



# MI'KMAQ NEWS

NEWSLETTER OF THE FEDERATION OF NEWFOUNDLAND INDIANS

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Winter 2004 - 2005

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

On behalf of the Federation of Newfoundland Indians (FNI), board of directors, executive and staff, I take this opportunity to wish you the membership and others who receive the Mi'kmaq News the very best of health for 2005. The FNI is hoping that 2005 will be the year that brings a positive message from the Federal Government in respect to an approval to work on the process of an agreement in principle. The FNI negotiating team have had the opportunity to meet with the Hon. John Efford and Bill Matthews, as well as officials from Minister Emerson's department and Minister Scott's department just prior to Christmas. The meetings were very encouraging and indicated without a doubt a signal of support for the FNI's current case of a landless band concept. I have just recently had the opportunity to meet with Gerry Byrne (M.P.), a long-time supporter of the FNI file and was not surprised as to where Mr. Byrne stands in relation to our file.

In correspondence dated Dec. 21, 2004 from the Minister of Indian Affairs, the Hon. Andy Scott, states, "I am pleased to note the progress that continues to be made on this file and the spirit of goodwill and co-operation that is reflected in this most recent set of recommendations." He further stated that, "matters of such significance require the necessary policy and legal analysis to be completed in order for me and my colleagues to make an informed decision that will result in the desired outcome." He expects to be reviewing the completed work in the near future and encourages the chiefs and I to continue the preparatory work, which will further support this process. The Congress of Aboriginal Peoples, Chief & President Mr. Dwight Dorey has written a letter of support on our behalf to Prime Minister Martin. Saqamaw Misel Joe has written a letter of support from his community and have requested that an agenda item be included at the next all chiefs meeting, that a letter of support be sent from the Atlantic Policy Congress, the Grand Council and the Assembly of First Nations. I have written many Ministers seeking their support and requesting meetings .....Continued on page 2

## CORNER BROOK ABORIGINAL WOMEN AND ELDERS

submitted by Michelle Matthews, Secretary

The Corner Brook Aboriginal Women's Association would like to take this opportunity to introduce our association. This commencement took place in April, 2003.

We are a grassroots aboriginal women's organization committed to the promotion and enhancement of the rejuvenation of our cultural and spiritual heritage.

.....Continued on page 2



In December, Corner Brook Aboriginal Women's Association held a Talking/Healing Circle Ceremony headed by cultural speaker, Victor Muise. Joining him are the elders that attended the ceremony.

Due to the amount of information submitted for the newsletter during this quarter, we the Federation of Newfoundland Indians are pleased to present you with a larger edition of the Mi'kmaq News. We hope you enjoy it. Michelle Ploughman Communications Officer.

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*...Message from the President continued* at their convenience and will continue to do so in an attempt to move this process to a successful conclusion. Apart from my report there is additional information in this edition of Mi'Kmaq News that is more relevant to the update on the preliminary negotiation.

The FNI exhibition, The Mi'Kmaq of Newfoundland, A Celebration, successfully opened at the Provincial Museum in St. John's on November 15-04, the room was filled to capacity with a number of provincial MHAs including Minister Tom Rideout, Labrador & Aboriginal Affairs and Minister Joan Burke. The exhibition is certainly promoting the awareness of the Newfoundland Mi'kmaq to our fellow Newfoundlanders as well as to other Canadians and visitors from abroad. As a result of this exhibition an opportunity arose to promote aboriginal content in the new social studies for grades K-7. The FNI has pursued this opportunity and is continuing to make great success with the Dept. of Education and their program coordinators. A special thanks to Parks Canada representatives, Ms. Annie Randell executive assistant FNI, the Provincial Dept. of Education and their education coordinators for the success achieved on this initiative to date.

As a result of many hours of sincere and dedicated work by the FNI's executive assistant Ms. Annie Randell, the FNI has been successful in obtaining additional funding under a number of programs, which are reported on separately in this edition of Mi'kmaq News. All other programs which have been within the FNI for the past years still continue to be funded by the different departments and new contract agreements are currently being signed for new periods of operation.

The organization is showing continuous growth and the opportunities for further expansion into other programs are very positive. The FNI just recently had to hire a part-time office assistant to take care of some of the accounting and administration work as a result of the additional programs.

The FNI executive and board of directors will continue to work in the best interest of the membership with a degree of optimism and a strong will to attain the recognition set out in the 2002 Mi'kmaq Regime which was endorsed by you, the membership.

#### *.....Corner Brook Women and Elders continued*

Our vision is to build strong Aboriginal families proud of their culture by:

- **Enhancing and respectfully learning the Aboriginal culture.**
- **Promoting community awareness of the Aboriginal culture.**
- **Liaising with other Provincial and National Aboriginal organizations with common goals.**
- **Developing programs and activities for Aboriginal women and families.**
- **Being a voice for Aboriginal women, addressing issues faced by Aboriginal women.**
- **Serving as a resource within the community.**

The Board of Directors are Gwen Campbell and Michelle Gillette,(Co-Chairs), Michelle Matthews,(Secretary), Shelley Connolly,(Treasurer), Elizabeth Campbell, (Elder Representative), Sonya Bennett (Youth Representative), Gail Anderson, Jean Murphy, Joanne Keough, (Members at Large).

Since our commencement, we have had meetings on the second Thursday of each month, 7:00 pm at the Corner Brook Women's Center. Special guests have included Candace Russell, a youth drummer who performed Mi'kmaq songs, a cultural speaker who joined us in the early fall 2004, and Victor Muise who participated in a Talking/Healing Circle ceremony at a pot luck meal prior to Christmas. During our meetings we have discussed and performed sweet grass ceremonies using tobacco, sweet grass, sage and cedar. We have had topics of discussion regarding the medicine wheel, dream catchers, talking stick and sweat lodges. We created an Awareness Board for June 6th's Aboriginal Day . We have had the wonderful experience of making and tasting bannock . Our latest and largest task was a submission of the very first Aboriginal Float for the Corner Brook Christmas Parade. Its purpose was to create an awareness that this group is very active and to welcome any new interested

Aboriginal Women to join us at our monthly gatherings. We were pleasantly surprised to have won 1st place in non-commercial category. We have done several fund-raising projects to offset expenses incurred for these activities such as a 50/50 Draw, Halloween and Christmas Baskets. We must thank the 35-40 active members for the donations they have made.

We are very proud of what we have accomplished since our commencement and we are looking to what the future holds for the Mi'kmaq Women in Corner Brook and the rest of Newfoundland. For further information, contact our Co-Chairs Gwen Campbell@634-8308 or Michelle Gillette @ 632-3079.

#### **\$35,000 Approved for Nuclear Waste Management**

The Federation of Newfoundland Indians as an affiliate of the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples has received \$10,000 to have a questionnaire completed by band members regarding Nuclear Fuel Waste Management; this agreement will be completed by the nine local band councils. A second phase of the Nuclear Fuel Waste Management program has been approved in the amount of \$25,000 to hold public information sessions in each of the local band councils to inform our people of the proposed management and storage of Nuclear Fuel Waste in Canada. This contract will be tendered out to the general public with preference given to FNI members (see this issue of the Mi'kmaq News for the request for proposal). A follow-up to the second phase program after information has been provided will be to complete another questionnaire by the people in attendance at the public information sessions, as well as members who have a general interest and who are aware of the Nuclear Fuel Waste Storage process by the Nuclear Waste Management Organization in Canada.

## PATHWAY TO A HEALTHIER LIFESTYLE

It is a known fact that aboriginal people have a three to five time higher risk of Type 2 Diabetes than the general population. That means that we have to be extra careful to ensure that we get tested regularly and learn as much as we can about diabetes prevention. It is easy to say you need to be healthy but what does that mean in our daily lives.

First of all you should eat three regular meals a day that are no more than six hours apart; the reason for this is that regular meal times help your body to control your glucose levels. Learning portions sizes is also very important so you should refer to the Canada's Food Guide for serving sizes. You should limit sugars and sweets including: regular pop, sugar, desserts, candy, jam and honey. The reason to limit these items is because the more sugar you eat the higher your glucose level will be. You should also limit the high fat food you eat such as fried food, potato chips, and pastries because high fat food can cause weight gain and a healthy weight helps control blood glucose levels.

**Here are some ways to bring more healthy ideas into your everyday lives.**

First eat more high fibre foods because these foods may help you feel full and may lower blood glucose and cholesterol levels.

Next drink water. Our bodies are made up of a great deal of water and to continue to stay healthy water is an important part of it. Some people may think that they are feeling hungry but in reality they need water so when you find yourself hungry before your next meal try to drink some water first before heading for the snacks.

Lastly, as we all should know by now, physical activity is the next step in a healthy lifestyle. Be sure to include some form of physical activity in your daily routine. One of the many benefits of regular physical activity is that it can help improve your blood glucose control. Together all of these factors which include a healthy lifestyle and regular physical activity can go a long way in preventing or delaying the onset of Type 2 Diabetes.

During winter there are many ways to get our exercise in the great outdoors. In Newfoundland we usually get a great deal of snow that needs to be shoveled and hills that are just begging for us to slide down them. Many people enjoy ski-dooing, skiing, and skating; these are all great ways to stay fit during the long cold winter months. Be sure to take all the necessary precautions when participating in winter sports and remember most of all to have fun!

### FREE BOOK

**Tip:** Health Canada has a Handbook for Physical Activity. To receive your free copy call toll free: 1-888-334-9769 or check out the website at: [www.paguide.com](http://www.paguide.com)

### Children and Youth Magazine

A new children's and youth magazine has been created by the diabetes coordinator with information on diabetes, prevention, nutrition, and physical activity. This magazine will be sent out to the children and youth of the FNI in the next few months. Please help your child read the magazine so they can also learn about diabetes and they can decide to become more involved in their health. If you have any questions please contact the diabetes coordinator at the information given below.

### Banana Yogurt Pancakes (Makes 18 pancakes)

These pancakes are tender and tasty, sure to be a hit with the children. You can serve them with sugar free syrup, or better yet, sautéed fresh berries or other favorite fruit.

#### Ingredients:

2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour, sifted  
1 packet sugar substitute  
1 tablespoon baking soda  
8 ounces fat free plain yogurt  
1 large very ripe banana, mashed  
1/2 cup skim milk  
1/2 tablespoon canola oil  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
4 egg whites, beaten to soft peaks  
butter-flavored cooking spray

#### Directions:

Combine the flour, sugar substitute, and baking soda in a large bowl. Stir to combine.  
Add the yogurt, banana, milk, oil, and vanilla. Stir until just moistened.  
Gently fold in the beaten egg whites to complete the batter.  
Lightly coat a nonstick skillet with cooking spray. Working in batches and using a ladle, make 4 inch pancakes. Cook until the bottom is browned and bubbles come to the top of the cakes. Turn and continue to cook until browned.  
Keep warm while you cook the rest of the pancakes.  
Per serving: 76 calories, 3 g protein, 1 total fat, 14 g carbohydrates, 1 g dietary fiber.

### SHELLEY GARNIER

*Diabetes Coordinator*

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## YOUTH ACTION NEWS

### Crime & Victimization, Phase II

The youth program of the FNI has received \$20,000 from the National Crime Prevention Strategy and \$2,000 from the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples to implement Phase II of its Crime Prevention Strategy. This conference is tentatively scheduled to take place in mid April, 2005, and will involve a 5 day training program aimed at giving its participants the skills and knowledge to raise awareness on the community level about Crime and Victimization. This initiative will likely become a Skills Link Program, and continue on into a 26-week training and awareness campaign that will be brought back into the Aboriginal communities as represented by the FNI. Further information will be released as it becomes available.



### Youth Fundraiser for PEI Powwow!!!

The excitement levels of the FNI youth committees are getting high, as they anticipate traveling off the island to PEI this upcoming summer. Fund-raising efforts have already started to take place as youth committees hope to raise enough money for the trip.

For the past two years, the youth committees have fundraised to attend Conne River's annual Powwow, as they will continue to do. This year however, they have set their sites high and will also attend the PEI annual powwow. There, they will get the opportunity to meet new friends, and to further take part in the traditions and culture of their people. If any youth are interested in taking part in the fund-raising efforts, and would like to travel to PEI with the youth, contact your Youth Coordinator for details!

### Young Canada Works!!!

Young Canada Works offers literally thousands of summer jobs, lasting 6 to 16 weeks, and are available in National Historic Sites, Heritage Organizations, National Parks, Native Friendship Centres, and more. The only requirements are that you have to be returning to school, between the ages of 16 and 30, and have the appropriate skills that may be needed for some specific projects. You can apply directly to <http://yes.skillnet.ca> or call toll free at 1-800-935-5555. Don't miss out on this great opportunity to gain a high paying summer job, and to gain some great, valuable experience and networks.

Don't forget that the youth have a website where you can find even more great links to scholarships, career opportunities, youth happenings, etc.... [www.fnityouth.com](http://www.fnityouth.com)

## Youth Speak

**An Inside Look: By Cindy Kyle, Flat Bay Youth Council Leader**

Richard Louvelle is sixteen years old and a member of the Corner Brook Indian Band Council.

Richard became very interested in finding out more about his Mi'kmaq culture after attending the Youth Crime and Victimization Conference in September of 2003. When he was informed of the creation of Youth Committees Richard jumped at the opportunity to get involved.



Richard has since become the youth leader for the Corner Brook Indian Band Youth Committee. As youth leader, Richard has helped plan educational activities, fundraisers and meetings. He has also helped the youth get involved by letting them know that these events are there for them to experience.

From being involved Richard feels that it has done him a world of good. He has become a very strong leader and it has raised his self-esteem. For example, at one point in time Richard was extremely shy and not comfortable to speak in public. However, now he has the confidence to do so. He feels that it has also given him the know how to deal with situations that at another point in time he would not have.

In addition to communication skills Richard has been able to learn a great deal about his culture. Through being involved he has become introduced to various Mi'kmaq crafts and has taken up making dream catchers in his spare time as a result. He has also learned a great deal about the traditions and ceremonies. He has had the opportunity to meet individuals with this knowledge and participate in some ceremonies such as the sweet grass ceremony.

Over all Richard says that being involved makes him feel great as an individual and that it has helped shape the outcome of tomorrow for him.

**Contact: FNI Youth Coordinator  
Candace Russell**

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## ST. GEORGE'S BAND HOLDS ELDERS DINNER AND GIVEAWAY.

The St. George's Indian Band celebrated Christmas in a special way this year by hosting an "Elder's Christmas Giveaway" on December 26th at the Royal Canadian Legion, St. George's.

Elder's, members of the board of directors of the St. George's Indian Band and members of the St. George's Young Warriors Aboriginal Youth Organization were in attendance. Elders and youth were united for the evening's festivities with the youth tending to the needs of the elders.

The elders were treated to a special Christmas feast, gifts and several draws which were held during the evening, for special prizes that were only available to the Elders. Emcee for the evening was aboriginal youth, Alison White. Chief Violet Dawson brought greetings on behalf of the St. George's Indian Band, she spoke of the traditional Mi'kmaq Giveaway and what it means to be an elder according to Mi'kmaq tradition. She also spoke of the connection between the Mi'kmaq Giveaway and the spirit of giving at this special time of the year. A Mi'kmaq Giveaway, however, just as it is with the spirit of giving at Christmas wasn't just about the giving of material things, it was also about the giving of ourselves to each other, that is the true spirit of the Mi'kmaq Giveaway.

Chief Dawson continued to honor the elders throughout the evening which went over very well with all the participants.

"So, tonight, we give you a feast, a memento as a souvenir and a small gift, but more importantly we give you our love, our respect and our thanks," states Chief Dawson, during the feast.

"We hope word will spread as to the success of this event and we look forward to a bigger turn out for next year's

Elder's Christmas Giveaway," continues Chief Dawson.

The St. George's Indian Band would like to thank elders: Theresa Alexander, Earl Bennett, Gertie Bennett, Edward Bennett, Shirley Blanchard, June Galpin, Odelle Garnier, Barb Kovich, Gerald Lucas, Margaret White and Kenneth White; aboriginal youth: Chris Curnew, Lori Leroux, Marlena and Elena Messervey, Joelle Ploughman and Lori White; our fabulous chefs: Melvin White, Karen White, Mary Blanchard and Patsy Cramm; our emcee: Alison White and Michelle Ploughman (youth mentor) and Linda Williams, Royal Canadian Legion.



The Elders of St. George's were honored by the band and were treated to a feast and a traditional Mi'kmaq giveaway during Christmas. Here the Elders and Chief Dawson prepare to enjoy the feast.

### Request for Proposals - Gateway Program

The FNI are currently creating a web page that will inform everyone of the historic, ethnographic and contemporary way of life, economy, culture, beliefs and practices. The FNI would also like to have this site bilingual. Therefore we are asking for any member who may be interested, who is bilingual and has the experience of translation to present the FNI with a proposal outlining their experience, education and cost per page (8 x 11 page). The deadline for proposals will be February 25th 2005 at 4:00pm at the FNI office in Corner Brook.

### FNI SEEKING ONE FISHERPERSON

The FNI entered the commercial fishing industry in 2001 to assist with the unemployment rate among its members. In May 2004 a 44' 11" crab vessel set sail from Summerford, NL with three Mi'kmaq fishermen and three non-aboriginal fishermen as crew members. This crew did a tremendous job during the crab season last year and we will take this opportunity to thank each of them for a job well done. But it is the objective of the FNI to have at some point all Mi'kmaq people as crew members on this vessel therefore we will be hiring one person per year to achieve this objective. All interested members that would like to apply as a crew member of the 44' 11" M.V. Dream Catcher fishing out of Summerford, NL are welcomed to apply to the FNI Corner Brook office by no later than February 25th, 2005. Please be advise that members from the Central Region of Newfoundland will be given priority since this vessel was purchased as an economic venture for that region.

### PHOTO'S OF YOUR FAMILY

If anyone has old photo's of their families or pictures of Mi'kmaq tools that their families used, dancing etc that is at least prior to 1949 that they would like to have posted on the new site that the FNI is developing, they can send the photo's and pertinent information regarding the photo to Michelle Ploughman by March 4th, 2005. Digitized graphics can also be emailed to michelle@fni.nf.ca or mailed to the St. George's office. All original photo's will be returned.

If the photo or similar photo is already used in the Exhibition catalog no need to send because the FNI will be posting all photo's from the Catalog on the site.

## Sple'tk Youth, President of "Council of Student Executives"



President of the Council of Student Executives for the College of the North Atlantic, Michael Hickey

Working hard and keeping busy is nothing new to Michael Hickey, a member of the Sple'tk First Nations Indian Band and a student at the College of the North Atlantic in Grand Falls-Windsor.

When Michael planned to go to College he was considering a couple of different options. However he decided the three-year Business Management Program would be the best choice for him. So with help from the Federation of Newfoundland Indians Employment and Training program and Aboriginal Client Relations Officer, Bernie Hanlon, Michael set out to pursue a future in public relations in September 2003.

During his second year in the program Michael became President of the Student Representative Council of the Grand-Falls Windsor campus. One of the duties as president is to sit on the Council of Student Executives (CSE), which is a governing body for all seventeen College of the North Atlantic campuses. At his first executive meeting in 2004, Michael was elected President of this governing body as well.

One would think this would take a toll on his school-work but he maintains a high grade point average. In addition to his executive positions he performs with the A.N.D. Company, a dinner theatre group in Grand Falls Windsor and has recently finished acting in a play with the Committee Against Violence called "Broken Hearts - Broken Homes."

Michael is also the central rep for the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) and was recently elected provincial Campaigns Coordinator for the CFS at their last meeting, he will start that position in May. Currently they are dealing with issues on Aboriginal Sponsorship Taxation.

"The Federal Government are planning on taxing Aboriginal student funding," states Hickey. "We (CFS) are currently trying to combat that, as the students already have enough extra burdens and hurdles to deal with."

In addition to this work Michael and the CSE are trying to include some aboriginal representation across the campuses. If there are any aboriginal students interested in working with the CSE you can contact Michael Hickey at (709) 292-5656.

### NEWS FROM SPLE'TK

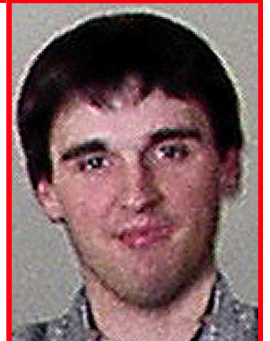
The Exploits Native Women's Association held another successful Elder's Feast for the members of Sple'tk First Nations (SFN). There were eighty guests in attendance who enjoyed a lovely roast beef dinner catered by C&E Catering from Botwood. Chief Nellie Power from SFN presented the Elders with a ham on behalf of the Band Council. Entertainment was provided by Ed Power, Howard Barnes, Joe Kennedy, Nish Paul, Francis Newhook and Mike Murray. Everyone enjoyed themselves and are looking forward to next year's event.

### Thanks Extended

On behalf of Bonita Lawrence (formerly at Queen's University and now at York University) and myself, Wellaylin to the Mi'kmaq Band Chiefs, Band Executives, women and youth leaders across the province who interviewed with me last summer. It is the first stage of the national Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Project, "Surviving Outside the Indian Act: Exploring the Sovereignty Struggles of Non-Status Native Communities in Eastern Canada". It's been an honour to be with each of you. We've learned a lot, grown and the project is strengthened by your input. We look forward to visiting again next summer to conduct interviews with community members. Anyone interested in participating or requiring further information please email Gertie Mai Muise, Project Researcher, at [gmuise@sympatico.ca](mailto:gmuise@sympatico.ca) or Bonita Lawrence, Project Leader, at [Bonital@Yorku.CA](mailto:Bonital@Yorku.CA).

### New National Youth Representative for the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples!

Randy Drover, youth director and mentor of Sple'tk First Nations in the Exploits band area has been elected as National Youth Representative for the CAP National Youth Council. Randy has served on the youth council for approximately 5 years, and has been actively



involved with youth issues since that time. He also dedicates a lot of time and energy to the youth committee in his band area, and is the committed youth director of Sple'tk First Nations! Congratulations on your huge achievement!!! We look forward to your future success!

### The Linking of Our Spirits. Aboriginal Elders, Women, & Youth

The youth of the FNI have received \$10,000 from the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation to hold a workshop, which will give the youth further teachings of the drum, they will learn to sing new songs, and they will also learn teachings of the medicine wheel. This workshop will also bring the Women and Elders together with the youth in order to strengthen their ties, and build a strong relationship. The workshop will take place during the summer, with a definite date to be announced.



## Ulnooweg:

### Serving the Aboriginal Business Market in Atlantic Canada

Ulnooweg Development Group provides business financing to aboriginal entrepreneurs in Atlantic Canada and continues to assist in the development of aboriginal businesses both on and off reserve. Whether you're starting a new business or expanding an existing one, Ulnooweg Development Group can help you! We can assist you in developing

your business idea, assessing your project application, ensuring all avenues for government funding are explored, providing debt financing, and continuing to work with you once you are operational.

Our lending service provides business loans to individuals, partnerships, corporations, and band owned enterprises. We offer several loan programs including our youth program with loans up to \$15,000 at 8.5%, our Aboriginal Business Development Fund with loans up to \$125,000 at bank prime rate plus 2, and our general loans up to \$250,000 at 12.75%. Loan types include startup, working capital, acquisition, expansion, and refinance.

For more information please contact:

**Terence Hickey**

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Visit our website for more information: [www.ulnooweg.ca](http://www.ulnooweg.ca)

### Elmastogoeg Present Scholarships

The 2004 winners of the Chief Pat Rumbolt Memorial scholarship are Kenneth Evoy and Lorna Evoy.

This is the first year the scholarships have been presented and will continue to be an annual event.

The scholarships are donated by the Elmastogoeg First Nations Band in Benoit's Cove. The ceremony was held at the Benoit's Cove band office and the award was presented by Rose Rumbolt, widow of the late Chief Rumbolt.

If you would like more information on how to apply for this scholarship you can contact a member of the band.

### Sple'tk Dancers and Drummers Perform for 100th Anniversary Celebrations

On January 7th, 2005, The Sple'tk Dancers and Drummers were invited to perform for the Grand Falls - Windsor One Hundredth Anniversary Celebrations.

The event was held at the Joe Byrne Memorial Stadium and the group performed along with other notable entertainers such as; Gorden Pinsent, the Centennial Choir, the Belle Canto Singers as well as numerous other performers.

If you are interested in joining The Sple'tk Dancers and Drummers group you can contact Bernie Hanlon by leaving a message at the band office or by calling 489-8425 before March 1st, 2005. Commitment is a must.

### A Mi'kmaq Christmas for Indian Head First Nations

The Indian Head First Nations Youth Group gave the surrounding communities a little taste of the Mi'kmaq culture during the Christmas season. The group entered a float in the local Santa Clause parade, complete with wigwam frame, animal props and Mi'kmaq youth singing and drumming. The group would like to thank all the people who assisted them in any way with the float.



Several Indian Head First Nations youth huddle together in the wigwam on the Mi'kmaq float they entered in the local Santa Clause parade

## Indian and Northern Affairs Continues to Financially Support the FNI

The Department of Indian and Northern Affairs has approved a contribution of \$86,000 to the Federation of Newfoundland Indians to continue preparatory work in anticipation that Federal Cabinet will give approval to Indian Affairs to enter into an agreement in principal with the FNI on the basis of a landless band for the Mi'kmaq of Newfoundland. These funds will be utilized to establish a Terms of Reference for a membership committee, leadership selection, government structure for a landless band and Program and service costing.

## CURRENT STATUS OF FEDERAL RECOGNITION

From November 2003 to October 2004 the FNI undertook preliminary negotiations with Canada's special representative, the Honorable Marc Lalonde to determine if a Landless Indian Act Band concept represented a suitable option to address our long-standing issue of official recognition.

Based on consultations which took place with its membership during the preliminary negotiations, the FNI signaled their support to Canada that a Landless Band creation with the registration of members as status Indians and the resulting programs and services represented a workable solution to the recognition issue.

It is the FNI's understanding that the Honorable Marc Lalonde made a "recommendation" to the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs in his preliminary negotiations report of October 2004, that Canada consider negotiations with the FNI on the principle of creating a landless band.

It must be remembered that this is a "recommendation" and the FNI currently awaits a decision by the Federal Government to proceed with negotiations on an agreement in principle. We are informed that the federal cabinet must approve the decision to proceed with such negotiations.

However, the FNI file is active with the department of Indian and Northern Affairs, a great deal of work has been

done and additional work is currently underway to prepare for an eventual cabinet submission. We are informed that the following steps must occur before the cabinet submission:

- **Consultation with Central Agencies**
- **Internal Committee meeting**
- **Operational Committee Meeting**
- **Federal Cabinet**
- **Agreement in Principle**

The FNI have been advised that Indian Affairs is targeting the end of February 2005 as a possible date to present the FNI issue before cabinet. It is roughly around the same date that our lawyer will be back in front of the Federal Court Judge to provide a current update on the process of preliminary negotiations between the federal government and the FNI, grounds by which the court case has been granted abeyance by the federal court judge. The FNI legal representative is of the opinion that we must have substantive development on the negotiations in order for the federal court judge to grant a further abeyance. It is hoped that this legal reality and our on going lobbying efforts will result in a positive outcome.

## FNI Undertakes Development Work In Anticipation of Landless Band Option

Although the federal government has yet to announce that it will enter formal negotiations with the FNI with respect to the landless band option, the FNI currently is undertaking development work that will benefit eventual negotiations if such is to take place. With funding assistance from the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs the FNI has started preliminary work and discussion on the following items:

1. Terms of Reference of a registration Advisory Committee that will advise Canada and the FNI with respect to individual's eligibility for registration as per established registration criteria;
2. Leadership selection and government structure for a landless band;
3. Program and service costing.

In addition to the above the FNI has been active in keeping the registration issue current with provincial and federal officials and elected members. The following represents some of the activity:

- Meetings with various Federal and provincial representatives
  - \* Support from Minister Effort, Gerry Byrne & Bill Matthews
- Correspondence to Federal Cabinet Ministers
- Support from the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples & Assembly of First Nations
- Support from the Miawpukek First Nations (Conne River)

## **Opportunity for Members of the FNI to Voice Their Opinion!!!**

As mentioned earlier the FNI Steering Committee and Negotiating Team will be discussing a proposed Leadership selection and government structure for a landless band. Within the next few weeks there will be an opportunity for you to voice your opinion on what type of structure would best govern the future of the Mi'kmaq people if registered by the Federal Government. The following information is for your viewing and consideration and if you would like to voice your opinion on what type of structure the FNI should put forward you may do so in writing to the FNI office in Corner Brook or email [annie@fni.nf.ca](mailto:annie@fni.nf.ca) with subject as "Proposed Structured".

- **Landless Band - Election Options**
- **Discussion Document**

A Landless Band recognized under the Indian Act, will choose from two (2) types of elections, "Indian Act Declaration" or "Band Custom". The following presents the main aspects of each election process with the view of facilitating dialogue regarding the appropriate or preferred election process for a Landless Band.

### **Indian Act Declaration Option**

Under this option the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs makes a declaration, that the Indian Act applies to the band's election process and the band's elections will then be governed by section 74(1) of the Indian Act and the election regulation. The following are the key aspects of Indian Act elections:

- (i) **Who may vote:**  
All registered members of the band who are at least eighteen years of age may vote in an *Indian Act* election.
- (ii) **What will be the band government structure:**  
*Indian Act* Bands are governed by a Chief and Council. Under the act, unless otherwise ordered, the council of a band shall be comprised of one chief and one councilor for every one hundred members of the band.
- (iii) **Who may run for Chief and Council Term of Office:**  
Any member of the band that has obtained the age of eighteen years may run for the position of chief or councilor. The term of office is for 2 years.
- (iv) **Who may nominate:**  
A person must be eligible to run for chief or council in order to nominate another person to run for chief or council respectively. A candidate for chief or council requires a nominator and a person to second the nomination.
- (v) **How an election is called:**  
At least six days before the nomination meeting, and at least 12 days before the election, an "electoral officer" must post a notice calling for nomination meeting. An electoral officer must be a neutral person appointed by the band. After the nominations, the electoral officer must prepare a voters list and post it. On the day of the election, eligible voters cast secret ballots. The elections are conducted typically from 9:00 am to 6:00 P.M.

#### **Pros**

- The *Indian Act* elections provide an "already established" mechanism for band elections.
- An appeal mechanism is in place in that band members have 30 days after an election to lodge an appeal to the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs.
- Majority of bands across Canada fall under Indian Act election provisions.

#### **Cons**

- Chief and Councilors that are elected will be those with the most votes thus you may not have any regional representation. In such an election for example it is possible that there may not be a councilor elected from one of the regions (Bay St. George, Bay of Islands or Central NL) to the landless band.
- *Indian Act* elections may not reflect the election customs or traditions of the band.
- *Indian Act* prescribed elections is thought to be outdated and paternal. Most bands wish to revert to "custom elections".

*Indian Act* Election Code can be mailed out if you want to review it by calling the communication officer.

## Custom Band Option

In a number of First Nations the Chief and Councilors are chosen according to the custom of the Band. The First Nation chooses who may vote, how voting is carried out, when elections are held and what the government structure (i.e. Chief and Council) will look like. The Department of Indian and Northern Affairs does not generally interfere in custom elections, however, it does recommend that bands have their custom election process codified and that it includes an appeal mechanism. As well, the department has guidelines in place stipulating the requirements for bands wishing to revert from *Indian Act* elections to custom elections.

### Pros

- Custom elections avoids the paternalism of the Indian Act and recognize band custom.
- Furthers a bands self-government goals and objectives
- Offers an opportunity to develop a unique and creative election process which reflects current reality while at the same time capturing elements of past customs or traditions.

### Cons

- May require more discussion, debate and technical work in creating a "custom" election process unique to the land less band. Tendency in some bands to settle for the "known" and perceived comfort of ready made Indian Act process.
- Depending on the amending procedure, may result in an election process that changes frequently.

## Custom Elections- Potential Models

In that custom band elections are unique to each band and their customs and traditions there is no set "key aspects" that can be listed. Instead it is useful to present several custom band election models which may be suitable for the FNI/Landless band situation:

### **Model # 1 - Modified Indian Act Elections**

Custom Band election process that basically follows the Indian Act election guidelines but has some differences in terms of term of office and number of councilors. Several custom bands have essentially modified the Indian Act election regulations to suit their needs. In this respect they are taking advantage of an already establish election process but adding the advantage of imparting some aspects unique to the band.

### **Model # 2- Regional Representation**

This model may involve electing a chief as political head (through universal suffrage) and councilors representing a defined region and elected through regional votes (i.e. ward system).

### **Model # 3 - Local Group Representation**

This model may be similar to the current FNI government structure. A chief can be elected by the entire membership with councilors elected from defined local groups (i.e. current bands). Issues will have to be addressed with respect to registered members which may not be entirely affiliated with a local band and groupings of registered members which at a future date may want to have local group status (i.e. have a councilor on the Landless Band's Government structure).

*Presented by the Negotiating Team:*

**Brendan Sheppard, Shayne McDonald. Annie Randell**

## **Federation of Newfoundland Indians & Miawpukek First Nations forms a Partnership**

The Federation of Newfoundland Indians and Miawpukek First Nations (Conne River Indian Band) has come together for the first time in many years for the benefit of both Mi'kmaq groups on the island of Newfoundland. Jointly, both groups have submitted a proposal to the Department of Fisheries & Oceans under the Aboriginal Aquatic Resource & Ocean Management program (AAROM). A financial contribution for this initiative has been approved in the amount of \$128,412 for this fiscal year. The objective of this program is to conduct a capacity building phase of the AAROM program that was established with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans in 2003. The funds will be used to form a legal entity to represent both groups, a stakeholders conference hosting representatives from both groups with various sector representatives of DFO. In addition a portion of the funding will be used build the administration capacity of both groups to enhance their opportunity to continue this program into a collaborative management program for the fiscal year of 2005-2006.

## Phase II for St. George's Courthouse

The exterior restoration has been completed on the courthouse and they are heading into phase II of the project.



This phase will see the completion of the interior restoration as well as the hiring of an interpretive planning firm to aid them in the design of the museum and interpretation center. Phase II is scheduled to finish in May 2005, while the grand opening is planned for June 2006.

### WE HAVE A WINNER!!

The FNI would like to congratulate Derrick Brown of Summerford (Gander Bay Band) & Lottie Childs of York Harbour (Benoit's Cove Band) for naming the 44' 11" fishing vessel in Central Newfoundland the "Dream Catcher". The FNI are please to provide each of these individuals with \$100 for their interest.

We will also like to extend a thank you to all of the individuals that entered this contest

## FLAT BAY YOUTH WINS SCHOLARSHIP

Kayla Miles, a native youth from Flat Bay is one of the recipients of the 2004 Helen Basset Commemorative scholarships.

She received the scholarship, from The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC). NWAC offers student Scholarships all across Canada to four young aboriginal women, in commemoration of Helen Basset.

The scholarship is based on miss Miles accomplishments, both academically and socially, along with her dedication to pursue post secondary studies.

Kayla is currently working towards a degree in the Arts Program at St. Thomas University in order to pursue a degree in law. She hopes one day that she will be able to return home to practice.



Kayla Miles was presented the Helen Basset Scholarship by Flat Bay Chief Calvin White at her recent academic graduation.

# EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING

THE FEDERATION OF NEWFOUNDLAND INDIANS

**For more information on Employment and Training please contact the following people:**

### CENTRAL

**Bernie Hanlon: (709) 489-6770**  
toll free 1-877-489-6770  
email: exploits@fni.nf.ca

### WESTERN

**Hayward Young: (709) 647-3550**  
toll free 1-877-647-3129  
email: hayward@fni.nf.ca

**ANNIE M. RANDELL**  
**AHRDA COORDINATOR.**  
(709) 634 - 0996  
annie@fni.nf.ca

## The Federation of Newfoundland Indians Invitation to Tender

The ideal candidate for this initiative would need some knowledge on the issue of long-term management of nuclear fuel waste in Canada, experience with public consultation and report writing. The successful candidate will be responsible for:

- hosting nine public meetings (one in each band council- see FNI web-site for band lists at [www.fni.nf.ca](http://www.fni.nf.ca));
- ensure a wide variety of advertisements in each area;
- pay all related expense on hosting each meeting such as: travel, rental of building space, printed material, if any,
- provide all the necessary equipment;
- present a final report to FNI by April 15th, 2005

A request for proposals with total cost to complete the above project must be submitted to the FNI office at P.O. Box 956 Corner Brook, NL, A2H 6J3 on or before closing March 3rd, 2005. Emails or fax's will not be accepted. Preference will be given to members of the Federation of Newfoundland Indians (please specify band affiliation). The lowest tender not necessarily accepted.

## FEDERATION DIRECTORY

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**Tony John**  
**Central Vice President**  
 (see chief listings)

**Hayward Young**  
**Western Vice President**  
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## Mi'kmaq Words

**Ga't** - eel - pronounced (gaad)

**Tegig** - cold - pronounced (de·gik)

**Lasguaw** - snowshoe - pronounced  
 (las·ku·aw)

check out <http://www.mikmaqonline.org/>

### FNI Receives Funding for New Website

The Federation of Newfoundland Indians has received \$24,050 from the federal department of Canadian Heritage to develop a website dedicated to the Mi'kmaq exhibition which is currently on display in St. John's. According to Hon. Gerry Byrne, Liberal Commons Member for Humber-St. Barbe-Baie Verte, "The Mi'kmaq People of Newfoundland - A Celebration" website will feature an online museum which highlights and displays contemporary content on the Newfoundland Mi'kmaq communities and will feature both the traditional and contemporary way of life, the economy and communities, of the Mi'kmaq people. It will present both historical and contemporary Mi'kmaq artists and list events on cultural gatherings.

"The understanding and outreach of the aboriginal people of the island portion of the province is growing", Byrne said. "It was expressed in the federal government's decision to designate Mattie Mitchell as a person of special, national significance. It continued with the creation of a national museum and educational exhibit that is travelling the province and soon the country, to explain and to celebrate the contributions of the Newfoundland Mi'kmaq people. Most importantly, their significance as an aboriginal people will be supported through the current negotiations between the FNI and the federal government on achieving recognition under the Indian Act. We have come far and we will go even farther in the days and months ahead. This funding that I have announced today reinforces that outreach and helps the FNI with their organization's work."

## MI'KMAQ NEWS

We are always looking for event listings, stories, suggestions, poems, ideas, and artwork.

You can send them to:

**Federation of Newfoundland Indians**  
**P.O. Box 460**  
**St. George's, NL**  
**A0N 1Z0**

Phone: (709) 647-3800

Toll Free: 1 866-640-3800

Fax: (709) 647-3509

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