

Wulustuk Times

Wulustuk, aboriginal name for St. John River



Psi-te keg ba wa dum,
nood na mon Ktahkomikuk.



Everything I need, I get from the earth.

Victor Bear, Tobique First Nation, Basketmaker Extra Ordinaire

TABLE OF CONTENTS - SEPTEMBER 2007

LIFELONG PRODUCER OF MALISEET BASKETS - VICTOR BEAR

NO FIREWORKS, NO CARNIVAL THIS YEAR, - REASON, FINANCIAL PINCH

TOBIQUE TRUCK-STOP ON T.C.H. PUT UNDER RECEIVERSHIP

**INUIT NOW GOVERN A MINERAL-RICH TERRITORY IN NORTHERN QUEBEC -
NUNAVIK**

CANADA AMONG SEVERAL COUNTRIES TO REJECT NATIVE RIGHTS

HOULTON: MALISEETS GET \$457,290 HOUSING GRANT

PLEASANT POINT: PASSAMAQUODDYS CELEBRATE CULTURAL PRIDE

MALISEET-MIG'MAUG SOCIAL WORKER PROGRAM CONTINUING

LESSONS TO BE LEARNED FROM TRADITIONAL CEREMONIES

DAN'S CORNER - Respect Self, Respect the Talking Circle

DEAN'S DEN - Caliber

This publication now the "Wulustuk Times"

Each month we try to gather and produce the latest, most comprehensive and relevant native news material from the Indian country. Proceeding with this concept, we feel that a well informed reader can better relate with, analyze and grasp a situation more effectively when the right tools and information are at hand. Through our stories, our aim is to provide easily understood articles that come with a solid background behind every story.

Web access: Not only is our local readership serviced with this format of news production, but the Internet audience benefits as well. To reach a global audience, a talented and seemingly tireless worker, Sharon Green, from Ontario, helps us by putting Wulustuk Times on her web site each month. Sharon's website is located at Gathering Place First Nations, and once there, then just hit our indicator marked Wulustuk Times.

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LIFELONG PRODUCER OF MALISEET BASKETS - VICTOR BEAR

p.paul

Tobique FN, - Victor Bear of the Tobique First Nation has acquired a well-earned reputation and a country-wide distinction as a uniquely skilled native craftsman. He is a lifelong provider and producer of the finest baskets in eastern Canada made at Tobique First Nation.

Basketmaking has been a family affair in Victor's family for several generations that starts way back from his grandfather, Noel Bear Sr. who passed on the unique aboriginal skills to his son, Noel Jr., Victor's dad and all members of the family. This was happening during the peak era of basketmaking, the forties and the fifties.

It was through that kind of family environment that Victor learned to naturally follow the family tradition of making a living, and he does the same work to this day.

In the 40's, prior to the birth of the 'harvester', a machine specially built to mechanically harvest potatoes for Maine and New Brunswick farmers, the potato basket was THE item every potato farmer had to have each fall to manually gather tons and tons of potatoes from their fields.

Maine and New Brunswick being in the heart of potato industry, thousands and thousands of potato baskets were constantly in high demand from both sides of the border and the Indian producers took advantage of this high demand.

During the '30's, through to the '50's Indians were the sole producers of baskets and the whole potato industry depended on them to produce baskets well before the 'picking season began which generally ran from September to late October, and sometimes jumped into November in inclement weather.

Every Tobique family, and every family member, from the child to the grandparent, was involved one way or another in producing the potato basket that provided the family income.

The male producers were either cutting ash trees from the woods and/or axe-pounding the layers of grains from the log to peel and trim 'splints' for weaving. Or they could be involved in shaving a white ash tree to make the frame and handles. Kids and the oldsters also took part in many stages of the production.

The Bear family being fairly large in numbers, basketmaking was a means of putting bread on the table so everyone from the child to mom and dad and grandparents were part of the production.

Victor says he can't even remember when he first learned to make a basket because he was so young and just naturally drawn into business. To him and to other kids in the community, it just became a natural art and talent that everyone took for granted and nothing special in those early times.

Almost every child on the reserve went the same route back then because there was nothing else to do. According to Victor it wasn't such a big deal to know how to make a basket. "We all did it 'cause we had to," he said.

In today's world however, only a handful of Tobique residents, fewer than a dozen, are making the many designs and varieties of baskets. Potato baskets are more or less a mere novelty or a thing of the past in this day and age. When the potato industry turned to automation, the potato basket essentially disappeared.

Although many of his peers and counterparts took many directions and careers as they got older, Victor has always stayed close to his given talents and make a career of producing baskets.

Today his incredible skills and talent in basketmaking can be seen in places like the Smithsonian Institute Museum in Washington and Maryland, or the Museum of Man in Ottawa, plus other places of distinction that enhance and are dedicated to the preservation of native art.

In the fall of 2007, Victor's brother, Jeff Bear, a noted film maker and producer for CBC-TV, is scheduled to make an hour-long documentary depicting Victor's basket career, covering every aspect from A to Z, which will highlight his role in preserving the unique art, skill and talent of Maliseet basketry.

The documentary will be available to the public shortly after its production. For individual orders of it, contact Jeff Bear at (604) 263-4025 in Vancouver, B.C. And for local orders in eastern Canada or the US, call Victor Bear directly at Tobique First Nation, NB. Canada, Tel. (506) 273-4366

NO FIREWORKS, NO CARNIVAL THIS YEAR - REASON, FINANCIAL PINCH

p.paul

Tobique FN, - For the first time in about forty years, Tobique FN will not host the fireworks display this year, nor will the circus come on Labour Day weekend. Main reason, -lack of bucks.

It was indicated by band officials that the Labour Day events will focus mainly on keeping children's games and activities going, but those activities will operate on a tight and a low-range budget.

One of the band councillors said that the cost of the fireworks display has been climbing over the past few years and in the present circumstances has reached a critical point and declared beyond budget.

Originally, when the fireworks began in the 1970's , the cost would have been around five grand in comparison to today's estimated price tag of up to nine to ten big ones which puts them out of reach for the time being at least.

Other services impacted.

As a result of the cash crunch a number of band services have also undergone an internal revamp or moved into a merging situation.

Some services either have been cut or reduced to a bare minimum to lessen the impact on band expenditures. This band-wide savings measure is meant to keep only essential services going while those of lesser priority are pared down, or possibly eliminated to fit the revised operational schedule.

Staffing in every department has been reduced right across the board including adjustment in essential services that are now operating at a minimum scale doubling on service delivery.

At the moment it is uncertain how long the trimmed down administration and reduced operational mode will last as the band continues to work out of its nancial dilemma using a skeletal staff in the process.

According to the councillor, fireworks are definitely out of the picture at least for this year. It may take a year or more to unwind from the present course if things are run along close budget lines. Otherwise, more cost-saving procedures, besides cancelling the fireworks could follow.

TOBIQUE TRUCK STOP ON T.C.H. PUT UNDER RECEIVERSHIP

p.paul

Tobique Truck-Stop officially opened on July 6, 2004 on the Trans Canada Highway in Perth-Andover has closed under the burden of untenable financial difficulties that have built up over the preceding twelve months.

Originally the co-financed facility consigned between the band and Ultramar Canada, on the surface seemed to operate quite smoothly during the first two years of operation under a dual management approach.

Under dual control the 24/7 fuel bar and the attached convenience store outlet were operated by Ultramar Canada while the Tobique band ran the 24-hour restaurant section of the operation on a seemingly productive pattern.

However, some troubling financial aspects were brewing somewhere in the seams which finally came to surface during the latter phase of 2006 when the problem came to light which started a downward spiral from that point.

By spring of 2007, the management announced their concerns whether the eatery could in reality be kept open and operating on regular service and on its established schedule as the revenues were gradually slipping at a worrisome pace.

The situation grew worse and by June, 2007, and a decision was made by the management and the band to close the restaurant temporarily in order to shore up and restore the stability back to a normal capacity by revamping or modifying certain areas and reopening the facility at a modest scale.

This new operating procedure was never reached however, as the Tobique chief and council along with the staff and management tried in earnest to rebound from a difficult decline in business.

By July and August 2007 it became clear that the restaurant could not reopen again under any circumstances due to the heavy financial load the eatery had reached despite the laudable efforts mounted to save it from a permanent shutdown.

At that time local newspapers reported that the First Nation facility was given legal orders to liquidate all remaining assets to pay outstanding creditors while the facility was placed under receivership due to the band's inability to unwind from an insurmountable debt load.

Presently, all bids from outside to take over the facility are coming from any or all interested parties are being considered which upon receipt of an acceptable bidder may result a reopening of the restaurant under new management.

INUIT NOW GOVERN A MINERAL-RICH TERRITORY IN NORTHERN QUEBEC, - NUNAVIK

p.paul

The message has been clearly written on the ice, on the snow, in the minds of the Inuit for centuries that, "The northern lands, routes, waters and resources are Inuit by nature and will always be, and therefore should be ruled genuinely by an independent Inuit government"

That legal position was realized, finalized and conceded by the federal and provincial governments on August 12, 2007 when the reins of power and the seat of government were scheduled to be turned over to the Inuit peoples for the first time ever, on official and permanent basis.

With that concession, the Inuit are now officially in control of the unique Regional Government of Nunavik, a vast northern region of Quebec that covers roughly one third of the province along the northeast coast of the Hudson Bay. In geographical terms the area would entail roughly 455,000 square km, or almost the size of NB, at 21,235 sq. mi., a mineral-rich and pristine territory.

This transfer of governing capacity represents a new and a historical development in self-determination of original inhabitants that not only provides inner strength, unification and cultural pride within their communities, but imparts a bold new direction for Inuit of today and tomorrow giving them the hands-on powers of nation building that has only been a dream for so many, for so long.

On this new venture they have the absolute power, capacity and command to determine what is best and most advantageous on the road ahead, and above all, being in control of a united territory provides them a permanent safe haven for Inuit today and for the future generations.

Jean-Francois Arteau, the head legal adviser for the Quebec Inuit, said he would expect all future maps of Canada to include the Nunavik region, which uses the 55th

parallel as a southern border and makes up one-third of Quebec. (Note map above)

The newly appointed federal Indian Affairs Minister, Chuck Stahl will host a conference in Kuujjuac, the new capital of Nunavik, on Aug. 23 and 24 to discuss the agreement-in-principle with Inuit leaders and Quebec Premier, Jean Charest to create the new government.

In relation to Canada, Nunavik will be like a territory within the province of Quebec.

And in comparison and much like the Canada's legal ties and connection over the territories of Nunavut, Yukon and Northwest Territories, the federal government will continue to play a significant role in areas such as funding, regulations and the creation of parks within Nunavik.

However, the Inuit delight in having an exclusive territory of their own, -called Nunavi

CANADA AND U.S. AMONG SEVERAL COUNTRIES TO REJECT NATIVE RIGHTS

p.paul

Canada is one of several UN signatories who refuses to sign the universal declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples. Harper govt. refused to sign the document last year due to its 'vagueness' and possible wrong interpreting when applied in UN or in respective members' home governments.

Indigenous nations from around the world have been actively urging UN to ratify the resolution since the 1985. To date, each attempt has failed. This year's vote comes on September 13.

The UN rule stipulates that every resolution requires full, unanimous support from all members.

Standing against the signing are, Canada, United States, Russia, Australia, New Zealand, Columbia, Guyana and Suriname.

Surprisingly, Canada has unduly claimed universal leadership for upholding civil and human rights while at the same time proclaiming herself a model for fair and equal treatment for all its citizens including the aboriginal sector. The very opposite is true from the perspective of the native people.

Based upon her shining claim in international leadership and self-gloss of righteousness, Canada has plans for constructing a huge Museum of Human Rights, in Winnipeg, Man. at an estimated cost of \$300m which is scheduled for completion by 2010.

When the doors are opened, it is destined to showcase to the world, Canada's 'lead' and proclaimed 'humane' treatment for her mosaic populations. "Far from the fact," say native people.

Due to personal knowledge, individual and collective cases of abuse to forcefully Canadianize and christianize native kids in residential schools, added to the centuries of segregation and isolation on Indian reserves, many native people are pretty 'pissed-off' and are willing to challenge Canada's manufactured claim to greatness, fairness and humane treatment to all, when from their heart they know the opposite to be true.

Canada needs only to retrace its questionable past and contemplate on its unconscionable takeover of Indian land to see its murky image and understand where native people are coming from.

Without taking this integrated revision of itself into consideration, Canada's manipulated history of selecting elites or preferred members of society to rule and dominate over others will never be understood, nor will it ever completely endorse or justify the building of a national Human Rights Museum.

As a rational option, could we not turn the proposed \$300m over to building a fairer, more just human rights regime in our society for future generations?

HOULTON: MALISEETS GET \$457,290 HOUSING GRANT

ByJen Lynds - Bangor Daily News

A sizable grant is in the hands of the Houlton Band of Maliseets to assist with a variety of affordable housing activities. Sens. Olympia Snowe and Susan Collins announced that the Maliseets would receive \$457,290 from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The department allows the grant funding to be used for operating assistance for existing housing as well as the development of new affordable housing.

Tribal Chief Brenda Commander said earlier this week that the money would be used by the Maliseets' Housing Authority to continue a number of affordable housing activities currently in place.

The Housing Authority oversees the tribe's 68 rental units and offers services such as housing assistance through a variety of programs. Those include a low-income rental, home ownership and down payment assistance programs.

"The housing authority provides a number of services to our members, and this money is going to help with down payment assistance and other programs and to keep up with our 68 rental units," Commander said.

The Housing Authority provides assistance to every tribal member living in Aroostook County.

PLEASANT POINT: PASSAMAQUODDYS CELEBRATE CULTURAL PRIDE

By Diana Graettinger - Bangor Daily News

It's all about pride in self, culture and history, tribal elder Joseph "Cozy" Nicholas said Sunday.

And that is why the Passamaquoddy Tribe each year holds its annual Indian Day Celebration.

It was 42 years ago that Nicholas and another tribal member started the Indian Day Celebration.

"Mary Moore [who is deceased] and I started it together and it was a dream, but I can see that the dream has abundantly come true," he said. "The older people taught me so I could encourage the young people, and basically this is what it is all about."

The tradition is being carried on, Nicholas said. "When you see the children and their mothers you know the future is bright," he said. "And I feel fantastic as a result."

Members of Nicholas' family were among the dancers.

Nicholas also said he was pleased so many people had attended the annual event. Several hundred people watched under sunny skies.

"We didn't have that in the beginning, to tell you the truth, but I am so happy today," he said.

The celebration began at 2 p.m. with the Little Eagles Drum Group of Pleasant Point and the Red Willow Drum Group of New Hampshire playing the welcoming song.

"If you want to know what is happening to youth, some of them are embracing their culture in a meaningful way," tribal elder Wayne Newell of Indian Township said of the drumming groups. Newell served as master

of ceremonies.

Joseph Nicholas' son Steven of Pleasant Point led the grand entrance. Behind him was Chief Rick Phillips-Doyle of Pleasant Point and Richard Stevens, former chief of Indian Township, Pleasant Point's sister

reservation.

They were joined by dancers from Pleasant Point as well as Indian Township and from other tribes including the Navajo, Crow and Micmac, among others.

Tribal elder Joanna Dana of Indian Township, joined by Ruby Richter of Pleasant Point, offered a prayer in Passamaquoddy. Then the tribe paid tribute to all veterans with a dance. Blanche Sockabasin of Indian

ownship played the drum and sang.

Phillips-Doyle welcomed the group. "It does my heart good when I see people gather to honor and live our culture," he said. Phillips-Doyle said he was pleased to see such a large crowd.

Then the tribe performed the welcome greeting, where Phillips-Doyle welcomed Stevens to the reservation with a dance. After that the traditional pipe was directed to the four points of the Earth.

During the ceremony, the Little Eagles also honored one of their own. Brett Lewey soon will turn 18 years old and leave for college. Lewey will be turning his drumming stick over to someone else.

"He has been very committed to the drum and to his people and everything we do as native people," said Barbara Paul, Passamaquoddy drumming teacher. Members of the tribe did the honor song for Lewey.

Then it was time for the intertribal dance, when tribal and nontribal members danced together.

MALISEET-MIG'MAUG SOCIAL WORKER PROGRAM CONTINUING SEPT. 8

Overview

The Mi'kmaq/Maliseet Bachelor of Social Work Programme is an existing programme that allows First Nation individuals to obtain a Bachelor of Social Work degree from either St. Thomas or Dalhousie University within a flexible and culturally relevant framework. The MMBSW is designed for First Nation individuals who are currently working or wish to work in social work or related positions in areas such as child & family services, addictions, health, social development or schools in First Nation communities in the Maritime Provinces.

Overall Programme Structure and Delivery

Mainstream social work education programmes have been unable to attract and retain First Nation students resulting in an insufficient number of professionally trained First Nation social workers. The MMBSW programme has not only managed to retain a high number of students, but also has attracted a data base of students interested in applying for the second cohort scheduled to begin in September, 2008.

St. Thomas and Dalhousie Universities collaborated to design the MMBSW. Students can enroll in the BSW programme at either St. Thomas or Dalhousie Universities and are able to earn their BSW degree in a flexible format on a part-time basis over a three-year period. The programme design respects that First Nation students are typically employed and have family commitments. Students who wish to study on a full-time basis can access the mainstream programmes at either university.

The MMBSW programme requires students to successfully complete 60 social work credit hours over a 3 year period.

Admissions Requirements

Students admitted to the MMBSW are required to meet the admission requirements of St. Thomas or Dalhousie Universities. Potential students will need to possess an undergraduate degree or a minimum of 10 full university Arts credits (60 credit hours) to be considered for admission.

Please contact Sandra Germain for additional information on the MMBSW programme,

Contact Sandra Germain - 66 Duval Court - Fredericton, NB E3B 6Y7

sgermain@nbnet.nb.ca <http://www.mmbsw.ca> 506.461.8525

LESSONS TO BE LEARNED FROM TRADITIONAL CEREMONIES

Precious information and vital cultural insights can be learned from experiencing some of the ancient native rituals and practices that originate from our ancestors. These ceremonies were given to us through teachings. They are gifts designed for preserving our cultures forever through all future generations.

Some of these rituals might include Sweatlodge ceremonies, Sundance ceremonies, Shaking tent, Talking Circle, Healing and Purification Circles and ceremonies from sage, tobacco and sweetgrass offering, plus other culturally distinct practices performed in various nations across the land.

For instance in ancient times, before calendar time, and prior to european contact, native people had a unique compact and an extraordinary relationship with the spirit world. Theirs was a sharing with the 'outer beings' which meshed perfectly with their physical environment and beliefs.

In that by-gone era, native people lived in harmony with nature and with the universe to the fullest extent. They coexisted comfortably and were at ease with the spiritual entities as they were with their physical counterparts.

It was not unusual to have out-of-body experiences or entering into a supernatural field or being in contact with the spirit world. In fact, native life was a para-physical/spiritual compact and relationship with spirits, or with ancestors who had departed much earlier. This dual relationship between the present and the past was normal, accepted and an appreciated phenomenon of life.

Unlike in the present circumstances where most people tend to get spooked or un-nerved from seeing "ghosts", spirits, or having some kind of an outer-dimensional experience, native people on the other are at ease with this extra-sensory depth. Instead of fearing the spirits ' presence, native people looked forward to these apparitions. Participation in native rituals as always been seen as being in a direct contact and communication with the spirit world.

This multi-level connections also strengthened solidarity with other natural species which produced an inner contact of closeness and sharing

with all creation.

The ultimate gift gained from participating in native ceremonies is the inner richness that consoles and produces a total sense of balance, peace and harmony with nature.

This remarkable experience is open and available to anyone, native or non-native, who is willing to take part in celebrating ancient native ceremonies.

Note: When the Europeans first arrived in the new world they were totally awestruck by the vastness of land and the boundless landscape which was so richly endowed with every imaginable resource. It was within this vast abundance and richness that gave the 'primitive' peoples a quality of life incomparable to any other peoples in the world. Witnessing this pure pristine environment complete with such grandeur and unspoiled beauty, hastened the Europeans to readily compare it to the "Paradise" or the "Garden of Eden" they knew from their biblical teachings.

DAN'S CORNER - Respect Self, -Respect the Talking Circle

Dan Ennis

Aboriginal people use methods of reaching agreement or consensus that are in keeping with values fundamental to their world view and spirituality. The circle is not just a symbol, it is the model by which their society and thought are structured. A Talking Circle is both a forum to bring all parties together and a ceremony to remind us of the sacred. Aboriginal people believe that Creator and the ancestors are very much present whenever this circle is called.

A Talking Circle is called for a specific purpose whether it is to resolve a conflict or to celebrate an event. All participants come together for that purpose and have an opportunity to contribute to the resolution or consensus reached. However, it is a process whose purpose may change with the process of sharing. Each circle is unique. Creator's gifts of Truth, Honesty, Respect, Compassion, Wisdom, Humility and Love are the values inherent within the sacred circle process.

The "rules" of a Talking Circle are simple and straightforward. One speaks from the heart by expressing what one feels. Too often, we favour the intellect (the brain) at the expense of the intuitive (the heart) and the Talking Circle seeks to express both. Each person that is part of this process can share their thoughts and feelings without fear of criticism or

interruption. Positive feelings, thoughts and words lend positive energy to the process and the reverse holds true as well - negative feelings and words will also positive influence the process and outcome if they are allowed to play a part. People can disagree but no unkind words, thoughts or actions are added or the whole circle is dishonoured. Unless everyone in the circle agrees otherwise, the principle of confidentiality is the norm in all circles. Therefore no note taking or any other form of recording the process is allowed in these circles.

What is shared within the Sacred Circle remains within the circle. This is a simple matter of respect. Respect for the Ancestors, the People, the Seventh Generation, the Traditional Teachings, the Ceremonies and respect for one's self.

The facilitator of the circle may begin the process with a cleansing ceremony ("smudging") which may consist of the burning of sweetgrass, tobacco, cedar, sage or a combination of all four of these sacred medicines. He or she then explains the purpose of the circle and the process that follows. A sacred object such as a feather, rock or talking stick is passed around in a clockwise direction which upon reaching the facilitator again, completes a "round". There is no set limit on the number of rounds, there may be one round or as many as required to reach consensus, or when the participants end it. Each participant may choose to speak when that object is passed to them. If they choose not to speak, they then pass the object to the next person on their left. When a participant chooses to speak, everyone listens. There is no limit regarding how long that person speaks and there are no interruptions. If there is a question posed to another within the circle, the participant must wait for an answer until such a time as the object reaches the individual to whom the question is posed, and then they must respect the right of that individual to choose whether or not to answer it. Although participation is encouraged until the process is completed, a participant may leave the circle but must do so quietly.

There may be some variations between facilitators on practices and process according to the teaching they have received regarding the Talking Circle. There is one rule that is universally agreed upon regarding drugs and alcohol. Participants are asked to refrain from drugs and alcohol for a period of time prior to taking part in a Talking Circle. The length of time may vary according to the facilitator.

You receive from Talking Circles only what you give to them. Peace, healing, patience, the ability to listen, understanding and tolerance for the views of others are some of the lessons learned through this process. You may also find that you leave with a deeper understanding of yourself as a person in addition to an appreciation of others.

All My Relations,

DEAN'S DEN - Caliber

He was seated in the end-light

The epitome of calm

As one hand worked the rhythm

Cross the other unturned palm

The steel was given to him

Ritualized - for luck

Now matched up to the handle

> From the antler of the buck,

The sheath was made of moosehide

On a thong hung around his neck

Graced by quills of porcupine

In an age-old patterned check,

He spit and then he spread it

Along the concave of the blade

Then he honed it with a brook stone

Hand pick, and deftly played,

He held it up and scanned it

Ran the edge along the thumb

He smiled in satisfaction

With what it had become,
For, you see, a hunter knows it
That the shift 'tween death and life
Depends a lot - on caliber
And . . . The temper of the knife!

D.C. Butterfield

DESTINY

If all the beasts were gone, men would die from loneliness of spirit
For whatever happens to the beast, happens to man
All things are connected
Whatever befalls the Earth, befalls the sons of Earth
- From Chief Seathl

PLACE

Lesser the opinion man has of himself, greater the bond shared with the
Creator