

Devolution complicates forming national park

First Nation negotiators working to establish the Thaidene Nene national park near Lutsel K'e face new hurdles with devolution. See page 2.



Regulator links oilsands emissions to health issues

An Alberta Energy Regulatorled inquiry into the impact of oilsands emissions has made a link to health problems in the Peace River area. See page 8.



Arctic Council unpacks oil, shipping regulations

The Arctic Council will review international offshore oil and shipping regulations in anticipation of increasing interest in Northern waters. See page 9.



AWG 2018: South Slave versus Beaufort Delta

With the NWT scheduled to host the 2018 Arctic Winter Games, the South Slave and Beaufort Delta are looking to make host bids. See page 23.





Keenan Carpenter leads the Inuvik Drummers and Dancers in front of a packed house at East Three School Friday night to kick off the 57th Muskrat Jamboree with a performance at the opening ceremonies. The annual spring festival saw hundreds celebrate the wonderfully warm temperatures. See page 13.

Public demands participation in GNWT's plan to 'devolve, then evolve'

Residents in the Northwest Territories are pushing for a full public review of the devolution bills passed over the last month now that the devolution effective date of Apr. 1 has come and gone.

Premier Bob McLeod promised a legislative review of the 10 devolution bills recently passed in the House following concern that the Apr. 1 deadline precluded the legislation from undergoing the regular process, which provides for public comment.

While officials from the GNWT could not yet say what the process and schedule would look like for the review, others outside the government

By MEAGAN WOHLBERG are already mobilizing their in the last days of the sitting," case for specific changes to O'Reilly said. many of the bills.

> Kevin O'Reilly of Alternatives North sent a letter to the premier last week asking for details on the promised "devolve, then evolve" process and providing commentary on several of the bills, which mirror pieces of federal legislation in place prior to devolution.

> 'We recognize that there's been a whole bunch of devolution bills passed in the last sitting of the assembly, virtually all of which didn't go through any kind of public review...I think there was only three or four bills that were available and then they all sort of got crammed through

According to Weledeh MLA Bob Bromley, similar concerns have been coming from his constituents

The bills in question include acts on reindeer, archaeological sites, the Surface Rights Board, petroleum resources, NWT lands, waters and oil and gas operations, among others.

Though a few were tabled in time to allow the regular review process to take place, including a full review by committee and a public hearing, the majority were delayed by last-minute royal assent given to the federal devolution act, which could have impacted territorial legislation.

communications officer for the GNWT department of the Executive, said links to all the devolution bills are now online and open for public comment.

Because the legislation was just very recently passed, Holsapple said the government is still working out how a review would or could take place, but said the department will investigate the type and amount of public interest over the next six months to determine how extensive the review process will be.

"We're still in early, early days, so we kind of want to gauge the scope of the interest. We have a process for doing all of our legislative reviews,

Megan Holsapple, senior and it can be very technical or it can take a long time," she said. "If what we're seeing is just a lot of questions on how something works, those are easily answered. We just need to see what the response is at this point."

She said public feedback on the devolution bills, like all territorial legislation, is welcome and encouraged.

"It's quite normal for us to be looking at legislation and seeing how we can improve it," she said. "Public feedback is so important. We're a public government. We need people who are interested in public legislation to be letting us know what they want to see in our laws."

See Public on page 3.

NEWS BRIEFS

Hwy. 63 construction moves north of Fort McMurray

Alberta Transportation is warning of minor delays on the highway north of Fort McMurray now that twinning construction on Hwy. 63 has begun just north of the Taiga Nova intersection. Construction launched north of the city on Apr. 2 and is expected to run until mid-May as crews widen the existing southbound lanes for roughly 1 km in order to continue work on the \$150-million Parsons Creek Interchange. Once the southbound paving is complete, traffic will be diverted onto the new lanes while the northbound lanes are widened. The \$1-billion Hwy. 63 twinning project has been in progress since 2005 and is slated for completion in 2016.

Fort Chipewyan winter road closes, gravel weight restrictions begin

As of Apr. 8, the winter road from Fort Smith to Fort Chipewyan through Wood Buffalo National Park is closed to all traffic for the spring, summer and fall season, according to the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo. The winter road was originally limited to light traffic under 5,000 kg on Apr. 6, but warmer temperatures on the weekend sped up melting on the delta and forced the municipality to close the road entirely by Tuesday. A weight restriction of 75 per cent of the legal load limit on all gravel roads in the municipality is scheduled for Apr. 14 to prevent road damage.

Dominion Diamonds' profits drop for third consecutive quarter

Toronto-based precious gem company Dominion Diamonds is reporting a profit loss for the third consecutive quarter in 2013. The company, which owns Ekati and Diavik diamond mines and recently moved its senior management headquarters to Yellowknife, reported to shareholders a \$7.8-million loss or \$0.09 a share in the last quarter of last year. The company says initial numbers show rough diamond prices rose in early 2014 and the market is expected to continue improving. In November, Dominion Diamonds submitted a proposal to expand its Ekati mine by drilling two new kimberlite pipes to replace the current ones, which will be exhausted by 2019. The application is under review.



Negotiators for the Lutsel K'e Dene First Nation say the transfer of land from the federal to the territorial government could delay the creation of the Thaidene Nene national park reserve around the East Arm of Great Slave Lake.

Politics Devolution

Devolution could pose challenge to forming national park

By MEAGAN WOHLBERG

With responsibility for crown land changing hands last week through devolution, First Nation negotiators working to establish the Thaidene Nene national park near Lutsel K'e now have an extra party

to please before the protected area can be created.

The territorial government inherited administrative control over the public lands around the East Arm of Great Slave Lake that have been under negotiation between Parks Canada and the Lutsel K'e Dene First Nation (LKDFN) for 30 years on Apr. 1.

Federal and First Nation negotiators had nearly sealed the deal on the creation of the national park, but the jurisdictional shuffle has created an added challenge for the park's formation due to GNWT concerns about the park's size, measuring more than 33,500 square-km.

While the GNWT has yet to engage with LKDFN in any interest-based negotiations, conversations have taken place over the last year in anticipation of devolution, wherein the GNWT has expressed concern about the boundaries of the park and the legislation that will protect it, according to Stephen Ellis, a member of the negotiating team for LKDFN.

"The GNWT's been quite clear that part of the reason for devolution was to increase territorial jurisdiction over land and resources, and anything that's captured within a national park reserve is definitely not under territorial jurisdiction," Ellis said.

Though officials with the GNWT said the federal government retains the right to expropriate whatever land they want for the park, Ellis said it is likely the GNWT will have to support whatever final boundary is drawn up for the park to be approved.

"What the GNWT has clearly articulated both to the First Nation and certainly to Canada is:

1) We support the creation of Thaidene Nene national park reserve; 2) We think the current

area of interest is too big - perhaps even much too big...; and 3) we'd be quite interested in a national park reserve of smaller size with what they're calling 'abutting territorial conservation tools' protecting other aspects of Thaidene Nene."

Ellis said the GNWT has yet to lay out details on its preferred legal framework for the proposed park, which could include something like a zone around a smaller national park area incorporating territorial parks legislation.

"If they're willing to do better than what the feds will do and use Northern ways of doing things (true indigenous partnerships, care and respect for Though the original land withdrawal for the proposed park expired on Mar. 31 this year, a two-year extension was granted by the federal government and mirrored by the GNWT, protecting the area until Apr. 1, 2016.

A mineral and energy resource assessment was done for the proposed park reserve in 2013, the details of which showed most feasible deposits lay outside or on the boundary of the proposed park, though some pockets of gold, copper and uranium could be prospective. Hydrocarbon potential was dismissed entirely.

The findings showed most of the area's viable resource potential to be located in the 10

I think we can come up with a boundary that works for them, works for Canada, works for the First Nation.

> Stephen Ellis Lutsel K'e Dene First Nation

environment, etc.), then we're happy to talk, but if the GNWT's only talking about much diminished protection and increased cabinet control as opposed to First Nation partnership, then that would certainly give the First Nation a fair amount of pause," Ellis said.

Parks Canada and LKDFN have agreed to a co-management arrangement for the park, which houses sensitive watersheds, caribou calving grounds and sacred cultural sites. The two parties signed a draft establishment agreement in February 2013, and the federal government is now in consultation with the Northwest Territory Métis Nation, whose traditional territory overlaps that of LKDFN's, about the park's creation.

square-km area around Gahcho Kue - the site of a newly approved diamond mine - located just outside of or on the proposed park boundary

"There's probably not a huge amount of contentious mineral deposits within the boundary right now that we need to worry about," Ellis said, adding that the national park itself will be an economic driver for the territory.

Ellis said he hopes the First Nation and GNWT can come to an agreement on the boundary within a year.

"I think we can come up with a boundary that works for them, works for Canada, works for the First Nation; it's just are they willing to go there and make a decision on this," he said.



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GNWT marks Devolution Day, transfer of power

By JACK DANYLCHUK

Despite relegating Apr. 1 to the status of just another day at the office, the territorial government found ways to mark the arrival of devolution and the transfer of power from Ottawa to politicians in the Northwest Territories afterall.

Resource royalties loom large in the government's reasons for pushing devolution forward, and Dave Ramsay, minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, turned the first mineral claim into a media event.

"Today is a coming of age for the territory," Ramsay proclaimed, as Lou Covello, past-president of the NWT and Yukon Chamber of Mines, turned over a cheque for \$937.50 for three mineral claims on 3,758 hectares, about 350 km north of Yellowknife.

"We have our hands, today, firmly on the controls of environment and resource development in the Territories," said Ramsay, who will head the new regulator replacing the land and water boards that have overseen resource extraction projects in the Northwest Territories.

Premier Bob McLeod marked Apr. 1 with a press release extolling the virtues of devolution, which he said



Premier Bob McLeod welcomes more than 100 new employees who left the federal public service to join the ranks of the government of the Northwest Territories at an informal ceremony in the Great Hall of the Legislature last Wednesday.

"makes Northerners responsible for decisions that were previously made in Ottawa."

Despite expressions of discontent with devolution among Aboriginal leaders, McLeod said the new "Intergovernmental Council will ensure our environment is protected, (and) our economy is strong." "New territorial legislation that came into effect today gives the GNWT the authority for inspections, enforcement and leasing on territorial lands. The GNWT will now manage and regulate the development of minerals, oil and gas," McLeod said, declaring: "We are now in control of our own future."

Last Wednesday, McLeod welcomed 130 new territorial government employees at a brief ceremony in the Great Hall of the Legislative Assembly.

"You have an opportunity to become part of our coming success," said McLeod, who served in the federal and territorial public service before entering political life. "Our government worked hard for devolution. We wanted to make sure there was a seamless transition; we needed to transfer the corporate knowledge that made programs work. That meant making sure as many staff as possible came over to our government."

Almost 100 per cent of former Aboriginal and

Northern Affairs Canada employees who received job offers from the territorial government accepted them, McLeod said.

"This speaks to our government's preparation and your commitment to serving the people of the Northwest Territories," he said at the welcoming ceremony.

Politics Devolution

Public feedback on bills already submitted

Continued from page 1.

Alternatives North, which has already made a submission, wants to see specific changes made to the legislation now that it is under territorial control to improve upon past problems with federal laws.

"We've done a lot of complaining about how the feds managed our lands and resources over the years, and now that we've got control of it, how are we going to do that any differently?" O'Reilly asked.

For instance, when it comes to the NWT Lands Act and Petroleum Resources Act, O'Reilly would like to see several changes made.

"We think there are a number of things in the legislation that was passed that clearly could and should be improved upon: things like mandatory requirements for financial security; mandatory requirements for closure plans; perhaps rethinking the free entry system when it comes to mineral staking," he said.

Under the Lands Act, cabinet has the power to allow

We've done a lot of complaining about how the feds managed our lands and resources over the years, and now that we've got control of it, how are we going to do that any differently?

> Kevin O'Reilly Alternatives North

developers to avoid putting up financial securities, which O'Reilly says is "not in the public interest."

The new laws also make a cabinet minister responsible for oil and gas regulation, which O'Reilly said should not have been done without public input.

"We are of the firm view that oil and gas decisions and management should be taken out of the political realm and placed with an independent board," Alternatives North suggests in its submission.

O'Reilly said he wants the opportunity to be able to bring those concerns to committee through a full, public hearing process, and to also have the public be included in the planned policy review aimed at aligning land management policies to ensure they reflect Northern principles.

"We're worried that it might be ratcheted down to some type of internal review and that's not appropriate," O'Reilly said. "That's not what the premier has committed to in the House when these bills were being marched through."



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Advertising Deadlines

Display ad deadline is Thursday at 4:00 p.m. Classified ad deadline is Thursday at 5:00 p.m. Email: ads@norj.ca

Subscription Rates (867) 872-3000

Prices include GST. \$47.25 in Fort Smith; \$52.50 elsewhere in Canada; \$105 in the USA; overseas \$164.30.

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Published weekly by Cascade Publishing Ltd.

Printed on recycled newsprint with vegetable ink at Wainwright Star Chronicle.

Stephen Harper all-powerful

Stephen Harper runs Canada's government system with an iron hand. His party, with its solid majority, dominates Parliament. During his seven years in power, Harper has taken advantage of Senate appointments so his Conservatives control that branch "of sober second thought," as well. His own MPs complain that in Canada's version of an executive branch, the PMO (Prime Minister's office) staff have far too much power and influence. The judiciary is the remaining bastion Harper does not run - but he is working on that. Efforts to appoint sympathetic judges to courts across the country are ongoing.

Democracies, with built in checks and balances, are structured so that no one leader can ever take complete control. Typically one branch of government has a veto over the other so that they have to work together. Somehow that has broken down over time in Canada. Stephen Harper has taken advantage, consolidated power and is re-making Canada in his conservative image.

Who will be the next Prime Minister?

Have you watched the Conservative attack ads against Justin Trudeau? He is depicted as sleazy, a person of poor judgement, by inference someone who does not have much intellectual capacity - certainly not prime minister material. Trudeau is growing in popularity and has been identified by the Conservatives as their number one threat. Will their attempt to discredit him work? They are already campaigning for an election that is 18 months away.

If Jack Layton had not been so cruelly removed from the scene by cancer, those ads would be about him. He would be the big threat. Layton had the leadership of Canada in his sights. His 106 seats - the most ever for the NDP, the most women, the youngest MPs of any party, solid in Quebec - all so commendable. He consolidated the Maritimes and made inroads into Western Canada. He was on a roll.

Harper has been dogged by controversy, and growing numbers of an often angry public are astounded by the way he manhandles Parliament, aghast at his agenda against the environment. Layton would have looked like a saint next to him - the one always smiling, positive; the other frumpy and controlling.

It may be that recent polls in his favour do not reflect the popularity of Trudeau as much as they do the Canadian public's concern about Harper's slicing and dicing ways. If the public is growing unhappy with him, anti-Trudeau ads by the Conservatives might backfire. If their polling drops further, it will be very bad news - for them.

Canadians will go to the polls to elect a new prime minister on Monday, Oct. 19, 2015, a year and a half from now, yet there is already excitement about the prospects of the looming battle. The campaign has already begun. We Canadians love our politics.

If a federal election were called today, who do you think would win and how then would the parties stack up in the House of Commons? Given the lay of the current political landscape, a minority Conservative government would likely result.

The Conservatives have been in power since 2006 and are getting long in the tooth. They have been hurt too often from within and their aura of righteousness and entitlement is not unlike that of the Liberals when they were given the old heave-ho by Canadians seven years ago. If they don't turn around the growing opposition, they have the most to lose.

What of the chances of the New Democrats under Tom Mulcair? He is relentlessly fervent as an opposition leader, his MPs have been stalwart performers and devoid of controversy; but he has to show that his party is more than simply defined in terms of what the Conservatives are not.

He is seen as stodgy by Canadians. If he is to be the future prime minister, he has to loosen up and show he and his party have a vision worth voting for.

There is good reason why the Conservatives are so worried about Trudeau. He is the one leader that has popular appeal, the only bright light among the three. With only 34 seats in parliament and nowhere to go but up, he has to prove himself. The wait for that among Canadians is almost audible.

What would our country end up with? Very likely embattled and reduced Conservative ranks, the NDP struggling to maintain its current strength and a surge by the Liberals. With the three parties close in size and the Conservatives slightly in the lead, we would get a minority government.

It is not a bad prospect. There are some really beneficial things about having a minority government. The Conservatives would be reined in, for one, no longer able to dominate, forced to work with other parties - the way parliamentary democracy should be. The Liberals would be in striving mode, an emerging force, poised, much as the NDP was after the election in 2011.

It all has great possibilities. Anything would be better than the rancour and oppressiveness that characterize our government now. We can surely do better than that.





Brigette DePape, the former "rogue page" who made headlines with her "Stop Harper" sign in Parliament in 2011, was in Yellowknife on the weekend leading a workshop on creative and effective grassroots activism. The events, sponsored by the NWT Council of Canadians, included a speaking engagement on Friday night at Northern United Place, where DePape spoke about ways to stimulate social and political change.

WEATHER Yellowknife **Fort Smith Inuvik Hay River** Weekly Norms: Weekly Norms: Low-9°C Low -20°C High -2°C High 4°C High -9°C Low -13°C High 1°C Low -10°C

Canadians for Venezuela democracy

Editor

We are planning to send a team of human rights experts, political and community advocates to Venezuela.

The crisis in Venezuela is approaching the three month mark and we need to hold President Maduro and his group of thugs accountable.

In Canada we [Canadian Parliament on March 27] were able to pass a

unanimous decision calling on Maduro to stop the violence against the people of Venezuela.

I am pleased to announce that effective immediately I have accepted and agreed to head the G20 Human Rights organization as their chairperson.

A report will have to be written and then presented to the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva holding Maduro responsible for his actions in Venezuela (similar to what we had done for Sri Lanka).

Please ask your friends and family to sign the ePetition and send a Message to the G20 leaders in the world to support our engagement of UNHRC (www. http://g20humanrights.com/venezuela)

Thank you, Hon. Jim Karygiannis Editor's note: Not everyone in Canada agrees with this approach. Some feel it is interference in Venezuela's left wing "revolution." (See http://venezuelanalysis.com/donate). Jim Karygiannis is a Liberal Member of Parliament from Ontario. He recently announced his resignation after 26 years in Parliament and will run for Toronto city council. (http://www.karygiannismp.com)

Love nature?

The Nature Conservancy of Canada is inviting Canadians to contribute to protecting local sensitive natural areas.

A recent poll found 94 per cent of Canadians value protected natural areas close to where they live, with 91 per cent using them for personal enjoyment.

Conservation Volunteers was established as a handson, educational volunteer program that promotes

conservation successes. It engages nature enthusiasts in the organization's onthe-ground work, hosting a wide-range of outdoor events from coast to coast. Past events have included counting rare species like bluebirds in British Columbia, removing invasive species, surveying waterfowl populations, cleaning up shorelines and improving hiking trails. (www.conservationvolunteers.ca)

COLUMN

White Girl Village of Widows: Part 3 of 3

By DAWN KOSTELNIK

This is a story of that circle; this story needs to be told again, in this day and at this time. Fort Franklin is located on Great Bear Lake, across from a place that exists no more in structure, but lives on, a dark shadow in the water and the fish and the physical bodies of the survivors. Spirits roam human memories and live as well; "don't repeat the terror, don't repeat the terror," is whispered in the ears of those who will listen. One person can make a difference.

From 1942 until 1960, Somba Ke (the money place) Port Radium was a mining town.

Men from Norman and Franklin worked as coolies packing burlap sacks of uranium on their backs. The uranium was being shipped first by barge down the Bear and Mackenzie Rivers and then trucked to our Southern neighbours in the U.S. for the Manhattan Project. It was one of the U.S.'s secret operations with Canada and the people of the North unknowingly providing a basis for their plot. The Dene called the uranium "money rock."

Around 1990 it was disclosed to the people of the

MUKLUK

Village of Widows that the uranium had been used to construct two atomic bombs. The Village of Widows is also known as Fort Franklin, NWT, Canada, and now Deline. Fort Norman and Fort Franklin are villages woven together by bone and blood. One village is sister to the other with a combination of family members – family members that are dying from cancer.

Uranium has been dumped into the crystal clear waters of Great Bear Lake and travels its course through human bodies, native and white. White underground uranium miners suffer the consequences of cancer, as well. Unknown to most Northerners, these white miners returned south to their families and also died. An inquest into this wilderness of death was called.

A delegation of six elders travels from Fort Norman, to Hiroshima Japan. A celebration of peace is observed on the anniversary of the dropping of the atomic bombs. An estimated 220,000 people were killed when the U.S. dropped their atomic bombs on Aug. 6, 1945 on Hiroshima and then on Aug. 9,

1945 on Nagasaki. Residual estimates of death and sickness cannot be tallied as it continues to this day. This is destruction that cannot be reversed; it cannot be "cleaned up." This destruction seeps into Mother Earth, poisons her heart and contaminates our very essence, the water. How can we live without water?

During the inquest into the plague of cancer in the Sahtu region, the Dene learned that the uranium the men packed on their backs and some had died for, was in fact the uranium that went into the bombs that the U.S. constructed to destroy the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan: The Manhattan Project.

Six Elders travel from a little village in the NWT.The first ore carriers (or their representatives) of the uranium that went into the bombs meet with the first people of Japan on whom the atomic bombs were dropped. They have come to say that they are sorry. A Dene woman was heard to say, "We are good people; we hope that blame won't be put on us because we had no knowledge about all that happened in the war."

Our friend Paul Baton, a chief and Elder of Fort Norman, was one of the members of this delegation. He was a surviving ore carrier. My brothers Kurtis and John are his godsons. Once in a lifetime we are lucky to encounter persons of greatness. Paul Baton was greatness. I am honoured to have known him. Mashi.

P.S. Without choice, the atomic bombs were dropped by the U.S. on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. By choice, countries of the world now construct nuclear sites. Why do we commercially fish the mouths of spawning rivers? Why do we construct nuclear sites on earthquake faults? Why do we believe that we are God when documented history glares back to state that we are silly little beings when faced with the wrath of Mother Earth and her sister, Mother Nature?

We will not win by repeating mistakes. We cannot keep soiling our nest; we do not have a replacement nest. All across this planet we are smart and compassionate people; we can do this. This is the only home we have; we have to do this.

No war, no nukes, no fracking!

FACEBOOK FEEDBACK

Northern Journal 2014

Salt River asks for help with homeless shelter



The Salt River First Nation (SRFN) has formally asked the Town of Fort Smith to help fund its band-run homeless shelter, saying the facility, which is open to all members of the community, could close without assistance.



Evelyn Benwell: Yes they should help, hopefully they don't shut down, c'mon people i don't like hearing of others who have to put up tents in the bush around here, the town should do something and help em' out.



Tommy Clarke: They should help!!

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ARCHIVES

15 Years Ago...

The Great Divide

Nunavut was officially born midnight, Mar. 31, 1999, as fireworks from east to west joined waves of aurora borealis in the sky to light thousands of cold celebrators under a full midnight moon. As the first fireworks went off, a massive frozen border descended upon the Canadian North, splitting the territory of Nunavut from its former partner, the Northwest Territories.

Issue: April 6, 1999

20 Years Ago...

Hay River group home contract revoked

An independent investigation into the termination of Hay River's group home contract with the GNWT has been ordered by the minister of Social Services, after allegations the department revoked the contract without proper cause. Who will conduct the investigation is not known at this time.

Issue: April 6, 1994

30 Years Ago...

Feds boost college plans

NWT Education Minister Dennis Patterson says a federal grant to Thebacha College is "a windfall." The Minister told *The Journal* that Employment Minister John Roberts has approved a request for \$1.7 million to be used to develop an addition to the Trades Complex.

Issue: April 5, 1984







Texas oil spill a concern for whooping cranes

By MARIA CHURCH

An advocacy group for the protection of endangered whooping cranes says it's "very concerned" about the impacts of a tanker spill in Texas that resulted in 168,000 gallons of oil being dumped into Galveston Bay, less than 300 km from where the birds overwinter.

Oil globs as large as basketballs began washing up on Matagorda Island last week, an area of the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge where whooping cranes spend the winter season before heading to their northern breeding grounds in Wood Buffalo National Park.

A sizeable operation has been launched by the US Coast Guard to clean up the spill, which happened on Mar. 22 when an oil tanker collided with another ship in the bay, but some are expressing concern that the effects of the cleanup could be devastating to the fragile crane population in the middle of migration.

Chester McConnell, one of the advocates behind Friends of the Wild Whoopers (FOTWW), told *The Journal* his concern stems from what he sees as a lack of concern for the cranes and



Crew members work to remove oil on the beaches of the National Seashore Park on Apr. 1 following the Galveston Bay oil spill in Texas. Whooping crane advocates expressed concern after hearing reports of heavy machinery being used in the cleanup effort.

other endangered species by the cleanup crew.

"The intensive cleanup efforts were doing the job for other needs associated with the beaches and were not too concerned about wildlife," he said.

FOTWW, along with other conservation groups, made

significant noise after hearing reports of heavy equipment and machinery being used early in the cleanup process.

Last week, their outcry made some headway when it was confirmed that cleanup crews will switch to hand tools and equipment that has a "light touch" in areas sensitive to wildlife. "As of today, our concerns have subsided a bit," McConnell said in an email Friday.

Lessons to be learned

The whooping cranes are currently in the middle of a staggered migration period that will eventually see the entire population leave Texas

and make its way through the US to their summer home in Wood Buffalo.

According to observers, around 25 per cent of the population has already begun migration.

While immediate concern about the safety of whooping cranes has eased, McConnell said it's important for leaders and politicians to reflect on how they will respond to future emergency environmental threats.

"Those of us interested in whooping cranes have been concerned for many years that something like this oil spill would occur. There is much boat traffic that goes immediately by the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge. Any of these vessels loaded with oil, chemicals, etc. are a serious threat," he said.

"Plans need to be developed specifically for the Aransas Refuge vicinity to respond to any future emergencies. Equipment and supplies need to be on call so immediate attention can be directed to any future catastrophe near Aransas Refuge."

Reports from US media last week confirmed that hundreds of birds were killed by oil from the Galveston spill, a close call for the endangered whooping crane population of less than 300.

"The whooping cranes that use Aransas are the only wild flock remaining on the planet. They are the crown jewels and all other efforts to restore whooping cranes in other locations are dependent on these birds," McConnell said.

Aboriginal Language Month was a huge success!

Congratulations to the contest winners!

Now my mother is baking bannock.
Won by Vern Lepine

wıyawaw ohkama petaw maskihkiy Their grandmother brought medicine. Won by Pat Burke

Wehkac chi kimowaw sisip ahpo wapos Have you ever eaten duck or rabbit? Won by Meagan Wohlberg

My sister is a good cook.

No winner

**The Ni



Oilsands emissions linked to health problems: regulator

By MEAGAN WOHLBERG

Evicted landowners awaiting a court decision on the fate of oilsands operations near their properties in the Peace River area received a different victory last week with findings from a regulator-led inquiry linking oilsands emissions to health problems.

The Alberta Energy Regulator (AER) released its report last week following a public investigation into the complaints of residents in the Peace River area, who allege that odours and emissions from nearby in situ operations are causing a suite of health problems and have forced several families from their homes.

The report found that odours caused by the heavy oil operations in the Peace River area do have the potential to cause some of the health symptoms exhibited by residents, who have complained of nausea, respiratory problems, headaches, dizziness, skin rashes, nosebleeds and other symptoms, which they say are caused by emissions from nearby heated bitumen storage tanks.

The AER encouraged further studies to determine what the connection could be between emissions and the health problems, and recommended that Alberta Health link local physicians with environmental health specialists.

In its report based on eight days of public hearings, the regulator put forth 20 recommendations focused on eliminating odours and emissions to the greatest extent possible, asking companies to stop venting



A new report by the Alberta Enegy Regulator says emissions from heated bitumen storage tanks in the Peace River area could be responsible for residents' health problems following a public inquiry into odours and emissions in the region.

and capture produced gas with vapour recovery units within the next four months.

"Operational changes must be implemented in the area to eliminate venting, reduce flaring and, ultimately, conserve all produced gas where feasible," the report states.

Calling the current regulatory framework ineffective at managing hydrocarbon odours and emissions in the Peace River area, the AER recommends establishing a localized regulatory approach to heavy oil development "given the unique geology and large volume of odour complaints from area residents," and updating the existing regulations

to include enforcement actions for flaring and venting for off-lease hydrocarbon odours.

The AER also recommends initiating a regional air quality monitoring program to verify improved air quality and provide stakeholders with relevant and plain language data.

While oil and gas development has been occurring in the Peace River area since the 1950s, the AER notes it was not until the last decade that technological advances have been made to address odour and emission problems. Despite efforts by companies to resolve the problems, the

AER notes the complaints have continued.

It hopes the recommended measures help quell those complaints.

"Looking forward, the panel is confident that the necessary work will be undertaken to address the recommendations in this report, and that the proposed measures will help resolve many of the concerns of the area residents," the report states.

Alain Labrecque, one of the residents who moved his family from the area after experiencing negative health impacts, said the report is "very encouraging" and a "step in the right direction" in finding solutions for the landowners, but worries it leaves the door open for continued inaction on the

part of companies.

Despite calling for total elimination of venting outside of emergency situations, the AER's recommendations allow for flaring to continue at a limit of 3 per cent of the annual operation time, whereas most residents are completely opposed to flaring.

"I'm pleased with the support (from the AER)," Labrecque said. "But it still leaves openness for the near future here...We were never in support of having these vapours flared. If you can imagine, it's a small,

small area that would have 23 flares."

Companies are asked to conduct feasibility studies into options and timelines for conserving gas by Oct. 31, after which time the AER will require operators to implement appropriate conservation plans.

Labrecque said this allowance could let companies off the hook, and doesn't solve problems for families still living in the area.

"The feasibility study is a little bit troubling because it's showing the door or the way out, if they can prove it's not feasible or economically viable for them," he said. "There's been no recommendations to do anything immediately for these families. Nobody's been helped at all as far as what to do now. It still could be up to a few years away by the time these feasibility studies take place...and then come up with a plan to conserve these vapours without flaring."

The report noted that Shell currently conserves most of the gas from its cold and thermal operations, and that Baytex has committed to installing the required pipelines for gas conservation.

Labrecque and his cousin Brian took Baytex Energy to court last month, demanding the oil company halt its bitumen production in the Reno field near their properties until the health complaints and venting issues could be addressed.

The trial was held in Peace River last month, and a decision has yet to be made on the request for an injunction.

Environment Oil Spill

CNRL pipeline breach spills oil near Slave Lake Spill is company's tenth incident this year in Alberta

By MEAGAN WOHLBERG

The Alberta Energy Regulator (AER) is once again investigating an incident involving oil company Canadian Natural Resources Ltd. (CNRL) in northern Alberta following a pipeline leak near Slave Lake that spilled 70,000 litres of crude and wastewater.

The company's tenth incident this year, the pipeline breach was reported on Wednesday when the leak was found.

According to CNRL spokesperson Zoe Addington, the spill was composed of 1,750 litres of oil and 68,250 litres of processed water.

The company is investigating the cause of the leak, which was the result of an onsite pipe failure and leaked for less than three hours.

"All the fluid is contained and the oil has been fully



Bitumen oozes from the ground at CNRL's Primrose site near Cold Lake in a separate but ongoing oil spill incident in Alberta. The company has reported 10 incidents in one year.

recovered," Addington said. "The spill was on lease, and not near any people, water or wildlife."

According to Greenpeace, the company has had nearly twice as many incidents in Alberta as any other company over the last decade.

CNRL is currently battling a series of underground leaks at its Primrose oilsands site near Cold Lake, where bitumen has been unstoppably oozing to the surface for more than 10 months at four separate sites. More than 11,000 barrels of oil have come to the surface and around 6,300 collected.

Though the AER investigation into the leaks is ongoing, All the fluid is contained and the oil has been fully recovered. The spill was on lease, and not near any people, water or wildlife.

Zoe Addington Canadian Natural Resources Ltd.

the company attributes the leaks to well-bore failures.

An additional leak at the Primrose site in January saw 27,000 litres of bitumen breach a cement well casing and seep into an adjacent rock layer, though no oil came to the surface.

CNRL recently requested permission to restart production at its Primrose site, which

has been suspended since last June when the leaks were discovered, but was turned down by the AER.

The company also came under fire from the provincial government last month for releasing hydrogen sulphide gas from its Horizon upgrader facility near Fort McMurray last August and is now facing 11 charges.

New measures counter thawing Northern permafrost

By MEAGAN WOHLBERG

The impacts of permafrost degradation and climate change on infrastructure in the North are being countered by a set of new standards designed to help preserve the longevity of buildings through better construction and adaptation practices.

The standards, currently being developed by the CSA Group, are part of a joint initiative by the Standards Council of Canada and Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada to address the effects of climate change on new infrastructure, as well as retrofits, maintenance and repairs to existing infrastructure in the North.

Since 2012, four standards have been developed, meant to deal with the vulnerabilities created by permafrost degradation along with changes in temperatures and precipitation, which have led to heavier snowfall and, subsequently, greater loads on structures.

"There's a lot of information out there, but there's not one document you can refer to for each one of these different subject matters," said Mark Braiter, senior project manager with the CSA Group.

"There's a lot of information on permafrost, there's actually less information on thermosyphons, (and for) snow loads there's even less information, surprisingly, especially for what's happening up in the North. So there is a lot of information, but this will be the first time where you can go to a stand alone document and get everything that you need on that subject."



Radiators with chillers (on left) are installed as part of the flat loop thermosyphon foundation during construction of the Beaufort Delta Hospital in Inuvik. The hospital is one of several government buildings in Inuvik featuring thermosyphon technology, which aids in preventing permafrost degradation and the subsequent damage to infrastructure.

Before you build something up North, you need to be very aware of the land you're building on, in terms of whether there's permafrost or not, (and) the composition of the soil.

Mark Braiter, CSA Group

The newest standard, which came out last month and is undergoing public review, provides best practices that complement existing building codes to assist in determining options for conserving permafrost, remediating impacted buildings and assessing and monitoring the

state of permafrost beneath buildings.

The standard identifies numerous mitigation techniques to maintain permafrost and remediate permafrost degradation, focusing on shading, drainage and grading, ground cover and snow management, and provides solutions for

building foundations, from improving ventilation or insulation, using mechanized refrigeration, thermosyphon technology or total foundation replacement.

Other standards facilitate the use of thermosyphons for buildings in permafrost regions, managing changing snow load risks in the North, and community drainage system planning, design and maintenance in Canada's Northern communities.

The focus of the standards are chosen by an advisory committee composed of representatives from each Northern territory, and each standard is developed by around 10 subject matter experts in separate working groups.

The new standards, guidelines and building code models will be used to drive practical responses in the North following their publication. Though the dissemination of the information has yet to be coordinated, each jurisdiction is aware the project is nearing completion.

The first standard on thermosyphons is set to be published at the end of August followed by the other three by March 2015 at the latest. Work is also beginning on a fifth standard, identified by the technical committee in Yellowknife, on site characterization.

"This standard will look at before you build something up North, you need to be very aware of the land you're building on, in terms of whether there's permafrost or not, (and) the composition of the soil," Braiter explained.

Once the standards are published, they will be available free of charge on the CSA website. With the amount of positive feedback received from government, building manufacturers and Aboriginal communities thus far, Braiter is expecting the standards will be well used rather than sit on a shelf, and hopefully fill a gap in building standards, which tend to focus on the south.

"There is quite a need for this type of work up North," he said.

The standards are available for viewing and public comment online at http://publicreview.csa.ca/



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Arctic Council reviews international offshore oil drilling, shipping regulations

By MEAGAN WOHLBERG

It's a massive task, but the Arctic Council is in the throes of unpacking the international community's current offshore petroleum drilling and shipping regulations to ensure proper rules exist for a coming wave of drilling and transportation in ice laden Northern waters.

Western Arctic MP Dennis Bevington, who attended the plenary sessions of the Arctic Council's senior officials meeting in Yellowknife late last month, said there is an "enormous" amount of work being undertaken by the council's working groups, whose main focus right now is marine oil pollution prevention.

"What they're doing is they've created a matrix of regulation, so they've examined all the regulations that exist now among different countries, and they're trying to work that into a hybrid (international) instrument," Bevington said.

Much of the work came from evaluations of BP's Deepwater Horizon blowout in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010, the largest marine oil accident in history. Bevington said the mistakes made in that preventable spill were



Camilla Zoe-Chocolate, a Tlicho member of the Arctic Athabaskan Council, speaks during one of the Arctic Council meetings in Yellowknife in March.

extrapolated by the study into an Arctic environment to consider the complications that could arise if similar events were to transpire in Northern waters with different weather and water conditions.

"It was a pretty revealing document about how difficult it is going to be to do the work in the Arctic, and how incredibly well-trained and well-equipped any of these crews that might be working up there will have to be, how carefully they'll have to be monitored, and how rigorously they'll have to follow procedures," Bevington said.

"They see how in a normal environment these things start to fall apart, and they're concerned around what would happen in an Arctic environment." While Arctic offshore drilling has been done successfully and safely in jurisdictions such as Norway for years, the first drilling in ice-filled waters was just recently done for the first time by Russia.

It is a new frontier that Bevington says is cause for concern because of the added complexities of the terrain. "No matter how good the rules are, if you can't obey the rules, they're no good," he said.

Apart from pollution prevention, work is underway to complete a polar shipping code under the lead of the International Maritime Organization, which wants to complete the code this year and see it come into force within the next two to three years.

The standards would include ship design and construction, ship systems and equipment and training for maritime crews.

"In order to do this, they need new technology, they need the shipbuilding industry to upgrade and innovate, so it has to pervade through the industry," Bevington said. "They identify all these areas where, quite obviously, the standard maritime regulations are not going to be good enough."

Apart from preparing for an increase in Arctic petroleum production and its accompanying environmental risks, Bevington said working groups of the council are actively working on biodiversity assessments and contributions to climate change, such as black carbon and methane emissions. He said the Arctic Council has become an important forum for discussing climate change outside of the UN's Conference of the Parties (COP) process, which he says has not been effectively addressing the issues.

Bevington's main concern with the council itself is that it is perhaps becoming stretched too thin as it attempts to take on this huge body of research and policymaking. While the council calls on the efforts of a wide network of scientists and policymakers from all of its eight member states, there are only four employees in the secretariat coordinating the workload.

"Some countries were wondering whether we could handle this volume of work," he said. "There's a lot of work going on, but for the coordination of all that and making all that come together, I don't think the structure is anywhere near where it has to be. I think it should be much larger, as engaged as it can be with all of these serious issues that they deal with."

The next meeting of the senior officials of the Arctic Council is set for this October in Whitehorse

Politics Arctic Council

Arctic Economic Council to promote business in North

By MEAGAN WOHLBERG

Senior officials with the Arctic Council have signed off on the creation of a new circumpolar economic agency, aimed at facilitating regional economic growth in the North.

Arctic Council member states moved forward with the establishment of the Arctic Economic Council during their meetings in Yellowknife at the end of March, the second gathering to take place since Canada assumed its two-year chairmanship.

The initiative, put forth by Canada in its first moments as chair, was first approved in Kiruna last May and an international task force was set up to develop a circumpolar business forum with representation from all eight Arctic Council member states. Over the past seven months, that focus has shifted to creating a permanent council.

The first meeting of the economic council, expected to report directly to the Arctic Council, will be coordinated by Arctic Council chair Leona Aglukkaq.



Senior Arctic Council officials enjoy a musical performance at Yellowknife's Snowcastle on Mar. 26.

Both Aglukkaq and the department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development declined requests for comment, stating that details would be released "in due course."

According to a briefing note distributed at the Arctic Council meetings, which were closed to the public and media, the overall aim of the permanent economic council is to foster "sustainable development, including economic growth, environmental

protection and social development in the Arctic region."

The note states that the group will strengthen the Arctic Council by enhancing regional economic cooperation, facilitate business opportunities, trade and investment in the Arctic, and maximize the potential for economic activities to positively impact Northern communities while protecting the environment.

The economic council may put forward proposals and

reports to the Arctic Council, and the Arctic Council may propose areas of focus for the economic council to consider.

Each Arctic member state and the six indigenous permanent participants of the Arctic Council have two months to nominate three representatives to attend the economic council's first meeting, though future meetings will allow industry to participate.

"In the future, the membership of the AEC will not be limited to such nominations and may accept self-nominations from the Arctic business community," the note states.

The maximum size of the group, governance, structure and activities are yet to be determined. A date for its first meeting has yet to be announced.

"It is supposed to be completely independent, so it's not going to be funded through the Arctic Council," Western Arctic MP Dennis Bevington, who attended the two days of meetings in Yellowknife, told *The Journal*. "It's going to be self-appointed, however that's supposed to work, and funded by the participants, I take it."

Bevington said the creation of the economic council is a concern for him because it has the potential to overshadow the environmental backbone of the organization.

"Economics quite obviously is larger than simply business, so even on that particular subject, business can't be the only one inputting into the economics. They can have a say in it, but what we need to do is get through all the issues that we're dealing with at the Arctic Council right now, which are linked to environmental issues," he said.

"Yes, there's going to be economic activity, but we can't let the economic activity get ahead of the environmental activity. The environmental activity has been the main focus, the priority item, and we don't want to see it switched to having the economics be the priority item. That is a switch that will put a lot at risk."



Lawyer and former national luge athlete Arlan Delisle will be making his case to run as the Conservative candidate in the by-election at a party vote to be held in late April.



After six years in municipal politics, Conservative nominee David Yurdiga is also looking for the Conservative candidacy.



Tim Moen, a long-time political activist, has thrown his hat in as the riding's first-ever Libertarian candidate.



Lori McDaniel meets with NDP MP for the Western Arctic Dennis Bevington following her announcement to run as the NDP candidate in the Fort McMurray by-election.



Liberal candidate Kyle Harrietha says it's time for the 57-year Conservative stronghold in Fort McMurray to end.

Politics Federal

Candidates chosen for Fort Mac by-election

First-ever Libertarian joins the federal political race

By MARIA CHURCH

The Liberal and NDP federal parties have chosen their candidates for the Fort McMurray-Athabasca by-election and will be joining the riding's first Libertarian candidate and one of two Conservative nominees in the running.

A by-election was called in January for the Fort McMurray-Athabasca riding, which represents northeastern Alberta from Lac La Biche to Fitzgerald on the NWT border, after former Conservative MP Brian Jean announced his sudden resignation from politics.

With the federal election scheduled for October 2015, the chosen MP will hold the seat for just over a year before the next race.

A date has not been set for the by-election, but with three other by-elections to be held in Canada, the Fort McMurray-Athabasca vote will be held before the end of June.

Liberal and NDP candidates announced

Liberal nominee Kyle Harrietha beat out contender Chris Flett to win the party candidacy last week following the announcement that Lori McDaniel will be running as the NDP's candidate.

Both Harrietha and McDaniel acknowledge that the riding is a Conservative stronghold with more than half a century of Conservative MP representation, but say it's time for change.

"It's pretty clear that after 57 years of representing northeastern Alberta straight that the Conservative party takes this region for granted," Harrietha told *The Journal*. "It's my impression that people feel it is time for a change."

Harrietha, a former Liberal staffer on Parliament Hill, said much of his campaign is focused on ensuring the federal government funds infrastructure in the region, which he said has seen unacceptably low transfers considering the rapid population growth and economic development over the last several years.

McDaniel, a heavy hauler at Suncor Energy and a health and safety representative for the local union, said her employment in the oilsands industry means she would bring a worker's perspective to federal politics.

"I'm a big voice and I'm a very hard worker for the people. Everyday that's my life, trying to make people's lives better at work, in the community and in the area," she said.

McDaniel said development of the oilsands will be a focus of her campaign, which she said requires a fine balance between promoting resource development and ensuring responsible environmental and safety regulations.

Conservatives to vote on candidate

The Conservative party candidacy is still up in the air with a vote scheduled for late April to pick between nominees David Yurdiga and Arlan Delisle.

Yurdiga has been a councillor, reeve and deputy reeve for Athabasca County for the past six years and said his passion and familiarity with the community is his strength.

"I have a real good understanding of the whole region and I think I can do the best for the constituents by understanding the uniqueness of each community," he said, adding that if chosen as the candidate, his focus will be on increasing funding to municipalities and to social services.

A former national luge athlete, journeyman electrician, Edson town councillor and lawyer, Delisle said his diverse background has given him a broad range of skills to bring to the election.

As a candidate, Delisle said it is paramount that he be accessible to the people, and that his political focus reflect their wishes.

Libertarian throws his hat in

Tim Moen, a firefighter and freelance documentarian working in Fort McMurray, recently added another hat to his repertoire by entering into the world of federal politics as the riding's first-ever Libertarian candidate.

Moen said his political message can be condensed into a snappy internet meme that states, "I want gay married couples to be able to protect their marijuana plants with guns."

"It's just the principles that this country and the US were based on: the idea that you own yourself, that people shouldn't use force against you, you shouldn't hit, you shouldn't steal, you shouldn't murder, you shouldn't rape and you shouldn't do these things even if you call yourself government. You don't get extra rights if you are in government," he said.

Moen said the Athabasca region is full of like-minded individuals, many of whom are working hard in an industry that is "painted by mainstream media as Mordor," and his message of liberty has been resonating more than he ever imagined.

If elected, Moen said his lack of ties to a federal party means he can be the voice that shakes up the system.

His political targets would include slashing provincial equalization payments, decreasing government control on social issues and establishing land ownership for First Nations.

Ailing Northland student flooded with support

Schools across northern Alberta raise funds for cancer treatment

By MARIA CHURCH

Mason Marty, a Grade 1 student at Elizabeth Métis Settlement School near Cold Lake, Alta., was diagnosed in late January with Wilms' tumour - an extremely rare kidney cancer almost exclusively found in children.

One day healthy and active at home and the next in a hospital in Edmonton dealing with a frightening diagnosis, Marty's young life was swiftly turned upside down.

Back home, news of his diagnosis spread like wildfire in the small northern Alberta community.

"We were really all just taken aback. You're so fearful and scared at that point." David Anger, principal of Elizabeth, shared with The Journal.

What happened next was an unprecedented outpouring of support for Marty and his family. Donations started flowing in from the community to assist the family in travelling back and forth to Edmonton for Marty's treatment.



Mason Marty, a Grade 1 student at Elizabeth Métis Settlement School near Cold Lake who is suffering from cancer, holds up gifts he was given by students from Athabasca Delta Community School in Fort Chipewyan.

"People just really wanted to help and the best way to help is to do something," Anger said. A community auction was quickly organized where

close to \$10,000 was raised for the family.

Because of the severity of the cancer, doctors acted swiftly on the young boy's

treatment plan and scheduled him for chemotherapy. radiation and then surgery to remove the kidney affected by the tumor.

Last week was Marty's first time back in school after months of treatment, and he was flooded with nothing but love from students and staff.

"He's just happy to be here and we have to be careful with the kids because they are all over him. Everybody is just so happy to see him. It's really served to bring our school community closer together," Anger said.

The principal described Marty as a high-energy youth with some "spunk."

"He wants to be involved and he wants to rip around so it's been hard for him to slow down and take it easy." he said.

Now that the tumour is removed, Marty has more freedom to run around again, but treatment is unfortunately not over for the youngster who is scheduled for more rounds of chemo and radiation soon.

"He's got a long road ahead, for sure," Anger said.

School district comes together

News of Marty's fight with cancer continued to spread

while he was in treatment and it wasn't long before other schools in Northland School Division felt a call to action.

The Conklin Kids Do Care Club at Conklin Community School was one of the first to learn about Marty and spearheaded an effort to encourage all Northland schools to send him well wishes.

Athabasca Delta Community School in Fort Chipewyan heard the call and wasted no time in answering. The school sent Marty a giant "get well soon" card, a box of gifts and a donation of close to \$1,000, raised through a bake sale.

"He came back to school and here are these kids from far away who are thinking of him and it was just so nice to be able to welcome him back in that way," Anger said. "His mom and dad both continue to be really overwhelmed."

Marty also received hundreds of Valentine's Day cards from Northland schools.

"To hear of all these kids thinking about him is pretty special," Anger said.



Congratulations to the all the racers!

10 DOG

1st place - Roland Campbell 2nd place - David Campbell 3rd place - Cameron Macdonald

4th place - Danny Savic

6 DOG

1st place - Matthew Poitras 2nd place - David Campbell 3rd place - Roland Campbell 4th place - Archie Cardinal 5th place - Cameron Macdonald

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Thanks to all the volunteers!

Richard 'Smokey' Ladouceur Lindsay Monk Chris Joly Lee Ladouceur Cameron Macdonald Jocelyn Marten Trudy Gillis

Misty Marten Margaret Flett/Villebrun Jason Straka Queenie Grey Guillaume Body George 'Sloan' Whiteknife Roland Campbell David Campbell

Special thanks to the cooks who helped with the canteen and potluck supper and all dog handlers. If we forgot anyone, please accept our apologies.



From left, Airiyanna Kakfwi, Teyanna Kakfwi and Danielle Kochon wait patiently as their bannock on a stick cooks over an open fire in front of PWK high school Thursday. Bannock was one of many treats offered to those who came out to help the high school celebrate culture and language.



Student Sadie McMahon is dished up a hot bowl of stew.

Arts & Culture Culture Month

Fort Smith students invite community for taste of culture

By MARIA CHURCH

Piping hot stew, bannock on a stick and maple treats were some of the tasty eats on the menu at Paul William Kaeser high school in Fort Smith last week during an event celebrating culture and language. The high school flung open its doors after school Thursday and welcomed the whole community to "chill out" with them outside where tents were erected, wood fires were burning and traditional games were in full force.

The celebratory event was put on by the high school's teachers and staff to mark April as culture and language month.

The Northern Life Museum and Cultural Centre provided a dose of the sweet stuff by setting up a sugar

shack while the GNWT brought the goods for bannock on a stick.

Parents of the high schoolers were encouraged to attend with their children as a precursor to parent-teacher interviews held later that evening.



PWK high school students team up against the teachers in Northern games held as part of the cultural celebrations.



Finnlay Rutherford-Simon is in a sticky situation with her maple sugar on a stick about to fall, but mom Lori lends a helping hand before she drops the sweet treat.



Darby Blake takes part in the open class cross-country skidoo race Saturday evening in Inuvik. Isaac Lennie took home first place, followed closely by Jimmy Kalinek and



Dog mushers compete in the 15th Annual Muskrat Jamboree Masters Open Dog Race Saturday afternoon on the Mackenzie River in Inuvik.

Arts & Culture Spring Festivals



Plank walk participants try not to fall as they race around the icy river site Saturday afternoon.



Tristan Kendo Greenland enjoys the festivities down at the river site of the annual Muskrat Jamboree in Inuvik. Temperatures rose to 9 degrees on Saturday to the delight of jamboree participants.

Inuvik celebrates spring with Muskrat Jamboree

By NATHALIE HEIBERG-HARRISON

The 57th Annual Muskrat Jamboree kicked off in Inuvik last Friday with a feast and crowning of this year's king and queen -Justin Frost and Maranda

Blake.

The Inuvik Drummers and Dancers later took to the stage at East Three School. Their performance was followed by jiving and limbo contests, which ran late into the night.

Events began at the river the next day, and included

the 15th Annual Muskrat Jamboree Masters Open Dog Race, community games and cross country snowmobile races.

Events slowed down around 7:00 p.m. for a \$20,000 TV bingo, and picked back up afterward

for an old time dance featuring the Delta Good Time Band. Residents packed back in to the East Three School gymnasium and were jigging well into the morning.

Sunday included more community games down at

the river, snowshoe races, open class track races and a lively talent show for a full house at the school.

Monday's schedule included the 17th Annual Isaac Simon Memorial Dog Race, more community games, a trapper skills event and

the open class 50-mile track race.

The 57th annual jamboree was organized by the 2014 Muskrat Jamboree committee and countless volunteers. It was dedicated to the emergency warming shelter.



More than 100 Inuvik residents take to the ice road last Sunday to watch the reindeer herd crossing near Bar-C, about halfway to Tuktoyaktuk. The herd is moved into the Mackenzie Delta every year by local reindeer harvesters, and this year residents were encouraged to come watch. The herd crossed the Inuvik-Tuktoyaktuk ice road around 1:00 p.m.



Caribou Legs is gifted with a "Protect the Peel" cake at a community feast in Tsiigehtchic.



Joseph Kay, a youth from Inuvik, helps to send Caribou Legs off on the first morning of his run.



Caribou Legs and his trusty dog Trixie are joined by Jared Blake, 15, on the run to Fort McPherson.

Environment Watersheds

Caribou Legs begins 1,200-km run to protect the Peel

By MEAGAN WOHLBERG

Northern ultra-marathon runner Brad "Caribou Legs" Firth began his 1,200 km journey by foot from Inuvik to Whitehorse last week to present Yukon Premier Darrell Pasloski with letters from people across the Peel watershed opposed to the government's new land use plan for the region.

Escorted by a support vehicle driven by Gwich'in Tribal Council president Robert A. Alexie himself, the Inuvik-born runner left his hometown on Apr. 2 with his dog Trixie, making it to Tsiigehtchic by Thursday

where the community held a feast in his honour, and Fort McPherson by Friday night.

As of Monday afternoon, Firth was en route to Eagle Plains in the Yukon, though still using Fort McPherson as his base camp.

"I feel up for the challenge!" he wrote on his facebook page Monday morning. "My body is recharged and primed for more mountain road running!"

A spot GPS device is mapping his progress online in real time so avid followers can track his advance in addition to the enthusiastic daily updates Firth is posting

I feel up for the challenge! My body is recharged and primed for more mountain road running!

Brad "Caribou Legs" Firth

on his Caribou Legs facebook page.

At each community, he is picking up more letters, as well as some youthful company for the run. He was joined by 15 year-old Jared Blake, fresh from the Arctic Winter Games in Alaska, on his way out of Tsiigehtchic, and had another youth, Joseph Kay from Inuvik, escort him to the Inuvik airport.

Outside of Fort McPherson, he was greeted by the entire Hanthorn family who

ran into town with him where he was welcomed by a large part of the community.

He was also given the special gift of Olympian Sharon Firth's fluorescent yellow cross-country ski racing bib, which she wore in Sarajevo.

"The bib has a 2nd life! It keeps me safe and displays a powerful message! Thank you Sharon!" Firth wrote on his facebook page.

Firth announced his intent to hand-deliver messages from people throughout the NWT side of the Peel watershed shortly after the Yukon Government removed the staking ban and put forth its controversial land use plan for the previously untouched, 68,000-square km land mass.

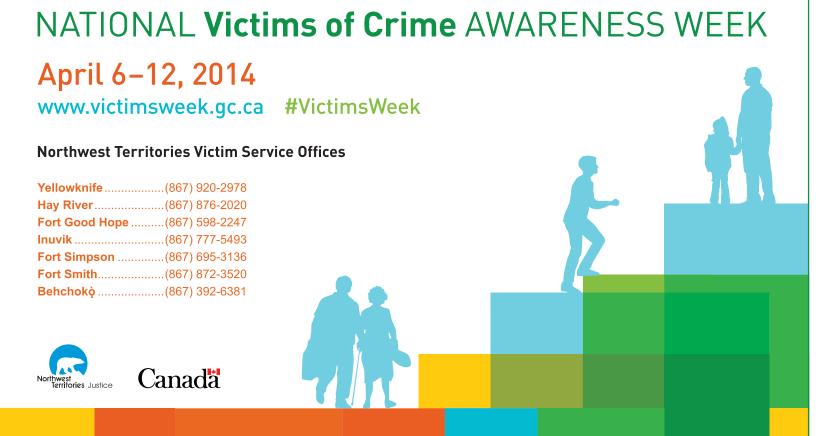
He said he is concerned about the impacts of mining and oil and gas development on his ancestral territory.

While the land use planning commission had recommended 80 per cent of the area be protected from industrial development based on years of consultation with communities on both the Yukon and NWT sides of the watershed, the Yukon Government put forward its own plan recommending the opposite: 29 per cent protection and 71 per cent open for development.

The runner intends to arrive in Whitehorse by Apr. 22, where he will read the letters aloud outside of the Yukon Legislature building at a public gathering before handing them off to the premier.

Firth plans to travel to Vancouver after the journey is over, before running all the way from the West Coast back to Inuvik to raise national awareness about the Peel watershed.

To follow Firth on his journey by GPS, visit http://share. findmespot.com/shared/faces/viewspots.jsp?glId=0i38Ok aafP2mIBW4pdkqGZI7Bz1kTQQNY



Searchlight narrows in on Fort Smith musician

Bryce Young in running for CBC's best new Canadian artist



Fort Smith's Bryce Young is a semi finalist in the CBC's Searchlight contest to find Canada's favourite new artist.

By MARIA CHURCH

When it comes to his music, guitarist Bryce Young, born and raised in Fort Smith, is an emotional guy and is not afraid to admit it. Music, he says, is an expression of emotion.

For the 24 year-old who first taught himself to play the guitar at 14 and has been jamming away with his younger brother ever since, words don't really cover what music means to him.

"Some people really know how to sell themselves and get the point across of what they are trying to say, but I'm just trying to let the music do the talking," he shared in an interview with *The Journal* last week.

While he has struggled to define his sound, Young said he once heard similar music described as steel string, neo-acoustic guitar. Using all areas of the instrument, including the guitar body, he creates music by tapping, slapping and picking the strings. The result is a unique instrumental soundscape complete with bass and harmony.

get the point across of what "There's a lot of emotion popular APTN TV show they are trying to say, but I'm in it, I find. You don't really Dene A Journey.

need lyrics to get that feeling drawn out of you," he said.

Reaching a national audience

Young recently entered himself as an artist on Searchlight, an online contest through CBC Music and CBC Radio One that asks people to vote for Canada's best new artist. His song *Within A Midnight Dream* has made him a regional finalist for the Yellowknife area.

Young said he entered on a whim, but was amazed at how quickly the Fort Smith community rallied to support him by sharing the contest online through social media feeds like Facebook and encouraging one another to vote for him.

"I'd be lying if I said it didn't hit me in the touchy feely," he said. "That's how it works though, we all come together."

If he wins the contest, Young will receive no small amount of money to go toward music equipment as well as studio time, a recording with CBC Music and, most importantly, national recognition for his music.

Young has had some pretty exciting musical debuts in the past, including a performance at Folk on the Rocks in Yellowknife and scoring a gig to play music for the popular APTN TV show Dene A Journey.

Making a name for yourself as a young musician is tough, he said, but no harder in the North than anywhere else.

"With YouTube and the internet and stuff it's probably a little bit easier now, but anywhere it's tough to be a musician I think," Young said.

Young currently works for Ekati Diamond Mine, which allows him to work for weeks at a time and then spend weeks at home in Fort Smith. The best part of being home is his proximity to nature, he said.

"There's the peacefulness and the quiet, the rocks and the power of the water. It's a beautiful town. It took me a long time to admit that," he said. "I can't be inside for too long now or I go crazy."

While performing and playing music for a living is a dream he can't quite let go of, the young artist said he's not unrealistic when it comes to his musical future.

"I'd like to say I'd live the dream, make music for a living, but realistically I don't see it happening. I'm just as comfortable and happy playing music with friends or by myself than I would be performing and playing live. I'm not really worried about it. As long as I'm still playing music, that's all that matters to me," he said.

Voting for CBC's Searchlight started on Mar. 24 and each region's semifinalists were announced on Apr. 7. To vote for Young in the semifinals, go online to http:// music.cbc.ca/#/Searchlight





A better winter tire?

From left, Dustin Hutchinson and Darren Schaffer of Yellowknife show off their customized studded racing tires, which Schaffer says "stick like glue" to the snow/ice racing course built on Vee Lake this winter. The pair built the tires by drilling 236 bolts into ordinary tires and then sharpening them. A chemical sealant stops air leaks.

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Nunasi Corp. caps year of restructuring with sale of NorTerra interest to Inuvialuit partners

By JACK DANYLCHUK

A year after Nunasi Corp. took the first steps toward restructuring by cutting loose unprofitable subsidiaries and moving its head-quarters out of Yellowknife, the Inuit birthright corporation made one more move last week.

In a joint announcement with the Inuvialuit Development Corp. (IDC), Nunasi announced last week that it had sold its 50 per cent interest in NorTerra to IDC for an undisclosed sum, putting paid to an investment that in recent years was a source of financial pain.

NorTerra does not issue a separate financial statement, but the Inuvialuit Regional Corp. (IRC) annual report for 2012 - the most recent available - shows that NorTerra posted a loss of \$7.2 million in 2011 and turned a profit of \$3.1 million in 2012. Its accumulated deficit dropped to \$8.5 million from \$12.7 million the year previous.

Financial returns posted on Nunasi's homepage show



Nunasi Corp. has announced the sale of its 50 per cent stake in NorTerra, which owns half of the airline Canadian North, to the Inuvialuit Regional Corp.

the company lost \$10.6 million in 2010, \$5.6 million in 2011 and showed a profit of \$4.3 million in 2012, while the IRC lost \$18.4 million in 2011 and showed a profit of \$17.5 million in 2012.

Wilf Wilcox, former chairman of Nunasi and NorTerra, said it was the demand for cash to prop up NorTerra subsidiaries Canadian North and Northern Transportation Company Ltd. that provided part of the impetus to restructure Nunasi before its 40th anniversary.

A need to make Nunasi more responsive to the competing interests of three regional development corporations formed after territorial division in 1993 also came into play, Wilcox said.

Canadian North competes with Qikiqtani First Aviation and Sakku First Aviation, two joint-venture entities set up between regional Inuit development corporations and the Makivikowned First Air.

Nunasi began restructuring in early 2013 with the sale of Secure Check, which specialized in safety, security and screening support for remote projects, and Nunavut Insurance. The Genesis Group, Academy of Learning and Frobuild, an Iqaluit hardware venture, were shuttered.

Last August, Nunasi closed its corporate office in Yellowknife, moving its finance and operations to Ottawa, and senior management positions and communications officer to Iqaluit.

Nunasi and IDC together are shareholders of two other companies, the National Aboriginal Services Company and Pan Arctic Inuit Logistics.



Métis Council president acclaimed in Fort Smith

Ken Hudson will serve final two-year term before retiring

By MARIA CHURCH

Ken Hudson will once again serve as head of the Fort Smith Métis Council after running uncontested for the council's presidency during the biennial election on Mar. 29.

Elections were also held for the council's vice president, board members, secretary treasurer and elder and youth representatives, all of whom will serve twoyear terms.

In a pool of nine candidates for six board positions, Lynn Napier-Buckley and Mary Ellen Piche were newly elected while Allen Heron, Gordon Pischinger, Vance Sanderson and Josh Tordiff were reelected to the board.

Earl Evans was once again voted in as the elder representative for the council and Jeremy Beamish was elected as the youth representative.

Daryl Loutit, a former board member, was elected as vice president and Betty Villebrun was voted in as secretary treasurer.



Acclaimed Fort Smith Métis Council president Ken Hudson says this is his last term.

President says last term

While he is looking forward to overseeing several new programs and initiatives over the next two years, Hudson told The Journal this will be his last term as president of the Fort Smith Métis Council.

"I've been there a long time. Fifteen years I've been there; since 1999 as the president," Hudson said. "I'm kind of looking forward to relaxing. I'm building a cabin out in the bush, my wife and I, and just looking forward to retiring."

The 64 year-old said he's pleased with the council's latest initiatives in the community, including the much-praised pilot program TAASTE, or Time-honoured Aboriginal Actions Sustaining Traditional Eating, that provides fresh meat and fish to elders in Fort Smith and the surrounding area.

Hudson said the program, which is funded by a grant from the GNWT department of Health and Social Services, has been garnering interest from surrounding communities since it was launched last fall.

"I go to Hay River and people are talking to me, people from Fort Res approach me and ask how they can get the same program. I keep repeating that it's a pilot project, so hopefully once we prove it's been successful it will be done across the North on a bigger scale," he said.

The pilot program includes a plan to build a greenhouse facility at the Northern Lights Special Care Home and support for youth on-the-land activities.

The youth aspect of the program has been taken on by Gord McSwain and Sanderson, who recently led a group of five youth into the bush to snare rabbits.

While the program's funding dried up on Apr. 1. the council will continue distributing meat ordered over the last few months and will start building the care home's greenhouse in the spring.

"It's not up to us to say it is going to continue, but the success of the program is certainly there as far as Fort Smith is concerned," Hudson said.

Council to build rental homes

The Métis Council has also been working on a long-term plan to develop rental houses in Fort Smith, capitalizing on the high demand for rental properties in the community.

The council recently purchased six land plots near the trailer court and plans to build two houses each year starting this spring.

Hudson said the council will be taking on the carpentry work internally, while all other aspects of construction will be contracted out to local businesses in Fort Smith.

"You need a plumber and you need electricians, so it's good for the community for us to employ people and buy lumber and all that other stuff," he said.

Environment Disaster Preparedness

Whati partakes in first-ever Northern resilience project

By MARIA CHURCH

The community of Whati is feeling a little more secure and ready to roll with the punches after receiving the results from its participation in the first-ever Northern Rural Disaster Resilience Project.

For the small Tlicho community soon to be directly affected by the development of Fortune Minerals' NICO mine, developing a resilience to change couldn't come any sooner.

"You've got a people here that have been on the land, in this area for hundreds of years," Larry Barran, senior administrative officer with the government of Whati, told The Journal.

"They have a way of dealing with things that the territorial government or the community government might say, 'This is the way it should be done,' but the cultural norm will say, 'No, we don't do it that way.' The resiliency plan steps back a bit and looks at that bigger picture," he said.

Developed by professors from Royal Roads University,



The resilience project draft is presented to the community of Whati in March.

the community resilience project uses a web-based questionnaire tool that assesses a community's preparation to respond to disasters by factoring in unique cultural norms and expectations.

Eric Bussey, a 30-year Northerner and retired territorial director of emergency management, was behind bringing the pilot project

Backed by the Centre for the North, Bussey brought the idea to Whati's chief and council where it was agreed they would become the first community in the North to participate and act as a model for adapting the tool to unique Northern cultures and challenges.

The process began in February of 2013 when Bussey along with Robin Cox, an associate professor from Royal Roads University, met with the leaders of Whati and the community to conduct the questionnaire.

Using their responses, the tool calculated multiple ways the community can prepare for scenarios that were highlighted as of concern to Whati.

Bussey said resilience can refer to preparedness for an array of situations, including

Academic research in the field shows that a community that is resilient to any kind of shock or change can be resilient to recovering from a disaster as well.

Whati community resilience project

natural disasters from envi- only how resilient the comronmental changes due to global warming and humanmade disasters from industrial incidents, such as oil or chemical spills.

"Academic research in the field shows that a community that is resilient to any kind of shock or change can be resilient to recovering from a disaster as well," he said.

Barran said the resiliency project was also beneficial because it forced the Whati government to reassess and reorganize its current emergency plans.

"One of the advantages of going through this resiliency process was to see not

munity was, but at the same time look at all the plans that have been floating out in isolation of one another and see what was required to bring everything in to align with one another," he said.

After a more than yearlong process crunching the data from the questionnaire, Bussey and Cox were back in Whati in March to present the draft copy of the resiliency document to the community.

Barran said the administration will now look at creating a five-year strategic implementation plan for the suggestions and goals identified in the resiliency document.

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com/direct-energy-volunteercitizen-of-the-year-vcoy or contact the AWNA at 780-434-8746 / 1-800-282-6903 ext. 225.

Auctions

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Job opportunities

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Post-Devolution Changes

at the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT)



Following the devolution of public land and resources from the federal government to the GNWT on April 1, there is one new GNWT department, the Department of Lands. Two existing departments, Industry, Tourism and Investment (ITI) and Environment and Natural Resources (ENR), have assumed additional responsibilities, and the responsibility for Commissioner's Land has moved from MACA to the new Department of Lands.



Department of Lands

Mandate

The mandate of the Department of Lands is to manage, administer and plan for the sustainable use of public land in the Northwest Territories in a fair and transparent manner that reflects the interests of the people of the Northwest Territories.

Changes

This is a new GNWT department. Most of the Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) staff with land responsibilities in Yellowknife and the regions have been transferred to the new Department of Lands. GNWT staff from MACA's Land Administration Division and support staff from other GNWT departments and AANDC also moved to the Department of Lands.

Responsibilities

The Department of Lands will be responsible for the management and administration of all public lands in the Northwest Territories (on both Commissioner's and Territorial lands), including:

- Administration and management of public lands (land inventories, leases, dispositions, valuation, survey applications, mapping)
- Land use sustainability standards, guidelines and policies
- Land use initiatives
- Project assessments
- Land use planning, including regional land use plans
- Land use administration, including permitting and securities
- Compliance and enforcement of land use, including inspections

 Informatics shared service centre, supporting the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and the Department of Lands

General Inquiries - Please contact the

System Navigator (A key point of contact for clients to ensure they are able to access programs, services and information about the Department of Lands effectively.)

Location: 1st Floor Gallery Building (4923 – 52nd Street), Yellowknife Phone: (867) 765-6727 or Toll Free 1-888-NWT-LAND (1-888-698-5263) Email: Lands@gov.nt.ca

Yellowknife Headquarters

GNWT Department of Lands
1st Floor Gallery Building (4923 – 52nd Street)
Box 1320, Yellowknife, NT
Phone: (867) 765-6727 or Toll Free
1-888-NWT-LAND (1-888-698-5263)
Email: Lands@gov.nt.ca

Lands Administration (Territorial Lands Unit)

1st Floor Gallery Building (4923 – 52nd Street) Phone: (867) 765-6701 Email: NWTLands@gov.nt.ca

Commissioner's Land Unit Northwestel Tower, 5th Floor Phone: (867) 920-6284 Fax: (867) 920-6156

North Slave Region

140 Bristol Avenue Box 1320, Yellowknife, NT Phone: (867) 765-6648

Beaufort-Delta Region

86 Duck Lake Road Bag Service #1, Inuvik, NT Phone: (867) 777-2090

Sahtu Region

31 Forestry Drive, Cartrols Building Box 126, Norman Wells, NT Phone: (867) 587-2011 Fax: (867) 587-2928

Dehcho Region

Current location (April 1 – May 5): Nahendeh Building, 2nd Floor Box 150, Fort Simpson, NT Phone: (867) 695-6733 Fax: (867) 695-2615

Post-May 5th Location: 9802 – 98th Ave ECE Service Centre, 2nd Floor Fort Simpson, NT Phone: (867) 695-6733 Fax: (867) 695-2615

South Slave Region (Fort Smith Office)

136 Simpson Street, Evergreen Building Box 658, Fort Smith, NT Phone: (867) 872-4343 Fax: (867) 872-3472

South Slave Region (Hay River Office)

Suite 203, 41 Capital Drive Government of Canada Building Hay River, NT Phone: (867) 874-6995 Fax: (867) 874-2460

Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA)

Mandate

The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA) supports capable, accountable and self-directed community governments providing a safe, sustainable and healthy environment for community residents. The department's mission is to work with community governments and other partners in supporting community residents and building capacity at the local government level to provide programs that improve the quality of life for NWT residents.

Changes

MACA's Land Administration Division administers Commissioner's Land, community planning, land purchases, property assessments, land development, survey and mapping, and supports community infrastructure.

After devolution the new Department of Lands will be responsible for Commissioner's Land and the Lands Administration Division staff from MACA will transfer to the Department

of Lands. MACA will retain responsibility for property assessment and community planning.

Contact

For more information about how devolution will affect MACA, please contact David Maguire, Communications and Web Advisor, at 920-3092 or david_maguire@gov.nt.ca.



POST-DEVOLUTION CHANGES AT THE GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES



Industry, Tourism and Investment (ITI)

Mandate:

The mandate of Industry, Tourism and Investment (ITI) is to promote economic self-sufficiency through the responsible management and development of NWT mineral and petroleum resources, domestic energy sources and natural resource industries, including agriculture, commercial fishing and the traditional economy. ITI's mandate also includes the promotion and support of tourism, trade and investment, business, and manufacturing and secondary industries to create a prosperous, diverse and sustainable economy for the benefit of all NWT residents.

Changes:

The Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment (ITI) is now responsible for mineral and onshore petroleum resources management, including the *Oil and Gas Operations Act*, the *Petroleum Resource Act* and the *Mining Regulations*. The Office of the Regulator of Oil and Gas Operations (OROGO) will be responsible for ensuring public health and safety, the conservation of petroleum resources and environmental protection.

The expanded department now includes the following services:

Mineral Resources

Current location: 9th Floor, Scotia Centre Future location: 4th Floor, Scotia Centre Phone: (867) 920-3222 Email: mining@gov.nt.ca

Mining Recorder's Office

Current location: 1st Floor, Gallery Building Future location: 1st Floor, Gallery Building Phone: (867) 669-2764 Email: miners@gov.nt.ca

Petroleum Resources

Road, Inuvik Future location: 1st Floor, 64 Mackenzie Road, Inuvik Move date: June 15, 2014 Phone: (867) 777-7475

Current location: 2nd Floor, 64 Mackenzie

Email: petroleum@gov.nt.ca Financial Analysis and

Royalty Administration

Current location: 9th Floor, Scotia Centre Future location: 4th Floor, Scotia Centre Phone: (867) 873-8686 Email: FARA@gov.nt.ca

Office of the Regulator of Oil and Gas Operations (OROGO)

Current location: 8th Floor, Scotia Centre Future location: 5th Floor, Northwestel Building Phone: (867) 920-8935 Email: OROGO@gov.nt.ca

Client Services and Community Relations

Current location: 9th Floor, Scotia Centre Future location: 4th Floor, Scotia Centre Phone: (867) 873-8683 Email: CSCR@gov.nt.ca

Industrial Initiatives

Current location: 9th Floor, Scotia Centre Future location: 4th Floor, Scotia Centre Phone: (867) 920-8941

Northwest Territories Geoscience Office (NTGO)

Current location: 4601-B 52nd Avenue, Yellowknife Future location: 4601-B 52nd Avenue, Yellowknife Phone: (867) 669-2636 Email: NTGO@gov.nt.ca

Mackenzie Valley Petroleum Planning Office (MVPPO)

Current location: 77 Woodland Drive, Hay River Future location: 77 Woodland Drive, Hay River Phone: (867) 874-5401 Email: mvppo@gov.nt.ca

Environment and Natural Resource (ENR)

Mandate

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) promotes and supports the sustainable use and development of natural resources to protect, conserve and enhance the Northwest Territories environment for the social and economic benefit of all residents.

Changes

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources is responsible for:

 the administration and management of all waters in the Mackenzie Valley and inland waters in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region;

- ensuring the environment is seriously considered in regional land use planning and the review of proposed development in the NWT;
- the Taiga Environmental Laboratory; and
- the NWT Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program.

Contact

Water Resources Division (Yellowknife)

General Inquiries: (867) 765-6773 2nd Floor, Gallery Building (4923 -52nd Street) Email: nwtwaters@gov.nt.ca

Taiga Environmental Laboratory (Yellowknife)

General Inquires: taiga@gov.nt.ca Fax: (867) 669-2718 4601 - 52nd Avenue

Conservation, Assessment and Monitoring (Yellowknife)

General Inquiries: (867) 920-6339 5th Floor Scotia Centre (5102 – 50th Avenue) 2nd Floor, Gallery Building (4923 -52nd Street)



FOR MORE INFORMATION: e-mail: devolution@gov.nt.ca web: devolution.gov.nt.ca



A skier in the Yellowknife Loppet sets off past the start line.



More than 300 cross-country skiers take part in the annual Yellowknife Loppet this year that took skiers north of the city for 25 or 15km on the Bert Mockford trail.

Sports & Recreation Cross-Country Skiing

Yellowknife loppet welcomes hundreds under sun

By MARIA CHURCH Smiling was practically mandatory at the 36th annual Yellowknife Ski Loppet Sunday as hundreds of avid cross-country skiers who worked up a sweat on the icy trails were welcomed back with a cup of hot chocolate and a steaming bowl of chili. Sponsored by Northwestel, this year's loppet gave skiers the option of a 25 or 15-km route that took the snow-happy participants north of the city on the Bert Mockford trail, crossing Vee Lake, Jackson Lake and as far as Banting Lake.

Temperatures were unusually warm for the skiers,

hovering around -15 and sunny for most of the day. More than 300 participants came out for the classic ski event.



The True North Rotary Club helps out at the loppet by serving up hot chocolate and chili. From left: Rotarians Gail Cyr, Marilyn Robak, Mike Kalnay, Hilary Jones and Cameron Buddo.



 $The \ sun \ shines \ down \ on \ a \ group \ of \ skiers \ heading \ down \ the \ Bert \ Mockford \ trail.$



The Ray family, with Kiran in the lead and Geoff pulling Sula in the sled, sets out on the loppet.



 $La ara\ Banner\ pulls\ her\ bundled-up\ daughter\ Annika\ on\ the\ trail.$



Inuvik and Aklavik mayors Floyd Roland and Charlie Furlong visit the

AWGs in Fairbanks, Alaska last month.



Fort Smith mayor Brad Brake gives a thumbs up with the AWG Fairbanks mascot.

Sports & Recreation Arctic Winter Games

AWG 2018: South Slave versus Beaufort Delta

By MARIA CHURCH

With the 2018 Arctic Winter Games (AWGs) scheduled to take place in the NWT and Yellowknife no longer in the running to host, the territory's largest regional centres are heading full-force into a competition to win the host bid.

Hay River and Fort Smith have announced they are teaming up to produce a formal bid for the South Slave region while the Town of Inuvik, with the help of Aklavik, Fort McPherson and Tuktoyaktuk, are hot on their heels forming a bid for the Beaufort Delta.

Both regions sent representatives to the AWGs in Fairbanks last month to meet with the AWG International Committee and get an idea of what it will take to host the week-long circumpolar sports competition.

Representatives toured behind the scenes with organizers to glimpse the inner workings of areas like food services, accommodations, medical facilities, transportation and security.

While the NWT has hosted several successful AWGs in the past, most recently in 2008, the 2018 games will mark the first time the games will be hosted outside of Yellowknife since 1978 when Hay River joined up with Pine Point.

Regions make their case

In the South Slave, Fort Smith and Hay River are coming at the bid process with a wealth of sport-hosting experience and can learn from their unsuccessful bid to host the AWGs in 2008, Janie Hobart, president of the Thebacha Chamber of Commerce, told *The Journal*.

Hobart said between the two communities they have the people power and infrastructure to host the games, but it will be a matter of selling it to the AWG committee, which will take an army of passionate people.

"You've got a lot of people in this community that have been involved in Arctic Winter Games as organizers, as regional coordinators, as coaches and mission staff. I can look around and name 20 people that have been highly involved with AWG over the years, so these are the people that we should be tapping into," she said.

Hobart said the bid will need to emphasize the "unique twist" the South Slave can put on the games to create a welcoming and impressionable experience for the international athletes.

to get athletes to their destinations within the AWG committee's mandated commute time of 90 minutes.

Transportation details are one of many items the Beaufort Delta's bid committee will be ironing out over the next few months. Funding will be another large issue.

"It will be a huge task for anyone in the North to do something like this outside of the capitals like Whitehorse, like Yellowknife. Even for Iqaluit it's a challenge because of the sheer size of the games," Roland said.

The GNWT department of Municipal and Community

It's about the sport, the athletes and the culture, and that's really what we want to do. We want to make sure everybody has a really good time and that everybody comes away and says, 'Wow, that was a really good games, I had a lot of fun.'

Mayor Brad Brake Town of Fort Smith

Similar tactics are being employed further north, where Inuvik Mayor Floyd Roland, one of the Beaufort Delta's AWG bid delegation in Alaska, said their main selling point will be to put the "Arctic" back in the AWG.

"From the research we've done, the Arctic Winter Games have never been held north of the Arctic Circle," Roland said. "We think we can pull this off and make it one heck of a games that people will remember for a long time."

Roland said between the four major communities in the Beaufort Delta they have the necessary infrastructure to host the games, though transportation via airlines will be necessary Affairs does provide funding for hosting the AWGs, but that amount is capped and the remaining funds must be raised through corporate sponsorship and community fundraising efforts.

Brad Brake, mayor of Fort Smith, said the local economic benefit of hosting the games is well worth the cost.

"It's a huge economic benefit to the community. Your hotels are busy, your stores are busy and your grocery (stores) - practically any business in town will benefit from it," he said, adding that former host communities have estimated the amount of money infused into their economy was as high as \$8-12 million.

At the end of the day, Brake said the real motivation is community pride.

"It's about the sport, the athletes and the culture, and that's really what we want to do. We want to make sure everybody has a really good time and that everybody comes away and says, 'Wow, that was a really good games, I had a lot of fun," he said.

SPORTS

BRIEFS

Sport North opens up nominations for annual awards

The NWT's Sport North Federation has issued a call for nominations for the annual Sport North awards held each year to highlight the territory's growing sport talent and those who help athletes along the way. The awards will be given out at a banquet held in Yellow-knife on May 25. The deadline to nominate someone is Apr. 15. For award details and to submit a nomination, go online to https://sportnorth.com/our-programs/sport-north-annual-awards



NWT athlete finishes second overall in national ski competition

Fort McPherson cross-country skier Annah Hanthorn ended her competitive ski season on a high note after her performance at a national competition in eastern Canada landed her a top 10 finish in every event. Hanthorn attended the Haywood Ski Nationals held in Corner Brook, Nfld. in mid-March where she skied against some of the best cross-country athletes in the country. Success was sweet for the NWT skier, who was not long ago recovering from a torn ligament in her ankle that prevented her from competing at the Canadian Eastern Championships in February. Hanthorn more than redeemed herself at nationals by receiving three bronze medals and a second place overall aggregate award for her age.

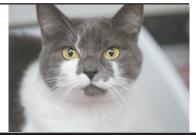






Fort Smith Animal Society Please leave a message at 872-5543 for details.

Billie is a chubby wee lady. But just look at her! Isn't she precious? If you brought her home, she'd be so happy and give you cuddles.



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