



Red River Current

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ATHLETES TO COMPETE IN ALASKA

Watch out Alaska here we come! Team Fort McKay had a strong showing at the Dene Games in Slave Lake last month. Seven Fort McKay athletes competed in the five traditional events of the Dene Games. The Fort McKay athletes that competed in the 2013 Dene Games were Star Grandjambe, Lane McKenzie, Reanna Whiteknife, Landon Richards, Riley Whiteknife, Alanis Laurent and Cole Marten. The team was managed by Stefany Guillen and coached by Mandy Mcredi. The Dene Games events are finger pull, pole push, stick pull, snowsnake and hand games.

The Dene Games also acted as qualifying event for Team Alberta North who will represent our region in the upcoming Arctic Winter Games being held in Fairbanks Alaska in March 2014. The following athletes will be representing Fort McKay on Team Alberta North at the Arctic Winter Games. Landon Richards (Placed 1st in the Junior Male category, Cole Marten – Placed 3rd in the Junior Male Category and Alannis Laurent – Place 2nd in the Junior Female category. Star Grandjambe will be an alternative in the Junior Female Category.

“The whole team performed well in the Dene Games,” says Simon

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ATHLETES QUALIFY FOR GAMES



FMFN LEADERSHIP TEAM

Jim Boucher, Chief
Raymond Powder, Councillor
David Bouchier, Councillor
Gerald Gladue, Councillor
Ruth McKenzie, Councillor

George Arcand, CEO
Larry Hewko, CFO/COO

ADMINISTRATION DEPT.

Dorothy McDonald Business Centre
General Delivery
Fort McKay, AB T0P 1C0
Phone: 780-828-2430

Hours of Operation:
Mon. to Thurs. - 8:30am - 4:30pm
Friday - 8:30am - 2:00pm

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SUBMISSIONS

Cort Gallup, Editor
If you have any photos, stories or ideas
for the Fort McKay Current, please
contact Cort at cgallup@fortmckay.com
or call 780-838-6061.

Dene Games athletes are Cole Marten, Landon Richards, Lane McKenzie, Coach Mandy Mercredi, Alanis Laurent, Manager Stefany Guillen, Cole McKenzie and Star Grandjambe. Missing Reanna Whiteknife and Riley Whiteknife,

(Continued from page 1)

Adams, Director of Community Services. "We are thrilled to have a solid contingent from Fort McKay that will be competing in the Arctic Winter Games in Alaska. They will represent us well. It will be an experience of a lifetime for them."

Adams says that Manager Stefany Guillen also put in a solid effort organizing training and the trip to Slave Lake for the Dene Games.

The team will now prepare for the Arctic Winter Games in Fairbanks Alaska, March 14 -22, 2014. The Arctic Winter Games is a high profile circumpolar sport competition for northern and arctic athletes. It includes a huge variety of winter sports including the Dene Games. For more information on the Dene Games see pages 14-15. Best of luck to our Athletes at the Arctic Winter Games and Go Team Alberta North!

DONNA GRANDJAMBE WINS STUDENT AWARD

Donna Grandjambe knows commitment. "When I do something I do it," says Grandjambe, "I don't half-ass it." Last month, Keyano College recognized Grandjambe's high level of commitment and presented her with the Student Award for "Commitment To Excellence." Grandjambe was presented the award at a formal Keyano College Students' Awards ceremony at the Keyano Theatre in Fort McMurray on Dec. 3, 2013. Grandjambe is a student at the Dorothy McDonald Learning Centre in Fort McKay. The adult learning centre is one of three Keyano College adult learning centres in the region. Grandjambe enrolled at the Dorothy McDonald Learning Centre last fall and is just weeks away from completing her first goal; obtaining her high school diploma. She hopes to upgrade her education after that so that she can become a Teacher's Assistant or Accountant. Grandjambe admits that she "was on the wrong path in her life", a path of destruction. She "decided to turn her life around" and channel her energy and focus towards something more productive.

Grandjambe modestly gives a lot of credit of her recent success to the Dorothy McDonald Learning Centre.

"There, they are willing to help you help yourself," says Grandjambe, who is also very grateful to her teacher Linda Mason. "She goes out of her way to help anyone of us," says Grandjambe about Mason. "Right now I'm afraid to go to school anywhere else because I am afraid I will not find anyone else like her. She is a great teacher."

Mason says Grandjambe is the one responsible for her recent success. "She (Grandjambe) really stuck at it," says Mason. "She has gone through tremendous circumstances and adversity, but she showed great perseverance." Congratulations to Donna Grandjambe!



Above: Donna Grandjambe after receiving her award at the Keyano College Theatre. Below: Grandjambe at the Dorothy McDonald Learning Centre in Fort McKay.



BISON HARVEST

You may soon be eating some of the best bison meat in North America at a family dinner in Fort McKay. Two 2-year-old bison were harvested December 3, 2013 at Fort McKay's bison harvesting facility. The bison were from Syncrude Canada's Bison Ranch that is celebrating it's 20th anniversary.

The highly successful commercial bison ranch is a partnership between Syncrude Canada and The Fort McKay Group of Companies (GOC). Syncrude provides the land, over 300 hectares of reclaimed land, and Fort McKay GOC operates the ranch.

"It has been one of the success stories of the Athabasca oil-sands," says Matthew Michetti, Stakeholder Relations Advisor with Syncrude Canada. "It has been a great reclamation project. It is a resounding success. It is one of the healthiest bison herds in North America."

The original herd came from Elk Island Park to their new home on grassland within the Syncrude lease.

An advisory committee from Fort McKay was then established. Committee members are now Wilfred Grandjambe, Joe Grandjambe, Harvey Rolland, Howard Lacorde, Melinda Stewart, Jean L'Hommecourt and Felix Faichney.

"They really helped us out, to make sure we were doing it right," says Michetti.

There have been some outside additions to the herd, but most



The bison harvesting crew above from left to right: **Travis Willier, Felix Faichney, Jeffrey Grandjambe, Joe Grandjambe, Wilfred Jr. Grandjambe Jr., and Site Commander Wilfred Grandjambe.** Right: **The ceremonial altar that was set up as part of the ceremony to give thanks to the animals and the Great Spirit.**

of the new bison are bred from the herd. In fact many bison farms purchase bison from the Syncrude Bison Ranch. They are highly sought after throughout the bison farming community in North America. Fort McKay Group of Companies manages the herd.



Harvesting families.
Left to right: **Joe Grandjambe, Didi Grandjambe, Joely Grandjambe 3, and Melinda Stewart.**

There are currently about 300 bison. Every year some of the Bison go to auction. It is some of the most prized bison within the Canadian Bison Association. The two bison harvested last month in Fort McKay turned 2 in the spring "so they should make good eating," says Michetti. The Bison Ranch is a commercial ranch, the bison are not pets.

used a 30-30 rifle.

Site Commander Wilfred Grandjambe says "it is very important for the younger generation. They might need it one day. It is very much like how we would dress a moose after killing it in the bush."

The newest member of the advisory committee, Felix Faichney, 17, was also one of the young Fort McKay members active in

They are tested every year. They get blood tests every year just like a person would get from a doctor. Staff veterinarians test for tuberculosis and other diseases. The First Nation hosted a traditional sweat the day before the harvest and then a traditional ceremony was held after the animals went down. Felix Faichney and Joe Grandjambe were the shooters at the Bison Harvest, they

the bison harvest.

"I think it is good for us to learn. Not everybody around here is going to be around forever," says Faichney. "We can come here, and learn, and carry on the traditions for years, to the next generation, like I am doing. I am here and I am learning and I will be able to carry it on to the next generation after me."

Victor Tazenzie, a pipe carrier and Family Support Worker at Fort McKay's Family Support Centre held the sweat and the traditional ceremony at the bison harvest.

"It is important to show respect to the animals and to give thanks," says Tessassaze.

Travis Willier, was another young bison harvester.

"It is a good experience. I like how they did the ceremony before we started cutting it up," says Willier.

Wilfred Grandjambe says that traditionally "all the animal is used. There will be almost nothing wasted."

He says the tails are even used. Ribbons and other decorations are added to them and they are then used for smudging.

Wilfred says the best meat, the softest and the tastiest are called the "Wetaskatan."

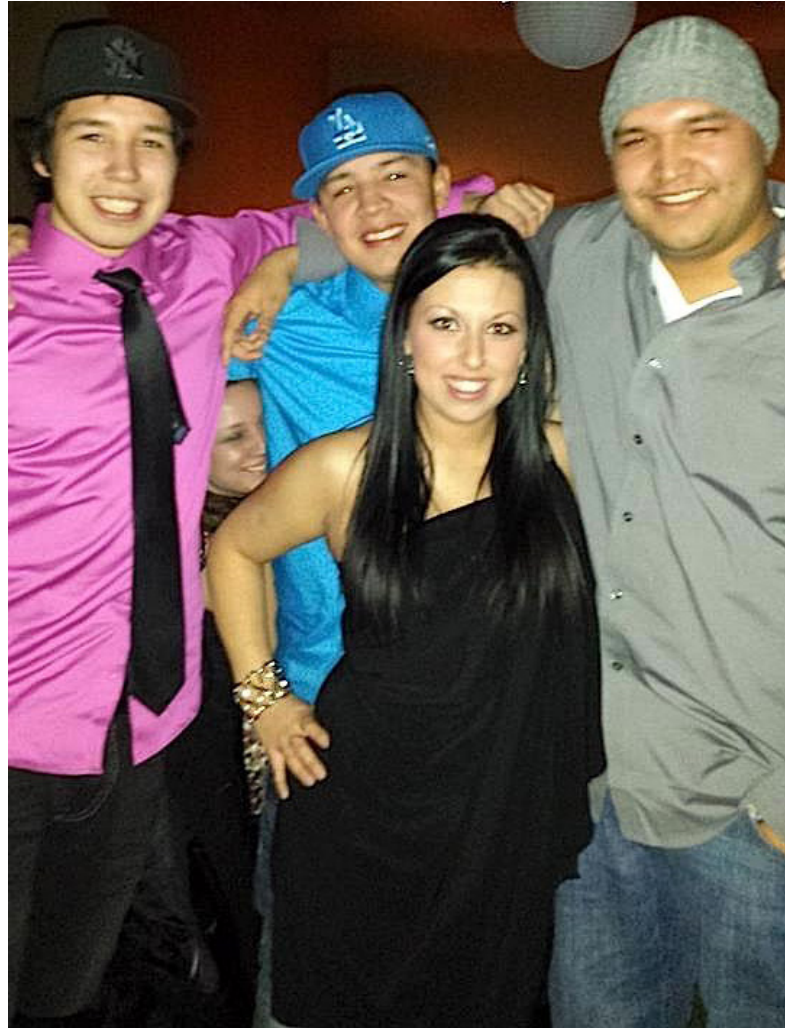
Joe Grandjambe says the "atabiss" is the white sinew that is used for threading and making snowshoes and other clothing." If you are a Fort McKay community member and would like some meat from the bison harvest, call Christine Flett at the Sustainability Department, 780-828-2480.

GOC CHRISTMAS PARTY

Over 250 Fort McKay Group of Company (GOC) employees and their guests partied at the extravagant annual GOC Christmas Party held this year at the Sawridge Inn Ballroom on Dec. 7, 2013. Employees, including many Fort McKay members, were acknowledged for milestones of several years of dedicated work.



On this page, above: Candis Boucher and Tyrone Courtoreille. **Top right:** Junior McDonald, Chris Grandjambe, Candace Fabian and Brad Fabian. **Bottom right:** David McClure, Shawn McClure and Riley McClure.



On this page, above: Dora L'Hommecourt was recognized for over 5 years of dedication at the Fort McKay Group of Companies (GOC).

Top right: Dennis Shott was recognized for over 6 years of dedication at Fort McKay GOC.

Bottom right: Tyrone Courtoreille and Sophie Powder were both recognized for over 5 years of dedication at Fort McKay GOC. (Photo bomber unidentified naturally)

On the cover page, bottom middle photo: Audrey Redcrow was acknowledged for over 10 years of dedication at the Fort McKay Group of Companies.



ELDERS' CHRISTMAS PARTY



Community members of all ages came together at the Fort McKay Elders' Christmas Party on December 5, 2013. The Fort McKay School Choir opened the festivities with a bang by singing their little hearts out. The Choir was followed by another beautiful performance by the Fort McKay Pow Wow Dancers. All then united in a round dance and enjoyed a delicious meal. Other entertainers that appeared were Roy Orbison, Neil Diamond, Tina Turner and Elvis Presley (impersonators). Santa was also there to present all Elders of Fort McKay with their own custom made moccasins. The event was presented by the Fort McKay Sustainability Department.





Community Awards BANQUET

February 21st, 2014.

Reception: 5:30 to 6:30 pm

Awards Ceremony 6:30 pm

At the Community Hall

AWARD CATEGORIES

Lifetime Achievement Award

Fire Fighter Service Award

Youth Role Model Award

Community Safety Award

Business of the Year Award

Culture Award

Mentorship Award

Community Enrichment Award

Community Engagement Award

Special Honours Award

Education Milestone Award

To nominate a community member for an award
phone Reinalie Jorolan at 1-800-738-8088 extension 23
or email: reinalie.jorolan@gmail.com

FORT MCKAY ELDERS' CENTRE CHRISTMAS LUNCH

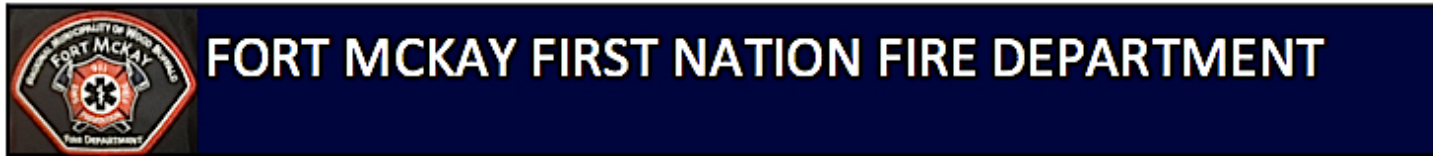


Stories and laughter echoed over the Christmas carols as the Elders of Fort McKay gathered in a joyous feast of turkey and all the trimmings on December 12, 2013. All Elders were presented with a Christmas gift. The annual Christmas lunch was hosted by the Fort McKay Elders' Centre.



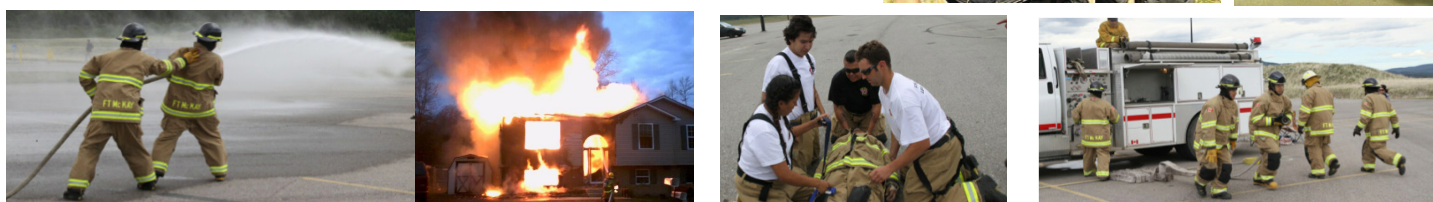
FORT MCKAY FIRE DEPARTMENT IS NOW RECRUITING

JOIN THE CREW, GET FIRE FIGHTER AND MEDICAL TRAINING,
AND SERVE YOUR COMMUNITY!



- PROFESSIONAL FIRE FIGHTER AND RESCUE TRAINING PROVIDED
- BASIC AND PROFESSIONAL MEDICAL TRAINING PROVIDED
- MUST BE PHYSICALLY FIT AND ABLE TO RESPOND TO EMERGENCY CALLS AT ALL HOURS

CALL DEPUTY CHIEF RON QUINTAL AT 780-799-2949



Fort McKay First Nation

&



Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business

Presents



Energy and the Oilsands Aboriginal Perspectives

January 23rd & 24th, 2014 at the Sawridge Inn & Conference Center, Fort McMurray

This conference is the first of it's kind and will address many of the key issues surrounding First Nations, Aboriginal business, economics, best practices, and the environment in Alberta.

Guest Speakers include: Chief Jim Boucher/Fort McKay First Nation, Chief Allan Adam/Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation, Minister Frank Oberle/Alberta Aboriginal Relations, David Tuccaro/President / Owner, Tuccaro Inc., JP Gladu/President & CEO, Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business, David Collyer/President, Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers, Dr. Kevin F. Nagel/President & CEO, Keyano College and many more distinguished panel experts.

Conference Emcee: Wab Kinew, Gala Emcee: Adam Beach.

Entertainment by: Don Amero.

Registration fee \$750/Conference Delegate, \$350/Banquet Participant,
\$1,000 Participation in all conference sessions and the Gala Banquet.

Adam Beach



A limited number of spots are available to community members at no cost to the community member. If you are interested in attending, please call Front Reception at FMFN at 780-828-2430 and say you are "interested in attending the Energy and the Oilsands – Aboriginal Perspectives Conference" and leave your name and phone number.

For the complete agenda or to register, go to www.fortmckay.com or www.ccab.com

Contact: Frederick McDonald at: frederickmcd@gmail.com or at: 1-780-370-8374



ATTENTION ALL FORT MCKAY BAND MEMBERS

YOUR NEXT QUARTERLY GENERAL MEETINGS ARE:

Fort McKay- January 13, 6:30PM at the Elders' Centre

Fort McMurray-January 14, 6:30PM at the Stonebridge Hotel

Edmonton-January 16, 7:00PM Chateau Nova-Edmonton

DENE GAMES

The Dene had many games that fostered strength and agility, patience and teamwork. The five games chosen are those that make up the Arctic Winter Games.

The games also transmit Dene worldview and as such contain many elements that help children and adults learn to relate to each other and understand the world.

These games are wonderful elements of positive good mental health. The games are fun and allow students to laugh and be amused by each other, key components of building self-esteem and youth spirit. These games are lifelong activities and promote lifelong physical activity. They require minimal equipment or facilities and therefore are not expensive like many other sports.

These games reinforce the power of Dene culture and the traditional ways that people were able to have fun on the land.

Before you try these games, it is important to read carefully how they are played, and how to prepare yourself to avoid injury. (denegames.ca)

Finger Pull

The Finger Pull game was used to help strengthen the fingers of the Dene and prepare them for the fishing season. The ability to catch and provide fish to Dene families and their dogs was very important in Dene culture. Often “stick fish” would be the main diet for many Dene families until the fall caribou hunts. Often fish were very large during the days of living in the bush and fish would have to be carried from the shore back to camp where the women would clean and prepare the fish. Fish would often be carried by inserting the middle finger into the gill area of the fish and carrying it. This required a lot of strength. In order to maintain their strength the Finger Pull game would be played.



Hand Games

The Hand Games were played years ago as a form of gambling among friends and different groups. Often the games were played to gamble for bullets, furs, dogs, toboggans, or stick matches. Today, however, the Hand Game is played in cultural centres, community carnivals and other events all over the Dene country as a friendly competition fostering community pride. The Hand Game is based on a simple concept of hiding and guessing of objects using elaborate hand signals and gestures to both find the object and hide the object.



Pole Push

The incredible journeys of the Dene are both extraordinary and difficult to comprehend for many people today. Often Dene would travel in their birch bark canoes hundreds of miles to the Barrenlands to hunt caribou, set traps or to visit family. In order to travel on these canoe trips there were many portages where the canoe would have to be emptied of gear and carried sometimes up to 15 or 20 kilometers to the next river and then they would have to return back for their gear. These journeys required strength, endurance, persistence and an innate sense of direction. In order to maintain their astonishing abilities for these grueling canoe trips, some Dene would practice the Pole Push. The Pole Push is similar to the tug-of-war game, but participants are using a 20 foot pole to try and push each other out of the circle.



Stick Pull

The Stick Pull game was used to help strengthen the hands and wrist of the Dene and prepare them for the fishing season. Often large fish swam along the shores and rivers enabling the Dene easy access. They would simply reach down and grab the fish near the middle of its back and throw it up on the land or shoreline. Though it may sound easy, the ability to grab a 20 pound whitefish or an aggressive Pike out of the water and toss it up on the shore required quickness, eye-hand coordination and incredible wrist and finger strength. Fish are often very slippery to hold and being able to grab a heavy fish out of the water is very difficult. So in order to remain strong and able Dene men would challenge each other in a stick pull.



Snowsnake

The Snowsnake game was used as a tool for killing caribou during the times when there were no guns. Dene people were intelligent and gifted hunters during a time when killing or not killing a caribou could mean life or death. Often in the early morning caribou would be found lying on the snow covered lakes. It was during this time that the Dene hunters would sneak out onto the lakes, hidden in the early morning darkness and throw their spear-like tool through the snow and into the caribou's stomach. This required incredible skill, not only to kill the animal but to be able to throw the spear with such amazing accuracy. In order to accomplish this feat time and time again, Dene hunters would practice their throwing techniques with the spear or as it is called today the Snowsnake.



For complete game preparation and rules visit denegames.ca.



SMOKE SIGNALS

HIDE TANNING 587-644-0772

To anyone that hunts and traps I know it is a lot of work to prepare and smoke a hide, but there are many people that want to learn. If you have a hide please donate it. It can be used to make moccasins and mukluks, and be used to continue our traditional teachings.

Rebecca Fabian 587-644-0772.

FORT MCKAY RECREATION 780-714-7094

Hockey Academy is on-going. Tuesday and Wednesdays for younger children, Fridays for the older age group 2:30pm-4:00pm.

Volleyball is back up and running on Mondays and Wednesday from 7:00-9:00pm.

Workout classes take place at noon on weekdays.

FORT MCKAY WELLNESS CENTRE 780-828-4312, 828-4403

Tutoring from 6:00pm-8:00pm for ages 6-12

YOUTH CENTRE 780-828-4462

Advance Tutoring on Tuesdays and Thursdays (math and science) from 6:00pm-10:00pm (this tutoring has been moved to the E-Learning classroom). Call Casey at 780-804-0709 for after hours band hall access.

Regular Tutoring is on Monday and Thursday 6:00pm-8:00pm. We re-opened on Monday January 6th.

SUSTAINABILITY DEPARTMENT 780-828-2480

The Sustainability Department is on a mission to update their community contact list. Please call the office at (780) 828-2480 and provide updated phone numbers so we can contact people for Community Consultation sessions.

The reason for this request is that phone numbers change so much and we are having a hard time contacting people.

FAMILY SUPPORT CENTRE 780-828-4048

Traditional Drumming and Singing lessons every Wednesday evening from 6:00pm-8:00pm at the Band Hall.

Mondays: ATC Child & Family Services, Foster Program & Family Enhancement, Alcohol Anonymous (AA) Meeting 7:00pm – 8:30pm.

Last Monday of every month: Probation/ Parole Services
Tuesday: Sharing circle 6:00pm - 8:00pm.

Wednesdays: Victim services – Victims of Crime support
Narcotics Anonymous (NA) Meeting 7:30pm – 8:30pm.

Thursdays: NEAFAN –North East Alberta FASD Network.
Men's Sharing Circle from 6:00pm-8:00pm.
Sweat Lodge starts at 1:00pm on Saturdays.

FORT MCKAY FIRE DEPARTMENT 780-799-2949

The FMFD is recruiting volunteers. Call Deputy Chief Ron Quintal at 780-799-2949.

FORT MCKAY COMMUNITY AWARDS 780-799-2949

February 21st, 2014.

Reception: 5:30 to 6:30 pm
Awards Ceremony 6:30 pm
At the Community Hall

AWARD CATEGORIES

Lifetime Achievement Award
Fire Fighter Service Award
Youth Role Model Award
Community Safety Award
Business of the Year Award
Culture Award
Mentorship Award
Community Enrichment Award
Community Engagement Award
Special Honours Award
Education Milestone

To nominate a community member for an award phone Reinalie Jorolan at 1800-738-8088 extension 23
reinalie.jorolan@gmail.com.

Granny

