

**Cold Lake First Nation upset at new CNRL leak**  
The First Nation is crying foul after reports of a fourth leak from CNRL's oilsands in early January reached them via the media. *See page 2.*



**Fort Smith fashionistas to host fur fashion show**  
Fort Smith will be holding a "Gone Wild" fashion show to celebrate the community's talents, history and culture through fur. *See page 11.*



**Enviros 'win' in first round of Fort McMurray**  
The web game-documentary is raising questions about a resource-based economy after launching online last December. *See page 14.*



**Former baton twirling champ shares her sport**  
A Fort Smith cop and former world champion baton twirler has started youth classes in her community to share her love of the sport. *See page 18.*

# NORTHERN Journal

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Fort Smith's Brittany Brasser plays to win on Friday night during the second game of the Territorial Mixed Doubles Curling Championship, held in Fort Smith last week. Brasser and her partner, Nick Kaeser, won the bonspiel and will be headed to the second ever national tournament in Ottawa in March. *See page 19 for more.*

## Neil Young concerts put treaties in spotlight

*Sold-out tour raises over \$500,000 for legal defence fund*

By MEAGAN WOHLBERG  
Amid a raging national debate over the exploitation of Alberta's oilsands, rocker Neil Young attempted to steer the message behind his ongoing benefit tour for the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation back to "Honouring the Treaties" earlier this week, claiming the issue is not solely about oil. "Our issue is not whether the natural resource sector is a fundamental part of the country," Young said last week in a statement. "Our

issue is with the government breaking treaties with the First Nation and plundering the natural resources the First Nation has rights to under the treaties." Young was responding to criticism from the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) that came out following a pre-concert press conference on Jan. 12 in Toronto held by Young and ACFN's leadership, where Young accused Canadians of breaking their promises to First Nations.

"The blood of these people will be on modern Canada's hands," he said. In its response, the PMO claimed "rock stars" are dependent on oil, too, and that Aboriginal people in Canada are benefiting from resource extraction. "The resource sector creates economic opportunities, and employs tens of thousands of Canadians in high wage jobs, contributing to a standard of living that is envied around the world, and helping to fund the

programs and services Canadians rely on," stated the PMO. ACFN, which is currently embroiled in several legal battles against oilsands expansion on its traditional territory north of Fort McMurray, is receiving 100 per cent of sales from Young's sold-out tour. The First Nation surpassed its fundraising goal over the weekend, coming out with over \$500,000. Those funds will go to ACFN's legal defence to pay for actions like the requested judicial review on the recent

approval of Shell's Jackpine oilsands mine expansion, also announced by ACFN's leadership Jan. 12. "We have succeeded beyond our wildest dreams in raising money for legal defence of the First Nations. Global environmental forces are joining us now with financial resources and it's because of the Canadian people's awesome response to our call for justice," Young told attendees of the pre-concert press conference in Calgary on Sunday. *See Benefit on page 3.*

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# NEWS BRIEFS

## Fort McKay, Alta. man arrested on multiple charges

RCMP have arrested a man from Fort McKay after he allegedly went on a crime spree in the community. The 43 year-old Mark L'Hommecourt was located and arrested by police at a residence in Fort McKay on Jan. 13, the result of months of investigation into crimes committed between Nov. 29, 2013 and Jan. 13, 2014 in both Fort McKay and Fort McMurray. Charges include failing to comply with his conditions, assault, assault with a weapon and robbery. L'Hommecourt is scheduled to appear in court on January 20th, 2014.

## Yellowknife chosen as top Northern travel destination

The city of Yellowknife has beaten out Whitehorse and Dawson City, Yukon, in the 2014 Travelers Choice Awards for the top visited Northern Canadian community by *ehcanadatravel.com* blog and online magazine. Yellowknife, the website reads, "is a landscape full of adventure and a launching point to the far North." According to the website, the selections are based on the number of online travelers who visited that community in 2013 and contributed to the blog. The award-winning blog boasts more than 2 million online travelers contributed last year.

## Man found dead at Suncor oilsands site

A Suncor employee was found dead at the company's oilsands site Sunday morning, submerged in sand from a workplace incident. The body of the 40 year-old man from Fort McMurray was located by police at the work site after calls about a missing employee. An initial investigation by police has determined the death unsuspicious, however the exact cause is still unknown. Suncor has stated that no other employees were involved in the incident. Alberta Occupational Health and Safety is currently involved in the ongoing investigation. The man's identity is not being released. Those with information are asked to call Wood Buffalo RCMP at (780) 788-4000, or anonymously through Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS).



Photo: Emma Pullman

Leaked bitumen pools in the wetlands near CNRL's Primrose oilsands site last summer, which is located on the traditional territory of the Cold Lake First Nation.

Environment Oil Spill

# Cold Lake 'shocked' by fourth leak from CNRL's oilsands

## First Nation councillor says they need more access to information

By MARIA CHURCH

Cold Lake First Nation leaders are crying foul after they said they learned about a fourth leak discovered on Canadian Natural Resource Ltd.'s (CNRL) Primrose Pad

30 - located on their traditional territory - in early January through media reports instead of the company or Alberta Environment.

"The Dene Nation was shocked to learn that CNRL had yet another spill within their territory," the nation stated in a press release late last week.

CNRL rep Zoe Addington told *The Journal* in an email that the incident, which occurred Jan. 3, was caused by a wellbore failure below the surface.

The failure did not cause a spill or leak to the surface, Addington stated, and there has been "no impact to the environment nor potential danger to people."

The Alberta Energy Regulator (AER) is currently investigating the incident that caused 27,000 litres of bitumen to be released underground, according to company numbers.

AER spokesperson Darin Barter confirmed that the incident was subsurface with no impact to the environment. He said the leak, which included steam, crude bitumen and produced water, has been contained.

### Cold Lake in the dark

Cold Lake councillor and former chief Walter Janvier told *The Journal* last Thursday that the nation didn't hear about the incident until a week after it happened through the media.

"This is another spill that has occurred and, similar to the last, the company has continuously not cooperated with the nation and not provided proper technical information so we can make

a good assessment of what's going on," he said.

Cold Lake recently had a meeting with Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development (ESRD) about remediation, cleanup

"Our concern is the impacts on human health," he said. "Our traditional people still consume a lot of the various animals that we hunt and fish for. A lot of these animals end up having a lot of

Our traditional people still consume a lot of the various animals that we hunt and fish for. A lot of these animals end up having a lot of the contaminants from what they are eating and the water. We need the scientific data to find out if these animals are safe to eat.

Walter Janvier  
Cold Lake First Nation

and prevention of bitumen leaks, but Janvier said the government has been either reluctant or unable to push the oilsands company.

### One in string of leaks for CNRL

Last summer, after CNRL's in situ operations near Cold Lake released millions of litres of bitumen into the surrounding forest and water bodies, ESRD issued a protection order that included forcing the company to drain a lake as part of the clean up.

"(ESRD) says they are dealing with it, but all it is is just cleaning up the surface. The main problem is coming from underneath," Janvier said.

Janvier said he would like to know what kind of pressure is being forced into the ground in the in situ drilling process and what kind of chemicals are being used, among other things.

the contaminants from what they are eating and the water. We need the scientific data to find out if these animals are safe to eat."

### Legal action considered

Janvier said that Cold Lake is standing in solidarity with the "Honour the Treaties" concert tour by Neil Young currently raising money for the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation's legal fees against the government and oilsands companies.

Legal action against CNRL is not out of the picture for Cold Lake, he said.

"We are taking all measures that are within our means," Janvier said. "That includes utilizing our legal system, utilizing our lawyers, utilizing our consultants and also our elders and all the people we can call upon to work out a way we can cause some kind of positive change."

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# ACFN wants oilsands expansion declared ‘unlawful’

## First Nation files legal suit while on tour with folk icon Neil Young

By MEAGAN WOHLBERG

With over half a million dollars in legal funds raised by Neil Young’s ongoing “Honour the Treaties” concert tour, the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation (ACFN) of northern Alberta is gearing up for another legal fight in an attempt to stop further oilsands expansion on its traditional territory.

The First Nation filed a new lawsuit against the federal government and Shell Canada last week on the eve of Young’s first concert in Toronto, requesting the Federal Court review the Crown’s Dec. 6 decision giving the go-ahead to Shell’s Jackpine open-pit oilsands mine expansion project.

ACFN is hoping the court will find the decision “invalid and unlawful” based on what it says was inadequate consultation regarding the project’s recognized impacts on the First Nation’s section 35 rights.

During the hearings for the Jackpine project, ACFN repeatedly attempted to halt the review process until it could be consulted on threats to members’ Treaty 8 rights. Those legal challenges were



ACFN Chief Allan Adam speaks during a press conference Sunday in Calgary prior to Neil Young’s final concert on the “Honour the Treaties” legal defence fund benefit tour, joined by ACFN representatives and scientist Dr. David Schindler (centre).

deferred, with the panel ruling that it could not determine whether consultation had properly taken place until after the decision had been made.

Now that the mine has been approved, ACFN’s leaders are saying they still haven’t been

adequately consulted on impacts to their treaty and Aboriginal rights, all of which were acknowledged by the review panel in its report as being compromised by the project.

“The Crown is in direct violation of their fiduciary

obligations,” said ACFN Chief Allan Adam. “We have not even begun to effectively address the many impacts this project would have on ACFN’s Aboriginal and treaty rights, yet they have already granted an approval? The approval of the

project was hypocritical; on one hand they outlined all of the various violations of laws and legislation but ultimately approved the project in the public interest. Frankly, it’s insulting and unlawful.”

In its case, ACFN alleges that Canada breached its duty

to consult and accommodate ACFN, and that the mitigation measures offered are inconsistent with legislation protecting migratory birds and species at risk.

“ACFN remains unsatisfied with the Crown’s response to consult and accommodate,” stated Doreen Somers, ACFN’s Industry Relation Corp. (IRC) consultation coordinator, in a press release last week. “The Crown is unwilling to meaningfully address the extensive concerns we have brought forward before, during and after the public review process for Shell’s Jackpine Mine Expansion.”

The First Nation is requesting that the decision to approve the mine be suspended until adequate consultation and accommodation takes place.

The legal challenge is driven by ACFN’s Elders Declaration outlining a protection zone north of the Firebag River, an area they say is critical for protecting at-risk wildlife populations and the constitutionally guaranteed traditional land-use activities of the First Nation.

Politics First Nations

# Benefit tour succeeds ‘beyond wildest dreams’

Continued from page 1.

“We have matched and multiplied the money we have raised from Canadians supporting honour the treaties. We will be positioned to match the legal power of our opposition dollar for dollar,” he said.

ACFN Chief Allan Adam said he would like to see the federal government address the First Nation’s concerns about consultation and treaty rights rather than frame ACFN as anti-development or attack Young, who first met ACFN’s leadership when he drove his electric car to Fort McMurray last fall.

“I think the prime minister should focus on the attention that we’re drawing in regards to honouring the treaties, instead of focusing attention on bringing down an icon like Neil Young, who had to raise the flag about broken promises,” the chief told *The Journal* from Young’s tour bus on the way to Winnipeg, where he performed and gave another press conference on Jan. 16 before heading off to another show in Regina on Jan. 17 and Calgary on Sunday.



Neil Young addresses media on his last concert stop in Calgary.

“(Prime Minister Harper) should sit down and focus on the issues in regards to the treaties,” Adam said. “We have outstanding claims with Canada that we’re still negotiating over 20 years.”

The chief said recent media polls showing the majority of Canadians are in favour of Young’s campaign, along with the very responsive and supportive concert audiences, reinforce his belief that what they are doing is right.

The sold-out concert at Toronto’s Massey Hall featured a round dance in the streets beforehand, where Adam said over 200 people showed up under the Idle No More banner. A similar round dance was held in Winnipeg, along with a teach-in on treaties and the Idle No More movement in Calgary on Sunday.

“These people weren’t going to the concert; they showed up to support what we were doing,” Adam said.

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# Oilsands - the truth please

Neil Young is “a has-been musician” who “does not have his facts straight” when he criticizes the way the oilsands are being developed, the federal government would have us believe. Movie director James Cameron was similarly vilified when he created the movie *Avatar*. Canadians who make it big on the world stage are applauded, but they are discredited if they use their fame to pursue causes at home.

Both famous Canadians have succeeded in focusing attention on the problems resulting from how the oilsands are being developed, to the chagrin of our political leaders. Politicians are expected to adjust the truth and spin facts, presenting them in a way that achieves their goals. Usually they do not stray too far from the truth, but claims that the current way the oilsands are harvested is benign go far beyond that to the point of deceit.

How the current crop of leaders feel they can get away with that and not fear an eventual reckoning is unfathomable. They seem able to convince themselves that what they want to believe is actually the truth, presenting the rationalized facade with the utmost sincerity. There is no respectability in that methodology - no honour, no morality, no decency, no dignity, no virtue. We appreciate the passion of leaders striving for a robust provincial and national economy, but that does not justify dishonesty.

Thousands of jobs are indeed being created and there is tremendous benefit to the economy. That part is true, but huge

costs that are common knowledge in the region are being whitewashed. Both the Alberta and federal governments are doing far too little to remedy the problems, all the while trying to cover them up. Tailings ponds are leaking into the groundwater and the Athabasca River. The fallout from the smokestacks contains metals and chemicals that contaminate the land and flush into the river. The harm to human health, already alarming, has the potential to be terrible in the long term. Meanwhile, forests are being stripped away and the land transformed so no amount of effort could return it to a natural state. All of it is true, yet all denied.

The story-line from the Harper Conservatives is that they have implemented “a world class environmental monitoring system” to guard against any negative impact from the oilsands industry. Their prime concern, they say, is the health of residents as well as environmental impact. It has become a mantra.

In fact, the federal environmental monitoring system only got underway two summers ago, is not yet fully implemented and, since it is in the beginning phase, has only now begun collecting baseline data. It will take years before it is really effective. Nor does it adequately examine contamination of aquifers from the massive tailings ponds, all of them permeable. It came about after decades of neglect, resulting only because of pressure from environmentalists and revelations by “renegade scientists” who instituted

their own monitoring systems and proved dramatically that claims by the federal government that no health-threatening problems exist are patently false.

Tens of billions of dollars will be invested each year over the coming decades, generating incredible wealth. After all the oil-bearing sand is stripped away and processed, the shale beds that underlie it will be exploited, likely by fracking. The northeast corner of Alberta is to be treated as an industrial cesspit for the next hundred years.

The development of the oilsands has been encouraged through tax breaks, investment and subsidies across decades while in contrast there has been minimal thought, effort or investment to ensure the health of residents in the region or mitigate impacts on the environment. Any change to that imbalance has come about grudgingly and sparingly.

The problem is not with industry. Corporations are there to do what they do and make a profit. They will, for the most part, follow rules and standards diligently. The problem lies squarely at the feet of government. The intent is obviously to encourage development and the need for proper rules and standards has been set aside intentionally. Accountability and enforcement are a joke. Industry is given a virtual free pass. All is shrouded in a lack of transparency. The negligence on the part of both the federal and Alberta governments is heinous, and the lack of standards and accountability morally corrupt.



Ottawa-based author/publisher Hayden Trenholm leads a creative writing workshop in Yellowknife Jan. 18-19, put on by NorthWords. Twelve writers, ranging from poets to copywriters, professionals to hobbyists, showed up for the master class. Top left: Trenholm with Gillian Dawe-Taylor and Gerry Antoine; right: Trenholm assists Susan Beaumont.

Photos: Bill Braden

## ARCHIVES

### 15 Years Ago...

*Fur sales down this winter*

North American Fur Auctions (NAFA) opened its 1998/99 selling season with a fresh collection of wild fur. At a wild fur auction held earlier in December, limited buyer attendance resulted in lower prices and very low clearances, according to NAFA.

Issue: January 19, 1999

### 20 Years Ago...

*MLA blasts mayor*

Thebacha MLA Jeannie Marie-Jewell has slammed Fort Smith mayor Dennis Bevington for using “communist-type tactics” to stop the construction of a road link between Fort Smith and Fort Vermilion. Bevington dismissed Marie-Jewell’s comments, saying he is not trying to derail any initiative to bring a road link to Fort Smith.

Issue: January 19, 1994

### 30 Years Ago...

*Competing carnival could kill Frolics*

The 1984 Wood Buffalo Frolics may turn out to be the last, because of rivalry from the newly created Pioneer Days. The Fort Smith Lions’ Club, which sponsors the annual spring Frolics, say the scheduling of the Pioneer Days could kill their celebrations.

Issue: January 19, 1984



# From the House

Bill C-15, the NWT Devolution Implementation Bill currently working its way through Parliament, will be discussed in Yellowknife on Jan. 27. The Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development has been tasked with holding hearings on the bill and stakeholders have been invited to make presentations.

All parties in the House have supported the bill in principle during the first debate held in December, although the inclusion of the changes to the regulatory system and the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act (MVRMA) are troublesome as the Conservatives have chosen to bundle all of these initiatives into one omnibus Bill.

Both the Gwich'in and the Tlicho have strongly opposed the creation of the Super Board

which is to replace the Regional Land and Water Boards that have been in place for the past decade. Grand Chief Eddie Erasmus took the opportunity at a reception hosted by the Tlicho in Ottawa on Dec. 11 to criticize the Conservative government, saying that the Tlicho would take all actions possible to protect their Agreement and the Wek'èezhìi Land and Water Board, which have been working extremely well.

In a letter sent in September of this year to Minister Valcourt, I requested that he present the Devolution Bill separately from the regulatory changes to the MVRMA. In talks with the Tlicho delegation in Ottawa last month, they confirmed that the two proposals were always presented as separate Bills in the consultation process and that

there was no indication they would be combined.

The government of the NWT has now said that it supports the creation of the Super Board. This is a change from its position two years ago when it opposed this idea in a letter to the previous Aboriginal Affairs Minister John Duncan. Although the Legislative Assembly has voted in favour of the Devolution Agreement, this Agreement is silent on any changes to the MVRMA.

Questions remain. Has Premier McLeod received any formal support from the Legislative Assembly for the GNWT's changing position? Was the GNWT forced into supporting the Super Board to get its Devolution package forward? In our consensus style politics, was this radical change discussed openly?

As a long-time advocate for the end of Ottawa's influence over the development of our resources in the NWT, I am willing to support the devolution aspects of this Bill. But as a past Co-Chair of the Constitutional Development Steering Committee prior to Division of the NWT, I have strong misgivings about the direction that the imposition of a Super Board will take us.

The Inuvialuit, through their claim, will retain their regional



Dennis Bevington  
MP, Western Arctic

strength, a structure that will ensure a distinct presence in decisionmaking on their traditional lands. The same should continue for the settled First Nations governments in the NWT. The regional boards have provided that, to a degree that has been acceptable. The remaining unsettled claimant groups, including the Métis need to finish out the process that they are currently involved in.

The Super Board inclusion is therefore unnecessary and therefore nothing more than ill-conceived manipulation by the Conservative government, which may sow seeds of greater discord in the future.

I suppose we could accept Premier McLeod's placating that perhaps in five years or so the Federal Government would be willing to reconsider the MVRMA, but by that time the Super Board will be well established, and difficult to change.

As Grand Chief Erasmus says, "Why change something that isn't broken?"

## CORRECTION

In last week's story, "Sahtu fracking results to be shrouded in secrecy for two years," it was stated that ConocoPhillips is not required to disclose the results of its exploratory drilling program in the Sahtu for two years. While that is the case, *The Journal* would like to clarify that ConocoPhillips is required to disclose issues affecting water to the Sahtu Land and Water Board, including groundwater results, surface water monitoring, water use and other environmental parameters, on an annual basis. *The Journal* apologizes for any confusion this may have caused.



# White Girl Break up or bombs: Part 3 of 3

The whole town is running toward the riverbank. A pole has been set up with a stop timer to record the actual time of break up; this will tell us who has won the ice pool. Where did all of these people come from? The total population of Fort Norman is less than 300 persons, and they are all here. Anyone who can walk or be carried is sitting on the bank by the Hudson Bay Co., waiting to see if the river will continue to go out. Sometimes the ice jams and grinds to a halt. You may have to wait for days for this ripping birth of spring.

A warehouse sits a short ways from the store, filled with furs and hides that people have trapped and traded throughout

the winter. Furs will go out on the barges and food will come in. Trapping is a lifestyle; it feeds kids and allows people to be responsible for themselves, a dignity that governments of all kinds take away.

Giant chunks of ice 10 feet in depth start to push against stalled sister pieces of the same dimension; we have action. A winner of the ice pool is announced. From our perch on the banks high above the river we watch as the winter debris is carried north to the Beaufort Sea. The earth shudders as these colossal frozen blocks grind against each other, rise up and crash into fragments on the sheet ice below. The hill drops away to the north, where several cabins are located on a bench below and to the right of us. Ice is now mashing its way up those lower banks, being

pushed by the faster flowing walls that are straining to move down the centre of this massive river of silt and mud.

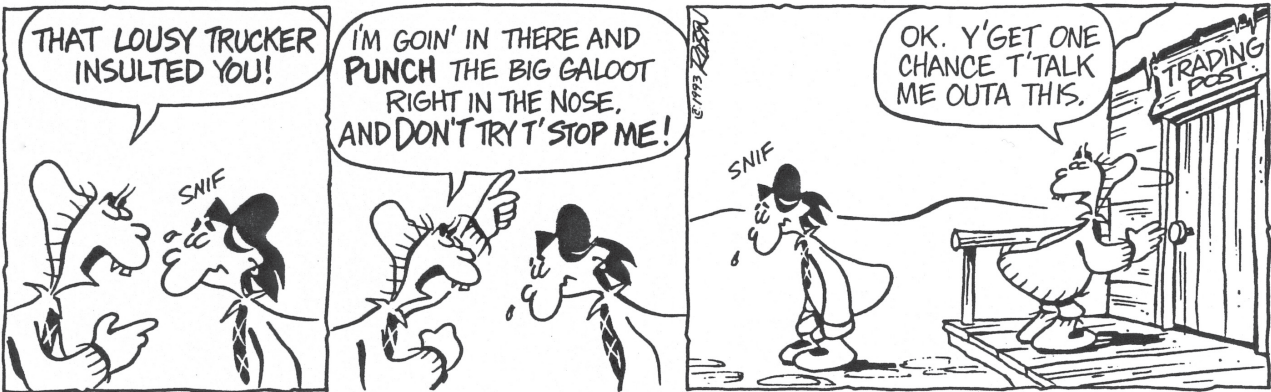
Our eyes are big as we look at each other with hands covering our ears from so much noise; there is thunder on the water. We smile as giant pieces of ice climb over each other and crash hard. When your world has no TV, no radio or boom boxes, a little bird's song is easy to hear, and smashing ice is spectacular in volume.

Oh no, oh no...the huge ice blocks are crowding up on Granny Yakeleya's house. Closer and closer to her door they move. She is crying, "My house, my house!" All the people watch, their fear for Granny's home shows in their eyes, we can do nothing. Nothing can stop this wall of ice from grinding down everything that she

owns, oh no! Slowly, slowly, the ice slows, inches to her door. "Please let it stop, please!" She starts to laugh, her wrinkled hands rising to cup her face. "I must have been good, see my house is still here. Mahsi, mahsi (thank you, thank you)."

Everyone starts to laugh and smile, hands reach out to touch and pat Granny in her happiness, her home is safe. She will live by the river still. She has a willow stick that she chases us kids with. This river runs wild and hard. The murderous Mackenzie has expanded its maw and swallowed many people; Granny Yakeleya is determined to save us from ourselves. We listen to her because she cares about us, kids know these things. When we forget again, her willow will remind us. Mahsi Granny, I remember you still.

## MUKLUK



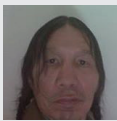
## FACEBOOK FEEDBACK

### Northern Journal 2014

Amid a raging national debate over the exploitation of Alberta's oilsands, rocker Neil Young attempted to steer the message behind his ongoing benefit tour for the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation back to "Honouring the Treaties" last week, claiming the issue is not solely about oil.



### Neil Young concerts force treaties into spotlight



**Roger Deranger:** everybody knows that the oil sands is creating a massive land destruction but who cares because there are over 7 billion on the earth and we all using over 90 millions barrels of oil a day for our vehicles, furnace, goods and service products and so forth so why should we complain?

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## Forecast

### Inuvik Yellowknife

Wednesday	
-3 High	-10 Low
-12 High	-30 Low
Thursday	
-21 High	-22 Low
-5 High	-12 Low
Friday	
-6 High	-23 Low
-19 High	-23 Low
Saturday	
-11 High	-11 Low
-17 High	-19 Low
Norms: -23°C and -31°C	
Norms: -22°C and -31°C	

### Hay River Fort Smith

Wednesday	
-7 High	-25 Low
-14 High	-27 Low
Thursday	
-6 High	-6 Low
-4 High	-13 Low
Friday	
-8 High	-14 Low
-14 High	-15 Low
Saturday	
-7 High	-9 Low
-11 High	-14 Low
Norms: -18°C and -28°C	
Norms: -19°C and -29°C	



# Salt River chief keeps post despite non-confidence vote

By MEAGAN WOHLBERG

A move by 42 people at a recent membership meeting to oust Salt River First Nation Chief Frieda Martselos in a vote of non-confidence hasn't stopped her from continuing to hold council meetings and make decisions on behalf of the First Nation.

All attendees at last Tuesday's meeting of the First Nation voted to remove Martselos as leader of SRFN in what was the latest in a series of attempts by band councillor George Cumming to oust her as chief.

Cumming first made the motion of non-confidence against Martselos at a meeting on Dec. 29, where he says three councillors voted in favour and two abstained.

"I put in a motion of non-confidence because of her hiring practices and just not involving the council with all her decisions. She just does whatever she wants," he told *The Journal*.

The non-confidence motion named numerous issues, alleging personal use of band vehicles, cutting the hours at the gas bar to 8 hours instead of 16, and refusal to use the

batch plant or handivan purchased by the First Nation.

"This is my second term as a councillor. Everything was going good before she got in there, and everything's just started going downhill," Cumming said. "The membership's not very happy. Everytime you go in there, there's someone new working there. She hires who she wants, when she wants."

After Tuesday's vote, around 20 of the members walked to the band office where Martselos was holding a meeting with three other councillors to deliver the results, along with a petition.

Cumming said the doors were locked, despite it being a public meeting.

knew we were there," Cumming said. "We never lock the doors...Members want

camera. If it was in camera, the RCMP wouldn't be sitting there."

The membership's not very happy. Everytime you go in there, there's someone new working there. She hires who she wants, when she wants.

*Councillor George Cumming  
Salt River First Nation*

"The RCMP sergeant was there...We were knocking on the doors and windows; they

to come, we let them come in. The only time they have to leave is when we go in

Martselos could not be reached for comment, though she is calling last Tuesday's meeting illegal, according to other media reports. That was confirmed by another councillor who said the vote was "invalid" because Cumming did not go through proper protocols with respect to the band's elections code.

According to a recent statement by the chief, delivered at Salt River's annual informational meeting on Dec. 8, Martselos said decisions like decreasing hours at the gas bar are being made to downsize spending within the First Nation to deal with its \$2-million deficit.

"This is the reason why you, as membership, gave me the direction to downsize the staff, evaluate the gas bar, follow the members' needs policies and implement tight fiscal restraint to rebuild Salt River First Nation back to a healthy financial position," she said at the meeting, asking members to be patient with her as she tries to "rebuild" finances.

"Elimination of the tremendous cost of the portfolios to individual councillors, elimination of the tremendous amount of travel costs, and restructuring of the office administration is a work in progress that will eventually pay off," she said.

Martselos has continued to go to work and hold meetings with councillors, excluding Cumming, who said he was told he is suspended from meetings for two months.

"As far as I'm concerned that's not legal because there's nothing about banning a councillor in the election code," he said.

Cumming said he "went by the books" on everything and doesn't understand why it is being called illegal.

"I put in the motion, I had a seconder, and then we voted on it and everyone was in favour to oust her," he said.

Cumming said he is now planning to contact the government, other media and the band's lawyers to address his concerns.

## A Quitter's Story

### Troy Ellsworth Ft. Smith



I quit smoking September 1, 2011. My wife, Linda, and I were leaving on a trip to Newfoundland and Montreal and I knew it was going to be inconvenient for me to smoke while travelling. I was going to be out of my normal routine, and since I would be with our families and friends who did not smoke, I thought maybe this is the time to quit. So, on August 31<sup>st</sup> I smoked like I would on a regular day, but before I went to bed that night I tossed my cigarette pack in the garbage. And I haven't smoked since that day!

My biggest motivation for quitting smoking was for health reasons. The money saved by not smoking is certainly a bonus but for me it was not enough motivation to quit. I realized smoking had affected my health, especially my breathing. Linda would tell me that I was wheezing during the night while sleeping. At first I didn't want to believe that, but as it worsened, I knew I should try to quit again. I had smoked for 30 years approximately 1 carton of cigarettes weekly. It was going to be tough, but I was ready for the challenge. It was my time to quit!

In the past when I attempted to quit smoking I struggled every day. The thought of having a cigarette never seemed to leave my mind. This time however, nothing hindered the process for me, I felt committed for the right reason, and I felt ready this time.

You can't quit for someone else – you have to quit for you. Quitting smoking will be one of the hardest things you'll ever do, but it is worth it.

Many people are not successful quitting on their first try but I think each time you attempt to quit smoking you learn more about yourself, your vulnerabilities and how to avoid repeating the mistakes that caused you to fail. These lessons can help you be successful on your next attempt.

Now that I have quit smoking, I feel better every day. Thankfully, I do not wheeze anymore, and my lung capacity is noticeably better. I saw an immediate benefit when I started playing hockey just a couple months after quitting. Today, I am healthier for quitting and I am no longer a slave to cigarettes.

In the end, the best advice I can give to anyone thinking of trying cigarettes is to never start smoking in the first place! For others who were like me, don't quit quitting!!



National Non-Smoking Week  
January 19<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> 2014





It's too early to tell whether or not the department of Finance will be revising its proposal on how much post-devolution resource revenues to funnel into the NWT's Heritage Fund, but if the majority of last year's budget dialogue participants have their way, it should be more than 5 per cent.

The final report summarizing feedback received at last fall's regional budget consultation meetings came out last week, indicating that while some individuals in Norman Wells and Hay River said they agreed with the department's proposal to put 5 per cent of resource revenues garnered after devolution into the fund, the majority of residents want to see more saved for future generations.

Finance Minister Michael Miltenberger said the document is now under discussion at the government's Priorities and Planning committee level, where MLAs are similarly reflecting a range of opinions.

Because the issue is currently under discussion, Miltenerberger said he could not give specifics on any numbers, but

“We’re hoping for some resolution to the process and to have some of the specifics

here by early next week so we can finalize things, because we're only about 20-some days away," Miltenberger said last Thursday. "MLAs

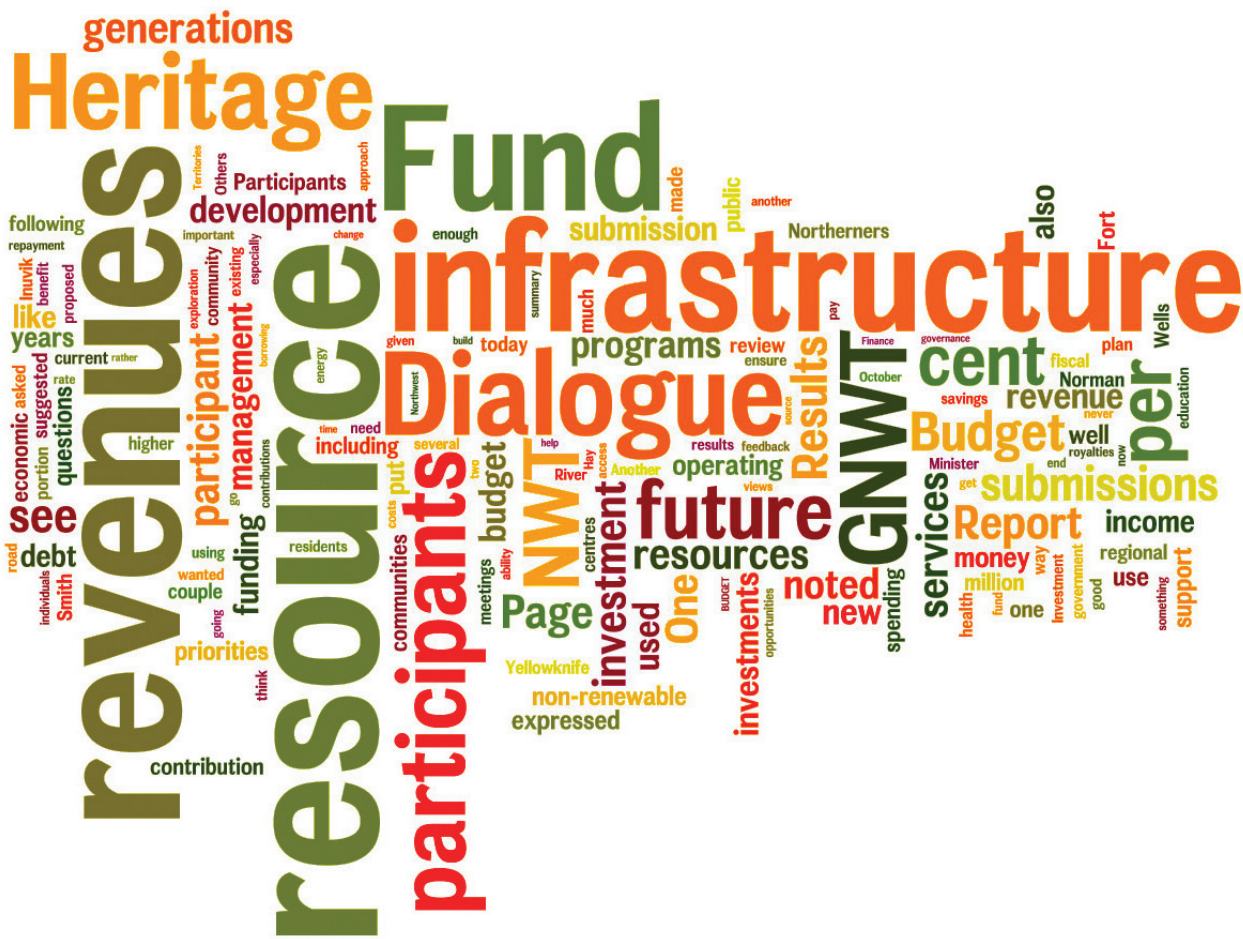
represent all those constituencies across the land where divergent opinion exists, so we are working to come to a consensus.”

Around 80 participants and some other 20 written submissions made to the department were included in the budget dialogue report,

which showed the majority of people in Inuvik, Yellowknife, Fort Smith and youth in Norman Wells want to see anywhere between 10 to 100 per cent of resource revenues put into the Heritage Fund. "Some thought that the Heritage Fund is the only true way to ensure intergenerational equity by putting away the money from a finite revenue source for when that revenue source is no longer present. Others noted that only by committing as much as possible now, can the Fund reach a point where the income generated can be useful," states the report.

Though there was a divergence in opinions on the fund, the report noted that nearly everyone was in agreement with the GNWT's proposal to keep resource revenues separate from spending on programs and services, with many in favour of using some of those revenues to build legacy infrastructure, which would also benefit future generations.

The NWT's resource revenue management plan will be decided upon in winter session beginning in February.



# FAMILY LITERACY DAY



**JBT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, Fort Smith**  
**JANUARY 27**

8-9 a.m. JBT will host a pancake breakfast for its school families.

9 a.m.-12 p.m. Multi-age groupings will visit stations on literacy, numeracy and social responsibility. Parents are encouraged to join their students.

School will be dismissed at 12 p.m.

**PAUL W. KAESAR HIGH SCHOOL, Fort Smith**  
**JANUARY 27**

Take a break from exams with the Family Literacy Quiz! Work together as a family to win prizes! Families can enter online (e-mail will be sent through PWK mailing list) or through the PWK office. Have fun reading, googling and learning as you find the answers.

**CHIEF SUNRISE EDUCATION CENTRE,**  
*K'atlodeeche First Nation*  
**JANUARY 27**

2:30-3:30 p.m. Fifteen Minutes of Fun! Short activities for students to enjoy.

3:30-4:00 p.m The whole school will come together for a special treat.

Families welcome!

**DENINU SCHOOL, Fort Resolution**  
**JANUARY 27**

1:30-3:00 p.m. Deninu will be engaging students in 15 minute activities including a scavenger hunt, storytelling by elders, arts and crafts, games and more.

Students are asked to bring one vegetable each to make a communal soup to share at the end of the day.

**LUTSEL K'E DENE SCHOOL, *Lutsel K'e***  
**JANUARY 27**

Join Lutsel K'e Dene School for a family luncheon of stew and bannock!

After lunch all are invited for a Big Book reading by one of the community members, then students will read their favourite books aloud to a family member, or person of their choice.

**HARRY CAMSELL SCHOOL, Hay River**  
**JANUARY 30**

8:30-9 AM Parents are invited to come to Harry Camsell's gym to participate in the family reading session before class begins. After reading, students will head back to class for a muffin, fruit and drink with classmates.

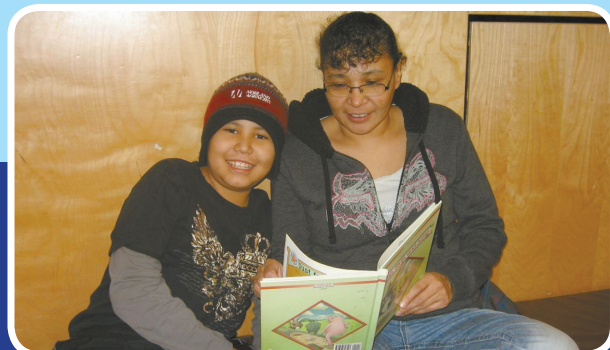
**PRINCESS ALEXANDRA SCHOOL, Hay River**  
**JANUARY 24**

8-9 AM Annual Family Day Literacy Breakfast! Students and parents will be provided a warm breakfast (French toast and sausages), and read together.

**DIAMOND JENNESS S. S., Hay River**  
**FEBRUARY 20**

1:15-3:20 p.m. This year's focus is on math literacy. Members of the community are welcome to attend.

Students will compete in teams of four, who will model a family; grandparent, parent and children. Prizes will be awarded to the teams with the most points.



# Creating Futures

Contact your local  
SSDEC school for  
more information!



# Devolution bill hearings set for one week in Yellowknife

## Formal meeting to address superboards issue tied to Bill C-15

By MEAGAN WOHLBERG

A packed agenda of divergent Northern interests promises a long day of hearings for the federal standing committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development on the NWT Devolution Act, or Bill C-15, next week in Yellowknife.

A total of 18 witnesses are scheduled to address the committee from 8:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 27 at the Explorer Hotel.

Kicking off the meeting will be the Aboriginal parties to the devolution deal, including the Tlicho, Sahtu and Gwich'in governments, some of which have expressed their unhappiness with the federal government's move to lump changes to the NWT's regulatory system in with devolution.

Apart from devolving powers over lands, water and resources to the territory, Bill C-15 also proposes



The GNWT and Aboriginal governments will have their final say on the Devolution Bill during next week's hearings.

amendments to the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act (MVRMA), which

include amalgamating the existing regional land and water boards established through

This will be a formal Committee meeting, which means members of the public will not be allowed to orally ask questions or provide feedback.

*Jean-Marie David  
Aboriginal Affairs and Northern  
Development Canada*

land claims into one overarching superboard.

Presentations will also be made by the territorial government, representatives from the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board, and individually by Neil McCrank and John Pollard, both of whom were charged with evaluating and consulting on the Northern regulatory regime.

Aboriginal groups who have yet to sign on to the deal are also expected to

make presentations, including representatives from the NWT Treaty 8 Tribal Corp./Akwitcho First Nations, the K'at'odeeche First Nation, Acho Dene Koe First Nation, the Fort Liard Métis and the North Slave Métis Alliance.

The NWT/Nunavut Chamber of Mines, the NWT Chamber of Commerce, the NWT Federation of Labour, the NWT Association of Communities, the Town of Inuvik and Alternatives North

are scheduled to speak in the afternoon, as well.

According to the standing committee clerk, Jean-Marie David, the meeting will be open to the public, but only those on the witness list will be permitted to speak.

"This will be a formal Committee meeting, which means members of the public will not be allowed to orally ask questions or provide feedback," David said in an email. "As in any other committee study, anyone is allowed to submit a brief in writing. Once translated, the document is then distributed to members of the committee who will take it into consideration when voting on the Bill or amendments."

Audio of the meeting will be available on the web during and after the meeting, he said.

The committee also expects to hear from other witnesses in Ottawa on subsequent dates.

### Industry Trade

## GNWT wants China to buy NWT fur products

### Territory, Alberta both launch trade missions to Asia

By MARIA CHURCH

The NWT's premier and industry minister are hoping that a recent trade mission to China will encourage the massive consumer power of the largest population in the world to look to Canada's North for quality fur.

Wild fur was the topic of choice during the trade mission to China where GNWT delegates attended the Beijing Fur Fair and International Fur Trade Federation Forum, touting the Territories' sustainable fur harvesting practices.

The government promoted the territory's wild fur harvesting and sustainable trapping practices to their Chinese counterparts, calling NWT fur some of the most highly sought after fur in the world.

"At every fur auction, our wild fur is in very high demand, particularly from Chinese buyers. Buyers have told us they want our wild fur because of its unique, high quality appearance and luxurious feel," Premier Bob McLeod said in a press release.

The GNWT's trip last week was the first since the Council of the Federation trade

mission to China in 2012. The GNWT was present on that mission to gauge Chinese investment interest in all territorial resources, including diamonds, furs, minerals, oil and gas, tourism and hydro.

Last week's trip focused in on mining, energy, furs

### Alberta increases trade with India

The Alberta government took steps last week to increase trade with India during a trade mission to discuss exporting Alberta resources to southeast Asia.

During the six-day mission, Premier Alison Redford

Buyers have told us they want our wild fur because of its unique, high quality appearance and luxurious feel.

*NWT Premier Bob McLeod*

and tourism, according to the GNWT. Fur, in particular, was apparently well received by Chinese trade partners.

"Connections made and strengthened during this trip will play an important role in ensuring trappers and their families can preserve their traditional ways in an economically relevant way," David Ramsay, minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, stated.

met with her Indian counterparts to sign agreements with two states in India to share agricultural expertise and exports.

Redford was also present for the opening of Alberta's new India Trade Office in Delhi. Another office opened in Singapore the same week.

"Quite simply, the long-term cost to Alberta of ignoring huge markets like India are incalculable," Redford said.

On January 27<sup>th</sup>

# Celebrate Family Literacy Day

by spending 15 minutes of fun together!

Just 15 minutes of fun a day benefits children and adults.

Visit [www.nwt.literacy.ca](http://www.nwt.literacy.ca) for fun activities you can do as a family!

**NWTLC**  
NWT Literacy Council





Denise Yuhas' Street Treats food truck is now awaiting its eye-catching paint job in BC.



The truck's "18-foot stainless steel playground for cooking" will be capable of serving up just about anything, from fried chicken to tacos to ice cream.

Photos courtesy of Apollo Food Trucks

Industry Small Business

# Truckin' good food rolling into Fort Smith

## Food truck to serve up sizzling 'Street Treats' starting this summer

By MEAGAN WOHLBERG

A truckload of tasty treats will be hitting the streets of Fort Smith this summer when local food aficionado Denise Yuhas' "Street Treats" food truck rolls into town. Already famed around town for her ultimate thirst quencher "the lemonator" and "those darn li'l donuts," Yuhas is upping the status of her streetfood venture by moving out of her little red trailer kitchen and into an 18-foot commercial restaurant on wheels starting this spring.

Under the slogan of "Truckin' Good Food," Yuhas is ready to serve everything from homemade ice cream to pulled pork, seafood and tacos over the summer, debuting the enterprise with a grand opening at this year's Fort Smith trade show in May. "Our goal is to do good food at a reasonable price," Yuhas said. "Who knows, maybe we'll come up with the ultimate dish and up the exposure up here." Yuhas and her partner Dwayne Woodward spent a chunk of last fall driving the

rig - a former Fedex truck bought secondhand in Edmonton - down to Surrey, BC where they had world-renowned mobile meal masters Apollo Food Trucks transform the vehicle into a "beautiful stainless steel playground" capable of cooking just about anything. Since then, Yuhas has been attending food trade shows and talking to chefs and other food truck operators in order to glean ideas for her menu and marketing, while the truck is now in Richmond, BC receiving

the final eye-catching artwork that will make it impossible to miss. Apart from regular servings around the week, Yuhas wants to see the truck hit up meetings, special events, birthday parties and other sorts of gatherings, hoping it will "fill the gap" that sometimes exists around town at different times of the year. "The idea is to complement what we already have in Fort Smith, not compete with what anyone else is doing," she said. "The way I see it is the more choices people have,

the better service everyone's going to get." Yuhas said she's excited to provide work for a few interested people in town who want to get more hands-on experience in the restaurant business, and potentially provide a platform for the community's myriad of "closet chefs" to come aboard as guest cooks. She also plans to continue using the business to support local charitable organizations like the Society for People with Disabilities, the Seniors' Society and the

Circle of Friends, and potentially hit the road to events in other communities. With the lineups Yuhas has experienced running her trailer at celebrations like Canada Day and Aboriginal Day in years previous, she has few doubts about the success of the business. But money aside, she said she's just looking forward to this new adventure, backed by the support of her friends and family. "We made a serious investment in this, and it's because I think the people of Fort Smith are worth it," she said.



## The Royal Canadian Legion Branch #239 was pleased to make the following donations in 2013:

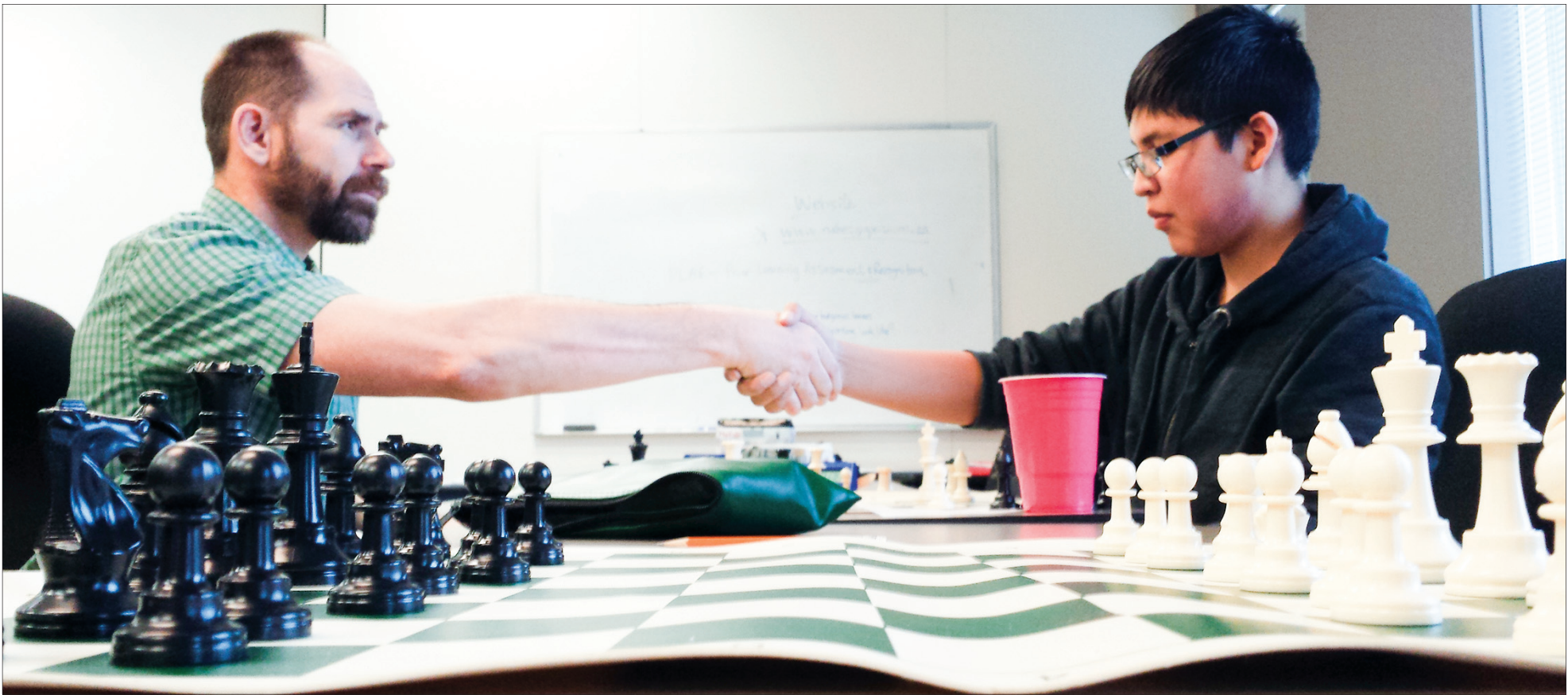
Relay for Life.....	3,102.87
Joel Rhymer (Attend Skate Canada).....	250.00
Fort Smith Fish Derby (Prizes For Youth Category).....	1,000.00
Katie White (Timber Crescent Playground).....	1,900.00
PWK High School Travel Club.....	2,000.00
Alberta/NWT Command (Polio/Youth Fund) .....	19,513.55
Fort Smith Paddlefest .....	2,000.00
Mike Labine (Santa Float).....	4,160.00
Atikin Hehn (Attend Aboriginal Hockey Day Championships) .....	1,500.00
Evan Tordiff (Attend Aboriginal Hockey Day Championships).....	500.00
Aurora Research - Slave River Day .....	1,000.00
Fort Smith Animal Shelter (Annual Calendar) .....	3,000.00
Wood Buffalo National Park (Pine Lake Picnic).....	1,000.00
PWK High School (Fitness Room).....	10,000.00
Aurora College (Aurora Open Youth Prizes) .....	500.00
Circle of Friends .....	2,500.00
Pelican Rapids Golf Course (Merchant's Tournament, Youth/Senior Prizes).....	1,500.00
Leah Macdonald (Fundraiser for Team Diabetes).....	1,500.00
Thebacha & Wood Buffalo Astronomical Society (Dark Sky Festival).....	2,550.00
Cecilia Bourque.....	500.00
PWK High School (Plaque For Top Attendance).....	275.00

AEDs for the Legion, PWK High School, and Pelican Rapids Golf Course...	5,062.05
JBT School (Purchase of Recorders).....	2,000.00
Albert Bohnet (Purchase of Handicap Scooter).....	4,000.00
Kole Crook Fiddle Association (Workshop) .....	2,500.00
Alzheimer's Society (Donation).....	2,685.52
JBT School (Snack Program).....	7,000.00
PWK High School (Snack Program) .....	7,000.00
Fort Smith Minor Hockey (Hockey Camp) .....	7,000.00
Fort Smith Volunteer Fire Department (Fundraiser) .....	3,000.00
S. Raymond (Learn to Twirl).....	675.00
PWK High School (L. Hobart Volleyball Tournament) .....	5,000.00
RCL Branch #239 (Donation to Community Poppy Fund).....	1,293.00
Fort Smith Extended Hand (Christmas Dinner).....	500.00
Fort Smith Food Bank .....	2,000.00
Fort Smith Men's Shelter (Christmas Dinner).....	500.00
Northern Lights Special Care Home (Christmas Dinner) .....	500.00
Sutherland House (Christmas Dinner & Gifts) .....	1,700.00
Fort Smith Cadets (2014 Operating Costs).....	6,000.00
Uncle Gabe's Friendship Center (Lunch Program).....	5,000.00
Fort Smith Hurricane Swim Team (Uniforms & Pool Costs).....	4,000.00

Total Donations in 2013.....\$127,666<sup>99</sup>

We look forward to continuing to support the Veterans, Seniors and Youth of Fort Smith in the future.





Chess tournament organizer Lloyd Thiessen (left) congratulates opponent Ryland Yakeleya on a hard-fought win on Sunday, Jan. 19 at Yellowknife's Aurora College.

Sports & Recreation Chess

# Yellowknifers battle it out in own ‘game of thrones’

## Chess match breaks up winter weekend with friendly competition

By MEAGAN WOHLBERG  
Avid chess players broke out their pawns, rooks and other royalty on Sunday to compete

in the fourth annual Yellowknife Chess Club tournament. Six players came out to Aurora College to strategize their

friendly attacks against one another in the for-fun adult competition. Kam So took first place in

the match, while Ryland Yakeleya got second and Lucy Pelletier third. Organizer Lloyd Thiessen,

who coordinates other school chess tournaments each year in April - he has two life-sized chess boards he uses

as demos - said he would like to see more players involved, but understands the winter is a busy time for most.



Kam So eyes up his next move in a match on Sunday during a for-fun chess tournament in Yellowknife. Six players showed up for the annual event.



Jesse Davidson strategizes his attack against Elizabeth Purchase during one of Sunday's tournament match-ups at Aurora College.

Photos: Bill Braden



# Fur fashion show brings out Fort Smith’s wild side

## ‘Gone Wild’ celebration puts spotlight on history and culture

By MEAGAN WOHLBERG

All it took was a present from Santa to spark one of Fort Smith’s most hotly anticipated events of the year, looking to celebrate the community’s talents, history and culture through one iconic item: fur.

Patti-Kay Hamilton said she received a seal skin and white fox fur hat as a Christmas gift this year, which as a former trapper herself, immediately inspired a desire to honour the trapping lifestyle and the beautiful - and useful - goods it produces.

In a matter of days, she had teamed up with friend Marnie Villeneuve and the first ever “Gone Wild” fur fashion show was born, meant to make the links between the community’s past and present and honour the subsistence trappers whose work has undeniably led to the creation of what is essentially wearable art.

“I know people who have been trapping for over 75 years, like Pi Kennedy,” Hamilton shared. “He traps lynx, he traps marten, but he’s never seen a lynx or a marten coat. So I want him sitting in that front seat when the fur coats come out. He’s very excited.”



Left to right, fur-friendly fashionistas Janie Hobart, Marnie Villeneuve and Patti-Kay Hamilton model some of the items to be proudly displayed at the upcoming “Gone Wild” event.

The idea has truly “gone wild,” says Hamilton: just the thought of putting on a fashion show has quickly morphed into an entire evening of celebration replete with food, music, educational booths and merrymaking - a volunteer effort by a powerhouse of committed ladies in the community.

A European style farmer’s market teeming with artists,

vendors and buskers will kick off the celebration, inviting the community to take part in celebrating the Northern wilderness and take a bite out of a delicious bannock burger to support the local food bank.

After the fair, the red carpets will roll out and the main event - the fashion show, featuring NWT

fur and models - will take the stage, fusing traditional with contemporary pieces of clothing to give a broad sampling of the versatility of fur as both beautiful and practical.

“It’s not just for the industry that creates luxury items. People use the furs, themselves. You think about how warm they are; this is

how people lived for generations,” said another of the event’s organizers, Janie Hobart. “All of us have some tie to it, and whether we’re still doing it or not, I think that we should recognize the people that are...It’s an occupation and it’s an honourable one.”

The evening will come to an end at the curling club lounge with a wine tasting and wild meat appetizer soiree, which Hobart said is also meant to celebrate the land and its harvesters.

“A lot of people think because they live in a very urban environment that animals are only trapped for their furs, and they don’t recognize that it is a way of living, but also all parts of the animal are used and it feeds families,” she said.

Aside from fur and food, the evening will also feature live performances by local musicians.

“It’s a real celebration of our community and our people and where we come from, and it’s also something that we take for granted because it’s just so much part of our everyday life - and yet it is really unique,” Villeneuve said. “We have really modernized people who

still incorporate tradition into their lifestyles.”

Besides being a reflection of the community, Villeneuve said the event is also a way to counter negative and false representations of the Northern fur industry put forth by celebrities like Pamela Anderson in the media, which do a lot of damage to people who trap as a source of income.

“If people don’t know the truths or aren’t educated in the field, then they’ll believe whatever they hear. Because (Anderson’s) some sort of a celebrity she gets coverage, and it’s not right and it’s not true. So my whole philosophy is, if you don’t hear two sides to an issue, you don’t know that you have a choice in what to believe,” Villeneuve said.

The event is scheduled to take place on Feb. 22 at the Fort Smith Rec Centre. Tickets, which are expected to sell out quickly, will go on sale Feb. 1 at the Rusty Raven, Anna’s Home Cooking and Northern Mac-ski-toe. All proceeds will be directed to local charity. For more information, contact Hamilton at [pkayham@gmail.com](mailto:pkayham@gmail.com) or 867-621-0804.

Arts & Culture Music

# Second annual music conference links NWT artists

## Organizer concerned artists miss out on funding opportunities

By MARIA CHURCH

Organizers of the Great Northern Music Conference, as musicians themselves, know that making a name for yourself in the NWT music scene has a unique set of challenges.

It was with that in mind that the second annual music conference held in Yellowknife last week focused on professional development, to give Northern musicians a chance to network and learn how to grow their careers.

“This year, I will admit, I have quite a few people coming in from the south, but when you are starting to build something you have to build outward before you can build within,” said Mike Filipowitsch, executive director of Music NWT and conference organizer.

“I’m bringing up some expertise that doesn’t exist up here so we build capacity and know-how and interest. People can network so they can know these people face to face to make it a little less daunting when people go to apply for funding,” he said.



Leela Gilday is one of a few musicians from the NWT who shared her story at the second annual Great Northern Music Conference in Yellowknife last week.

The conference ran Wednesday to Saturday last week in Yellowknife and covered everything from making music to self management and funding.

The agenda included a talk with social media expert Brian Thompson, a marketing consultant from Vancouver, whose

101 talk gave conference goers a run down of the burgeoning social media self-marketing opportunity for musicians.

The conference also included a panel discussion featuring Digawolf, Pat Braden and Leela Gilday, all successful musicians from the NWT, about what

it means to be a musician in the North.

Filipowitsch said the NWT’s outdoorsy environment is undoubtedly an inspiration for most artists.

“For me it’s the geography of the place; where we are located,” he said. “I think environment really plays a role in everyone

in how it shapes you, your sense of place and your sense of belonging.”

But at the same time, he said, the territory’s isolation makes it tricky for artists to network in the Canadian music industry.

“It makes it really difficult because you really need to harness certain skill sets. Social media and the internet can be your best friends when you can’t travel because traveling costs so much money,” Filipowitsch said.

Money is also more of an issue since Northern music associations are not as tuned in to funding opportunities, he said.

“We haven’t had any artists in the last, I don’t even know when, funded by FACTOR (the Foundation to Assist Canadian Talent on Records) in the NWT, so we’re missing out on a large pool of money,” Filipowitsch said.

Music NWT has been “flying under the radar” of Canada’s major funding organizations, he said,

but events like the Great Northern Music Conference are “baby steps” to putting Northern artists in the spotlight.

Representatives from the Canada Council for the Arts as well as Duncan McKie, the president of FACTOR, were flown in for the conference, and a mixer event on Friday gave attendees a chance to mingle with potential future funders.

“The fact that they are coming up here is great. It’s an opportunity for them to see Yellowknife, meet the artists, and I hope they come every year,” Filipowitsch said.

Already looking to next year’s conference, Filipowitsch said he hopes to be working with music associations in the Yukon and Nunavut with the goal of holding a pan-territorial music conference.

With the larger pool of talent, he would like to see more Northern guest speakers and experts sharing their secrets to professional development.



# Yellowknife doctor named to the Order of Canada

## Dr. Ewan Affleck calls his appointment ‘ironic’

By MARIA CHURCH

Dr. Ewan Affleck, a general practitioner in Yellowknife, laughs when he talks about his recent appointment to the Order of Canada.

It’s not a laugh of disrespect; it’s just “ironic,” he said.

Affleck, who is convinced he has an aversion to technology, received the prestigious civilian honour for his pioneer work on the NWT’s electronic medical records system.

Affleck told *The Journal* that the inspiration behind the electronic system was born out of necessity rather than a knack or even an interest in computers.

“I’m really bad at working with computers,” he shared. “My interests were more in literature and music, but the lesson in life is that you follow your passions. There are cool things that happen every day and if you follow it, sometimes it can lead you to a better place. So that’s sort of my story.”

When the doctor and his family arrived in



Photo: Tara Marchiori

Dr. Ewan Affleck has been named to the Order of Canada for his work on the territory’s Electronic Medical Records.

Yellowknife 12 years ago, he began running a weekly medical clinic at the women’s shelter.

Because the paper charts of medical treatment records could not be kept at the shelter, every week

The lesson in life is that you follow your passions. There are cool things that happen every day and if you follow it, sometimes it can lead you to a better place.

*Ewan Affleck*  
*Great Slave Medical House*

Affleck would haul an old airline trolley full of charts down Franklin Ave. to and from his office.

“I was the highest paid filing clerk in the Northwest Territories,” he joked.

Eventually he got more boxes and needed a bigger trolley.

“I said, ‘This is crazy; I need to get electronic charts.’ That’s where it all started.”

Affleck threw himself into work with the GNWT to create a territorial Electronic Medical Record (EMR) system, which would link all medical agencies in the territory, no matter how far away, to give them access to a patient’s file.

“Whether you are in Fort Smith or Ulukhaktok or wherever and you have kidney failure, you can have your nephrologist in Edmonton following your results and your blood pressure. You can have the intern in Yellowknife and the GP in Fort Smith,” Affleck explained. “They can then work together to ensure your care is good and it’s not dependent on shipping you around.”

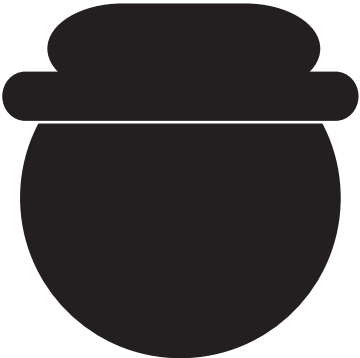
Today, Affleck continues to work on the EMR system with his counterparts in the GNWT to collect records from all territorial residents. He said the NWT is the ideal place to create a unified system for a plethora of reasons.

“We are in a better position to have everyone agree to work together. There are structural differences here compared to the provinces and even other territories that allow us to collaborate more,” he said.

“The North is a special place and I think it affords us opportunities to be creative with ideas,” Affleck continued. “If you have an idea here, certainly I’ve been able to have a creative outlet, and that’s probably the biggest gift.”

The doctor learned about his appointment to the Order of Canada late last year and will be attending a ceremony in Ottawa to accept his award sometime in 2014.

“It’s sort of intense,” Affleck said. “I feel pretty great about it.”

Read all  about it!

## Community newspaper readership remains strong

Three quarters of Canadians (73%) in non-urban centres read a community newspaper according to the 2013 study, *Connecting to Canadians with Community Newspapers*.

The survey was managed by Totum Research on behalf of the Canadian Community Newspapers Association (CCNA) with the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Canada Periodical Fund of the Department of Canadian Heritage. Telephone interviews were conducted from January to April 2013 in non-urban centres in five provinces.

The study was designed to measure readership of community newspapers in non-urban centres across Canada and examined reasons for reading community newspapers. A total of 1,000 telephone interviews were conducted with adults aged 18 or older that lived in areas with population less than 100,000, served by community newspapers. Five regions were selected (AB, SK, MB, Northern ON, NS) and 200 interviews were conducted within each. The response rate of the study was 43.2%.

## Community newspapers remain relevant

The steady readership suggests that community newspapers continue to have strong readership in today’s new media landscape. Community newspapers continue to remain relevant to local residents for news, information and advertising.

- 95% said their reason for reading community newspapers was for **Local News** or **Local Events**
- 76% are reading for the **Advertising** or the **Flyers/Inserts**
- 72% are looking for **Classified Ads, Real Estate** or **Employment ads**
- 60% read for the **Editorial**



# Take a Kid Trapping program lauded in new report

## Researcher focuses on strengths instead of weaknesses

By MARIA CHURCH

The author of a new report on Aboriginal youth wellness North of 60 is advocating a strength-based approach to solving what he says are issues too often characterized by negative statistics.

Siomonn Pulla, author of *Building on our Strengths: Aboriginal youth wellness in Canada's North*, the latest work published by the Centre for the North, told *The Journal* that it's important for programs such as the NWT's Take a Kid Trapping program be recognized for their successes.

"There's so much around the negative outcomes: high suicide rates with youth in the North, the poor educational outcomes, all these stories all focusing on the negatives," he said. "We wanted to focus on the success: What are Northern communities and Northern organizations doing?"

The report took two-years of interviewing, research and writing for Pulla, an associate professor of social sciences at Royal Roads University in Victoria, BC.



Students from Kalemi Dene school are photographed by researcher Siomonn Pulla as they examine a traditionally tanned hide during the Take a Kid Trapping program.

His greatest discovery, he said, was the wealth of programs available to youth in the North.

"Once you shift your perspective and you start looking at strength-based approaches, there is so much out there. There are so many organizations that are doing amazing work building resilience amongst youth in the North,

dealing with some of these really tough situations and working with youth. There's so many success stories," Pulla said.

Another twist for the researcher was finding out how underreported the programs are, he said.

"The surprise was how resilient these programs actually are and how we're not

actually hearing about them in the press. Why is the media always focusing on the negative stories and not telling those positive stories about success, resilience and youth involvement?"

At the same time, his research isn't looking to "put our heads in the sand," Pulla said. The report clearly states that there are tangible

concerns for youth in the North, such as higher infant mortality rates, higher instances of sexually transmitted infections, and increased rates of obesity, certain cancers, high blood pressure and nutrition-related childhood diseases.

### Local determination central to success

Research took Pulla to Yellowknife where he participated in the Take a Kid Trapping program with the Kalemi Dene school and met program creator, Guy Erasmus. His "fierce dedication" to the program is a huge part of its success, Pulla said.

"It comes down to Guy's commitment to making that program happen," he said. "He was so convinced about how important that was that he wasn't going to stand by and not let it happen."

The report profiled two other programs for Aboriginal youth in Canada's North: the Winnipeg Aboriginal Sports Achievement Centre North and the "made in Nunavut by Nunavummiut" Makimautiksat Youth

Wellness and Empowerment Camp in Iqaluit.

The crucial factor that makes them all successful is the determination behind the organization and the "trust factor," Pulla said.

"These aren't pop up programs that you can come up to the North and create overnight. It takes time. It takes dedication. It takes local connections and a sense of the programmers really being committed," he explained.

With no one-size-fits-all approach for the programming, the challenge presented now to organizations and public policy makers is how to implement similar programs in their own communities.

Eventually, Pulla said he'd like to see government of all levels start looking into strength-based approaches to wellness.

There are programs out there making a difference, he said, and the more focus there is on strengths and success, the more likely similar programs will emerge.

Read the full report online at <http://www.centreforthenorth.ca/>

### Justice Violence

# Round dance for murdered Fort Chip woman sheds light on larger issue in First Nation community

By MARIA CHURCH

In Cree culture, when someone in the community passes away, it is traditional to hold a round dance once a year for four years to honour them.

Last weekend, the Mikisew Cree First Nation in Fort Chipewyan held the first annual round dance for Amber Tuccaro, a woman whose high-profile missing persons case in 2010 led to police finding her remains two years later south of Edmonton near Leduc. Her murder case is still unsolved.

With dozens showing up for the event Saturday, held in Tuccaro's home community of Fort Chipewyan, what began as a memorial dance grew into a powerful event shedding light on missing and murdered women in Aboriginal communities.

April Eve, founder of the Stolen Sisters Awareness Movement and a member of the Mikisew Cree First Nation, attended the event and said it was the first time she's seen a round dance generate so much participation from outside the Aboriginal community.

"I think because Amber's case was so high profile, the family and the supporters of the family put a lot of pressure on the investigative arm, RCMP and Project KARE. They wouldn't let Amber's story just drift off into the back pages of the investigative file," Eve told *The Journal*. "They really pushed hard that Amber isn't just another file. She was a real person, somebody that was loved by many people."

Speaking on behalf of Vivian Tuccaro, Amber's mother and the main organizer of the event, Eve said the goal of the round dance was three-fold: to honour and remember the life of the young Tuccaro, who was 20 at the time she went missing; to raise the level of awareness of missing and murdered Aboriginal women; and to plead for justice in the murder case.

"Unfortunately these cases of our women and girls that have gone missing are far too numerous and I think the numbers really do speak for themselves," she said.

Since 2007, there have been four women missing from the Mikisew Cree First Nation alone, Eve said, including Shirley Ann Waquan, Shelly Dene and Helen Ratfat.

In an effort to make their stories and others like them known, Eve launched the Stolen Sisters Awareness Movement in 2007 from her home base in Edmonton. The grassroots movement's major initiative has been to hold annual walks raising the profile of missing and murdered Métis, Inuit, non-Status and First Nations women in Canada.

"Amber represents, unfortunately, a large number of others who have gone missing or have been victims of homicide," Eve said, adding that these cases are not always limited to women. Edward Decoin from the Mikisew community has been added to the missing persons list in Edmonton.

Community events like the round dance are important to bring Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people together in solidarity against the injustice of such disappearances, Eve

said, which have been called an underreported epidemic and human rights crisis in Canada.

In late 2013, a United Nations human rights ambassador called on Canada to hold a national inquiry into missing Aboriginal women. The federal government has thus far ignored the call.

Mikisew's leaders and the community of Fort

Chipewyan helped to make sure Tuccaro's case was not one of the forgotten, Eve said.

"It really does take a community," she said.

Tuccaro's is still an unsolved homicide case, but efforts were renewed late last year to find justice. In November, RCMP put up billboards around Leduc with a photo of Tuccaro hoping to catch the eye of anyone with information about the

case, particularly in helping to identify a voice recording of a man that is believed to be the last person to have seen Tuccaro alive.

The recording is available at [www.kare.ca](http://www.kare.ca) and [www.albertamissingpersons.ca](http://www.albertamissingpersons.ca).

Those with any related information are asked to call Project KARE toll free at 1-877-412-KARE (5273) or Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477).



## Town of Fort Smith Notice to Residents

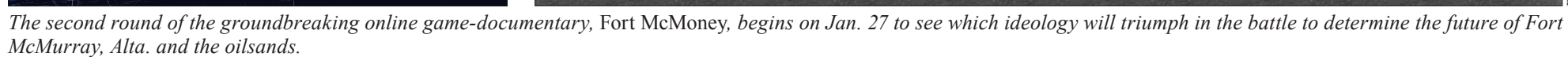
### Prepayment of Utility Charges

Residential users and small business users (5 or less employees) of the Water and Sewer system may prepay eleven (11) months and have the twelfth (12) month free. This does not include excess charges. Prepaid accounts are still subject to meter readings on over usage.

### DEADLINE:

5:00 PM, FEBRUARY 1, 2014





# Environment ‘wins’ in first round of *Fort McMoney*

## *Online game-documentary raises questions about resource economy*





# The future of Canadian pipelines and protests:

## Experts forecast energy policy moves in 2014

*The Journal* interviews two experts, one in energy economics and another in public policy, to gain insight into what 2014 could bring for Canadian oil and gas production and government decisions in light of increasing First Nations protests. Paul Precht is an energy economist and the founder of Paul Precht Energy Economics based in Edmonton, Alta. André Plourde is the dean of the Faculty of Public Affairs at Carleton University in Ottawa.

By MARIA CHURCH



Paul Precht

**Northern Journal:** What are the numbers showing for oil and gas drilling in Alberta last year? Is there any indication of a slowdown or future boom in 2014?

**Precht:** Drilling is actually holding up pretty well. I don't have final numbers but it looks like 2013 may be still a fairly strong year and rough equivalent with preceding years. Land sale numbers for the province of Alberta are substantively down and that would be indication of future drilling intentions and also evaluation of any discoveries they might find from that drilling. It would suggest that drilling could go down in the future.

**NJ:** What is possibly behind the drop in land sales?

**Precht:** Demand for oil is not growing in the Western economies and supply is growing in particular in places like the United States and Canada. Where previously the market was driven by Asian demand, that is continuing, but even that is slowing down.

**NJ:** Why?

**Precht:** Oil prices have been high for the better part of a decade, so there is a price effect. People want to try and economize. The other thing is, in developed countries you reach a maturity in terms of energy consumption and you're just not consuming as much

energy in terms of your general lifestyle, particularly oil.

**NJ:** What does that mean for oil producers?

**Precht:** I'm guessing that some investors may be seeing it that way as well and that might account for the slowdown. Maybe we'll even see slowdown in oilsands. I'm talking about investment, and that could eventually have impact on production. It will be interesting to watch this year in terms of how activities and investment levels hold.

**NJ:** Do you think there will be an effect on Canadian public policy?

**Precht:** Certainly Canada will want to see the markets to Asia opened up. There is a lot of government policy pressure towards seeing that (Northern) Gateway pipeline built. It's been approved by the (National Energy Board) and I have no doubt that it will be approved by the government of Canada, but there is still an awful lot of social resistance and First Nation resistance. Having gotten these regulatory approvals, it's still not necessary a slam dunk in my mind that it is necessarily going to happen yet.



André Plourde

**Northern Journal:** Has First Nations and civil protest against the oil and gas industry been noticeably growing across the country?

**Plourde:** I think in a sense it's always been there, but now there is a clearer focus. There are projects that are being considered where the issues are much clearer. The precedents and the court cases have been accumulating over time.

**NJ:** Any sweeping predictions for what effect the increasing pressure from First Nations will have on government policy concerning the oil industry in 2014?

**Plourde:** Over the course of the year, I think we should expect some kind of development on the front of relationships between government, the oil and gas industry and First Nations. I think this has been brewing for some time. I think devolution in the NWT will make this almost inevitable. That's almost the wrong word, but it will create an environment where this issue will need to be addressed in some sense.

**NJ:** What are your thoughts on pipeline development in Canada?

**Plourde:** There are probably four projects on the go that people will be pushing for: Keystone, the reversal of Line 9B (in southern Ontario), Energy East and the Northern Gateway. I'd be surprised if we didn't have a decision on Keystone in the course of the next year. A decision on Line 9 will also be coming in the next year. I'm less sure about Energy East and the Northern Gateway because they are longer term.

**NJ:** Do First Nations have a shot at affecting those decisions?

**Plourde:** The political environment of that is so difficult to understand. Can we think of any single First Nation as having a veto right? If you say, "not on my land," even if everybody else agrees, will you hold up a project? I think in the current environment, from a public policy perspective, that is something people are going to be very sensitive about because we don't have a good understanding of what the actual obligations are from a legal perspective.

**NJ:** Is that because there are no clear precedents?

**Plourde:** In part. I think if I were pushing for a particular policy direction it would be for the federal government to get a better understanding of what the courts think these obligations are. From a public policy perspective that is really important.

**NJ:** Is that something that could happen in 2014?

**Plourde:** I don't think so; that is something that will be long term. I think it will build. I think we will be much more aware of issues like that over the course of the year.

# Thank you

Special thanks to all the people and organizations listed below who contributed to the success of the 2013 Single Parents' Christmas Dinner hosted by Sutherland House.

Fort Smith Legion Branch #239  
Métis Local #50  
Smith's Landing First Nation  
Salt River First Nation  
Fort Smith RCMP  
Northern Journal  
Wally's Drugstore  
Wood Buffalo Inn  
Freund's Building Supplies  
Berro's  
Field's Stores  
Pelican Rapids Inn  
TDC

A Touch of Heaven  
Wood Buffalo Inn  
Women's Corrections  
River Ridge  
Harold Gambler  
Mike Keizer  
Ronnie & Cindy Schaefer  
Lynette Blesse  
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Your help has been greatly appreciated!



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**MID-WINTER CONSIGNMENT SALE.** January 25, 10 a.m., Sandhills Community Hall, Spruce Grove. Coin, antiques & collectibles, leather furniture, framed art, more. Details at: www.spectrumauctioneering.com. Spectrum Auctioneering 780-903-9393.

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### Coming Events

**QUALITY ASSURANCE COURSE** for Health Canada's Commercial Marijuana Program. February 22 & 23, Best Western Hotel, Kelowna, BC. Tickets: www.greenlineacademy.com or 1-855-860-8611 or 250-870-1882.

### Employment Opportunities

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# EMPLOYMENT, TENDERS AND LEGAL NOTICES



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Downtown, Yellowknife – SC794674,  
Inuvik – SC794675,  
Norman Wells – SC794676,  
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**– Various Communities, NT –**

The Northwest Territories Liquor Commission (NWTLC) is seeking proposals from qualified individuals or businesses for the provision and operation of a liquor store in Yellowknife (2), Inuvik, Norman Wells and Fort Simpson, NT. Sealed proposals can be addressed to any of the following locations:

Contracts Administrator, Procurement Shared Services, Public Works and Services, GNWT, 5009 – 49<sup>th</sup> Street, Yellowknife, NT X1A 2L9;

Contracts Administrator, Public Works and Services, Bag Service # 1, Inuvik, NT (Delivered to 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor GNWT Building, 106 Veterans Way, Inuvik, NT X0E 0T0);

Contracts Administrator, Public Works and Services, Suite 301 – 76 Capital Drive, Hay River, NT X0E 1G2

and must be received prior to:

**3:00 PM, LOCAL TIME, FEBRUARY 27, 2014.**

Interested proponents may obtain proposal documents from the Yellowknife office and the contact below as of January 22, 2014.

**General inquiries to:** Contracts Administrator  
Procurement Shared Services  
Government of the NWT  
Phone: (867) 873-7230  
E-mail: [pwstenders@gov.nt.ca](mailto:pwstenders@gov.nt.ca)

The GNWT Business Incentive Policy and Chapter 5 of the Agreement on Internal Trade will apply to this procurement.

*For contract opportunities visit [www.contractregistry.nt.ca](http://www.contractregistry.nt.ca)*

### Independent Commission to Review MLAs Compensation and Benefits

**What do you think about MLAs Salaries and Benefits?**

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To tell the Commission what you think please contact the Commission at (867) 920-4151 or by email at [info@nwtmlapay.ca](mailto:info@nwtmlapay.ca).

The Commission also encourages written submissions. These can be emailed to [info@nwtmlapay.ca](mailto:info@nwtmlapay.ca), faxed to (867) 920-4252, or mailed to:

Independent Commission to Review MLAs' Compensation and Benefits  
Box 2910,  
Yellowknife, NT  
X1A 2R2

Deadline for submissions is January 31, 2014

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**3:00 PM, LOCAL TIME, FEBRUARY 3, 2014.**

Contractors may obtain tender documents from the above address as of January 20, 2014.

**General inquiries to:** Charlene Lloyd  
Phone: (867) 920-8001

**Technical inquiries to:** Gilles Roy  
Phone: (867) 874-5019

The GNWT Business Incentive Policy and Chapter 5 of the Agreement on Internal Trade will apply to this procurement.

*For contract opportunities visit [www.contractregistry.nt.ca](http://www.contractregistry.nt.ca)*

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"I think it's something fun that I can do in the community and get to know some of the kids. Then in my other hat as a police officer, when they see me out there, it's not quite as intimidating," she said.

"It's a unique experience to come from the North and I am very proud of my heritage," Cockney said. "Thanks to all my fans in NWT and hopefully I'll be able to bring a medal up North this spring!"





Teammates Brittany Brasser and Bruce McArthur, filling in for Nick Kaeser, assess the very packed situation in the house on Friday night.



Tim McDonald asks his partner Alma McDonald for more ice on a shot during Friday night's play.



Alma McDonald calls a shot for her partner Tim.

Photos: Meagan Wohlberg

**Sports & Recreation Curling**

# NWT curlers investigate new play style with mixed doubles

## Fort Smith hosts second ever territorial mixed doubles curling bonspiel

By MEAGAN WOHLBERG

A new style of play is picking up momentum on curling ice across the territory, with the NWT hosting its second ever territorial mixed doubles curling championships in Fort Smith over the weekend. Two teams, both from Fort Smith, came out last week to compete in the modified game, featuring different rules and challenges set up by previously arranged rocks, limited rock takeouts and minimal sweeping.

Alma McDonald, 7-5, 11-2 and 9-5 respectively. Bruce McArthur filled in for Kaeser during the Friday night game after Kaeser was put on jury duty. Kaeser and Brasser will now head to Ottawa in March for the second ever national mixed doubles tournament. Last year, the Moyer team from Yellowknife - which hosted the first ever territorials - traveled down to Leduc, Alta. for the inaugural Canadian championships. Janie Hobart, who organized and officiated last

per team who take turns throwing six rocks and skipping, while sharing the task of sweeping. Two rocks are already set up - one in the centre between the hog line and house, as a guard, and the other sitting in the top half of the button. Teams are not permitted to remove any rocks until the fourth is thrown. "There's different strategies you have to employ as compared to regular play," Hobart said of the game's appeal. "Because there are already two positioned rocks there and because of the modified three guard zone rule, where you can't take any rocks out in the first three rocks thrown, it means that there's an awful lot of rocks in play. For some people that's a switch in how they play, because some people like to play a really clean game." The new take on the classic Canadian sport is gaining popularity in Fort Smith, with seven teams making up the brand new Monday night mixed doubles league. Hobart said more people would have liked to compete in the territorials, but couldn't due to scheduling issues. Based on the typical rotation, next year's

territorials will likely take place in Inuvik, where Hobart said she would like to see teams from Yellowknife and the South Slave join those from the Beaufort Delta. "I think this is something, too, that club-wise we're going to have to do more advertising to get more people out, because it is a really interesting new format," she said. "We have to do a bit more promotion of the actual format to encourage more curlers."

I think this is something, too, that club-wise we're going to have to do more advertising to get more people out, because it is a really interesting new format.

*Janie Hobart  
Fort Smith Curling Club*

Though it was their first time partnering, Nick Kaeser and Brittany Brasser triumphed in the best of five tournament, winning Thursday's, Friday's and Saturday morning's games against husband-wife pair Tim and

week's bonspiel, said there was great play by both teams, making games very interesting to watch for enthusiasts and those new to the game alike. Unlike a regular game, there are only two people

## SPORTS BRIEFS

### Yellowknife and Hay River face off in Northern Hockey Challenge

Hockey rivalry reignited in Hay River last weekend between Hay River and Yellowknife during the much anticipated mini Northern Hockey Challenge. When the puck hit the ice on Friday, the first game of the weekend's play, fans were packing the Hay River arena to watch the two adult teams duel it out. The game ran into the early morning due to a three-hour delay in starting and the match was called despite a tied score. Saturday's game saw Hay River step it up and win with a whopping 6-0. Sunday's play went back and forth between the two teams until Hay River tied it up 4-4 late in the game, only to see Yellowknife score once again to win the game. Both teams will face off again in Yellowknife on February 7-9.

### Brendan Green sees personal best at Biathlon World Cup race

Hay River's biathlete and recently announced Olympian broke a personal record at last week's Biathlon World Cup races in Antholz, Italy. The 27 year-old skier, who suffered a crippling back injury last year, placed eighth out of 104 of the world's top athletes during the 10-km Sprint last Friday. Green's fans in the NWT, along with Sport North Federation, have teamed up to promote a "Green Day" across the territory on Feb. 7, asking fans to wear green and cheer for the biathlete for the launch of the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia. The town of Hay River will be telecasting Green's first Olympic race, scheduled for 7:30 a.m. on Saturday, Feb. 8, at the Don Stewart community centre.



### Walk to Tuk competition up and running again

The fourth annual Walk to Tuk competition has participants from across the territory lacing up for the competition again this year with a prize that NWT Recreation and Parks Association organizers say will "sweep you off your feet." The Walk to Tuk competition, in its fourth year running, asks teams of participants to walk the distance of the Mackenzie River from Fort Providence to Tuktoyaktuk - a total of 1,685 km. Up for grabs to the team that can walk to Tuk the fastest is a flight voucher from First Air. Members of the winning team will be entered in a draw to win the voucher. The competition, which started Jan. 6, wraps up on Mar. 3. To follow the competition, go online to <http://www.nwtrpa.org/walk-to-tuk.htm>.

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**Benjamin Moore**  
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# Yukon fails to attract oil and gas explorers

## Government says Yukon has less resources to offer than NWT

By MARY WALDEN

For the second time running, the Yukon government’s call for interest from the oil and gas exploration industry has gone unheeded.

Twice a year companies can ask for areas to be opened to exploration. But the latest Jan. 8 deadline came and went and not a single “request for postings” was submitted.

That’s not “out of the norm,” said oil and gas branch director Ron Sumanik.

There have been other dry spells since the territory took control of its onshore resources, he said. It’s not an easy place to do business and, compared to its neighbours like the NWT, the Yukon has less to offer in terms of estimated oil and gas potential.

“So you’re farther away from the market, costs to explore are higher in the North and the size of the prize,

“In our view there is not a moratorium,” Sumanik said. “We have the ability to make oil and gas resources available in the portion of the Kaska traditional territory that lies within Yukon. At this point - since we removed, repealed the section 13 consent provision - we have chosen not to exercise that.”

Both the Peel Plateau and Bonnet Plume basins are also currently out of play. They’ve been closed to industry since 2010 to allow the government and First Nations to complete a land use plan for the watershed. There’s still no final plan and the ban was due to expire Jan. 21.

As for the Whitehorse Trough – an area stretching from Carcross to Carmacks which is home to the majority of the Yukon’s population – the government “temporarily

Environment Minister Currie Dixon, Watson Lake MLA Patti McLeod and Vuntut Gwitchin MLA Darius Elias.

NDP MLAs Jim Tredger and Lois Moorcroft, along with Klondike MLA and interim Liberal leader Sandy Silver, round out the roster.

The committee recently toured an Alberta fracking site. It’s expected to soon hold public hearings in Whitehorse, Old Crow and Watson Lake.

It’s supposed to report its findings back to the legislature this spring.

Right now the Yukon’s only oil and gas activity is being done by Calgary-based Northern Cross, a company controlled by China’s state-owned CNOOC. It’s doing an intensive 3-D seismic program on its Eagle Plains permits, near the Dempster Highway.

There’s been no production at the territory’s only gas field, Kotaneelee, located in the southeast corner near the NWT border, since 2012.

The Yukon’s next request for oil and gas postings closes on July 9.

So you’re farther away from the market, costs to explore are higher in the North and the size of the prize, for lack of a better term, is less than some other global or Canadian jurisdictions.

*Ron Sumanik  
Yukon Government*

for lack of a better term, is less than some other global or Canadian jurisdictions,” Sumanik said.

And then there’s the question of land – there aren’t many places to look in the Yukon right now.

Only two of the territory’s eight sedimentary basins were open for requests during this latest round – portions of Eagle Plains not already taken or protected and the nearby Kandik basin.

The much-sought-after Liard basin, tucked away in the southeast corner, is still off limits, he said.

Even though it’s been more than a year since the government stripped the region’s Kaska First Nations of their oil and gas veto power, the two sides remain at odds over how to deal with new development.

The Kaska have never signed a land claim. In the wake of the government’s controversial move, they threatened court action and declared a resource moratorium.

suspended” new dispositions in 2012 in response to public outrage over potential development.

The Yukon’s temporary ban on fracking also contributes to the lack of industry interest, Sumanik said.

“There is no question we have feedback from industry that the hydraulic fracturing issue is part of the concern about investing in the Yukon,” he said.

Until a committee of MLAs, who were appointed last year to study the risks and benefits of fracking, decides whether the contentious practice should be allowed or not, companies wouldn’t be able to assess both conventional and unconventional possibilities.

“But then at least there will be certainty one way or the other, and they will know, with certainty, what the Yukon has to offer,” he said.

The six-member committee includes three Yukon Party government reps – Economic Development and

## The D  l  n   Final Self-Government Agreement has been completed and will be put to a vote in **March 2014**.

Eligible voters and other community members are invited to:

- meet the negotiators
- learn about the agreement
- ask questions

### Information Open Houses are planned for:

#### Yellowknife

Tuesday, Jan. 28  
Elks Hall

Noon - 1:00 pm  
Lunch

1:00 - 6:00 pm  
Open House

6:00 - 7:30 pm  
Dinner

#### Fort Smith

Wednesday, Jan. 29  
Museum

3:00 - 6:00 pm  
Snacks and refreshments

6:00 - 7:30 pm  
Dinner / Info Session



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