



# ELDERS ROCK

DECEMBER 2, 2008

URBAN ABORIGINAL ELDERS NEWSLETTER

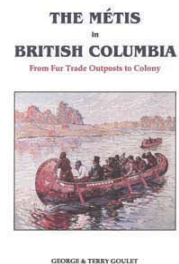
VOLUME 1, NUMBER 1

## Elders Camp a Success

The verdict is in; the Elders had a fantastic weekend! Elders, youth and volunteers came together to share their knowledge, work and learn together. It was a powerful weekend, filled with laughter, sharing, ceremonies, drumming, good music, stories, and great food. I think that most of us haven't laughed that hard in a long time and felt quite refreshed and uplifted. On the ride back into town we were lucky enough to see Eagles swoop in front of the bus.

## The Métis in British Columbia

George and Terry Goulet had a presentation at CNC and UNBC. Their book, *The Métis in British Columbia: From Fur Trade Outposts to Colony* focuses on the contributions made by Métis historical figures to the development of British Columbia. CNC is considering using this book as a part of the curriculum for the Métis Studies program.



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## Louis Riel Day

If you didn't get a chance to attend Louis Riel day, you missed out on a lot of fun. It was a full house! The kids did an awesome job dancing, Bev Lambert from Vancouver taught the children new steps, and there was face painting and crafts, as well as a silent auction. For the adults, there was a variety of interesting guest speakers. The food was great (thank you to the people from Grama's Inn). All in all, it was a lot of fun and there was a really good turnout.

## Winston Wuttunee Awesome



Winston was amazing. Most people will agree that his stories, wisdom and songs were powerful. Everybody learned from his different ceremonies, especially the teachings of the Eagle Feather and teachings about dreams. The youth got a kick out of his campfire stories and Johnny Cash impressions.

## Health Article: A Changed Lifestyle: Older Aboriginal Adults

### How It Was

Traditionally, Canadian Aboriginal communities have highly esteemed their ageing members, turning to grandmothers and grandfathers for advice, teaching, and guidance in raising children and maintaining traditional cultural practices. Throughout history, senior members of Aboriginal communities have transmitted ancestral wisdom and played active roles in the everyday life of the community. Seniors' contributions provided both a link to the past and a bridge to the future (Government of Canada, 1996b).

The day-to-day survival of community members depended on everyone's ability to contribute to each family's well-being. Seniors worked side-by-side with children, young people, and other adults to provide food, shelter, clothing, and recreation. In particular, seniors transmitted knowledge about their language, traditional hunting practices, medicinal treatment, and other crucial knowledge. The active contributions of elderly members to a great extent defined the social structure of Aboriginal communities. This role made physical stamina a necessity for Aboriginal seniors (Cyr & McFarlane, 1999, p2).

### How It Is Now

However, modern ways of life have brought dramatic social changes. Many Aboriginal seniors are no longer considered productive members of their society. Modern conveniences, electronic gadgetry, improved medical treatment, and changing family structures meant that many Aboriginal seniors now have little opportunity to contribute to their own community. The important roles they once played have been replaced or eliminated completely. Now that physical strength is no longer necessary, many seniors face infirmity, diminished physical capacity, and a general decline in their health (Cyr & McFarlane, 1999, p. 2).

### *Seniors' Health and Physical Activity*

Chronic disease in Aboriginal communities is increasing: "the prevalence of five conditions: diabetes, cancer, heart disease, hypertension and arthritis/ rheumatism among First Nations exceeds that of all Canadians in all major age-sex groups...of particular interest is diabetes, which is extremely prevalent" (Health Canada & First Nations and Regional Health Survey National Steering Group, 1999, p. 58).

According to Ship and Tarbell (1997, p. 83) Such chronic diseases limit activity and in the cases of cardiovascular disease, hypertension, diabetes, and arthritis/ rheumatism, prevention and/or control call for the patient to undertake some form of physical activity, reaping physiological benefits that include more efficient blood circulation and breathing, more energy, improved muscle functioning, improved digestion, stronger bones, more supple joints, improved mobility and less chance of falls and accidents.

As well as the physical limitations of chronic diseases, seniors who live in isolation are prone to depression, loneliness, and inactivity of the mind and body that can cause them to withdraw into themselves (Crawford, 1979, p. 83).

### ***An Ageing Population***

The number of older Aboriginal adults is increasing. Since 1970, the life expectancy of Aboriginal men and women has increased by ten years (Indian and Northern Affairs, 1995, Table 1, p. 1). The number of Aboriginal seniors who identify with their Aboriginal heritage is expected to more than triple, from 23,000 in 1991 to almost 74,000 by 2016, with the largest increases being expected among registered Indians and Métis living in urban areas, while the smallest increase is anticipated among registered Indians in rural areas (CMHC, 1996, p. 22).

### ***Changing Family Structures***

Traditionally, North American Aboriginal family life has been characterized by the extended family system that included a man and woman, their children, and more distant relations (e.g., grandparents aunts, and uncles) living together in a mutually supportive environment.

Due to the social and geographical demands of industrial society, the nuclear family is gradually replacing this traditional Aboriginal family life (The Family, 1999). As a result, seniors have lost their important role in guiding and bringing up children. At the same time, the mutually supportive environment in which the younger generation looks after the needs of seniors in the same household has also been eroded (Government of Canada, 1996a).

### ***What Do These Changes Mean?***

Electricity, running water, and motorized vehicles have led to a sedentary lifestyle. The touch of a dial or the turn of a faucet or ignition key provides instant power, water and transportation, eliminating the need to chop and haul wood for heat and cooking, carry water, or walk to a destination.

The physical demands of a traditional lifestyle used energy that resulted in a sense of accomplishment at the end of a day. Seniors' roles as partners in the work of the society required them to remain active, teach younger members, and provide essential services to their communities. Active involvement in the life of the community also meant that seniors maintained their health, mental capacity, productivity, and social position as leaders and guides in the areas of spirituality, ethics, and traditional wisdom.

These social changes are not unique to aboriginal communities, but significantly affect a society that once relied heavily on its senior members to maintain traditional cultural mores, values and customs.

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## Fun and Games

### Proverbs

“Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.”

~ Henry Ford

“If you can laugh together, you can work together”

~ Robert Orben, US magician and comedy writer

### Bible Quote - Romans 12:8

If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.

## Jokes

### *Bannock*

The old Chief was on his death bed. He had only hours to live when he suddenly smelled the scent of fry-bread wafting into his room. Aaahhhh... he loved fry-bread more than anything else in the world.

With his last bit of energy, he pulled himself out of bed, down the stairs and into the kitchen he went. There was his beloved wife kneading the dough for a new batch. As he reached for one of the fresh steaming fry-breads, he got smacked across the back of his hand by the wooden spoon his wife was holding. "Leave them alone!" she said. "They're for the funeral!"

### *Political Correctness*

I think the political correctness is getting ridiculous. Today I overheard a little boy say he was going to go play a game of Cattle Management Specialists and Native Americans.

### *The Vegetarian*

What do you call an Aboriginal vegetarian?  
A bad hunter.

### *Immigrants*

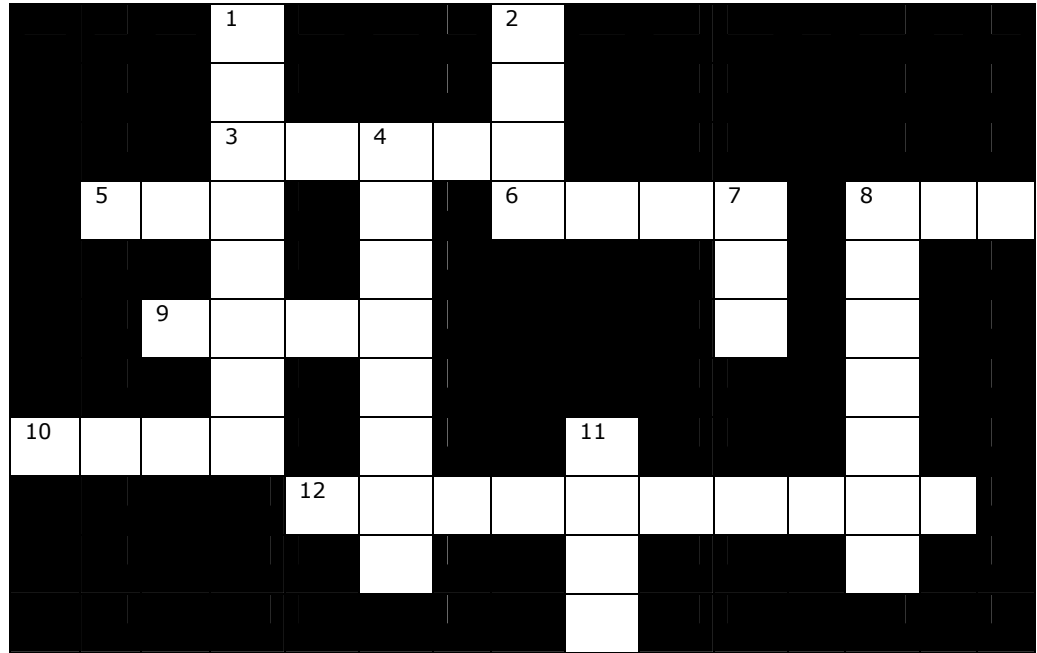
A Chief had to leave for a few weeks; he left his son to look after the tribe. When he came back he asked how it went.  
S. Dad I have good news and I have bad news.  
C. Let me hear the bad news first.  
S. We had 15,000 immigrants cross the reservation last week.  
C. What's the good news?  
S. They tasted like buffalo.



# Puzzles

## Dak'elh Crossword Puzzle

How well do you know the Carrier language? The words are in Carrier. Glodel (°) marks are in their own box. Answers on last page.



### Across

- 3. Hello
- 5. Good, nice
- 6. Ouch
- 8. This
- 9. Day
- 10. Here (this place)
- 12. I am well

### Down

- 1. One day
- 2. True, Truly
- 4. How are you?
- 7. Because
- 8. And you?
- 11. Thank you



## Upcoming Events

### Good Grief For the Holidays

Grief can be difficult at anytime, particularly at holidays. This workshop will provide an opportunity to discuss ways to help you cope with your grief during the holiday season. Phone or email to register.

**Location:** Domano Renewal Centre - #110 Southridge Avenue

**Date:** Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup>

**Time:** 10 am to 12.30 pm

**Cost:** \$10 or admission by donation

**Contact:** Beverly Bobola 250 964 4475 – [drc@netbistro.com](mailto:drc@netbistro.com)

### Free Swim

This is a fun way to spend time with your grandchildren, and good exercise! Free locker tokens are provided as well.

**Location:** Aquatic Centre

**Date:** Sunday, December 14<sup>th</sup>

**Time:** 4 pm to 6 pm

**Cost:** Free

### Eagles Pancake Breakfast

Enjoy a delicious pancake breakfast.

**Location:** Eagles Hall - 6742 Dagg Road

**Date:** Sunday, December 14<sup>th</sup>

**Time:** 8 am to 11.30 am

**Cost:**

**Contact:** 250 962 7005

### Foot Care Clinic

Nurses from "We Care" do complete foot care. By appointment only.

**Location:** Senior Activity Centre – 425 Brunswick Street

**Date:** Wednesday, December 17<sup>th</sup> and Thursday December 18<sup>th</sup>

**Time:** 9 am to 3 pm

**Cost:** \$20.00

**Phone:** 250 564 3287

### Celebration of Lights

Enjoy the beautiful Christmas village, rides on the Cottonwood Railway, hot chocolate and roasting hot dogs around a bonfire and skating. Santa will be there!

**Location:** Prince George Railway and Forestry Museum

**Date:** December 18<sup>th</sup> to December 24<sup>th</sup>

**Time:** 4 to 8 pm

**Cost:** Free

**Contact:** Ranjit Gill 250 563 7351

*"Lack of communication will destroy things."*

**Elders Social - Christmas Dinner**

The Elders Social Christmas Dinner is going to be a lot of fun, Winston Wuttunee will be the MC and Santa will make an appearance. Seats are limited, and filling up fast so contact Bertha if you would like to attend.

**Location:** Prince George Native Friendship Centre

**Date:** Thursday, December 18<sup>th</sup>

**Time:** 5 pm

**Cost:** Free

**Contact:** Bertha Cardinal 250 564 3568 ext. 231

**Métis Christmas Dinner**

The annual Métis Community Christmas dinner will be potluck style (bring a salad or dessert). It is always a lot of fun, and Santa will be there with candy bags.

**Location:** Moose Hall

**Date:** Sunday, December 21<sup>st</sup>

**Time:** 5 pm

**Cost:** Free

**Contact:** Joyce 250 330 4224 or Tom 250 564 0166

**All My Relations**

There will be AA meetings on Sunday nights, followed with an after session smudge ceremony.

**Location:** Alano Club – 766 Alward Street

**Date:** Sundays

**Time:** 6 – 7 pm

**Cost:** Free

**Contact:** 250 563 9517

**Community Open Space Meeting**

There will be a two day meeting to discuss common objectives that the Elders could work together on for the betterment of the entire community. This meeting is open to the entire community! Please invite anybody who you think would be interested.

**Location:** Prince George Civic Centre

**Date:** February 18 – 19<sup>th</sup> 2009

**Time:** TBA

**Cost:** Free

**Contact:** Laura 250 563 6325 for more details.

