with a generous time limit of eight hours for the full marathon. Cooler temperatures for the 5:00 am start soon climb closer to 30°C (mid 80's°F) by 10:00 a.m. The Honolulu Marathon course is mostly flat with the exception of Diamond Head. The highest point on the course is 38

metres (124 feet) above sea level near Mile Nine.

This premier destination event incorporates the welcoming spirit for which Hawaiians are renowned. Team Diabetes stays for five days in Hawaii which brings participants' fundraising amount to \$6,100 plus a \$100 registration fee.

Along with the Honolulu Marathon, a cultural exchange is being planned with the First Nations people of the Hawaiian islands. This will be a very memorable experience that will last a lifetime.

The Team Diabetes Program is quite simple – you join Team Diabetes by paying the \$100 registration fee to walk or run a full or half-marathon. You agree to raise a minimum of \$6,200 for the Canadian Diabetes Association (due to the extra nights required in this location). In return, the Association provides travel to and accommodation at the marathon destination. The Canadian Diabetes Association also provides training and fundraising support to help participants achieve their personal goals.

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Coordinator, Admissions
College of Medicine
phone: 306-966-6143
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Program for brain injured Aboriginal people in jeopardy

BY DARLA READ

About once a week, Ben Cote gets to hang out with his community support worker. He also attends group outings, whether it's an Elders night or an Aboriginal art class.

It used to be a lot easier for Cote to get around, though.

At one point he even traveled southern parts of the United States with ease, catching rides on trains. Unfortunately, that's what led to his brain injury. About 20 years ago, Cote was riding in a boxcar. He was sleeping, and the train hit its brakes. Cote hit his head.

Cote's speech may be a bit difficult to understand, but it's clear he looks forward to his outings with Vince Vandale. He's his community support worker.

"We play crib, go for coffee, shoot the breeze," says Cote, and he jokes that they look at girls, too. Cote says he really likes playing cards.

Vandale knows how much the outings mean to Cote and the other men he visits.

"When I go there, they're itching to go out," he explains. "They're always happy to see me. They can't wait for me to show up."

Vandale works for the Aboriginal Acquired Brain Injury Community Support

Program run by the Saskatchewan Abilities Council in Saskatoon. It is the only program of its kind in the province, and it's geared specifically towards Aboriginal people who suffer from an acquired brain injury.

An acquired brain injury happens after birth, and often happens in a motor vehicle accident, although not always. It is some kind of traumatic injury.

Characteristics of an acquired brain injury can include things like memory loss, a physical disability, speech impairment and inappropriate social behaviours.

This program has existed since last July. Initially there were five people. Now there are 11, and there is a wait list of 10. Unfortunately the program is in danger. It's a pilot project, and funding runs out at the end of March.

That's why people like Lana Pillar are working hard to find alternative means to fund the program.

Pillar, who supervises the program, says the cultural component is really important, and that's why there are things like sharing circles, talking circles and smudges in group settings. But Pillar says the one-on-one time is really important, too.

"Most workers in care homes are female," she explains. "To go out with one



Ben Cote, in the toque and his cohorts Colin Wuttunee, Daryl Kelegac and Clarence Slippery receive instruction on native symbolism from Crystal Kishayinew at the Saskatoon Cultural Arts Program.

of the guys and be one of the guys is huge."

Vandale says it's huge for him, too. He says the job is rewarding and that the best part is seeing the guys happy. He's pleased to be a companion while helping the men keep in touch with their roots. He says many have lost contact with their reserves, and that some family members don't even come to visit those who live in institutions, like Ben Cote.

"It's pretty sad, you know," says Van-

dale.

Vandale hopes Aboriginal organizations that can step up to the plate will do so to help this program keep running. He says otherwise these people would "be going back to looking out the window and not getting out."

And that would be a big disappointment to Ben Cote.

"I like meeting people. I like going out," he says. "Going out with Vince is a big help."

Alex Maurice rejects idea of breakaway group that would challenge Métis Nation of Saskatchewan

• Continued from Page 7

Veteran politician Alex Maurice says he's walking away from the organization forever if something substantial isn't changed during the next election. A candidate for president during the 2004 election, Maurice says an election would be completely useless if it was controlled by the current Provincial Métis Council.

"I, for one, will be walking away from the process if these characters receive funding in 2008 if we don't have an (annual general meeting) until then.

"I will not be a part of an election under the control

of this bunch. We've proven time and time again that 2004 resulted in charges and everyone suspending funding for us."

The question of a parallel governmental body to the MN-S arising has come up in the past. While Poitras says she wouldn't rule out something like that occurring, Maurice is fairly pessimistic about the idea.

"I think what people don't realize is that we can't begin to organize another entity altogether because the federal and provincial governments have made it quite clear they will not recognize a breakaway group," he says.

Maurice ultimately believes that a petition signed by 75 Métis presidents could bypass the current Provincial Métis Council and force an election.

"(The federal and provincial governments) will recognize an application of the existing constitution, and if 75 presidents sign a petition, then I think the provincial and federal governments will release monies to the oversight committee to have an (annual general meeting) and an Métis Nation Legislative Assembly.

"I think that process would establish an election date that the existing Provincial Métis Council cannot ignore because we'd be abiding by the constitution."

Whatever happens, it's clear the nation has been suffering since 2004. With the MN-S in limbo, the federal government has no organization to talk to regarding hunting rights or other issues of provincial significance.

And that might be the biggest problem of all.



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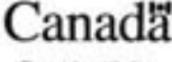
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February is not only a time for flowers, chocolates and Valentines – it's also Heart and Stroke Month. Did you know thousand of Canadians die from heart attacks every year because they don't get medical treatment quickly enough?

What are the symptoms of a heart attack?

Knowing the answer to that question can save your life. Heart attack warning signals include: pain, shortness of breath, nausea, sweating and fear.

If you are experiencing any of these symptoms get to the hospital or clinic as soon as possible.

There are a few things we can do to reduce our chances of having a heart attack. For a more complete list see the Heart and Stroke Foundation Website.

Smoking is one risk factor we can do something about. Smoking contributes to the build up of plaque in your arteries increasing the risks of blood clots, reduces the oxygen in your blood, increases your blood pressure

Ladies, while you're having your doctor check out your heart consider another silent killer

and makes your heart work harder.

If you need help to quit smoking check out www.gosmokefree.ca or call toll free the Smokers' Helpline 1-877-513-3333.

Another risk is being overweight. Almost 60 per cent of Canadian adults are overweight which is one of the major risk factors for heart disease.

By achieving and maintaining a healthy weight you can significantly reduce your risk of heart disease.

Check out www.heartandstrokefoundation.ca

Ladies, while you're having your doctor check out your heart consider another silent killer. Listen carefully – Ovarian Cancer Whispers – so listen.

Watch for pelvic or abdominal pain or discomfort;

vague but persistent gastrointestinal upsets such as gas, nausea, and indigestion; frequency and/or urgency of urination in the absence of an infection; unexplained weight gain or weight loss; pelvic and/or abdominal swelling, bloating and/or feeling of fullness; ongoing unusual fatigue; or unexplained changes in bowel habits.

If symptoms persist for more than two weeks, ask your doctor for a combination pelvic/rectal exam, CA-

or a lump in the prostate gland. As the cancer grows it presses on the urethra, the flow of urine slows and urination becomes difficult.

Patients may also experience burning with urination or blood in the urine. As the cancer continues to grow, it can completely block the flow of urine, resulting in a painful obstructed and enlarged bladder. So gentlemen don't die of embarrassment – go and have your prostate checked.

As we near the end of winter let me remind you drivers out there to be careful on Saskatchewan highways. Pack an emergency kit in your trunk.

This is a suggested list of what to put in your kit: flares, large empty coffee can, candles, matches, water and granola bars. Should your vehicle get stuck – stay with your vehicle – do not try walking to get help – you have a better chance of surviving if you stay in the vehicle.

Do you have any health topics you would like to learn more about? Do you have any questions or comments? Write to me at sandee2says@yahoo.com

I look forward to hearing from our readers. Don't have access to a computer – no problem! Our mailing address is PO Box 924, ATTN Sandee Sez, Saskatoon SK., S7K 3M4

Until next month play safe and have fun.

Sandee Sez



Sandra Ahenakew

125 blood test, and transvaginal ultrasound. A Pap Test WILL NOT detect ovarian cancer.

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First Nations University gets environmental boost

REGINA - The First Nations University of Canada recently announced its new appointment as co-administrator of the National First Nations Environmental Contaminants Program.

"This new agreement demonstrates that our university has much to contribute to the studying and researching of human health issues that affect nearly all of the 600 First Nations throughout Canada," said Charles Pratt, the University President.

"I congratulate the First Nations University on their commitment to this Environmental Contaminants Program," said the Honourable Tony Clement, Federal Minister of Health.

"With this announcement, Canada's new government and the Assembly of First Nations can work together with the University to better address the environmental health concerns of First Nations people in Canada."

The program is a \$1 million a year program funded by Health Canada. Each year, between five and seven projects are funded following a competitive selection process. Funding is provided directly to the selected First Nations communities to conduct community-driven scientific research projects.

The University's Department of Science, under which the program will operate on a yearly basis in partnership with Health Canada, has an established network of ex-

perience in teaching, research and service in relation to health, the environment, and to the pure and applied sciences. This includes an emphasis on incorporating traditional knowledge and contemporary issues faced by First Nations people.

The University also thanked the Canada Foundation of Innovation's investment of over \$350,000 toward the purchase of new equipment for the science laboratory.

In the past, the main campus was housed in rental space at the University of Regina, which provided limited access to crucial equipment and laboratories. Although research is a top priority for the institution, particularly research related to Aboriginal issues, the scope and quality of research that could be conducted were severely limited by the lack of equipment and space.

The new campus was completed in March 2003, and includes an Interdisciplinary Research Facility for Aboriginal Science and Health, thanks in part to a Canada Foundation for Innovation grant.

"We are thankful to CFI for their contribution," says Herman Michell, Department of Science.

"Through these contributions, the research facility can provide our faculty and students with access to state-of-the-art research equipment to further their research, teaching, and community service initiatives."



Herman Michell of the Department of Science says funding from the Canadian Foundation of Innovation will allow the school to offer students access to the latest research equipment.

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Working for YOU in Saskatoon!

Historic partnership delivers national symposium on business

BY JOHN LAGIMODIERE

The Province of Saskatchewan, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians and the Clarence Campeau Development Fund, representing the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan, recently joined together in Saskatoon for a unique partnership to deliver an impressive economic development conference.

Almost 700 people from across Canada – including the premiers of B.C., Manitoba, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nunavut, and the North West Territories, and key Aboriginal leaders – were in attendance for ‘Excellence in Action: Best Practices in First Nations, Métis and Inuit Economic Development.’

“We took a great deal of pleasure working with the Federation and the Province to bring this event together,” said Ron Rivard, vice chair of the Clarence Campeau Development Fund, one of the major sponsors of the conference.

“We just don’t do that (work together) too often. This marks a very positive step with the Métis, the First Nations and the Province all working together. Now that

Duplessis impressed by conference

Roland Duplessis, Manager of the Clarence Campeau Development Fund was pleased at how well the Province, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians and, representing the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan, the Clarence Campeau Development Fund, worked together to bring the conference to fruition. Duplessis and Doug Repay from the Louis Riel Capital Corporation presented at the session “Opening the Toolbox for Métis Economic Development.”



“We hope this symposium will lead to meaningful discussion about revenue sharing and jurisdiction. These are the real tools we, in co-operation with society, can use to generate economic and social development for First Nations people,” he continued.

we know we can get together, I throw out the challenge that we should do this on jurisdiction, land rights and maybe even poverty.”

Premier Lorne Calvert also had high praise for the event.

“This symposium results from the need to take a practical look at the steps that must be taken locally and nationally to help achieve greater Aboriginal participation in the economy,” he said.

“Given the activity that is already taking place, and the challenges that still face us, we are very confident that the delegates we invited here to meet in Saskatchewan will generate meaningful and significant discussion about what should be done next. We have certainly exceeded our goals.”

The panel presentations included:

- Challenge, Change and Development: Strategies for Success, which identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities and Aboriginal businesses that have generated, and are sustaining, economic and employment benefits.

- What's Making a Difference in Training, Skills Development and Labour Market Development, explored approaches to a representative workforce or the “return on social inclusion” that have delivered results.

“When Treaty was signed, the concept of sharing was first and foremost. Both parties were supposed to have the tools to drive economic development, which leads to social well-being,” said FSIN Chief Lawrence Joseph.

“We hope this symposium will lead to meaningful discussion about revenue sharing and jurisdiction. These are the real tools we, in co-operation with society, can use to generate economic and social development for First Nations people,” he continued.

“I have a really good feeling but we can’t let this end as a feel good fuzzy hug. We were all at the table as equal partners and it was encouraging to see the premiers and the other Aboriginal leaders here.

“We are tired of meetings and being reliant on government. We have to remember that when the Aboriginal people prosper, everyone prospers.”



Ron Rivard, vice-chair of the Clarence Campeau Development Fund, FSIN Chief Lawrence Joseph and Premier Lorne Calvert field questions at the Excellence in Action economic development conference held in Saskatoon.

(Photo by John Lagimodiere)

Keynote speaker urges leaders

First Nations in Canada would be much better off if they had less to do with the two senior levels of government according to an American academic who also happens to be a member of the powerful Navajo Nation.

Dr. Manley Begay Jr. delivered the keynote address that closed the Excellence in Action conference recently held in Saskatoon. Begay is both the director of the Native Nations Institute for Leadership, Management and Policy in the Udall Centre for Studies in Public Policy and senior lecturer/associate social scientist in the American Indian Studies Program at the University of Arizona.

He is also co-director of the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. He is from the Navajo Nation, one that encompasses 17,000 square miles, has 300,000 residents and a council of 88 people.

Amazing credentials aside, Begay is one of the

most pragmatic speakers of development in the world. He mentioned as he highlighted best practices in the world, including the Meade and the Lac La Ronge Indian bands, to drop these pearls of wisdom to the attendees.

“U.S. Tribes have more success. Tribes would be much more successful with more involvement of provincial and federal government,” Begay told the conference.

“Things are the worst in the world. But there are similarities with the Queen.

“This is the standard approach to development, which often fails: It is not strategic, economic development is not a priority; lets others set the development agenda; views Indigenous people as a hurdle to development.”



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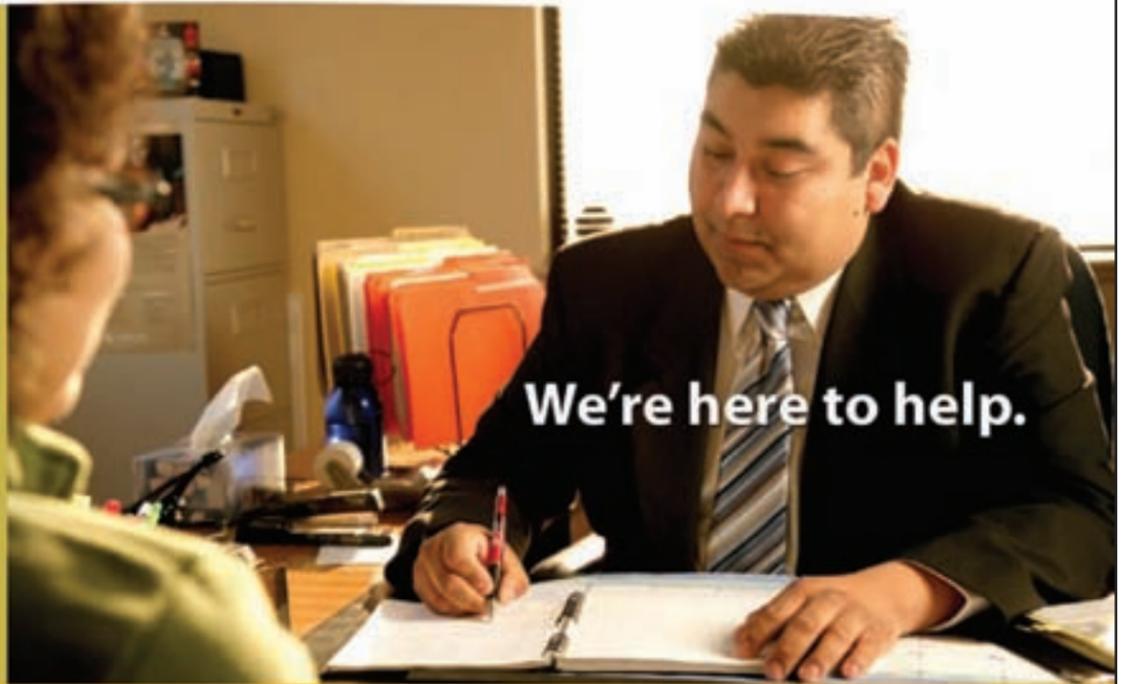
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Councilor Harold Jimmy and Savanna Energy Chief Executive Officer Elson MacDougald signed a Memorandum of Understanding to create a partnership to enter into the oil field with service rigs to work on the First Nation.

(Photo by John Lagimodiere)

Thunderchild signs deal with Savanna Energy

BY JOHN LAGIMODIERE

Rod Bruinooge, Parliamentary Secretary to Jim Prentice, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, and Frank Scholz, Director of the Aboriginal Sector at Siemens Canada Limited, on behalf of President and CEO Guenther Scholz, have signed an agreement to work together on the development of a partnership for Aboriginal employment.

“Canada’s new government is proud to sign an Aboriginal Workplace Partnership agreement with Siemens Canada, which will recruit, retain and promote Aboriginal employees, said Bruinooge.

“By partnering with Siemens, we will be providing opportunities for Aboriginal people to enter careers in business, science and the skilled trades.”

The parties agreed to work together to generate opportunities that can provide mutual benefits for Aboriginal people, the Government of Canada and Siemens Canada. They will focus on identifying and working to eliminate barriers in the workplace that limit Aboriginal employment opportunities, and supporting career and business development projects for Aboriginal youth.

“Our strategy considers not only the technologies required for clean water, health care, telehealth and wireless connectivity, but also requires Siemens to build local capacities to maintain and operate these systems,” said Scholz.

“We are committed to developing infrastructure that fosters employment, economic development and community growth.”

Based in Mississauga, Ontario, Siemens is one of the largest and most diversified companies in the world, providing innovations in areas such as automation and control, power, transportation, medical, information and communications, and lighting.

Thunderchild First Nation also got into the swing of things as they signed a

memorandum of understanding with Elson MacDougald, Chief Executive Officer of Savanna Energy Services, which owns Western Lakota Energy Service Inc. Harold Jimmy, a Councilor from Thunderchild sees two major benefits for his First Nation.

“This will enable not only employment for our people, but it will create some wealth. Every day there is hundreds of thousands of dollars leaving our land. By participating in this partnership where we own a service rig we will start keeping that money.

“We have a lot of activity on the land right now so we need service rigs and there is a need. Also our people can be home every night.”

MacDougald is an old hand at this as his company has twelve 50/50 partnerships with Aboriginal communities.

“We expect to have people working by spring,” said MacDougald. “This is our first partnership in Saskatchewan and Thunderchild is very progressive and want to get it done.”

One of Canada’s fastest growing energy services providers, Western Lakota is currently operating 36 drilling rigs, including seven CBM/oil sands coring/pre-set rigs. The company also operates three-coil service units with an additional five scheduled to be completed throughout 2006.

Western Lakota continues to provide one of the newest fleets of safe and efficient drilling rigs and coil service units in Canada while delivering strong results for shareholders, customers, and Aboriginal partners.

Aboriginal employees make up 20 per cent of the company’s workforce of 650. It plans to increase that number by training an additional 100-150 people in 2006.

Western Lakota’s distinctive Aboriginal training program uses a portable drilling rig platform, that they take right into the community for training. It includes all the machinery and jobs of an on-site rig.

to find own economic solutions

on Aboriginal economic development had the crowd’s full attention. Practices from around the world Lake Tribal Council and Indian Band. He also went on to discuss the need for freedom for the conference attendees.

are jurisdiction. Canadian people are wealthy if there was less interference from federal governments,”

in Australia. Way behind. With Canada and the relation

approach to economic development. Often short term and non-sustainable. Development is seen as an economic activity. (governments) set the design. Indigenous cultures as an obstacle.

Begay says the result is that a Nation becomes dependant on federal programs and the people become dependant on the band office.

“To turn it around, you should take these steps. First, have genuine self-rule and exercise jurisdiction. Have capable governing institutions. Have appropriate governing institutions. Think strategically. Have leadership that serves the Nation instead of itself or its faction.”

To sum it up, Dr. Begay left this statement with his audience.

“The government is not going to ‘give’ you self-rule. You kind of have to take it.



DR. MANLEY BEGAY

- Lagimodiere

Nēhiyāwiwin Cree Language and Culture Program

The Nēhiyāwiwin Cree Language and Culture Program at Confederation Park Community School is accepting Kindergarten to Grade Two application forms for the 2007-2008 school year.

This unique oral fluency language and culture program is for any Kindergarten, Grade One or Grade Two student wishing to learn the Cree language. The Kindergarten program is morning only.

Application forms can be picked up at your neighborhood public elementary school, Saskatoon Tribal Council or the Saskatoon Public School’s main office. For further information call 683-7180.

Please forward completed forms to Confederation Park Community School.

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Stories told in variety of ways

BY DARLA READ

When Curtis Peeteetuce set out to find storytellers for the 2007 Saskatchewan Aboriginal Storytelling week, he wanted people who told stories in different ways.

"The general belief is that only Elders tell stories," he explains. "It's important to me to acknowledge times are changing, and that stories are coming from everyone now."

As the Writer in Residence at the Saskatoon Public Library, Peeteetuce was responsible for finding storytellers for the week of February 4 - 9 when the Library presented the week of tales. Each day a different storyteller shared at one of the Saskatoon public libraries to full capacity crowds, and it was all for free.

Peeteetuce tried to find a mixture of storytelling, and says the people each added something special.

First, Peeteetuce wanted people to see storytelling through song, which is why he asked Joseph Naytowhow and Erika Faith, a duo that goes by the name Mocikun (Cree for having and creating joy) to perform. The two told stories through song or accompanied by instruments.

Cree isn't Faith's first language; she told the audience she's been studying it for three years now.

"I encourage everyone to learn languages because it's a beautiful way to learn about other people."

The crowd got a kick out of her when she couldn't translate parts of a Cree story she and Naytowhow told together.

Peeteetuce also wanted children and adults attending storytelling week to see that stories exist in drama, so he invited the Saskatchewan Native Theatre

Company to present Caribou Song, a story written by Tomson Highway that depicts children who live in the North.

The next storyteller strayed from the tradition of oral history, says Peeteetuce, but he says the children just loved Dieter Braun's presentation.

Through a series of photographs of clouds, Braun gave his interpretation of what he saw in them, which became the story of the sky thunderbirds.

"There were 'ooohs' and 'ahhhs'," says Peeteetuce excitedly. "[Braun] would say, 'Look at the thunderbird. Do you see it?' and the kids would say, 'Wow, look at that! Yeah, I see it!'"

Thursday was a bit more serious, but still light-hearted. There was an Aboriginal women's storytelling circle. Women were able to share personal stories of humor and healing.

Tyrone Tootosis finished off Aboriginal Storytelling Week by sharing stories from Nehiyaw Askiy Wasinahinkan: Cree Land Map. Peeteetuce says this was a historical storytelling approach as Tootosis told stories about traditional Cree places.

Peeteetuce says the response from children at these sessions was great, and he says response from the community in general was, too. He wishes the sessions could have been held in bigger spaces, because he is certain those would have been filled.

While he doesn't have any particular thing he wanted people to go away with, he says sharing stories is important because all Aboriginal stories, in whatever medium, have significance.

"I do know stories are an expression of who we are. They are entertainment. They educate. And they empower. If anyone leaves with any one of those, I feel really good about this week."



Joseph Naytowhow and Erika Faith add song to their storytelling performances.

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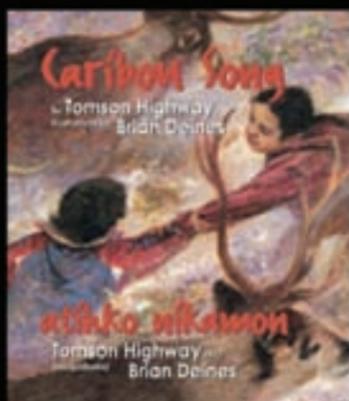
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955-4755



Environment Critic

Glen Hart
Last Mountain-Touchwood
1-877-723-4488

"On behalf of the Saskatchewan Party Caucus, I'd like to recognize the many contributions and accomplishments Aboriginal people have made in the province, and thank them for all they've done to make Saskatchewan great."

-Brad Wall

The Piping Plover — A Species at Risk

The Piping Plover is a species at risk protected by the Species at Risk Act (SARA)

COSEWIC and SARA Status: ENDANGERED (in immediate danger of disappearing from the wild)

How do I know a Piping Plover when I see one?

The Piping Plover is a small shorebird that easily blends in with its habitat of gravel or sand beaches. Distinguishing features are a single black neck-band, a yellow bill with a black tip and orange legs. This bird may be easily confused with the similar looking Killdeer that has two black neck-bands (see photo).



Peculiar Piping Plover Facts:

Piping Plovers make their nests out of pebbles and sand and usually lay four eggs.

- Female Piping Plovers may leave their nest and young, leaving the male to look after the chicks alone.

- Piping Plovers are very sensitive to disturbance, so keeping pets, people, and vehicles such as ATVs, off of beaches where they nest helps plovers survive.

Piping Plover Distribution and Habitat

Piping Plovers spend their winters along the Atlantic coast, from South Carolina to Florida, and along the coast of the Gulf of Mexico. Piping Plovers come to Canada in late April or May (central Alberta, southern Saskatchewan, and southern Manitoba) to breed, nest, and raise their young in the summer months. It takes about 25 days for the chicks to fledge (to gain feathers and develop wings) so that they are ready to fly. Fall migration occurs between mid-July and early August, it is rare, but possible to see Pip-

ing Plovers in Canada until mid-September.

Piping Plovers nest just above the normal high-water mark on exposed sandy or gravelly beaches. On the prairies, nesting occurs on gravel shores of shallow, saline lakes and on sandy shores of larger prairie lakes.

Why are Piping Plovers considered to be a species at risk?

Unfortunately, the number of Piping Plovers has been decreasing everywhere.

The biggest threat is loss of habitat due to human use of beaches and disturbance of nesting sites. For example, some Piping Plovers prefer habitat at Grand Beach, Manitoba, but so do hundreds of beach-loving people! The use of ATVs on beaches is also a concern. It is crucial for people using ATVs for recreational or business purposes, such as access to boats by commercial fishermen, to avoid areas of Piping Plover habitat during summer months and into the fall.

Animals such as dogs, gulls, ravens and racoons that may be attracted to nesting beaches by picnickers' garbage, prey on eggs and young.

On the Prairies, cattle and horses are known to trample nests, and chicks can be trapped in their deep hoofprints. Changes in water levels due to recreational or building activities, dams, and seasonal storms also threaten the nesting sites.

Piping Plover Protection and Recovery The Piping Plover circumcinctus subspecies is protected under the federal Species at Risk Act (SARA), as well as additional provincial and federal laws. Surveys have been conducted from the 1980s to

the present to locate all active Piping Plover breeding areas in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Ontario. Surveys such as the International Piping Plover Census (conducted every five years since 1991) was done this year in 2006 and indicated that numbers of Piping Plovers in Canada are decreasing. Recovery actions need to be taken. One method used to recover Piping Plovers has been small, portable enclosures that keep predators away from nests. Piping Plover nesting beaches at Grand Beach, Manitoba are closely monitored during the breeding season and predator enclosures are placed over nests to protect eggs from gulls.

Education to increase awareness of plovers among landowners, beach users, and industry, and thereby decrease disturbance of nesting plovers is essential. Habitat protection and enhancement projects, such as those completed at numerous lakes in the prairies, are valuable. For example, the Grand Rapids Fishermen's Cooperative of Grand Rapid's First Nation on Lake Winnipeg has helped to preserve Piping Plover habitat by setting aside a portion of their fish camp to establish the Walter A. Cook Special Conservation area in 1991. You can be involved in protecting Piping Plovers by learning to identify these shorebirds and avoiding their nesting areas, particularly in June and July. You can also join conservation efforts, such as the Volunteer Guardians at Grand Beach who patrol the beach in order to share information about the plover and encourage people to respect protected areas. Two other guardian programs are active in the prairies, one at Muriel Lake, Alberta and the other at Lake Diefenbaker, Saskatchewan.

Take Action!

You can help prevent species at risk from disappearing from the wild –

Learn more about the Species at Risk Act process by contacting the Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources at (204)956-0660.

Provide feedback to the Government of Canada regarding listing and recovery of species at risk in you area (www.sararegistry.gc.ca).

Get involved in stewardship initiatives for recovery and protection of species at risk in your area by contacting species at risk Recovery Team Chairs (www.speciesatrisk.gc.ca/recovery/team_ch_e.cfm).

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Saskatchewan Pension Plan

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Arts Grants Application Deadlines

The Independent Artists Grant Program
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Application Deadline: Thursday, March 15, 2007

Project Assistance Grant Program
Project Grants of up to \$5,000 are available to assist organizations or groups presenting short-term activities or event programs. Individuals may be eligible for activities not funded under the Independent Artists Grant Program.
Application Deadline: Thursday, March 15, 2007

Artist in Residence Grant Program
Grants of up to \$40,000 are available for community organizations to hire a Saskatchewan artist to collaboratively develop and deliver a residency program for a period of up to 15 months.
Application Deadline: Thursday, March 15, 2007

APPLICATIONS AND SUPPORT MATERIAL MUST BE RECEIVED BY 4:30 P.M. ON THE DEADLINE DATE.

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Fax: (306) 787-4199 Email: grants@artsboard.sk.ca
Website: www.artsboard.sk.ca

SIGA's Daktoa Dunes Casino opening early

Whitecap Dakota First Nation, SK - Construction and commissioning of the Dakota Dunes Casino is within budget and ahead of schedule according to Zane Hansen, President and CEO of the Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority (SIGA).

"SIGA is pleased to announce the Dakota Dunes Casino will open to the public on September 6, 2007, almost one month ahead of schedule" said Hansen.

"A grand opening gala will be held in September to open Saskatchewan's newest entertainment destination."

The next phase of construction is now underway, as the casino building is turned over to SIGA to complete its leasehold improvements, interior design work and installation of equipment. The base building contract between Saskatoon Tribal Council and Graham Construction, which includes the support area and warehouse, administration, gaming floor and multifunction room is essentially complete.

"The partnership arrangement between Graham Construction and Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology's (SIIT) Construction Careers Program has been an overwhelming success with at least 60 per cent of the employees being of First Nations ancestry during construction," said Saskatoon Tribal Council Chief Joe Quewezance.

"We've reached another significant milestone in this mega project," added Chief Darcy Bear of the Whitecap Dakota First Nation.

"This casino, once complete, will generate significant employment opportunities, contribute to rural revitalization, and create new business opportunities throughout the entire region."

SIGA will now proceed with tenant improvements including interior design and theming of the facility.



Saskatoon Tribal Council Chief Joe Quewezance hands over the key to the casino to SIGA CEO Zane Hansen.

"Tenant improvements include the finishes to the public areas of the casino including the gaming floor, restaurant, and multi-function room," said Hansen.

The organizational structure has been finalized and staffing levels will be set for front line-positions, shortly. Currently, SIGA has begun the recruitment process for the Dakota Dunes Casino management team. The recruiting, hiring and training will continue over the next six months, with the majority of positions being hired in the summer.

As part of the construction process, Thalden Boyd Architects, a Native American firm located in St. Louis, Missouri is responsible for the interior design of the

Dakota Dunes Casino and Resort. Local architects Klypak Rusick have been responsible for the exterior design and site development

SIGA continues to strengthen the lives of Saskatchewan and First Nations people through employment, economic growth and community relations initiatives. SIGA operates casinos in Prince Albert, North Battleford, Yorkton and on the White Bear First Nation near Carlyle.

SIGA is also developing new casinos in Swift Current and Yorkton. All SIGA casinos offer a distinctive First Nations gaming experience that reflects the traditional aspects of First Nations heritage and hospitality.



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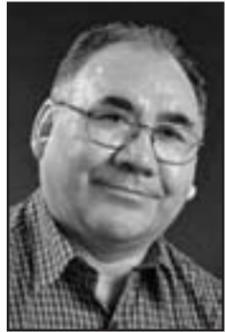
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dcossee@nwac-hq.org
OR fax (613) 722-7687

Deadline: February 26, noon
No phone calls, only those selected for an interview will be contacted.



Cook among trio named to Business Hall of Fame

The Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business recently announced that Chief Victor Buffalo of Hobbema, Alberta, Harry Cook of Lac La Ronge, and Garfield Flowers of Hopedale, Newfoundland are being honoured for their lifetime contribution to Aboriginal business in Canada as the third group of laureates to be named to the Council's Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame. Buffalo, 62, Chief of



HARRY COOK

Alberta's Samson Cree First Nation, was the long-time Chair of the Board of Peace Hills Trust, Canada's first and still largest Aboriginal-owned financial institution, with assets of of \$400 million. He remains a member of the Peace Hills executive committee.

Cook, 64, former Chief of the Lac La Ronge First Nation in northern Saskatchewan, was also President of Kitsaki Management Limited Partnership. Cook is a world class entrepreneur, but not for his own account. He built his businesses for his community. He was

born in 1943 in Stanley Mission in northern Saskatchewan. Cook trapped and fished with his parents until he was sent to residential school at the age of nine.

As a teenager he realized that his parents' traditional way of life was disappearing, so Cook went to Prince Albert for high school and then trained as a welder in Saskatoon. He spent 13 years at an aluminum and steel manufacturing plant in Regina - the last three as foreman.

In 1967 he married Rosie, also from Stanley Mission, and they started a family. Their life in Regina was comfortable, but they both missed their home up north. They moved back to Lac La Ronge in 1978, where Cook took a job as housing coordinator for the band. He was elected to council in 1983.

His remarkable 18-year run as Chief started in 1987. As Chief, Cook was President of the Kitsaki Management Limited Partnership which had been set up to allow the band council to finance their business ventures. Cook was one of the first Aboriginals in Canada appointed to a blue-chip business board. In 1992, he was invited to join the board of Cameco Corporation, the world's largest uranium producer, a position he still holds.

Despite the fact that the area's resources are relatively undeveloped, under Cook's leadership the businesses grew and prospered until, by 2005 when he retired, Kitsaki owned or managed 14 companies engaged in everything from trucking to catering, forestry to hotels, and large-scale exports of locally-grown wild rice. It does about \$70 million a year in business and has some 450 full-time employees.

Flowers, 66, President of Northland Enterprises of Hopedale, Newfoundland and Labrador, is an entrepreneur who has started, owned and operated numerous successful businesses in his tiny northern Labrador community over the past four decades.

Previous laureates, named in 2005, were Dr. Billy "Chief" Diamond, a northern Québec Cree and Irvin Goodon, a Métis from Boissevain, Manitoba and, in 2006, Fred Carmichael, a Gwich'in from the Northwest Territories and Madame Suzanne Rochon-Burnett, a Métis from Ontario.

The Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame is sponsored by ESS Support Services, a division of Compass Group Canada. The Hall was created by the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business in 2004 to mark their 20th year of operations.



SOONIAS

Opportunities in finance

The Aboriginal Financial Officers Association recently met in Saskatoon to network and refresh their skills. Eagle Feather News did a quick Q & A with Dana Soonias, president of the organization and the Manager of Business Development for Concentra Financial.

Members of the Aboriginal Financial Officers Association can be found in what kinds of jobs around the Province?

The AFOA members staff such positions as CEOs, CFOs, Band managers, administrative staff and those in their business organizations. Anyone involved in the finance and management fields in Aboriginal business and those that work closely with Aboriginal businesses, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal.

What size of budgets do they often work with?

These can range from small to large complex organizations from a small First Nation to a complex organization in Aboriginal businesses with budgets of approximately \$5 million to \$50 million per year.

What kind of training or education would a person need to go into this kind of career?

There is a minimum educational requirement to start in the financial field such as Grade 12 and then from there they can register with our national organization and begin taking classes online or in person at some of the partnering institutions here in the province such as SIIT. From there, the sky is the limit to where and how far they want to pursue their education. AFOA Canada is working on a partnership with CGA Canada whereby Certified Aboriginal Financial Managers, those certified in Aboriginal business management through AFOA Canada, can pursue their CGA designation.

For more information on what the Aboriginal Financial Officers do, check out their website at www.foa.ca



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Training and employment affiliate will enhance Gabriel Dumont Institute's educational services

BY JOHN LAGIMODIERE

The Métis People of Saskatchewan have a new baby. Gabriel Dumont Institute Training and Employment Services, an entity owned by the Gabriel Dumont Institute, will now take over any services that Métis Employment and Training Saskatchewan used to provide to Métis people looking to improve their educational and employment situation.

The federal government decommissioned the original incarnation, often known as METSI, after some of the people involved in METSI overspent and improperly spent money that was supposed to fund students to get training.

That lack of good governance and a refusal on many people's parts to pay back the so-called overpayments led to the loss of this important institution.

Thankfully, there are many people in the Métis community who saw this as an opportunity instead of a loss.

"After METSI was dissolved, we answered the call for proposals and worked hard with our board and senior staff at developing a model that would best serve our clients," said Geordy McCaffery, Executive Director of Gabriel Dumont Institute.

"We want to focus on the clients that need the services. We will have ten regional offices and the staff will travel

to outlying communities to make sure everyone gets the services they need."

The knock against METSI was that it was an administrative nightmare with administration often eating up 40 per cent of the budget, often leaving students with no funds for training. The new Employment and Training program has addressed that issue immediately.

"We will be more efficient, with less service delivery offices and also we have less staff," said McCaffery. "In the decision-making processes, we don't have a dedicated board that will oversee the Training and Employment Services."

"Our current Gabriel Dumont Institute Board of Governors will make policies and procedures for this agency. We also have no local Métis management board structure. In its place we have student selection committees."

"They will have the important job of allocating funds to students based on labour market needs and trends."

"Experts from Regional Colleges and CanSask Centres will advise those committees on training needs and skills required in a certain geographical area and then hopefully move students into those fields and then on into employment."

Now that the training and employment services are under one roof, the concept of one stop shopping, and the

better service that follows will surely show some positive results soon. The Institute used to rely on METSI to provide labour market information to them as they drew up curriculum and decided what fields to offer classes in. Now, they have that responsibility as well.

"Previously, we were running educational programs but we didn't have the tools to link to the labour force. Now theoretically, we will be able to support a student from the second they enter our door to their career," explained McCaffery.

"If they need career guidance in choosing a career, we can help them. More to that, we can give them tuition support, living allowances when they are attending training and in the case of workplace training, we can supply employers subsidies and things of that nature," he added.

"Basically people will be supported in their educational programs right to their job with a client focus."

We will be more efficient and client centered. We have to get Métis people involved in training and into the labour force. You will see that soon, and we will be efficient."

There will be ten program delivery offices throughout Saskatchewan located in Ile a la Crosse, La Loche, La Ronge, Meadow Lake, Nipawin, North Battleford, Prince Albert, Regina, Saskatoon and Yorkton.



Geordy McCaffery



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For more information visit the Interprovincial Health Training area at www.sasknetwork.ca or the Education and Career Planning area at www.health.gov.sk.ca.

Saskatchewan!
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SIGA names Hansen president and CEO

The Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority board of directors has named Zane Hansen as president and chief executive officer.

Hansen, a member of the Waterhen Lake First Nation, has served as acting president and CEO, since January 2006. He was hired by SIGA in January of 2005 for the position of senior vice president of finance and administration.

Prior to his role with SIGA, Hansen was employed by the Meadow Lake Tribal Council as the director of finance and administration.

During this time, he gained extensive experience in the management of public sector programs and commercial business developments.

"I am proud of the progress SIGA continues to make," said Hansen.

"I look forward to working with our team as we take on expansion projects and conduct our corporate business."

Hansen has worked with all levels of government and is an accomplished negotiator.

He served six years on Meadow Lake Town Council as alderman, seven years as a member of the FSIN Treasury Board, three years as a provincial representative on the National Tribal Council Review and three years as Vice-Chair of the Prairie North Regional Health Authority.

Hansen holds a Bachelor of Commerce from the University of Saskatchewan, and has a Certified Man-

agement Accountant designation from the Society of Management Accountants.

"Zane has demonstrated the leadership and focus that SIGA needs to succeed in an increasingly competitive market," added Ray Ahenakew, Chairman of the Board of SIGA.

"The board of directors has been impressed with Zane's leadership and initiative, and is confident that he is the

right person to lead SIGA."

SIGA continues to strengthen the lives of Saskatchewan and First Nations people through employment, economic growth and community relations initiatives.

SIGA operates casinos in Prince Albert, North Battleford, Yorkton and on the White Bear First Nation near Carlyle. SIGA is also developing new casinos in Swift Current and Yorkton.

All SIGA

casinos offer a distinctive First Nations gaming experience that reflects the traditional aspects of First Nations heritage and hospitality.

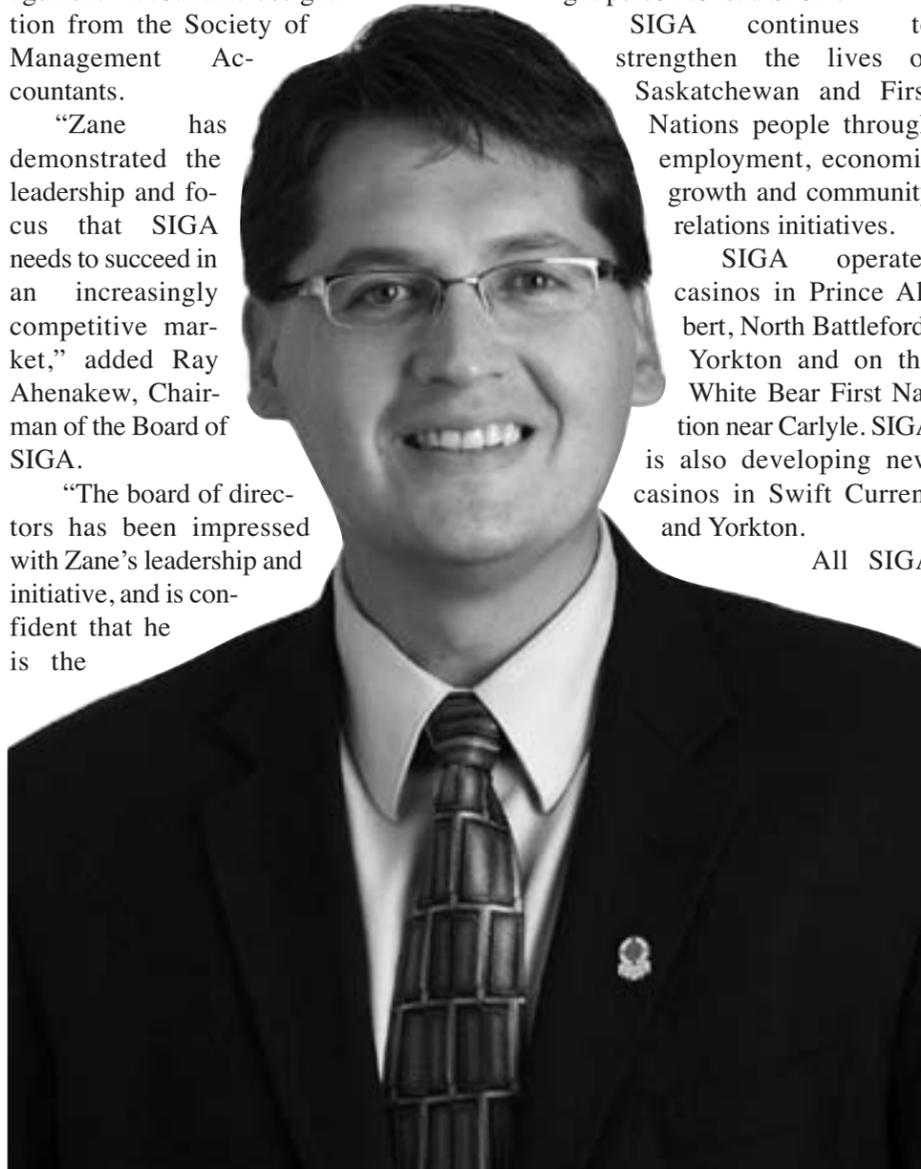
In the 2005-06 fiscal year, SIGA reported net revenues of \$112.8 million up from \$100.6 in the previous year. The Authority also reported net income of \$40 million for the year, an increase of more than \$8 million in 2004-05.

A significant portion of SIGA's net income is distributed to four Community Development Corporations that are managed by Tribal Council partners.

"These funds are a source of revenue that is used to leverage new economic ventures and promote many First Nation cultural and social opportunities," Hansen said in SIGA's most recent annual report.

SIGA employs more than 1,100 people at its casinos and that number is expected to increase dramatically when the new casino at Whitecap opens later this year.

SIGA says being a responsible corporate citizen is important. The organization invests \$1.5 million annually to the First Nations Addiction Rehabilitation Foundation. SIGA also provides in excess of a million dollars in financial support to more than 400 community groups and initiatives in Saskatchewan annually through our sponsorship program. SIGA is committed to developing, fostering and reaffirming partnerships in the community.



After serving SIGA for several years, Zane Hansen has been given the top job.



SASKATOON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS Elementary School Principals & Elementary School Vice Principals

It is anticipated that elementary school principals and elementary school vice principals (K-8) will be required effective July 1, 2007. As a school administrator, you will be responsible for the overall leadership of a school, for developing positive relationships among members of the school community, and for the continued introduction of innovative and progressive programs. Building on the support of your community, the ideal candidate will put the school division's vision into action and lead the school team that will meet the challenges of today and tomorrow.

Please see our website www.spsd.sk.ca (Careers) for Guidelines for Preparing an Application for a School Administrator. Applications should be forwarded to:



Mrs. Traci Toth
Saskatoon Public Schools
310 - 21st Street East
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7K 1M7
Phone: (306) 683-8210
E-Mail: totht@spsd.sk.ca

The closing date for applications is Wednesday, February 21, 2007.

As per the school division's approved Education Equity program, applications are encouraged from persons of Aboriginal ancestry.



GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE of Native Studies and Applied Research

Serving the education and training needs of
Saskatchewan's Métis for over 25 years!

Gabriel Dumont Institute Training and Employment Services

New Initiatives

Métis Health and Wellness Scholarship Program

Gabriel Dumont College Graduate Student Bursary Program



DUMONT TECHNICAL INSTITUTE (DTI): DTI is the adult upgrading and technical training arm of GDI. DTI is responsible for the design, development and delivery of adult basic education and skills training.

GABRIEL DUMONT COLLEGE (GDC): GDC offers the first two years of courses that will contribute toward a Bachelor's degree in Arts or Science at the University of Saskatchewan.

SASKATCHEWAN URBAN NATIVE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM (SUNTEP): is a Bachelor of Education program offered in three urban centres: Regina, Saskatoon and Prince Albert.

For more information on GDI programs, services, and scholarships, visit:
www.gdins.org

Gabriel Dumont Institute strives to promote the renewal and development of Métis culture through research, materials development, collections and the distribution of those materials and the development and delivery of Métis-specific educational programs and services.

New name symbolizes new direction for high school

Oskayak High School has been selected as the new name for Joe Duquette High School. Oskayak means "young people" in Cree. It is felt this name captures the community belief that the school is for all young people.



Elder Joe Duquette

"This happens as we continue to work on new and innovative programming for the school," said Oskayak principal Darryl Bazylak.

"The name change provides students, parents, community and staff with the opportunity to reaffirm the school's cultural foundation."

Oskayak was chosen from more than 30 suggestions submitted to school administration between September

and December 2006. A committee representing school stakeholders discussed the submissions at a meeting and Oskayak emerged as the overwhelming choice. The Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools Board of Education approved the name change at its regular board meeting in January.

The new name will be phased in over the next several months as the school finalizes plans to implement enhanced programming in areas such as mathematics and English language arts.

As well, Oskayak will offer students the opportunity to participate in academies that allow them to focus on one or more specific areas, including cultural arts, Cree language, drama and hockey.

Students participating in an academy spend two periods of each school day focusing on a specialized area of study, while the other three periods are spent in traditional classes. The new programming is scheduled to be implemented in August 2007.

School Elders have discussed changing the name of the school with the family of Joe Duquette, who was the school's first Elder.

Joe Duquette's relatives agreed that the change would allow the spirit of their loved one to now rest peacefully.

"His legacy does not end with the change of name," said Bazylak. "Our Elders Mary Lee and Simon Kytwayhat brought the idea of a new name forward as they thought that every time we said Joe Duquette's name, we were holding back his spirit."

The family was very understanding of this and we will make sure that Joe Duquette will always be remembered and honoured during ceremony at the school."

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor:

Can you image that the average non-Aboriginal Canadian – or his Member of Parliament or lawyer – would ever endure, as we ask our Aboriginal people to endure, the shabby and inhumane way we have treated Aboriginal people who have asked for justice in the resolution of their claims?

Let me repeat here the scenario that we used in the introduction to our Senate Committee report, Negotiation or Confrontation: It's Canada's Choice to illustrate our country's double standards and shameful practices in dealing with Aboriginal claims.

Imagine your new neighbour comes into your backyard and fences off half of it. Then he sells it

to someone down the street. This new neighbour tells you he got a good deal but he won't say how much he got. Then, he says that he'll take care of the cash – on your behalf, of course. Maybe he even spends a little on himself.

You complain. He denies he did anything wrong. What would you do? Go to the proper authorities? Turns out that the authorities and their agencies work for him. Sue him? He tells you that none of the lawyers can work for you – he's got every one in town working for him. When he finally lets a lawyer work for you – it turns out that he can afford five of them for every one you can afford.

Finally he says: Okay, I'm willing to discuss it. But first you

have to prove I did something wrong.

Oh, and I get to be the judge of whether you've proved it. And, if you do prove it, I get to set the rules about how we'll negotiate. I'll decide when we've reached a deal and I'll even get to determine how I'll pay the settlement out to you. Oh, and I hope you're in no rush because this is going to take about 20 or 30 years to settle. Sounds crazy?

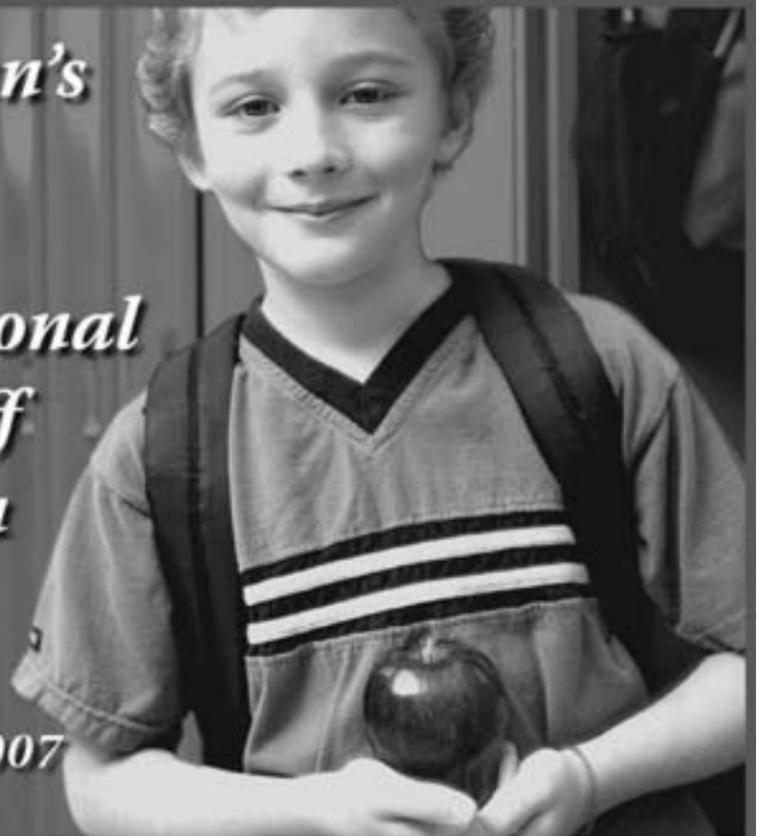
Welcome to the world of Indian Specific Claims.

Specific Claims arose when Canada and its agents failed to live up to Canada's responsibilities in connection with First Nations' lands, monies, and assets.

• Continued on Page 22

Saskatchewan's 20th Annual National Teacher/Staff Appreciation Week

February 11-17, 2007



As the Minister of Learning, I am pleased to proclaim the week of February 11-17, 2007, as **Saskatchewan's 20th Annual National Teacher/Staff Appreciation Week.**

This week provides an opportunity to show our appreciation for Saskatchewan's teachers and support staff, whose work is fundamental to the prosperity of our students. This week is also a celebration of education and its value. Education is an important investment we make in ourselves, and it is an important investment in Saskatchewan.

Education in Saskatchewan schools fosters student success and the success of our province. Staff and teachers provide a learning environment that equips students to become contributing citizens who can pursue their futures here in Saskatchewan.

Best wishes to all Saskatchewan staff and teachers for a successful week.

Sincerely,

Deb Higgins
Minister of Learning

Saskatchewan!

A message from the Government of Saskatchewan

Minimum Wage for Saskatchewan will be:

\$7.95 per hour effective March 1, 2007

For more information regarding the Minimum Wage or Labour Standards in Saskatchewan call toll-free: 1-800-667-1783 or visit www.labour.gov.sk.ca.



Saskatchewan
Labour

Captain Obvious dares to tell it like it is, Tony

Dirk Dashing is great at reporting on current events. Mr. Answer Guy is not too shabby in dispensing advice. But only Captain Obvious has the stones to point out the painfully obvious.

As Captain Obvious, it is my mission to reveal certain absurdities for what they really are ... mind-numbing episodes that make you want to put your head in a vice and say, "Yes, that's right, gimme some more!"

Our first story deals with Tony Merchant, that down-on-his-luck lawyer who single-handedly took on the federal government on behalf of 8,000 former students of the residential schools.

If it wasn't for Tony there wouldn't be a multi-billion dollar settlement for car dealerships to drool over.

This poor schmuck is under siege.

Before the federal government dishes out any cash they want to look at his books, to see if his \$15 to 40 million legal bill is justified.

Now \$15 million to \$40 million may seem obscene to the likes of us peasants, but you got to remember that Mr. Merchant is so distraught over the matter he had to flee to the Bahamas where sun-kissed maidens could soothe his wounded soul.

Hang in there Tony, our thoughts and our prayers are with you.

Like you, I thought the matter of Tony's legal bill could have been severed from the student settlement funds so that cash-strapped dealerships, furniture rental stores and satellite TV outlets wouldn't have to suffer any more trauma.

tors, you do have options.

The first thing we do is not call Tony's office, looking for information. Every time someone calls a lawyer for an update, even for five minutes, that lawyer gets to charge anywhere between half an hour to a full hour. Even

one red penny. But that is not what matters to the powers that be.

What matters are the real victims of this story – lawyers, twinkies and fartcatchers – who must prey upon the misfortune of First Nations people to make a living. Sure \$15 million to \$40 million will get you through the weekend, but is that enough?

On a completely unrelated matter you may recall the murder trial in Yorkton. This is where Kim Walker shot and killed James Hayward, the 24-year old man that was merely helping Kim's 16-year old daughter stay strung out on drugs like morphine.

Kim Walker is being applauded as a hero by some, whereas Hayward is cast as the demon in the story, a fact the Hayward family resents.

Sorry, Hayward family, you'll get no sympathy from the parents of this country. What Walker did was not right, and he will pay a price.

But no one feels sorry for the demise of a grown man taking advantage of a 16-year old girl. Not going to happen.

Drug dealers are not martyrs. Neither are lawyers who put their interests before victims.

I'm Captain Obvious, and that's how it is.

Dirk asks, "If you choke a Smurf, what colour does it turn?"

dirkdashing@shaw.ca

5th Generation

Winston McLean



The students could probably use the cash too.

Despite all the court appeals, and counter court appeals, Indian Affairs Minister, Jim Prentice says he does not expect any delay in payouts to former students.

Then we get news that the federal government has already looked at Tony's books – twice!

The only thing that makes sense is that some federal twinkies and assorted fart catchers are on a fishing expedition, looking for fraudulent claims and for ways to chisel down Tony's fat paycheck.

Even though we are only specta-

if only 500 people call that can add up to an insane figure rather quickly.

No, if you want an update check out the FSIN website at www.fsin.com/ or call 665-1215 and someone will get you the news you need.

The other thing you can do is attend the regional Residential School Conference at the Travelodge in Saskatoon, February 21 and 22.

While there, demand that an independent arbitrator be set up to deal with Tony's legal bill as a separate matter from student payouts.

Sadly, some former students have already passed away without have seen



SASKATCHEWAN
INDIAN
INSTITUTE OF
TECHNOLOGIES
WWW.SIIT.SK.CA

SIIT Head Office

118 - 335 Packham Avenue
Saskatoon, SK S7N 4S1
Ph: 306-244-4444
Fax: 306-244-1391
www.siit.sk.ca

Saskatoon Campus

Suite 201, 229 - 4th Avenue S
Saskatoon, SK S7K 4K3
Ph: 306-373-4777

Prince Albert Campus

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Prince Albert, SK S6V 6P2
Ph: 306-953-7225

Fort Qu'Appelle Campus

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Fort Qu'Appelle, SK S0G 1S0
Ph: 306-332-8240

North Battleford Campus

10702 Diefenbaker Drive
North Battleford, SK S9A 4A8
Ph: 306-445-9400

Meadow Lake Campus

720 - 5th Street W
Meadow Lake, SK S9X 1T9
Ph: 306-234-5114

Yorkton Campus

Bay #4-37 7th Avenue S
Yorkton, SK S3N 3V1
Ph: 306-783-2225

Onion Lake Campus

Box 340
Onion Lake, SK S0M 2E0
Ph: 306-344-2525

Regina Campus

2024C Albert Street S
Regina, SK S4P 2T7
Ph: 306-546-2945

La Ronge Campus

Box 480
La Ronge, SK S0J 1L0
Ph: 306-425-4938



The Institute of Choice
Honouring Saskatchewan's 100 Years

Letter to the Editor

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In some cases Canada didn't give them the land they were promised in the treaties. In some cases, they got the land only to have it taken away again – in a way that violated Canada's own rules. In other cases, federal employees actually stole Indian land, money or other assets.

Until the 1950s, First Nations were prohibited by law from hiring lawyers to pursue these claims – many of which date back 70, 100 or 200 years. Since then impoverished Indian communities have had to fight the federal government in court or else persuade it to acknowledge the claim and negotiate a settlement.

Currently, everything is done on Canada's terms and the government is both defendant and judge. With few resources allocated to find solutions, it can often take twenty or more years from the time a First Nation comes forward with a claim to finally reaching a settlement.

Despite the amazing hurdles, almost 300 claims have been settled. In every case where they have been settled, it has meant an immediate improvement in the lives of First Nations people.

It has also strengthened relations between Canada and those First Nations and between those First Nations and the communities that surround them. Settling

outstanding claims is not only the just thing to do, it is the smart thing. Close to 900 claims sit in the backlog. Things are getting worse rather than better. First Nations have been patient – incredibly patient – but their patience is wearing thin.

This report proposes a series of actions the government can take immediately to improve the process and demonstrate to First Nations that Canada is serious about living up to its lawful obligations. It also proposes some longer term measures that will resolve this issue once and for all. No-one expects Specific Claims to be cleared up over night. But we have to start and we have to start now.

The choice is clear. Justice, respect, honour or Oka, Ipperwash, Caledonia.

Canada is a great nation in the world but Canada will only achieve true greatness when it has shown that it is prepared to fulfill its legal and moral obligations to the aboriginal peoples of Canada, and in the process demonstrate that all Canadians, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal alike, can expect fair and equitable treatment from their government.

Sincerely,

Hon. Gerry St. Germain, P.C.
(Senator St. Germain is the Chair of the Senate's Aboriginal Peoples Standing Committee)

Painful memories of school linger for half a century

I was born in the town of Levack, Ontario in the early 1950s. I was branded as a loser, a trouble maker and a dummy among other things.

Back in those days the strap was the rule. Boys, mostly of the lower class, got the strap for the most part. Class system in Canada ... you can bet it's still alive and well throughout Canada. This story is about my Grade 3 adventure.

I still remember the day that I started Grade 3. An older boy warned me that a teacher by the name of Miss. or Mrs. Saultess liked to give the boys the strap. Well, he was telling the truth. I had a lot of trouble reading and writing. I was always being disciplined for not sitting still and talking in class. It started out by my sitting at the back of the room with my desk facing the cloak room. Next came the strap. It seemed that she jumped down my throat any time if she was given a reason.

It all came to a head one day when I took off my shoes in class because the nails in the heels were coming through and hurting the heels of my feet. She screamed at me to put my shoes back on. I did try to explain the trouble to her. This just gave her more reason to take this further. I was told to come to the front of the class take off my socks where she proceeded to strap me on the bottom of the feet. I still remember the other kids in the class laughing at me. I guess that's when this woman broke my spirit and opened the door for ever other kids to pick on me. "For the rest of my life."

When I went home at noon, I went downstairs to my dad's workshop. I took off my shoes and pounded the nails back with a hammer. I looked at the rafters in the basement and a rope lying on the workbench ... my first thoughts of suicide. The events after this aren't clear, but I knew I could not go back to that school.

What for? I remember going down to the creek after lunch and hiding there until I saw the kids going home from school. I went home like nothing had happened. First part of the plan, great! The next morning I pretended to go to school by hiding in the wooded area down by the creek. Second part of my plan comes to-

gether.

Plan falls apart. I was waiting for the other kids to head home for lunch when I spied my sister who was just a tad older than myself, coming home for lunch. She was in junior high and got out for lunch earlier than grade school children. I did notice that there weren't any other kids my age out on the street, but everyone gets out at the same time for lunch right?

My sister asked me what I was doing home from school early? I said that I wasn't and she pointed out the she was in junior high school and she got out earlier. "The Jig Was Up." She said she was going to tell Mom and she did. They came out of the house my mom saying that I was going back to school right now. I said I wasn't and picked up some rocks and started throwing them at them to keep them at bay.

I think that there were a least two more of my sisters there at this time telling me to come into the house. I don't know how long the ruckus went on, but in my mind there was no way in hell I was going back to that school. Well, my mom finally said that I did not have to go back to school and I put down the stones and went in the house with them. Just thinking that I did not have to go back into that school calmed me down with a sensation of relief. As I stood in the kitchen of our home, I was thinking of getting a job somewhere.

The next morning my big brother, Garfield, woke me up and said that we had to go to school. He had skipped work to do this for mom. I said to him that it was decided that I would not be going back to school. He suggested that we should go to the school and talk to his friend, the vice-principal. As we approached the front doors, many feelings ran through me.

We went in and asked where he could find the vice-principal's office. We headed down the stairs to the basement of the school. The kids were lining up in the basement getting ready to go to their rooms as we past through them. The vice-principal's office was under the stairs. Garfield knocked on the door told me to wait outside.

• Continued on Page 24

The Saskatchewan Youth Award
Honouring Excellence

Saskatchewan is alive with talented, innovative, caring and industrious young people. The Saskatchewan Youth Award recognizes these individuals for their outstanding achievements and contributions to their communities and the province.

The nomination deadline is **March 16, 2007**.

Visit www.gr.gov.sk.ca/protocol for more information on how to nominate an exceptional young leader in Saskatchewan.

Saskatchewan Office of Protocol and Honours
Bureau du protocole et des distinctions honorifiques en Saskatchewan

26th ANNUAL
Ordinary Women, Extraordinary Lives
YWCA Women of Distinction Awards® Dinner
Thursday, June 7th, 2007
TCU Place

The nomination categories include:
– Arts, Culture and/or Heritage
– Community Building
– Education
– Entrepreneurship
– Health and Wellness
– Lifetime Achievement
– Science, Technology or Research
– Athletics
– Leadership and Management
– Youth

Nomination forms available at:
www.ywcasaskatoon.com
or by calling the YWCA at 244-7034, ext. 122

All proceeds from the dinner go towards supporting YWCA programs and services.

Dinner MC: Maura Davies
Tickets: \$90 each or \$720 for a table of 8.
Call 244-0944 to order tickets
Nomination Deadline: March 29th, 2007

Logos for sponsors: YWCA, CIBC, SaskPower, SaskTel, NewsTalk 650, CTV, The StarPhoenix, Concentra, United Way, and others.

Sports of all sorts coming up in Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan scores big

The National Aboriginal Hockey Championships are coming to our great province. Prince Albert will play host to this prestigious event which takes place from April 2- May 5, 2007.

The Saskatchewan Men's Team will look to defend the title they won last year in Kahnawake, Quebec.

The tournament will showcase the top Aboriginal AAA male and female players from across the country.

Vice Chief Morley Watson says that "this caliber of hockey goes a long way in developing young First Nations people both on and off the ice".

For more information contact Bonnie Braden, FSIN Communications Director at (306) 956-1026 or (306) 260-4706.



Team Saskatchewan hopes to defend the National Aboriginal Championship they won last year in Quebec.

Honouring Kevin Moccasin

On March 5, the For The Love Community Basketball Event will take place at Bedford Road Collegiate. Participants will gather at 6:00pm and the game will tip-off at 6:30pm.



The game raises money for the Fourth Annual Kevin Moccasin Memorial Basketball Tournament.

Past participants have included many of the Saskatchewan Huskies such as Andrew Spagrud, Re-jean Chabot and Kerri Leigh-Porter. Look for many local celebrities to take part in the action this year.

For more information contact Mason Medynski at (306) 241-6399 or (306) 683-3516.

Slamfest rolls through Muskeg

The Creative Natives continued their dominance of the local basketball scene. The boys from Saskatoon have won several all Native tournaments lately and look to continue their run unless another team steps up.

This time around it was the Siksika First Nation from Alberta, who fell just a little bit short in ending their run. In round robin play Siksika won at the buzzer and looked primed to win it all. However, following the lead of their veteran leader Mike Tanton, The Natives pulled it out once again.

On the girls side of the draw, the Lady Ballaz from Saskatoon took home top prize. These girls have fought hard the last couple of years and it was nice to see them finally win the big one.

With the help of MVP Candace St. Denis, they ran over Edmonton in convincing fashion.

Curling anyone?

The 2007 National Aboriginal Curling Championships are set to kick off March 29 – April 2 in Wynyard Saskatchewan. The Men will have three events, the woman will have two.

Top prize in the men's draw is \$3,000 and the women will take home \$2,000. Entry fee is \$300 per team and must be in no later than March 15.

There will be a limit of 46 men's and 12 ladies teams. For more information call Curtis (306) 554-2951 or Martin (306)554-2182.

The 9th Annual SaskTel Aboriginal Youth Awards of Excellence

Deadline for nominations April 13th, 2007
Gala Evening May 11th, 2007 at TCU Place

Award Categories

Outstanding Achievement	Sports Recreation
Leadership	Fine Arts/Performing Arts
Education	Technology/Science
Community Service	Spirit
Culture	

Nomination forms can be found on www.sasktel.com and have also been mailed out to your school.

For further information:
aboriginal.youthawards@sasktel.sk.ca
 1-866-931-6205



Memories of school

• Continued from Page 22

Sometime later the door opened and I was asked to come inside. I don't remember how he said it, but he asked me if I wanted to go back to class. I remember yelling and screaming that I wouldn't be going back there or to this school and her room. After they calmed me down, they convinced me I should go back to class. My brother took me back to class. I remember him standing at the door as I took my seat facing the back of the room. He closed the door and walked away.

Not long after that a knock came on the door and the teacher went and answered it. She was called out into the hall by the principal or the vice principal. She came in and they asked me if I would behave myself? She had me move my desk facing the front of the class again. It seemed that most of that year I was always facing the back of the room.

Another knock came on the classroom door. This time I was taken out of the class and taken down the hall to a different class. They put me in Miss. Connelly's room. May God bless that woman's soul and her kind heart. She was kind and never gave me the strap or yelled at me in any way for the rest of the year.

A few days later I was pulled out of line for talking. Everyone was talking as I remember. I was being centered out. I was told to go down to Mr. Kinsola's room. I was heading down there to get the strap for talking in line. I remember passing Miss. Connelly in the hall I told her what was going on and continued on my way. This was not the last time that I would be strapped.

After this my life was changed forever. This incident effected me: emotionally, mentally, morally. It dictated the way that I met new people, the way I interacted with my family and close friends. Even to this day I will never be the same happy-go-lucky kid that I was back then before Saultless. The memory of that one day is like a millstone around my neck that I have to carry for the rest of my life.

I am now 54 years old and they found out the I am dyslexic and I have Attention Deficit Disorder.

The only kind of teachers that used the strap are the incompetent ones; the ones who can't teach, the ones who are frustrated and have to take out their anger on some innocent child.

The only children that they pick on are the ones that they know they can get away with it. The strap in school? "K.M.R.A"

There were good teachers in that school. Miss Connelly, Jim Sutherland, if you're still alive, "THANKS".

This story I dedicate to my sister Margaret.

Keith Picard

Casino Regina
PRESENTS

#27

OSKANA
CUP II
REGINA

The Reggie Leach Hockey Challenge

April 13-15, 2007

Canlan Ice Sports Regina

(Highway #1 East, north of CTV)

Division	Team Entries	Team Entry Fee	1st Prize	2nd Prize	3rd Prize
Sr. All Reserve with 2 Aboriginal Imports	8	\$800	\$7,000	\$4,000	\$2,000
Recreation - Aboriginal	8	\$600	\$2,500	\$1,500	\$1,000
Masters (35+) - Aboriginal	6	\$600	\$2,500	\$1,500	\$1,000
Masters (40+) - Aboriginal	6	\$500	\$2,000	\$1,000	\$500
Women - Aboriginal	6	\$500	\$2,000	\$1,000	\$500

*\$100 penalty if not paid in full by deadline of March 31, 2007 *Net prizes based on full entries *Non-refundable
Entries payable to: Oskana Minor Hockey Development Inc. Box 3737 Station Main Regina, SK S4P 3N8
Host Hotel (306) 569-1666 or Toll Free at 1-800-665-6500 prompt 2 (ask for Oskana Cup II rate)

**Tickets: Adults \$10/day or \$25/weekend pass - Elders \$8/day or \$20/weekend pass
Children under 6 Free**

Cabaret on Saturday night - Car Shoot Out - Sportsman's Dinner April 12th

Visit www.OskanaCup.org or phone (306) 522-7494 for full details

