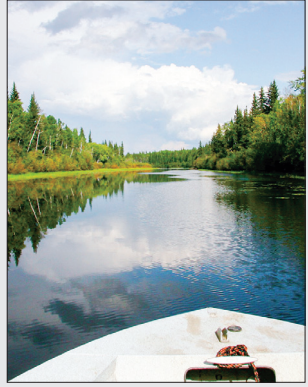


Visit www.norj.ca

Hats Off to the Grads! Hard work pays off for Inuvik's Aurora College graduates. See page 14.



First Nation developing ecotourism business
A culture-based ecotourism initiative underway at Smith's Landing First Nation holds economic promise for its membership. See page 2.



NWT Elders Parliament wants freeze on fracking
A resolution passed at last week's session of the Elders Parliament calls for a moratorium on fracking in the NWT. See page 7.



Students compete with hands-on science skills
Fort Smith high school science students tested out their chemistry, biology and physics knowledge at Aurora College's Science Rendezvous. See page 10.



NWT musician explores passion at Toronto college
Veronica Johnny, an Aboriginal musician from Fort Smith, is done her first year of a challenging music program in Toronto. See page 19.

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Yellowknives Dene Chief Ed Sangris, left, and Ernest Betsina, right, meet with Canadian Olympian speedskater and cyclist Clara Hughes on the northern portion of her "Big Ride" by bike across Canada. The tour, sponsored by Bell Canada, is meant to bring awareness to mental health issues. See page 11.

NWT stays course on fracking despite cautionary report

Ministers believe gaps can be addressed 'going forward'

By MEAGAN WOHLBERG
A federal report recommending Canadian jurisdictions mind the gap in scientific knowledge on the impacts of fracking has not deterred the NWT government from believing it can effectively monitor the burgeoning industry alongside development.
The recent Council of Canadian Academies report, commissioned by the federal government, advises regulators to exercise caution in advancing the already-booming shale gas and oil extraction process, of which little is known in terms of the impacts on the environment and human health.
Though aware of the scientific gaps presented by

the report, Environment and Natural Resources Minister Michael Miltenberger said the recently established NWT energy regulator will stay the course on developing what is new industrial frontier for the territory, with only one exploratory fracking project in the NWT approved to date.

"We are of the opinion, as government, that we can manage this with the existing processes that are there," he said. "There's still a small number of fracking projects, so we're of the opinion that we can balance off protecting the environment and the water at the same time as manage this sustainable development."

Hundreds of people across the territory have been calling for a full environmental assessment of fracking since the first project, carried out by ConocoPhillips over the winter, was approved last summer without a public review.
A recent petition of more than 700 signatures asked the GNWT to refer the next application

placed by Husky Energy last month - to the review board, but a recent submission from the territorial government indicated it felt there would not be "significant adverse impacts."
While opposing voices are being heard and counted, Miltenberger said the government is confident its regulatory regime can adequately address concerns without going through the lengthy and expensive assessment process.
"Environmental assessment is not an end in itself," he said. "We can achieve the same ends by doing the things we're doing, the way we're doing it, as would possibly be achieved through a much longer process."
See NWT on page 3.

There's still a small number of fracking projects, so we're of the opinion that we can balance off protecting the environment and the water at the same time as manage this sustainable development.
NWT Environment Minister Michael Miltenberger

RCMP rescue man from river

With the spring melt and river breakup underway, RCMP are advising NWT residents use caution around waterways and lakes after police in Fort Providence were called to rescue a man who was walking on the Mackenzie River ice last week. Police were notified by concerned residents on Monday afternoon that an unidentified male was traversing the dangerous ice. RCMP members were able to direct the man off the ice safely, after which he was taken to the health centre for care. According to RCMP, the Mackenzie River is unpredictable at this time of year with the ice unstable and moving rapidly.

Bear kills worker at Suncor oilsands base

A Suncor Energy employee is dead following a bear attack at the company's oilsands base outside Fort McMurray last week. RCMP and first responders were called in just after 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday after reports of a large, male black bear attacking a female employee. The woman, identified as 36 year-old Lorna Weaver, was declared dead on scene. RCMP have turned the investigation over to Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development. The male black bear was later shot and killed.

GNWT launches mental wellness awareness-raising magazine

The government of the Northwest Territories has launched a wellness magazine aimed at raising awareness of mental health in the NWT. Called *Mind & Spirit*, the magazine looks to inspire people to talk about mental health and share success stories of dealing with and overcoming mental health and addiction issues. The government plans to distribute the magazine throughout the NWT and will make a web-version available on the department of Health and Social Services website at www.hss.gov.nt.ca



Smith's Landing First Nation's ecotourism coordinator Francois Paulette fishes near the first set of falls on the Dog River, a potential site for future visitors booking a sightseeing adventure with Dene Chanie Tours.

Industry Tourism

Budding ecotourism project grows opportunities for First Nation

By MEAGAN WOHLBERG
A First Nations ecotourism initiative showcasing indigenous history, culture, places and traditional land use may be offering sightseeing tours

as soon as this summer along the Slave River.

Smith's Landing First Nation (SLFN), located in northern Alberta just south of Fort Smith, NWT, is in the process of developing a small set of tour packages to lure visitors to experience the sacred sites, breathtaking landscape and stories of the Denesuline people of Thebacha.

Called Dene Chanie Tours, which roughly translates as "Dene culture" in English, the initiative is being worked on by SLFN elder Francois Paulette, who is hoping to hire several youth from the First Nation to work with him over the summer offering a unique visitor experience.

Backed by the chief, council and membership, the project aims to create the sustainable economic development the First Nation envisioned upon signing its TLE land claim with Canada in 2000.

"We knew that one of the biggest economic opportunities was tourism," Paulette said, "because we have such wonderful, beautiful lands that we not only picked as reserve lands, but within our traditional territory."

Though the project is still in the planning stages, options for a one or two-day tour package have already been laid out so that the First Nation can "start small" before rolling out more tourism offerings in the future.

Paulette said a typical trip would take visitors to the rapids at Mountain Portage, known by the Dene as a huge dam created by giant beavers, which ties into similar stories from across Denendeh.

They would then travel to Fitzgerald to visit the Treaty 8 monument, learn the local history and take in a meal at the local organic gardens, and then on to Hay Camp by road before setting off by boat up the Slave River the following day either to Murdock Creek for some fishing or berry picking or the sacred site located at Demicharge.

The return trip would include a run of the Dog River - a Slave River tributary - to see the waterfalls and stop at the youth cultural camp, currently under construction by the First Nation.

Each site will be infused with storytelling on the place's history, spiritual significance and knowledge about the wildlife and vegetation.

Visitors will be able to fish, canoe, hike and camp throughout. Traditional meals of wild meat, fish and indigenous plants will also be included.

Eventually the plan is to expand the business to offer tours of the Pelican and Cassette Rapids, and to include bird watching at various islands along the Slave River, which are home to songbirds, pelicans and eagles, to name a few.

"We want to have as many people involved in this tour business as possible from our community," Paulette said. "That may be traditional cooks, storytellers, craft makers. In the winter months, we may include dog team rides for viewing of aurora - then again we would ask people in town who have dog teams. We would utilize their expertise."

But most importantly, Paulette said, is creating opportunities for SLFN's young people.

"The big thing is the youth. Right now the SLFN are looking for two young people - one to work with the interpreter program at Wood Buffalo National Park, and the other one is with me when we're doing the tour guiding, so they learn about bush life, how to make fire, how to drive a boat, how to talk to guests, tell stories," he said. "Along with that, we're looking at potentially a guide training program."

SLFN's chief and council have already met with Parks Canada, which agreed to help with marketing the tour operation, and have the support of NWT Tourism and the Town of Fort Smith's tourism advisory board, Paulette said.

The plan is to have the business fully incorporated by the end of June.

Paulette said the initiative fits within SLFN's firm commitment to sustainable development, which prevents them from investing in companies and projects they deem to be harmful to the environment or oppressive to indigenous peoples around the world.

While the First Nation has been approached by companies like ATCO to participate in damming the Slave River to provide hydroelectricity for the Alberta grid, the chiefs and councils to date have refused.

"If you were to read the mission statement of Smith's Landing, you would see it's very clear: we want to envision sustainable development based on our values and principles of our Dene Chanie," Paulette said.

Fort Smith's Residential Spring Clean-up is scheduled for the period of May 20 to May 30, 2014

Residents may have large items, washers, dryers, refrigerators, etc., and yard work debris collected by the Town - **for a cost of \$40.00, from the curb side only.**

- Smaller items must be boxed/bagged.
- Brush & willows must be bundled.
- Trees must be limbed and cut to 4-foot lengths.
- All items must be placed at the property roadside.

NO VEHICLES WILL BE COLLECTED, however tipping fees at the Landfill are waived for residential customers for the duration of the Spring Clean-up.

NO HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE such as propane tanks, batteries, paint, used oils, etc., will be collected.

NO CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS such as demolished buildings or construction sites/projects at residential locations will be collected.

TO REGISTER PLEASE VISIT OR CALL THE TOWN OFFICE AT 872-8400 WITH THE FOLLOWING:

- Name and Residence Address
- Material(s) to be picked up
- Contact phone number(s)
- \$40 payment.



DURING THE SPRING CLEANUP DAYS THE LANDFILL WILL BE OPEN EVERY DAY FROM 10:00 A.M. TO 6:00 P.M.

Registrations close at 5:00 p.m., Friday May 30, 2014.

CanNor unaware of impacts of its funding: audit

By MEAGAN WOHLBERG

The Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor) does not know for certain whether its \$52 million in funding for projects across the three Northern territories is actually working effectively, Canada's auditor general revealed in a report last week.

Auditor General Michael Ferguson said last Tuesday at a news conference that CanNor, established in 2008 as a way to boost economic development in Canada's North, "is not adequately monitoring the contributions it pays out" and "doesn't know whether the funding they are providing is making a difference to economic development in the North."

According to the report, CanNor has failed to manage and deliver its transfer payment programs in accordance with key requirements for accountability, including the way projects are assessed and grants are monitored.

"The Agency's administration of contribution agreements is weak, monitoring of recipients is inadequate, and the Agency has not measured and reported on whether its programs are achieving their objectives," states the report.

In particular, Ferguson found only three of 11 projects



Photo: Gov. of Canada

Employment at CanNor's headquarters in Iqaluit, Nunavut is the subject of criticism in a new report by federal Auditor General Michael Ferguson.

funded through the Community Economic Development Program (CEDP) were properly assessed to see if they or their activities, costs or recipients were eligible and that applications were complete.

"For example, one application simply stated that funding was for business support for a convenience store, motel, and gas bar without specifying the activities to be carried out or the expected results. The Agency did not ask the applicant to provide the missing information before completing the assessment and funding the project," Ferguson found.

"Because the application was incomplete, the Agency

did not have assurance that supporting this project was consistent with the program's objectives or that eligible activities were being funded."

Other projects were funded before applications were received, while most did not receive funding until nine months after the application was received, leaving little time to use the money.

Upon granting funds, the auditor general found CanNor did not adequately monitor compliance with the contribution agreements.

About 15 per cent of the reports due for the 2010-11 and 2011-12 fiscal years had not been received. About 75 per

cent of the reports due for 2012-13 were outstanding at the end of the audit.

Key positions remain in south

Despite its mandate to function as a Northern agency, Ferguson's report indicates CanNor is struggling to fill its Iqaluit office and still maintains its chief positions in Ottawa, rather than the North, while having no plan to remedy the situation.

Key positions of president, vice president for policy, planning and communications and the Northern Project Management Office, and the senior advisor for Inuit community

relations, are based in Ottawa.

According to the audit, CanNor currently has no plan to relocate those key positions to the North.

The human resources plan for the agency requires that 45 per cent of employees work at CanNor's headquarters and Nunavut regional office, both located in Iqaluit, with another 45 per cent at the Yellowknife and Whitehorse offices and the final 10 per cent assigned to a liaison office in Ottawa.

Though the number of employees based in Iqaluit doubled from 2010, as of August 2013 only 30 per cent of employees worked in Iqaluit despite concerted recruitment efforts.

"The Agency told us that of 32 positions advertised for the Iqaluit office, only 15 have been staffed, including some temporary positions. The remaining positions were not filled (six competitions were still in progress at the end of our audit)," the report stated.

The report also found problems with the agency's compliance with the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, which stipulates that organizations must establish and maintain the employment of Inuit people at a representative level.

Though the agency has

a target of 50 per cent Inuit representation, as of August 2013 only 25 per cent of CanNor employees in Iqaluit were Inuit, and the agency had not yet finalized its Inuit employment plan.

Federal Opposition Northern critic Dennis Bevington, who raised concerns previously about having the central CanNor office located in Iqaluit, said the report is not surprising.

"No wonder the agency is in disarray: all the decisions are being made in Ottawa not the North," Bevington said in a press release. "There is only one person responsible for this incompetence, and that's the minister."

CanNor officials agreed to all the recommendations made in the auditor general's report, stating that its quality assurance and performance measurement strategies are being updated with each program renewal.

The agency said it is committed to fully staffing its Iqaluit headquarters and meeting the Nunavut claims agreement by the end of first quarter, 2014, and will increase its current Iqaluit workforce by nine additional positions by the end of the 2014-15 fiscal year before "gradually" transferring more internal services from Ottawa.

Politics Regulatory

NWT fracking guidelines still in the works

Continued from page 1.

The GNWT recently signed contracts with both the National Energy Board (NEB) and the Alberta Energy Regulator to provide technical support to the new NWT regulator, and is in the process of developing its own fracking guidelines to accompany the new NEB filing requirements it inherited as of Apr. 1.

Though the Council of Academies report found that regulations in other jurisdictions where fracking is ongoing, such as Alberta, "are not based on strong science and remain untested," Miltenberger said the NWT will be adapting its rules as new technical information arises on the areas of leaky well casings, fracking fluids, wastewater and air quality flagged by the report.

To date, the GNWT has spent \$1 million to initiate groundwater mapping and collect baseline data on wildlife throughout the Sahtu region, where the fracking is occurring. Though the GNWT's own policy guidelines on fracking have yet to be completed, those are expected to come out by early winter.

We don't want to be making decisions that we're going to regret. We need to ensure that we're able to better understand the new roles and responsibilities that we have, and then we can make changes.

*Minister David Ramsay
Industry, Tourism and Investment*

"We've been working for two years now on getting our thinking clear on what improvements are needed to the filing requirements so that when it comes to fracking we are looking at best practices...and we continue to adjust as technology and science improves in this area," Miltenberger said.

Industry, Tourism and Investment Minister David Ramsay, who serves as head of the new NWT regulator, said movement on fracking is being done cautiously in the territory as the GNWT

settles into its brand-new role as regulator.

"We don't want to be making decisions that we're going to regret. We need to ensure that we're able to better understand the new roles and responsibilities that we have, and then we can make changes," he said.

"That was the reason for devolution: so that policy direction, the legislation, the way things work would be in our hands, and it is in our hands. We will look at ways we can improve the system as we go forward."



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The Northern Journal welcomes letters to the editor. Letters must be signed and include a phone number so the author can be verified. Names will be withheld on request in special circumstances where the reasons are determined to be valid. The Journal reserves the right to edit letters for length, libel, clarity and taste. Opinions expressed in letters and columns are not necessarily those of the publisher or editor.



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Behchoko	Fort Simpson	Sachs Harbour
Colville Lake	Fort Smith	Trout Lake
Deline	Gameti	Tsigehtchic
Eagle Plains	Hay River	Tuktoyaktuk
Ekati Diamond Mines	Inuvik	Tulita
Enterprise	Jean Marie River	Ulukhaktok
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Fort McPherson	Nahanni Butte	Wrigley
Fort Providence	Norman Wells	Yellowknife

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Anzac	Fort Chipewyan	Kehewin
Atikameg	Fort MacKay	Kinuso
Brownvale	Fort McMurray	Lac La Biche
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Chateh	Glenevis	Peace River
Cold Lake	Goodfish Lake	Rainbow Lake
Conklin	Grande Prairie	Red Earth Creek
Driftpile	Grouard	Saddle Lake
Duffield	High Level	Slave Lake
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Mental health issues impact us all

Last week, Mental Health Week brought awareness to an issue that is troubling, pervasive and too often tragic. It is now known that one in three of us will suffer from mental health issues in our lifetime.

Mental problems usually start in childhood. Seventy per cent of young people who suffer from some form of mental illness say the symptoms were present when they were children. Young people live in a challenging, competitive, too often cruel world. Depression is not uncommon. The worst outcome of that is suicide. There is nothing more tragic than when a troubled young person takes their own life. The tragedy of suicide touches all our lives at some point. Said to be "the most selfish act," those who do so feel lost, in such anguish they feel unconsolable, as if they've fallen into a deep, dark hole and cannot get out.

Mental health issues take many forms: homelessness, post traumatic stress (PTSD), gender and family violence, and substance abuse, to name a few. Suicide is the worst outcome, but many people suffer from some form of mental illness throughout their lives, affecting their quality of life, reducing their productivity and challenging those who are close to them.

Mental health, especially depression, can affect certain groups, deriving from context or social environment. In some it is epidemic. Suicide among Aboriginal Canadians is three times the national average. Most victims are teens or young adults. The 1995 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples said suicide was one of the most urgent problems facing Aboriginal communities. The problem is at least as bad today.

Nunavut suffered 46 suicide deaths in 2013, in a population of only 36,000. On average, eight people take their own life each year in the NWT, a population of 42,000 while a much better statistic, even one suicide is too many.

In November 2012, a woman in Yellowknife with known mental health issues in a standoff with RCMP charged out of a house, pointed a rifle at them and was shot and killed. It was later determined that the rifle was not loaded. Four of the six recommendations from the coroner's inquest that followed were already RCMP policy and the shooting was deemed "justified" because officers were threatened with lethal force. It was suggested by the RCMP at the time that the community should improve ways of dealing with mental health issues.

A wave of suicides by soldiers returning from Afghan deployment has shocked the military and all Canadians. Cpl. Leona MacEachern, retired 20-year veteran of the Canadian Armed Forces left behind her husband and daughter when she crashed her car head-on into a transport truck west of Calgary on Christmas Day last year. Her husband described it as an "intentional final desperate act." He said, "We would like to say that Leona had slipped through the cracks in the system, but in fact, there does not seem to be a system."

The Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco celebrated its 75th anniversary last year and also tallied a recorded number of jumpers. An estimated 46 people leaped to their deaths from the bridge in 2013, adding to more than 1,600 deaths since it was built.

The Macdonald Bridge that spans Halifax Harbour in Nova Scotia experienced issues with suicides for years. In November 2012, action was taken including; custom suicide intervention training for staff; 12 emergency phones on the bridge connected 24 hours to the control room; 24-hour scheduled patrols of the bridge; and high, unscalable safety barriers along each side.

There are many resources available to anyone seeking help for mental issues, which continues to improve as awareness grows. Counsellors and wellness centres are available in most communities. The NWT department of Health and Social Services has a depth of resources on its website, including a just-published magazine called *Mind + Spirit*. It has a great message:

"In the North, we are strong, independent people. Maybe that's why so many of us find it hard to admit we're having a hard time dealing with serious issues. The fact is, it's not just ok, it's really important to take care of your mental health and talk openly to others about any challenges you're facing. For too long, people have been afraid to share their problems with someone else."

All us need to be stronger in mind and spirit as well as our bodies. Life can be tough. Self-esteem, stress management and coping with change and challenges are essential.

Mental illness is an important topic we all need to engage in. If you or someone you care about is having problems, know that you are not alone. If you think you need help, the best thing you can do is ask.



Adam Bembridge, president of Great Slave Helicopters, presents Sahtu Helicopters chairman Danny Yakeleya the keys to the company's first fully-owned helicopter to be based in Norman Wells. Sahtu Helicopters, a majority Aboriginal-owned joint venture between the Fort Norman Métis and Great Slave Helicopters, has been providing helicopter service in the Sahtu using Yellowknife's fleet since 2004.

WEATHER

Inuvik	Yellowknife	Hay River	Fort Smith
 Weekly Norms: High 5°C Low -4°C	 Weekly Norms: High 10°C Low 0°C	 Weekly Norms: High 11°C Low 1°C	 Weekly Norms: High 15°C Low 2°C

Bring back our indigenous girls

In response to the fast action on the part of Canada to address the kidnapped and still missing Nigerian school girls by a terrorist organization, Grand Chief Terry Nelson of the Southern Chiefs Organization in Manitoba, calls for immediate and meaningful action by the government of Canada on the 1,200 missing and murdered indigenous women and girls:

It is important to address human rights injustices and atrocities that occur in the international realm. I support international efforts to bring the abducted Nigerian girls home. However I must draw attention to the fact that Canada has acted quickly to support that effort and yet refuses to heed the call of many for a national

inquiry on our missing and murdered indigenous women and girls.

Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird announced

to find these young girls as soon as possible.”

This news coincides with the release of new information by RCMP

Inquiries are expensive but they are often needed to spur real, meaningful and system-wide change. Expensive does not mean that they should not take place. Are the indigenous women and children who have been murdered or are missing here in Canada somehow less important than other women and children?

*Grand Chief Terry Nelson
Southern Chiefs’
Organization*

The Southern Chiefs’ Organization represents 33 First Nations with a combined population of 72,000. Most have high unemployment rates ranging between 60 to 95 per cent. The plight of native women forced to live in abject poverty creates an unsafe environment with little options for them.

I support international efforts to bring the abducted Nigerian girls home. However I must draw attention to the fact that Canada has acted quickly to support that effort and yet refuses to heed the call of many for a national inquiry on our missing and murdered indigenous women and girls.

Canada’s intention to support Nigeria in the House of Commons on Wednesday and told journalists, “...if it’s necessary, we will move heaven and earth to get the support

Commissioner Bob Paulson on the numbers of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls – 1,026 murder cases and 160 missing person cases.



White Girl Missionary: Mrs. Grace Priest Part 2 of 3

By DAWN KOSTELNIK

On July 1 weekend, we left by canoe for Willow Lake to hunt rats (muskrats). At the junction of Bear River and Willow River we have to get out and portage the rapids. My kitty Sammy is with us, but not for long. He jumps out of the canoe and heads for the bush not to be seen again. We call and search the bush but he refuses to be found. Dad says we will stop and look for him on the way back; he will be much hungrier then.

I believe that the wolves will eat him. I cry all the way to Willow Lake. We did not find him on the way back; it is now fall time and is freezing at night. I think about Sammy and I wonder if he could walk over the sheet ice and come home before it gets so cold that he will be frozen.

The days are longer, colder and darker as we settle into a quiet routine. One of the older girls that liked to pound on me has left for school; life is easier. Our new principal is a

musician so we get to focus on our recorders. A wild squeak and out of control treble are heard in the hallway as we battle to control these wild flutes. Mr. Mazur likes to sing to himself as he writes on the black board. He teaches us French songs.

Now and again we are let out of school early because the timber wolves slink into town. We all need to be at home before the dark falls; the wolves creep in with the shadow of night. When the wolf pack gets too brave, somebody’s dad comes to school with a rifle and walks all of us home. The wolves come in to eat the dogs chained on the dog lines.

Loose domestic dogs pack up and are worse than the wolves - they know people. We walk with big sticks. If we are lucky enough to find an old axe handle, that is the best of all. An axe handle feels strong in your hand, it makes you tough. You’re not afraid of the dog pack, you hold the old axe in your hand

and walk backwards facing them as they try to sneak in and bite you. Show no fear, look big and tough and yell at them with a strong voice; don’t trip, they will chew you up and kill you.

Mrs. Grace Priest is a Pentecostal missionary sent from the outside to teach us about Jesus. She is always called Mrs. Priest, her husband is Mr. Priest. Mrs. Priest talks funny, as she is British. She wears a hat all of the time and wears dresses too. We see a pair of thick bloomers in one of the mission boxes; they look goofy but we hope they keep her warm. Sometimes her hats have jewellery in them and feathers. She is proper and teaches us manners. People send her boxes of clothes and material and wool to help her with her mission work.

A large box is filled to the brim with all colours of wool. Mrs. Priest has difficulty getting us to come to Sunday school; we are all Catholics, after all. She decides that we should learn some lifestyle

skills instead of church stuff. She is a very kind lady who has no children of her own, she loves Jesus very much, and she loves us as well.

We visit Mrs. Priest and she teaches us to knit, crochet, sew buttons on clothes and patch holes in our pants. The large box of wool doesn’t come with knitting needles, so what to do? We are sent out to look for sticks that will replace the non-existent knitting needles. Green willow is the best of the worst and not very good at all. Mrs. Priest decides that large nails or spikes will work. She walks over and convinces Paul Baton that he should lend spikes to us. He agrees but maintains that he will need the spikes returned in the spring. They will be used to fix a house after we are done with them. We learn how to knit on spikes singing to the clicking rhythm of metal “Oh what a friend we have in Jesus.”

Visit www.thewhitegirl.ca for past stories.

MUKLUK



CORRECTION

In last week’s issue of the Northern Journal, it was incorrectly stated that Meagan Wohlberg authored the story, “Researchers look to skies to predict climate change.” The author of the story is in fact Nathalie Heiberg-Harrison. *The Journal* apologizes for the error.

FACEBOOK FEEDBACK

Northern Journal 2014

Caribou Legs keen to carry on Peel protection run



After knocking off 1,200 km in 28 days on a run from Inuvik to Whitehorse, you’d think Brad “Caribou Legs” Firth might want to hang up his caribou hide shin pads, strapped neatly on with leather lashing, at least for a bit. But you’d be wrong.



Alasdair Veitch: There are people that just totally amaze you in this world of ours. Brad Firth is definitely one of them. The man does not know the meaning of the word “quit” - and it shows. His passion for running and for the quality of water and land in his Gwich’in homeland is so very apparent in his latest quest. Run Brad, RUN!!



Brad Firth: thanks for the compliment and post Alasdair !

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ARCHIVES

15 Years Ago...

Another piece of history falls

The old Fort Smith Curling Rink came tumbling down on Monday, replaced recently by the new Recreation Centre. The old rink saw its first bonspiel on Jan. 23, 1965. Spearheaded by Fergie Craig and designed by architect Dick Blonjeau, the rink was built with a huge community effort that saw many residents pour hours of volunteer time into the project.

Issue: May 11, 1999

20 Years Ago...

Cost-cutter wins award

Fort Smith airport manager Barry Roste has been named as a recipient of an Award of Excellence from the department of Transport for his idea to install waste oil-fired furnaces in the Cambridge Bay and Fort Simpson maintenance garages.

Issue: May 11, 1994

30 Years Ago...

Legislative Assembly opens in Smith

The 10th legislative assembly of the Northwest Territories, which opened yesterday in Fort Smith, will make history for many reasons. Historically, it is the first time in over 20 years that the government of the NWT has met here. Since that time, Fort Smith has lost its status as the capital of the NWT.

Issue: May 10, 1984

Site C dam report leaves tough decision up to ministers

Report claims dam will have no effect on Peace-Athabasca Delta

By MEAGAN WOHLBERG

While the benefits of going forward with BC Hydro's proposed Site C dam are "clear," the ministers responsible for making the final call have a long list of serious adverse impacts to consider before approving the project, says the panel charged with reviewing the \$7.9-billion hydro project on the Peace River.

The panel's final report following a two-and-a-half year environmental impact review process was made public last Thursday after being handed over to the provincial and federal governments the week previous.

In the 450-page report that gives attempts to find a "middle ground" within the polarized debate for and against, the joint review panel makes 50 recommendations to the crown corporation designed to mitigate a suite of adverse impacts on the environment, communities and Aboriginal culture, while noting that many of the adverse impacts are unmitigable and situated within the context of an increasingly exploited region of the country.

"The Peace River region has been and is currently



Photo: J. Henry Fair

A third dam on the Peace river will have "no measurable impact" on the Peace-Athabasca Delta, above, according to the panel responsible for reviewing Site C.

undergoing enormous stress from resource development. In this context, the Panel has determined that the Project, combined with past, present and reasonably foreseeable future projects would result in significant cumulative effects on fish, vegetation and ecological communities, wildlife, current use of lands and resources for traditional purposes, and heritage. In some cases, these effects are already significant, even without the Project," states the summary by panel members Harry Swain, Jocelyne Beaudet and James Mattison.

Despite the considerable and irremediable impacts, the report struggles to find an alternative.

"The benefits are clear. Despite high initial costs, and some uncertainty about when the power would be needed, the Project would provide a large and long-term increment of firm energy and capacity at a price that would benefit future generations. It would do this in a way that would produce a vastly smaller burden of greenhouse gases than any alternative save nuclear power, which B.C. has prohibited," states the summary.

Apart from providing a renewable, low-carbon energy source, the project will also provide a number of local, regional and Aboriginal economic benefits, the report states.

The provincial and federal governments have six months to make a decision on whether or not to approve the project.

'No impacts to Peace-Athabasca Delta'

While a great deal of concern was voiced during the hearings by people living in the Peace-Athabasca Delta (PAD) region of northern Alberta about the impacts of further

flow regulation on the Peace River, which already plays host to two existing hydro mega-projects, the review panel says Site C will "have no measurable effect" on the people or ecosystem.

"The Panel concludes there would be no effects from the Project on any aspect of the environment in the Peace Athabasca Delta, and a cumulative effects assessment on the PAD is not required," states the report.

During hearings earlier this year, representatives from northern Alberta First Nations and Wood Buffalo National Park expressed concern that the sensitive delta ecosystem is already feeling the impacts of upstream hydro development, which has reduced ice-jam flooding, thereby changing the landscape, contributing to the disappearance of certain wildlife and impacting treaty and Aboriginal rights.

Although the panel said it is "not deaf to the importance of the PAD and the changes that are happening to it" as a result of flow regulation on the Peace River, it notes that hydro is only one of many culprits, including climate

change and water withdrawals from the Athabasca River, impacting the area, and that the project is too far away to have a major impact.

"The Panel notes that the changes to the PAD that were reported to the Panel are happening now without the Project. In addition, the PAD is 1,100 km downstream of Site C. While the majority of flow regulation on the Peace River is due to the operation of the Bennett Dam, the additional regulation provided by the Project would be attenuated before reaching the PAD," the panel said.

The panel agreed with BC Hydro's study results showing that the downstream extent of Site C's influence on the river ice thickness, break-up or freeze-up water levels would reach a maximum of 500 km downstream.

The report urges BC Hydro, Parks Canada, the Alberta government and others in the region to discuss the value and costs associated with providing periodic pulses of water to create flooding in the delta with the hope of preserving or restoring its aquatic ecosystems.

Industry Biomass

Pellet mill project leaps closer to production launch

South Slave company signs export agreement with Korean company

By MARIA CHURCH

The NWT's first proposed pellet mill project is two giant steps closer to launching production in the South Slave with the community of Fort Resolution signed on to provide wood supply and the company securing markets abroad.

Aurora Wood Pellets Ltd. was guaranteed a secure

supply of wood products after the Deninu Kue First Nation and the Fort Resolution Métis Council signed a Forestry Management Agreement (FMA) with the GNWT in late February, the first of its kind in the NWT.

Fort Providence is currently weeks away from setting its own FMA.

First Nations, Métis and community governing bodies in Hay River, Kakisa and Jean Marie River all have yet to sign FMAs, but Brad Mapes, the man behind the pellet mill project, said he expects that will happen over the next few months with the large communities paving the way.

"Basically we are now ready to build, but we really can't do anything until we have these FMAs going and the forest companies wrapped up," Mapes said in an interview last week.

Once all the agreements are signed and harvesting companies contracted, the project could see land development and mill construction this year and could be producing by next summer, he said.

NWT pellets attract attention overseas

Meanwhile the company is starting to capitalize on interest from the international marketplace.

"When we first started looking at the project, we were looking at strictly selling domestically, but now we realize, for a large per cent of our product, we have an opportunity to export it. There is a huge demand for wood pellets all over the world," Mapes said.

Currently most of the global pellet supply is considered low grade for industrial use, but with the NWT's sustainable supply of quality wood, Aurora Wood Pellets will be able to market a "premium" product.

"For a premium pellet, the difference is we will not use bark. We de-bark our material and only use core wood. We'll also blend our product using white pine, white spruce and black spruce, and with a consistent core timber source, we'll always have the same quality. It will produce a higher value product," Mapes said.

Mapes recently met with delegates from the South Korean industrial company Hyosung Corp. to secure a preliminary export agreement that will see an initial 150 to 170 tonnes of premium pellets shipped overseas to supply their factories.

The South Koreans were in Yellowknife for two days in late April where they signed the initial agreement and expressed interest in a long-term supply contract.

The company is also currently in talks with other international companies interested in the premium pellet.

Regardless of the international export potential, Mapes said a large chunk of production, around 40 to 60 tonnes, will be kept for domestic markets, including the territorial government's biomass facilities.

Jobs creation a core goal

Since it was given the go-ahead from the GNWT in 2012, the pellet mill project has enjoyed huge support from many groups in the South Slave, mainly because of its potential to create long-term employment, Mapes said.

"Ultimately we are there to make a profit for the company and the community groups, but really this project is a wellness project. It builds wellness by producing work for the communities and it gives our students the opportunity to see that there are going to be more jobs available so they can stay in their home communities," he said.

The GNWT has estimated the FMAs, which pledge government support to community-led, renewable resource development in the area, will likely create around 600 new jobs linked to the forestry industry in the South Slave.

The proposed pellet manufacturing plant, slated for construction outside of Enterprise, will directly employ an estimated 40 people.

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NWT Elders Parliament votes for freeze on fracking

By MEAGAN WOHLBERG

In a part of the country “where the term ‘elders’ still means something,” elder Jean-Pierre Isoré is hoping the NWT Elders Parliament’s unanimous resolution to put a freeze on fracking in the NWT holds some clout with the territorial government.

Members of the symbolic political assembly met last Thursday in legislature to discuss a host of issues, including the controversial oil and gas extraction method known as hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, just one week after a federal report came out showing major gaps in the scientific and technical knowledge around its impacts on the environment and human health.

Following an impassioned speech on the risks versus the benefits of allowing fracking in the NWT, Isoré and the 18 other delegates representing every constituency in the territory voted unanimously for a moratorium on the industrial practice - including representative Melody McLeod, Premier Bob McLeod’s wife.



Deh Cho elder Sam Gargan, centre, speaks on the fracking resolution put forth by elder Jean-Pierre Isoré, right, which calls for a temporary moratorium. Be'sha Blondin, left, said fracking requires a full environmental assessment. The resolution passed unanimously.

“The technical analysis shows that whatever you do today in terms of fracking is risky. Now, in the military life you learn to take risks - calculated risks - and

there must be a direct proportion between the risk you take and the result you get. And we don’t get that. We take all the risks and we get no result,” said

Isoré, elder representative for Frame Lake.

Isoré, who said the elders making up the parliament bring a total of 1,200 years of wisdom and hundreds of

grandchildren to the equation, said the government’s job is to listen, even if the Elders Parliament - established in 2010 as a way to give elders space to voice their concerns - has no official powers.

“We represent a good percentage of the population just among us. And we say, ‘No way. No way. Get back to the drawing board.’ We don’t say no to oil development or gas development. We’re not crazy. We want prosperity, but not at any cost.”

Isoré was not alone in his critique of fracking.

Elder and former MLA Sam Gargan of the Deh Cho region said the practice requires great quantities of water that, after being mixed with chemicals, is no longer usable.

Yellowknife Centre elder Be'sha Blondin called for an environmental assessment of fracking in the territory.

“Who’s going to protect the people? Who’s going to protect the animals, the water and the land?” she demanded.

The motion calls for a moratorium to be put in

place until the “impacts on the North are better understood, and the government can manage this technology in a way that ensures the integrity of our environment and communities,” echoing a similar resolution passed by the Dene Nation leadership in 2011.

The debate in the Elders Parliament emerged as representatives of the GNWT cabinet told media the territory had no plans of enforcing a moratorium or change of pace when it comes to fracking, regardless of the precautionary warning issued by the federal report.

To date, only one company has conducted horizontal fracking in the territory. ConocoPhillips, whose exploratory drilling project bypassed environmental assessment last year, drilled and fracked two wells over the winter, and is looking to drill up to 10 more over the next five years.

A second application by Husky Energy, currently awaiting approval by the Sahtu Land and Water Board, is looking to frack up to four wells in the Central Mackenzie region.



All residents and businesses in Colville Lake lost power last week after a line was knocked down.

Infrastructure Electricity

Colville Lake power back on after line taken down

By MEAGAN WOHLBERG

Residents of Colville Lake regained power Tuesday evening after a large vehicle accidentally pulled down a power line on Monday morning, resulting in a complete loss of electricity to the town.

According to the NT Power Corp. (NTPC), a vehicle snagged a line, taking down a power pole and requiring a new pole be installed.

That vehicle was transporting a backhoe, according to the community’s assistant SAO David Codzi.

“They were transporting a backhoe back into the community. Usually when they transport it, they have the arm extended, but I guess they forgot to do that this

time,” he told *The Journal*. “It ended up hitting the wire.”

An NTPC line crew was dispatched from Inuvik to Colville Lake Monday afternoon and began working non-stop to install the new pole, a process which was hindered by having to dig into frozen ground.

Power was restored to more than half the community by around 9:00 p.m. on Monday evening without installing the new pole, leaving a remaining 15 customers - including the grocery store - without power.

The crew worked into the night to get the pole installed and returned to finish the job Tuesday morning, and after a full day of work erected the

pole and reconnected power to all but one customer, who required the work of an electrician, by 6:35 p.m.

In total, all 52 NTPC customers in the town were affected by the outage.

Codzi said people turned to their wood stoves and generators to cope with the outage. Both the store and gas station were closed.

“There were a lot of cook-outs. Basically everybody has wood stoves and those were used to cook and stuff,” he said. “A lot of people have generators - those were going.”

Codzi said it was like old times before the community got power.

“We didn’t have power not that long ago,” he said.

Fort Smith Mission Historic Park Community Garden

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or 867-872-2859

All 33 NWT communities gather in Inuvik for AGM

Awards presented to community builders, volunteers across NWT

By NATHALIE HEIBERG-HARRISON

For the first time in its history, the Northwest Territories Association of Communities (NWTAC) celebrated its annual general meeting 33 communities strong, following the addition of Lutsel K'e to the association in March.

"The NWTAC now numbers each and every community in the Northwest Territories among our membership," outgoing association president and Fort Providence Mayor Tina Gargan said in a statement to delegates. "It means that when our communities speak together through NWTAC resolutions and advocacy, other governments and organizations are in no doubt: NWTAC lobbying positions have the endorsements of all municipal governments."

More than 120 delegates, including mayors, councillors, senior administrative officers, MLAs, government officials and NWTAC staff attended the meetings held in Inuvik at the Midnight Sun Recreation Complex between May 8 and 11.

Activities included a speech by Calgary Mayor Naheed Nenshi on leadership, formal



Photo: Nathalie Heiberg-Harrison

From left, Premier Bob McLeod congratulates 2014 Outstanding Volunteer Award winners Margaret Miller, Michelle Rees of the NWT SPCA, David Taylor and Thomas Norbert in front.

AGM business, presentations by GNWT committees and departments, a board of directors meeting, adoption of resolutions for 2014 and the election of NWTAC directors.

Stepping in as new president of the association is Charlie Furlong, the mayor of Aklavik. Gargan remains on as one of two vice presidents, along with Clarence Wood, a councillor from Inuvik. Roger Chandow, a councillor from Hay River, Paulatuk Mayor Ray Ruben Sr. and

Deline Chief Leonard Kenny were elected board directors.

The association passed a total of five resolutions on issues including fees for households in the general taxation area, homelessness, hazardous waste in municipal landfills, vehicle mechanics and maintenance, and a community funding review.

"There has been no significant adjustment or increase in the rate of funding provided to the municipalities since the creation of the New Deal in 2007,"

reads the association's final motion on the topic of a community funding review. "The GNWT needs to ensure that communities are adequately funded to deliver the programs that are legislated, mandated and expected to deliver."

On the final day of the annual general meeting, delegates were given the opportunity to ask questions of the premier and his cabinet on a wide range of issues, including homelessness, fuel prices, Northern

living allowance reductions and dog control.

Volunteers awarded for service

The NWTAC AGM also included the NWT Outstanding Volunteer ceremony and luncheon, which was held at the community hall. The awards, presented by Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA), recognize outstanding elder, youth, individual and group volunteers.

"They don't do it for the recognition," said MACA Minister Robert C. McLeod at the award ceremony. "They do it to give back to the community."

Edward Oudzi of Norman Wells and Margaret Miller of Inuvik were both presented with the Outstanding Elder Awards.

Oudzi was commended for teaching traditional skills, hosting on-the-land trips and having a strong impact on youth in the Sahtu.

"He has become both an educational and inspirational speaker," said Tom Williams, deputy minister of MACA.

Miller was recognized as a quiet, hardworking individual,

who has volunteered with such organizations as the Great Northern Arts Festival, the Inuvik Food Bank and Arctic Paws, and whose "altruistic work makes her a role model for many," Williams said.

Thomas Norbert, 10, of Tsiigehtchic was presented with the Outstanding Youth Award for his willingness to help out in his community.

David Taylor of Yellowknife received the Outstanding Individual Award for his service to countless organizations and non-profit groups in the city, while the NWT SPCA received the Outstanding Group Award.

In addition, the NWTAC presented seven awards of its own at its banquet on Saturday evening, including long service awards.

The Community Builder Award was presented to Charlie Scarborough, while the Community Service Award was presented to John McKee.

The final award of the night, the President's Award, was given to the Deline Got'ine Government, whose final self-government agreement is the first of its kind in Canada.

Fort Smith unveils big plans for upgraded, greener arena

By MARIA CHURCH

A brand-new mezzanine, six new change rooms and energy-efficient upgrades are just a few of the renovations Fort Smith has in store for its local arena.

Last week, the town unveiled its plans to retrofit the old Fort Smith Centennial Arena into what looks like a brand-new, state of the art complex.

Updates will include a glassed-in, heated mezzanine and ground-floor lobby, bleachers with top floor-only access, six new change rooms underneath the stands, players boxes across from the bleachers, large storage additions and energy-efficient insulation and lighting.

The future of the arena was put in question last year after an electrical fire swept through the building in May. While officials originally feared the ice would be closed for the winter season, quick repairs and temporary fixes allowed the town to open the facility for use in November.

Councillor Don Webb, a member of the ice strategy committee formed last year to address the arena damage, has been one of the leads on



Photo: Maria Church

Fort Smith councillor Don Webb, right, shows off the newly-unveiled arena renovation schematics to residents at the annual Fort Smith Trade show on May 3.

the renovation project. He said each upgrade proposed is the result of a specific request from ice user groups who met with council in March.

"Everybody who uses the arena came to council with their wish list. Every single

thing that they asked for is there. They can't believe it," Webb said.

The plans were drafted so that each component has an individual price tag, which will allow the town to move ahead with segments of the

construction according to its budget and timeline.

Council met to discuss the arena financing last week and determine priority and long-term renovations.

"That is how we have been approaching it. No final cost or

possible completion date yet, although we hope before 2018, but it could go past this date for some modules of the project," Mayor Brad Brake said in an email to *The Journal*.

This year, the priority renovations are the bleachers,

washrooms and change rooms - all areas damaged by the fire and now covered by \$250,000 in insurance for code upgrades. The town will be footing an additional \$150,000 to complete those upgrades.

An initial contract for \$1.77 million has been awarded by the town to complete repairs to the fire-damaged areas and install energy-efficient LED (light-emitting diode) lighting before Oct. 1, just in time for the next ice season.

"The rest of it is all going to be staged over the next couple of years if we can find the additional funds, but I'm extremely confident we can do it. I think it's an exciting project," Webb said.

According to contractor estimates, the renovations will extend the building lifespan 25-30 years.

"It's much wiser to spend a few million dollars to upgrade the building for long-term than to spend a whole bunch of money to build a new facility," Webb said.

Council is still waiting on the contractor for a total estimate and timeline before they vote to pass the arena financing budget.

Work begins on new Norman Wells health facilities

By MEAGAN WOHLBERG

After years of living with an outdated health care facility and no space for long-term care, the town of Norman Wells and the entire Sahtu region will have access to two brand-new, state of the art health facilities by 2016.

Construction on the new Norman Wells Health and Social Services Centre and long-term care facility, totalling at \$35 million, began last Wednesday afternoon with a feeding the fire ceremony and community feast to mark the occasion in Norman Wells.

The new health centre replaces the 36 year-old current facility, while the long-term care facility creates 18 beds for people who can no longer live in their homes and require full-time support, both of which were badly needed.

"They have not had a regional long-term care facility in the Sahtu before," said Derek Elkin, assistant deputy minister of corporate services with the department of Health and Social Services.



Photo: Dorothy Westerman

Drummers mark the start of construction on two new health facilities in Norman Wells last Wednesday at a feeding the fire ceremony.

"The health centre was built in 1978, so it's 36 years old and it's got to the point in the life of the building where it would cost more

to continue renovating and maintaining it than to build new, so we're going to get a modern health centre, built to current standards and

the current way of delivering health care," Elkin said.

"We're also building it to support potential expansion in services for the next 50

We're putting everything under one roof so they're all consolidated and people can work together as an integrated system.

Derek Elkin

NWT Health & Social Services

years, so we're not going to quickly outgrow it."

Existing health and social services - located in separate spaces in the community, at present - will be brought together with the creation of the new building.

"We're putting everything under one roof so they're all consolidated and people can work together as an integrated system," Elkin said.

While the long-term care facility will not be attached, it will be connected for mechanical reasons on the

same grounds as the health centre.

The 18 beds will be available to people from across the entire Sahtu region, or help to support people from other regions where there are waitlists.

Contracts for the design and construction have been awarded to the Tulita District Investment Corp. and Yellowknife-based Clark Builders.

Construction is expected to start this month with final completion of the two facilities slated for sometime in 2016.

Junior Kindergarten in the NWT

Free. Safe. Fun. Optional.

Dear Parents,

I am Lois Philipp, Principal of Deh Gáh Elementary and Secondary School in Fort Providence. I was born and raised in the DehCho and am grateful to be working at Deh Gáh, which is where I got my start in education - I went to grade 9 here as a youth. Our school has been one of the demonstration sites for Junior Kindergarten (JK) in the NWT this school year. We took a bit of a different approach and decided to partner with the Aboriginal Head Start (AHS) program in our community.

Prior to this year, the AHS program was the only licensed early childhood program in Fort Providence. The AHS programs have high quality early childhood programming for children 0-4, and we wanted to give our children the benefit of both AHS and JK. Respecting the excellent work and history of the AHS program, we decided to pilot the program with our 4-year-olds attending JK in the mornings and AHS in the afternoons.

Our primary program is an immersion program in Dene Zhahti (South Slavey), and inviting the 4-year-olds into the school supports the development of our language. Research shows that kids are able to pick up second languages easier when they are younger, and with the JK program our students are immersed into the language for an additional year. We know that children absorb new information so easily in the early years, which can only help their language acquisition in later years.

We began our program in October of 2013 with about half of the 4-year olds in the community participating, but by March of this year, all of the 4-year-olds were in JK. We're now seeing more confident, self-aware children having fun exploring, communicating, and working together.

They seem to be more socialized and better able to self-regulate. The JK program gives them a bridge between the early childhood programs they attended and the structure of a school day. It also introduces education and learning in a fun way that teaches them to explore, to be curious, and to understand that they learn in everything they do. It's amazing to watch these kids grow and develop together!

If you want to speak with me directly please don't hesitate to call me at Deh Gáh School in Fort Providence at (867) 699-3131.



Lois Philipp,

Principal,
Deh Gáh Elementary
and Secondary School,
Fort Providence





Danny MacDonald watches as Alexander Robichaud-Vogt tests out a homemade spectrometer.



Megan Evoy throws an atlatl during the Science Rendezvous competition held for students at Aurora College last week.



Andreas Robichaud-Vogt races against time as he navigates a wheelchair through the college door.

Photos: Maria Church

Education Science

Aurora College opens doors to science celebration

By MARIA CHURCH

Fort Smith's high school science students tested out their chemistry, biology and physics knowledge last week by going head to head in a science-based competition at Aurora College's Thebacha campus.

Egg drops, wheelchair races and spectrometer

building were just a few of the activities that challenged the students during the first-time event held in conjunction with Science Rendezvous, a Canada-wide celebration of science.

Students were all smiles as they took to a wheelchair and navigated an

obstacle course, racing for the best time, or launched an atlatl at a fake bear as Aurora College instructor George Peterson upped the adrenaline factor by saying, "Imagine this time it's coming at you."

"The kids are loving this," Paul William Kaeser high

school vice principal Dan Kearley said as he watched a team of students put together an egg drop landing pad out of paper, straws and masking tape.

Up for grabs for the top team were several gift certificates to local businesses.

Organizer Sarah Rosolen of the South Slave Aurora Research Institute said the pilot event was well received by the students as well as Aurora College staff and participating groups, which included the Thebacha and Wood Buffalo Astronomical Society and the Fort Smith

Health and Social Services Authority.

Held annually since 2008, Science Rendezvous was created by four Ontario universities with the goal of taking science out of the lab and onto the streets. Last year, more than 160,000 people in 30 cities across Canada participated.

Sports & Recreation Track & Field

NWT track team takes Grand Prix by storm

By MARIA CHURCH

NWT Storm, the territory's high school track team, is returning from nationals with pride after competing in hurdles, jumps and dashes against some of the best high school track athletes in the country.

Some 18 athletes from high schools across the territory made the trek to Toronto last weekend for the Nike Grand Prix, the biggest national high school track and field meet in the country, to compete against more than 300 athletes from 24 schools across 12 provinces.

The team had the morning to warm up before the meet, scheduled for Friday afternoon at the University of Toronto's Varsity Stadium.

"When we were warming up, we were able to scope out the other team, see what we're up against. It's a pretty awesome venue and a great way for our athletes



Team Storm's 18 high school athletes from the NWT compete in Toronto at the Nike Grand Prix last weekend.

to see what elite athletes go through during competition," Storm coach Allie MacDonald shared with *The Journal* from Toronto last week.

Sarah Ibey, a student from St. Patrick high school in Yellowknife, was one of the 18

athletes at the meet, but was forced to sit out the competition because of a stress fracture to her shin.

Despite the disappointment of not competing in her scheduled events, which included the 100-m dash,

200-m dash and high jump, Ibey said she was excited to be in Toronto to support her teammates.

"Definitely I'll be out there cheering them on," she said.

MacDonald said the team's goal going into the

competition was to see more medals than the four they came home with last year.

"Four medals is still an amazing feat coming from the North because there are very high level athletes that we are competing against,

but we are hoping to do the same or better than last year," she said.

In the end, NWT Team Storm met that goal by bringing home another four medals, all in the 4x100-m relay event.

Fort Smith's Thomas Rhone and Kandis Villebrun from Yellowknife both won silver while Kiera Mandeville and Daniel Melanson, both from Hay River, each nabbed a bronze.

In the field events, Mackenzie Clowe from Yellowknife placed fifth in girls shot put and eighth in high jump while Melanson placed seventh in boys high jump.

In the track events, Desiree Brown from Yellowknife placed 16th in the girls 800-m and 9th in the 1500-m. Joel Demarcke from Hay River came in 13th in the boys 1500-m while Yellowknife's Alex Keefe placed 16th in the boys 100-m dash.

Photo: TrojanOne



Olympian Clara Hughes is presented with a "Dempster-safe" helmet during her visit to East Three Secondary School in Inuvik.



A six-time medalist, Hughes is surrounded by youth in Dettah where she offered to share her medals with them.

Health & Wellness Mental Health

Olympian visits NWT to talk mental health

By NATHALIE HEIBERG-HARRISON

Six-time Olympic medalist Clara Hughes first visited the Mackenzie Delta when she cycled the Dempster Highway on her honeymoon more than 10 years ago.

Last week, Hughes returned to the town of Inuvik, but this time her goal was much more than simply biking the highway - she wanted to start a conversation in the community about mental health.

As part of Clara's Big Ride, a cross-country campaign sponsored by Bell, Hughes has visited 45 schools and spoken to more than 45,000 people about mental health.

Her tour included stops in Yellowknife, Behchoko and Dettah earlier this month, with the help of Northwestel, which sponsored the Northern part of the tour.

Inuvik marked the halfway point of her campaign, which will eventually take her to 110 communities across Canada as part of Bell's "Let's Talk" campaign around mental

health. In total, she will bike 12,000 km.

Last Tuesday, Hughes spoke to approximately 200 students and community members at Inuvik's East Three Secondary School. Students at Mangilaluk School in Tuktoyaktuk and Moose Kerr School in Aklavik took part via webcast.

Her message to students: end the stigma of mental illness.

"You have the strongest voices, whether you know it or not. You are the future - of your communities, of your culture, of your country, of your territory, and when you learn to use the voice you have you can change things and make them better than they ever have been," she said.

"That's what this campaign is all about - opening up this conversation so that nobody suffers in silence."

Hughes spoke to students about her dad's alcoholism, her parent's divorce and her sister's continuing substance abuse and manic-depressive disorder. She spoke of her lack of discipline as a youth

and how, at the age of 13, she began drinking and smoking to numb the pain.

At the age of 16, Hughes watched Olympic speed skating for the first time and said the moment completely changed her.

"I knew that's what I was going to do. I didn't know how or where, but I knew I was going to do that," she said. "If I had never made the Olympics it wouldn't have mattered. It shifted the direction I was going in."

the achievement left her feeling empty.

"Inside I felt like nothing. Within two months I was in a state of clinical depression," she said.

Luckily, Hughes was surrounded by people who cared for and supported her, and she finally accepted professional help.

She encouraged Inuvik youth to find the courage to speak out, and told them they are not alone in their struggles.

When you learn to use the voice you have you can change things and make them better than they ever have been.

Clara Hughes

Hughes traded drugs and alcohol for training, and said she tried to battle depression by training harder than anyone else.

She returned from the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta with two bronze medals in her summer sport, cycling, but said

"What I can't emphasize enough is your connection to the land," she said in closing. "In the south we don't have this connection to the land, and that is such a source of power. It's also a source of strength. Don't ever underestimate that."

Jeffery Amos, a resolution support health worker with the Inuvialuit Regional Corp., was asked to speak alongside Hughes.

He stressed the importance of seeking help for mental health issues, noting that mental health and suicide often go hand in hand.

"We have the highest suicide rate per capita in the NWT," he said. "Mental health is something we shouldn't be afraid to talk about."

Amos compared mental illness to the common cold, explaining that it can happen to anybody, whether you're rich or poor, young or old, healthy or unhealthy.

"You're not immune," he said.

He encouraged students to seek help, either by talking with the school's counsellors, family counsellors, workers with health and social services or people at his own office.

A community feast was held the evening after Hughes' talk at East Three Secondary School to allow community

members to hear her message as well.

In a speech to the approximately 100 community members in attendance, Inuvik Boot Lake MLA Alfred Moses said he was glad something was being done countrywide to promote mental wellness.

As chair of the Standing Committee on Social Programs, he said it was a priority to make concrete changes to the Mental Health Act during the 17th Legislative Assembly.

There have been no changes to the act since 1987, he said.

"Hopefully we get less people falling through the cracks and less people in need," he said.

After her visit in Inuvik, Hughes headed down the Dempster Highway to speak at Chief Julius School in Fort McPherson.

She plans to bike the entirety of the Dempster Highway, and is scheduled to arrive in Whitehorse on May 12.

"I really felt like we had to do something epic to respect the North," she said of her journey from Inuvik to Whitehorse.



Hughes was the guest of honour at a community gathering in Dettah that included a presentation from the Olympian and a caribou stew feast last Monday. Dettah was one of several stops on Clara's Big Ride to raise awareness of mental health.



Hughes chats with a Dettah youth who donned one of her Olympic medals.

Photos: Bill Braden and Nathalie Heiberg-Harrison

Fort Smith RCMP investigating multiple crimes

By MARIA CHURCH

Police in Fort Smith are asking for the public's assistance in identifying the

person or people responsible for two separate crimes that happened in the community last week.

RCMP were notified early Monday morning by several residents in Fort Smith who reported their tires had

been slashed in the night. The damages appear to be limited to homes in the west end of town.

An investigation is ongoing and no arrests have been made.

A day later, RCMP received a call from a resident in town that an elderly woman had been struck by a vehicle while riding her bike on Wilderness Rd., also in the west end.

The 77 year-old was knocked off her bike and landed on the side of the road, at which point the vehicle fled the scene.

An ambulance was called and the injured woman was transported to Fort Smith hospital where they arranged for her medevac to Stanton Territorial Hospital in Yellowknife. She has since been released.

Fort Smith RCMP have seized a vehicle of interest in the hit and run, but have not made any arrests.

The RCMP ask that anyone with information in either incident come forward by contacting the Fort Smith RCMP at 867-872-1111 or anonymously by contacting Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS(8477). Informants may be entitled to a cash reward.



The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs would like to recognize the contributions made by the 2014 Outstanding Volunteer Award recipients and all volunteers in the Northwest Territories. The time and effort that volunteers give to their communities helps improve the quality of life for all Northerners.

Territorial Award Recipients

- Outstanding Elder Awards – Edward Oudzi, Norman Wells – Margaret Miller, Inuvik
- Outstanding Youth Award – Thomas Norbert, Tsiigehtchic
- Outstanding Individual Award – David Taylor, Yellowknife
- Outstanding Group Award – NWT SPCA, Yellowknife

The territorial award recipients were honoured at an award ceremony in Inuvik on May 9, 2014.

Award Nominees

Youth

- Alison Buckland – Yellowknife
- Faith Rogers – Inuvik
- Thomas Norbert – Tsiigehtchic

Elder

- Edward Oudzi – Norman Wells
- Margaret Miller – Inuvik

Group

- Fort Smith Animal Society – Fort Smith
- Fort Smith Volunteer Ambulance Department – Fort Smith
- NWT Girl Guide Leaders – NWT
- The Mabbitt Ladies: Linda, Margaret, Mary, Lorena, Bev, and Karen – Fort Smith
- Rick Lindsay and Chris Garven – Inuvik
- NWT SPCA – NWT
- NWT Wellness Society Steering Committee – Yellowknife

Individual

- Belinda Sanspariel – Behchoko
- Bertha Deneron – Trout Lake
- Beverly Drybone-McNeely – Fort Good Hope
- David Taylor – Yellowknife
- Dean Harvey – Fort Simpson
- Doug Ritchie – Yellowknife
- Elaine Keenan Bengts – Yellowknife
- Faye Aviugana – Fort Resolution
- Jacqueline Stanbridge – Behchoko
- Louisa Kay – Fort McPherson
- Mark Salvor – Yellowknife
- Michele Thoms – Yellowknife
- Mirsad Mujcin – Yellowknife
- Steven José – Fort Simpson
- Tasha Stephenson – Yellowknife
- Taylor Phillips – Fort Smith
- Tracy St. Denis – Yellowknife
- Tyler Holland – Fort Good Hope
- Vivian Hansen – Yellowknife



Justice Fraud

Yellowknife officer charged with defrauding RCMP

By MARIA CHURCH

An RCMP officer in Yellowknife has been charged with several counts of fraud and forgery against the police institution he worked for over the last seven years.

Cst. Nathan White of the Yellowknife detachment is facing charges of fraud under \$5,000, forgery and

uttering a forged document after a year-long investigation by the RCMP.

The charges were laid against White on Apr. 1.

According to an RCMP news release, White joined the force in Tuktoyaktuk in early 2007 and later moved to the Yellowknife detachment. He has served

his whole police career in the NWT.

White was suspended from duties with pay on May 29 last year and will remain suspended until the court and internal discipline process is carried out.

He is scheduled to make a his first court appearance in Yellowknife's Territorial Court on May 13 at 9:30 a.m.



YK Trade Show Attracts Young and Old: Two year-old Emma Jordan and her dad Alex were among thousands of Yellowknifers who took in the annual YK Chamber of Commerce Trade Show over the weekend, where Betsy the Bison was there to showcase Park Canada's Wood Buffalo National Park, as well as promote the Dark Sky Festival planned for late August in Fort Smith.

Photo: Bill Braden

Higher numbers at 16th annual skills competition

Territorial competition seeks to end trades stigma

By MARIA CHURCH

With slightly higher numbers than last year, the 16th annual Territorial Skills Competition in Yellowknife last week saw more than 70 students demonstrate their skills in 16 different trades and technology jobs.

Open to both post-secondary and high school students, the annual territory-wide competition was held at multiple high schools and technical centres across the city on Tuesday.

Jan Fullerton, organizer and executive director of Skills Canada NWT, said the usual trades of photography and cooking were popular once again this year and saw the most entrants.

Other contests included carpentry, heavy mechanics, baking, electrical, graphic design, hairstyling, plumbing and welding.

This year also saw the resurgence of cabinetmaking with Graham Chan, an apprentice cabinetmaker in Yellowknife, vying unchallenged for the gold medal.

While the bulk of the registrants came from Yellowknife, the regional presence increased this year with medalists from Fort Smith, Hay River, Behchoko, Fort Simpson, Fort McPherson, Aklavik, Inuvik and Ulukhaktok.

Gold medalists from the territorial competition will go on to compete at the Skills Canada National Competition in Toronto from June 4 to 7. Last year, NWT electrical apprentice Richard Neary brought home a gold medal from the Canada-wide competition.



Olivia Williams from Yellowknife prepares vegetables during the cooking component of the annual Territorial Skills Competition, held in Yellowknife last week.



Yellowknife's Austin Miller wields a skill saw.

Many of the territorial competitors coming away with gold medals this year were from Yellowknife, with the exception of Dawson Kovacs from Inuvik who won gold in workplace safety, Ulukhaktok's Natalja Westwood with the gold medal in secondary-level photography, Alainna Carpenter from Inuvik with a gold in secondary sewing and Behchoko's Andrew Weyallon

with the gold in millwright.

Fullerton said the numbers for the annual competition were slightly higher than last year, but still not as high as she'd like to see them.

"I would like to be seeing it closer to 90 or 100," she said.

According to Fullerton, the gain in numbers from the regional communities is likely because of the increasing popularity of the two regional



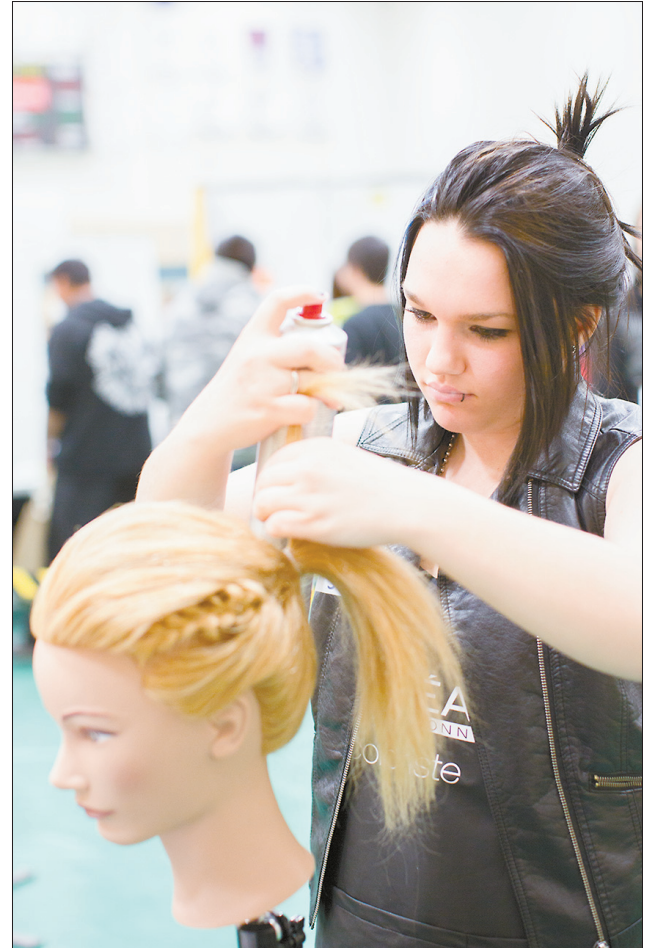
Graeme Chan measures.

competitions, held this past February in Inuvik and Hay River, both of which saw higher numbers than expected.

"I think that we are losing ground maybe in our Yellowknife competitors and our post-secondary competitors," she said.

Goal to end the stigma

Across the country, skilled tradespeople are in huge



Kenya Parent-Desjardins uses hairspray on a mannequin.

demand with declining numbers of high school graduates going into the trades.

The main goal behind all the skills competition is to give much-needed recognition to the trades and undermine the stigma that it's a second-choice option for youth, Fullerton said.

"People will say something like, 'You're really smart, why are you going into culinary arts

when you could go to university and become a doctor?' We're still trying to combat that mentality and to try and get more people seeing the skill trades and technology as viable career options and first-choice career options," she said.

The competition is also an opportunity for the youth to network with businesses and trades people for potential job placements.

Education Territorial

Northern education ministers share best practices

NWT's education renewal will be delayed for more consultation

By MARIA CHURCH

The three territorial education ministers have taken the first steps toward greater communication and information sharing when it comes to Northern education.

NWT Education Minister Jackson Lafferty was joined by his territorial counterparts for the first time in a tri-territorial forum to discuss ways the three jurisdictions can work together to achieve success for students in the North, from pre-kindergarten to adult learners.

"The three territorial jurisdictions are very unique in how we deliver things with the remoteness and high cost of living. We are going to be standing united together when we approach the federal government or provincial counterparts," Lafferty told *The Journal* on Friday.



Territorial education ministers Paul Quassa, Elaine Taylor and Jackson Lafferty meet in Yellowknife last week.

"This is the first meeting we've had where we are sharing information so we know what the other jurisdictions are doing. It was a great interaction," he said.

The three ministers discussed ways of closing the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students, possible federal cuts to the territorial literacy councils and

touched on Teacher Education Programs offered by each of the three territorial colleges.

Lafferty said the ministers hope to continue meeting at least annually to get a sense of where education is heading in the three territories.

Residential schools education a focus

One of major topics discussed by the ministers was how each territory is incorporating the history and legacy of residential schools in the classroom.

According to Lafferty, the NWT and Nunavut are "leading the pack" in Canada and internationally for including a residential schools component in their high school education systems.

Developed by the territory over a number of years, the residential schools unit of the

Northern Studies program was implemented as a mandatory component for Grade 10 students in 2013 and has since received attention across Canada and abroad.

"We're getting a lot of positive feedback from educators, even the parents and students," Lafferty said. "Other jurisdictions are asking for more detailed information on the actual curriculum and how we developed it...It was very unique; the first of its kind."

"This material is quite critical to our schools as we move forward to reconcile our pasts, and move forward with healing and hope for the future," he said.

More engagement on education renewal

The action plan promised in the GNWT's framework

for education renewal tabled last November, which promises sweeping reforms to the territory's education system, will be delayed by several more months for more consultation, Lafferty said.

"I was hoping to have that by spring session, but we're told that it's too rushed, we need more engagement with the public, with the educators, with the parents, all walks of life," he said. "It will be their document; it will be their voice."

The minister said his two territorial counterparts will be watching closely as the NWT tackles its education overhaul.

"It's a huge undertaking and they are very interested in how we move forward on this," he said.



Aurora College president Jane Arychuk, left, presents Mary Firth with her diploma alongside Board of Governors chair Sydney O'Sullivan, vice president of education and training Diane Reed, Deputy Commissioner Gerry Kisoun, Premier Bob McLeod and Western Arctic MP Dennis Bevington.



Shannon Ciboci received her diploma in business administration last Friday at Aurora College's graduation ceremony in Inuvik.

Education Aurora College Grad

Hard works pays off for Inuvik college graduates

By NATHALIE HEIBERG-HARRISON

Family, friends and honorary guests packed Ingamo Hall in Inuvik last week to celebrate the graduation of Aurora College's Aurora Campus students.

The students received diplomas in such specialties as office administration, business administration and teacher education.

Keynote speaker Anne Church, who retired from Aurora College in 2012, spoke about her pride in the North, its people and their achievements.

"I believe Aurora College plays an essential role in

developing the community and its people," she said. "You should be extremely proud of what you have accomplished."

Greeting students on stage were Western Arctic MP Dennis Bevington, Premier Bob McLeod, Deputy Commissioner Gerry Kisoun, vice president of education and training Diane Reed, board of governors chair Sydney O'Sullivan, Aurora College president Jane Arychuk and Aurora Campus director Doug Robertson.

Valedictorian Nicolinea Minakis was the last to speak to the crowd at Ingamo Hall. She spoke of the struggles of

being both a student and a single mom, and reminded graduates that hard work pays off.

"With each failure comes an opportunity to learn something new. The beauty of being human is that we all make mistakes. We learn from them and we grow from them. So, if you stumble, pick yourself up and keep on going," she said.

"If I can leave you with one last lesson to be learned for today, it would be to go out, be bold, take risks, live passionately and to never give up on yourself or your education."



From left: Twyla Amos, Joanne Francis, Alecia Lennie and Maribeth Pokiak share a laugh following the graduation ceremony at Ingamo Hall last Friday.



Agnes Noksana lines up to receive her diploma. Later in the ceremony, Noksana was presented with the Board of Governors Student Leadership Award.



Valedictorian Nicolinea Minakis speaks to the crowd at Ingamo Hall Friday afternoon.



Lauren Green leaves the convocation ceremony holding her diploma in front of a full house at Ingamo Hall in Inuvik.

Keyano College celebrates more than 150 grads



Photo: Sean McLennan/Keyano College

Keyano College students celebrate with their friends during convocation, held last Friday.

By MARIA CHURCH

More than 150 tassels moved from right to left at Keyano College in Fort McMurray last week during its 48th annual convocation ceremony.

An estimated 738 students graduated this year

with around 170 attending the ceremony and walking the stage in front of friends, family and classmates.

With such a large graduating class, two ceremonies were slated for convocation day with one in the morning and one in the afternoon.

Both were held this year at Keyano Theatre, moved from the Sport and Wellness Centre where it was held for the past three years.

This year's valedictorian was Amber Cleghorn, a student from the Business, Administration and

Management diploma program, who will graduate with a 3.99 GPA (grade point average) out of 4.0.

While she looks forward to the next chapter of her life, the new graduate will always remember the college that "changed her forever," Cleghorn said in a press release from the college.

"When I had first arrived at Keyano, I had no idea what I wanted to do with the rest of my life; but, just by taking the courses of my program and discovering what interested me and maybe even what subjects or areas I would personally like to steer clear of, I learned more about myself and what direction I wanted to proceed in," she said.

This year's guest speaker at the convocation was Canadian film star William Shatner.

"Culture is defined in some books as the betterment or refinement of individuals," he told the crowd.

"Looking around at our existence, examining it,

manipulating it, maybe altering it, brings us almost as much value as food and shelter," Shatner said.

In order to fully celebrate this year's graduates, the college launched a first-time event called Grad Daze this year, which was held on May 5 and saw 120

graduates attend to pick up their gowns, complete surveys, sign up for the alumni association and talk about their futures.

"Grad Daze was a smashing success!" Marsha Kuchelema, director of student services and registrar for the college, said in the release.

Arts & Culture Writing

Fort Smith, Yellowknife students share community love

By MARIA CHURCH

Anonymous love letters are about to crop up in Fort Smith and Yellowknife courtesy of your local Grade 10 students.

Airmail envelopes, blank save for the single word "love" and containing a personal ode to their hometown, are being left in secret, hidden locations by their makers in the hopes that someone will stumble upon them and receive a boost of love of the town.

It's called the Love Lettering Project and creator Lindsay Zier-Vogel was in the NWT last week to bring the heartwarming activity to Grade 10 students in Yellowknife and Fort Smith.

"It was amazing. I think it's an interesting age group. For a Grade 10 in high school, you don't have a lot of agency about where you live and you might not feel like you have a lot of agency about very much," she said. "I was really amazed about how open they were and it was really interesting to hear them talk about what works here and what makes it different about living here."

The Love Lettering Project was born around 10 years ago when Zier-Vogel was hanging out with a friend in a park in



Photo: Maria Church

Lindsay Zier-Vogel brought her Love Lettering Project to students in Fort Smith and Yellowknife last week.

downtown Toronto. She decided it would be fun to write love poems to leave for strangers.

"We'd put them in these airmail envelopes and leave them for people to find. It was this idea of just coming across something and not having it interrupt your day," she said.

Zier-Vogel decided to expand her random act of lettering love into a project that encourages others to write odes to their hometowns to spread the good feelings.

Over the last 10 years, between 3-4,000 letters have been written in Toronto, across

Canada and even as far away as the United Kingdom.

This was Zier-Vogel's first time in the North and her trip included a stop in Whitehorse, Fort Smith and Yellowknife where she arranged to have students in Grade 10 Career and Life Management (CALM) classes write their own letters about what they love in their communities, put them into her airmail envelopes and leave them anonymously around town.

Zier-Vogel's Northern excursion was done in partnership with Dream Catcher Mentoring,

a program designed to encourage students to continue their education by connecting them with professional mentors over the internet. Zier-Vogel said she had the opportunity to meet with a few of the students she had mentored through the program.

"We chatted about my career and what it's like to run community engagement events and then I got to ask them what they love about where they live," she said.

Kelsey Baldwin, a teacher at PWK high school in Fort Smith, said the students shared their love for the access to outdoors, skidooring, dry meat and the aurora borealis.

For Baldwin, the real treat was having the students, who are considering future paths, introduced to Zier-Vogel as a role model of where they can take their own careers.

"Kids who grow up anywhere, if it's a small town, it's really important for them to see what the possibilities are. Engaging with adults who are leading lives and living how the students might want to, seeing how they got there is the biggest thing I want students to take away from it," she said.

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REQUEST FOR TENDERS

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Sealed tenders addressed to either the Procurement Shared Services office in Hay River or Yellowknife, will be received before:

3:00 PM, LOCAL TIME, JUNE 12, 2014.

Pre-tender meeting: 10:00 am, May 29, 2014, 1st Floor, Boardroom (Highways Building), 4510 Franklin Ave., Yellowknife, NT.

General inquiries to: Procurement Shared Services
Phone: (867) 873-7230
Email: psstenders@gov.nt.ca

Contractors may obtain tender documents by emailing psstenders@gov.nt.ca. Tender documents will be available on May 12, 2014.

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

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Northwest Territories Power Corporation

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

L150 TRANSMISSION LINE CLEARING

FORT SMITH, NT

RFP NO. 21408

Sealed RFP's marked "Northwest Territories Power Corporation RFP 21408" will be received at the offices of the Northwest Territories Power Corporation, 4 Capital Drive, Hay River, NT X0E 1G2 until 4:00 p.m. local time on **May 26, 2014.**

The RFP consists of L150 Transmission Line Clearing, Fort Smith, NT as specified in the RFP Documents.

Please note that security is being requested in the form of a bid bond and consent of surety at ten percent (10%) of the proposal price. A performance bond and labour and materials bond in the amount of fifty percent (50%) will be required of the successful proponent.

RFP Documents will be available on **May 5, 2014.** Please fax or email request for documents to:

Jamie Hunt
Contract Coordinator
Northwest Territories Power Corporation
Phone: (867) 874-5211 Fax: (867) 874-5251
Email: jhunt@ntpc.com

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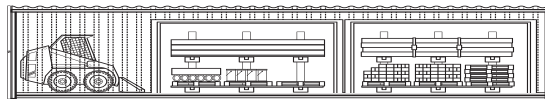
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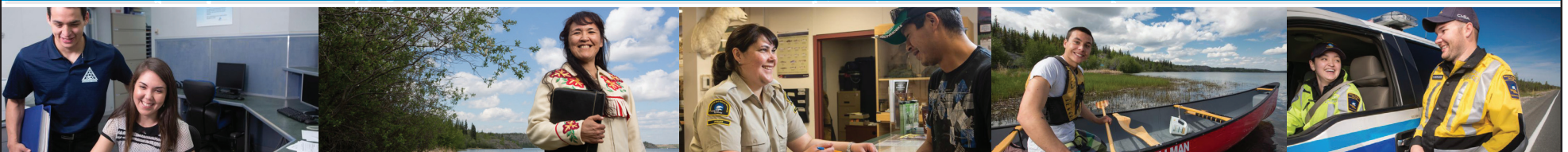
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App guides visitors through Yellowknife's Old Town

By JACK DANYLCHUK

What began two years ago as a 45-minute sound tour of the neighbourhood where Yellowknife began has morphed into a smartphone and tablet app that showcases stories, music and people of Old Town.

"I was new to Yellowknife and I wanted to learn the history of the place and meet some of the people connected to the neighbourhood," said creator Janna Graham, an independent radio producer.

The first sound tour was broadcast from a small transmitter in Old Town to citizen band radios handed out at Ramble and Ride, an annual celebration that welcomes the rest of the city to Yellowknife's oldest neighbourhood.



Photo: Jack Danylchuk

Janna Graham stops by the Wildcat Cafe on a walk with her dog Penny through Yellowknife's Old Town district.

"I wanted to give people a pass to go into some places they might find intimidating – like the Einar Brodden

Woodyard. It has a sign that says 'enter at your own risk' and the audio tour walked people through that."

With financial support from the city's heritage committee and the territorial government, Graham collaborated with Rosana Strong and her company Strong Interpretations to transform the original audio tour into an application for tablets and smart phones.

"We have narration, we have soundbites of Old Town voices like Barb Bromley and Walt Humphries and Ryan Silke and Fran Hurcomb, and we have musical folks like Andrea Bettger and Ryan McCord and Pat Braden," Graham said.

It's a cultural walk with historical information and the voices of people who have lived and worked there for decades. The audience learns the lexicon of Old

Town and the meaning of mysterious phrases like "Herman Nelson" and "honeybags"; there are archival photos and details on buildings that are gone and those that remain.

The application is aimed at tourists, and although it also serves as an historic marker for a neighbourhood on the cusp of major changes, Graham said she avoided making any political or philosophical statements about its future.

In the era when Yellowknife was served almost entirely by water, "Old Town was a real working neighbourhood," said Graham, who keeps watch from a small houseboat where she lives with her dog Penny.

"We're at a crossroads. Some of the history is still

tangible and visible, but there is pressure to develop and clean up. I wanted to document that and make a point that the history is worth holding on to and preserving," she said.

"I think people realize that Old Town is what's special about Yellowknife. There is a conscious effort by the city to hold on to that, but looking at the Harbour Plan, I wonder how realistic that plan is. It looks more like Vancouver than Yellowknife," Graham said.

"I hope it can hold on to the quirky, ramshackle character, that is a beautiful part of the neighbourhood. I would like to see its rustic charm remain while making it more accessible to the public."

Health & Wellness Cleansing

Fort Smith invited to 'spring clean' body and mind

By MEAGAN WOHLBERG

Spring cleaning should include more than just your house and garage, says the health-conscious duo behind a new holistic juice cleanse program soon to take place in Fort Smith.

Starting May 20, those interested in doing an entire body detox will be supported through a group cleanse scenario led by Malorie Rehm and Anna Kikoak of Anna's Home Cooking restaurant, aimed at ridding the body of any physical, mental and emotional toxins that have built up over the winter.

"The toxins that build up physically, mentally, emotionally all collect in the physical body, and this is the basis of understanding where illness comes from," said Rehm, a yoga instructor and holistic wellness practitioner. "All illness has roots in all of the subtle energies that collect in the body, so the way that we're running this program is in a holistic way, like if you look at the medicine wheel."

Though people tend to see cleanses as being entirely physical, Rehm said they can also bring up mental and emotional side effects, which is why she and Kikoak will be providing willing participants with the nutritious liquid meals, meditation, yoga and emotional support needed to complete the program over



Photo: Meagan Wohlberg

Anna Kikoak, left, of Anna's Home Cooking and yoga instructor Malorie Rehm have teamed up to facilitate a juice cleanse for the community of Fort Smith. The detoxification regimen features a provided liquids-only diet, along with yoga, meditation and emotional support during a three, five or 10-day period.

a three, five or 10-day period of their choice.

While a large part of the reasoning behind cleansing is detoxification, which can lead to heightened energy, Rehm said it's also a way for people to figure out what dietary influences may be causing a host of maladies in their body, from allergic reactions to skin conditions and digestive troubles.

"This cleanse isn't like a weight-loss program. It's

not some kind of fad. It's a tool for getting to know your body better, for befriending your body, because after the cleanse when you start going back to the food that you used to eat, you could have reactions to them. You'll have a chance after the cleanse to notice what happens to you after you eat different foods when you reintroduce them," she said.

Each day, participants will be given three fresh

vegetable and fruit juices, a nut milk, a raw soup and a tea to consume as their meals throughout the day. Because the cleanse is liquid, Rehm said it's effective at flushing out toxins, as well as giving your body the adequate nutrition to heal itself, making it different from a fast.

"When you're eating solid foods, it takes a lot more energy to digest it and break it down. So because it's not solid, your body's only going

to be using up the amount of energy it needs to break that down and then the rest of it will go to the healing process," she said.

Though anyone can cleanse on their own, Rehm said the group support provided by the program will be helpful in keeping people motivated and on-track, as well as deal with some of the physical and emotional issues that might arise during the detox.

"When you cleanse is when

stuff starts to come up," she said. "You can get headaches in the beginning, cold or flu-like symptoms, skin flare-ups, and it's important when you're going through it that you have some kind of support system to make it through that part."

The meditation is designed to bring awareness to what's going on in the body and the yoga, dancing, walking and toning classes offered alongside the diet will keep the body grounded, Rehm said.

The greater self-awareness and strengthened willpower achieved during a cleanse is also a great reason to get on board, Kikoak said.

"You're also getting exposed to a different kind of medicine so you can school yourself on the availability of choices out there for your health," she said. "It gives you a greater awareness of different ways of achieving health."

That leads to self-empowerment, Rehm said, and hopefully a healthier community.

"It's a deeper understanding of food and how food affects our life on a very profound level," she said.

Prices to participate range between \$210 for three days, \$350 for five days and \$700 for the full 10-day program.

For more information drop in to Anna's Home Cooking between 11:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Monday to Friday or call 872-2582 (CLUB).

NWT artist immerses herself in music at Toronto college

By MEAGAN WOHLBERG

An NWT musician is staying true to her Aboriginal roots while mastering the world of music - in all of its manifestations - in Toronto.

Fort Smith-born Aboriginal artist and frontwoman of Toronto-based rock band The Johnnys, Veronica Johnny recently completed what is the first in three years of an intensely challenging music program at Toronto's Centennial College aimed at making her the best musician she can be.

"I just want to be a better musician. I want to learn every day of my life, and this is just going to help me be a better musician, a better singer," she shared from Toronto. "It's really opened up a lot for me musically."

This was the first year for Centennial's new Music Industry Arts and Performance program, which held its music classes, rehearsals and final performances at the Toronto Centre for the Arts.

The program focuses on popular, world and indigenous music as opposed to the typical jazz and classical influences deeply ingrained in most post-secondary music programs.

Within the first year of the program, students were exposed to courses in tonnes of musical theory, ear training, keyboarding, voice training, the history of music, music industry/business courses, recording techniques and even writing classes, which Johnny said further boosted her creativity.

"It got me writing again," she said, "just like writing essays and stories. I'm always writing songs, but it really just got everything happening for me again creatively."

Though Johnny has been singing and playing on stage for years, she said most of her skills came from copying



Veronica Johnny, centre, performs with her Soul Journey ensemble on stage at the Toronto Centre for the Arts as part of her music program's final performance, marking the end of her first year at Centennial College.

Photo: Daniela Mitrovic

others and learning to play by ear or memorization.

"I was 25 when I first started learning guitar, and I never actually had formal lessons. My friend Caroline would invite me and some other friends over every Wednesday night and all we had to do was bring a six-pack of beer and she'd show us some stuff on guitar," Johnny said with a laugh.

Now at Centennial, she said she's being forced to climb mountains of theory, a challenge that is both intimidating and empowering.

"It was intense. There's lots to learn," said Johnny, who employed the help of her bandmates from The Johnnys to help her wade through the theory over the year. "If I had known when I started that I was going to have to learn how to play the piano, I probably would have been so

intimidated that I wouldn't have even applied! But my tutors really helped me apply the theory without having to memorize everything."

Despite the challenges, Johnny is now playing that piano, along with sight-reading music, understanding the structure of classical music, hearing all the parts of a chord and using her voice to harmonize outside of the melody, for instance.

"I'm amazed at all these skills I have now. I can't even believe only eight months ago I didn't have a clue about any of this," she said.

"It's actually making me much more of a well-rounded musician. And I'm much more confident now because when you're not sure of what you're doing, you're hesitant."

It's also exposed her to unfamiliar terrain, taking her to her first symphony and

introducing her to her new love: the oboe.

While much of it is new, Johnny is also able

to incorporate her own traditional music and culture into the program, bringing her hand drum to class and

teaching her fellow students traditional songs that are performed as a group.

"My ensemble played two traditional songs over the year: last term we sang the Strong Woman song... We played that with the full band - the piano and my hand drum - and four vocalists," she said. "This term, we sang the Four Elements song."

Now that the pressure of school is off for the summer, Johnny is getting back into some of the things she does best: rocking out and passing on tradition. Last week, she was in some of Toronto's public schools teaching hand-drum workshops and exposing youth to Aboriginal culture.

That said, the program has certainly inspired her to open more doors.

"I want to play with all kinds of people. I would love to record a CD with Northern musicians and collaborate on projects. And now when there's a jam, I can harmonize! It's just enhanced my life, really. If I could go to school everyday, I would."

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