

Tobique First Nation, NB April 2012
Wulustuk Times
Wulustuk - Indigenous name for St. John
River

This publication produced monthly at
Tobique, NB, Canada E7H 5K3

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE SONG OF THE STARS

NATIVE SCHOOLS FUNDING FALLS SHORT, BUDGET CRITICS SAY
MORE CASH FOR FIRST NATIONS 'GOODWILL GESTURES'

FIRST NATIONS FISHERMEN WIN TAX EXEMPTION

FEDERAL BILL S-8 FAILS TO "PROTECT" DRINKING WATER FOR
FIRST NATIONS

LAND SALE HIGHLIGHTS OWNERSHIP RULES QUIRK

WOODSTOCK MALISEET RESERVE

DAN'S CORNER -THE NATIVE AMERICAN HOLOCAUST

DEAN'S DEN -YOUNG BLOOD & LUXURIATED GREEN

Wulustuk Times:

Each month we gather and publish the latest, most current and relevant native information for our readers. Proceeding with this concept, we feel that a well informed person is better able to see, relate with, and assess a situation more accurately when equipped with the right tools. Our aim is to provide you with the precise tools and the best information possible.

Contact:

We can be reached at Box 3226, Perth-Andover, NB. Canada, E7H 5K3, or at Box 603, Ft. Fairfield, ME 04742. By phone, call us at 506-273-6737. On the net we're at pesun@nbnet.nb.ca

THE SONG OF THE STARS

We are the stars which sing,
We sing with our light;
We are the birds of fire,
We fly over the sky.
Our light is a voice.
We make a road for spirits,
For the spirits to pass over.
Among us are three hunters
Who chase a bear;
There never was a time
When they were not hunting.
We look down on the mountains.
This is the Song of the Stars.

April is one of the best times of the year to look up to the night sky and appreciate how all things are connected. Look for the Great Bear constellation (Ursa Major). If you can find the Big Dipper, you have found part of the Great Bear (refer to the stars diagram). As the seasons progress this Great Bear runs across the sky chased by three hunters. It tells a story that is vital for the humans down here on the earth to understand and heed.

Through thousands of generations in this "land of the dawn" the Wolastoqiyik have celebrated the circle of life in songs, dances, and in traditional gatherings. They are acutely aware that all things continue in a cycle - the seasons, the planets, the stars, birth and death, day and night, the growth rings in a tree. All is a circle, and all is connected in a sacred relationship - "all my relations" is the familiar phrase. These ancient stories, dances and songs connect children to their ancestors, the present to the past.

The ancients looked to the night skies, and the moon and stars spoke to them. They could "read" the heavens. The position of the stars, sun, and the phases of the moon connected them to important seasonal events here on the earth. The old people sang songs and told stories that were

preserved by tradition for future generations. These songs and stories were more than just entertainment. They taught vital lessons, each one being a type of teaching aid that gave wise counsel for good health and survival.

One of the oldest, most beautiful and discerning songs of the elders was a song captured in writing by Charles Leland in 1884, called The Song of the Stars. It was the concluding page in his book, Algonquin Legends. The song is a synopsis of all the legends and songs he had gathered and published. It is a song of the Passamaquoddy and Maliseet people. It is one of the most powerful songs ever composed and sung by mankind. It has no known author, and most likely evolved over generations by the shamans. It is a sacred, timeless song with a message that is always relevant.

The song is about listening to the voices of the stars in the night sky, connecting their position in the sky to the cycle of events happening down here on earth. When we look up to the stars to read their message, we are looking at the very same book that the Maliseets of ancient times studied long before any white man came to this land. The story it tells has not changed in thousands of years. It is a place to turn to that is the very beginning, a place to start understanding the verities of life.

The words of this song are very discerning, even spiritual in nature. It is about the stars in the night sky that sing a song with their light like "birds of fire." Among the stars are three hunters (named Alioth, Mizar, and Alkaid by astronomers) who chase a bear (the Ursa Major constellation) of which the Big Dipper is a familiar component. The three stars in the handle of the dipper are the three hunters. The first hunter (Alioth) is carrying a bow and arrow. The second hunter (Mizar) carries a large pot (the star Alcor) on his shoulder in which to cook the bear, while the third hunter (Alkaid) hauls a pile of firewood to light a fire beneath the pot. The bowl of the dipper and several other stars make up the bear.

These three hunters have always been hunting and looking down upon the mountains. As spring turns into summer and summer into fall they chase the bear across the night sky. By summer the three hunters are high over the North Star as darkness falls. Tradition has it that they wound the bear

in the fall and its blood falls down and stains the forests with red. Then the bear comes down to the earth and hides in a cave and is healed from its wounds over the winter. At this time the bear constellation passes under the Pole Star, dropping from view low in the horizon. In the spring the bear comes out of the cave and the hunt resumes and you will see the hunters chasing the bear once again in the night sky. The story repeats itself. Every year these three hunters chase the bear across the sky, eventually wounding it and the leaves become stained with red. The circle of seasons is taught by this story. The "milky" glowing band arching across the night sky is the road over which departed spirits travel to reach the "happy hunting grounds." It is the Milky Way. The Maliseets have known for thousands of generations that the events happening in the heavens above them are all connected to things taking place down here on the earth.

Take time every now and then to look up into the night sky to see where the three hunters are located as they chase the bear across the dark abyss. Then realize that you are watching a play that your ancestors also watched in ancient times. They knew by the location of the chase when things would soon be happening among the living creatures down here on earth: the salmon and eel runs, the return of the geese and ducks, the time to dig sunchokes, and the time to plant corn, beans and squash. This is the connection to your ancestors across the ages. It is enlightenment for the present, and assurance for the Seven Generations to come.

All my relations ----- Nugeekadoonkut

NATIVE SCHOOLS FUNDING FALLS SHORT, BUDGET CRITICS SAY

\$275M for First Nations literacy, buildings described as inadequate
The Canadian Press

The federal budget puts a down payment on improvements to First Nations schooling, but the young people who have led the charge for better funding in native schools say the \$275 million is inadequate.

The education funding is the centrepiece of a First Nations package that includes renewal of money for clean water as well as a commitment to explore allowing private-property ownership on reserves that want it. It comes as Aboriginal Affairs' budget is cut by \$166 million a year, or 2.7 per cent.

"We will work with First Nations to ... unlock the potential of Canada's First Nations children," Finance Minister Jim Flaherty said in his budget speech.

The goal of the education money is to bring First Nations schools up to a high enough standard that they can participate in a new governance system — similar to school boards — to be in place in 2014. The \$275 million includes \$100 million for early literacy programming and other supports, as well as \$175 million for building and renovating schools on reserves.

\$500M needed to give students 'everything they deserve'

But that's only a sliver of what First Nations need just to get started, said Chelsea Edwards, the 16-year-old who is the voice of the Shannen's Dream initiative to bring provincial standards to reserves.

"We need about \$500 million a year to give the students everything they deserve," Edwards said in a telephone interview from Timmins, Ont. "(Aboriginal Affairs Minister John) Duncan seems to think we can get by with just 20 per cent of this."

She noted it's costing about \$30 million to build a school in nearby Attawapiskat alone, so \$175 million for new buildings won't go very far. "This isn't right."

The Conservatives recently backed an NDP motion in the House of Commons that committed the government to bringing First Nations schools up to provincial standards.

But the funding falls far short of the \$500 million the Assembly of First Nations says is necessary to set native schools on an equal footing with provincial schools. Nor does the measure lift the two-per-cent cap on funding increases that First Nations have decried as inadequate.

Flaherty calls funding 'initial steps'

First Nations young people are the fastest growing demographic in Canada, but only half of them graduate from high school — exacerbating the high unemployment and poverty that undermine many reserves. But Flaherty, in his speech, suggested there may be more money to come, calling the new funding "initial steps" in improving First Nations education.

For clean water, the budget renews funding for First Nations to build and renovate water infrastructure on reserves, putting \$330 million over two years into the initiative. A similar amount was set to expire shortly. But again, the funding falls far short of what experts say is necessary to supply reserves with clean, safe water. A national assessment commissioned by the federal government recently found that \$4.9 billion over 10 years is what it would cost to improve and maintain water systems.

The Conservatives have introduced legislation meant to ensure First Nations have access to safe and reliable drinking water, but no funding was attached to the bill. Critics have complained that there is no point in passing legislation that First Nations don't have the means to implement.

As for owning private property, the budget reflects the belief held by many Conservatives that the key to First Nations prosperity is ending the collective ownership system that dominates reserves right now. The idea is controversial, however, since many First Nations believe it will erode their traditional hold on the land.

'Substandard contributions'

The budget signals that the government will not force private property ownership on anyone. Rather, Ottawa will "explore with interested First Nations the option of moving forward with legislation that would allow for this."

The hodge-podge of measures amounts to a big let-down after Prime Minister Stephen Harper raised hopes and expectations in his summit with First Nations leaders in January, said Chief Isadore Day of the Serpent River First Nation, in southern Ontario.

"A new fiscal relationship is not what this budget represents.

We as First Nations needed substantive commitments, not substandard contributions to known solutions."

The national chief of the Assembly of First Nations applauded the new money for education, but said more is needed.

"The investments in education in today's budget indicate that the voices of our youth are perhaps beginning to be heard but we must do more," Shawn Atleo said in a statement.

"We will be relentless in our efforts to ensure sustainable and secure funding for education."

MORE CASH FOR FIRST NATIONS 'GOODWILL GESTURES'

Winnipeg Free Press

IN a belt-tightening federal budget, Canada's First Nations were one of the few groups that received more funding from Ottawa.

But the \$275 million over three years to build and renovate schools and improve educational programming, and \$330 million over two years to improve water and sewer services, were described as "goodwill gestures" by Derek Nepinak, grand chief of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs.

Aboriginal leaders had called for \$500 million to improve aboriginal schools and Manitoba's Island Lake region needs \$100 million alone for water and sewer services, Nepinak said.

Other funding for First Nations Thursday includes \$27 million over two years to renew the urban aboriginal strategy and a commitment to improve on-reserve employment training.

"I think parts of it could be characterized as goodwill gestures towards addressing some of the substantial issues that we have in Manitoba," Nepinak said.

Only a small part of the education initiative -- \$45 million -- will be spent in the current fiscal year.

The rest, \$230 million, will be divided equally into each of the next two budget years.

Ottawa also announced it will introduce a First Nation Education Act "to establish the structures and standards needed to support strong and accountable education systems on-reserve."

Nepinak said First Nations want to ensure the new education framework includes the protection and perpetuation of indigenous languages and culture.

"To us, that is a priority," he said, adding it's a positive move that Ottawa is providing "some seed money" to start engaging in such discussions with First Nations.

Premier Greg Selinger called Ottawa's proposed investment in First Nations education a "modest" improvement.

He noted the funding gap per student between students on-reserve and off-reserve is \$3,500 a year. He said he is disappointed the \$275 million would be stretched over three years.

"It's not going to have as much impact as we had anticipated," he said.

Meanwhile, Nepinak said he is concerned about Ottawa's proposed changes to environmental regulations and to old age security eligibility.

He said turning environmental reviews into "merely administrative exercises" undermines Ottawa's "constitutional duty to consult and accommodate First Nations interests" with regards to their ancestral lands and resource development.

He said he is worried about the implications for Manitoba First Nations concerning future hydroelectric development.

The First Nations leader said raising the age of eligibility on OAS benefits to 67 from 65 is particularly unfair to aboriginal people.

"It's built on the premise that Canadians are living longer. And that may be very true for many Canadians, but for Canada's First Nations people, we're not living longer," Nepinak said.

He said there is a seven-year gap in the life expectancy of an aboriginal man and a non-aboriginal Canadian.

He said new OAS eligibility rules should not be applied to First Nations people until that gap is closed.

Mia Rabson

FIRST NATIONS FISHERMEN WIN TAX EXEMPTION

CBC News

Two First Nations men from northern Manitoba don't have to pay tax on income earned from fishing, according to a federal appeal court ruling.

Revenue Canada had argued the income should be taxed because it was from personal property off reserve.

But the federal court reaffirmed an original tax court ruling in 2009 that the Norway House residents were exempt even though the fish weren't caught on reserve property.

At the time, tax court Judge J.E. Hershfield observed, "they fish in the lake because that's where the fish are."

The decision released Wednesday "is a great win for treaty fishermen," said Manitoba Grand Chief Derek Nepinak.

He said he hopes it will lead to a more "lucrative economy for Manitoba's inland fishermen."

The federal government has 30 days to file an appeal with the Supreme Court of Canada.

FEDERAL BILL S-8 FAILS TO “PROTECT” DRINKING WATER FOR FIRST NATIONS

chiefs-of-ontario

Toronto, ON – On February 29, 2012, the federal government introduced Bill S-8, Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act. In announcing the introduction of Bill S-8 the government claimed it was acting to protect drinking water for First Nations.

Ontario Regional Chief Angus Toulouse expressed concern that the Act is almost an exact replica of a previous Bill, known as Bill S-11, which was met with widespread opposition from First Nations. “One of the main concerns with this Bill, similar to the previous Bill, is that there is no provision of resources to ensure that First Nations are able to meet any standards that are set. The government is well aware of the fact that many First Nations in Ontario do not meet the department’s current protocols. The concern is that First Nations are being set up to fail and then who is held liable when they fail to meet the regulations,” stated the Regional Chief.

In July 2011, the federal Department Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada published the National Assessment of First Nations Water and Wastewater Systems. The contractor inspected water and wastewater systems in 120 First Nations communities in Ontario. This report found that out of 158 water systems inspected, 72 were considered high risk, 61 medium risk and 25 low risk. Of the 77 wastewater systems inspected 28 were categorized as high risk, 38 as medium risk and 11 low risk.

Bill S-8 states that the government is committed to improving the health and safety of residents of First Nation lands, and that the government is “committed to working with First Nations to develop proposals for regulations to be made under this Act”. Regional Chief Toulouse indicated that it makes no sense to set drinking water standards without addressing the obvious infrastructure gaps that exist. The Ontario First Nations Technical Services Corporation estimates that it will cost approximately \$228 - \$296 million to upgrade the 158 existing water treatment plants found in First Nations communities. This is consistent with the cost

estimate identified by Neegan Burnside, the contractor that produced the government-commissioned national assessment. The contractor indicated that it would cost approximately \$309 million to bring First Nation water and waste water facilities up to current AADNC protocols, and up to \$1 billion to meet the expected growth over the next ten years in Ontario First Nations alone.

Ensuring that First Nations have access to safe drinking water and appropriate wastewater systems is a paramount concern of all First Nations communities, and developing and implementing a plan of action to address the issue requires First Nations' expertise and involvement at every stage. "This Bill fails to recognize and respect First Nations jurisdiction with regards to water and it fails to address the real and pressing needs that exist. If the government is serious about working with First Nations to address the health and safety needs of our citizens they will act first to address the infrastructure and capacity gaps before imposing regulations that set many First Nations up to fail," said Regional Chief Toulouse.

For more information, please contact:
Andre Morriseau Communications Officer
Ph: 416-580-9320

LAND SALE HIGHLIGHTS OWNERSHIP RULES QUIRK DAILY NEWS

A quarter-acre lot on some First Nations land in Cedar, put on the market this month, can only be purchased by Snuneymuxw First Nation members.

A federal government has run a quarter-page newspaper advertisement calling for bids from Snuneymuxw band members on a property described as Lot 14 on the Nanaimo River Indian Reserve No. 3.

It illustrates a quirk of the rules regulating ownership of Indian Reserve land in Canada. The land is held by the Crown for aboriginal use, and while band members can build and own homes on lots on reserve land, title to the land can only be in the name of band members.

The rules are highly specific: Only members of the band for which the land is reserved can hold title to the land.

Even former band members who left the band to join another band are prevented from owning land.

That has created a unique problem for the federal Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development in recent years.

Sometimes band members die, leaving land willed to family members who are no longer a member of the band, or who never were members.

About a year ago the federal department decided it would start selling off such properties so the land could be used again.

"It's federal land put aside for the benefit of the First Nation," said Brian Novosel, individual land holdings specialist with the federal department.

Title to the property is listed in the name of the estate of Francis Thomas.

"The land can only be held by a member of that First Nation," Novosel said.

"That one condition does keep it a very tight market for that reason. You have to be a band member to place a bid."

It's one of a backlog of properties the federal department had to come to terms with until about a year ago, when the decision was made to address the problem.

"The Indian Act does not respect the oral tradition and that's often a challenge for First Nations. Everything has to be documented and done just so," Novosel said.

"We got direction from headquarters and they said 'let's roll these through.'"

Bids will be accepted up until 11: 59 p.m. on June 13.

DBellaart@nanaimodailynews.com 250-729-4235

WOODSTOCK MALISEET RESERVE

It was a typical Sunday morning when I visited Peter Paul. I sat with Peter at his fine old gleaming table made from local wood long ago. A table Minnie loved to serve her culinary skills cooked on her old cherished wood stove that lacked a temperature gauge. I was sure her meals would suffer if she had a modern kitchen. Adney had worked with Peter at this table for at least fifteen years. Now I was taking my turn.

Peter was telling me about the beginning of the Reserve. He began with his genealogy.

John Paul came from the St. Lawrence river's Saguenay area many years ago. We don't know why he came here. Was he born here and left? Did his parents meet some of our people at a tribal gathering and a promise to marry one of our girls? We don't know the answer. He came, and hunted from Kingsclear up and down the River with his family. His son Noel Paul saw much of the St. John and its tributaries but favored to settle in the Woodstock area as his home site. Noel's parents may have made a marriage contract with the parents of a young girl, Susan who born about 1820. By this time much of the land on both sides of the St, John River had been given to soldiers or loyalists who wanted to settle in the new land. One winter day when Susan was about thirteen, Noel Paul II (the son of Noel Paul I; Noel Paul II also had a son Noel Paul III) skated the 60 miles to Kingsclear to marry Susan. He returned skating up the River with Susan riding on his shoulders. For some unknown reason he preferred to return to Woodstock than to setter with Susan's parents as was the custom.

A daughter of Peter Polchies married into the Noel Paul family. E. T. Adney said that Peter Polchies was from Oromocto, sometimes known as Oromocto Pete, and before that moved from the Passamaquoddy coast. These two families have been the dominant families establishing the Woodstock Indian village. Woodstock became a nucleus for family hunting territories that extended north far up the St. John, to the south into what is now Aroostook County, Maine, and as far east as Grand Lake, NB. It included a fine network of lakes and rivers teeming with a great variety of plant and animal life.

A small creek whose source was a fresh water spring still flowed across the village site in 1950. Each spring stone points, hammer stones, and other artifacts would turn up indicating that Indians had enjoyed this site for some time.

Noel Paul III had six daughters. At that time it was the custom for the daughter to remain with her parents after marriage. The young husbands became hunters and providers for the extended family group. The community grew. The father-in-law directed the hunt using his special powers to locate game.

The neighboring farmers saw the river side site as rich farm land and offered to buy it from their Indian neighbors. The younger men thought that the money offered for the land was a wonderful gift. The elders were very much aware of how the land their forefathers had once roamed freely over became greatly reduced to small pockets like Woodstock's extended family unit. Land was much more valuable than money. Much to the disappointment of the farmers, the land deal was not accepted. The Woodstock Reserve is typical of many of the Maliseet and Micmac reserves that was the land that had supported an Indian extended family. The land was security for them; they must retain it.

A Canadian government law stipulated that Indian reserves have a minimum population of sixty people before they could have a chief. Woodstock did not meet that requirement until 1914. The government also set the term for a chief at three years.

Although Woodstock did not have a chief as defined by Ottawa law, until 1916 the people put their trust in their oldest man to be their leader. There was no tradition of a chief-making ceremony like the older reserves had. Nor did they have a church with its missionary on the reserve. The missionary had the role of swearing in the chief on the reserves that had a church. The Wabanaki tradition was that when it was time to elect a new chief, the chief and sub chief of the neighboring Wabanaki tribes would come and elect the new chief. The people accepted their choice. Woodstock did not have a tradition of chief-making so had never sent representatives to attend other neighboring reserve chief-making ceremonies.

The Woodstock Chief-making ceremonies were simplified. Chief Solomon Brooks of Kingsclear was the only outsider who attended and voted at a Woodstock election. He attended only their first election in 1916 when William Polchies, a son of Noel Polchies, was elected as Woodstock's first Chief. William Polchies reigned for two terms.

The Woodstock Maliseet village expanded and changed little until after the flooding of the St. John River caused by the Mactaquac Dam caused houses to be moved across the street and up the hill that had been forest land.

Nicholas N. Smith

DAN'S CORNER -THE NATIVE AMERICAN HOLOCAUST

NOTE: (This item originally appeared in our July 2003 edition, and by special request it is being reprinted in the current edition with the permission of the author, Dan Ennis).

I recently completed a summer course at the University of Maine Presque Isle entitled "The Native American Holocaust 1492 - Present".

The course was taught by Dr. Matthew Johnson, professor of Sociology. This was one of the most rewarding educational experiences that I have ever received in my years of attending Euro-American schools. For this experience a heartfelt thank-you must go to Matt Johnson. His teaching style reminded me of the gentle teaching ways of our Medicine Elders. His style conveyed to his students that he cared, he was aware, he knew the subject matter and that he was taking on the responsibility as opposed to taking on guilt for the Native American Holocaust.

My gratitude and appreciation goes to the authors of the prescribed, excellent text books for having the heart and spirit to research and publish their books. I would also like to thank the students for their heart and spirit for taking part in a such a difficult and gut-wrenching course. All have renewed my faith in humankind and in a future for the Seventh Generation.

This course did many things for me as an Indian. It confirmed that all of the estimated population and annihilation figures put out by schools over the years have been too low. It is now generally agreed that the actual population of the Americas prior to the arrival of the Europeans was in the range of 90-120,000,000 persons and that the annihilation rate among native societies routinely reached and exceeded 95%. All is not lost however.

Again, due to my having taken this course, I know that people (both Indian and non-Indian) do care about the fate of those 100 million Indians that were annihilated in the name of Indian land, Indian gold and European greed. While it is still very painful and anger-provoking to know that our people died in such horrific numbers and with such contempt and callousness, it is good to know that people, especially academics, are now interested enough to conduct the required research so as to produce text books that speak the truth to the Native American Holocaust.

With similar such courses at other schools, colleges and universities a very important first step will have been taken in the process of recognition, acknowledgment, acceptance and responsibility for the Native American Holocaust. Our two peoples may yet meet on that common ground of mutual respect, understanding and acceptance where our people have been waiting for the past 500 years.

All My Relations, Dan Ennis June 30, 03.

DEAN'S DEN -YOUNG BLOOD & LUXURIATED GREEN

Young Blood

A young blood soon forgets
His many should's and ought's
When springtime turns his fancy
And love invades his thoughts!

Luxuriated Green

The Purple Trillium and the Dogwood
And the lovely Lady's Slipper
Along with Dutchman's Britches
Were all feeling rather chipper,
They were beautiful and graphic
Wild flowers soft and sweet
And lo - the lowly fiddlehead
Lay furled 'neath their feet,
Yet, as the foliage faded
The fiddlehead began to rise
For it would be "a joy" all summer
Greenery to soothe the eyes,
Without a crown of color
This luxuriated screen
Would soon usurp the flora
As it spread across the scene!
D.C. Butterfield

QUOTES:

Eagle Chief (Letakos-Lesa) Pawnee

In the beginning of all things, wisdom and knowledge were with the animals, for Tirawa, the One Above, did not speak directly to man. He sent certain animals to tell men that he showed himself through the beast, and that from them, and from the stars and the sun and moon should man learn.. all things tell of Tirawa.

All things in the world are two. In our minds we are two, good and evil. With our eyes we see two things, things that are fair and things that are ugly.... We have the right hand that strikes and makes for evil, and we have the left hand full of kindness, near the heart. One foot may lead us to an evil way, the other foot may lead us to a good. So are all things two, all two.

Believe in yourself! Have faith in your abilities! Without a humble but reasonable confidence in your own powers you can be successful or be happy.