

Volume 11 Issue 7

June 2011

EV'S 127th Issue!

ATTENTION: Elders Contact People
Please Remember To Make Copies of The
EV Each Month For Your Elders And If
You Could Also Make Copies For Your
Chiefs and Councils That Would Be A Great Help, And Much Appreciated!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ALL ELDERS BORN IN JUNE!
HAPPY FATHER'S DAY! AND HAPPY NATIONAL ABORIGINAL DAY!



Dear All, Support fees allow this office to run for you each year. Only 46 fees have been sent in so far this year and that is not good. It is all of our responsibility that this office continue to run for our aboriginal elders in BC. Your help is needed, please step in and assist.

Thank you. Sincerely, Donna Stirling, BCECCS Coordinator

**IS YOUR GROUP REGISTERED FOR THE ELDERS GATHERING?
THE FORM IS ON PG. 4 PLEASE SEND TO HOST IMMEDIATELY!**

Indian Residential School Survivors Society (IRSSS)

1.800.721.0066

Monday to Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm

Common Experience Payment (CEP)

Deadline for CEP September 19, 2011

Independent Assessment Process (IAP)

Deadline for IAP September 19, 2012

BC ELDERS COMMUNICATION CENTER SOCIETY

ELDERS VOICE

Inside this issue

Easy Bakers Corner/Handy Tips/Website Information	2
List of Paid Support Fees	3
GATHERING REGISTRATION	4
***LOGO CONTEST *** JUNE 15th DEADLINE	5
Joint Public Statement	6-7
NESKIE MANUEL MISSING	8-9
Children and Odd News	10-11

Pgs. 12-14: Article from 2004—CBC Overview of Aboriginal Canadians
Pg. 15: AFN Nations Chief Atleo Calls for Immediate Action to Support Evacuated First Nations
Pgs. 16-18: FN Stories in the News
Pg. 19: Truth and Reconciliation Article
Pgs. 20-21: National Aboriginal Day
Pgs. 22-23: "Church doctrine blamed as basis for residential schools' from Northern News Services by Paul Bickford
Back Pg:
Annual Elders Gathering Info
Our Contact Info, Quotes, and Jokes, Horoscopes

Easy Bakers Corner – Apple Cake from www.northpole.com

Cover 1 cup of raisins with water, cook for 3 minutes, drain well. Preheat oven to 325°F and grease a 13x9 inch pan.

Mix 1 3/4 cups of granulated sugar, 2 cups of flour, pinch of salt, 1 1/2 tsp. of cinnamon, and 1 tsp of baking soda. Make a well in the middle of the dry ingredients and add mixture of 2 tsp. of vanilla, 3 eggs, 1 cup of vegetable oil. Mix thoroughly.

Stir in the 1 cup of raisins, 1/2 cup chopped nuts, 2 cups of apples, peeled and chunked.

Pour into prepared pan and bake for 1 hour. Remove from oven and let cool before frosting.

Frosting: Combine 6 Tbsp. of butter with 1/4 cup of milk and 1/2 cup of brown sugar and boil for 2 minutes. Let cool. Mix in 4 cups of icing sugar, 1 cup at a time until it reaches spreading consistency. After frosting, sprinkle some chopped cuts on top. As an option, replace the frosting with ice-cream.

HANDY TIPS:

Have grease stains on your carpet? Shake some cornstarch over the grease stain and let it set there overnight or at least 8 hours. Then just vacuum.

Cleaning woodwork? Did you know that cold tea will clean woodwork. Give it a try!

What Can you please share?

The following is a short list of Elders suggestions of what might be shared: Your local Newsletters/Upcoming Local Events/Prayers/Poems/Quotes/Comments/Storytelling/Drawings/Articles of Interest/Native Songs Lyrics/Wellness Seminars/Obituaries, etc. Submissions are best forwarded to me via email by the 15th of the preceding month. If you are interested in providing articles, please do so, I look forward to hearing from anyone who wants to contribute to the content of your newsletter.

Gilakasla, Donna Stirling

‘PRESERVING THE PAST’

New Elder’s Website: www.bcelders.com

The *First Ever* Elder’s Website “Preserving the Past” is now online (as of Sept. 2002). Registration forms, booth forms, maps of the host territory, accommodation information, etc. concerning the Annual Elders Gatherings are available each year on the BC Elders Communication Center Society’s website www.bcelders.com as soon as they are made available from each new host community.

Issues of your Elders Voice Newsletter are also posted on the website each month, though all issues still continue to be mailed out to your Elder’s Contact People throughout the province (to ensure that no one is left out because of a lack of access to the internet).

Disclaimer:

Health articles, etc. are provided as a courtesy and neither the BC Elders Communication Center Society’s Board/ Members or anyone working on its behalf mean this information to be used to replace your doctor’s and other professional’s advice. You should contact your family physician or health care worker for all health care matters. Information is provided in the Elders Voice for your reference only. And opinions contained in this publication are not those of Donna Stirling, Coordinator unless her name appears below the material.

BCECCS 11th Year GRATITUDE LIST

Support Fee from Dec. 1st 2010 – Nov. 30th 2011

(In the past the fee has always been \$250 yearly, but in these economic times it has become necessary to ask groups to consider assisting more, if possible to make up for groups who cannot help.) Your support is much appreciated!

LEVELS OF SUPPORT

\$1000 – Salmon

\$750 – Frog

\$500 – Sisiutl

\$250 - Hummingbird

SALMON LEVEL - \$1000

1. Tahltan Band Council

Sisiutl Level - \$500

1. Adams Lake Indian Band
2. Ts'kw'aylaxw Elders
3. Tsleil-Waututh Nation
4. Cook's Ferry Indian Band
5. Lhoosk'uz Dene Nation

Hummingbird Level - \$250

1. Nuxalk Ts'Ikt Elders
2. Kla-How-Eya Circle of Elders
3. Shuswap Nation Tribal Council
4. Kluhx Kluhx Hu-Up
5. Indian Residential School Survivors Society
6. Laich-Kwil-Tach Treaty Society
7. Osoyoos Indian Band
8. Tansi Friendship Centre Society
9. Tobacco Plains Indian Band
10. Uchucklesaht Band Council
11. Douglas Band
12. Neskonlith Indian Band
13. Qualicum First Nation
14. Gitxaala Nation
15. Ka:'Yu:'k't'h'/Che:k'tles7et'h' Nation
16. Heskw'en'scutxe Health Services
17. Ehattesah Tribe
18. UBCIC
19. Cowichan Elders
20. Wei Wai Kum First Nation
21. BCAAFC
22. Daylu Dene Council
23. Akisqnuq First Nation
24. Carnegie Community Centre
25. BC Assembly of First Nations
26. McLeod Lake Tse'khene Elders Society
27. Hailika'as Heiltsuk Heath Centre
28. Xaxli'p Band
29. We Wai Kai Nation
30. Doig River First Nation
31. Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society
32. Bridge River Indian Band
33. Tsawwassen First Nation
34. Carrier Sekani Family Services
35. SIMPCW First Nation
36. Quatsino Band
37. Wuikinuxv Nation
38. Mount Currie Band Council
39. Seton Lake Elders
40. SKELKELA7IHKALHA Elders Society
- 41.



35th Annual B.C. Elders Gathering

Hosted by:

Stó:lō and Coast Salish Elders

c/o Clarence Pennier

P.O. Box 76, 12892 Moses Drive

Lake Errock, BC V0M 1N0

Phone: 604-826-5813 cell: 604-798-2432

Email: kat.pennier@stolotribalcouncil.ca

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

Participant Name:	Group / Nation / Tribe
Are you an: Elder <input type="checkbox"/> (55 & over)	On Site Contact Information:
Caregiver <input type="checkbox"/>	
Bus Driver <input type="checkbox"/>	
Caregiver @ Gathering:	Cell Number:
Hotel/Lodging Name & #	Emergency Contact: (if different from above)
Any Health Concerns/Issues (This will be on your badge for emergency purposes):	

This registration form and \$50.00 per person fee is due by May 11th, 2011 – (note that after May 11th, the registration fee will be \$75.00).

Your registration fee includes meals, plus “*Bag of Swag*” (goodies), plus some tours.

Please make cheque payable to “35th Annual Elders Gathering” and send to:

Wendy Ritchie, Registration Coordinator

Box 2370, Sardis Main Station

Chilliwack, BC V2R 1A7

The 35th Annual Gathering Planning Group is not responsible for lost or stolen items, nor injuries or illnesses during the gathering.

ART CONTEST!!!!

Help us create a logo that sends a message about Aboriginal people and the Aboriginal organization in Vancouver that represents them

The Metro Vancouver Aboriginal Executive Council (MVAEC) is looking to create positive messages about Aboriginal people, and to make people more aware of MVAEC. We are looking for one design by an Aboriginal person to use as our logo and go on other things to help raise awareness. In addition to our logo 'Metro Vancouver Aboriginal Executive Council' or 'MVAEC', will include some of the following on our website and in our marketing material:

- Positive message (from one word to a 50 word poem or paragraph)
- Pictures (drawn or computer made, including from a camera)
- Positive, empowering and/or cultural images

Research our website at www.mvaec.ca or face book us at Metro Vancouver Aboriginal Executive Council (mvaec) to find out more about us. (push like to get regular updates)

Be Creative! It will be hard to choose only one design, so make your design stand out. We want to ensure that we have different designs to represent females, males, Westcoast, plains, urban, culture, and youth. The logo is envisioned to depict the transition to the city from our communities, culture and history.

There will be an \$800.00 honorarium for the artist whose design is chosen to be printed as the logo and a \$50 honorarium for four(4) artwork, poems or pictures material used in the marketing of MVAEC. Unfortunately we cannot use all of the artwork that is sent in, so we thank you in advance for sharing your work with us. Those artists whose artwork is chosen will give MVAEC written permission to use their artwork for all of our advertising, and do adjustments for our purposes. For those not chosen, you can pick up your work before June 30th, 2011 or all items will be dealt with appropriately.

All entries must be on an 8½" x 11" letter size paper. You can use color or black and white. Please drop off or mail your artwork, name, phone number, and address in an envelope addressed to Coordinator at the Metro Vancouver Aboriginal Executive Council at 107-1607 East Hastings Street, Vancouver BC, V5L 1S6 or email cstone.mvaec@gmail.com

Deadline: 4:30pm June 15, 2011

Joint Public statement
27 April 2011

Children's rights denied by indifference and legal technicalities

Indigenous peoples and human rights organizations call for an immediate end to discrimination against First Nations families

Indigenous peoples and human rights organizations urge all political leaders in Canada to make a clear public commitment to ending the discriminatory underfunding that is tearing apart First Nations families.

For the last decade, government studies have shown that the federal government is failing in its responsibilities to Indigenous children and their families. The government spends significantly less money per child for children's services in First Nations reserves than its provincial and territorial counterparts provide in predominantly non-Aboriginal communities. This is despite the higher costs of delivering services in remote communities and the greater need created by the residential school legacy and other pressures on First Nations communities.

One consequence is that most First Nations families do not have access to the same level and quality of early intervention and preventative programming available to other families in Canada. As a result, the intended last resort of removing children from their homes and communities has become the primary government approach for child protection in many First Nations communities.

More First Nations children are being placed in government care today than were taken away from their families and communities at the height of the residential school era. In most cases, the stated reason is "neglect." In other words, whether because of poverty or another reason, the parents are unable to meet their children's basic needs.

"We're hearing a lot talk in this election about the importance of supporting families," says Ontario Regional Chief Angus Toulouse. "We have to ask why successive governments have ignored the plight of First Nations families whose children are being taken away for entirely avoidable reasons."

Jennifer Preston of the Canadian Friends Service Committee says, "The federal government has apologized, on behalf of all Canadians, for the grave harm done by the residential school systems. Our organizations find it hypocritical that the Canadian government would apologize for the harms of the past while contributing to the ongoing harm being done to First Nations families and communities. This is not reconciliation."

In February 2007, the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society (FNCFCS) and the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) filed a complaint with the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC). The Commission agreed that First Nations children were being discriminated against and referred the case to the Human Rights Tribunal for a ruling.

The federal government has strongly opposed the hearing. The federal government has told United Nations human rights bodies that it provides First Nations communities with "services comparable to those provided by the provinces and territories." However, the government has taken the position that these services cannot be compared for the purpose of determining discrimination under the Canadian Human Rights Act.

The government failed twice to get the Federal Court to stop the hearings. But in March 2011, the Human Rights Tribunal Chair agreed with the government's argument and dismissed the case.

The federal government has said that First Nations people living on reserves have "full access to, and protection under, the *Canadian Human Rights Act*". Yet if this Tribunal ruling stands, it will deny First

Nations children equal protection under the Act. The FNCFCS and the AFN, as well as the CHRC, have appealed the decision to the Federal Court.

“The decisions made by the government about what and how much they will fund have enormous impact on the lives of Aboriginal people,” says Alex Neve, Secretary General of Amnesty International Canada. “The notion that these decisions should be exempt from human rights oversight is fundamentally unacceptable. Canadians should be outraged that their government even pursued this argument in the first place.”

“It’s shocking that another generation of Aboriginal children is being torn from their homes simply because the government won’t address the discrimination in funding,” says Grand Chief Stewart Phillip of the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs. “The last four years should have been spent fixing the problem rather than fighting this human rights complaint.”

Federal government lawyers also argued that the Tribunal should not make any use of international human rights standards such as the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* or the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, to which Canada is legally bound, in ruling on the underfunding of First Nations children’s services.

“International human rights standards, including the UN Declaration, underline the fact that government obligations toward Indigenous children and families cannot simply be ignored,” says Jeannette Corbiere Lavell, President of the Native Women’s Association of Canada. “Any opposition to applying the UN Declaration, or to the Tribunal even hearing this case, reflects a profound failure to respect the fact that the well-being of First Nations children and families is a matter of basic human rights.”

Amnesty International Canada
Anishinabek Nation (Union of Ontario Indians)
Assembly of First Nations British Columbia
Canadian Friends Service Committee (Quakers)
Chiefs of Ontario
First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada
First Nations Summit
Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)
KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives
National Association of Friendship Centres
Native Women’s Association of Canada
Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs

For more information, please contact:

Elizabeth Berton-Hunter
Media and External
Communications Officer,
Amnesty International
Tel: 416-363-9933 ext 332
Cell: 416-904-7158

Maurice Switzer
Director of
Communications
Anishinabek Nation (Union
of Ontario Indians)
[**swimau@anishinabek.ca**](mailto:swimau@anishinabek.ca)

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip
President
Union of BC Indian Chiefs
Cell: 250-490-5314

Cindy Blackstock
Executive Director
First Nations Child and
Family Caring Society of
Canada
Tel: 613-853-8440

Jennifer Preston
Canadian Friends Service
Committee (Quakers)
[**jennifer@quakerservice.ca**](mailto:jennifer@quakerservice.ca)

Claudette Dumont-Smith
Executive Director
Native Women's
Association of Canada
Tel: 613-722-3033 ext. 223

FAMILY MESSAGE: EXTENDED SEARCH FOR NESKIE MANUEL ACROSS NORTH AMERICA

INTENSIVE SEARCH TO DATE

(Neskonlith, May 23, 2011) We, as Neskies Manuel's family, would like to first of all take this opportunity to thank all the searchers who were part of the extensive search of the area around Neskonlith Lake for the past 15 days. Neskonlith Indian Band Councillor Neskies Manuel (Secwepemc/Ktunaxa/French), 30 years old, went missing on May 8, 2011 from the annual Mother's Day Gathering at the west end of Neskonlith Lake by Neskonlith Creek, near Chase (British Columbia) and has not been seen since. A search was immediately initiated. A coordinated systematic grid search of the area was conducted over the first week by official search and rescue teams, starting off with Kamloops Search and Rescue, and then lead by Shuswap Search and Rescue along with teams from Vernon and Logan Lake. Over the following week the systematic grid search was carried on by our family, supported by First Nations Emergency Services (FNESS) and Cathy Arnouse, Adams Lake Indian Band (ALIB) Fire Chief, and the Neskonlith Indian Band (NIB). The Shuswap Nation Tribal Council (SNTC), the Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC) and the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), also pledged their support.

In the last 15 days an extensive quadrant search of the entire area surrounding Neskonlith Lake has been conducted, including Neskonlith Creek, the cliffs, the meadows, Neskonlith Provincial Park and the creeks to the Northeast of Neskonlith Lake (map attached). The search teams and the family are over 80% certain that Neskies is not in the area that has been searched extensively, although it is still possible that he may have been overlooked. The RCMP has committed to conducting a detailed search of Neskonlith Lake this week using side scan sonar. Also surrounding areas have been extensively searched by Secwepemc and local people with extensive knowledge of the area, including by horse and ATV. **However there are surrounding areas that have not been covered and a strategic search of these areas will continue.** Neskies Manuel has never left the area before without letting his family know and his friends across the United States and Canada have not heard from him.

Elders from the Secwepemc Nation and spiritual leaders from across North America have encouraged the family and the community to keep praying and keep looking for Neskies Manuel. We deeply appreciate this unprecedented effort with the community, the nation, with indigenous peoples, supporters and search and rescue teams coming together in the search for Neskies Manuel. Hundreds of volunteers have covered many square kilometers in an extensive search. This ongoing support is needed now more than ever as we move to a more extensive search for Neskies Manuel.

EXTENDING SEARCH TO NORTH AMERICA

As a result of the detailed search of the local area, **we as Neskies Manuel's family have decided to extend the search to all of North America.** Neskies Manuel has traveled extensively, including biking across Canada. Given that Neskies was showing signs of disorientation lately, he might be lost outside of the search area and his family is anxious to find him and ensure that he is well.

We are calling for the enclosed official RCMP poster to be extensively circulated, not just via internet, but to also have it posted along highways, in parks, at community centres and in car windows. Tips should be passed on to a local RCMP or police detachment, since they are key to leading this search to a successful conclusion. **NESKIES MANUEL'S FAMILY IS OFFERING A REWARD OF \$1,000 CND FOR FINDING NESKIES.**

SUPPORT APPRECIATED AND NEEDED

The search for Neskie Manuel will continue to be raised at the national and international level. National Chief Shawn Atleo attended a briefing in the community during the first week of the search and pledged national support which will be required in this extended search for Neskie. UBCIC President Grand Chief Stewart Phillip joined the search over the first weekend and assisted in securing a proper transition of the search effort. SNTC Tribal Chair Kukpi7 Wayne Christian, and Kukpi7 Judy Wilson (NIB) have stood by our side throughout. **We call for their ongoing support and on all peoples, communities and organizations in North America to spread the word that we are looking for clues and information about the whereabouts of Neskie Manuel.**

Through this tragic experience the family, the community and supporting organizations have realized the gap that exists when it comes to dealing with missing persons in indigenous communities and in coordinating a search and rescue operation that includes indigenous knowledge of the area. In the absence of such a structure, the burden falls on the family of the missing person to keep an organized search going. **We call on the ongoing support of all people, organizations and the media to keep Neskie Manuel's picture, and missing poster in the public eye, so Neskie can be found.**

The family will also set up a virtual office and website to keep circulating information about the extended search. Neskie's Missing Person posters will be available at a central location on Neskonlith Indian reserve for distribution across Canada, along with equipment and supplies for an ongoing search of the local area. Secwepemc Radio which was set up by Neskie Manuel, along with other alternative media, will also keep carrying the message about his disappearance and call for any tips to be passed on to the police.

HEARTFELT THANK YOUS:

Neskie Manuel's family would like to thank all those who have come out to support the search for Neskie and those who have sent their support and prayers. We want to specifically thank all the volunteer searchers, including: Shuswap, Kamloops, Vernon and Logan Lake Search and Rescue; FNESS; Cathy Arnouse, Emergency Preparedness Planner Casey Larochelle, John Anderson and Martha Manuel who coordinated the search on behalf of the family; and the many searchers who came from far and wide. We also want to thank all the indigenous organizations that continue to support the search: NIB and ALIB; other Secwepemc bands, including Skeetchestn who sent their fire fighters; SNTC, the UBCIC, AFN, and many others. The family deeply appreciates the financial contributions to the search, by the above mentioned organizations; the First Nations Summit; other Indian bands; the Seventh Generation Fund; the law firm Nahwegahbow-Corbiere; Community Futures Kamloops which enabled the extensive search over the weekend; Canadians for Reconciliation; Mining Watch, and other organizations that Neskie worked with; and many businesses, organizations, family, friends and individuals who deeply care for Neskie and his family. We want to thank the media that has been reporting on Neskie's disappearance, including local and provincial media and the Aboriginal Peoples' Television Network (APTN) and ask them to keep calling for clues regarding the disappearance of Neskie to be passed on to the police. We also want to thank the cooks and the elders in the community that provided for everyone; and the spiritual people and all those who continue to send their prayers for Neskie's safe return home.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR MEDIA PLEASE CONTACT:

Arthur Manuel (father): 250-319-0688
Kukpi7 Judy Wilson: 250-320-7738

Reasons Not To Mess With Children

1. A little girl was talking to her teacher about whales.

The teacher said it was physically impossible for a whale to swallow a human because even though it was a very large mammal its throat was very small.

The little girl stated that Jonah was swallowed by a whale.

Irritated, the teacher reiterated that a whale could not swallow a human; it was physically impossible.

The little girl said, 'When I get to heaven I will ask Jonah'.

The teacher asked, 'What if Jonah went to hell?'

The little girl replied, 'Then you ask him'.

2. A Kindergarten teacher was observing her classroom of children while they were drawing. She would occasionally walk around to see each child's work.

As she got to one little girl who was working diligently, she asked what the drawing was.

The girl replied, 'I'm drawing God.'

The teacher paused and said, 'But no one knows what God looks like.'

Without missing a beat, or looking up from her drawing, the girl replied, 'They will in a minute.'

3. A Sunday school teacher was discussing the Ten Commandments with her five and six year olds.

After explaining the commandment to 'honour' thy Father and thy Mother, she asked, 'Is there a commandment that teaches us how to treat our brothers and sisters?'

Without missing a beat one little boy (the oldest of a family) answered, 'Thou shall not kill.'

4. One day a little girl was sitting and watching her mother do the dishes at the kitchen sink. She suddenly noticed that her mother had several strands of white hair sticking out in contrast on her brunette head.

She looked at her mother and inquisitively asked, 'Why are some of your hairs white, Mum?'

Her mother replied, 'Well, every time that you do something wrong and make me cry or unhappy, one of my hairs turns white.'

The little girl thought about this revelation for a while and then said, 'Mummy, how come ALL of grandma's hairs are white?'

5. The children had all been photographed, and the teacher was trying to persuade them each to buy a copy of the group picture.

'Just think how nice it will be to look at it when you are all grown up and say, 'There's Jennifer, she's a lawyer,' or 'That's Michael, He's a doctor.'

A small voice at the back of the room rang out, 'And there's the teacher, she's dead.'

6. A teacher was giving a lesson on the circulation of the blood. Trying to make the matter clearer, she said, 'Now, class, if I stood on my head, the blood, as you know, would run into it, and I would turn red in the face.'

'Yes,' the class said.

'Then why is it that while I am standing upright in the ordinary position the blood doesn't run into my feet?'

A little fellow shouted, 'Cause your feet ain't empty.'

7. The children were lined up in the cafeteria of a Catholic elementary school for lunch. At the head of the table was a large pile of apples. The nun made a note, and posted on the apple tray:

'Take only ONE. God is watching.'

Moving further along the lunch line, at the other end of the table was a large pile of chocolate chip cookies.

A child had written a note, 'Take all you want.. God is watching the apples.'

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS, cp.org, Updated: January 30

Malaysian court orders lovers to pay fine of 4 buffaloes, 1 pig for illicit affair

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia - A news report says a Malaysian court has ordered two lovers to pay a fine of four buffaloes and a pig after they were found guilty of having an illicit affair.

The Star newspaper says the Native Court in Penampang district on Borneo island ruled Friday that the man and woman must compensate their communities with the animals, valued at about 6,000 ringgit (\$1,800), for their tryst.

They were also fined 1,000 ringgit (\$300) each.

The man's wife filed a complaint last year after finding her husband in shorts and her colleague in a sarong at the man's second home. The court rejected their claim that they were just "best friends."

Officials could not immediately be reached Sunday for further details.

An old woman was arrested for shoplifting at a grocery store. When she appeared before the judge, the judge asked what she had taken. The lady replied, "A can of peaches." The judge then asked why she had done it. She replied, "I was hungry and forgot to bring any cash to the store." The judge asked how many peaches were in the can. She replied, "Nine." The judge said, "Well then, I'm going to give you nine days in jail--one day for each peach." As the judge was about to drop his gavel, the lady's husband raised his hand and asked if he might speak. The judge said, "Yes, what do you have to add?" The husband said, "Your honor, she also stole a can of peas."

From www.pruneville.com

Overview

CBC News Online | July 02, 2004

Back, back in time...

If you fly beyond Old Crow Flats in northern Yukon you can see the remains of ancient logs that form massive, man-made structures once used to catch caribou. Aboriginal Canadians call them "the caribou corrals."

The corrals were designed to capture migrating caribou. The log walls of the corral were higher than the caribou. The animals entered at a place where the corrals were about five kilometres wide. The corrals gradually narrowed until the caribou were trapped, providing a convenient bin of live meat, enough to feed dozens of families over the long Yukon winter.

Finding the caribou corrals excited archeologists, anthropologists and paleontologists. They discovered that some of the logs used for the corral walls had been fashioned by stone axes, which suggested the corrals might have been used in prehistoric times. By carbon-dating fossil bones by the corrals, scientists determined they were 30,000 years old, which proved to be a rare instance of direct evidence of human activity in the Western Hemisphere.

There is more to be learned from aboriginal culture than caribou corrals and stone axes. The federal systems of government in Canada and the United States are modeled on the system of government devised by the Iroquois.

The Iroquois system took care to protect individual liberties and freedoms, including gender equality. Thomas Jefferson, America's third president and one of the drafters of the U.S. Constitution, observed that among the Iroquois "every man, with them, is perfectly free to follow his own inclinations. But if, in doing this, he violates the rights of another, if the case be slight, he is punished by the disesteem of society or, as we say, public opinion; if serious, he is tomahawked as a serious enemy." Jefferson used this to draft his First Amendment, which allows freedom until it violates another person's rights.

In their 1991 book *Occupied Canada*, authors Robert Hunter and Robert Calihoo devote a chapter to "The Great Gift of the Iroquois," in which they describe some of the workings of the Iroquois Confederacy: "Factionalism with the confederacy was reduced by building in a system of clan kinships that transcended the borders of different tribes. Thus, the clans of the Hawk, Turtle, Wild Potatoes, Great Bear or Deer Pigeon would have had members among the Mohawks, Seneca, Onondagas, Oneidas, and Cayuga alike, and these individuals would view each other as members of the same family."

Benjamin Franklin was so impressed by the Iroquois Confederacy that he championed it as a model to unite the new colonies, urging that each colony become a state with control over internal affairs, with a federal council responsible for external matters. This became the basis of the Articles of Confederation.

The story is rich, vast, complex.

What's in a name?

Consider, for a start, the nomenclature. Is it "aboriginal Canadians" or "first peoples" or "natives" or "Indians" or "First Nations People" or "indigenous people"? They're all correct, with some mild fretting over politically-correct hemlines, which at least has eliminated such clunkers as the English "redskins" and the French *sauvages*. We still call it "the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs." Aboriginals find demeaning the use of possessives such as "Canada's aboriginals" and "Canada's natives," though "native" is acceptable if used to modify "people" and "leaders" and "communities."

Consider the languages. The largest aboriginal language group is Algonquian, spoken by some 100,000 people. The Algonquian language group actually contains nine aboriginal languages: Abenaki, Blackfoot, Delaware, Mi'kmaq, Maliseet, Montagnais-Naskapi, Ojibwa, Potawatomi, and Cree. The Crees are spread across Canada in various groupings, each with their own dialects: Plains, Swampy, Northern, Woods, Moose, and East.

On the matter of the Mi'kmaq, the word comes from "nikmaq," which aboriginals gave to the French and Basque fishermen and explorers in the 17th century. Essentially it means "my kin-friends." The Mi'kmaq, when referring to themselves, use the term "L'nu'k," which means "the people" or "humans." Mi'kmaq is pronounced *Mig-mow* (as in "owl").

The complexity cries out for perspective, which I found one afternoon in May, 1975, in Inuvik where the Mackenzie River empties into the Beaufort Sea. I was talking to an Eskimo named Abe Okpik. Abe and I were both on assignment with the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry, popularly known as the Berger Inquiry after the chairman, Mr. Justice Thomas Berger.

"Three times this morning I heard someone say Inuit," Okpik told me. Then, with exquisite timing over his mug of coffee, he added, "The anthropologists must be early this summer."

Okpik died early in 1998, by which time he had comfortably embraced the use of "Inuit" to describe "Eskimos," a southern aboriginal expression for "eaters of raw meat." And why not? "Inuit" means "the people," as in "people everywhere." It is also plural; one Inuit is an "Inuk." Abe told me an Inuk can denote two Inuit by somehow saying *Inuuk*.

Nunavut and the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples

The Berger Commission was a watershed event in the history of aboriginal Canadians, examining the lives and living conditions of the people of the Mackenzie Valley and further north to Sachs Harbour and Holman Island. Judge Berger held formal hearings in Yellowknife, and community hearings in scattered villages and encampments across the western Arctic. He ended up taking his commission across southern Canada, all the way to the Maritimes.

"We possess a terrible self-centredness, even arrogance, as a people," Berger said, referring to non-aboriginal Canadians. "History is what happened to us. We dismiss as a curiosity what has gone before. The culture, values and traditions of native people amount to more than crafts and carvings. Their respect for the wisdom of their elders, their concept of family responsibilities extending beyond the nuclear family to embrace a whole village, their respect for the environment, their willingness to share - all of these values persist within their own culture even though they have been under unremitting pressure to abandon them."

On April 1, 1999 the eastern portion of the Northwest Territories became Nunavut. It was the first time the map of Canada was changed since Newfoundland joined confederation in 1949.

Nunavut means "our land" in Inuktitut, the language of the Inuit. The territory of Nunavut is five times larger than Alberta, with a population of 24,000, of whom 85 per cent are Inuit. Ottawa agreed to pay Nunavut \$1.2 billion over 14 years, ending in 2007.

I heard it often during my time in the Mackenzie Valley working on a book on the Berger Inquiry, which was titled *The Past and Future Land*. I finally found a way to reply when we were in Fort Liard and I met Chief Harry Deneron, who testified at the inquiry that the local nurse had posted a sign on the door of the Hudson's Bay store that warned: DO NOT DRINK THE WATER.

"Well, it's okay for us - like a doctor can tell us this because we're humans," Chief Deneron told Judge Berger. "Most of us will probably know what they're talking about, but what we can't get at is, how can we get the

message across to the animals that are depending on this water, the fish and that?"

In the book I wrote:

"It is a good question, one that confounds those white people who like to put a priority on things, with humans and their things definitely at the top and all the rest, the beasts and fishes, definitely lower down. The whole of the Northwest Territories, they say, could easily fit into Toronto's CNE Stadium, and it's true if by 'whole' you mean only the humans. For sure you won't get the land in, not the land that is one third of Canada, or the animals, not the herds of caribou that thunder by in numbers exceeding 100,000. But just the humans, yes. It is like measuring a Caesar salad by counting the croutons."

At the start of 1998, the Canadian government formally apologized to the aboriginal Canadians for the way they have been mistreated.

This was in response to the 1996 report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, a massive document that recommended a new era of partnership.

A section of the report titled "Looking Forward, Looking Back," begins: "After some 500 years of a relationship that has swung from partnership to domination, from mutual respect and cooperation to paternalism and attempted assimilation, Canada must now work out fair and lasting terms for coexistence with Aboriginal people."

As a starting point, the royal commission listed four reasons why this must be done:

1. Canada's claim to be a fair and enlightened society depends on it.
2. The life chances of Aboriginal people, which are still shamefully low, must be improved.
3. Negotiation, as conducted under the current rules, has proved unequal to the task of settling grievances.
4. Continued failure may well lead to violence.

Other recommendations:

1. The creation of what would essentially be a third order of government: an aboriginal parliament.
2. An independent tribunal to decide on land claims.
3. More money to be spent to improve housing, health, education and employment.
4. Establishment of a native university.
5. An "immediate and major infusion of money" that would see \$2 billion added to the present government spending of \$6 billion a year on aboriginal Canadians.

The report cites the Royal Proclamation of 1763 as a defining document in the relationship between aboriginal and non-aboriginal people in North America. The document, signed by King George III, says:

"It is just and reasonable and essential to our interest and security of our colonies that the several nations or tribes of Indians with whom we are connected and who live under our protection, should not be molested or disturbed in the possession of such parts of our dominions and territories which, not having been ceded to or purchased by us, are reserved to them or any of them as their hunting grounds."

AFN National Chief Calls for Immediate Action to Support Evacuated First Nations

May 19, 2011

(Ottawa, ON) – Assembly of First Nations National Chief Shawn A-in-chut Atleo today called for immediate action to support First Nation citizens and communities impacted by wildfires in Alberta.

“First and foremost, and on behalf of the Assembly of First Nations and the national executive, our thoughts and prayers are with all those impacted by the devastating wildfires in Alberta region,” said AFN National Chief Shawn Atleo. “It’s times like this when we see some of the most vulnerable citizens in Canada become even more vulnerable. We are calling on all levels of government to work with First Nations to address both immediate needs and long-term community infrastructure needs in the wake of these fires.”

First Nation communities across Treaty 8 territory in Alberta have been impacted by wildfires which ignited last weekend. Seven First Nations have been directly impacted and close to 2,000 people have been displaced by this emergency.

Treaty 8 will be hosting a special event tomorrow including a BBQ and are asking for donations of personal items and financial support for the displaced families. The event will take place from 11am - 3:30 pm at the Santa Fe Plaza 18178 - 102 Avenue in Edmonton.

Please contact Treaty 8 for more information (contact information is on the Treaty 8 website at www.treaty8.ca) or Laury Supernant and Chantale Mailhot at 780-444-9366.

The Assembly of First Nations is the national organization representing First Nations citizens in Canada. Follow AFN and National Chief Atleo on Twitter @AFN_Updates, @AFN_Comms and @NCAtleo.

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For more information please contact:

Joseph Jobin, Chief Operating Officer Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta - 780-444-9366 or jjobin@treaty8.org

Victor Horseman, Grand Chief Liaison Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta – 780-444-9366, ext 250 or cell 780-984-3031 or vhorseman@treaty8.org

Don Kelly, AFN A/Communications Director 613-241-6789 ext. 334 or cell: 613-292-2787 or e-mail dkelly@afn.ca

Jenna Young, AFN Communications Officer 613-241-6789, ext 401 or jyoung@afn.ca

Alain Garon, AFN Bilingual Communications Officer (613) 241-6789, ext 382 or agaron@afn.ca

First Nations Stories Dominating the News

1. Aboriginal Affairs: A new name with an uncertain meaning

GLOBE AND MAIL, Bill Curry – May 19, 2011 - Of all the repositioning unveiled in the Harper cabinet shuffle, none may have such lasting consequences as a simple name change. The department that had been called “Indian Affairs” since before Confederation has been rebranded as “Aboriginal Affairs.” At first glance, Prime Minister Stephen Harper’s reclassification appears to be in keeping with prevailing moves toward political correctness: replacing a label that doesn’t have much relevance any more with one more widely accepted. “Indian” is dated, in much the same way as Inuit are no longer called Eskimos. But there is power in naming. The semantic shift could have all sorts of consequences for native people from the laws governing their treatment, the services they get, and even their identities. Leading the tension is the fact that the legislation that governs how natives are treated retains the old term. The 19th-century Indian Act definition centred around blood lines and band rules, and continues to divide families and communities, yet past attempts at reform – even by majority governments – have failed.

The name change is meant to show that the department's role has expanded to serve a greater number of people – like Métis and Inuit – who do not fall into the classification of status Indian. This could help the Harper government reach out to those feeling unconnected to both Canada and their own history. However, even though many first nations people don’t call themselves “Indians,” some expressed concern after Wednesday’s announcement that the change could dilute what it means to be an Indian and threaten their long-held rights. Anishinabek Nation leader Patrick Madahbee issued a statement on Wednesday accusing the Conservatives of “slighting first nations citizens” with the name change. Shawn Atleo, national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, said that while “Indian” is not the preferred term for some first nations, many still use it and it is important in terms of protecting rights. “It’s a little bit like a double-edged sword,” he said. “If this discussion helps us to get to a better level of understanding, then it’s something that would perhaps prove helpful. But understandably, first nations greet changes most quickly with suspicion about what it might mean, in an adverse or a negative way, so I think it’s incumbent on me to go ahead and find out exactly what’s intended.”

Even before the name change, the Harper government was working on changing the relationship with natives. Across Canada, aboriginal groups have been drafting proposals for new “citizenship” rules and Indian Affairs is in discussions with native groups on an “exploratory process on Indian Registration, Band Membership and Citizenship.” But the department’s talks and the name change suggest an incremental approach.

Vancouver Island’s John Duncan is still in charge, but he’s now the minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development. The term Indian Affairs will eventually be removed from the department’s website, stationery and signage. The Indian Act and its definition of Indian remain. The term lives on because of its legal value. It also carries major financial implications for federal spending. Census data list about 1.2 million Canadians as aboriginal, but only about half of those (53 per cent) are registered Indians under the Indian Act. The rest are Métis (30 per cent), non-status Indians (11 per cent) and Inuit (4 per cent). Ottawa is responsible for providing services otherwise supplied by the provinces – such as health care and education – to status Indians living on reserves. The rest of Canada’s aboriginal population gets them largely from the provinces and territories. The Conservative government insists the name change will not affect these legal relationships, but some have questions. First nations chiefs fear Ottawa’s increasing use of the term “aboriginal” will undermine their legal relationship with the Crown via historic treaties, which used the word “Indian.” Andrew MacDougall, a spokesman for Prime Minister Stephen Harper, said the name change is motivated by a desire to update the language. “Changing the term used in the minister’s title from ‘Indian’ to ‘aboriginal’ better reflects the scope of the minister’s responsibilities with respect to First Nations, Inuit and Métis,” he wrote in an e-mail.

“This title is more up to date and inclusive, consistent with the government's focus on moving forward in our relationship with Aboriginal peoples.” The Prime Minister’s new cabinet includes two aboriginal MPs. Health Minister Leona Aglukkaq is an Inuk – the term for an Inuit person – and new Intergovernmental Affairs Minister Peter Penashue is a former Innu leader from Labrador. Not all native representatives were wary, however. Betty Ann Lavallée, national chief of the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples, has long advocated on behalf of non-status Indians who do not qualify for the wide range of services that governments provide to status Indians. She hopes the name change will further that discussion. “I haven’t stopped smiling,” she said on Wednesday when asked for her reaction to the name change. “I love it.”

2. Two Aboriginal MPs picked for cabinet for the first time

POSTMEDIA NEWS, Randy Boswell – May 18, 2011 - OTTAWA — There have been, throughout Canada's past, numerous aboriginal MPs — Louis Riel among them — as well as cabinet ministers of First Nations and (since 2008) Inuit heritage. But Wednesday's unveiling of Prime Minister Stephen Harper's new federal cabinet marked the first time in Canadian history that two members of Canada's indigenous communities — returning Health Minister Leona Aglukkaq, an Inuk from Nunavut, and the new Intergovernmental Affairs Minister Peter Penashue, an Innu Nation leader from Newfoundland and Labrador — will sit together in the inner circle of Canada's national government. It was a landmark moment promptly acknowledged by the Ottawa-based Assembly of First Nations, which noted following the swearing-in ceremony that the "new record for cabinet members" was preceded in the May 2 federal vote by a "new record for MPs" elected from among Canada's aboriginal people — seven in total, including five with the governing Conservatives.

"I think it's really significant we've got the two of them in cabinet, and we welcome it," Assembly of First Nations National Chief Shawn Atleo told Postmedia News. National Inuit leader Mary Simon, in a statement issued by Ottawa-based Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, congratulated Harper on his new cabinet and hailed "another remarkable moment in Canadian political history with the inclusion of two aboriginal cabinet ministers." Simon noted that in a February 2009 meeting with the 43-year-old Aglukkaq — who has been given the additional cabinet role of minister responsible for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency — the two Inuit leaders discussed issues in their native language, a "historic" moment in Canadian political affairs.

"Inuit join with our fellow aboriginal peoples, and all Canadians, in applauding the appointment of Mr. Peter Penashue," Simon added. Penashue's immediate elevation to cabinet was not surprising given Harper's need to have the executive branch of government represent as much of the country as possible. The Conservatives elected only one MP in the six ridings in Newfoundland and Labrador, making Penashue's appointment virtually automatic. But Penashue's rich record of public service since he became a young aboriginal leader in the 1980s — including his role as the public face of the devastated Labrador Innu following the substance-abuse and suicide tragedies that have befallen the nation at times — makes his rise to cabinet particularly poignant.

The 47-year-old rookie MP, who has also been named president of the Queen's Privy Council, becomes the first federal Innu cabinet minister in Canadian history. Another change to Harper's cabinet — the renaming of John Duncan's portfolio from "Indian Affairs and Northern Development" to "Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development" — drew a mixed reaction from First Nations leaders. While a government spokesman said the change was meant to reflect a more "inclusive" approach to aboriginal issues — encompassing First Nations (the historic "Indian" people), as well as Metis and Inuit — at least one native leader panned the ministry's new title.

"We are not aboriginal, we are Anishinabek," that nation's chief, Patrick Madahbee, said in a statement. "Trying to lump First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples together might save space on the minister's business card, but it is disrespectful of the truly distinct nature of the communities with whom he needs to establish better relationships." Atleo said AFN will be "seeking clarity in the ministry's name change to ensure that it accurately reflects the relationship between First Nations and the Crown." He added that AFN will work "to ensure the constitutionally protected rights of First Nations are respected, the responsibilities to First Nations are upheld, and our interests receive specific attention and action. This needs to be about real action and change, not a name change."

In her statement, Simon acknowledged the government's attempt to "better reflect the fact that the minister has responsibility for all aboriginal peoples — First Nation, Inuit, and Metis," and added that "to the extent that this helps clarify and reinforce this responsibility for Inuit, it is welcomed." But she also said what's important is "not so much a change of name of the department, but rather that Inuit will work in partnership with this government to improve the lives of Inuit throughout Canada."

3. Court upholds right of First Nations to sell fish taken in commercial fishery

CANADIAN PRESS – May 18, 2011 - VANCOUVER — The B.C. Court of Appeal has upheld the right of aboriginal groups to take part in the commercial fishery and sell what they catch, except for a specialized commercial clam fishery. The case involves a group of bands on the West Coast of Vancouver Island collectively known as the Nuu-

chah-nulth, who argued they had a right to harvest and sell fish based on the practices of their ancestors. The federal government claimed there was no evidence of a commercial fish trade by the First Nations' ancestors. However, a B.C. Supreme Court judge ruled that expert testimony and historic records showed the bands had a right to fish within their territories and to sell the fish. The federal government appealed that ruling but in a decision released Wednesday, the appeal court rejected the appeal, except for the geoduck clam fishery. The court said because that fishery is a high-tech venture that has only been operational for about 35 years, the First Nations ancestors could not have taken part in such a commercial enterprise. According to an affidavit provided during the trial by the Fisheries Department, the geoduck commercial fishery requires divers to wear specialized gear as they extract geoducks, which live about a metre below the ocean floor.

"There is simply no adequate basis in the evidence to support an ancestral practice that would translate into any modern right to participate in harvesting and selling this marine food resource," said B.C. Appeal Court Justice John Hall. He said that the trial judge, in her original ruling in November 2009, "erred in her finding that the evidence demonstrated that the respondents' aboriginal right should be found to extend to the geoduck fishery." The appeal court also agreed with the trial judge that the modern equivalent of fishing for sustenance includes necessities such as food, clothing and housing but not the accumulation of wealth.

4. Lack of proper schools for natives is 'immoral discrimination,' Martin says

TORONTO STAR, Tanya Talaga – May 18, 2011 - The lack of proper school for First Nations children is "immoral discrimination" that flies in the face of Canadian values, says former Prime Minister Paul Martin. A proposed student residence for northern native children forced to move hundreds of kilometres from home should be backed by the federal government, Martin said in an interview with the Star. Since 2000, seven First Nations children who have relocated to Thunder Bay to go to school have been found dead in local rivers. "You should not take out a 14-year-old kid, from a community of 300 people, and then plunk them down in a boarding house in Thunder Bay, where they are all by themselves," Martin said from Montreal. Six of the seven students went to Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School, a First Nations-run school funded by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC).

In an effort to better care for these kids, the school wants to build a residence that can house at least 125 students. But so far the government has turned them down, said Martin. "It makes absolutely no sense. They are condemning those kids," he said. Martin retired from public life in 2006 and then immediately began the Martin Aboriginal Initiative devoted to improving entrepreneurship and education among First Nations people. He will receive an honorary degree for his public service from the University of Toronto on June 3.

All Canadians should be concerned the per capita funding for a First Nations child going to elementary or high school is anywhere from 20 to 40 per cent lower (depending on the province) than what non-native kids get on a per capita basis, he said. "That is simply immoral discrimination . . .," he said. Martin tried to eliminate the woeful discrepancies in education underfunding with the Kelowna Accord, a \$5 billion plan to improve the lives of First Nations people signed in late 2005. But just days after it was signed, the Liberal minority government fell.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper scrapped the deal after he was elected. Premier Dalton McGuinty said if the federal government were to provide equal funding and turn over responsibility to the province, he'd "jump at the chance" to work with First Nations people to improve the schools. Thunder Bay's DFC high school has a student body of nearly 100 kids and a residence is sorely needed, said Jennifer Manitowabi, executive director of the Northern Nishnawbe Education Council, the group that runs the school.

She put together a proposal for a residence and gave it to INAC, who told her this is an off-reserve initiative and they wouldn't get involved. Since then, INAC has asked them for an improved proposal. The first phase of the residence would be for 125 students and it would be built adjacent to the school, she said. "I understand it takes time to find dollars and to build buildings," she said. "But the kids can't wait five years, they are dying today."

From www.bcafn.ca

Statement gathering targets homeless residential school survivors

In Alberta Sweetgrass

Author: By Shari Narine Sweetgrass Writer CALGARY

Volume: 18 Issue: 4 Year: 2011

SkyBlue Morin is grateful that a number of her clients had the opportunity recently to tell their stories to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's statement gathering team.

The team was in Calgary for Homeless Connect in mid-February. The day after the event, which allows homeless people to access services free of charge, residential school survivors, who call the streets or shelters their homes, were able to share their experiences with members of the TRC statement gathering team at the downtown branch of the Calgary Public Library.

"There was a sense of relief that they finally (got to tell their stories) and there were support people there to help them through it," said Morin.

Morin was one of four resolution health support workers at the day-long event.

Morin works from Métis Calgary Family Services, which is the agency that has the contract with Health Canada. Morin hits the streets regularly to connect with homeless people. She sees some of her clients only four times a year, every three months when Homeless Connect Calgary is held. Because she only connects with some clients at that event, Morin invited the TRC to attend. Morin split her time at the Feb. 19 Homeless Connect between her booth for the Indian Residential School resolution health support program and the TRC.

Morin has 120 homeless clients and almost all have a connection to residential schools. Fifty are direct survivors while 62 are second generation residential school survivors.

Morin said when she invited TRC's team she warned them that many of her clients are angry.

"They want to give someone heck, maybe the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Canada. I deal with angry clients every day. They're hurting, they're in pain, they want to blame someone. It's just part of where they're at," said Morin. "But not all are like that. Some are okay, some are moving forward in their healing."

Ry Moran, director of statement gathering for the TRC, said the commission is making a push to connect with the homeless and is hopeful that Calgary's event can help set a template as how to carry out the work nationally.

"Ideally we want to find organizations that are working with homeless people (and) who are willing to work with us," said Moran. "That's a real interest to us because statement gathering is built on trust."

As well, with deadlines fast approaching for applications to be made for the Common Experience Payment (deadline Sept. 19, 2011) and Independent Assessment Process (deadline Sept. 19, 2012), Indian and Northern Affairs Canada is holding sessions in shelters and centres to reach former residential school survivors, as well as having sessions with shelter and centre staff.

CEP is given to former students who lived at one of the prescribed residential schools and is awarded at \$10,000 for the first school year. IAP is given to a student who suffered sexual or serious physical abuses, or other abuses, and falls between \$5,000 to \$275,000 in payment.

From www.trc.ca

IN DEPTH: ABORIGINAL CANADIANS

National Aboriginal Day

CBC News Online | June 23, 2006

Ten years have passed since the federal government declared June 21 to be National Aboriginal Day in order to honour and celebrate Canada's Indians, Inuit and Métis.

When Gov. Gen. Roméo LeBlanc signed the proclamation formally designating the day on June 13, 1996, he spoke about the important contributions that aboriginals have made in the country.

"Many cities in Canada are less than a hundred years old. But aboriginal people have lived in this land for more than a hundred centuries," said LeBlanc at Rideau Hall.

"From coast to coast and in the Arctic, they first explored our lakes and rivers, they first mastered our forests and prairies, and they helped those who came later to join them."

June 21 was chosen because of the cultural significance of the summer solstice, the first day of summer and longest day of the year. Many aboriginal groups mark the date as a time to celebrate their heritage.

"On June 21st, this year and every year, Canada will honour the native peoples who first brought humanity to this great land," said Leblanc. "And may the first peoples of our past always be full and proud partners in our future."

The day's proclamation was an event 14 years in the making.

A brief history of National Aboriginal Day:

1982: National Indian Brotherhood (now the Assembly of First Nations) calls for the creation of National Aboriginal Solidarity Day on June 21.

1990: Quebec legislature recognizes June 21 as a day to celebrate aboriginal culture.

1995: The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples recommends the designation of a National First Peoples Day. The Sacred Assembly, a national conference of aboriginal and non-aboriginal people chaired by Elijah Harper, calls for a national holiday to celebrate the contributions of Canada's Aboriginal Peoples.

1996: June 13: Gov. Gen. Roméo LeBlanc declares June 21 as National Aboriginal Day after consultations with various aboriginal groups. The inaugural day is celebrated with events from coast to coast to coast.

Since then, the day has been celebrated in both small venues – such as elementary schools – and large venues alike.

In 2005, two of Canada's big banks hosted events at their downtown Toronto offices to mark the day. Also that year, in Iqaluit, the day was marked in a special way – 11 Inuit men and women made up the graduating class of

the Akitsiraq law school, a one-time co-operative venture between the University of Victoria and Nunavut Arctic College meant to boost the number of lawyers in the North. Overnight, Nunavut's population of Inuit lawyers grew from one – Premier Paul Okalik – to 12.

To mark the 10th anniversary of National Aboriginal Day, dozens of formal and informal events were planned across the country, ranging from sunrise ceremonies at Nathan Phillips Square in Toronto to aboriginal art workshops at the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Gatineau, Que. There's also a conference on Aboriginal contributions to the Canadian military experience at Royal Military College in Kingston.

The day kicks off the beginning of the annual 11-day Celebrate Canada! festivities held from June 21 to July 1. The festivities also include St-Jean Baptiste Day (June 24), Canadian Multiculturalism Day (June 27) and Canada Day (July 1).

FAQs on aboriginal Canadians:

How many aboriginal Canadians are there in Canada?

In 2001, 3.4 per cent of Canadians were aboriginal, a total of 976,305 people. Of those, 62 per cent were North American Indian, about 30 per cent were Métis, and 5 per cent were Inuit.

How many live on and off reserves?

About seven out of 10 aboriginal people live off a reserve, according to the 2001 census, with almost a third of those living in large cities. Nearly 30 per cent live on reserves.

Where do aboriginal people live in Canada?

In 2001, the provinces with the largest aboriginal populations were Ontario, British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

Winnipeg had the largest North American Indian population among census metropolitan areas, with 22,955. Alberta had the highest proportion of Métis, at 23 per cent. And half of Canada's Inuit population lives in Nunavut.

What are the projections for Canada's aboriginal population?

By 2017, there will be an estimated 1.39 million to 1.43 million aboriginal persons, according to Statistics Canada. Aboriginals would represent 4.1 per cent of the Canadian population, up from 3.4 per cent in 2001.

Canada's aboriginal population is expected to grow by 1.8 per cent annually, more than twice the rate of 0.7 per cent for the general population. The aboriginal birth rate is 1.5 times the Canadian birth rate.

Church doctrine blamed as basis for residential schools: Francois Paulette describes impact of 15th-century ruling

Northern News Services By Paul Bickford

(May 16, 2011) - THEBACHA/FORT SMITH - When the Truth and Reconciliation Commission for residential schools held a public hearing in Fort Smith on May 6, it made sure there were full Kleenex boxes on the witness table.

The tissues were well used as former students emotionally recounted harrowing stories of the residential school experience and how it negatively impacted their lives.

However, Francois Paulette did not use any tissues as he calmly, methodically and forcefully analyzed and condemned the residential school system.

"I want to make sense of this residential school era," he said. "It is the last straw since Columbus came here of what we had to endure."

Paulette of Fort Fitzgerald, Alta., about 20 km south of Fort Smith, attended both the Holy Angels School in Fort Chipewyan, Alta., and Akaitcho Hall in Yellowknife.

The former chief, treaty land entitlement negotiator and respected elder with Smith's Landing First Nation argued the ideological foundation of the residential school system is the Doctrine of Discovery.

That is a concept that can be traced to a proclamation by a 15th-century pope. In essence, it gave church blessing to colonial powers conquering regions newly discovered by Europeans.

"When Europeans first came to this land, they saw us as subhuman," Paulette said of the treatment of indigenous people. "You were inhuman."

The Europeans' thinking and their religion were based on the premise that indigenous people had to be subdued, he added, noting the idea can be traced to Genesis 1:28, a Bible passage which speaks of subduing the Earth and having dominion over all living things.

"The Christians' Doctrine of Discovery was to do exactly that," Paulette said. "It was to exercise their authority over indigenous people."

Paulette noted the doctrine, also known as a papal bull, still exists.

"It has never been withdrawn," he said. "It's still there."

Europeans looked at indigenous nations and the land of the Americas as being vacant in a legal sense, he added.

Paulette said one of the 10 Commandments - Thou shall not steal - left an imprint on his young mind while in residential school. He could not understand why the people who ran the residential schools could claim they were good people while stealing him away from his parents and his home, forcing him to cut his long hair and taking away his moccasins.

"So thou shall not steal goes back to the Doctrine of Discovery, because they stole everything," he said. "Their whole religion, their whole doctrine was to put us down."

Paulette said, while he was abused physically and psychologically in residential school, he was never sexually assaulted.

The assimilation was the same at Holy Angels School and Akaitcho Hall - going to church, keeping hair short, loss of culture, and being made to be ashamed of who you were.

In Fort Smith in the 1960s and 1970s, the Dene regarded themselves as a very low class of people and were ashamed of what they were, Paulette said, adding many members of his own family had problems with alcohol, including himself.

"This whole community became dysfunctional and that's because they also lost their pride and dignity," he said.

However, Paulette had a spiritual awakening as an adult.

"The drum became an important part of my life," he said. "It was a time of decolonization and decoding. I was never one to be ashamed of who I was. I was not going to be in denial about my history."

However, he said some churches denounce Dene ways even today. "There are still churches that deny the drum. There are still churches that deny the expression of Dene to be who they are. That hasn't stopped."

In concluding his remarks before commissioner Chief Wilton Littlechild, Paulette recommended the federal government abandon the Indian Act and the Roman Catholic Church retract the Doctrine of Discovery.

"Our culture, our way of life is powerful," he said. "We need to get out of this box where religion, this Doctrine of Discovery, put us. We need to get out of there. We need to decolonize. We need to decode."

Source: http://nnsf.com/northern-news-services/stories/papers/may16_11res.html

From www.jokeclean.com

Jacob, age 92, and Rebecca, age 89, are all excited about their decision to get married. They go for a stroll to discuss the wedding and on the way they pass a drugstore. Jacob suggests they go in. Jacob addresses the man behind the counter:

Jacob: "Are you the owner?"

The pharmacist answers, "Yes".

Jacob: "Do you sell heart medication?"

Pharmacist: "Of course, we do."

Jacob: "How about medicine for circulation?"

Pharmacist: "All kinds."

Jacob: "Medicine for rheumatism, scoliosis?"

Pharmacist: "Definitely."

Jacob: "Medicine for memory problems, arthritis, jaundice?"

Pharmacist: "Yes, a large variety. The works."

Jacob: "What about vitamins, sleeping pills, Geritol, antidotes for Parkinson's disease?"

Pharmacist: "Absolutely."

Jacob: "You sell wheelchairs and walkers?"

Pharmacist: "All speeds and sizes"

Jacob says to the pharmacist: "We're about to get married. We'd like to use this store as our Bridal Registry."

**BC ELDERS
COMMUNICATION
CENTER SOCIETY**

**ADDRESS:
1415 Wewaikum Rd.
Campbell River, B.C. V9W 5W9**

**Phone: 1-250-286-9977
Fax: 1-250-286-4809
Toll-Free: 1-877-738-7288
Coordinator: Donna Stirling
Website: www.bcelders.com
Email:
bcelders@telus.net**

**'ELDERS VOICE'
ISSUES
ARE SENT OUT TO
COMMUNITIES BY THE
1st OF EACH MONTH.
If your area's copy is not
received in a timely manner
please call into the office.**

What Makes a Dad
God took the strength of a mountain,
The majesty of a tree,
The warmth of a summer sun,
The calm of a quiet sea,
The generous soul of nature,
The comforting arm of night,
The wisdom of the ages,
The power of the eagle's flight,
The joy of a morning in spring,
The faith of a mustard seed,
The patience of eternity,
The depth of a family need,
Then God combined these qualities,
When there was nothing more to add,
He knew His masterpiece was complete,
And so, He called it ... Dad
Author Unknown

"I cannot think of any need in childhood as strong as the need for a father's protection." *Sigmund Freud*

"Any man can be a Father, but it takes someone special to be a Dad."
Anne Geddes

"A Father is a banker provided by nature." *French Proverb*

QUOTES: *"He didn't tell me how to live; he lived, and let me watch him do it."* *Clarence B. Kelland*

"A Father is a guy who has snapshots in his wallet where his money used to be." *Unknown*

GEMINI - The Chatterbox (May 21 - June 20) Smart and witty. Outgoing, very chatty. Lively, energetic. Adaptable But needs to express themselves. Argumentative and outspoken. Like change. Versatile. Busy, sometimes nervous and tense. Gossips. May seem superficial or inconsistent. Beautiful physically and mentally.

**Annual Elders Gathering Grand Entry Photos are on:
www.bcelders.com each year!**

ANNUAL BC ELDERS GATHERING INFORMATION CORNER

**Hosts: Sto:lo and Coast Salish
35th Annual BC Elders Gathering
July 12, 13, 14, 2011
LOCATION: The Fraser Valley Trade & Exhibition Centre or Tradex
1190 Cornel Street, Abbotsford
Elders Gathering Coordinator: Grand Chief Clarence (Kat) Pennier
Ph: 604-796-0643 ext. 238 or Email: kat.pennier@stolotribalcouncil.ca**