



In This Issue:

- Coca-Cola
- Quilt of Belonging Algonquin
- PBS Native Specials
- A Letter from Art and Lynn Haines
- Safe Drinking Water for First Nations
- Ah! The Peace and Tranquility of Country Living
- Adoption Records
- The Story of the Quilt of Belonging
- Native American Stamps
- Native Rights Declaration
- Letter from a Member
- Aboriginal Day
- Homeless Man Hailed a Hero



"To be ignorant of what occurred before you were born is to remain always a child. For what is the worth of human life, unless it is woven into the life of our ancestors by the records of history?" This quote by Marcus Tullius Cicero (106 BC to 43 BC) encompasses a core belief of our organization.

Coca-Cola



The Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (VANOC) and the Four Host First Nations (FHFN) are seeking your help in identifying Aboriginal artists interested in participating in the Coca-Cola Aboriginal Art Bottle Program.

Coca-Cola's unique contour bottle is recognized around the world and the Coca Cola Art Bottle Program has become a tremendous form of expression during past Olympic Games. Last summer, during the Beijing Olympic Games, the Program featured artists from across China and showcased Chinese art and culture.

For the 2010 Winter Games in Vancouver, Coca-Cola is launching the Coca-Cola Aboriginal Art Bottle Program, which will celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal art and culture to the world by showcasing Aboriginal art on the contour bottle.

This information was copied from:
<http://www.nationtalk.ca/modules/news/article.php?storyid=20323>

Quilt of Belonging Algonquin

Description: The simple star pattern design, beaded and embroidered by Pauline Decontie, has a long and proud history. An elder, whose grandmother had used it to decorate moccasins vamps with naturally dyed porcupine quills and moose hair, gave the design to Pauline. The star is repeated four times around a Four Direction symbol, representing the cardinal points of a compass. This symbol and the number four are prominent themes among the Anishinàbe people. Algonquin oral culture talks about the four races — white, yellow, red, and black — and the need for cooperation among all people to respect and protect Mother Earth.

History: The Algonquian language family is the largest native-language group in North America, with many related languages and dialects. They refer to themselves as *Anishinabeg* meaning "the people". However, not all speakers of Algonquian languages are necessarily Algonquin. Other First Nations people, the Abenakis, Ojibwe, Saukteaux, among others, speak languages belonging to the Algonquian linguistic family. The Algonquin (Algonkin), were a specific group of bands who called themselves *Mamiwinini* and lived in the Ottawa River Valley.

Historically they lived as semi-nomadic hunter-gatherers, travelling great distances in birch-bark canoes. Unlike their Iroquoian neighbours to the south and west, the Algonquin were not agricultural, being too far north to make it a viable option. Dependent on hunting and trapping for survival, they became renowned for their expert skills. During the summers various bands would come together at prime fishing locations. This was also a time for socialization. With the arrival of winters they would again break off into small hunting bands of extended family members to increase their chances of survival in the harsh climate. **(Continued Next Page)**



The Public Broadcasting System (PBS) has some wonderful DVDs on Native Americans. The ones I have seen are truly excellent.

American Experience: We Shall Remain (DVD)
A History of American Indian Achievement (DVD)
Secrets of the Soul (DVD)
NOVA: Pocahontas Revealed (DVD)
Independent Lens: Chiefs (DVD)
The War That Made America (DVD and book)
American Experience: Last Stand at Little Big Horn (DVD)
True Whispers: The Story of the Navajo Code Talkers (DVD)
American Experience: Geronimo and the Apache Resistance (DVD)
The Great Indian Wars (DVD)
The War That Made America (audiobook (CD))
The War Tat Made America (DVD)
500 Nations (DVD)
The Journey of Sacagawea (DVD)
The West (DVD)
Lewis & Clark: The Journey of the Corps of Discovery (DVD)
American Experience: The Way West (DVD)
Lewis & Clark: The Journey of the Corps of Discovery + Sacagawea (DVD)
Mystery!: A Thief of Time (DVD)
Mystery!: Coyote Waits: An American Mystery Special (DVD)
Lewis & Clark: The Journey of the Corps of Discovery (DVD & Book)

If any of these interest you, go to:

<http://www.pbs.org/>

Shop PBS

Native American Specials

The Quilt of Belonging - Algonquin

In the early 17th century they became involved in the fur trade, often acting as middlemen between the French traders and the native peoples of the western Great Lakes region. The fur trade changed their lifestyle considerably, as they became more dependent on European trade goods. They acquired firearms and iron traps, making hunting easier and more prosperous. Increasingly, fabric became the material of choice for making clothing and shelter. By the 1800's forestry operations had a devastating effect on Algonquin traditional hunting grounds, pushing the people further north.

The Algonquin now live in communities located in the Outaouais region of Québec, and the Ottawa River Valley. Their interests are managed and protected internally through specific programs and services. Their language has had a strong impact in the region, as is evidenced by the many native names given towns and villages.

Sponsors: Alison Wilson



We would like to take this opportunity to thank all our members and the people who have made inquiries about our organization for enabling us to reach the Métis people not only in Ontario, but also internationally. Because of your efforts of referring OMFRC to your friends and extended family members we are currently considering opening another office to assist us.

Our websites have recently been redesigned and our Newsletter is now online for both our members and anyone interested in Métis issues. Canada's latest census shows that 1.7 million Canadians identify themselves as having First Nations ancestry. We plan other websites and projects to reach out to all of them.

We need your help; we have many projects where volunteers can assist us. We would love to work with any of you who are interested in contributing to our information on First Nations and Métis family history, or if you have any specialty that is relevant to the native community, let us know. Anyone who can do genealogy research and is willing to volunteer would be most welcome.

Thank you again to all who have sent us referrals and contributed their time and information, keep up the good work. It is very much appreciated

Art and Lynn Haines

Ontario Metis Family Records Center



Safe Drinking Water for First Nations

A Review of the Engagement Sessions for the Federal Action Plan on Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Position Statement

SASKATOON – The Safe Drinking Water Foundation (SDWF)'s Advanced Aboriginal Water Treatment Team (AAWTT) released their Position Paper on the Federal Engagement Sessions for First Nations Drinking Water today. The position has the support of the Indigenous Environmental Network, the Polaris Institute, Sierra Club Canada, Canadian Labour Congress and Maude Barlow, who is both the chairperson for the Council of



The AAWTT feels that Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC)'s engagement sessions and attempts to deal with First Nations drinking water quality are utterly inadequate, to the point of diminishing First Nation Treaty Rights. The position paper documents the issues and recommends solutions.

“This document just uncovers the tip of the iceberg,” said Dr. Hans Peterson, Executive Director of SDWF, “Were the Auditor General to launch a full inquiry into INAC's allocation of funds for First Nation water projects and the inaccurate assessment of water quality by Health Canada, the sponsorship scandal would pale in comparison.”

Additional statements of support:

“Engineers should be held accountable for selecting water treatment systems for First Nation Communities that are capable of meeting, at minimum, the Canadian Drinking Water Quality Guidelines.” Dan Hogan, P.Eng., Former President, Professional Engineers of Saskatchewan Contact: 306-221-6364 or 306-934-3813 or [e-mail] d.hogan@sasktel.net

“INAC has spent over \$7 million on our water treatment plant in the last 4 years, but this is a plant that is full of problems, making it very difficult for our water keepers to produce quality water. The federal government needs to find solutions that work for remote communities, such as ours. Throwing money alone at it doesn't work.” Chief Rose Laboucan, Driftpile First Nation Contact: 780-355-3868 or 780-523-0520

“The biggest problem with water treatment plants built on reserves is that they don't have to produce safe drinking water.” Bob Pratt, Circuit Rider, Touchwood Tribal Council Founding member of AAWTT Contact: 306-835-2136 (before 9 a.m. in SK) or 306-835-7707

Ah! The Peace and Tranquility of Country Living

SUNDAY: Our phones were out of service. We took the opportunity to make a research trip to Hiawatha Reserve on Rice Lake, near Peterborough.

MONDAY: Our phones were still out of service.

TUESDAY: We were in court for the trial of a man who stole the timber from our property. After two years I can tell you that justice is an abstract concept that you won't find in our courts.

WEDNESDAY: Our webmaster has been working to create two new websites for us. On Wednesday his computer crashed and he had to start again on some of the work involved.

A local couple dropped in to discuss membership. It turned out that the husband was my fourth cousin and we spent a couple of hours discussing our family histories and Métis issues in general.

THURSDAY: On Thursday morning Sharon Boomhour, one of our volunteers, was evaluating the ease and performance of the download of our Newsletter on a dialup connection. When she attempted to do so, what she actually downloaded was the “Download’ button itself, not the Newsletter. This was actually the high point of my week. I’m still laughing about it. Later on Thursday morning our power went out and stayed off for twelve hours. Thursday afternoon a gentleman (not a member) came to discuss Algonquin hunting rights and had a lot of questions. I spent the rest of the day finding answers for him.

FRIDAY and SATURDAY: Friday and Saturday were spent catching up on the dozens of phone calls and e-mails that went unanswered during the week. I also prepared materials for three of our volunteer researchers who had completed all the previous searches given to them.

SUNDAY: A few of our members came to visit.

... ..and I bet you thought life in rural Ontario was peaceful. Now, where's my bed?



Adoption Records

We have literally spoken to hundreds of frustrated adoptees. Finally, they all have some hope of tracing their roots. Ontario's adoption records will be opened on June 1, 2009. If you were involved in an adoption in Ontario your information and privacy rights will change. Adopted adults and birth parents will have access to identifying information from birth records and adoption orders.



Adopted adults and birth parents can file a disclosure veto to prevent release of the information. Anyone wishing to file a disclosure veto should do so before June 1, 2009.

For more information, visit www.ontario.ca/adoptioninfo or call 1-800-461-2156.



1980 United States stamps featuring Native American masks

37¢ August 21, 2004

The Story of the Quilt of Belonging



Brian Sturgeon brought this to our attention. We hadn't been aware of the quilt. Thanks Brian! The Quilt of Belonging project was begun in the fall of 1998 by artist Esther Bryan. Esther recognized that each culture in Canada has a unique beauty that contributes to our national identity. Both the conception and the design of the Quilt are truly inspiring.

The Quilt is the work of volunteers from across Canada. The Quilt is 120 feet long by 10.5 feet high and is made up of 263 eleven inch blocks that include all the First Peoples (70 blocks) in Canada and every nation of the world. We plan to feature one of the First Peoples blocks in each issue of our newsletter.

The first exhibition of the completed Quilt of Belonging took place on April 1st, 2005 at the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Gatineau (Ottawa). The Quilt is currently on a five-year tour across Canada.

Learn more about the Quilt at: <http://www.invitationproject.ca/ourstory.htm>



U.S.: Obama Urged to Sign Native Rights Declaration



May 6, 2009
By Haider Rizvi

UNITED NATIONS, May 6 (IPS) - The United States is considering whether to endorse a major U.N. General Assembly resolution calling for the recognition of the rights of the world's 370 million indigenous peoples over their lands and resources.

"The position on [this issue] is under review," Patrick Ventrell, spokesperson for the U.S. mission to the U.N., told IPS about the Barack Obama administration's stance on the non-binding U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Approved by a vast majority of the U.N. member states in September 2007, the General Assembly resolution on the declaration was rejected by the George W. Bush administration over indigenous leaders' argument that no economic or political power has the right to exploit their resources without seeking their "informed consent."

Three other "settler nations" of European descent, namely Canada, New Zealand and Australia, also voted against the declaration, which states that indigenous peoples have the right to maintain their cultures and remain on their land.

However, last month, the new left-leaning government in Canberra reversed its position, announcing support for the declaration.

"We show our respect for indigenous peoples," said Jenny Macklin, a member of the Australian parliament. "We show our faith in a new era of relations between states and indigenous peoples in good faith."

Submitted by Donna Meness from:
The Indigenous Environmental Network • PO Box 485 • Bemidji • MN • 56619

Letter from a Member



I want to thank Lynn and Art for their precious time. My sister and I stopped in to see them on one of their least busy days! It was mind boggling to see what a supposedly calm day was for them. The phones never quit ringing! But with all the Chaos that went on they still managed to deal with the business at hand, and to treat us as if we were their number one priority at that time. They made us welcome. With all the disturbances of their everyday life I was amazed and grateful for all the help and support we received. Thank you both so much and we are looking forward to another visit with both of you.

Jo-Anne – Gilmore, ON.



For the Kids – Aboriginal Day

June 21st is Aboriginal Day in Canada. An Internet search for Aboriginal Day should enable you to find special events being held in your area. Use the name of your town or city in the search, i.e. 'aboriginal day Timmins' or 'aboriginal day Toronto'.

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada offers several free items that will help your children enjoy the celebration: <http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ach/ev/nad/index-eng.asp> There are also games available for the kids at

<http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ach/lr/ks/gam/index-eng.asp>

Manitoba offers an attractive Louis Riel poster that you can download and print:

<http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/socstud/riel/index.html>

Find an event, order some things, encourage your children to take pride in their ancestry!

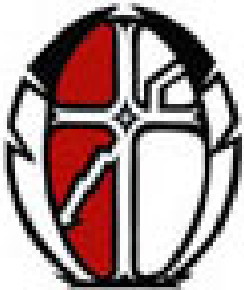


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We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.omfrc.org

www.aboriginalstatus.org

Homeless Man Hailed as a Hero

Faron Hall is an aboriginal homeless man who lives on the banks of the Red River in St. Boniface. Faron was sitting with his friend Wayne Spence at their makeshift home on the riverbank when he heard the screams and saw a male teen fall from the Provencher Bridge above into the Red River which is swift and swollen from floodwaters.

Without thoughts for his own safety he risked his life by jumping into the rapidly moving frigid water. He was able to save the teen's life despite the boy's panic which put both their lives at risk. "I just dove into the river and I had to swim all the way over there on an angle, because the current was carrying him downstream," Hall said. The boy was unable to swim because of back injuries and he was getting sucked under by the undertow.



Faron Hall (right)

"When Hall dove in, I thought, 'Are you friggin' nuts?'" said Faron's friend Spence.

After the rescue the firefighters said to him, 'You're a hero, you saved a life'. Hall replied, "possibly, but can I get a blanket? I'm kind of cold".

Hall's sister Kristi Hall, was stabbed to death in a random attack in July 2007. Hall said "Maybe that's why I didn't want to let anyone else die".

Originally Hall was from the Dakota Tipi First Nation but grew up in a good foster home. He finished high school and worked as a teaching assistant while taking classes at the University of Manitoba. Despite a promising future, alcohol took hold, especially after his mother was murdered a decade ago. About two years ago, his sister was stabbed to death. Hall last worked on construction jobs in Saskatchewan before returning to Winnipeg about 10 years ago. Hall has been homeless for about seven years.

Hall's bravery should make people think twice when they encounter the homeless. This is a man that most people would try to avoid. Despite this, he had the courage and the humanity to jump into the water to save the life of a stranger with no thought for his own safety. When I see a homeless person, I think "There but for the grace of God go I". The homeless are people like you and I, and as Mr. Hall has demonstrated, some of them are better than the rest of us.

Art Haines
Director, OMFRC