

Wulustuk Times

Wulustuk - Indigenous name for St John River

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



Photo taken at Sugar Island on the Wulustuk River, looking up river towards Keswick Ridge

May 2012 - Table of Contents

DIM FUTURE AHEAD FOR RIVERS AROUND THE WORLD INCLUDING THE WULUSTUK

THE REAL CAUSE OF THIS YEAR'S DISASTROUS SPRING FLOOD

BAD WATER FOILS ATTEMPT TO BUILD HEALTHY COMMUNITY

FIRST NATIONS CHILD FUNDING SCORES COURT VICTORY

UN TO GET UP-CLOSE LOOK AT STRUGGLING RESERVES

DAN' CORNER - CREATORS GIFT OF SPECIALLY GIFTED CHILDREN

DEAN'S DEN 1) ACCEPTANCE 2) LIFTING SONG

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.

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DIM FUTURE AHEAD FOR RIVERS AROUND THE WORLD INCLUDING THE WULUSTUK

p.paul

No river is safe, secure, clean and unpolluted anywhere in the world today because there is so much human waste, garbage and industrial pollutants, caustic waste and poisons, toxins, and every kind of contaminant being dumped into all water systems around the world.

This man-created global menace is not limited to just inland waters alone, the pollution is so deep and widespread that even the great seas around the world are becoming sick and polluted to the point of destroying all life under the seas universally.

So the problem is not just a local dilemma or concern to be reckoned with, it in fact is a universal and growing that threatens every person, every creature, in every town, city, community around the world. Everyone and everything needs clean water to survive.

Water from our rivers that once was once known to be pure and universally clean and potable for every use is now a thing of the past. We've messed our water purity and put ourselves in a jam.

A relatively small river like the Wulustuk here in New Brunswick, Canada is no exception for pureness by any means, nor is it better than any other river in the world. We have poisoned and polluted our precious river so badly it has turned almost into a river of waste containing the worst contaminants one can imagine because our misuse, reuse and careless treatment has turned it into a cesspool or a waste-depository for every foul contaminant or effluent from our homes,

towns, farms, factories, forestry run-offs, along with tonnes of industrial effluents from processing plants.

Our disregard and lack of care and concern for clean water during the past century has brought us to the brink of disaster, a water crisis, without clean fresh water left in our rivers.

The only good potable water we have today comes from the small plastic containers sold at the local convenience store for a buck-and-a-half, or more.

We must start realizing that life's most precious gift, our water, is fast coming to a critical stage and it will take all of us to bring our waters and rivers back to the fine quality they once were before we got on this twisted road of abuse, misuse, greed and lack of concern for clean water.

THE REAL CAUSE OF THIS YEAR'S DISASTROUS SPRING FLOOD

During the recent destructive spring flooding in Perth-Andover there were many comments on Facebook and in blogs, in news articles, and in circulating emails speculating about the cause. Many blame it on global warming, and some attribute it to the Beechwood Dam. There were some people criticizing those who had built in a flood plain. To understand and appreciate the situation better, it is necessary to step back in time and discover the full story behind the latest floods of recent years on the St. John River, the beautiful and mighty Wolastoq. It will explain with historical evidence as to how we got to this place.

Our story begins in 1604 when French explorers Pierre Dugas de Mons, who had been given a fur trading monopoly in New France by the king, and Samuel de Champlain, cartographer and geographer, along with a group of sailors and other tradesmen arrived at St. Croix Island (present-day Dorchet Island). Immediately upon landing they began clearing the trees from the island. This small settlement was the first cutting of timber and cultivation of land in this region by Europeans. It was the beginning of creating a new Europe, a New France in La Cadie (Acadia) that would replicate the old country from which they came. Champlain reveals his vision to clear the forests and cultivate the land as he describes the region around St. Croix: "The soil is of the finest sort and there are 15 or 30 acres of cleared land, where Sieur De Monts had some wheat sown, which flourished finely. The savages come here sometimes five or six weeks during the fishing season." And then he adds, "All of the country consists of very dense forests. If the land were cleared up, grain would flourish excellently." Passamaquoddy and Maliseets witnessed the first lumbering operation. Champlain goes on to write about that harsh winter on St. Croix Island, and he makes a comment that the snows were "from three to four feet deep up to the end of the month of April; lasting much longer, I suppose, than it would if the country were cultivated."

Champlain predicted back in 1604 that had this land of dense forests been opened up and cultivated, the cold snows on the land might be melted and gone sooner. Jesuit Father Pierre Biard wrote in 1616 about the "interminable" and "boundless" forests. He expressed his concern for all the trees that shade the winter snow cover, holding it back, melting ever so slowly: "The second cause of the cold is very similar, namely, the wild and primitive condition of the land; for this is only a boundless forest, and so the soil cannot be readily warmed by the sun, either because it has a hard crust, never having been ploughed, or on account of the trees, which cast upon it a perpetual shade, or because the snow and water stagnate there for a long time with no

possibility of being consumed. Thus, from these lands nothing can arise except cold, gloomy, and moldy vapors; and these are the fogs when the wind ceases, and our piercing cold when they are put in motion and blown into a fury. Whereas, if the land were inhabited and cultivated, from it and from the dwellings of the inhabitants would arise exhalations, that is, warm and dry fumes; furthermore, the sun would find it prepared to feel its rays, and to scatter the cold and fogs; this was very evident to us from actual observation. For upon the small part which we ploughed, the snow always melted sooner than upon the other parts, and from there, the fogs usually began to scatter, and little by little to disappear." Note that he said "if the land were inhabited". He didn't acknowledge that this forest land was inhabited by the aboriginal peoples who had been here for at least ten thousand years. Clearing the land for agriculture and constructing permanent homes and barns was considered "inhabiting" it, and the "savages" were not doing that. In his "relations" of four hundred years ago, Father Biard describes a plan to cut down the forests, eliminate the trees and undergrowth, then plough the land to encourage faster melting of the snows and warming of the soils.

The Indians of these eastern parts, as Marc Lescarbot described them in 1605, were "addicted" to hunting, fishing, and gathering, and the Europeans were addicted to agriculture. One culture required forests with the animal and plant life in them for their subsistence, and the other culture saw the same forests as a resource to consume until gone, and then agriculture could replace them. This difference was often noted by both Champlain and Lescarbot in their journals. In attempting to describe the desperate state of Champlain's men during that first winter on St. Croix Island, Lescarbot explains how difficult it is to survive without sufficient provisions, to be in danger among an unknown people, and what is worse, to be "in a land which is unmanured and all overgrown with forests." The problem with living off the produce of forests and rivers, he concludes, is that it forces the people to be nomadic, not staying in one place for long, "game is not always to be found in abundance in a place where people are obliged to live on it, and where there is a permanent settlement. This is what makes nomads of the Savages, and prevents them from remaining long in one place. When they have been six weeks in a place, they are obliged to leave their habitation." Lescarbot emphasizes the primary goal of the French, that of clearing and cultivating these forested lands in LaCadie and getting the Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik peoples to settle permanently in one spot: "But as to the Souriquois and Etechemins, who are nomadic and divided, they must be made sedentary by the cultivation of the land, thus obliging them to remain in one place. For anyone who has taken the trouble to cultivate a piece of land does not readily abandon it, but struggles valiantly to keep it." In 1693 four sons of Mathieu D'Amours, a member of the Governor's Council in Quebec were granted lands over a huge tract running approximately 250 miles along the river from the Jemseg all the way up to Grand Falls. They were the first "planters", the first farmers and lumbermen, who would pave the way for more French settlers.

Louis D'Amours received property at Jemseg. He made a modest attempt at clearing and cultivating the land, having 65 acres with wheat, oats, peas, Indian corn, and a small herd of cattle, as well as hogs and chickens. He kept a store in Jemseg and did a large trade with the Indians. Incidentally, it was he who purchased the release (ransom) of John Gyles from the Maliseets in 1695 during the French-English war. Gyles helped in the store. Another son, René d'Amours, received a very large grant extending from Meductic to Grand Falls. Gyles wrote in his memoirs about René d'Amour, the Frenchman who traded at Medoctec with the Maliseets and got them drunk with rum and took advantage of them in his dealings. René's home was on Clignancourt or Cleoncore Island (present day Nevers Island) near Eqpahak Island. He was more interested in fur trading and made little attempt at farming, clearing just 15 acres on the Island. After the battle at Fort Nashwaak he joined the Indians and accompanied them on raids in New England. Mathieu D'Amours received a grant of land between Jemseg and Nashwaak on both sides of the river, two leagues deep. His residence was in the Sheffield area. With the

help of Louis he built a saw mill on the Nashwaak, no doubt the first saw mill in the St. John River valley. Bernard D'Amours received a grant in 1695 on the Kennebecasis River. He became a coureur-de-bois like his brother René, not improving his land grant. The farms of the D'Amours are the earliest evidence of Europeans farming on the St. John River.

After the French/English war (Seven Years War) that ended in 1759 with the taking of Quebec by General Wolfe, the victorious British started giving large land grants in the form of townships to families of officers of the British Army and Navy, and other "planters" along the St. John River, the earliest grants being given up as far as present day French Village and Keswick areas. This was the first major impact on the primitive forest lands along the St. John River.

All of a sudden, in 1783, the land of the St. John's Indians (Wolastoqiyik) felt the influx of 10,000 loyalist refugees from New England arriving in less than one year. The forests and streams of the Wolastoqiyik and their wildlife relations upon which they had depended for thousands of years were suddenly transformed into a totally New World. There was a great demand in Britain for lumber, especially for the huge pine trees for making ship masts. The forests were cut down, the vegetation on the forest floor cleared and cultivated. Domestic cattle, horses, sheep, hogs and poultry were introduced. Grist mills and saw mills were erected on the streams and rivers. For every gristmill and sawmill there was a dam built across the stream or brook which blocked the passage of trout, salmon and other fish. Also, there were large amounts of sawdust and grist residues entering the streams.

In the late fall and winter of 1814-15, Sir George Head, assistant Commissary General in the British Army was sent from England to Canada to assist in the establishment of a post at Penetanguishene in Upper Canada (Ontario). He went on a long journey from Halifax to "the Canadas" which took him up the St. John River. He describes in great detail the Maliseets whom he visited in a village of wigwams located three miles beyond the outskirts of the town of Fredericton (at Eqpahak). In this trip by horse and sleigh up the frozen St. John River, while observing the homeland of these same Maliseets, he expresses his hopes for the axe to eventually level the endless forests and let the sun in to melt the snows: "It is true, that the slow but increasing process of agriculture may work important change; the axe may level the forest with the earthy and the cheering beams of the sun admitted to its hidden recesses, may dissipate the masses of snow which now feed the piercing winds of winter:"

In the early times of horses, wagons and tote sleds, the most practical and productive places to have lumbering operations were near saw mills. The saw mills were of necessity on streams and rivers to use the flow of the water to power the water wheels. Consequently the forests along the watershed areas of rivers were the first to be cleared.

In 1855 Alexander Monro published a natural history and an almanac for all regions of New Brunswick, and also some parts of Nova Scotia and PEI. This book is full of statistical information about populations, land grants, wildlife, plant life, forest acreages, rivers and streams, cleared lands, livestock numbers, grist mills, saw mills, other industries, road infrastructures, stagecoach and steamboat routes and schedules, economy, and export products, etc. Monro's opening paragraph refers to "inexhaustible forests of valuable timber accessible by an extensive seaboard, and by navigable rivers; immense mineral resources, and an unparalleled coast and river fishery." He obviously sees this new country from one perspective, and that is exclusively for its resources and potential economic profits. In regards to forests and rivers of that day, his statistics of the numbers of saw mills, grist mills, and the extent of cleared lands are worth giving attention to. Within the census of 1851 he lists 261 grist mills and 584 saw mills in the province.

Monro estimates that two industries, coal mining and agriculture could sustain a population of

nearly 6 million people "besides a due proportion of cattle, sheep, horses, and pigs."The approach to opening up the country was to encourage agriculture, making lumbering the first phase followed by cultivation of the land. He states that "the timber producing qualities of the Province appear to be almost inexhaustible, considering there are not less than 16 million acres covered with dense forest."His concern was that more people need to be brought here to take advantage of all the resources. The present population was far too inadequate for the amount of resources that were capable of being harvested. Once again he remarks: "The forests of New Brunswick are almost inexhaustible; a vast extent of the best portion of the Colony is still untrodden by the foot of the lumberman."

With much gratification and even boasting he gives the example of the rapid growth of Woodstock then having a population of 4,272. He writes: "Less than 40 years ago this place, with its numerous surrounding settlements, was a dense wilderness, where the only sounds that could be heard were the voices of wild beasts and the murmuring of the waterfalls. Now the wild animals are almost exterminated; the forest is giving place, before the exertions of industry and perseverance to cultivated fields; while the very beds of the rivers have not only been deepened, but in many places have changed their direction; thus indicating surely that while man has been moving onward in the scale of improvement, nature has been improving a way for his transit and intercourse." This is a good example of the mindset of that day that eliminating the forests causes the rivers to run with greater volume and flow in the spring, thereby deepening their beds and straightening their winding courses, to the benefit of the colonists. There is no mention in his entire book about the Indians, the First Peoples, who had lived here for thousands of years and sustained the environment in a symbiotic relationship. Like a parasite that benefits at the expense of its host, the Europeans came here and swarmed upon this land of the Wolastoqiyik and sucked all the nutrients out of her. They had already done this in Europe, destroying the forests and polluting the rivers. Then like all parasites that have taken all they can from their host and must move on to another, the Europeans came here to the "New World" to satisfy their consuming nature.

In 1852 at the opening of a new Agricultural Exhibition Building in Fredericton, His Excellency Sir Edmond Walker Head, Lieutenant Governor and Commander-in-chief for the province spoke these words as he reflected back on the "progress" the colonists had made since coming here: "The time is not far removed when the greater part of the River St. John was traversed only by the Indian and the beaver. The site of the City of Saint John itself was a wilderness within the memory of one or two persons now in this room; now, happy homes and cultivated fields are seen on each side, from Saint John to Grand Falls." Although he is criticizing the Indian here, placing them at the level of animals, I think the Lieutenant Governor missed the point that their culture had preserved the forests and streams in a pristine, sustainable state. He also omitted the fact that the first white settlers who came here would have not survived had the Indians not helped them and educated them in their life sustaining ways and customs.

The rapid increase in clearing of forest land in New Brunswick in the 1800s can be appreciated in the statistics of "cleared acreage" given in Munro's book: 1827 = 59,909 acres; 1833 = 94,630 acres; 1841 = 141,580 acres; 1848 = 215,389 acres. In 1851 there were 538 sawmills in New Brunswick, 26 of those being in Saint John. With the advent of pulp and paper industry in the early 1900s, even more forests were cut. There was a time before the white man came here when the edge of the forest was at the banks of the St. John River. By the end of the 1800s the edge of the forest had withdrawn back several miles from the river, exposing the watershed area to the direct rays of the sun, melting snows fast and drying out the land sooner. In the last few decades the farmers have resorted to using irrigation systems. By the 1940s new forms of power such as gasoline and diesel engines, and hydroelectric power had replaced the water wheels,

and the mills could be built anywhere. More important they could operate year round after the rivers had frozen. Modern transportation, railway cars and logging trucks could haul timber from the most remote areas in the back lands in much faster time than ever before. River log drives were no longer necessary to get the logs to the mills. The forest industry was booming and the protective forest canopy that held back the snow melt in watershed areas was removed. As the years went by the normal spring flood levels kept peaking higher and higher.

According to Stats Canada there were 976,629 acres of cropland in New Brunswick in 2006. If you look at a satellite view on Google Maps of the St. John River watershed lands in the upper regions of Maine around Presque Isle and Fort Fairfield, and in New Brunswick from Woodstock to Grand Falls and New Denmark areas, you will see vast areas of open farm lands that are quite visible from the heavens. If you drive to some of these areas and stand on the high ridges, you can look far into the distant horizon and see nothing but barren land where once there was forest. This is the fulfillment of Champlain's dream and the dream of Father Biard, the d'Amour families, Alexander Munro, and a thousand other European immigrants to this land. This was not the dream of the Wolastoqiyik who were forced to change their sustaining culture and yield to the invading dominant society.

Now the snows melt much faster in this unshaded, wide open landscape and the waters rush down the hillsides eroding the soil and washing residues of chemical insecticides and fungicides into the St. John River. The river swells dangerously fast and the thick layer of winter's ice on the river breaks up and runs down stream towards the dam where it collides with a large barrier of ice that cannot move. An ice jam is formed and the flood waters rise even higher, flooding areas that in earlier times were never affected. In fact, in those times people like René D'Amours built their home on the islands in the river. As late as the early 1900s there were still homes and barns on some islands and into the 1930s houses were built in areas that in people's memory never got flooded. These were considered safe areas. As more forest was cleared for croplands in the upper regions of the river, and dams were built, flooding of some of these previously unaffected areas began to occur. By the 1970s, flood water peak levels had broken more records, damages were also increasing and the government's disaster funding budgets were growing. In the early 1980s a flood risk mapping program was implemented to attempt to identify areas prone to flooding for future land developers and real estate companies. Land registry offices started stamping caveats on deeds identifying them as being flood plain properties. The Community Planning Act was changed to allow municipalities to pass flood plain bylaws and to designate flood risk zones. Besides flood concerns, pollution from agriculture, forestry, mining and other activities in watershed areas was a concern. Various watershed areas were designated by government as "protected." A Watershed Area Designation Order was created to control land-use and water-use activities in these protected areas. The map of designated watersheds does not include any of the agricultural land in the upper St. John River valley, nor does it apply to any portions of the watershed regions in the State of Maine. Bottom line: The forests and agriculture create jobs and sustain our place in the global economy. Jobs and economy are a priority for government, so we must get used to the flooding and prepare for it in the future. The state of the European countries that came here and brought their culture with them is such that today 70% of Great Britain is agricultural land, and 36% of France is agricultural land. Compare that to New Brunswick where just 2% (363,484 acres) makes up agricultural crop land. I wonder where we will be in another 400 years? I doubt Munro's prediction of 6 million people living here will be fulfilled.
..... all my relations, Nugeekadoonkut

BAD WATER FOILS ATTEMPT TO BUILD HEALTHY COMMUNITY

Slate Falls First Nation says Aboriginal Affairs won't fund proper water system
CBC News

Slate Falls First Nation says it's paying a price for trying to build a more liveable First Nation community.

Back in the 1990s, when residents moved to the new reserve located 120 km north of Sioux Lookout, leaders planned houses spread out in a horse shoe pattern around the lake. Each duplex in the community has lakefront access, giving residents space and access to the land and water.

"Even though it looks nice, there are problems, there are issues," said band councillor Katy Loon.

The biggest problem is the lack of safe drinking water. Houses are served by a series of pump houses where water is drawn from the lake, run through a filter and briefly passed through a chlorination system. But the system lacks the capacity to properly rid the water of e-coli and other contaminants.

"It's a crisis in our community because of the detrimental impact on our health," Chief Lorraine Crane said.

Crane said the First Nation has been asking Aboriginal Affairs to improve the water system for more than a decade. She said the answer has been study after study, without a fix.

"And to this day, there is no solution and I don't see anything coming," Crane said. "We keep getting caught [for having poor drinking water quality] and then we're into another study again." Loon said there is good ground water in Slate Falls and the First Nation would like to drill wells but Aboriginal Affairs policies prohibit it.

Now the water problem is affecting Slate Falls in exactly the way they hoped to avoid - overcrowding. Without safe drinking water, no new homes can be built in the community and the existing ones are becoming jammed full of young families.

Dinah Loon, 82, shares her two-bedroom duplex with her granddaughter, her husband and three children. The family of five sleeps in one room, while the children share a mattress on the floor. Through an interpreter, Dinah Loon said it's stressful taking shifts to use the tiny kitchen and single bathroom.

"I believe there would be a lot of people who would want to come back and work here and live here," councillor Kathy Loon said. "I mean look at it, everybody has a nice lakefront. They don't get that in town." But unfortunately, Loon said "good human resources" leave the community.

"I believe a lot more people would come home if there were houses for them - and if there was water for them."

Slate Falls is just one of more than two dozen communities in the Nishnawbe Aski Nation that is without safe drinking water. Grand Chief Stan Beardy said, if the problem is to be fixed, the government will need to allocate "a lot more" funding for First Nations water upgrades than was identified in the recent federal budget.

Beardy said the Conservative's own study showed \$4.9 billion over 10 years is required. The budget identified \$330,000 over three years.

CBC News asked Aboriginal Affairs what it plans to do about the water supply in Slate Falls First Nation and about government policies around drilling wells in First Nations, but no one has responded to the inquiry.

FIRST NATIONS CHILD FUNDING SCORES COURT VICTORY

The Ottawa Citizen

First Nations groups are hailing a Federal Court judgment as the first step toward equality for aboriginal children on reserves.

Justice Anne Mactavish issued a ruling Wednesday that found the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal's chairwoman erred when she dismissed a 2007 case from the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada and the Assembly of First Nations.

Mactavish set aside the tribunal's original 2011 decision and granted three applications for judicial review. She ordered that a "differently constituted panel" hear the case.

The First Nations groups allege the federal government discriminates against aboriginal children by consistently underfunding services on reserves, leading - they contend - to poverty, poor housing, substance abuse and a vast over-representation of aboriginal children in state care.

Research cited by the assembly and the caring society indicates children on reserve receive 22 per cent less funding for services than those living off reserve.

Native advocates also point out that three times more First Nations children are being removed from their families today than at the peak of the residential school system in 1949. Then, approximately 8,900 aboriginal children were taken from families and placed in residential schools. Now, more than 27,500 First Nations children are in foster care.

The issue at the core of the case is whether the government can be held legally responsible for the circumstances of native children in the child-welfare system. Under the Indian Act, the federal government is responsible for funding health, education, police services and child welfare on reserves, all of which fall under provincial jurisdiction off reserves.

In her decision, Mactavish said the tribunal "erred in failing to consider the significance of the government's own adoption of provincial child-welfare standards in its programming and funding policies."

The federal government has 30 days to appeal the ruling, but First Nations groups are hoping for a quick resolution.

"We must all agree that lengthy and costly battles are not the way forward," Shawn Atleo, national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, said in a release. "The priority is to deliver justice and fairness for our children, and the way forward must be about working together focused on real action and results for our kids and all First Nation peoples."

Caring society executive director Cindy Blackstock was "overjoyed that (Mactavish) looked at the balance of the evidence and saw what many Canadians saw, which is the complete obvious, that what's happening here is fundamentally wrong."

UN TO GET UP-CLOSE LOOK AT STRUGGLING RESERVES

Winnipeg Free Press

A United Nations envoy will visit two northern reserves next month on a fact-finding mission about food and flooding.

Olivier De Schutter, the UN's special rapporteur on the right to food, will visit God's River First Nation on the east side of the province as well as the Garden Hill reserve nearby. De Schutter, a Harvard-educated human rights lawyer who investigates and makes recommendations on food issues, is slated to be in Manitoba May 10 to May 12 as part of a cross-Canada trip.

"What the rapporteur is going to see is a transition phase where we're relying less on a traditional diet and more on processed, less healthy food," said Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs Grand Chief Derek Nepinak. "Where I come from at Pine Creek First Nation, there is no fish left in the lake and there is no moose to hunt on the mountain. We have to make our purchases at the grocery store just like everyone else."

Northern Grand Chief David Harper said he hopes the envoy will get a feel for the high cost of groceries at Northern Stores. De Schutter will also tour a failed fish-processing plant in Garden Hill that could provide food and economic development for the community if it got up and running again, said Harper.

On the way back to Winnipeg, De Schutter will fly over the Lake St. Martin area, where prolonged flooding has forced the evacuation of hundreds of reserve residents.

De Schutter will also visit the Sagkeeng First Nation closer to Winnipeg for a forum and meet with provincial officials.

Federal and provincial aboriginal groups have appealed several times to the United Nations for help with inadequate funding for child welfare and education on reserves, as well as the indoor plumbing crisis in northern Manitoba.

Grocery cost comparison

Rice Krispies cereal (small box)

Northern Stores, God's Lake region -- \$6.09

Winnipeg (McPhillips Street Safeway) -- \$4.99

Milk (four-litre jug)

God's Lake -- \$7.95
Winnipeg -- \$4.69
Apples (three-pound bag)
God's Lake -- \$7.85
Winnipeg -- \$4.99
Brown bread
God's Lake -- \$4.79
Winnipeg -- \$1.99
Head of lettuce
God's Lake -- \$1.79 (on sale)
Winnipeg -- \$1.49

DAN'S CORNER - CREATORS GIFT OF SPECIALLY GIFTED CHILDREN

This writing is dedicated to all of those among us who are specially gifted and who possess all of those extraordinary powers and medicines that our people require at this time of extraordinary need.

Through our Traditional Teachings our people are taught to look at all things from the positive point of view. Our teachings also say that all of Great Creator's creation is perfect just as it is. We are taught that Great Creator created only perfection and that she did not create junk. We are also taught that all of Great Creator's creation is sacred and that we all should respect her perfect creation.

Human beings as creations of Great Creator have no business in labeling nor changing nor "improving" her creation. Our original instructions teach us that our Sacred Earth Mother and all that lives upon her is Great Creator's perfect creation and all should be honored, nurtured, loved and respected. Also our original instructions teach us that our Sacred Earth Mother and all that lives upon her are both teachers and learners. That each of us have things to teach and learn from fellow human beings.

Another teaching of our Traditional Teachings is that within every experience that humans experience there is a gift, there is a teaching. It is up to human beings to discover and/or uncover that gift of teaching and to begin living that teaching.

All children are gifts from Great Creator and should be recognized, acknowledged and accepted in that way. They should also be recognized, acknowledged and accepted as our teachers.

As they begin their Earthwalk they still carry within their hearts the original instructions from Great Creator. They have a very strong connection to the other side, to the sacred, the ancestors, the life-force energy and all the teachings that make us whole human beings.

This is how our Ancestors viewed children and it is how the present generation must continue to view their children. We must not allow ourselves to take on the negative, arrogant, hurtful and disrespectful traits of our white oppressors. Those are the traits that have brought human beings to the brink of destruction.

To our people a specially gifted child is one with any physically, mentally and/or emotionally extraordinary power or gift. These children, who are labeled by our white brothers as disabled and/or handicapped, are viewed by our people as ones with the power to help the ordinary and/or "normal" people to grow and develop as human beings.

For our people it is the same for the Two Spirited ones or, in white man's vernacular, gays. We view them as specially gifted and as possessing extraordinary powers. This is the subject of a future essay however.

We viewed any human being who did not fall into the category of "normal" and/or ordinary as being extraordinary in a positive sense as opposed to a negative sense. Gifted with extraordinary visionary powers, extraordinary healing powers and/or extraordinary leadership powers.

Most of our great leaders such as Massassoit, Tadodaho, Pontiac, Geronimo, Big Foot, Crazy Horse along with others were great leaders and all were born with extraordinary powers/gifts. Specially Gifted Children teach us about unconditional love, about patience, inner resilience, about inner strength, about inner peace and about living in the present on a moment by moment basis.

All My Relations, Dan Ennis, April 2012

DEAN'S DEN -ACCEPTANCE AND LIFTING SONG

Acceptance

Anxious, apprehensive, abandoned
Alarmed, agitated, annoyed?
Are awed, awkward, and awful
Accentuated - alloyed?
Although abject - apathetic
Accede, adapt - and afford
As abrasions are accomodated
Acceptance ... an amazing accord!

Lifting Song

What's the use of worrying
Did it ever do you any good
What's the use of wondering
About, maybe, if you should?
What's the use of wishing
It just makes you a slave
What's the use of wanting

If you're not prepared to save?
Regardless, don't go wounding
And, don't go doing wrong
World-weary weight is lifted
When woe ... gives way to song!
..... D.C. Butterfield

QUOTES FROM FAMOUS CHIEFS

One does not sell the earth upon which the people walk. -Chief Crazy Horse

May Talking Circle:

Next Talking Circle at Mt. Carleton Park on Sat. May 19, 2012. Be at gate at 11:00 am for a united entry into the park. If interested in attending contact Pat 273-6737, or Dan 273-2412 .

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.