



Cree Communicator

News of the Lac La Ronge Indian Band

October 2007



A procession heads north on Hwy. 2 between Far Reserve and La Ronge, drawing attention to the need to honour the treaty rights of First Nations people. More, page 6.

Dollars, not just gas, to flow from pipeline project

While SaskEnergy's decision to extend its natural gas service into La Ronge may only directly benefit the La Ronge area, the Lac La Ronge Indian Band has signed a new deal with SaskEnergy that will allow economic development opportunities to flow from that pipeline along with the gas, and thereby create long-term benefits for all band members.

The band's decision to convert all its commercial and institutional buildings in the immediate La Ronge area, and more than 500 on-reserve homes, to natural gas (see story page 2), was the key to enabling the recently-announced second phase of SaskEnergy's gasification project – from Weyakwin to La Ronge – to go ahead. While that decision will benefit the band in terms of long-term savings on energy costs and a cleaner, safer source of heat, both SaskEnergy and the band leadership saw that a formal agreement between the two parties could have even more benefits.

Thus, on Sept. 10, Chief Tammy Cook-Searson and SaskEnergy president and CEO Doug Kelln signed the Mistahisakahikan Protocol, a deal that will set the tone for future negotiations between the two parties in regards to hiring employees and contracting out work to band-owned businesses.

"Today's agreement represents a new way of doing business," said Chief Cook-Searson. "(The protocol) is intended to maximize employment and economic development opportunities for band members. The Lac La Ronge Indian Band and (its business arm) Kitsaki (Management) have a long history of developing partnerships. Our plan is to further develop an equitable standard of living, full employment and sustainable business opportunities for our members.... (and) to build a positive, ongoing relationship (with SaskEnergy) based on open communication, trust, respect, common interests and shared values."

The protocol agreement is the result of several months of work by Kitsaki CEO Russell Roberts, LLRIB executive director Blake Charles and SaskEnergy's director of aboriginal relations, Dona Desmarais. With SaskEnergy having not only a wish to expand its gas network but also a mandate to help develop local capacity (that is, hire and train local people) and make use of local suppliers – especially First Nations-owned businesses – as much as possible, this agreement makes sense for both parties.

For example, there may be opportunities for band members to help with the construction, and/or eventually run the local gas distribution facility, for Northern Resource Trucking to haul supplies, and for the La Ronge Hotel and Suites to house and feed SaskEnergy crews through the 12- to 18-month construction phase. More opportunities may well present themselves as the relationship grows – perhaps even to help push the pipeline even further north.

As local MLA and Northern Affairs Minister Joan Beatty said, "those of us from the North know its history, its beauty and its potential. We also know that northern people are incredibly resourceful and resilient, and today, with the relationship being developed SaskEnergy and the La Ronge band, northern First Nations will demonstrate these qualities again, as you work together to establish a natural gas distribution system that will serve people living in and around La Ronge. Keep on going, maybe to the northeast..." Beatty said, clearly thinking of her home community of Deschambault Lake.

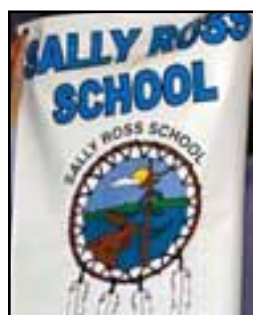
Although Beatty's comment about even more expansion brought the laugh she intended, SaskEnergy's Doug Kelln clearly

See "Dollars," page 2



New regional water system

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Congrats to our grads

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Aboriginal Day festivities

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"Dollars" continued from page 1

out the option of further northern expansion, especially with the close working relationship his company now has with the LLRIB. He praised the band for committing to such a large-scale conversion of its buildings, and pushing 10 years of discussion and negotiation into the realm of reality.

"The Lac La Ronge Indian Band... really took the biggest step forward to make that happen," Kelln said. "You are extending a lot of economic development to the entire community, and that's respected."

He also spoke of the value of the Mistahisakahikan Protocol to SaskEnergy as well as to the band. "This agreement is so powerful to us," he said, "because I think it's going to allow our relationship to grow for all the right reasons."

"This is an interesting day for us," said SaskEnergy's vice-president in charge of distribution, Dean Reeve, who along with Kelln has worked with the Anglin Lake-La Ronge natural gas committee for its entire 10-year history. "We've talked about a project for a decade, and it's become very clear over the last number of weeks and months that this is much more than a project."

"We will put pipe in and get gas to flow... but if that's the only benefit we've achieved (from this relationship), then we've failed," Reeve said. "The pipe in the ground will be there for a hundred years, so this is not a short-term relationship.... No one party is going to be able to make this have the kinds of benefits that are possible without us working together."

Natural gas a "go" for LLRIB

The province's plans to extend natural gas service to the La Ronge area now formally include the Lac La Ronge Indian Band.

The band's major facilities in the immediate La Ronge area, including the band office, Indian Child and Family Services, Keethanow Gas Bar and Supermarket, Kitsaki Hall, the Jonas Roberts Memorial Community Centre, Senator Myles Venne School, Bell's Point Elementary School, Public Works and Housing, Kitsaki Management's head office, and the Jeannie Bird Clinic, will all be hooked up to natural gas.

The new homes under construction this year are being set up for natural gas and will be converted from propane to the new fuel system in summer 2008. As well, the brand-new subdivision on Bell's Point, currently under development, will be serviced with natural gas. All told, more than 500 reserve homes and 31 band buildings will be converted to natural gas.

Although cheques from residential customers in La Ronge have not been deposited, stirring up doubts about the project's future, SaskEnergy officials offered reassurances that the municipal portion of the project remains on track.

The design and approval phase is still underway, but construction is scheduled to begin in the Weyakwin/Ramsey Bay area by mid-October. "This is going to happen, it's just a matter of getting all the pieces together," said Dean Reeve, SaskEnergy's senior vice-president in charge of distribution. "We're starting to get some better determined dates as to when the

shovel's actually going to hit the dirt... (but) it's like anything – once you see the equipment (working), then you know it's going to happen."

The current plan is that the majority of the heavy work will be done this fall, once the tourist season is over. Some of the work will have to wait until freeze-up, but the work should be completed this winter, with the first gas line hook-ups happening in the spring.

Amongst the issues taken into account in the planning phase were caribou habitat and migration patterns, spring and fall vegetation, and spawning and nesting seasons.

In addition to the work done by SaskEnergy's own crews, contracts are being awarded for supplies such as the steel and polyester piping, sand, gravel and concrete, paving, landscaping, brush cutting and trucking, as well as the actual line construction and supply of other materials.

An information seminar for supply and service contractors was held in May at the La Ronge Hotel and Suites, and several contracts have been awarded, but SaskEnergy is still open to further inquiries and bids from northern contractors. If you are interested in submitting a bid, call Darren Janke, manager of purchasing and supplier development at (306) 777-9526 or e-mail djanke@saskenergy.com.

Regional fire hall underway

Construction has begun on a new regional fire hall for the La Ronge area.

The facility, is located on the corner of Hwy. 2 and Hildebrand Dr. across from the La Ronge Industrial Park, will be managed by a tri-community partnership between the Lac La Ronge Indian Band, the Town of La Ronge and the Village of Air Ronge. The formal memorandum of understanding between the three partners was signed on May 17.

The official governing body for the fire hall will be a regional fire protective services advisory board, which will oversee both the construction of the building and the operations of the fire chief and the area fire department. Each of the communities has appointed two representatives to the advisory board; the band's reps are Public Works and Housing manager Lewis Layton and Counc. Pam Mirasty.

All three communities are contributing on a per-capita basis both to the cost of building the fire hall and to a fire equipment replacement reserve fund, and all equipment purchases will be pre-approved by all three governing bodies. The band's share is 36.96 per cent, with the Town contributing 45.7 per cent and the Village 17.3 per cent.

The fire chief's capital output budget will be approved annually by the board. All of the fire equipment purchased prior to the agreement will remain in the ownership of the governing

body that purchased it, and both municipalities will handle their own insurance.

The actual construction of the fire hall is being done by Gabriel Construction, while the design work was done by Prakash Engineering. The approximate price on the facility is \$2 million.



Air Ronge Mayor Gordon Stomp, Chief Tammy Cook-Searson and La Ronge Mayor Joe Hordyski put their signatures to the formal agreement establishing a regional approach to fire protection at a ceremony held May 17 in the band's council chambers. Also attending the signing were Counc. Pam Mirasty, executive secretary Ruth Thompson, Air Ronge Counc. Terry DesRoches, Elder Catherine Charles, Counc. Doris Morin and Air Ronge Counc. Tom Carlson.

... to this in less than a month's time.



The new fire hall for the La Ronge area has progressed from this...



Chief Tammy Cook-Searson shares a laugh with Alice Tataryn, chair of the Anglin Lake-La Ronge natural gas committee, and Cumberland MLA Joan Beatty at the province's formal announcement about the extension of natural gas to the La Ronge area. The province's decision was made after 10 years of lobbying on the part of Tataryn and her committee.

Lac La Ronge gasification project specs

Project scope:

- 147 km of 4" gas transmission line from Timber Cove to La Ronge
- Gas conversion of over 500 homes and over 31 band buildings on I.R. 156/156A/156B
- Replacement or gas conversion of all existing furnaces in on-reserve band housing
- Replacement of existing water heaters with natural gas heaters where viable

Project funding:

SaskEnergy – transmission line
– \$20.10 million
SaskEnergy – building services
– \$ 2.85 million
Lac La Ronge Indian Band – \$2.43 million
Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
– \$1.56 million
Total project cost: \$26.94 million

Project schedule:

Transmission line – start September 2007
– arrive in La Ronge April 2008
Band home/building conversion schedule
– April 2008 through to September 2011

Multi-million dollar contract a boost for new gravel business

The Lac La Ronge Indian Band's newest business is off to a rock solid start.

On May 28, the provincial government announced that Asiniy Gravel Crushing has been awarded an exclusive four-year contract to crush the gravel required for all of the province's new northern road construction projects, a minimum 350,000 tons per year. The work is valued at more than \$20 million.

Asiniy – the Cree word for “rock” – is a new partnership between the LLRIB's economic development arm, Kitsaki Management, and Lonesome Prairie Sand and Gravel, a company owned by the Ochapowace First Nation. Lonesome Prairie, which has been in the road-building business for 25 years, will provide the technical expertise, while Kitsaki will focus on human resource development.

A three-way partnership between northern and southern First Nations and the provincial government is a unique concept, noted Chief Tammy Cook-Searson and Ochapowace Chief Denton George. “It's an honour to be partnered (with LLRIB),” said Chief George.

As part of its new \$65-million Northern Economic Infrastructure Strategy, which was reportedly inspired by Premier Lorne Calvert's bone-rattling bus trip through the North two years ago, the province decided to not only improve the road system, but find ways to get northerners involved in the process.

A call was put out last winter for northerners to partner with southern companies with expertise in road work, and then jointly apply for the government contracts, including gravel crushing. Asiniy is the first company to win a contract under this new program, which the government calls “Transportation for Economic Advantage”.

“It requires a complete change in the way we do business... We've taken on the role of mentor to help create viable new businesses. This company came out the clear winner,” said then-Highways Minister Eldon Lautermilch. (Lautermilch's portfolio has since been passed to Athabasca MLA Buckley Belanger.)

“You will see capacity building at its best,” said Northern Affairs Minister Joan Beatty. The new company will employ 20 full-time workers,

and will bring in qualified trades people to provide on-the-job training. Asiniy will also use northern sub-contractors and help northern logging companies diversify into gravel hauling. The initial staff include six Lac La Ronge Indian Band members, and two people relocated from Lonesome Prairie's Saskatoon operation.

“It's exciting for us because it's the first multi-year contract (Saskatchewan) Highways has ever awarded,” said Harold Derksen of Lonesome Prairie. Derksen's company was approached by Kitsaki about forming a partnership on the basis of Lonesome Prairie's history and ties to the Ochap band, as well as their experience working in the North. “We felt that Kitsaki was the premiere partner to work with,” Derksen said.

Kitsaki's goal with the creation of Asiniy is to meet not only Saskatchewan Highways' gravel-crushing needs over the course of the next four years, but to create a long-term business operation with multiple contracts. The northern mining industry has already said that a northern gravel crushing operation will be an asset to mining operations.

Asiniy will be temporarily housed in the Northern Resource Trucking (NRT) training

facility in La Ronge's industrial park, as there is room on the grounds to store equipment, but eventually a permanent northern base will be chosen.

“Hopefully it'll last a long time,” said Joe McLeod, one of Asiniy's first employees. “The roads here are awful, and hopefully this will improve them.... (As well,) we have a high unemployment rate, and 20 jobs, it may not sound like much, but it's a big step toward employment.”

Kitsaki CEO Russell Roberts certainly sees a long-term future for Asiniy. “We absolutely see this as a growth opportunity,” Roberts said. “All of the developments in northern Saskatchewan will need aggregate at one point.... There's a significant development happening not just in the mining industry but in infrastructure (growth) all over in northern Saskatchewan. The sky's the limit.”



Ochapowace Chief Denton George (above) takes the controls on one of Asiniy Gravel Crushing's new loaders, to scoop up the other dignitaries: former Highways Minister Eldon Lautermilch, Chief Tammy Cook-Searson, Northern Affairs Minister Joan Beatty and Kitsaki CEO Russell Roberts.

Deadline extended for gun registration

Band members who own an unregistered gun won't face criminal charges until next spring at the earliest, thanks to the federal Minister of Public Safety's recent extension on the amnesty period for gun owners. The new deadline for registering guns is May 16, 2008.

During the amnesty period, which runs until the deadline, people who either currently hold a firearms license, or held one that expired on or after Jan. 1, 2004, are protected from criminal liability for possessing an unregistered, non-restricted firearm, as long as they are taking the necessary steps to comply with the law. These steps include:

- obtaining the required license and registration certificate for the gun;
- taking the gun apart so that it can no longer be used;
- exporting the gun in accordance with legal export requirements (including the laws of the country the gun is being exported to);
- turning the gun over to a police officer or a firearms officer to be destroyed or otherwise disposed of; or

selling or giving the gun away, either to a public service agency or a business (such as a museum) that holds a license authorizing the acquisition of firearms, or to an individual who holds a possession and acquisition license.

If you are getting rid of a gun that was previously registered, you need to notify the federal registrar by sending an e-mail to cfc-cafc@cfc-cafc.gc.ca or writing a letter to P.O. Box 1200, Miramichi, NB E1N 5Z3.

For more information on how to comply with the law, visit the RCMP Canada Firearms Centre website at www.cfc-cafc.gc.ca or call 1-800-731-4000.



Doug Kelln, CEO and president of SaskEnergy, and Chief Tammy Cook-Searson prepare to sign the Mistahisakahian Protocol, establishing the terms for future co-operation between the provincial natural gas utility and the Lac La Ronge band. Counc. Doris Morin, Elder Catherine Charles and Counc. Pam Mirasty were on hand to witness the signing.

Watch for a special feature coming in *The Cree Communicator's* next issue.

We will be publishing a detailed listing of band employees and elected officials, with their job descriptions and contact information. As per community requests, we hope to have all of our band departments, including the five sub-offices, included in the listing.

If you've ever had a question about LLRIB services and not known who to call, you'll want to cut this one out to stick on your fridge or post in your office.

Don't miss it!

Stanley Mission improving community infrastructure



Community members from Stanley Mission pitched in to clean up the cemetery at Holy Trinity Anglican Church this summer.

Several new projects in Stanley Mission are helping the community address both its growing population and its desire for greater self-reliance.

Amongst the new initiatives are a community-owned gas bar and convenience store, which opened in April, a new lift station, finished in August; and an expanded and upgraded sewage lagoon, which is being completed this fall.

The new store, located on the main road into the community, is band-owned. "The main reason (for building it) was to keep the emergency fund on-reserve," said Counc. Brian Hardlotte. A lot of the money in that fund is used to buy gas when there are family matters or other emergencies that require an immediate trip down south, and until now, that money was going to private retailers, rather than back into the band's administration fund. The new arrangement will allow the band to put the money back into community projects. It will also allow the band to get the gas tax money back, under a provincial agreement.

The new lift station and the lagoon upgrade will address some of the storage issues resulting from community growth, and also make sure the water that comes into residents' taps and out through its drains is as clean as possible.

It's also important that the Churchill River – the community's main water source and

repository for the treated water – be kept clean. "It's our drinking water, everything," said Counc. Hardlotte.

A upgrade to the playing field at Rhoda Hardlotte Memorial Keethanow School was on the books for this year, but the work has been postponed until 2008 due to funding cutbacks at Indian Affairs. The playing field has sunk, with the track being especially affected because it runs so close to the muskeg, and it collects a lot of water, so the plan is to infill it and improve the drainage system.

Council and staff are also working on plans for a new fire hall, which will be larger than the existing one and include classroom space for training local firefighters. Although the need for a new fire hall has been felt for some time, the Hwy. 2 corridor fires that forced the evacuation of Stanley Mission, Grandmother's Bay and Sucker River last July were "a wake-up" for the community and its leadership, said Counc. Hardlotte.

After the fires, the leadership applied for and received a grant under the "Fire Smart" program – a joint initiative by Saskatchewan Environment and the Canadian Forest Service, which helped pay for the clearing of a fire break around Stanley Mission. Councillors also attended an emergency planning workshop offered by the province, and are currently working on an updated version of the community emergency response plan.

Neighbours collaborate on infrastructure projects

The spirit of co-operation is in the air, with the top officials from the three La Ronge-area governments having recently met in the Lac La Ronge Indian Band's council chambers to discuss a series of proposed regional projects.

The May 17 meeting, led by La Ronge Mayor Joe Hordyski, Air Ronge Mayor Gordon Stomp and Chief Tammy Cook-Searson, was the first tri-community discussion on such a wide range of topics. The leaders touched on a regional water system, an interpretive centre/tourist booth, a fire hall, a community swimming pool, and a youth centre.

Some of the projects – notably the fire hall (see story page 6) – are already a "go"; others are in an earlier stage of development or have caused some frustration or discontent between

the three communities; and others, such as the swimming pool, are brand-new proposals, at least at the regional level.

Regional water system

The three communities have agreed on a single water treatment supply system, and the federal Department of Western Economic Diversification (WED) has committed supply \$4.2 million for a joint project. (See page 5 for detailed story.)

Tourist information centre

The area's tourist information centre, for many years located on a strip of land owned by the Village of Air Ronge along Hwy. 2, next door to the Kitsaki Management office, will be moving back to that location. The old tourist booth, which was housed in an old trailer, was removed several years ago because it was very run-down, and there has been extensive debate about both a new building and a location, including a plan to build a permanent facility in La Ronge's Patterson Park. Neither the village nor the band liked the idea of moving the tourist booth into downtown La Ronge, believing that the tourists would choose to simply drive by without bothering to check out the area's services instead of going into La Ronge as town officials thought. Visitor information services are currently provided out of an office building at the south end of La Ronge Ave.

Now, the Northern Development Board is willing to fund a tri-community effort, and in the interests of co-operation, the Village of Air Ronge has agreed to donate the land on Hwy. 2, while the band and the Town of La Ronge will provide funding. The band wants to include a cultural heritage/history component, and both mayors agreed that this would make the project much more worthwhile.

With the Northern Development Board's funding deadline of May 31 looming, the communities agreed to start with a determined location and the re-establishment of a steering committee composed of representatives from Kitsaki Management (Russell Roberts) and Woodlands and Waterways Development Corporation (Yvonne Meekel) and two reps from each of the three communities.

Swimming pool

After a few notes on the fire hall, La Ronge Mayor Joe Hordyski brought up the idea of a regional indoor swimming complex, proposing it as an "added value" for the community to attract new residents and as an option for exercise and entertainment for those already living in the area. The area's schools – both the band's and those run by the Northern Lights School Division could use it for physical education programs, Hordyski suggested. Air Ronge Mayor Gordon Stomp brought up the perennial issue of ongoing operation and maintenance costs; Hordyski noted that the town's rec board has been studying options, and cost-reduction possibilities include both solar and geo-thermal heating.

Chief Tammy Cook-Searson agreed that if such a facility were to go ahead, it should definitely be a three-way initiative, although it remains to be seen whether such a project would fit in the band's budget. On-reserve housing and infrastructure remain the band's first priority.

Youth centre

The final topic of discussion was the proposed youth centre, which the band would like to run out of a building it purchased from Kitsaki Management, across from the Shell gas station at the entrance to La Ronge. This project has been caught in bureaucratic cross-hairs for months; the construction halt ordered last year relate to zoning (the land is zoned as commercial, not institutional), while a proposal for the Town of La Ronge to be involved in some fashion hinges on the need for a business plan to prove the need for and viability of a youth centre, as there has been concern about duplication of services.

Executive director Blake Charles noted that the band's education department has been somewhat hesitant to commit to a second band-run recreation facility, in light of the programming already available at the Jonas Roberts Memorial Community Centre. However, there is still interest on the part of both the band and the Town on pursuing the project, and steps will be taken to resolve the issue.



Johanna Simpson shows off the grocery bill that helped her snag the grand prize in Keethanow Supermarket's quad contest. Pictured with her are Chief Tammy Cook-Searson, Councillors Doris Morin and Pam Mirasty, and Keethanow staff members Terry Charles and Emily Barr.

Tapping into clean water

A new regionally-run water system will soon be bringing a more economical source of clean, piped water to the band's reserves in the immediate La Ronge area.

In July 2005, on behalf of the Lac La Ronge band membership and band council, Chief Tammy Cook-Searson signed a memorandum of understanding with the Town of La Ronge and the Village of Air Ronge to explore the option of setting up a regional water utility to supply safe treated water for the three communities over the long term.

In addition to the study, it was agreed that an application would be made to Western Economic Diversification Canada for a grant to partially fund the project. Total cost of the project was estimated at over \$9 million.

On Sept. 14, the federal government's regional minister for Saskatchewan, Gerry Ritz, made a stop in Rosetown to announce five major water projects for Saskatchewan, one of which was for the La Ronge area. Chief Cook-Searson, Counc. Pam Mirasty, Counc. Hillary Cook and Counc. Doris Morin were present for the announcement.

Under the agreement, Western Economic Diversification Canada will contribute \$4.22 million toward the project. Indian Affairs, on behalf of the Lac La Ronge band, will put in \$2.885 million. The Town of La Ronge and Village of Air Ronge will put in a combined \$2.23 million.

The project will start with engineering design this year. Construction is expected to start in 2008 and be completed in the year 2010. The water treatment utility will be managed by an independent corporation with a

board consisting of seven people, two from each of the band, the Village of Air Ronge and the Town of La Ronge (appointed by the respective councils), plus one member at large, to be appointed by the board.

"For the band, the advantage of going this route is that we will now be able to replace truck delivery, cistern water to communities in Kitsaki Reserve 156B, thereby eliminating the need for them to ration and restrict the use of water. This should contribute to improved health and quality of life," Chief Cook-Searson said.

Without this agreement, the band would not be receiving treated pipeline water in Morin's Hill, Jackpine, 101, Big Rocks or Little Rocks for the foreseeable future.

The new regional approach will also guarantee a long-term high quality water supply for residents of Lac La Ronge 156 and 156B, since water will come from the La Ronge plant after the project is complete.

Taking a regional approach will also simplify hiring; the requirements for trained operators for water plants are getting stricter each year and it is getting difficult to find and keep qualified



Clean water will soon be flowing from the taps in more on-reserve homes in the La Ronge area, thanks to a new regional management approach and an infusion of federal dollars.

operators. A shortage of personnel who can do the work necessary to keep water systems bacteria-free has contributed to health issues – and costly lawsuits – in communities such as North Battleford and Walkerton, Ontario.

Under this agreement, which will run for 20 years, the La Ronge Water Treatment Plant will be expanded, and a new lake intake for raw water will be developed. A bulk water pipeline will be constructed from the La Ronge Treatment Plant to Hwy. 102 by the new reservoir. It will then run along Hwy. 2 to Zesty's, over to the reserve main road, and along the reserve road to link up with the Air Ronge water lines, which continue on to Lac La Ronge 156. From this main line, water, and eventually sewer will be installed in Morin's Hill, Jackpine, 101, Big Rocks and Little Rocks.

"I want to stress that no band member will be put out of work as a result of us going this way," noted Chief Cook-Searson. Staff in positions such as the existing water delivery personnel and operators will continue to be employed in the band's Public Works department in other areas. There will be added work with the new servicing planned for Kitsaki Reserve 156B.

This statement was released to the media regarding the Day of Action.

Chief Tammy Cook-Searson and the council of the Lac La Ronge Indian Band have chosen to celebrate and emphasize positive treaty relationships on June 29, 2007, the National Day of Action.

The band council respects the sovereignty of the band membership and supports the continuing development of good treaty relationships. Our ancestors entered treaty with the Crown so that both they and future generations could share and benefit from their traditional territories and resources.

In the middle of the winter of 1889, our leaders made the long trek from our traditional territories in northern Saskatchewan to Molanosa, on the north end of Montreal Lake, in order to enter into a treaty relationship with Queen Victoria and the Government of Canada. For the last 118 years, we have continued to honour the treaty relationship established by Chief James Roberts and the representatives of Her Majesty.

We realize that the full spirit and intent of the treaty relationship has yet to be honoured. However, we have seen good progress over the years, and we have reasons to celebrate. For example, many of our band members have benefited from the treaty right to education. We encourage band members to take advantage of this most sacred of treaty rights, which helps to establish a firm foundation for a healthy lifestyle.

On June 21, National Aboriginal Day, we welcomed the Queen's representative, Saskatchewan Lieutenant-Governor Gordon Barnhart, as he joined Chief Tammy Cook-Searson, and members of her council for a canoe voyage re-creating the arrival of the treaty party at Kitsaki Reserve. We were pleased to have the lieutenant-governor, representative of the Crown joining us in our traditional territory, for a celebration of who we are as a people. We also welcomed representatives from Indian and Northern Affairs, neighbouring First Nations and the Prince Albert Grand Council.

As a First Nation, we deeply value our partnerships with other First Nations, Queen Elizabeth II, the Government of Canada, the Government of Saskatchewan, and our partners in business, health and education. Our ancestors' intent in signing Treaty 6 was to establish peaceful and harmonious treaty relationships for the long-term benefit of the band membership. Our present band council and our council of elders share that desire, and it is our intent to continue working towards its fulfillment.

On-reserve home ownership program flourishing

Mortgages, property transfers and renovation loans offer new options

Three years after its start, the Lac La Ronge Indian Band's home ownership program has gained so much momentum that BMO Bank of Montreal officials travelled from Toronto to La Ronge this summer to see the results firsthand.

For the BMO officials, the summer visit was to see the band's program – which is both the first of its kind in the prairie provinces, and the first to make use of BMO's on-reserve housing loan program. Officials were also keen to talk to people who are making use of the program. "I wanted to go out and visit people in their homes... to find out what the process was like for them, if there's something we could do better, and to find out what difference this has made for them," said the bank's Saskatchewan vice-president, Ken Segboer.

By the end of the 2006 construction season, BMO Bank of Montreal had approved three mortgages for Lac La Ronge band members to build privately-owned homes on-reserve. All three homes have either been recently built or are under construction. At the start of the 2007 construction season, a total of seven mortgages were in place, and several more mortgages are in the early negotiation stage, program co-ordinator Kevin McLeod told the group of senior BMO officials.

McLeod noted that in addition to its agreement with the BMO, the band has arranged 30 leases to transfer ownership of existing on-reserve homes to their occupants, and the band has a \$1.7 million revolving loan program to assist members wanting to renovate or build homes. This loan program was started with seed money from Indian Affairs, and is designed to complement the BMO program.

By the end of the 2007 season, an additional one million dollars will have been invested on-reserve, with the money going in several directions: some to band members who are contractors, some to the band's lumber

yard and some to the band's Department of Public Works through contracts to dig in water and sewer for the new homeowners.

What the home ownership program offers, through both the BMO and the band's own loan fund, is a new housing option on Lac La Ronge Indian Band land, said Chief Tammy Cook-Searson.

"Our band members have owned boats, motors and snowmobiles. Now we're going the next step and owning our own homes on-reserve," said Chief Cook-Searson.

Other advantages provided by the home ownership program include pride of ownership, the opportunity for band members to build a home that fits his or her design specifications as opposed to following a mandated design, and less "down time" for construction crews who build band-owned rental housing.

For the homeowners, one of the major benefits to this program is the opportunity to sell both the home and improvements (such as a shed) and transfer the lease to another band member, or else pass the house on to the next generation.

"The bank is very proud of (this program) because it just illustrated an innovative way to get around the security constraints of the Indian Act," said Clint Davis, BMO's national director for aboriginal banking. "What we're seeing now is probably a product of demographics.... You have a lot of younger people who now are gaining perhaps education outside the communities, wanting to come back, work in their communities... (and they're) looking for a home."

Given the boom in Saskatchewan's housing market, the timing on this program is ideal. The price of housing is skyrocketing in the North, and lots in municipalities such as La Ronge and Air Ronge are getting hard to come by. "In this context," said McLeod, it's easy to see why owning a home on-reserve has become an attractive option."

Marchers raise awareness about treaties...



Band members from Stanley Mission hoist neon-coloured signs about the poor condition of northern roads, including Hwy. 102.

Members of two Lac La Ronge Indian Band communities took to the highway on June 29, marching from their reserves to raise awareness about key issues facing the First Nation.

Although both events were designed to tie in with the National Day of Action organized by the Assembly of First Nations, the walk from Far Reserve to La Ronge focused on the importance of honouring the treaties, while the Stanley Mission group carried banners promoting a more specific issue: the deplorable state of Hwy. 915 and other northern roads.

In La Ronge, the awareness march began at the Public Works and Housing offices on Far Reserve, with the band flag and a large banner carried in front. An RCMP escort vehicle kept traffic safely pinned back as the marchers moved through the reserve and onto Hwy. 2, swelling in numbers as the group passed the Jonas Roberts Memorial Community Centre, the junction of Far Reserve Road and the highway (where staff from the Jeannie Bird Clinic were waiting), Kitsaki Management and eventually the entrance to La Ronge, where staff from the central office and Indian Child and Family Services joined in.

As the walkers spilled over much of the highway, most of those inching by in vehicles willingly took information brochures on the treaties, including the drivers of at least one semi-trailer, a schoolbus, and a truck carrying

a large load of canoes. There were no clashes between the walkers and the drivers, honouring the band's intention to co-ordinate the event "in a peaceful, lawful and positive manner, where respect and friendship will dominate," with an overall goal of demonstrating that "the relationship between First Nations and Canadians is based on the principles of respect, dignity and fairness."

The walk wrapped up at the old hospital grounds in downtown La Ronge, where the crowd listened to speeches from Chief Tammy Cook-Searson and local band councillors Pam Mirasty, Jimmy Roberts, Doris Morin and Hillary Cook, and then shared a meal of caribou meat and salads. Counc. Kenny Ratt of Sucker River also participated in the walk.

"The true intent of the treaty that was signed by our forefathers was that we would share this land.... It was for us to govern ourselves, co-existing with the settlers," said Chief Cook-Searson. She explained that it was like two groups of people, each paddling their own canoe but travelling in the same direction, and when they come to a set of rapids, they figure out between them how they will navigate through these difficult waters.

"We agreed to share this land in order to get benefits such as health and education, but more and more we see these rights being eroded," she said. "We reclaim our sovereign right to the livelihood that is determined by our

Cree nation, built on positive, forward-thinking, forward-looking relationships based on the treaties."

The councillors expressed their appreciation to the organizers – Blake Charles, Russell Roberts and Tom McKenzie – and all those who participated in the awareness walk and expressed their support for the cause. "It would have been nice to have more kids involved, just to let them know what it is that we're walking for.... Hopefully it does continue year after year, and we can make it bigger and better," said Counc. Jimmy Roberts.

Counc. Hillary Cook recalled that in the past, he was sometimes teased about his passion for the treaties, but today, Canadian courts are upholding aboriginal rights, and politicians and industry are paying more attention to their duty to consult with First Nations. "That re-affirms that our treaties are alive and strong, and are prospering," Cook said.



Executive director Blake Charles hands an information brochure to a passing semi-truck driver.

... and the need for safer northern roads

The Stanley Mission group, meanwhile, put on even more miles of foot-power, as they marching for about three hours from the junction of Hwy. 915 and Hwy. 102, to just north of Sucker River, and then stopping for a barbecue. Several of those on the trek were young children, bumpily travelling in strollers over the gravel-paved highway. The walkers carried posters promoting many of the reasons for their wish to see the highways improved, including tourism and safety.

"Every spring Hwy. 915 experiences floods as the run-off spills over onto the highway,

destroying it, and this is caused by no ditch constructed on many parts of the road," said Counc. Lester Roberts.

Better roads would serve to attract tourists – or at least keep them coming back – and ease the travel back and forth to the south for local residents. The trips are especially jarring and painful for those coming back from surgery or travelling in an ambulance, Counc. Brian Hardlotte said.

He also worries about safety: not just the risk of a cracked windshield or a tire that catches the edge of a steep incline and rolls into the ditch, but the possibility of hazardous material spilling from one of the semis travelling to and from the northern mines. "If they ever have a spill, we're facing an environmental disaster," Hardlotte said.

While the North's resources feed the province's coffers, the access routes through the region – for both residents and those who use the area for pleasure or commercial gain – continue to suffer, noted Counc. Bernice Roberts.

"We want to have the revenues realized from mineral and other resource extraction set aside for the repair and maintenance of our roads," Bernice Roberts said. "This would ensure that the roads are addressed properly year after year."

"People that live in northern Saskatchewan see the amount of resources that are being extracted from the North... and (yet) you drive



Even kids in strollers braved the bumpy gravel highway to raise awareness about the road issues.



Two women from Stanley Mission reach the first bit of pavement on Hwy. 102 after walking for nearly three hours.

on the roads of northern Saskatchewan and they're in really bad condition," agreed Counc. Hardlotte. "(We want) improvement of the roads in exchange for our resources."

Message from the Chief



Tansi to all Lac La Ronge Indian Band members and friends. I am pleased to have this opportunity to update you on our activities in the first part of 2007. It has been an exciting time for our band. As I look back, I see times of celebration and change, as well as sorrow and joy. As your chief and council, we are pleased and gratified that the residential school resolution process is finally nearing its end, and that our band members who are residential school survivors will soon be receiving financial compensation.

Over the last few months, I have attended graduation ceremonies, National Aboriginal Day festivities, the First Nations Summer Games, cultural camps and many more wonderful occasions.

I have been honoured to attend many graduation ceremonies for our band members. Sally Ross School celebrated their first ever graduation, with six young women completing Grade 12. Our post-secondary graduates have been increasing with students graduating from programs at Northlands College, NORTEP, SIAST, First Nations University, the University of Saskatchewan, and the RCMP. Congratulations to all of you on your achievements!

We are encouraged to see more of our band members continue to become qualified as nurses. This spring Rhoda Roberts and Esther Keighley Dorion both graduated from nursing studies. Graduates like these will contribute to the development of our band's health system in the band, just as the graduates from the teacher education programs have helped build our education system.

I am very proud of the many accomplishments of our band members, including our young athletes, who excel in

everything from hockey to cross-country running. Our band member former executive director Russell Mirasty is now superintendent for all of northern Saskatchewan's RCMP officers, and former Chief Harry Cook was inducted into the Canadian Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame.

The Lac La Ronge Indian Band continues to play a key leadership role in economic development. As Kitsaki Management celebrates its 25th year in business, I want to thank the staff in all our businesses for their commitment. It is through their hard work that we have been able to achieve the success we have in economic development.

We continue to make effective use of our lands and resources. We have just recently signed a memorandum of understanding with Golden Band Resources to explore the possibility of re-opening the Jolu gold mine near McLennan Lake, and investigating other gold deposits.

I'm excited to report that Kitsaki Management has started a new business venture, Asiniy Gravel, which is in partnership with the Ochapowace First Nation. We continue to look for other opportunities to expand as we work with other First Nations people in North America.

As chief, I made a promise that we would balance economic development with social development. Using an innovative approach, we were able to expand the number of houses for our band membership. In the 2007 construction season alone, we employed approximately 75 people to build 38 new homes for our six communities.

In the area of health, our wellness conference was a great success, attracting over 700 people from all over the North, Saskatchewan and Canada. Guest speakers included Assembly of First Nations Chief Phil Fontaine, who spoke about recovery from the residential school experiences. We had role models from our communities and a guest role model, Sharon Firth, a First Nations four-time Olympic cross country skier. While Sharon was here, she visited many of our schools to share her life experiences, from growing up on a trapline to competing around the world, in order to

encourage our young people to follow their dreams and strive for excellence.

I am very proud of the work done by so many volunteers who made this event such a success. It is gatherings such as these that will contribute to the improvement of the health and well being of all our band members. We appreciated the support of the sponsors of our conference, which enjoyed an attendance of over 700 people over the three day period.

As chief and council, we continue to lobby for improvements in housing, health, and education. As promised, we have been holding our band council meetings in the different communities for the first time in our history. We have been working with the Assembly of First Nations to resolve national issues with the federal government, such as the residential school survivor settlement. With the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and the Prince Albert Grand Council, we are working on provincial concerns such as our response to the "duty to consult and accommodate", the Supreme Court of Canada's order to consult First Nations people if planned developments would affect traditional land use. We are working toward improvement of communication between Saskatchewan Environment and our trappers.

Treaties and treaty rights are foundational to the Woodland Cree. I was honoured to be present at the royal visit of Princess Anne to Regina. As is our tradition, the First Nations people of Saskatchewan presented her with a gift, a beautifully hand crafted shawl. The shawl was decorated with the symbols that represented our special relationship with the crown. We also granted her a new name: White Wolf Woman.

Fall is a season of change, and as your elected officials, we strive to be flexible and available to serve you to the best of our ability. If you have any questions or issues to bring up, please call any of the band offices or your local councillor(s). We are always ready to help.

Have a safe and enjoyable fall, and enjoy the gifts of the season and time with family and friends. Teniki.

- Chief Tammy Cook-Searson

Healing circle held in honour of Johnny Venne Jr.

As the case of a teenaged boy murdered on Big Stone reserve works its way through the legal system, the band leadership is both seeking guidance and attempting to help the community heal. A step towards that goal was taken on Aug. 3, with a community gathering organized by the health department's prevention and recovery services.

Four youth from Big Stone stand accused of second-degree murder and tampering with human remains after the body of 15-year-old Johnny Abel Venne was pulled from the Montreal River on July 11. Three weeks later, Johnny's siblings and close friends formed a circle within a larger circle of health workers, teachers, justice workers, band council reps, family members and others concerned or affected by Johnny's death, to talk and share their grief.

Johnny's older brother, Randy, took the leadership role within the inner circle, both sharing the raw depths of his pain and anger, and cajoling the group of friends to open up as well, telling them, "I don't want to lose you guys."

With encouragement from both Randy and prevention and recovery worker Anita Jackson, several of the youth also spoke, letting the group of listeners into their own hurt and also remembering the Johnny they knew: hyper, funny, constantly smiling, a hackey-sack enthusiast, a skateboarder proud of a new move he had just mastered, a boy eager to hang out with the cool guys and be seen as "cool" himself.

For nearly five hours, both the youth and the adults – approximately 45 people in total – talked openly about their concerns and their hurt regarding Johnny's death, divisions between families and people from different reserves, violence amongst youth and in the home, and possible solutions to some of these issues, such as full-time addictions workers in the schools, more teaching about cultural roots, a tribal police force, or a facility for repeat young offenders.

They shared memories of Johnny, such as his respect for elders and his "beautiful spirit". They worried aloud about the persistent issues of neglect, abuse, violence and poverty, while also noting the good things that have been accomplished on many of the band's reserves and in the schools.

In order for everyone to have a chance to share, a "talking stick" – replaced, in this case, by a black-and-white hackey-sack – was passed around the circle. With the words shared by Johnny's inner circle still lingering in their minds, many of the adults used the opportunity to share with the gathering (and specifically the youth) some words of advice for grieving, healing and restoration, such as speaking openly about Johnny with others who cared about him, sharing both the hurts and the good memories, instead of either drowning the pain in alcohol or more violence or being ashamed of the pain.

There was much said of the youth's courage in speaking out in a public setting, and several of the adults shared stories of their own losses as well as their pain in dealing this recent

death. As Big Stone Christian Mission Fellowship pastor Angus Ross put it, "We all watched Johnny grow up, and we all lost Johnny." He encouraged the youth to consider collectively taking on a project that would allow others to remember Johnny, such as building a park near the site of his death.

Elders Catherine Charles and Henry Roberts, who opened and closed the gathering with prayer, and Josie Searson all touched on the spiritual forces at work, and many of those present encouraged the youth to remember that they are never alone, whether they want to seek solace in God/Creator/Higher Power or in other people. At one point near the end, all those in the circle held hands as Elder Roberts led the group in prayer for Johnny and others who have died in the last month.

Chief Tammy Cook-Searson talked about keeping Johnny's obituary picture by her bedside during the last week, and shared both her struggle to know what to say and her desire to develop an action plan for dealing with youth violence – a sentiment echoed by several, including executive director Blake Charles and Council member Hillary Cook. Co-ordinated healing circles will be held at the Big Stone church under the direction of the health department, for as long as there is interest. These circles are held on Friday nights from 7 to 9 p.m.

The gathering closed with a renewed sense of hope, as each participant both offered and received either a hug or a handshake as they moved through the circle. The anger that was evident when the day began was replaced with acceptance, understanding and compassion.

Aboriginal Day celebrated

National Aboriginal Day 2007 began with a splash of water and ended with a ripple of laughter and applause in La Ronge.

With the Rainbow Buffalo Drummers beating the drums at the Patterson Park beach, and a crowd of excited children waiting (after a banner-waving march down La Ronge Ave.) at Kitsaki Beach, several canoes full of dignitaries slipped into Lac la Ronge to mark the start of the celebrations June 21.

Amongst those travelling in the voyageur canoes were Chief Tammy Cook-Searson and band councillors Pam Mirasty, Hillary Cook and Doris Morin, Saskatchewan Lieutenant-Governor Gordon Barnhart (convinced to participate by the paddling prowess of his aide-de-camp and canoe partner, RCMP Superintendent Russ Mirasty), Prince Albert Grand Council Grand Chief Russ Mirasty, Montreal Lake Council Elmer Ballantyne, actor Gordon Tootoosis, several band staff members and friends. The canoe voyage – rescheduled after an unseasonable snowstorm in May –

was a recreation of the arrival of the early treaty parties at Kitsaki Beach.

In the afternoon, the Jonas Roberts Memorial Community Centre (JRMCC) played host to a community feast and a children's carnival, as well as traditional food preparation demos and a less-traditional tug-of-war competition. The men's contest was won by a group of local guys, while a team made up mainly of visitors from the University of the Arctic – including three professors from Russian universities – snagged the women's title. Co-ed canoe races were held at Kitsaki Beach.

For the evening, Kikinahk Friendship Centre offered a free meal and a comedy show by aboriginal comedian Don Burnstick, at the Mel Hegland Uniplex. Jingle dress and hoop dancers also performed. After the show, a cabaret provided musical entertainment as a fundraiser for the planned Kitsaki long-term elder care facility.



Rather than having his face painted like a cat or a dog, as most of the kids lined up at the LLRIB children's carnival were doing, Jerry Ross decided to get made up as a girl, complete with "beauty spot" – much to his friend Alison Halkett's amusement.



Recreating the arrival of the early treaty parties by voyageur canoe, Chief Tammy Cook-Searson (hoisting a wind-blown flag) and the rest of her party come into shore at the beach by Kitsaki Hall.



Comedian Don Burnstick pays homage to National Aboriginal Day in his own way.



Ida Tremblay and Roger Ratt assist Council. Jimmy Roberts with identifying people in old school photos, during the National Day of Action celebration held on the former residential school grounds in downtown La Ronge.



Swedish exchange students Sandra Olofsson and Neila Fjallstrom, both members of the Sami indigenous group from northern Scandinavia, chat with provincial cabinet minister Maynard Sonntag during a visit to La Ronge earlier this year. The students' visit was arranged by the Prince Albert Model Forest, as part of a student exchange focused on forestry and wildlife (especially caribou/reindeer) issues.

Residential school payouts starting soon

With only a small percentage of former residential school students (just over 200) having rejected the Canadian government's compensation deal, the deal is now legally approved. This means that those who have chosen not to opt out can now start applying to receive compensation.

Here are the answers the band leadership has gathered in response to frequently asked questions from our membership:

What is the CEP?

The Common Experience Payment (CEP) program is the government's attempt to compensate all former Indian residential school students for their experiences at the schools. People who suffered physical or sexual abuse in the schools are eligible to apply for additional compensation, but all former students can apply for the CEP. You must submit an application in order to receive payment, and these will be accepted starting Sept. 20.

A former student will receive \$10,000 for the first year (or portion of a year, to as little as one day) he or she attended a residential school, and \$3,000 per year for each school year he or she attended. The maximum amount is \$46,000.

Will the government take back any of the money?

The CEP is non-taxable, and neither your Employment Insurance (EI) nor your welfare/social assistance will be deducted or reduced if you receive the CEP.

Where are the new application forms that became available after Sept. 19?

You can pick up an application at any Lac La Ronge band office or Service Canada's offices – either the one in the downtown post office in La Ronge, or in Prince Albert at 1288 Central Ave. Northern offices are also located in Buffalo Narrows and Stony Rapids. You can also download a copy from the Web at www.servicecanada.gc.ca. The new forms do not have to be date-stamped by Service Canada, but you still have to have your valid identification documents certified.

What about the forms from the Merchant Law Group that were sent out before Sept. 19?

Those of you who filled out and/or mailed one of the photocopied application forms sent out by the Merchant Law Group should contact the band office or Service Canada to get your form date-stamped. It must be dated after Sept. 19. Your identification documents also must be shown to Service Canada to prove that they are not expired.

What if I need help with the form?

Either Service Canada staff, Chief Cook-Searson, your local band councillor or band office staff can help you with filling out and mailing your application.

How do I apply?

The application form must be filled out completely. Include:

Your full name, including names that you may have been known by at residential school, such as a short form of your name (eg. Cathy, Kitty or Katie for Catherine) and any nicknames, or even any misspelled versions of your name (such as Cathryn) that appear on official documents.

Your complete, current mailing address, including your postal code.

All of the residential schools where you resided, and the dates you attended each school, up to and including 1997. If you are having trouble remembering names or dates, think of key dates (eg. birthdays) or talk to people who knew you then to jog your memory.

Your identity documents.

What if I still can't remember when and/or how long I went to residential school?

You can make a best guess, based on your age, and Service Canada will do a detailed search of the records, starting from 10 years before that date and 10 years after it. They will

be doing this for everyone; an exact set of dates just makes the search faster. You will not lose out on your payment if you forget a date.

How do I prove who I am?

You have several options for proving your identity:

An original birth certificate, OR
Two of the following (one of which must have a photo of you):

- Certificate of Indian status
- Provincial health card
- Canadian passport
- Driver's license

You can either bring your original documents to the Service Canada office, or, if you are applying by mail, you can send either your original birth certificate (which will be returned to you) or certified copies of two of the other choices.

If the name on the application form is different from the name on any of your identity documents, you must also bring or mail either the original or a certified copy of the document that clarifies the reason for the name change, such as a marriage license or registration, a divorce decree, a legal change of name document or adoption papers.

What is a certified copy?

To make a certified copy, someone other than you must write on the copy, in capital letters, "I CERTIFY THIS TO BE A TRUE COPY OF THE ORIGINAL". On the document that has a photo, the certifier must write, "I CERTIFY THAT THIS IS A TRUE COPY OF THE ORIGINAL AND THAT THE IMAGE IS A TRUE LIKENESS OF THE APPLICANT. I AM A CANADIAN CITIZEN AND HAVE KNOWN THE APPLICANT PERSONALLY FOR AT LEAST TWO YEARS." In either case, the certifier must then add their printed name, position, signature, contact information and the date they signed the document.

In order to certify a document, the person must hold one of a specific list of jobs, such as the chief and councillors, a medical doctor, an RCMP officer, or a social worker with a Master's in Social Work degree. The full list of jobs is on the application form.

What if I went to a school that is not on the list, such as Timber Bay?

The list of schools whose students are approved for payment is available where you pick up your application form. The chief and council are aware that a number of Lac La Ronge Indian Band members have attended schools that are not the list. There is an appeals process that can be followed, and the band has retained lawyer Jake Tootoosis to work on this matter. Chief Cook-Searson has spoken to Indian Residential Schools Resolution Canada about formally registering the school, and they will be sending her a form to start the process.

What if I did not have treaty status when I went to residential school, but now do?

Your treaty status does not matter; if you attended an Indian residential school, you are eligible for the CEP.

What about advance payments?

If you received an advance payment, which was an option given to those aged 65 and older as of May 30, 2005, the amount you received will be deducted (taken off) from the total you are eligible for. For example, if you attended for two years and have already received the \$8,000 advance payment, you will receive another \$5,000.

What about elders who did not receive the advance payment?

Some elders missed out on the advance payment because the Canadian government could not find the records of their residential school attendance. Cree-speaking lawyer Jake Tootoosis will also be working with these elders to verify their attendance so that they can pursue their CEP.

What if the former student has since passed away?

You can apply on behalf of the person's estate or as the designated beneficiary. If your relative did not leave a will, the family must decide who is to apply for the money. If your relative received an advance payment, you can still apply to receive the remaining payout.

To prove that you are acting as the executor of the estate, or as the designated beneficiary, you must bring the person's death certificate, his/her birth certificate and his/her legal will, plus your own identity documents as outlined above.

When and how will I get my money?

The government has set a "target to payment" of 60 days. So, if you filled out your application and mailed it in on Sept. 20, you should expect your money by approximately Nov. 20.

You have two choices: receiving a cheque or having the money directly deposited into your bank account. To go the direct deposit route, you must include a bank account number and a void cheque (a blank cheque with your account number and the word "VOID" written across it so that no one can fill it out) with your application.

Service Canada recommends the direct deposit approach because it is faster and safer. The money will show up in your account without the extra step of depositing a cheque, and you will not have to worry about losing the cheque or having someone steal it; only someone with legal access to your account will be able to withdraw any of the money.

How long do I have to apply?

You can apply any time in the next four years, until Sept. 20, 2011, but the sooner you apply, the better it will be for everyone.

What if I don't have a bank account, or I don't want one?

If you want to set up a bank account, staff at any bank will help you. If you choose not to set up a bank account, you can cash the cheque at a bank; however, be aware that bank branches do not have large reserves of cash on hand, so call the bank two days ahead of time.

What do I do with all this money?

Ultimately, that is up to you. The band will be holding community meetings in the near future to discuss this issue. A great deal of money will be coming into our communities in November, and we want all our band members to know what your options are.

What if I have other questions?

You can call the Indian Residential School Resolution Canada office at 1-866-879-4913. For service in Cree, press 4 when prompted. The office is open 7 days a week, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

For help with the Common Experience Payment, call Service Canada at 425-6500 or call the toll-free helpline at 1-800-622-6232. Service is available in both Cree and English. The office is open 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (including over the noon hour).

For questions about the Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) process, call 1-800-816-7293. This office is open from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

For assistance with residential school records, call Margaret Kirklayd at 1-819-934-7177.

For the survivor support line, call 1-866-925-4419. Anyone in crisis can call this line 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

**Got a LLRIB
success story?
Share it with us!
Call Carmen at 425-1334**

Around the Office

(This new column will update the band on new employees with the LLRIB. Department heads, human resource officers and administrators in each of the six communities are invited to e-mail or fax names and short biographies of new employees to communications officer Carmen Pauls Orthner. See page 14 for submission information.)

John Sanderson, Recreation Worker (JRMCC)

Looking for some practical job experience, John applied for the recreation position. John most recently worked with the local health district before joining the band's recreation program. John's academic history includes numerous scholarships.

Philip Sanderson, Custodian (Band Office)

One of our most recently hired employees is Philip Sanderson. Philip is employed as the custodian providing janitorial service in the band office. He comes to the position after a



Elder Henry Roberts accepts an award honouring the contributions of the Lac La Ronge police management board, at the 6th annual Northern Justice Symposium in Prince Albert on Sept. 12.

long history of employment with the local sawmill.

Otto Fietz, Director of Education

Of the 24 candidates who applied for the director position vacated by Gladys Christiansen, Otto Fietz was hired for the top job in the band's education department. Otto most recently served as the Multi-Disciplinary Team Leader in the Health department's Prevention & Recovery Program, addressing FASD issues and prevention. His background is in teaching and he served as a principal at SMVS. Otto has a degree in Education and requires the completion of his thesis to attain his Master's degree.

Pauline Finlayson, Special Needs Tutor (CMRS)

Pauline is returning to Chief Moses Ratt School, this time as a tutor. She worked there in the past as a guidance counsellor for about five years. In July, Pauline completed her contract position as coordinator for the Northern Women's Network office in Sucker River.

Bella Sanderson, Behavioural Tutor (SMVS)

Bella Sanderson is one of the new tutors at SMVS. She previously worked with the Community Action Program for Children (CAPC) and the La Ronge Native Women's Council. She also has a background in the day-care and group home settings. Bella attained a two-year certificate in early childhood education in 2005.

Morris Cook, Vice Principal (SMVS)

Another position where there was a high degree of interested candidate was the VP position at SMVS, eventually filled by Morris Cook. Morris, who has two degrees, B.A. and B.Ed (Honours), is originally from Stanley Mission, where he worked at RHMKHS for the past three years. Morris has a strong sense of cultural identity and is fluent in the Cree language. Morris comes to the position with numerous accomplishments and experiences. He is a former provincial judo champion.

Jude Ratt, Guidance Counsellor (SMVS)

Jude is a former probation officer with the Province. However, a desire for a less stressful job and a new experience enticed Jude to apply for the SMVS guidance counsellor position. Jude has an extensive work history, most of it in the human service field. His sense of humour and friendly attitude should serve him well in his new job.

Donna McKenzie, Special Education Teacher (SMVS)

Donna recently graduated from the NORTEP program with a Bachelor of Education degree. She has served previously as a tutor in her home community of Stanley Mission for five years before deciding to back to school. She also spent one year as a Life Skills tutor at Senator Myles Venne School, familiarizing herself with the school and students. Donna is deeply proud of her Cree culture and language. Her sporting interests include coaching hockey and volleyball. She loves the outdoors, especially fishing, hunting and camping.

Percy Mirasty, Garbage Truck Operator

Having worked as a casual driver for the Public Works/Housing department almost two years, Percy earned himself a permanent position as the garbage truck operator. Over the years, Percy has worked for the band in various capacities. He obtained his A1 license though the Northern Resource Trucking truck driving program.

Chris Ratt, Carpenter Supervisor

Chris is a journeyman carpenter who was hired as the carpentry supervisor. With the increase of housing activity in La Ronge, someone was needed to supervise all carpentry projects and employees in the housing department. Chris's new job also involves organizing the ordering and delivery of construction material to the projects site, and dealing with contractors on behalf of LLRIB.

Tanya Friesen, Secretary/Receptionist

Tanya joined the Public Works/Housing department as the full-time secretary/receptionist. Tanya comes to the position with a strong background in the information technology field, having obtained certification from Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies.

Jessica Miller, Data Entry Clerk

Jessica has worked on a casual-basis on several occasions for different band departments. Recently she was hired for a one-year term as a Data Entry Clerk with the Public Works/Housing Department.

E. Marie Genereaux, BPES Special Needs Tutor

Marie was one of two tutors hired at Bell's Point Elementary School. Marie worked previously with PAGC prior to coming to work for LLRIB. She is one of the few women to work as heavy equipment operator and was employed casually with the Public Works/Housing Department. Having completed a year of SUNTEP (U of S), Marie returned to the education field and hopes to eventually return to complete her teacher studies.

Eric Kemp, Bus Driver (SMVS)

Eric was recruited to fill the vacant bus driver position with the Senator Myles Venne School. Over the summer, Eric also provided his services on weekends to the Public Works/Housing filling in on a casual basis driving the water truck.

Katrina Irving, Recreation Facility and Program Manager (JRMCC)

Previously employed with PAGC, Katrina returned to her home community to take up the vacant JRMCC manager position. The position had not been filled for sometime due in part to the large number of candidates meeting specific qualifications. Katrina has an exceptional background in administration, specifically in the accounting field. Her skills and experience will be a welcomed addition to the recreation program.

Emery Olsen, Information Technology (IT) Administrator

Emery was hired as the IT administrator. Emery has an extensive background in the computer field. He is responsible for maintaining the network server in the band office and providing computer support services for the various departments.



Hall Lake community leader Thompson Halkett and his wife Polly Halkett share a laugh under the starblanket presented to them May 25 as a 50th wedding anniversary gift by Chief Tammy Cook-Searson and former chief Harry Cook. The Halketts marked their anniversary by renewing their vows in a special ceremony held at the local Anglican church, and celebrating – with much confetti and feasting – in the company of friends and family members.

Back to the force

Russ Mirasty has re-donned his red serge.

After leaving the RCMP in 2005 to return home to La Ronge to serve as the band's executive director, Mirasty decided this spring to return to the national police force. But this time, he's not straying quite so far from home – he's now based out of Prince Albert, as the superintendent in charge of "F" Division's north district, which makes him the overseer for all of northern Saskatchewan's RCMP operations.

Mirasty, who had completed 29 years of service with the RCMP prior to his short-lived "dis-engagement", is a natural choice for the north district supervisory position. He is the highest-ranked Aboriginal officer in the RCMP, and served as head of "F" Division's aboriginal policing unit before relocating for a time to Prince Edward Island. He also grew up in La Ronge, and he and his wife Donna have built a home in the community. Donna and their daughter Jennifer are both working for LLRIB Health Services, and Mirasty continues to come home on weekends.

At Mirasty's farewell in March, Chief Tammy Cook-Searson spoke warmly of his commitment, high-quality work, and deep sense of integrity, noting that Mirasty has "a big heart for serving the best interests of the people."

Like his job as the band's executive director, Mirasty's new role involves both financial and human resource management, and his experience of returning home has given him a leg up in resuming work with the RCMP. Not only did he get to brush up on his Cree, which enables him to talk more easily with a broader range of northerners, he also learned a lot about his own community, First Nations governance, and the interaction between First Nations and the federal government.

"Knowing the community that you're working with... gives you a better understanding of the issues and challenges that a community faces," Mirasty said. "Coming from there ensures that I have that knowledge."



Russ Mirasty (shown during a visit to Stanley Mission as aide-de-camp to Lieutenant-Governor Gordon Barnhart) is now back with the RCMP, serving as superintendent in charge of all the detachments in the northern part of Saskatchewan.

Blake Charles takes over as executive director



Blake Charles brings a familiarity with both traditional teachings and modern business and education practices to his role as the band's executive director.

When Mirasty, who had been with the band since August 2005, chose to resume his 29-year career with the RCMP, Charles decided to apply for the executive director's position. "I know the band well enough that I felt confident I could do the job," he said. "Chief and council need to utilize a person who is versatile, who understands where the people are coming from... and they need someone who is skilled and educated, so they can realize (the goals of) their strategic plan."

As executive director, Charles is not the decision-maker; that is the role of chief and council. The band's recently-completed five-year strategic planning process – which Charles was involved in as part of the education department's management team – set out the vision; Charles' role will be to guide the implementation of those goals. "The key theme in my role is to separate the politics and the governance of the communities from the management of the programs," he said. "We have all the ingredients in place."

Over the course of his career, Charles has come to realize that a strong, assertive stance is needed if the band is to achieve its aims, both economically and socially. "We can't wait for the government or general society to come and 'rescue' us," he said. "We need to make those decisions for ourselves in order to sustain our economic development, our housing, and our education, and we need to determine where we want to go with that (development)."

"I also sense there's a real desire amongst community people to get well," he said.

"They're tired of being in poverty... (and tired of) disempowerment, not getting those opportunities (to succeed). We have to make those opportunities – that's the key."

One of Charles' tasks in achieving those aims will be to create partnerships and strength alliances that will allow the band to access resources – financial and otherwise – while making it clear that the LLRIB membership will not be used, manipulated or made dependent on outside groups, including other governments. "There has to be a relationship that benefits both sides... not only when a financial contribution is expected," he said. "I hope to build those bridges."

Growing up on his family's trapline, Charles learned that it was possible to make a living off of their own resources, through co-operative effort, resourcefulness and hard work. "You can't depend on someone all the time.... Community and co-operation are important, but each has to do their share," he said.

He hopes to model that approach in his new job. "It's so important to do things, and not just talk about them. I am what I do, not what I say," Charles said, concluding with a favourite quote: "I need a little less thunder in the voice, and a little more lightning in the hand."

Employment Profile Human Resources – La Ronge Administration (Includes Sucker River and La Ronge only)

Number of Full-Time Employees by Department/Program
As of May 8, 2007
(Information supplied by Kevin Roberts, Human Resources Officer)

DEPARTMENT/PROGRAM	LLRB	Full Time	Allocated	Not Allocated	TOTAL
Education, Training & Employment					
- Central Office	9				9
- Career/Resource Development Unit	12	1			13
- Recreational Program	7				7
- Residential Program	8				8
- Student Program	16				16
- Boarding Home Program	2				2
- Woodland Cree Enterprises	4				4
- Teachers/Principals (SMVS, RPS, CMBS)	22	4	3	18	46
- Professionals (SMVS, RPS, CMBS)	14	2	1	8	22
- Support Staff (SMVS, RPS, CMBS)	19	1		1	21
Public Works/Housing					
- Facilities/Housing	26			3	29
Administration					
- Administration/Personnel	11				11
- Day Program	1				1
- Government (Chief and Council)	3				3
- Executive	2				2
- RCMP Tripartite Agreement	1				1
- Land Management	1				1
Social Development					
- Welfare	4				4
- Band Membership	1				1
TOTAL	169	9	4	24	206
	(222)	(8)	(9)	(24)	100
PERCENTAGE (%) (May 8, 2007)	82.0	4.4	1.9	11.7	100
PERCENTAGE (%) (October 25, 2006)	(86.8)	(3.5)	(1.0)	(7.4)	100
NOTES					
Notes:					
- Numbers are based on payroll counts.					
- Numbers only include FTE permanent and FTE casual employees.					
- Numbers do not include casual employees.					
- Numbers do not include employees from the Kaminore group of businesses, Health, ETS, RMP, or the self-administered communities.					

Learn a Cree Word



English phrase:
"I am grateful it is summer."

ninanāskomon ī-nīpihk

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Translation and illustration supplied by the Gift of Language and Culture Project.



The mission of the
**Lac La Ronge Indian Band
Health Services Department**

is to provide
**quality, equitable and accessible program
and support by ensuring the holistic
well being and healing of each
member of our band communities.**

As a department of the Lac La Ronge Indian Band, our goal is to recruit qualified, educated professionals to return their skills, knowledge and expertise back to the LLRIB communities.

Qualified LLRIB members are a priority in recruitment for all LLRIB vacancies. The LLRIBHS ensures best practices are utilized pertaining to recruitment and retention.

*Within the department,
we house programs in the following areas:*

**Community Health;
Prevention & Recovery;
Home & Community Care;
Dental Therapy;
Medical Transportation;
Water Quality Monitoring;
Group Home for mental and/or physical
disabilities;
Information Technology;
Maintenance Services; and
Administration in all areas.**

*The individual programs provide specialized
services in the following areas:*

**Home Care Nursing;
Community Health Nursing;
Youth Wellness;
Maternal & Child Health;
Mental Health;
Addiction & Youth Suicide Prevention;
FASD Education;
Diabetes Education;
Dental Therapy; &
Management;**

We also hire people in other professions as required, to ensure that our members, clients and vendors receive the best services available from the Lac La Ronge Indian Band. Many of the LLRIBHS positions are entry level, and job training is provided/available.

All vacant competitions are posted on the SaskNetWork: www.sasknetwork.gov.sk.ca

*For more information on LLRIB Health Services
employment opportunities, please contact:*

MARILYN G. GALE,
Human Resource Officer
Direct line: (306) 425-1705
Phone: (306) 425-3600 Ext. 2139
E-mail: mgale@llribhs.ca

Medical taxi system now band-run

The band's health services department is now co-ordinating medical trips using its own vehicles rather than those of a private taxi company.

Until this spring, a private company was providing rides for band members needing transportation to medical appointments, through an arrangement with Health Canada's First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB).



Chief Tammy Cook-Searson was amongst the Saskatchewan First Nations leaders who gathered in Regina in June to welcome Princess Anne, daughter of Queen Elizabeth II, on her Saskatchewan tour. Here, the Princess Royal chats with attendees at a presentation where she accepted a traditional First Nation shawl as a gift. Princess Anne was also given a new name: White Wolf Woman. (Photo by Joshua Sawka. Copyright 2007, The Leader-Post. Used with permission.)

Recently, however, FNIHB decided to instead pay individual First Nations to purchase and maintain vans, and to hire a co-ordinator and drivers to provide this service.

For Lac La Ronge band members, that will mean both employment opportunities and the advantages of a service operated under the band's jurisdiction. "We've got a big learning curve in learning to run a medical transportation service, but we hope to have the service run as effectively as possible, and provide a culturally-appropriate, friendly service," said health director Mary Carlson. "We're looking to make sure people are treated with respect and kept safe (on medical trips)."

The new service will include six vans for the La Ronge area, one for Grandmother's Bay and one for Hall Lake. Sucker River will be served by the La Ronge or Grandmother's Bay drivers. The service will be available 365 days a year, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, with two of the drivers on call for emergency after-hours (ie. after 4:30 p.m. and before 8 a.m.) trips. All of the vehicles will be smoke-free.

As per existing policy, please remember to give the office 24 hours notice for in-town medical appointments and one-week notice for out-of-town appointments. For emergencies, call any time.

The medical transportation office will be located at the central band office on Kitsaki reserve, rather than at the clinic. During regular office hours, leave a message if you are unable to reach a clerk, and they will return your call as soon as possible.

**Medical taxi phone numbers:
425-4939 • 1-877-768-3888**

Healthy relationships

What is a healthy relationship? You might hear that you should get out of unhealthy or harmful relationships, but what does a healthy relationship look like?

Here are a few suggestions of what to look for in a healthy relationship:

1. Happiness
2. Trust
3. Love
4. Affection
5. Equality
6. Mutual respect
7. Friendship
8. Laughter
9. Common interests
10. Support
11. Honesty
12. Strong self-esteem
13. Acceptance
14. Comfort
15. Kindness
16. Communication
17. Humour/fun
18. You can be yourself, without pretending or putting on a "mask" emotionally
19. No fear of the other person in the relationship
20. Still have your independence
21. Fair fights

If your relationship is lacking most or some of these qualities, you may want to consider communicating with your partner to let him or her know how you feel. If that doesn't work, you may want to seek professional help.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact Heather Jansen, youth wellness worker, at the Jeannie Bird Clinic. Call 425-1735 or send an e-mail to hjansen@llribhs.ca.

For related health services in the Stanley Mission area, call 635-2090 (clinic) or 635-2152 (mental health).

Media scholarship winners announced

The Missinipi Youth Foundation scholarship selection committee has chosen seven scholarship recipients for the 2007-08 school year.

The MYF scholarships are awarded to northern youth who are undertaking post-secondary studies in the area of media skills and electronic media communications. The MYF partners with Missinipi Broadcasting Corporation to present the annual scholarships.

"We wish the scholarship recipients every success in their educational endeavours," said Deborah Charles, chief executive officer for Missinipi Broadcasting Corporation.

Lac La Ronge Indian Band member Kaylene Bell of La Ronge and Janelle Roy, a Metis student from Ile-a-la-Crosse each received \$1,500 toward their studies at the Western Academy of Radio and T.V. Broadcasting in Saskatoon.

Receiving \$1,000 scholarships are:

Cassandra Opikokew of Meadow Lake, a member of the Canoe Lake Cree Nation, who is in her fourth year at the University of Regina School of Journalism;

Trudy Stewart of Meadow Lake, enrolled in the fourth year of Indian Communication Arts (INCA) program at First Nations University in Regina;

Ntawnis Piapot of Piapot Cree Nation, enrolled in the third year of the INCA program;

Penny Smoke of Fishing Lake First Nation, also enrolled in the third year of the INCA program;

and Reba O'Watch of Okanese First Nation, who is entering her second year in the INCA program.

2007 Grade 12 graduates

Little Red River School, Little Red River

Ashley Ballantyne
Shari Bell
Shannon Bird
Chrissy Cook
Jay Halkett
Josha Halkett
Michelle Halkett
Precious Halkett
Sean Halkett
Cindy-Lou Mirasty

Sally Ross School, Hall Lake

Melody (Ambie) Eyahpaise
Nina Halkett
Kristy Landry
Christopher (Kris) Ross
Eliza Ross
Melissa Ross

Senator Myles Venne School, La Ronge

Cindy Bear
David Bird
Carmen Fiddler
Georgette McLeod
Isaac (Junior) McKenzie
Samantha McKenzie
Shandi Mirasty
Raylene Powder
Jessica Sanderson
Connie Simpson

Churchill High School, La Ronge

Kaylene Bell
Kristen Charles
Alysha Cook
Norman Halkett
Christopher Ratt
Shirley Ray Larsen
Roxanne Roberts

Rhoda Hardlotte Memorial Keethanow High School, Stanley Mission

Carol Ballantyne
Vanessa Ballantyne
Cheryl Charles
Kimberly Charles
Martha Charles
Nora Charles
Robyn-Faye Dorion
Lorraine Fiddler
Conrad McKenzie
Adrienne McLeod
Greg McLeod
Philip McLeod
Michael Roberts

Other schools

Patricia Kinch
St. Mary High School, Prince Albert
Crystal Thompson-Halkett
Wesmore Community High, Prince Albert
Ernestine Ray
Hector Thiboutot School, Sandy Bay
Samantha Naytowhow
Sturgeon Lake School, Sturgeon Lake
Crystal Whiteman
St. Mary High School, Prince Albert
Quinn McKenzie
Carlton Comprehensive, Prince Albert
Ira Cook — Reindeer Lake School, Southend

2007 post-secondary grads

First Nations University of Canada/University of Saskatchewan

Esther Keighley – Nursing

First Nations University of Canada

Susan Cook – Bachelor of Arts
(Indian Studies)
Theresa Helary – Certificate in Continuing
Education – Administrative Development
Tammy Ratt – Bachelor of Education

Northlands College

Susan Church – Continuing Care Assistant
Bonnie Severight – Continuing Care
Assistant
Patricia Halkett – Continuing Care Assistant
Corrina Caisse – Continuing Care Assistant
Patricia Halkett – Continuing Care Assistant
Selena Hancheroff – Continuing Care
Assistant
Ida Charles – Office Education
Kimberly Charles – Office Education
Myra Lynn McKenzie – Office Education
Carol Charles – Office Education
Terri Bradfield – Office Education

Northern Teacher Education Program/Northern Professional Access College (NORTEP/NORPAC)

Michelle Charles – Bachelor of Arts
Gloria Smith – Bachelor of Arts
Laurie Smith – Bachelor of Arts
Donna McKenzie – Bachelor of Education
Lena Bird – 2nd year Arts Recognition

Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies (SIIT)

Debbie Jo Bell – Management Studies II
Brenda Gail Bird – Management Studies II
Roxanne Bird – Management Studies II
Sarah Ratt- Charles – Management Studies II
Brooke Clarke – Management Studies II
Dolly Hancheroff – Management Studies II
Mary Lariviere – Management Studies II
Nora Lavallee Roberts – Management
Studies II
Molly McKenzie – Management Studies II
Susan McKenzie – Management Studies II
Georgina Ratt – Management Studies II
Michael Ratt – Management Studies II
Nancy Ratt – Management Studies II
Sally Roberts – Management Studies II
Mary Ross – Management Studies II
Clara Sanderson – Management Studies II
Loretta Tremblay – Management Studies II
Joyce Wood – Management Studies II
Daniel O'Shea – Teacher Assistant
Robert Mirasty – Management Studies II
Marlene Ratt – Office Management
William Dupre – Management Studies I
James Mirasty – Information Technology
– Yr. II

SUNTEP

Ramona Cook – Bachelor of Education

University of Saskatchewan

Crystal Eninew – Bachelor of Arts
(3-year Sociology) with Distinction

Note: some names were unavailable at press time. Look for more in our next issue.

Sally Ross School celebrates first Grade 12 grad

Hall Lake celebrated its first-ever high school graduation on June 15, honouring not only six young women but the impressive achievements of their elders.

As the new Grade 12 graduates seated at the head table – Melody (Ambie) Eyahpaise, Nina Halkett, Kristy Landry, Kris Ross, Eliza Ross and Melissa Ross – grinned at friends and family members amongst the large crowd gathered in the Sally Ross School gym speakers such as community leader Thompson Halkett (for whom the high school wing is named) and Cumberland MLA Joan Beatty paid tribute to the years of effort involved in bringing a full high school program to the community.

Highlights of the day included the graduates' grand entrance march with their escorts – chanted and drummed in by the newly-formed Hall Lake drum group – as well as the traditional rose presentation to the graduates' chosen supporters, the valedictory speech by Eliza Ross, gifts from the band, the Prince Albert Grand Council and the provincial government, and a tribute to retiring teacher Bertha Lafontaine To mark the uniqueness of the occasion, principal Pat Cardinal and teacher Kurtis Balon unrolled a special 2007 grad banner that will hang in the school.

The ceremonies wrapped up with the cutting of a specially-designed cake featuring icing photos of the new graduates in their robes and tassels, before the grads themselves headed off to La Ronge to dance the night away.



Principal Pat Cardinal and teacher Kurtis Balon hoist the graduation banner.



Thompson Halkett addresses the crowd at Sally Ross School.

A victory salute from the first Sally Ross graduating class.



You can, in fact, have your (face on a) cake and eat it too.



Joshua Roberts, a Lac La Ronge band member and Grade 8 student at Churchill School, and Louisa Caporuscio, education specialist with the Canadian Space Agency, listen as astronauts Barbara Morgan and Dr. Dave Williams answer Joshua's questions about space travel from on-board the NASA shuttle "Endeavour". The shuttle downlink was held at Northlands College's program centre on Aug. 20, a day before the "Endeavour" returned to Earth. Several other students from Pre-Cam and Churchill also participated.



Coming... next issue

Look for these articles in the December issue of
The Cree Communicator:

- *Our soldiers in Afghanistan*
- *CanSouth: business partnerships in Panama*
- *Stanley Mission's Junior Rangers*
- *The University of the Arctic*
- *Athletic accomplishments*
- *The Gift of Language and Culture project*
- *Cultural camps*
- *Little Red River's new water bottling business*
- *Wellness conference*
- *Students connecting with a model forest in northern Sweden*
- *Lieutenant Governor's youth leadership program*

**Plus much more from
all our band communities!**

Congratulations
to all of our students who have
completed studies in 2007,
including our Grade 12,
adult upgrading,
trades
and university grads.

Your hard work, perseverance
and dedication to your education
are an inspiration to us all.

Thank you for making us so proud.

We wish you continued success
in the years ahead,
and we look forward to seeing
what you accomplish.

Chief Tammy Cook-Searson,
council, staff and
membership of the
Lac La Ronge Indian Band



The Cree Communicator is the official newspaper of the Lac La Ronge Indian Band. Its goal is to provide effective and positive communication between the band's chief and council, staff and general membership, and celebrate the accomplishments of our band members.. This publication serves the 8,300-plus band members living off-reserve or in the six communities of La Ronge, Stanley Mission, Grandmother's Bay, Sucker River, Hall Lake and Little Red River.

LLRIB departments, staff and community members are encouraged to submit story ideas, photos and news about past and upcoming community events and band members' accomplishments.



The Cree Communicator

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Information about the Lac La Ronge Indian Band can also be found on-line at www.llrib.ca.

Articles by Carmen Pauls Orthner, communications officer, unless stated otherwise

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Caught on film

Clockwise from top:

Franklin Carriere teaches kids how to do goose calls on Canada Day.

A young dancer gets his hoops in order, during the opening celebrations for the RCMP Musical Ride in La Ronge.

Coffee break time at the Little Red River cultural camp.

Queen Elizabeth II's representative for Saskatchewan, Lieutenant-Governor Gordon Barnhart, chats with another "royal": Queen Trapper Sally McKenzie.

Junior Queen Trapper competitors race for the finish line in the snowshoeing competition in La Ronge.

Olympic gold medallist Sharon Firth shares some of her experiences during the LLRIB wellness conference.

RCMP constable Rhoda Catanzariti tries her luck in the fishpond game during treaty days at Grandmother's Bay.

Grit and determination – and a healthy dose of good humour – helped out these competitors in the tug-of-war contest, held at the Jonas Roberts Memorial Community Centre on National Aboriginal Day.

Dressed as an elder named "Mary", Dr. Rose Roberts shares some of the findings from her research into perspectives on cancer among the Woodland Cree. Roberts, who is originally from Stanley Mission, is a professor with the University of Saskatchewan College of Nursing. She presented her research at the Canadian Aboriginal Science and Technology Society (CASTS) conference in Calgary, Alberta.



Right: At former executive director Russ Mirasty's farewell party, Chief Tammy Cook-Searson thanks Mirasty for "time well spent".





Home at last

Top left: Joe Roberts pages through the newly-restored pulpit Bible at Stanley Mission's Holy Trinity Anglican Church. The Bible, the altar cloth and four memorial plaques were removed from the church last October for repair and restoration, and their return was celebrated in June with a service at the church, attended by community members, band councillors, and visiting dignitaries from the provincial government. Roberts served as the community liaison for the project.

Top right: Reverend Wilson Halkett leads the congregation in worship.

Left: After the service, Saskatchewan Lt.-Gov. Gordon Barnhart signs the church guest-book, under the watchful eye of Counc. Brian Hardlotte.

Samoans spread gospel through dance

A group of Christian performers from the South Pacific island of Samoa visited the band's schools, did a public performance at the Jonas Roberts Memorial Community Centre and also danced for the assembled

chiefs of the Prince Albert Grand Council during their gathering at the LLRIB council chambers in March.

The performers, who are part of a Youth with a Mission (YWAM) outreach team called "New Waves", use their island dances and drums not only to entertain, but to minister to First Nations people by showing that indigenous culture is a gift from God, worth treating with honour and respect. They also perform

feats of strength to show the power that comes from God.

"Our vision is to redeem the cultures in every indigenous people. We find here in Canada (that) native people are ashamed of their culture.... But their culture is from God. They're gifts from God," said performer Eseta Suluape.

"What we trying to do - we bring our culture in here and we are telling them how important our culture is. Our culture is from God. So we use our culture - we can dance, and were trying to bring that in to native communities."

The performers connected with the band through Adam Atkinson, a former La Ronge resident who now works with YWAM in Medicine Hat, Alta., and through the Big Stone Christian Fellowship. This was their second visit to the La Ronge area.



Left and right: Performers from Samoa bring both their Christian faith and the brilliant colours and rhythms of their South Pacific home and other tropical islands to La Ronge.

Below: The Samoans with Price Albert Gran Council Chiefs and Councillors

