



"To give a voice to the vision of the Anishinabek Nation."

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NBI/WATER: Lifeblood of Mother Earth

Moved by the spirit of creation, Josephine Mandamin, an Anishinawbe Quay Grandmother, recognized the importance of water to our life and acted on her vision to walk for the water around the Great Lakes. In her spiritual journey to raise awareness about the need to take care of the water, she was joined by many women and men for support. From 2003 to 2006, they walked around four of the Great Lakes. This photo was taken when the Water Walkers visited Lake Huron Chiefs meeting in Whitefish Lake First Nation in May, 2005. Velma Michano, Gladys McDonald, Laura Liberty, Violet Caibaiossai, Josephine Mandamin, David Trudeau, Kyle Trudeau, Josh Wemigwans, Leona Stevens, Serene Manitowabi and Rose Corbiere were greeted by Bob Goulais, right, executive assistant to the Anishinabek Nation Grand Council Chief.

On Saturday April 28, 2007, Josephine Mandamin, supporters and fellow walkers will set out from Fort Erie, Ontario to walk around Lake Erie and complete the circle of their journey. Please join in this great and wonderful event, through walking, assisting, donating, accommodating, feasting, providing security, hosting events, and spreading the word – everything helps us all. More information is available at <http://www.motherearthwaterwalk.com> or by contacting Josephine Mandamin at (807) 622-2457 or by e-mail at: mandamin@shaw.ca

Related articles: Page 9 – First Anishinabek Women's Water Commission appointed

Page 13 – Anishinabek and Ontario agree to co-management of Great Lakes basin



ANISHINABEK



Little NHL trophy presenters, from left, Lloyd McGregor, Ginoogaming midget division goaltender, NHL legend Reggie Leach, and tourney organizers Debbie Debassige and Dawn Madahbee.

Little NHL 2007 results

SUDBURY – The 36th annual Little Native Hockey League Tournament was another resounding success, attracting over 100 teams and over 2,000 players to the March 11-15 event.

The Ojibwe Cultural Foundation was instrumental in organizing this year's event.

Final results, provided by the OCF's Alan Corbiere:

Tyke Boys

Garden River: 13 / Wasauksing: 0

Novice Boys

Kettle & Stoney Point: 8 / Oneida: 7

Atom Boys

Moose Cree: 4 / Garden River: 3

Peewee Boys

Akwesasne: 3 / Garden River: 2

Bantam Boys

Eagle Lake: 6 / Aamjiwnaang: 3

Midget Boys

Wiwemikong: 3 / Ginoogaming: 2

Junior Girls

Wiwemikong: 4 / Curve Lake: 3

Senior Girls

AundeckOmniKanig: 6 / Curve Lake: 1

Wiwemikong woman fights racism in taxation battles

By Medora Hicks

Anii! Esna Boozhoo!

A few years ago we deemed our country a Multicultural Canada. What happened? We are very loving people and always willing to help our fellow humans when in need. Here we are today feeling the effects of racism and discrimination.

I recently placed an order by phone with Sears Canada and was told the total of my order was X amount of dollars including the taxes. I replied that I am tax-exempt. On checking my order the woman proceeded to tell me she could remove the PST only.

I stated that I live on a reserve and I am a Status Indian who is exempt from both taxes. This salesperson refused to remove the GST at which time I asked to speak to her supervisor, a lady who told me the same thing. When I voiced my rights as a Native person, she told me I am very lucky, to which I replied that luck has nothing to do with it – I have my status and am exempt from both taxes. I asked her if I could speak to her manager and she told me "I am the manager," again saying I am damn lucky to not have been paying the GST.

Out of frustration I told her that she is the one who is damn lucky, that I have always been Native and no one can change that, I live on Wiwemikong Unceded Indian Reserve and have always been in my own country. At that point she said "I am not arguing with you any more" and hung up – the telephone went abuzz in my ear.

I went to my computer and wrote a letter of complaint to Sears Customer Services, copied to the Union of Ontario Indians and

other departments and persons I know personally. Within a very short while I started to receive responses to my letter and got a lot of support to my cause.

After a few days I received another call which was, I later found out, from Sears' vice-president of customer relations. She asked me to relate the experience I had with my order and when I told her she apologized emphatically.

As far back as I can remember Native people have always relied on Sears catalogues to order their necessities. In those times it was the most convenient method of getting supplies and acquiring goods, from fabrics, frying pans to Swede saw files. It was part of our lifestyle to order from a catalogue. If it weren't for the Native people in more isolated communities ordering from Sears, they most likely would not be in existence today. It was our loyalty and consistent support that put Sears Canada in the position they are now in.

Years ago I was at a drug store to make a purchase and when I presented my Status Card the cashier told me to "throw that away" ...it was "no good." She proceeded to shout at me "you people and your tobacco, I have read about it in the papers." This was during the time of the Oka crisis, in 1990. I put the items back on the shelf, but I found myself in the midst of a crowd of interested and nosey people.

One man asked me why I was

refusing to pay the sales tax. This prompted others to surround me in front of everyone else in the Mall. I left there and think I cried all the way home. I called my husband at work and he advised me to make a call to the Human Rights Commission in Ottawa. I did just that and before too long I received a call to request from me a letter explaining my experience. So it was dealt with and the owners of the store were advised to write a letter of apology to me and display a poster on anti-racism.

A few weeks ago travelling between Birch Island and Whitefish Falls an OPP officer pulled me over. He told me he clocked me at 100 km in an 80 zone, and gave me a warning to observe the speed limit. Then he said, "You, being from Wiky, you're bound to be a repeat customer around here." Well, I'm not sure what he meant by that remark only that I felt it was totally uncalled for, especially by an officer and a person of authority.

Racism is very much alive and well.

Over the years I have met many people from various walks of life and made many friends who are non-Native and they are my best friends to this day. It only takes one and only now and then to generate a sour taste and it all comes back again – all the injustices we have encountered in the past.

We need to speak up for ourselves, for our rights as a native people. Taking the time to act and file a complaint is all it takes sometimes to resolve a small part of our issues and daily encounters.



Medora Hicks

NAAF 4 x 8.75



GICHI-ODENA / URBAN REZ

Native population outpacing available services

THUNDER BAY – Aboriginal youth are increasing in numbers in Thunder Bay according to Statistics Canada Census breakdown of the city's urban Aboriginal population.

Thunder Bay's research was commissioned by the Urban Aboriginal Task Force (UATF), Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres (OFIFC), Ontario Native Women's Association (ONWA) and the Ontario Métis Aboriginal Association (OMAA) with

funding from the OFIFC, provincial ministries and federal departments. It shows, among many findings, significant changes in the demographics and service gaps of urban Aboriginal Peoples.

"There has been a 172% increase in Aboriginal population," Sally Ledger, executive director of the Ontario Native Women's Association (ONWA) says.

Failure to address the jurisdictional boundaries of federal, provincial, and municipal funding has led to a lack of core

funding for services. The research shows the median income for Aboriginal families is \$18,449 per year, markedly less than non-Aboriginals.

Anne Lesage, executive director of the Thunder Bay Indian Friendship Centre, says, "I have seen the changes in our organizations' ability to meet the increasing need for services. It is not only an increase in numbers; it is increasing poverty. Children in our community experience daily hunger." Community

researchers used community surveys, interviews, focus groups, plenary sessions, and life histories to collect data from January 2006 until June 2006. The study included 425 respondents; Aboriginal respondents comprised 89% of respondents overall.

• 2001 Census data shows that: 1/3 of Aboriginal peoples in Thunder Bay were under the age of 15; Aboriginal peoples made up about 7% of the city's total population; and, Aboriginal children represented about 13% of

the city's children.

• 2001 Census data shows school attendance rates among Aboriginal youth (15 to 24 years) increased significantly from 1981 (46%) to 2001 (64%).

• 79.6% of community survey respondents experienced racism from non-Aboriginal people in malls (33%), dealing with police (31%), in restaurants (30%), in schools (29%), on buses (27%) and in health care (39%) (e.g. hospital, doctor, dentist and optometrist's offices).



Squaw Bay Road dump site.



Youth photo exhibit focuses on environmental concerns.

Fort William community group focuses on environmental issues

By Deanna Marie Therriault

FORT WILLIAM FN – When the people of Fort William First Nation leave the comforts of their homes they are greeted with something other than what our Creator had intended: garbage, litter and dump sites scattered across the reserve, the rotten egg stench of the Bowater Mill, boarded up ruins of former homes, bears and stray dogs.

The issue is community pollution; the solution is the Anishinabek of the Gichigami (AGG), a newly formed autonomous, community-based environmental group.

This group of like-minded community, volunteers is committed to the traditional principle that Anishinabe peoples are keepers of the land, stewards of the bountiful gifts given to us by Mother Earth, and they intend to educate the rest of their community about how to maintain and secure her gifts for future generations. They are reclaiming their traditional lands and re-assuming the responsibilities

handed down through countless generations. In short, they're cleaning up.

The group was formed in the summer of 2006, and is coordinated by Fort William First Nation community member, Damien Lee and a council of 12 community members residing both on and off-reserve. The group governs the activities which at present have zeroed in on land waste.

On December 17, 2006 the Anishinabek of the Gichigami hosted an Open House formerly introducing themselves to the community and showcasing their accomplishments to date.

The centerpiece of the gathering was a youth photo exhibit entitled *This Is Our Home*.

Youth were armed with disposable cameras and told to capture what they perceived as pollution and contaminants within the community. They were successfully able to highlight the environmental challenges faced by this reserve. They also identified over 250 on-reserve dumping sites.

Wasse-Abin Wikwemikong High School
Annual Career Fair 2007

"The Future Is Yours... Grab It!"

THURSDAY, MAY 10, 2007
9:00 A.M. TO 3:00 P.M.
at the WASSE-ABIN HIGH SCHOOL, Wikwemikong

This is an invitation to Businesses, Entrepreneurs, Agencies & Organizations in the career areas of BUSINESS, LAW & JUSTICE

We welcome you to attend our upcoming career fair to set up an interactive display booth, and/or present a workshop on your exciting career to students and community members.

If you are interested in attending our event, please contact Erika Manitowabi or Alex Maloney to register.
WASSE-ABIN WIKWEMIKONG HIGH SCHOOL
Phone: (705) 859-2870 – Fax: (705) 859-2407
Email: erikainguidance@yahoo.ca OR amaloney@amtelecom.net

Hosted by the Wikwemikong Wasse-Abin High School in Partnership with Wikwemikong Youth Apprenticeship Program & Wassa Naabin Youth Services

High school promoting awareness

By Heather Campbell

SUDBURY – Native Awareness Day at Sudbury Secondary School in Sudbury is increasing cross-cultural understanding among students and teachers.

Teresa Flamand, the school's Native Liaison Worker, organized a February day-long agenda of traditional Native food, traditional teachings and demonstrations, bringing in local speakers and Elders to share their teachings and gifts with the student body.

Maxine Shawongonabe was Elder for the day-long event and shared some traditional medicine teachings. Young people demonstrated pow-wow dances and men's drumming. Other guests included Susan Manitowabi talking about Native Parenting, Sonya Mason sharing teachings on Traditional Cooking and Lorraine Flamand with Native Crafts.

Jericho Pettifer, 16, recently moved to the area and attending



Susan Manitowabi from Laurentian University was a guest presenter at Sudbury Secondary School's Native Awareness Day.

Grade 11, helped organize the event.

"It's important for all students, but shows non-native students another culture," said Pettifer, "It shows people we are struggling with problems but we have ways to deal with things, our traditions. We need to keep them alive and teach everyone."

In the past two years Pettifer has learned to be a grass dancer. He says he feels more alive when he is dancing. "When you dance you don't bring negativity into the circle, you need to think positive."

He says that as he learns he also teaches others. Sudbury Secondary School has a significant percentage of aboriginal-heritage students in their student body. They have dedicated classroom space for students to gather and stay connected within the school environment. The room is covered with posters reflecting Native teachings and role models, dream catchers and the Four Colours, creating a home away from home. Students can come and eat lunch, get resources and just connect with their people.



ANISHINABEK NEWS



The Anishinabek News is a monthly publication of the Union of Ontario Indians (UOI). Views expressed are not necessarily the opinion or political position of the UOI.

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Editor: Maurice Switzer

Contributors: Ann Brascoupe, Holly Brodhagen, Heather Campbell, Christie A. Cooper, Cindy Crowe, Denise Desormeaux, Cherie Dimaline, Medora Hicks, Raymond M. Johns, Lynn McGregor, Marie McGregor Pitawanakwat, Val Monague, Roberta Oshkawbewis Martin, Julie Ovenell-Carter, Ron Plain, J. Spencer Rowe, Dan Shaule, Deanna Marie Theriault, Richard Wagamese and Shirley Williams

Editorial Board: Fred Bellefeuille, Les Couchie, Cathie Favreau
Production: Deb Sullivan
Co-ordinator: Priscilla Goulais

Telephone: (705) 497-9127 Toll Free: 1-877-702-5200
Fax: (705) 497-9135 e-mail: news@anishinabek.ca
Anishinabek News P.O. Box 711, Nipissing First Nation,
North Bay, ON P1B 8J8

ANISHINABEK NEWS



Publishing Criteria

GOAL

To publish a quality newspaper and related publications designed to foster pride and share knowledge about Anishinabek current affairs, culture, goals, and accomplishments.

OBJECTIVES

To provide information that reflects the Creator's four original gifts to the Anishinabek:

Respect: To welcome diversity and encourage a free exchange of opinions that may differ without being disagreeable. Fair and humorous comments are welcomed, but not ridicule or personal attacks.

Honesty: Debwevin – speaking the truth – is the cornerstone of our newspaper's content.

Sharing: Providing opportunities for people from the four corners of the Anishinabek Nation to tell stories and record achievements, and to keep our citizens informed about activities of the Union of Ontario Indians.

Strength: To give a voice to the vision of the Anishinabek Nation that celebrates our history, culture and language, promotes our land, treaty, and aboriginal rights, and supports the development of healthy and prosperous communities.

NOTE: The Editor reserves the right to edit all submissions for brevity, clarity, and suitability for publication. All formal comments and complaints must be addressed to Editorial Board c/o Anishinabek News.

Advertising & News Deadlines

The current circulation of the Anishinabek News is 10,000 copies, with 9,000 mailed and 1,000 distributed at various events.

DEADLINES FOR MAY ISSUE

Advertising	
Bookings:	April 20
Final Art:	April 23
News	
News submissions:	April 20
Scheduled printing:	May 4

For more information or inquiries to the Anishinabek News related to advertising and circulation issues please call our new toll-free number: **1-800-463-6408**

MAANDA NDINENDAM OPINION

Hockeyville: Racism on ice

“Sticks and stones may break your bones, but names will never hurt you!”

At least that's what they used to tell us when we were little, presumably to make us feel better after some schoolyard bully sent us home in tears.

I didn't believe it then, and I don't believe it now.

As I write these words, a loudmouth radio announcer named Don Imus is backpedalling at Olympic-calibre speed from on-air comments he and his broadcasting sidekick made, to the effect that the members of the Rutgers University women's basketball team were “nappy-headed hos” and “jigaboos.”

Civilization as we know it must be coming to an end when major corporations pay seven-figure salaries to people for exhibiting no greater social skills than the ability to call other people names. Sure, it's racist. It's also childish, ignorant, boorish, and stupid. All of those adjectives are inter-changeable.



Maurice Switzer

In addition to reserving special epithets for people of various ethnic backgrounds, Imus routinely refers to political leaders as “idiots” and “morons”, but tries to excuse his behaviour by pointing to his charity fund-raising, calling himself “a good person” who was only “trying to be funny,” and not blurting out such insulting comments “out of anger.”

The really sad thing is that there often don't seem to be serious consequences for people like this, especially if they enjoy positions of social or economic power. Imus' New York radio show had over 300,000 listeners – all potential purchasers of his sponsors' products – and it took a lot of pressure to finally convince his broadcast bosses that his talents might be more appreciated somewhere else – the monkey cage at the Central Park Zoo comes to mind.

Not only are high-profile people more likely to be excused when they behave badly, they also can compound the problems they cause by setting examples for others to follow. Parents across North America shudder at the thoughts of their teen-aged daughters copying Britney Spears' choice of clothes – or lack of them. And when hockey-playing cowboys like Todd Bertuzzi steer-wrestle opponents to the ice, it sends a subliminal message to ankle-biters in arenas across the land that such behaviour is acceptable – even desirable – if they hope to make it to the big leagues.

Speaking of hockey, our office has been working with a group of Nipissing First Nation parents who'd prefer that 14-year-olds playing

against their sons not refer to them as “bush niggers” or “stupid f---ing Indians”, as has been the case in recent months. There is a growing number of such reported incidents, without any indication of concern by those responsible for overseeing the games or the facilities in which they are played.

The mayor of North Bay refused to meet with the parents of the boys who had been the target of the racist insults in one of his city's arenas. He also rejected a suggestion that he issue a public statement condemning such public conduct in his city. The parents were still waiting for a response to their request for a public apology from the local hockey association.

Teasing and taunting are part and parcel of sports – but there are boundaries. In my hockey and softball-playing days I was the brunt of my share of sideline jeers, but never personal slights. I was luckier – and lighter-skinned – than ground-breakers like Ted Nolan who has had to endure race-specific insults for most of his illustrious hockey career.

When Nolan was coaching a Moncton junior team in a playoff game in Chicoutimi a couple of winters ago, some crowd members directed racist taunting and yelling at the Garden River First Nation citizen. Subsequent public apologies were forthcoming from both the president of the hockey club and mayor of the Saguenay region.

Nolan is back coaching in the National Hockey League these days, his New York Islanders having edged out the Maple Leafs for a playoff berth on the last day of the regular season. He is scheduled to bring the Islanders to North Bay to compete in a pre-season exhibition game this fall against the Atlanta Thrashers.

The right to host the exhibition game, along with a \$60,000 cash award, were part of North Bay's prize for being selected as Hockeyville 2007 – the Canadian community “that best embodies the spirit of hockey and hometown spirit.” North Bay was also one of five municipalities cited for “fairness” in the national competition.

There's something wrong with this picture.

Maurice Switzer is a citizen of the Mississaugas of Alderville First Nation. He serves as director of communications for the Union of Ontario Indians in North Bay, and editor of the Anishinabek News.



MAANDA NDINENDAM/OPINIONS

First aid for the environment

By Ron Plain

It was 2001 when the plant I worked at hired a new General Manager. He was a bit of an odd sort but likeable. He had both saved someone and been saved by someone using First Aid.



Ron Plain

To say he was a health and safety guy is an understatement. He posted an opportunity for "volunteers" to take the American Red Cross First Aid CPR courses. I thought to myself I'm 40-something, I should know this stuff and signed up. Of the 90 employees of the plant only one other signed up.

Our initiative earned us carte blanche. We could, at full pay, take any course the Red Cross offered. I took them all, quickly advancing up to Health and Safety representative for the plant.

I took the qualifications earned at the plant and began doing First Aid courses on Aamjiwnaang. During these courses I repeatedly stated if you do not have a first aid kit in your house, car, boat, RV and camper you were being negligent. During one of these courses one participant said if I believe that I should sell first aid kits. All of a sudden I was in the medical supply business.

My career as an environmentalist began when Sunoco decided it was okay to build an ethanol plant next to our community and I became part of the new Aamjiwnaang Environment Committee. My time on the committee took me away from my business and then the business closed. My work became being a full-time volunteer, which, in turn, led to my election as committee Chair.

On January 15th of this year I resigned my position as Chair and from the Aamjiwnaang Environment Committee. Ada Lockridge is now Chair and it has never been in better hands. She says she could never fill my shoes, I am glad to hear that

because my size 11's would look like clown feet on her. It has been a couple of months and she has settled into the position exactly as I knew she would. Change is difficult and stressful but she, and the committee, have worked through the change with focus and determination. I became a Researcher, a Consultant if you will. My exposure to the bigger picture of Aboriginal environmental issues is leading me to exciting and fulfilling opportunities to effect change on a national basis. Working with Indigenous groups from Mexico, the United States and Canada is allowing me to share our stories with international ears, and to learn from the stories and experiences of our relations in these other countries.

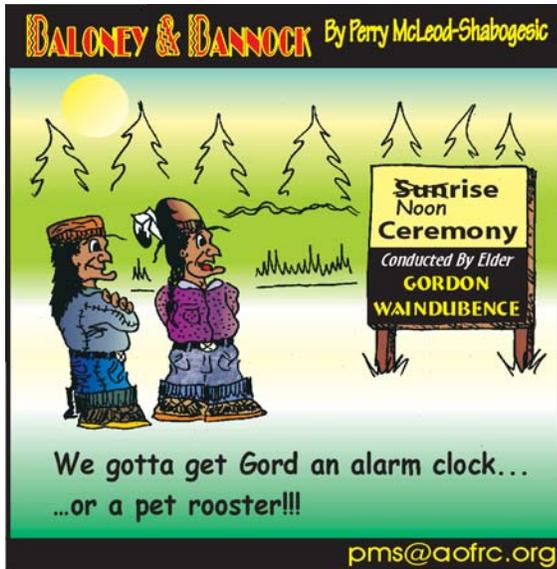
Making conversation with a stranger on a train almost always leads to the "What do you do?" question. When I explain what I do they ask, "How did you find a job like this?" I do not have that answer. I believe I am now doing what I was training for my entire life, that each event good or bad has led me to this point.

My writing here in the Anishinabek News allows me the opportunity to share with you the news and events of environmental issues that effect you and I. I enjoy this and am thankful I am able to write.

Over the course of the next year I will be traveling throughout Ontario talking with you. Since I need to continue to work for Aamjiwnaang's health and environmental concerns, continue to work internationally to learn how other communities have succeeded, I must also hear your stories. I need to continue to expose your stories to other Anishinabek communities so we can all learn and grow together.



Ada Lockridge, The new Aamjiwnaang Environment Committee Chairperson



Two-spirit means more than gay

By J. Spencer Rowe

I'm often asked to explain the two-spirit within Anishnabek culture.

I'm not the sole authority on the two-spirit but what I can share with you is a historical and traditional condensed view of who we are as I understand it.



J. Spencer Rowe

First there is no such thing as the two-spirit as such. It was a name created in the early 90's to somehow give us a definition that people may be better able to understand. It has since become to mean being gay and highly associated with HIV/AIDS. Which is fine except that doesn't reflect the complex and myriad varieties of our place

within our culture.

So let me put it this way. We used to have in our culture and still do, people whose gifts were valued and utilized by our communities. Some of these people could be called in English, shamans, contraries, medicine people, seers, transgender, gay, bi, straight, artists, ritualists for cross-overs and name-giving, surrogate parents and clowns among many other always fascinating people.

For whatever reason there was/is not always a place for them within our lodges. They were/are historically and traditionally defined by their gifts/deeds and named accordingly and thought to have a special relationship with the spirit world in their service to community. Sometimes they lived just outside of the village in a protective capacity if you will.

They were teachers, healers and protectors. Today they still exist, but their roles and duties have not always been recognized or respected, and are often dismissed as "faggots" or some other white-man hateful view. But they are still here challenging, doing and performing the sacred duties they have been given to do, it is up to you to see it.

I hope this has helped a little for those who have questions. I encourage you to research for yourselves as there is information is available.

J. Spencer Rowe is a Toronto-based consultant, writer, and motivational speaker who is proud of his Native and Irish heritage. He can be contacted at 647-340-9483, or at his website at <http://spencerconsulting.tripod.com>



LETTERS



Casino cash stops flowing

Across Ontario, First Nations share in the revenues generated by casino operations located on Mnjikaning First Nation near Orillia.

However, recently Ontario and the council of Mnjikaning have usurped control over the revenues distributed to First Nations and turned the taps off in an effort to influence lawsuits First Nations have against both Ontario and Mnjikaning itself.

Information about these lawsuits is available on the web, but suffice it to say, the lawsuits are about broken agreements and promises made to First Nations in Ontario by the Province and Mnjikaning and an unwillingness by them to honour the agreements and share equally in the benefits.

Mnjikaning has made good on its threat to shut off all funding to Ontario's First Nations. Failing to sign off on a mortgage for a casino hotel, Mnjikaning has forced the default on the mortgage, allowing the province to move in and claim all of the proceeds from casino operations. This has meant that First Nations in Ontario will not receive any payment from casino Operations.

The impacts to the rest of Ontario are real; many communities rely on the proceeds from Rama to keep classrooms open, to fund youth recreation, community housing initiatives. The act of the Council of Mnjikaning and the subsequent cash sweep by the Province will result in school closures, halted community projects that have real material impacts in the First Nations in Ontario.

Why should the First Nations of Ontario suffer in silence while the coffers of the province and Mnjikaning Council get fatter and fatter? Ontario First Nations should march upon Mnjikaning and the casino itself in protest until the money the province and Mnjikaning have stolen from us is returned.

Byron LeClair, Pic River First Nation

German sees similarities

(Copy of a letter sent to Indian Affairs Minister James Prentice.)

Recently I've read your opinion that "First Nation Citizens don't have the same rights and remedies as other Canadians." It's really shocking, embarrassing and shameful.

In the eyes of the Creator we are all equal – every creation on this planet deserves the same respect.

Obviously you don't know the history of your country – ask yourself why they are called First Nations – because they been and still are the first inhabitants of this land which is now stolen and occupied by the white race.

For me, as a German citizen, these First Nations worldwide are the Treasure of Mankind. What will the white mankind leave on this planet? Only pollution, destruction, poverty and disparity and shame. That really cannot make you proud.

We as Germans have learned from our history that these kind of thinkings is wrong and a crime and genocide. Till today the whole world is reminding us about the Nazi time. It was the same injustice with the Jews as you are doing with First Nation. It doesn't matter if they are quarter, half, full blood – they are First Nations in your country and deserve your and our respect, recognition, restoration and the ability to live in peace instead of poverty and desperation.

You should reconsider and start a reconciliation with an apology and honesty and respect.

Stephanie Benver

In a Real Reality...

A real reality is constructed by and through ideals of kindness and humility...

In a real reality, these values of goodness and humbleness versus greed, individualism, and endless refuge production are ritualized and, thus, embodied through ceremony and song from the moment of conception...

In a real reality, embodying knowledge and 'embodied knowledge' versus 'reason knowledge' is practiced and valued...

In a real reality, all of the Creator's creatures – plant and animal and all their requirements such as clean water – are equal in the natural democracy...

Or alternatively, in a real reality, all beings are accounted for...

In a real reality, these values of goodness and humility become the interpretive lens for all we do and all we think...

In a real reality, these values of goodness and humbleness are encoded and codified in all structures, institutions, policies, and legislations...

In a real reality, humans are taught the limitations of their consciousness, intelligences, and knowledge, as contradiction in the form of earthly destruction is rarely far away...

In a real reality, mind-varying drugs such as ritalin and anti-depressants are not required to fit into the structures...

In a real reality, humans are taught and know how pitiful we are to counter our ego and arrogant tendency in constructing a real reality...

In a real reality, practice is close to these theoretical ideals versus far away...

Lynn Gehl, Peterborough



MNO-BMAADZIWIN



Champion bannock bakers, from left: Christabell Baptiste, Florence Becker and Lorraine Liberty.

Bannock bakers guard their secrets

NORTH BAY – Florence Becker was delighted to be crowned winner of the 2007 Bannock Bake-off at North Bay Indian Friendship Centre.... but not enough to reveal the secrets of her winning recipe.

“Oh, you know, the usual – flour, lard, salt....” the Bear Island citizen said cautiously, after a panel of judges rated her traditional bannock the best of this year’s dozen entries.

Florence maintained the tight-lipped tradition begun in last year’s inaugural competition, which organizer Lily Couchie launched as part of the Friendship Centre’s Life-long Care program.

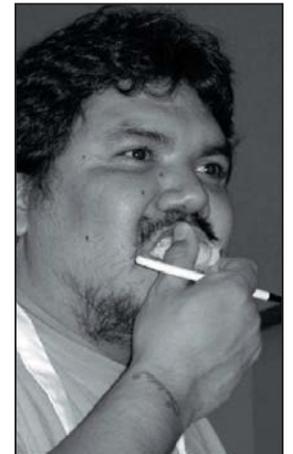
“It’s good to get the Elders out,” said Couchie after placing tiaras and sashes on the bannock queen and first princess Lorraine Liberty and second princess Christabell Baptiste. “

They’re good cooks, and they like to get together.”

Couchie thanked her “loyal staff,” who acted as judges, served a lunch of beans, baloney, and bannock to about 30 contest

onlookers, and helped hand out trophies and prizes (oven mitts and baking supplies) to the winners.

Bannock was judged on taste, colour, look, presentation, and height, and included one pinkish raspberry entry.



Judge Robin Antone

Social work requires gumption

By Val Monague

When I was offered the position as Director of Social Services for the Union of Ontario Indians I said to myself: “This Chimissing island girl can become a northerner, or perhaps more appropriately, a North-bay-er, although given where I live, a temporary Nipissing”.

I am very honoured that Nipissing First Nation has allowed me to live on their land (no one has knocked on my door telling me otherwise).

Most of my adult life has been devoted to supporting families in one way or another. Fresh out of college I work at the “daycare” (ECA, George Brown College) then it was on to Child Welfare (Youth Worker Cert., Georgian College) then as Crisis Counsellor at a Women’s Shelter (thought I was tired of Social and wanted to be my own boss so I got a diploma in Business & Tourism, Georgian College) and next thing I realized there I was after graduation, working as a Social Service Administrator (Social Service Worker Diploma, Loyalist

College). I realized that doors to management opened with a degree, so off I went to Carleton University to get my Honours Bachelor of Social Work, while working as a Social Policy Analyst at the Chiefs of Ontario.



Val Monague

Oh yes, and I should mention that social work provides a solid foundation for politics.... this is where I drew my strength from in over my six years as Chief of my community Beausoleil FN. So here I am now, working for my favourite political organization, in a field I am naturally drawn to, hoping to make a difference in the lives of our families within all our member communities. I do believe I will stick around here for quite awhile.

Working in social services takes a special kind of person: an optimist, a vessel full of energy, passion, and

fortitude, lots of love and kindness. As my grandma Harriet would say, you got to have “gumption”! The staff that work in our daycares, child welfare prevention and protection services, social assistance/employment supports, mental health, family violence, adult care, etc...in our communities have “gumption”. I define gumption as having the nerve to make things better.

On behalf of the Anishinabek Nation, the UOI staff are encouraged to strengthen our communication to the communities we work on behalf of. I would like to celebrate and champion some of the wonderful things that are happening in our communities in the area of social services by ensuring that our stories are included in the Anishinabek News with a monthly section dedicated to our work. I would also like to highlight some of the struggles and barriers that are encountered so that perhaps collectively we can help in some way to make a difference in our world.

Take care...baa maa pii miin waa.

Cancer facts

• Cancer is a serious public health concern for Ontario Aboriginal people, as it is for most Ontarians. Although the rate of new cases of cancer is lower among First Nations people (Registered Status Indians), rates rose between 1968 and 2001 and becoming similar to rates in the province of Ontario as a whole. This is largely due to rapidly rising rates of lung, breast and colorectal cancer in First Nations people.

• There is a myth that cancer is rare among Aboriginal people. In fact, incidence of cancer is increasing, and has become the second most common cause of death in First Nations people.

• The age distribution of the Aboriginal population differs from the rest of Ontario. Over 60 percent are under 30 years of age. As the population ages, the number of new cancer cases can be expected to increase as well.

• Culturally-appropriate cancer information in Ontario is lacking. There are fewer materials still that are available in Aboriginal languages.

Biidahban Health

4 x 4.5

MBS

Ont Health

4 x 8



MNO-BMAADZIWIN/HEALTH

Beverly advocates good health

My name is Beverly Restoule and I have recently been hired as the Health Advocacy Developer for the Northeast region. I am located at the Union of Ontario Indians office at Nipissing First Nation. I am from Dokis First Nation, was born and raised in North Bay and my ancestry is with Nipissing First Nation. I am married to Tinny Restoule and we have four children and seven grandchildren.

I have 30 years' experience working for First Nation programs such as NNADAP Worker, Mental Health Worker, Ontario Works Administrator, Education Counsellor, Clinic Manager, Housing Manager, Healing and Wellness Coordinator and Health Outreach worker with the North Bay Friendship Center and Native Counsellor with the Northeast Mental Health Center. I have my Bachelors of Arts degree in Sociology /Social Welfare my Certified Nursing Assistant Certificate with the Ministry

of Health, and my Native Counsellor Certificate from the Ministry of Education.

The Aboriginal Health Advocacy Initiative is mandated to ensure that Aboriginal, First Nation, and Metis people receive fair and equal services that are culturally appropriate. The OAHAI is a project of the Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy (AHWS), which was announced and started in 1994. This Initiative is unique to Ontario.

The Ontario Aboriginal Health Advocacy Initiative is a free information and training resource for frontline and community support workers to address systemic advocacy issues research, information gathering, developing partnerships with lobby groups, reviewing legislation and driving policy to ensure Aboriginal health needs are met.

The Northeast region covers North to Attawapiskat, South to Orillia, West



Beverly Restoule

to Pic Morbert and East to Ottawa. I look forward to meeting with front line workers, health professionals and organizations in the Northeast region to promote this very worthwhile initiative. For more information I can be reached at 705-497-9127 ext. 2245 E-mail resbev@anishinabek.ca.

Ontario supports no-smoking plan

TORONTO – The provincial government is providing \$1,685,737 over two years for 13 initiatives that address the disease prevention and health promotion needs of Ontario's Aboriginal communities.

The funding will go to Aboriginal organizations and agencies to implement culturally-appropriate initiatives that will best address particular challenges facing the Aboriginal population.

Health Promotion Minister Jim Watson said "We asked organizations and agencies that service these communities to tell us how best to address these challenges in their communities and these initiatives are as a result of this healthy partnership."

"This funding is very important to Aboriginal communities across Ontario," said David Martin, President of the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres. "These programs will help us to address incidents of chronic disease, such as diabetes and cancer which are many times higher than the provincial average."

The Ontario government also

recently introduced the province's first Aboriginal-specific mass media campaign to raise awareness of the harmful effects of commercial tobacco.

Smoking kills an average of 16,000 people in Ontario each year. Tobacco-related diseases cost the Ontario health care system at least \$1.7 billion a year, result in more than \$2.6 billion in productivity losses, and account for at least 500,000 hospital days each year.

Ontario's tobacco consumption has fallen by 18.7 per cent or more than 2.6 billion cigarettes since 2003. During that time, the government has increased its investments in tobacco control six-fold to a total of \$60 million, including a \$10 million increase in 2006 over the previous year.

The Union of Ontario Indians, headquartered in North Bay, received support to begin development of an "Anishinabek Nation Smoke-Free Strategy" to address the health and economic burden of commercial tobacco use in 42 member First Nations. (\$25,000).

North Bay
Mental Health Unit
6 x 8-7/8

FASD forum stresses mental health issues

By Lynn McGregor

VANCOUVER – A March conference at the University of British Columbia provided over 1100 delegates a major forum for discussion of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).

The agenda for the 2nd International Conference on FASD placed an emphasis on "Research, Policy and Practice Around the World".

Each day opened with plenary sessions sharing information about research projects, including presentations from doctors and professionals alike who have conducted studies to enhance the existing knowledge base of FASD worldwide. Many of the presentations emphasized that effect of alcohol consumption, long-term impacts of daily living, and the need to stress that FASD is a mental health issue that needs community supports for all parties affected.

I was pleased to attend various workshops, including: "Moving Beyond Awareness" by Skeetchestn Band.

A First Nation perspective on a community-based perspective of FASD concerns. Key topics included Prevention Best Practices, Community Strengths, and Culturally- Based Practices. This First Nation's focus is on community input to programming, sensitivity to local values/practices, language inclusion, more personal contact with participants and multidisciplinary approaches to FASD prevention. First Nation community workers stress that FASD treatment means more than creating awareness -- it involves primary, secondary and tertiary service provision to those affected.

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) is a broad term used to describe a wide range of physical, neurodevelopmental, behavioral, and cognitive disabilities due to prenatal alcohol exposure. Studies indicate that children suffer teratogenic damage as a result of maternal alcohol ingestion during the gestational period.

First Nation representatives offered honour songs to those impacted by FASD, the master of ceremonies was an FASD child, FASD flags were presented to each country's delegation, and a light ceremony commemorated those whose lives have been effected by FASD.

Lynn works at Curve Lake office

Aanii,Boozhoo, Lynn McGregor Fox ndishnikaaz.

I have been hired by the Union of Ontario Indians as the Southeast/Southwest Regional FASD Worker and will be based out of the Curve Lake Office. I am a First Nation member of Whitefish River and a community member of Alderville First Nation. My partner William Crowe Jr. along myself with our children -- Bryton, 11, Christopher, 6, and daughter Presley, 2 -- enjoy spending time with our extended family and participating in various family-related fun activities. I hold diplomas in the area of Early Childhood Education, Child and Family Services; and possess a university degree in Liberal Arts from the University of Sudbury. I am in the process of continued completion of my Social Service Degree and Law Certificate from the University of Sudbury. And in my spare time I also assist with the family's Canadian General Contracting and Roofing business.

I look forward to meeting you in the near future. Please feel free to contact me at (705) 657-9383



EZHOOSGAGED/ARTS

Odjig honoured

OTTAWA – Renowned Manitoulin Island artist Daphne Odjig has been selected as one of this year's eight winners of the Governor General's Awards in Visual and Media Arts.

In presenting the awards, Governor General Michaëlle Jean told the recipients: "You continuously open our eyes to everything that is beautiful in the world and we thank you for that."

Daphne Odjig is one of Canada's most celebrated Aboriginal painters and printmakers. Born on Wikwemikong Unceded Indian Reserve, of Pottawatomi and English heritage, she first learned about art-making from her grandfather, Jonas Odjig, a tombstone carver who taught her to draw and paint. She later moved to British Columbia.

Odjig's style, which underwent several developments and adaptations from decade to decade,



Daphne Odjig with Governor General Michaëlle Jean at Rideau Hall

is always identifiable. Mixing traditional Aboriginal styles and imagery with Cubist and Surrealist influences, Odjig's work is defined by curving contours, strong outlining, overlapping shapes and an unsurpassed sense of colour. Her work has addressed issues of colonization, the displacement of Aboriginal peoples, and the status of Aboriginal women and children, bringing Aboriginal political issues to the forefront of contemporary art practices and theory.

This year's winners each received \$25,000.

Hollywood calling

TORONTO (CP) – Tamara Podemski's phone has not stopped ringing with calls from Hollywood studios and casting agents since she unexpectedly walked away with a prestigious acting prize at January's Sundance Film Festival.

"It came out of nowhere, so it was a total shock, and I am still sort of riding this roller-coaster," Podemski, 29, says from her Toronto home.

Podemski plays a troubled native American in the indie film *Four Sheets to the Wind*, about an aboriginal family in small-town Oklahoma.

The Sundance jury honoured Podemski for her "fully realized physical and emotional turn" as Miri, a woman whose carefree lifestyle brings her to the brink of tragedy.

Even though the film has yet to find a distributor, Podemski's



Tamara Podemski

performance has caught the attention of Hollywood power brokers, and the lifelong Torontonian – who's also an accomplished musician and dancer – is heeding their calls to move to Tinseltown.

"NBC Universal were the most adamant of the people I've talked to, to just get me down there and get me in some meetings as soon as possible. So I'm going ... but moving to L.A. is most definitely happening as well."

Podemski, was named best female artist and best songwriter at last fall's Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards.

Cheechoo sees stars

SUDBURY (CP) – After years of cinematic slogging in relative obscurity (but with much critical acclaim), Shirley Cheechoo has bridged the professional divide between Canada and the United States.

The director of *Johmy Tootall, Pikutiskwauu/Mother Earth* and *Tracks in the Snow*, Cheechoo – a James Bay Cree who makes her home in M'Chigeeng First Nation on Manitoulin Island – now has the backing of Los Angeles production companies for her next directing project. Moonrise Films and Superior Inc. have several million dollars to play with to make *Superior*, a story of racial reconciliation set in a small northern American town.

The film will be shot near Madison, Wisconsin and several Hollywood stars are said to be considering the lead roles. Cheechoo



Shirley Cheechoo

and the film's producers/scriptwriters were in Sudbury to hold auditions for a number of roles in the picture.

Cheechoo began directing films in 1998. She is a multiple award winner, including being named the Independent Filmmaker of the Year at the Arizona International Film Festival.

"The most challenging part for me will be that I have never worked with big stars," she added. "There are probably going to be big stars in this film."

Bartleman: a legacy of books

By Ann Brascoupe

TORONTO – James K. Bartleman has made literacy an important part of his legacy as Ontario's first-ever aboriginal lieutenant governor.

Equally important as the hundreds of thousands of books he has helped collect to fill often empty shelves in remote First Nations communities is the biographical series he has produced to enlighten readers about life as a Native in Canada.

His latest – *Raisin Wine: A Boyhood in a Different Muskoka* (McClelland & Stewart) strings a recollection of boyhood adventures and fantasies of a young James Bartleman in his hometown of Port Carling in the heart of Muskoka cottage country. Born to a Chippewa mother and a Scottish father, the young boy who is referred to as "Jimmy" transports the reader to life in the 1920's and 1930's in the heart of Ontario tourist country with its rich summer cottages, coal oil lamps, outhouses and his entrepreneurial spirit.

Filled with reminiscences of the old days, old ways and of rural life, it is written in the third person with anonymous characters. The narrative style lends itself to taking the reader to relate to their own childhood experiences and dreams "in another world and life..." And, indeed it does.

Living in a rundown two-storey house without electricity and the hardships of an under-privileged upbringing, Bartleman – whose five-year term as Ontario's vice-regal expired this June – offers readers descriptive antidotes sprinkled with humour and historical facts. He writes about his visits to the Indian Camp of his mother's

home community, his first hunting expedition, being called 'inferior Indian', his father's famous raisin wine and daily life.

The boy's love of reading began at ten. Full of imagination and innocent wonderment, every issue of the Toronto Daily Star is read front to back before his summer paper delivery to wealthy customers.

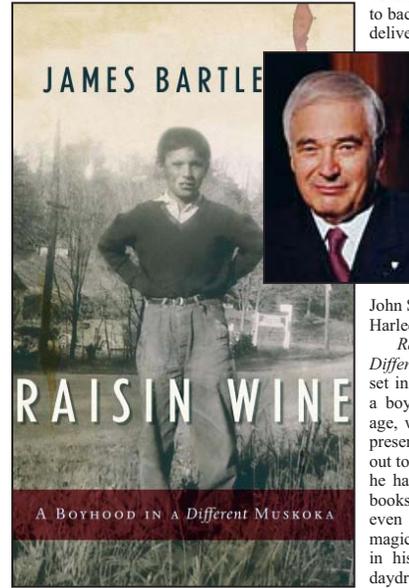
His paper route funded purchases of the familiar comics of the day – Batman, Superman, Dick Tracy – at the local drugstore. Later he graduated to reading classic novels from the local library and a whole new world opened up. His insatiable thirst for reading led him to notable authors like

John Steinbeck and the shlock of Harlequin Romances.

Raisin Wine: A Boyhood in a Different Muskoka is a memoir set in another time and place of a boy from 7 and 13 years of age, with an epilogue up to the present day: "His life would turn out to be just as exciting as those he had read about in the comic books he devoured as a boy, and even more wonderful than the magical world he had glimpsed in his youthful and overactive daydreaming."

Lieutenant-Governor James Bartleman is donating all his book royalties to help pay for shipping costs of books to Northern Ontario Anishnabek communities for use at the summer literacy camps he conceived and championed.

His Honour is also the prize-winning author of *Out of Muskoka* (2002), *On Six Continents* (2004) and *Rollercoaster* (2005).



Indigenous Theatre 6" x 6"



Anishinabek Nation Political Office
 Grand Council Chief, John Beaucage
 Deputy Grand Chief, Nelson Toulouse
 Chief-of-Staff, Bob Goulais
 Executive Liaison Officer, Monica Lister
 Executive Secretary, Patricia Campeau

UNION OF ONTARIO INDIANS Nipissing First Nation P.O. Box 711, North Bay ON P1B 8J8 Ph: 877-702-5200 Fx: 705-497-9135 E-mail: goubob@anishinabek.ca

NIIGAN ZHAAMIN — “Moving Forward, Together”

Chiefs adopt historic first law

SAULT STE. MARIE –The Union of Ontario Indians debated and approved in principle the first modern Anishinabek Nation Law respecting Matrimonial Real Property.

“In lieu of participating in the Government of Canada’s consultation process and legislative initiative regarding matrimonial real property, our Chiefs opted to develop our own process and our own Anishinabek Nation Law,” said Grand Council Chief John Beaucage.

The Law was approved-in-principle at a one-day Special Chiefs Assembly on Matrimonial Real Property (MRP) and final ratification will take place at the Anishinabek Nation Grand Council Assembly scheduled for June 25-28, 2007 in Alderville First Nation.

For the previous 40 days, Union of Ontario Indians leaders and staff had conducted nine separate consultation sessions across the Anishinabek Nation that engaged members of the 42 member communities and obtained feedback and principles to be incorporated into the Anishinabek Nation Law.

“The principles contained in the Anishinabek Nation law will have come from our engagement and consultation with our leadership and citizens. In the end, it will be up to each Anishinabek First Nation to subscribe to these principles that unite us, by enacting regulations at their respective Councils,” said Grand Council Chief Beaucage.

According to the draft Anishinabek Nation Law, member First Nations will have one year to pass community regulations, based on the framework provided for in the Anishinabek Nation Law. First Nations will have various options they can customize depending on their specific land tenure circumstances such as certificate of possession, custom allotment, First Nations Land Management Act, etc. They will also have the authority to customize components of their regulations according to the needs and wishes of their particular First Nations.

Last year, the Government of Canada announced their intention to introduce legislation to address the issue of matrimonial real property on-reserve, in particular a solution that will protect families, equity and fairness upon the dissolution of marriage. The Chiefs of the Anishinabek Nation opted for their own Anishinabek Nation Law rather than being subject to federal legislation and provincial jurisdiction on these matters.

The Anishinabek Nation incorporated the Union of Ontario Indians (UOI) as its secretariat in 1949. The UOI is a political advocate for 42-member First Nations across Ontario. The Union of Ontario Indians is the oldest political organization in Ontario and can trace its roots back to the Confederacy of Three Fires, which existed long before European contact.



A comprehensive 40-day consultation process culminated in the passage of the first modern-day Anishinabek Nation law, one dealing with the issue of Matrimonial Real Property. Celebrating the passage of a template for the proposed law by Anishinabek Nation member communities – who will be asked to ratify the finalized document in June – are Murray Maracle Jr., Grand Council Chief John Beaucage, Jenny Restoule-Malozzi, Deputy Grand Chief Glen Hare, and Murray Maracle Sr.
 – Photo by Maurice Switzer

Women’s water commission to offer advice

SAULT STE. MARIE – Grand Council Chief John Beaucage launched an Anishinabek Nation Building Conference by pledging to do more to contribute to the well-being of the environment and particular to the Great Lakes water.

He appointed an Anishinabek Women’s Water Commission to advise the Union of Ontario Indians on water and Great Lakes management issues.

“Our work with regard to the water and Great Lakes co-management will not focus only on policy and science,” he said. “Through our Women’s Water Commission, the beliefs that water is living and spoken for by our women will now be reflected in Ontario’s management regime.”

“We need to ensure that First Nations, especially our women, maintain their role as stewards of the water and give a voice for our most

precious resource,” added Beaucage.

The Anishinabek Women’s Water Commission will advise the Union of Ontario Indians on all aspects related to the management of the Great Lakes. Grand Council Chief Beaucage and Minister of Natural Resources David Ramsay signed a co-management agreement on March 27 to ensure First Nation participation in all decision-making that will impact the Great Lakes basin.

More importantly, the newly created Commission will play a leadership role in raising the awareness of Great Lakes water and impacts to its quality and quantity. The Women’s Water Commission will also share their tremendous traditional knowledge and teachings about water as they undertake their work across the Anishinabek Nation.

Josephine Mandamin, an Elder

from Wikwemikong Unceded Nation will serve as founding Chief Commissioner of the Anishinabek Women’s Water Commission.

“Water is a great uniter and I know that this historic step will begin to unite all nations because we all share an equal concern: the water’s future,” said Josephine Mandamin. “Hearing Mother Earth cry about how ill she is and how she is having a hard time feeding her children is a reminder to us all that our women feel the same way too. We must unite in this monumental task.”

Mandamin established the Mother Earth Water Walk, leading walks around Lake Superior, Lake Michigan, Lake Huron and Lake Ontario. Her group will begin walking around Lake Erie April 27.

Mary Deleary of Muncey and April Jones of London will also serve

as founding Commissioners. Both women are traditional teachers whose extensive aboriginal traditional knowledge focuses on the water and women’s role as caretakers on the water.

“My commitment as Anishinabek-Kwe (native woman) to ensuring the sustainability for life for our future generations guides much of my life,” said Mary Deleary. “Our ‘Sacred Water’ is the very essence of what will continue to sustain our life.”

“During my lifetime, I have seen the extreme changes that have occurred regarding the sustainability of one of our most precious resources, Mide-waboo,” said April Jones. “I continue to learn and to help in any way that I can regarding the protection of the water, because it is evident that the very future of our children and all of creation is dependent upon it.”



Grand Council Chief John Beaucage welcomes charter members of the first Anishinabek Women’s Water Commission to advise the 42-member nation on water and Great Lakes Management issues. Commission members are Mary Deleary, Muncey, Josephine Mandamin, Wikwemikong Unceded Indian Reserve, and April Jones, London.
 – Photo by Maurice Switzer



RESTORATION OF JURISDICTION

Special education needs focus for new committee

By Dave Shawana

Members from the Education Working Group will form a Special Education Committee to determine ways and means to meet the special education needs of students in the proposed Anishinabek Education System (AES).

This developmental work will determine how special education will be handled in the AES: how the First Nations will collectively make decisions and what funding formulas will be used to determine funding amounts.

In addition to building capacity for operating the AES, the findings of the committee will also assist Anishinabek Nation negotiators to establish a clear, well-

developed position on the amount of funding that will be required by the AES to meet the special education needs of its students.

The committee will complete a comprehensive review of the Anishinabek Nation's special education issues, Indian Affairs' Band Operated Funding Formulas (BOFF), the new Ontario First Nation, Metis, Inuit Education Policy Framework, the Assembly of First Nations' (AFN) special education policy, the Chiefs of Ontario "Education Manifesto," and other provincial special education policies, such as that in British Columbia where First Nations, the provincial government and Indian Affairs have entered a

tri-partite agreement on First Nations education.

Addressing special education is just one of the activities the EWG as a whole will undertake in the new fiscal year.

Other activities will include the development of education laws for the AES, including enforcement and adjudication of the new laws and appeals and redress mechanisms; and student assessments.

The education working group will also assist in the ratification process, providing assistance with the on-going communications and consultation sessions with First Nations about the AES and the Final Agreement on Education.



As follow-up to the Education Working Group meeting in Sault Ste. Marie (February) – Elizabeth Bigwin and Bryon Brisard (Education Officers for the Aboriginal Education Office, MOE) were in attendance to make a presentation on how special education is funded in the province, and how on-reserve First Nation students attending publicly-funded schools are funded, and the relationship to the Ontario First Nations, Metis-Inuit Education Policy Framework. Liz identified future regional presentations by the MOE and INAC were being scheduled for FNs to attend, in order to hear about the proposed policy framework and special education for FN students in the province.



Restoration of Jurisdiction

Why is it important to have a First Nation constitution?

First Nation Constitution Development Committees from seven First Nations attended an intensive 3-day constitution-writing workshop in Whitefish Lake March 19-22. A member of each committee was asked why they believed a First Nation constitution is important. This is what they had to say:



Our primary motivation is the well-being of our lands, resources and citizens. However, the decisions and laws of Canada have given us grave concerns. Canada volunteered itself to act as the trustee for certain land. These violations compel us to unilaterally act to protect the legal status of our lands, resources and citizens.

Peter Jones
Ketegaun Sebee
Ahnishnahbek



Our constitution will make us stronger and more unified. When we implement our constitution we will be working as a community. Our constitution is important – it is about ownership, protection, transparency, unity, strength and harmony.

Mildred Young
Whitefish Lake



A First Nation constitution will ensure that effective and accountable governance structures are in place to meet the current and future needs of the people, while providing a strong sense of hope, pride, ownership and personal responsibility for individuals within the community.

Art Fisher
Ojibways of Pic River



Laws adopted by our Anishinabe People are very important for today and the future. These laws will support our community. A constitution is a guideline for our people to follow and to know and understand our rights as First Nation people.

Joseph Legarde
Long Lake 58



A First Nation constitution lays a foundation for developing our own jurisdictions, maintains balance and sets out the right to rule and make laws to govern ourselves. It promotes a unified connection to our unique traditions and cultural practices and empowers us and benefits our children to become healthier leaders and allows "the silent" to speak up and protect us.

Chief Leonard Genereux
Sheshegwaning



A First Nation constitution is important for good government so that Chief and Council are not all over the place and they make decisions that are sound and fair to everyone.

Cindy Behm
Audeck Omni
Kaning

What do you have to say?

Please send us your responses by Email to resmik@anishinabek.ca or Fax us your comments to 705-497-9135.

– Photos by Mary Laronde



Our constitution is a declaration of our sovereign authority and jurisdiction as a nation. Our First Nation will ensure that our Aboriginal and Treaty rights, authority, and jurisdiction within our lands is protected for future generations and that our governing structures, system, and laws are based on Anishinabe teachings, language and traditions. We will ensure protection of all of our lands, so as to build a strong, accountable, and sustaining community for the future.

Bonnie Bressette
Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point



RESTORATION OF JURISDICTION



Members of the Constitution Development Committee from Wikwemikong Unceded Indian Reserve discuss their First Nation's draft, written constitution at the work shop held in Batchewana First Nation, March 5-8. In the background, Michipicoten's delegation is also hard at work.

Photo by Mike Restoule

Six steps to a draft constitution

Designed as a means of assisting the constitution committees to write their draft constitutions, the constitution development work shops followed a six-step process: developing a vision statement; reviewing a checklist of necessary components for a constitution; holding plenary discussions on the meanings and the rationale for the components; engaging in separate committee discussions; reviewing sample ratification processes; and developing a work plan for next steps.

Held in Rama Mnjikaning First Nation, Batchewana First Nation and Whitefish Lake First Nation, the work shops were coordinated and organized by Mike Restoule, Special Projects Coordinator, and facilitated by Tracey O'Donnell and Fred Bellefeuille, both lawyers and legal counsels at the education and governance negotiation tables, respectively.

"With two lawyers presenting at the workshop, the First Nation committees had a chance to present and discuss their legal issues with lawyers. The workshop participants, as well as the facilitators and UOI staff, all felt good at the end of the workshops knowing that the initial workshop objectives had been met," said O'Donnell.

A visioning exercise helped the committees understand why a preamble was useful and what purpose it would serve in the constitution. A checklist of the governance jurisdictions, duties, and undertakings necessary for First Nation governments to be self-governing was presented by Tracey O'Donnell. This checklist led the participants through their understanding and drafting the necessary articles of their community constitutions.

"Some of the committee members came in thinking that drafting a constitution was going to be hard work. It would be difficult for the committee to do. Through the course of the workshop, the committee

members came to understand that they, as First Nation members, knew what should be recorded in the constitution. As they came to understand the concepts of good governance through the workshop presentations, the drafting was actually very easy for them. Once the committee started drafting, the constitutions just seemed to flow," said O'Donnell.

Fred Bellefeuille said that the relationship of First Nation laws to the laws of Canada and Ontario was one of the more difficult areas tackled but it was explained that the Restoration of Jurisdiction negotiations are about achieving cooperation among the three orders of government. "In general terms, a constitution is the supreme law to which everything else – laws, by-laws, regulations, guidelines and policies – has to comply," Bellefeuille said. "What laws apply where and when will be negotiated and will be set out in the final agreements."

To end the work shops, were led through a discussion on the importance of community consultation, best practices to gain community input, and, finally, ratification processes for First Nation constitutions. Finally, the committees developed work plans outlining the next steps that must be undertaken to solicit community input and support for the draft and to eventually ratify their First Nation constitution.

The First Nations represented at the first workshop in Mnjikaning were Alderville, Rama Mnjikaning, Curve Lake, Georgina Island, Nipissing and Red Rock. In the second workshop at Batchewana First Nation, Constitution Development Committees from Dokis, Wikwemikong, Wasauksing and Michipicoten attended. The last of the series was held in Whitefish Lake First Nation with Garden River, Long Lake #58, Sheshegwaning, Kettle and Stony Point, Whitefish Lake, Pic River and Audefack Omni Kaning taking part.

Workshops produce 17 draft First Nation Constitutions

By Mary Laronde

Three intensive workshops have produced exceptional results for First Nation constitution development. Before the work shops, only eight First Nations had completed draft constitutions. Now, 17 First Nations have completed first drafts for their citizens to examine and discuss.

Tracey O'Donnell, a lawyer and facilitator at the work shops said that she thought the work shops were successful. "Each of the First Nations had a chance to review their draft constitutions and discuss the various elements of the constitution. This allowed the workshop participants to learn from one another. At the end of the workshop, each First Nation who did not have a draft, or had only a partial draft at the start of the workshop, left with a hard copy and an electronic copy of their complete, first draft constitution."

Participants agree. Most gave the work shop an excellent rating, commenting that taking home a finished product and having lawyers facilitating was not only informative but invaluable to the progress made.

The workshop series was coordinated

by Mike Restoule, Special Projects Coordinator, to ramp-up the writing of draft constitutions for First Nations involved in the Anishinabek Nation's constitution development project. "This was a big learning experience for all of us – facilitators, participants and technical staff – and it was a huge success," said Restoule, as he tabulated work shop evaluations.

With negotiations on the education final agreement down to the nitty-gritty of dollars and cents, and the governance agreement now starting talks on a final agreement, getting First Nation constitutions established is a priority, in the context of the agreements. First Nations wishing to participate in the final agreements on education and governance are required to establish a written community constitution (draft Final Agreement on Education, Part 10 and Agreement-in-Principle on Governance, Part 5).

"The constitutions that were developed during the workshops exceed the requirements set out in the draft education final agreement. The constitutions that were developed will provide each community with the basis of good

governance, regardless of whether the First Nation signs a self-government agreement," O'Donnell explained.

Even without the added incentive contained in the agreements, establishing written First Nation constitutions had been endorsed by the Grand Council Assembly of the Anishinabek Nation in 2001 after community consultations showed that First Nation citizens generally supported the concept of constitutional governments for the Anishinabek Nation and individual First Nation communities.

The support for written constitutions had been buoyed by studies showing that American Tribes with written constitutions fared better than those without. When the rules were written and administered consistently, the Tribes were able to create and sustain economic development. Studies claim the main reason is that, through their own constitutions, they practiced "de facto sovereignty," making decision for themselves and creating stable institutions of government and policies. Tribes who continued to rely on the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs to make decisions for themselves consistently failed.

Workshops not all work

Throwing and catching an orange at the same time is not as easy as it sounds. Just ask these participants at the recent constitution development work shop held in Batchewana First Nation. The work shops were very intensive but there was also time set aside for play and laughter. The work shops produced great results with all committees leaving with at least a first draft constitution for their First Nation to discuss. The series of workshops were organized by Mike Restoule, Special Projects Coordinator, and facilitated by Tracey O'Donnell and Fred Bellefeuille, legal counsels at the education and governance negotiation tables, respectively.



NISHNAABEWIN

CULTURE CULTURE CULTURE CULTURE CULTURE CULTURE

Baamaa Shkonwezyaang

When we suddenly realize



ANISHINAABEMOWIN

BY SHIRLEY WILLIAMS

Ngoding giwenh, nshiimenyag aapji wii-paa damnawag. Aapji ko gii-jaanmizwag ngoji wii-paa damnawaad. Nii'ying dash aapji wii-zhaawag, nsayenh ko gaa-daaawaad, binoojinyag oodi gii-baatiinwag. Mii dash oodi waa nji-damnawaad.

Once, my sisters wanted to go and play. They were anxious to go somewhere to go and play. They wanted to go very much, where my brother used to live. There were lots of children there. That is where they wanted to go and play.

Mii dash gii-kwejmaa'aad ngashbaniin,oodi wii-oo-damnawaad. Aabdig wii-kwediwawaad jibwaa maajaawaad ngoji wii-zhaa'aad. Mii dash ngashi gii-naad, "Wiiba go ka bi-giiwem, gaawiin go baamaa pii shkonwezyeg."

Then they asked my late mother if they could go and play over there. They have to ask first before they could go anywhere. This is what my late mother said to them: "You come home early, not when you suddenly become aware (that it is late)."

Oo! Gbe-giizhig giwenh oodi gii-onji-damnawag. Gi-maapii giwenh, nsayenh gii-gwejmaan maaminininmaad go naa geyaabi zhiwe bmi-yaanid kwezensan. Gii-niizaanendam wii-ni-dibaakshinwaaad. Mii zhaa zhi ni-dibikaaminaagok, geyaabi dash gondi mi damnawaad gojing. Mii dash iidig gii-kwejmaad, "Aaniish naa pii waa-ni-giiweyek?"

Oh! They play all day when they went to play. Anyway, my brother became aware that the girls were still around playing. He got concerned that darkness was upon them. It was dark already, and they were still there playing around outside. Then he asked them, "When are you going home?"

Mii dash bezhig wa nshiimenh, Barbara zhinkaazo, mii geye baabige gii-nkwetawaad. "Oo! Baamaa shkonwezyaang sa go naa gonimaa!" Mii dash aabdig gaa-zhi-giiwesemaad kwezensan gaa-dibaakshingjig miinwaa gaa-shkonweszejig.

One of my younger sisters, Barbara is her name, she spoke out very quickly. "Oh!, When we suddenly realize it - maybe!" Then it happened that he had to walk the girls home.

Gii-ni-nkweshkaanaawaa dbikad miinwaa gii-shkaneweswag iw sa gii-ni-dbikakbane. Gii-zhese wii-nigiwe'aad. Zaam wii-kaa gini-giiwe-wag, gii-dbaakshinoog. Da-saayenmowaan gii-gwaashimon. Jibwaa gchi-kiikimindwaa pii go ni giwewaad. He ni-wiindimaage gaakidwaapa!

They met darkness and suddenly became aware that it was dark. It was time to go home. They were late in going home for the evening but their brother saved them from getting a lecture when they got home by telling what they said.

Mii eko sing-daajimowaans!
This is the end of the little story!



Stretching a smoked moose hide with Chastity Stamp from Goodfish Lake First Nation

- Photos by Ryan Hlewka

Artisan travelled west to Alberta for lessons in Anishinabe crafts

By Denise Desormeaux

LAC LA BICHE, ALTA - Gifted Artisan Luana McQuabbie has travelled across Canada to learn about age-old Anishinabe arts and crafts traditions.

Returning to her home community of Henvey Inlet, McQuabbie spoke about the journey she travelled in pursuit of her dreams.

"I think about how far I had to drive - a six-day trip traveling at 70 kilometres an hour with my two younger children - Ally (5) and Stewart (9) - and a trailer hooked on. It was a scary at times. It took great sacrifice for me to come here because I had to leave my family, friends, home, and community."

A graduate of the Native Artisans Program at Portage College, McQuabbie was the 2005-2006 recipient of the Academic Achievement Award in the Advanced Native Cultural Arts Program, and is currently completing the Native Cultural Arts Instructor Program.

McQuabbie, 39, whose parents are Muriel King, Wasauksing FN, and Kenneth McQuabbie (Henvey Inlet and French River), brought the beadwork skills taught her by her mother to the Alberta program. Her creative talents have flourished



Luanna McQuabbie with baby quilt and pillow.

as her repertoire of artistic skills has increased. "Our learning includes hide tanning, carving (soapstone and wood), beadwork design, decorative arts (porcupine quillwork, horsehair wrapping, moose and caribou hair tufting), fish scale art, sewing (quilt-making), Native footwear design, nature crafts (with birch bark, red willow, and roots, along with corn husk doll making), and fine arts design (painting, clay, ceramics, and pastels)," she says. "Working with natural materials gives me a feel of the past and of our ancestors that once lived in a time where that was what they had to work with."

McQuabbie says moose and deer hide tanning have been the

highlight of her learning to date.

"We've been taught the Northern Woods Cree method (tanning and smoking the hides without chemicals, using punk spruce for smoking, and the brains for softening the hide). The entire process takes three weeks for a finished product. Elsie Quintal, a Metis Elder from Square Lake Settlement, Alberta, taught me how to tan hides. She really liked me working on her hides because I was very careful and never tore the hides. I look at Elsie who is 91 years and wow! I hope I can do what she does at 91 and still be a teacher. She's been a great mentor to me and to all of us and we just love her. She's welcomed us to her home and property where she's taught us."

Balancing motherhood and being a student, McQuabbie has endured some sleepless nights in pursuing her dream.

"While I've been out here my oldest daughter has experienced serious health problems and I've questioned whether or not to continue on with my schooling, or go back to Ontario to be with her," she says. "After spending time out here in this program, I know in my heart I've made the right decision."

Toulouse launches language commission

SAGAMOK FN - Chief Commissioner Nelson Toulouse has declared the official launch of the Anishinaabek Mushkegowuk Onkwehonwe Language Commission of Oniatari:

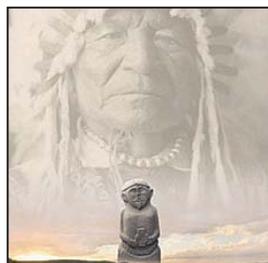


Toulouse, a long-time chief of Sagamok Anishinawbek First Nation and former Deputy Grand Chief of the Anishinabek Nation, says AMO's goal is "to ensure that our first civilization's languages are foremost in the minds, hearts and actions of people and leadership, by promoting and supporting the acquisition, maintenance, and revitalization of Anishinawbemowin, Mushkegomowin, and Onkwehonwehna to confirm their place in the world." Sanctioned by an All-Ontario Chiefs Resolution in 2006, the new language commission is comprised of twelve commissioners who are

developing a five-year strategic plan designed to enlist provincial and federal governments, as well as the private sector, in the preservation, promotion, maintenance and revitalization of the three First Nation language families in Ontario.

The commission's logo represents the three language families, with 13 figures in a half circle representing the thirteen languages in Ontario. The wampum belt along the bottom represented the historic Friendship Treaty between the Onkwehonwe and the Anishinaabek.

For more information contact, chief commissioner Nelson Toulouse, 705-869-8722 (cell) or 705-865-2432 (home), by e-mail at nelsontoulouse@sympatico.ca, or by letter at P.O. Box 22013, Brantford, ON, N3S 7V1.



Free admission to all Aboriginal visitors is now being offered by the Museum of Civilization in Hull, where the exhibit Masters of the Plains: Ancient Nomads of Russia and Canada will be on display until September.



Danielle Jones, a 2nd-year Native Education student at Georgian Community College in Barrie, demonstrates her fancy shawl dance style during the college's second annual traditional pow-wow March 10.

- Photo by Art Sapsworth



Malakhy 'Little Pine' Shabogestic, 14, demonstrates the grass dance during the March 2-3 Family Traditional Teachings and Gathering at Nipissing First Nation in Gtigaaning (Garden Village). - Photo by Alice McLeod



INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS



On March 27 Ontario Minister of Natural Resources David Ramsay and John Beaucage, Grand Council Chief of the Anishinabek Nation, signed three memoranda of agreement signifying increased cooperation in issues pertaining to natural resource management.

-- Photo by Jason Laronde

Anishinabek, Ontario agree to co-management of lakes

TORONTO – Anishinabek Nation leaders and Ontario's Ministry of Natural Resources have signed three memoranda of understanding that will help strengthen cooperation and collaboration on issues related to natural resource management.

A Memorandum of Understanding on the implementation of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement was signed March 27 by Minister of Natural Resources David Ramsay, and Grand Council Chief John Beaucage on behalf of 42 Anishinabek Nation communities.

"Our First Nations are dedicated to the principles of co-management," said Grand Council Chief Beaucage. "We acknowledge Ontario's jurisdiction in managing the Great Lakes on behalf of their citizens, while we will be asserting traditional management principles on behalf of our citizens."

"I am pleased to join Grand Council Chief Beaucage in signing the memorandum on Great Lakes Basin waters, which will help build our relationship with the Anishinabek Nation," said Ramsay. "By working together cooperatively, we can move forward, seeking mutually agreeable solutions on our common priority of protecting and conserving the waters of the Great Lakes Basin."

The memorandum of understanding related to the Great Lakes commits Ontario and the Anishinabek Nation to:

- Hold an annual meeting between the Anishinabek Grand Council Chief and the Minister of Natural Resources

- Establish a joint Great Lakes Charter Annex Agreement Implementation Committee, and

- Help build Anishinabek Nation advisory and technical capacity

through the Union of Ontario Indians retaining a technical advisor, as well as other measures.

Ontario is committing \$300,000 over three years to this effort.

Ontario and the Anishinabek Nation also signed a memorandum of understanding committing to a "collaborative approach" that would revitalize the Anishinabek/Ontario Resource Management Council process that was established seven years ago. Continuing the work of the council will help foster a positive working relationship and ensure greater coordination on issues related to natural resource management.

In addition, an agreement was signed establishing a protocol on the transfer of Eagle remains to Anishinabek First Nations. The Eagle is of particular social, cultural and religious importance to Aboriginal people.

Forest Commission link to leadership

By Nadine Roach

The Anishinabek Forest Commission, composed of duly elected Chiefs and technicians of the Union of Ontario Indians and Anishinabek communities, has been appointed and mandated by Resolution 28/06 to oversee the Forest Framework Development Process.

The Anishinabek Forest Commission will constitute the official Anishinabek Nation body receiving and disseminating information and serving as the link between Anishinabek communities and the political process.

A letter of intent was signed by Grand Council Chief John Beaucage and Minister of Natural Resources Minister David Ramsay on July 7, 2006, agreeing to continue discussions regarding a forest framework agreement, the intent of which is to provide Anishinabek communities with a greater share in economic opportunities and benefits.

Preparation for the Forest Framework Development Process includes the drafting of a multi-year work plan, beginning with goals, principles and objective statements that will set the parameters and establish the rules of engagement for the Forest Framework Development Process.

Anishinabek Forest Commission members

Chief Wilfred King, Kiashke Zaaging Anishinabek, Chief Pierre Pelletier, Lake Helen First Nation, Chief Paul Gladu, Bingwi Neyasshi, Commissioner at large, Roy Michano, Ojibways of Pic River, Commissioner at large, Art Jacko, Wikwemikong Unceded Indian Reserve, Commission at large, Harry Bombay, Consultant/Advisor Nadine Roach, UOI Forest Unit Coordinator.



Back Row, from left: Roy Michano – Ojibways of Pic River, Wilfred King - Kiashke Zaaging Anishinabek, Art Jacko - Wikwemikong Unceded Indian Reserve, Paul Gladu - Bingwi Neyasshi, Edward Wawia alternate for Chief Pierre Pelletier; Front row: Harry Bombay – National Aboriginal Forestry Association, Nadine Roach - Union of Ontario Indians Forestry Unit.

ANISHINABEK YOUTH ENGAGEMENT WORKSHOPS

"Laying the Foundation for Anishinabek Youth to engage in Natural Resources through land base learning"

An interactive workshop intended to connect the Anishinabek Youth to build long-term capacity in sustainable resource management within the Anishinabek Nation.

- Are you interested in natural resources, biology, or environmental sciences?
- Are you between 14-17 years of age?
- Are you interested in becoming a Junior Ranger, or a Stewardship Ambassador?

If you have answered "yes" to these questions, then this workshop is for you! A Registration / Consent form will be available online, or it can be directly mailed to you. The form must be filled and submitted by April 13, 2007, by email or by fax.

Register Early Spaces are Limited

Two Sessions
April 27 - 29, 2007 (21 spaces)
May 4 - 6, 2007 (21 spaces)

Canadian Ecology Center in Mattawa

Highlights: Environmental Education, Natural Resource Technology Applications, Outdoor skill and Activities, & Cultural Instruction

Look for updates on online at www.anishinabek.ca



CONTACT:
Rhonda Gagnon, Community Stewardship Leader, Lands and Resources Program
PH: 705-497-9127 ~ FAX: 705-497-9135
EMAIL: rhobuc@anishinabek.ca

IA STAFF

Allan Dokis
Intergovernmental Affairs
Director

Jason Laronde
Resource Management
Council Coordinator

Nadine Roach
Forestry Coordinator

Barb Naveau
Forestry Office Assistant

Alicia McLeod
Treaty Research Coordinator

Melissa Stevens
Treaty Research Clerk

Kerry Colnar
Operations Support

Rhonda Gagnon
Anishinabek Community
Stewardship Leader

WEBSITE of the MONTH



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GCC is a national network of community-based non-profit organizations that deliver innovative environmental programs and services, with a focus on household and community action.

Animal people

By Richard Wagamese



I've always been an animal guy. From my earliest recollections animals have always been important. Even though I never had a pet when I was small I was always drawn to the dogs and cats in whatever neighborhood I lived in.

Back then I never had the benefit of animal stories as told by our traditional teachers. I never knew as a kid that Ojibway people referred to four-legged creatures as Animal People. It wouldn't have struck me as odd. I think I've always regarded them I that way.

I was walking with my uncle once. I'd been reconnected with my tribal family for just a short time after twenty years of absence. Learning what it meant to be Ojibway was, and is, a complex process, filled with surprises, shocks and sudden joys. That day on the land with my uncle was a joy.

It had snowed the night before and there were a good couple of inches on the ground. Everywhere the detail of things was cut into sharp relief by the blanket of white. It was like the land was magnified somehow, heightened and seeing it that way was like seeing it for the first time. I was enthralled with everything.

We came upon a set of tracks. I'd have dismissed them in my sense of wonder at things but my uncle paused, looked around us casually and asked no one in particular, "I wonder who passed here?"

It seemed an odd question. They were animal tracks yet he'd referred to them as though they belonged to a person. So I asked him why.

He told me that Ojibway people hold animals in high regard. They are spirit beings and serve as our greatest teachers. When Creator sent Man to live in this reality he called the Animals forward and directed them to remain our teachers forever. What we know of ourselves as human beings, like our need for community and our need to live in harmony with each other came to us from the Animal People. As we walked he told me legends, traditional stories like how the dog came to be man's greatest friend, why the wolverine is a loner and why the raven is black. Each of those stories was like a world and entering them I felt bigger, sketched out more fully, given more detail and I understood why he asked "who" instead of "what" when we passed tracks in the snow.

We are all related. That's what my people understood from the earliest times. At the core of us is the creative energy of the universe. Every being, every form shares that kinetic, world building energy, and it makes us brothers, sisters, kin, family. Walking with my uncle that day, I came to the beginning of understanding that.

I don't hunt anymore. That's one thing that changed since that day. Oh, I'd go out and bring home a deer or a moose if it meant survival but I can't do it for the sport, for the joy of killing something or just because it's the Native thing to do.

People ask, "What kind of an Indian doesn't hunt?"

These days I smile and say, "the family kind."

ANISHINABEK

Book review

Judge ruled 'discovery' brought title

By Dan Shaule
A secret understanding between two or more people to gain something illegally, in a word is collusion.



Dan Shaule

Collusion is easier to say but much hard to prove in indigenous historical research and academics usually steer clear of saying collusion as they have no living evidence to prove this fact - despite how the evidence is leaning that way.

In *Conquest by Law* (Oxford University Press; 212 pages; 2005) the people involved have passed

away and any secret agreement has been buried with them.

To my astonishment Lindsay Robertson confidently uses the word "collusion" a number of times in his book to answer the question, "What legal right did Europeans acquire - and Indigenous people lose - by virtue of the European "discovery" of America?" *Conquest by Law* is a culmination of events that result in the "Marshall decisions."

The first and prominent Marshall decision was *Johnson v. M'Intosh*, an 1823 court case which caused a "political catastrophe" for all indigenous people of North America.

Supreme Court Judge John

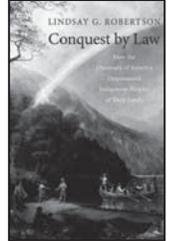
Marshall, a Revolutionary War veteran and former Virginia legislator who served as President John Adams secretary of state, was also a well-known land speculator and a committed Federalist.

According to Marshall, discovery resulted in the transfer of fee ownership of discovered lands to the discovering nation. The British Crown had thus, by "discovering" them, acquired title to the lands of the Indian Nations.

His legal opinion concluded that "all the nations of Europe, who have acquired territory on this continent, have asserted in themselves, and have recognized in others, the exclusive right of the discoverer to appropriate the lands

occupied by Indians."

In this decision the "discovery" nation overnight became owners of the lands that had previously belonged to Native Americans. Indigenous owners were converted into tenants on their own lands.



Dan Shaule is a citizen of Garden River First Nation who does land claims research for an aboriginal legal firm based in Ontario.

Traditional teaching lodge piles up partnerships

By Cindy Crowe

THUNDER BAY - As organizers of Waabi'ma'iingan (Grey Wolf) Traditional Teaching Lodge prepare for two major events in Thunder Bay, they also continue to build strategic relationships with various organizations across the region. The Community Arts and Heritage Education Project will allow the Teaching Lodge to share traditional and cultural teachings with a possible 12 different organizations.

The Métis Nation of Ontario continues to partner with Waabi'ma'iingan and are currently exploring a Community Intervention Program for Aboriginal Youth as well as partnering with the Oshkawbawas Grass Roots Youth Committee to provide assistance with their planned activities.

The Greenstone Economic Development Committee has

recently approved an application sponsored by the Long Lake #58

First Nation for \$1,762 in funding to finalize the legal costs for the incorporation of the Teaching Lodge. Waabi'ma'iingan assisted at the March Thunder Bay regional conference of the Canadian Cancer Society. The Society will



Elder Norma Fawcett promotes Teaching Lodge on Thunder Bay Television's 'Around Town' with host Wendy Siltamaki.

be a contributing partner at this summer's Dragonfly Symposium.

Volunteer Thunder Bay is exploring some avenues with the Teaching Lodge to have Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal volunteers working together to promote cultural awareness or to have non-Aboriginal volunteers working at

Aboriginal organizations and vice versa.

Waabi'ma'iingan participated in a March 21 breakfast hosted by Diversity Thunder Bay and Cindy Crowe is becoming a Diversity member to support aboriginal representation on this committee.

Waabi'ma'iingan is receiving support from North of Superior Tourism Association, TBO.ca, OntarioTravel.net, and the City of Thunder Bay tourism websites to promote our upcoming event -- the four-day Spiritual Teaching Lodge Ceremony on top of Mount McKay starting April 28 and the Dragonfly Symposium at Chippewa Park on July 10.

For more information visit Waabi-ma'iingan's website: www.blueskyteachinglodge.ca, or contact Norma Fawcett at (807) 887-2205 or Cindy Crowe (toll-free) at 1-888-852-5856.

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Garden River Truss gets \$280,000 boost

GARDEN RIVER FN -- The Ontario government is providing a grant of \$280,000 to Garden River Truss Company for the development of a \$3.2-million green field home-component manufacturing facility on the Garden River Reserve near Sault Ste. Marie.

The Aboriginal-owned facility, which produces value-added wood products and creates about 30 new jobs, is located on an old sawmill site located in the Garden River Industrial Park.

"The province's support has helped make this manufacturing facility a reality, and we are seeing considerable benefits for our First Nation," said Garden River Chief Lyle Sayers.

"We are grateful for the contribution from the Forest Sector Prosperity Fund in making it possible for us to proceed with this exciting initiative."

Natural Resources Minister David Ramsay said the funding is an investment by the province "in businesses that help Northern Ontario prosper and support Aboriginal development."

The Forest Sector Prosperity Fund is part of the provincial government's \$1-billion plan to help forest companies invest in their own future and the future of the communities that depend on them. "We've had a very positive response to the Forest Sector Prosperity Fund and the Loan Guarantee Program by the forest industry," said Ramsay. "We expect that 100 per cent of the Prosperity Fund will be committed to capital investments like this that support the industry in developing more value-added wood products."

Other initiatives include:

- Providing a \$22.5-million grant to Abitibi-Consolidated for an \$84-million biomass boiler at its facility in Fort Frances
- Providing a loan guarantee of \$8 million to Tembec for a \$19-million value-added engineered wood products facility in Kirkland Lake
- Providing a \$1.65-million grant to Flakeboard Company Ltd. for a \$16.5-million capital investment to upgrade its Sault Ste. Marie mill
- Providing a \$1.39-million grant to Bowater Canadian Forest Products Inc. for a \$13.9-million capital investment in the conversion of a paper machine at its Thunder Bay complex



Garden River Truss will employ 30 members of the First Nation.

Internet banking coming

GARDEN RIVER FN -- The Anishinabek Nation Credit Union is hoping to expand its customer base by expanding its services to include internet banking.

The 41 persons attending the ANCU's Feb. 27 annual general meeting were treated to a sneak preview of the proposed new service, which will allow account-holders to check account balances, transfer funds, make loan payments and pay bills via computer.

"Internet Banking has been a service that our members have been asking about for years and we are pleased to finally be able to offer it," said ANCU General Manager Allan Moffatt, who reported that the fiscal year ending Oct. 31, 2006 was the most financially successful in the credit union's five-year history.

He said ANCU net income surpassed \$88,000, that the credit union continues to grow annually at double digit rates, and has attained self-sustainability. The focus will be on growing the deposit base, he told board members. Outstanding loans still exceed deposits on hand.

This message was echoed by comments from board chair Wilma Bissiallon, of Mississauga First Nation, who said the future success of the credit union is dependent upon membership placing long-term deposits."

Members voted to add one new board position representing the Union of Ontario Indians. Margaret Belleau was re-elected as the board member from Garden River First Nation. The "member-at-large" seat was filled by Adeline Corbiere, from Batchewana First Nation.

ANCU has served over 1,300 members, granted loans in excess of \$5.6 million and has serviced deposits of \$5.5 million.

Forum explores energy options

By Christie A. Cooper

MNJIKANING FN -- First Nations continue to explore emergency economic development opportunities in the energy sector.

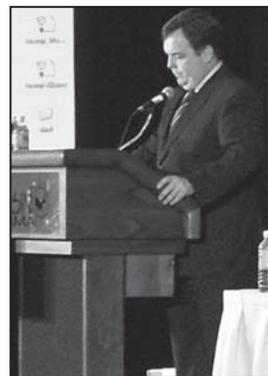
Over 90 participants attended a February Energy Forum hosted by the First Nations Energy Alliance at the Casino Rama Hotel. The number included First Nation Chiefs, counselors and economic development personnel, as well as the Hon. Dwight Duncan, Ontario Minister of Energy and other representatives from the energy industry.

"The goal of the forum was to provide First Nations, government and the private sector an opportunity to come together to network and share information about the emerging opportunities in energy," said Chief Robert Corbiere of the Wikwemikong Unceded Indian Reserve. The forum also provided the opportunity to gauge interest and support as well as to begin a strategic planning process for the First Nations Energy Alliance.

Minister Duncan said renewable energy is a key component of Ontario's Integrated Power

System Plan (IPSP). The IPSP is a 20-year plan being undertaken by the Ontario Power Authority to address the need to replace coal-fired energy generation and meet the growing needs of Ontario's population in the coming years. The plan will include development of renewable resources, including wind, hydro, biomass and solar power.

The organizers of the forum thanked Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and Hydro One Networks Inc. for their generous support of the event.



Hon. Dwight Duncan

MBS Min of Finance
10.25 x 3





Never too young to fight racism

Windsor elementary school students Kiersten Barton and Summer Jamal created winning entries in a poster contest sponsored by the Canadian Commission for UNESCO – the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization. The youngsters spoke to a March 29 forum in Windsor promoting the Coalition of Municipalities against Racism and Discrimination.



Union of Ontario Indians communications director Maurice Switzer and Paul Petahtegoose, representing Windsor's Can-Am Indian Friendship Centre, participated in a March 29 forum promoting the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities against Racism and Discrimination.

– Photos by Ted Shaw



Ontario Human Rights Chief Commissioner Barbara Hall gave a keynote address at the March 29 Windsor forum on the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities against Racism and Discrimination. To date, 12 Canadian municipalities have joined the coalition, which commits members to develop action plans to monitor and combat racism in their communities. The former Toronto mayor will be making a presentation about the project at June's annual meeting of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities in Calgary.

DEBWED/RIGHTS

Mascot done dancing

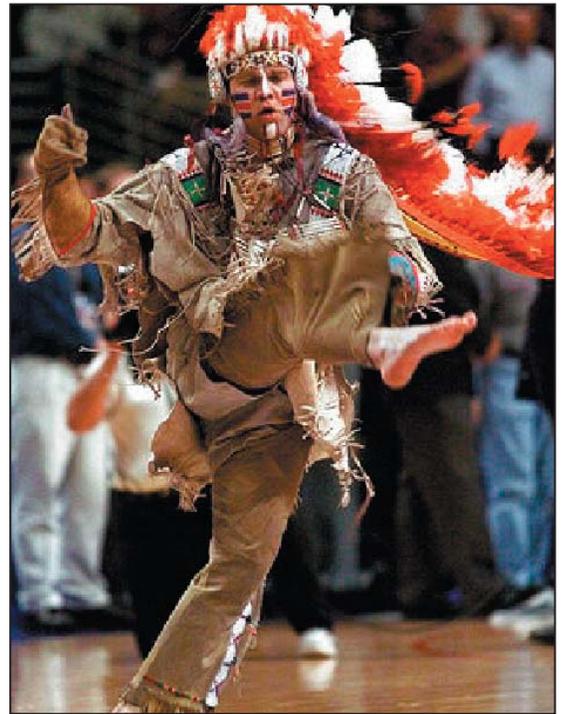
URBANA, Ill. (AP) – The University of Illinois has retired its 81-year-old American Indian mascot, Chief Illiniwek, following the last men's home basketball game of the season on Feb. 21.

The NCAA in 2005 deemed the buckskin-clad Illiniwek an offensive use of American Indian imagery and barred the university from hosting post-season championship events.

American Indian groups and others complained for years that the mascot, used since 1926, is demeaning. Supporters of the mascot say it honours the contributions of American Indians to Illinois.

School officials said they received a letter from the NCAA that said the school will no longer be banned from hosting post-season events if it drops the mascot and related American Indian imagery. The NCAA's sanctions thus far have prevented Illinois from hosting post-season events in two low-profile sports.

"The Chief Illiniwek tradition inspired and thrilled members of the University of Illinois community for 80 years," board of trustees chairman Lawrence Eppley said. "It was created, carried on and enjoyed by people with great respect for tradition, and we appreciate their dedication and commitment. It will be important now to ensure the



Chief Illiniwek's last performance.

accurate recounting and safekeeping of the tradition as an integral part of the history of the university." The NCAA in 2005 deemed Illiniwek – portrayed by buckskin-clad students who dance at home football and basketball games and other athletic events – to be an offensive use of

American Indian imagery and barred the university from hosting post-season events.

Athletic director Ron Guenther said he was disappointed in the decision, but that the NCAA's sanction hurt the school's athletes and coaches.

Solomon shares smudge at Holocaust Week event

By Cherie Dimaline

TORONTO – Few inside the Winchevsky Community Centre had ever witnessed a traditional smudging ceremony

before they attended a Holocaust Education Week panel offering a *Dialogue on Cultural Renewal after Genocide*.



Anne Solomon

Called *Out of the Ashes*, the event began with an opening prayer by Anne Solomon, an Anishinabe Kwe from the Bear Clan, who performed a smudge, and told the mainly Jewish audience that the evening was about "celebrating liberties".

"Our peoples have been affected so tremendously by having our liberties taken away."

Solomon explained the meanings of the smudge and opening prayer, as well as her personal background. "I am Anishinabek, from one of the nations in the Three Fires Confederacy. Another name that we go by is the Ojibway Nation. It

is our responsibility to be the faith keepers."

Holocaust survivor Ben Cardinal spoke of his ordeals as a "hidden child" in Belgium.

"My mother was killed in Auschwitz and my father was killed on the way to (another) concentration camp. The last time I saw my parents I was five years old."

Solomon connected the First Nations experience to genocidal catastrophe. "In our communities we still have the highest rate of suicide, so our genocide is not finished. We have the highest rate of diabetes, so genocide by disease is not finished."

She spoke a bit about the Residential School phenomenon. "We also have in common having our grandparents stolen from us."

She explained that she has Jewish ancestry through Ezekiel Solomon, a German Jew who was the first of his community to settle in Canada, and presented Ben Shek with a wooden feather inscribed with the word "Bravery" which will be on display in the Winchevsky Centre for the entire community to enjoy.

She concluded by telling the audience that "There is no way to peace. Peace is the way."

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N'Swakamok offers support systems, cultural context

By Heather Campbell

SUDBURY – An alternative school in the heart of downtown Sudbury is one of ten learning centres highlighted in a national study identifying schools producing tangible progress for aboriginal learners.

Since Feb. of 1990 the N'Swakamok Alternative Secondary School has been housed in Sudbury's Native Friendship Centre bearing the same name, which translates in Ojibway as "where the three roads meet".

Geared for Aboriginal youth and young adults who were unable to succeed in mainstream schools, N'Swakamok was identified as a success story by the Society for Advancement of Excellence in Education because of "its highly individualized approach to learning and ...its special support structures in a culturally-inclusive environment."

The society's recently-released report "Sharing our Success: More Case Studies in Aboriginal Schooling" attributes N'Swakamok's success – there have been 157 graduates since 1991 – to a combination of factors, including strong cultural connections, clearly-defined learning expectations, and a support system that offers participants a range of services from pre-natal classes to an addictions program.

A joint effort between the friendship centre, the Rainbow District School Board, and the provincial Ministry of Education, N'Swakamok operates with three full-time teachers and an aboriginal counsellor. The ministry covers the costs of salaries for an Education Support Worker and a Clerical Support Worker, the school board provides the salaries for the three teachers, and the friendship centre provides the space and upkeep for the program.

"Every day you feel you're making a difference," says program leader Judy Angeloff, a teacher

with 18 years' experience. "We are solving real life problems before getting to the lesson."

Born and educated in Sudbury, Angeloff's first teaching job involved working with Native children in the British Columbia interior. After many years in the mainstream high school system, she joined the N'Swakamok Alternative School six years ago.



N'Swakamok Alternative School students Emily Fleming and Lisa Plume.

Education Support Worker Kelly-Lee Assinewe, who has been

working at the school for the past ten years, believes enrolment numbers don't necessarily reflect the school's success.

"Success is not just graduating," she says. "It can be having the courage to come in the door, to attend every day, to complete one credit, to graduating with a high school diploma."

Students range in age from 15 to 60, although most are between 18 to their early 20's. They come to believe that education is important and achievable by working with teachers whose philosophy is that there is

no failure in this school.

Assinewe says the program's holistic approach has a significant impact on the success of students.

"We believe that students don't just learn from books; they need a wide array of sources and learning experiences. I like the saying 'bring history to life'. We use everyday experiences around us to make the learning experience."

In addition to the basic high school curriculum students also learn coping skills, team-building, leadership and empowerment. Students are expected to attend school for a minimum of 20 hours each week, complete a minimum of two weekly lessons, participate in weekly student meetings, complete two monthly journals, and participate in school activities and fundraising.

The school also introduces more culturally-relevant resource material into its curricula, for example, English students read books by aboriginal authors.

Current enrolment is 75, and waiting times have been significantly reduced. Some students hold down part-time jobs, and can do school work from home if family commitments make it challenging to come to the friendship centre.

Angeloff believes the support and safety that the friendship

centre provides creates a better learning environment for aboriginal students. "These students are often floundering in the regular system, don't feel like they belong, not getting engaged," she says. "But once in this school they settle and feel better about themselves."

Assinewe has many stories of students who change their lives for the better and change their perception of themselves. Some come out of jail and opt to change their lives through education. She describes one student, in his 30's, being released from jail and just hoping to get his Grade 10.

Encouragement from N'Swakamok teachers helped him realize he could achieve more. Other students who achieve high school and college diplomas – even university degrees – come back and talk to current students about dreaming bigger and believing in yourself to achieve a goal. Assinewe believes that the friendship centre location is a

major reason for the school's success. Only two of the province's eight alternative high schools are located outside of friendship centres, and they are not as successful.

"It's the extra supports in the centre – family support worker, Elders, community -- which create a safe environment," she says.

Students are coming to school with drug and alcohol issues, physical abuse and some are young mothers. Being able to get assistance with these issues enables students to focus more

attention on school work. In the mainstream school system, where many N'Swakamok students started high school, they faced rejection and isolation, racism, and judgment. In this school there is no judgment.

"I see lots of growth in students, not just education," says Kelly-Lee Assinewe. "They become more confident. To me, as their teacher, that's very rewarding. It's inspiring to see our program motivate students to move on to do something different with their lives."

Emily Fleming, 19, is completing her Grade 12 diploma this June after three years at the school. She enrolled at N'Swakamok a year after dropping out of mainstream high school at 15.

"I had to be at school for 9:30 every morning in the first year, which was hard," she recalls, "but the reward was getting freedom and flexibility in the last two years."

"I don't think I would have graduated if I went to regular high school," says Fleming, who is enthusiastic about N'Swakamok's social environment -- weekly student meetings that start with a smudge, cooking lessons, trips, and visiting guest speakers. Graduating students look forward to the annual trip to attend the Ottawa pow-wow and visit museums in the nation's capital.



Kelly-Lee Assinewe is an education support worker at the N'Swakamok Alternative School in downtown Sudbury.



Current enrolment at N'Swakamok Alternative Secondary School in downtown Sudbury stands at 75 – with a waiting list.

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KINOOMAAGEWIN/EDUCATION

Youth lobby for more culture in school curriculum

By Heather Campbell

SUDBURY – Urban Aboriginal Youth Leading the Way, a group of 12 young students, spent a lot of time teaching during the month of March.

They staged a March 1st workshop called Youth Shout-Out for their Sudbury-area peers at N'Swakomok Friendship Centre, a follow-up to last year's forum during which participants identified two key areas on which to focus future activities – policing and education. This year's agenda included discussions about policing and racism, municipal visioning, and developing a wilderness training experience as part of the school curriculum.

Special guests included Anishinabek Nation Deputy Grand Chief Glen Hare, Friendship Center president Barbara Stevens-Burns, Social Planning Council Executive Director Janet Gasparini, Constable Grant Dokis and Constable Darryl Rivers from the Greater Sudbury Police, and motivational speaker Brian Slegers. Elders for the youth group are Cheryl Partridge and Ed Sackney.

Jesse Pawis, 16, attended the workshop and was impressed by the involvement of adult mentors and Elders. Pawis, who moved to Sudbury from Shawanaga First Nation in 2005 to attend high school at Sudbury Secondary School, recently joined the school's Native Council. He says he enjoys workshops that offer him leadership skills.

Participants agreed on the need for more cultural teaching in the school curriculum. Aboriginal students could learn to harvest medicines, clean fish, build a wigwam and snare rabbits as part of their school experience.

Others brainstormed on what Sudbury needs to meet the needs of aboriginal youth, like more student residences, a Native Youth drop-in, and more recreation and

entertainment for young people. They talked about how many of their peers are in youth detention centres, group homes or on the streets. To change that reality they would be willing to devote their time to raising awareness of youth issues, talking about the environment or getting a radio station focused on Native urban life.

Constables Grant Dokis and Darryl Rivers shared a circle to talk about policing, an issue most youth participants could cite some connection to through family or friends. Dokis, who has been policing for 22 years, shared his experience of being called "apple" -- red on the outside, white in the middle -- by his colleagues when first joining the force.

On March 6-7 the Urban Aboriginal Youth Leading the Way group hosted the Anishinabek Nation's workshop on Youth and Mentorship as part of a Capacity Development initiative by the Union of Ontario Indians.

"This process is part of our larger self-government initiative," says Terry Restoule, Dokis First Nation, the Capacity Development Coordinator for the Union of Ontario Indians' Restoration of Jurisdiction project. The UOI process is currently in the final stages of self-government negotiations in education and governance between the 42 member communities of the Anishinabek Nation and the government of Canada.

Leading the Way was chosen to host the event because of their success in engaging City of Greater Sudbury officials on issues related to aboriginal youth. Capacity Development Committee members were also very impressed with the model presented by the youth to outreach to other agencies and services in the City of Sudbury. Participants had the opportunity to witness the unique model of youth leaders with their mentors. "Many of the participants have youth groups in

their own communities and will have the opportunity to pick up new ideas to bring back home with them," said Restoule.

The Aboriginal Youth Leaders include Michelle Manitowabi, Emily Flemming, Raven Plante, Brad Robinson, Mathew Wesley, Jericho Pettifer, AJ Elliot, Shane

Flamand, Laurie Manitowabi, Dakota Recollet, Erika Gollan and Theresa Manitowabi. Most youth in the group are high school students.

Capacity Development Committee member Liz Yellowman, a councilor for Aamjiwnaang First Nation, was overwhelmed that the Sudbury youth leaders have created

a relationship with city officials and believes this kind of leadership needs to happen in other communities. "This model, youth and mentors, can make a difference; it can go national," she said.

Yellowman's son, Arnold, 23, is a member of the Anishinabek Nation's Youth Council.



Sudbury Urban Aboriginal Youth team members Erika Gollan, AJ Elliot and Jericho Pettifer.

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KINOOMAAGEWIN/EDUCATION

Five years in Japan: an Anishinabekwe perspective

(Excerpted from a March 21 presentation at a Health Career Fair at Sault College.)

My name is Marie McGregor Pitawanakwat, and I am from the Whitefish River First Nation at Birch Island, Ontario.

Once upon a time, when we were children, my parents took us to visit an American family vacationing in McGregor Bay. They were very kind and friendly people, and while my parents visited them, we could read through their magazines and newspapers. They had the National Geographic magazine, and many back issues. It was great to be able to see the pictures, and read the stories about the way that other people around the world lived.

One of the most memorable things my late ex-husband told me was, "you can go anywhere in the world you want." I will always remember that.

When I was finishing my degree in business through videoconference via Queen's University I started to think about what to do next. Then, one day, I opened the Globe and Mail newspaper, and saw

an ad that said, "Are you a native speaker of English?" "Would you like to teach in Japan?" "Do you have a university degree?" I could answer affirmatively to those three questions.

By November of 1999, I was in Japan working for the largest language school there, based in Kobe, teaching ESL/ESP to the company's customers. They came from all walks of life and included researchers, executives, housewives, managers, students, professors and so on. It was intriguing to find out where they worked, how they lived and I started to learn about their history, customs and culture.

During the time I was in Japan, I never forgot who I was and where I came from. The sun shines just as beautifully on the other side of the world as it does here. The fresh water tastes just

as sweet as it does here. The trees speak to you just as clearly there as they do here.

There are many sacred places in Japan, too. There are those that are constructed, like the temples and shrines. And there are those natural, timeless ones, like we have here. Many times, when I went hiking in the mountains, accompanied by friends, I could leave my tobacco, food, coin and water offerings, quietly and serenely, with the prayers there, too. If a friend saw, I would explain, and they would understand.

There were also "Grandmother" spirits there, too. One day, about a year after I arrived there, I decided to move out and find my own apartment. Up to that point, I had been living in the company's apartments. It was time to go out on my own. Shortly after moving into

my new place, I arranged a house blessing. I asked a Buddhist priest to come and bless the apartment. I also invited a few friends. So, the priest said his prayers and sang his songs. Afterward, we had a small feast together. He asked, "Did someone die here?" I said no, that we had a custom of blessing a new place when we move in. He said, "It's a good custom." I stayed in that apartment for about four years.

There were many other experiences which can only be explained by having grown up in an Anishinabe environment. It's the experience of having grown up in an Anishinabe environment that has helped me to stay grounded, helped to see and maintain balance, and helped to survive in a foreign country.

The main idea I would like you to take away today is this: no matter where you go, or how far away, or how alien the culture is, you will always be Anishinabe. It is possible to retain the best of who you are and where you come from. You carry it around in your heart, in your mind, in your memory and in the way you treat other people.



Marie McGregor Pitawanakwat

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KINOOMAAGEWIN/EDUCATION

Program providing Natives sneak peek into university life

By Julie Ovenell-Carter

VANCOUVER – At 15, Powell River high school student Sosann Blaney had already decided not to pursue post-secondary education. One year later, she was certain that higher learning was in her future – a turnaround she attributed in part to her participation in Pesk’a, a unique summer program for aboriginal youth based at Simon Fraser University.

“I know that eventually I’m going to college,” said Blaney, a member of the Sliammon nation who hopes to one day run an adventure travel company.

She first heard about Pesk’a when her art teacher at Brooks secondary school handed her an application for the week-long program.

“I always thought it wasn’t for me, but at Pesk’a I was meeting all these people who were probably going to college who I thought were pretty cool people. It made me reconsider.”

Now in its third year, Pesk’a – which means hummingbird, a symbol of healing, in Halq’emeylem – is co-ordinated by Shad International, a non-profit Ontario-based organization which for the past 25 years has organized acclaimed month-long science-and-leadership programs for high-potential Canadian young people. The program based at SFU “is a forum for aboriginal students to excel and explore their potential with the mentorship of aboriginal role models,” says Shad Valley president Barry Bisson.

This past year 20 aboriginal

students entering Grades 11 or 12 attended the program from July 17-23. SFU’s First Nations student centre director Sasha Hobbs, who oversees the program, says Pesk’a “offers a taste of the fuller Shad Valley program, but incorporates aboriginal cultural activities, perspectives and ways to help promote cultural identity.”

The organizers of Pesk’a “want to help aboriginal students see a place for themselves in post-secondary institutions,” says Hobbs. “We want them to have the same opportunity as other students to discover where they belong.

“Aboriginal students are so under-represented in post-secondary schools that any aboriginal student who makes the choice to attend college or university is cause for celebration,” she says.

“They are a role model for their siblings and for the community at large. Pesk’a helps remove the mental and emotional barriers to that choice.”

During their week in Vancouver, Pesk’a students tour and participate in lectures at various campuses, including SFU, the University of British Columbia, Emily Carr college of art and design and the British Columbia Institute of Technology. They also visit local attractions such as Storyeum and the Museum of Anthropology, and visit students participating in the month-long Shad Valley program at UBC.

Though the campus visits were an eye-opener for Blaney, what she liked best about the program “was that it was all aboriginal.”



Trent University PhD candidate Lynn Gehl and Indigenous Studies Program chair Prof. David Newhouse examine a collection of Haudenosaunee wampum belts.



Respected Anishinaabemowin teacher Shirley Williams shows her speaker's gift to Union of Ontario Indians communications director Maurice Switzer. – Photos by Caitlyn Contin

Trent tradition

PETERBOROUGH – More than 800 participants attended the 31st Trent University Elders and Traditional Peoples gathering. Organizer Vern Douglas says the event’s goal is to bring indigenous knowledge into the academic world “to hear people speak for themselves... and address misconceptions.”



This year’s workshops included Jan Longboat’s Medicine Teachings, Shirley Williams’ Anishinaabemowin Worldview, Imagining the Future by David Newhouse, and The Changing Face of Eldership by Michael Thrasher.

Chief Keith Knott welcomed visitors to the traditional territory of Curve Lake First Nation.

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KINOOMAAGEWIN/EDUCATION

Ruby Slipperjack: from trapline to professor



By Raymond M. Johns

NORTH BAY – Dr. Ruby Slipperjack was born and raised in Northwestern Ontario in her father's trap line near Whitewater Lake.

She is a member of the Eabametoong (Fort Hope) First Nation. Before she turned 8 years old she never spoke a word of English. It was five years before Dr. Slipperjack was then placed into a residential school. At age 20 she was very familiar with the rifle and also painted when she got bored.

Today, Dr. Slipperjack writes books and tours, and manages to visit elementary and high schools and in February spoke to a Grade 12 class at Chippewa Secondary School in North Bay. She also travels internationally, promoting her Aboriginal ancestry.

Ruby calls Thunder Bay home

and is happily married with three loving children.

Today, all of her children are grown up and are graduates furthering their education in various fields.

Dr. Slipperjack writes from her own personal experiences and does not write stories that are not hers. She believes that would be an invasion of privacy and might offend other

individuals. *Honour the Sun* is her latest book and she has an upcoming novel called *Dog Tracks* which should be released in 2008.

Dr. Slipperjack also chairs the Department of Indigenous Learning at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay.

The students of Chippewa High School were very attentive



"I feel the land squish between my toes, that is what I write about."



Ruby Slipperjack, age 12

and showed no signs of distraction throughout the whole presentation which made time fly because before you knew it, the bell for the end of the school day had rung. From the brief history of the slideshow that Dr. Slipperjack showed was not only informative but also a brief history of how it really was back in her time.

"I feel the land squish between my toes, that is what I write about" she says.

High school completion key target

WINNIPEG (CP) – A federal government study suggests that educational gaps between natives and non-natives are narrower than widely believed.

The report's author is Michael Mendelson, a senior scholar at the Caledon Institute of Social Policy in Ottawa and a former Manitoba deputy minister

of social services. The study says aboriginal high school graduates are just as likely to complete post-secondary education as other high school graduates, and notes that aboriginal people in both Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island are more likely to complete non-university post-secondary education than the non-native population.

Still, almost 50 per cent of working-age aboriginals did not finish high school.

Mendelson suggests this means the government should focus on having aboriginal youth complete high school rather than focusing on post-secondary education.

"In some cases this may mean providing accessible, 'second chances' for older aboriginal students that are now ready to take on this challenge," he said.



Michael Mendelson

30 Natives interviewed by medical school

SUDBURY – Over 400 prospective medical school students – 30 of them self-identified as aboriginal – were at the Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM) campuses in Sudbury and Thunder Bay to undergo in-depth interviews as part of their application to the MD program.

This year, the school received 2274 applications, a ten per cent increase from the number of applications received in each of the last two years.

The applicants, many from Northern Ontario, are competing for 56 coveted student seats.

This year, 415 of the 2274 applicants were selected for interviews. Roughly half of the candidates were assessed in Sudbury at the School's East Campus on March 24 and 25, while the rest were assessed in Thunder Bay on March 31 and April 1.

"This year marks the third year the Northern Ontario School of Medicine has accepted student applications. Just like the previous years, we are searching for highly motivated students from a variety of backgrounds who are self-directed, and who will excel in a small group-based, distributed learning environment," said Dr. Tom Szabo, Associate Dean of Student Affairs and Admissions. He added, "Our goal is to reach those who have a strong interest in practicing medicine in urban, rural and remote communities in the North."

Candidates in both cities were also given the opportunity to tour the medical school buildings and facilities, the respective city, and meet with current students. Offers of admission from the School will be sent out to successful candidates on May 15, 2007, while Orientation Week for the NOSM 2007 first year class begins on August 20, 2007.

Northern students work at welding

By Roberta Oshkawbewisens Martin
KIRKLAND LAKE – A Level One Welding Apprenticeship Program for First Nations students began in August, 2006 at Northern College's local campus with a two-week Life Skills session, which involved meeting all welding and college staff and touring Kirkland Lake.

A total of 14 weeks of intense training that form part of this agreement also included Introduction to Welding, Health and Safety Certification with WHMIS, First Aid/CPR and NORCAT Orientation, Introduction to Power Tools, Welding Terminology and Safety in the Welding Shop, Blue Print Reading, Trade Mathematics, Welding and Cutting, Welding



Roberta Oshkawbewisens Martin

Theory and Welding Quality.

Students worked hard for their first-year success and completed their work placement in Timmins with Steeltec and The Bucket Shop. Graduates are in the process of becoming employed with these companies to gain their apprenticeship hours to continue the second and third year to gain their full status in the Welders Apprenticeship field.

All students received the Life Skills working in this field, and our anishinabe-kwe-wuk and niini-a-wuk gained balance and strength. This is part of our own teachings in our culture and traditions, with all of Creation we work beside one another in harmony.

As Native Student Advisor at Northern College, I commend these graduates for their hard work and commitment, and to their families for the support and encouragement for their loved one's success in this field.



Graduates of Welders Apprenticeship Program for First Nations at Northern College's Kirkland Lake Campus and Timmins employer placement representatives: from left, Suzy Symes, the Bucket Shop/Steeltec; Sissie Wesley, Kashechewan; Sylvia Edwards, Moosonee; Brian Richard, Moose Factory; Trevor Manchester, Moosonee; Paul Woodward and Merle Brownrigg, the Bucket Shop/Steeltec. (Missing from photo – Daniel Chum, Moose Factory).

KINOOMAAGEWIN/EDUCATION



ASK HOLLY
BY HOLLY BRODHAGEN

askholly@gmail.com

Schooling risk factor for gangs

A reader asked for my help in finding information about Native gangs in Canada. The information I found makes me appreciate the work that is being undertaken by our leaders and community workers to help our youth.

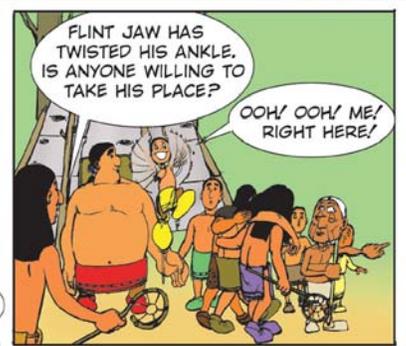
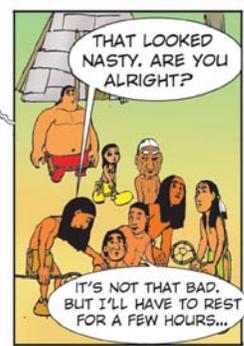
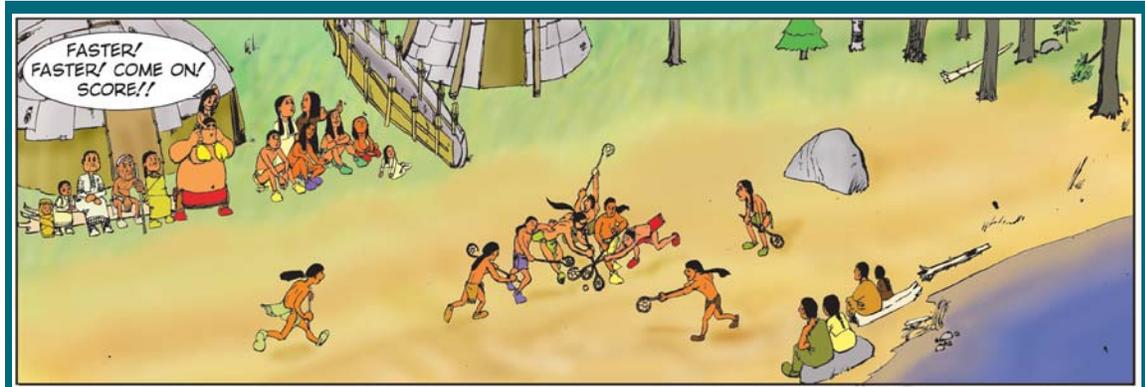
In a report commissioned by Correctional Services of Canada (2000), former National Chief Ovide Mercredi said that Native gangs are a reflection of the continued struggles of aboriginal people in Canada to have their rights and the responsibilities of the federal government recognized.

But there are a number of specific risk factors that contribute to any youth's potential involvement with gangs.

These include drug use, low self-esteem and feelings of alienation, poverty, abuse, racism, under-resourced communities, peer pressure and a lack of education. These are all factors found in Native communities and in urban aboriginal populations, so it is not a surprise that Natives make up 22% of gang members in Canada.

Additionally, aboriginal youth represent a large portion of the prison population and fall victim to gang recruitment practices while in jail. If and when they return to their communities, they bring the prison/gang mentality back with them. This begins a cycle of gang recruitment, criminal activity and community disruption.

Programs like Spirit Keepers Youth Society in Alberta were created to address the problems of aboriginal youth joining gangs. A report prepared for Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada



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(2005) outlined other programs and services that address the issue of Youth Gangs. It found that Quebec provides the most programs with the Western provinces coming in second, Ontario offers only 5% of the country's anti-gang programs. There are none in the Maritimes. Ten of the programs outlined in the report were specifically designed for aboriginal youth.

Len Untereiner from Spirit Keepers Youth Society says "We know that gangs are not going away, but we can stop or prevent kids from joining." Prevention measures include education and employment training, counselling for individuals and families, community development and cultural awareness.

Holly Brodhagen, Dokis First Nation, holds a Masters of Social Work degree. Questions or comments can be directed to her c/o by e-mail at askholly@gmail.com



RENEWING PARTNERSHIP – Canadore College and the Anishinabek Educational Institute (AEI) have renewed their unique educational partnership to promote program opportunities and excellence for Anishinabek learners. On March 20, Canadore president Barbara Taylor and Anishinabek Grand Council Chief John Beaucage renewed a four-year-old agreement for community-based delivery of three programs – Personal Support Worker, Anishinabek, Maintenance Management, Anishinabek, and Social Service Worker, Anishinabek – and added a new Office Administration program to the partnership. To date a total of 36 students have successfully completed the requirements for the Social Service Worker and Personal Support Worker programs under the partnership agreement. The Small Communities Maintenance Management and the Office Administration program will be new AEI offerings this fall at the Muncey-Delaware and Fort William Campus sites. – Photo by Priscilla Goulais

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