

WIGWAM TO WIGWAM

YOUR HOUSE TO HOUSE NEWS

JANUARY 2010

THE NEW YEAR EDITION



A look at the year ahead:

2010 Winter Olympic Games:

February 12-28, 2010

Go Canada Go!!!!



The Inuksuk represents Canada as the symbol of the Olympic Winter Games in Vancouver.

2010 - The year of the Inuit:

2010 Year of the Inuit is an educational campaign spearheaded by Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, the national organization representing Canadian Inuit. Its goal is to increase awareness among the general Canadian population about issues facing the Inuit of Canada and celebrate Inuit accomplishments and achievements.



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IN THE NEWS

Education vital to aboriginal health; Information on effects of disease key to health, but it's often ignored, especially by young men By Elvira Cordileone, November 27, 2009, The Toronto Star (L5)

Fragrant smoke rises heavenward as Devon Davis takes his turn tending a sacred fire outside the Native Canadian Centre on Spadina Rd.

The fire is in honour of a recently deceased member of the community. It will be kept alive for four days, a beacon to help the spirit find its way back after making final visits to people and places it has known in the flesh.

Inside the centre, an auditorium-size room hums with activity. Most are seniors. Most are women. All, but the young women with clipboards standing in the sidelines, have diabetes.

They've come to attend a foot clinic offered by the Southern Ontario Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative, an effort by the provincial government to provide diabetes education and services from Ottawa to Windsor and north to Parry Sound.

Behind one of three screens lined up on one side of the room, Eleanor Pine, 69, reclines on what looks like a backyard lounge chair.

Her feet rest on a cushion as chiropodist Murtaza Najmudin works on them.

Pine has had Type 2 diabetes since 1980.

"I've seen people who've had severe problems and they didn't even know it until they came to one of these clinics," Najmudin says. "I've seen a host of infections. A small callous, like the one (Pine) had, can become an ulcer very quickly. That's why there's such a high rate of amputations."

Pine's feet are in good shape. She takes care of herself. She has "discipline," she says, and eats properly.

Not so her two sons, however, who both also have Type 2 diabetes. Pine says her sons, like many in her community, are careless about managing their diabetes.

"I've been to some of these programs and they're really good," Pine says. "But the people that should have really been there, they're not going, especially the males."

Dr. Stewart Harris, a professor at the Schulich School of Medicine at the University of Western Ontario, has studied diabetes in aboriginal communities since the early 1990s, when he served as medical director in Sioux Lookout.

"In my many travels, I was overwhelmed by the amount of diabetes. I thought, 'Can we quantify how big this is?'"

Harris, a family doctor trained in public health, has since focused his clinical and research career on diabetes, particularly among aboriginal people.

"This disease did not exist (in the community) 30 to 40 years ago. In the course of a little over one generation, it's become an epidemic," he says.

Today, rates of diabetes among Canada's aboriginal people are three to five times higher than they are in the general population.

In fact, 20 per cent of the more than 1.2 million registered Indians, Inuit and Metis in Canada have the condition, Amy Bell, a Health Canada policy adviser, writes in a June 2009 article in Diabetes Voice. Worse still, the incidence of diabetes is spiking among the community's children.

Type 2, which accounts for 90 per cent of diabetes cases, is on the rise worldwide. Harris refers to the disease as "diabesity."

The word describes both the illness and the cause - obesity and a sedentary lifestyle.

Genetic heritage puts some ethnic groups, such as aboriginal people, Afro-Americans and South and Southeast Asians, at higher risk than the general population, he says.

"We're talking in terms of developing a protective metabolism that allowed you to survive in the kind of environment where, one day, you're eating really well because you killed a moose. Let's say you go for a couple of days where there isn't a lot of food so you develop a metabolism that will store energy for maximal survival," Harris says.

When that metabolism takes in a constant supply of fatty food, instead of the lean protein it's used to, and does not have to expend much energy to collect that food, it's a perfect recipe for disease, he says.

Ashley Lamothe, 24, a Metis-Ojibway, is prediabetic. She says four of her immediate family members have diabetes.

A psychology student and president of the aboriginal student organization at Brock University, Lamothe works part-time helping run some of the 18 foot care clinics the Diabetes Initiative holds annually.

She says she has learned a lot about eating more healthily and getting more exercise to avoid becoming diabetic since she joined the organization.

"I used to work with aboriginal youth during practicums," she says. "They don't think about what they eat, about exercising. I see a lot of fast food."

Governments have been pouring a lot of money into education programs and services to drive the diabetes message home.

In 2005, the federal government allocated \$190 million over five years to maintain and enhance the Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative. Last year, Ontario announced \$741 million funding over four years for its overall diabetes strategy.

Meanwhile, Eleanor Pine will continue to admonish her sons, 50 and 33, for failing to show up at events that would teach them how to prevent their disease from spiralling out of control.

"I think a lot of people need a lot of education," says the soft-spoken elder.

IN THE NEWS

Her quest for justice started early; Nightmares from harrowing years as an Inuit exile haunt her, but Martha Flaherty will not back down By Paul Watson, November 30, 2009, The Toronto Star (A3)

A child resisted.

The white people running things on the journey to exile expected quiet submission from the Inuit and usually got it. There were no translators, so there was no use complaining. That wasn't how Inuit preferred to do things, anyway.

When they were herded into a damp, dimly lit hold and told to sleep on the steel floor, they made the best of the accommodations.

When medical staff told exile families to strip down in groups for their health exams, they suffered the humiliation in silence.

They did as they were told.

But calling out "Martha E9-1900," the number on a 5-year-old girl's government-issued ID tag, was like cocking a loaded pistol.

"If they had to give needles to us children, I was always the last one," Martha Flaherty remembers. "Five men had to hold me by each arm. And I've been fighting ever since."

Like many child exiles, Martha's life is a constant struggle with the trauma of being uprooted, dumped in a polar wasteland and then shifted from one residential school to another in a government effort to drain the Inuit from her.

"They didn't think that we have feelings too," she says, disgusted. "We were like prisoners up there."

Dredging up the memories, she cries hard, like a little girl, lost. Then a nervous twitter of a laugh snaps her back, and the fire is in Martha's eyes again.

Martha's mother, Rynee Flaherty, says her daughter was the most unruly kid on the ship that moved the second wave of High Arctic exiles in 1955 from Inukjuak, in northern Quebec, to Grise Fiord.

The C.D. Howe's crew only knew Martha was cute. They gave her candy or coins to pose for pictures with them. She thinks they liked her locks, longer and more flowing than other Inuit girls' coarse black hair.

Martha guarded hers closely.

When the ship's doctor, Otto Schaefer, decided all children would have their heads shaved to prevent a lice infestation, Martha wasn't going to stand for it. Suspecting he'd have a fight on his hands, the doctor left her till last.

Pursued by Schaefer with a pair of scissors, Martha scrambled under the bed of a sleeping girl, but the doctor's hand grabbed for her.

"I kicked him and went through the other end," Martha says. "I ran upstairs with my mother to the toilet and (we) locked ourselves in, crying." For the rest of the voyage, Martha was the only child with hair.

The ordeal only got worse. The ship steamed north through storm season and "all night and day, it was dark, rainy and stormy," Rynee says. "Everyone was throwing up."

The ship rocked back and forth so hard, the top of a steel tower almost disappeared in waves that crashed over the foredeck, Martha recalls.

"I remember them telling us to put on our life jackets because they thought we were all going to drown," she says. "I thought we were going to be dead for sure because the water was black."

For years, she has relived the storms in nightmares, waking up to the howl and whimper of terrified sled dogs lashed to the listing deck, and the Arctic wind and waves battering the ships' moaning steel hull.

One of the worst memories draws her eyes to the window, and she is back at the ship's railing, in the large hands of an RCMP officer.

"He hung me out over the water," she says, wiping away a tear. "Well, it was a joke for the RCMP. He probably was teasing me. But it was very scary for me."

Some of the most upsetting thoughts are of her father, and how hard the betrayal hit him.

Following what seemed a request from his adoptive father, Josephie Flaherty defied his instinct and brought the family to Grise Fiord. When he got there, his father was dead and Grise Fiord a nightmare.

"After a few years, he would walk back forth, back and forth, thinking so hard," Martha says. "My mother had to snap him out of it. He wanted to go back (home) so bad."

The RCMP eventually told Martha's parents to give her up. She was sent to residential schools, then to a foster home in Carcross, Yukon, where she attended public school. She was mute for a year until the system gave up and sent her home.

Aboriginal healing has helped her speak of horrors she spent a lifetime keeping locked in her mind.

But the anger of exile is always with her, at times self-destructive, at others channelled into an endless struggle for justice. She has hosted an Inuktitut-language CBC television show, worked as an MP's aide on Parliament Hill, and been a fierce advocate of women's rights as president of Pauktuutit, the Inuit Women's Association Of Canada.

Making so much of a broken life is like emerging from a long freeze.

"They wanted us to disappear," she says. "But we refuse to disappear. We're like dough. Every time you press us, we rise. We're not going to disappear especially me."

MAINTENANCE



NEW SMART METERS



Why has the Province mandated the use of smart meters?

Between now and 2025, Ontario must build almost a whole new electricity system. This includes replacing about 80 per cent of our current generating facilities as they retire over time, and expanding the system to meet future growth. Building new supply is vital. So is conservation. That's why the Government of Ontario is introducing new tools like smart meters that will encourage all of us to think more about how and when we use electricity.

Smart meters measure hourly electricity use, so electricity prices can be different at different hours of the day. That better matches the way prices work in the electricity market, and will encourage us to think more about how and when we use electricity. As we move consumption away from the more expensive (peak) times of the day, we can help Ontario reduce its peak demand, which can help limit the building and operation of peak generating facilities.



City Waste Program

Hold on! The Blue Bin won't accept just anything.

NO Top 10 Bin Sins
 propane cylinders | clear plastic food containers | medical waste | tools & scrap metal | toys | clothes
 plastic blister packs | small appliances | cassettes, CDs & DVDs | plastic pails with metal handles

If you don't recycle properly, we can't either. Learn the ins and outs at toronto.ca/recycling



What goes in the Green Bin?

YES

- Fruit and vegetable scraps
- Meat and fish products
- Pasta, bread and cereal
- Dairy products, egg shells
- Coffee grounds and filters, tea bags
- Soiled paper towels, tissues
- Soiled paper food packaging – ice cream boxes, sugar and flour bags
- Cake, cookies, candy
- Diapers, sanitary products
- House plants, including soil
- Animal waste, bedding and kitty litter



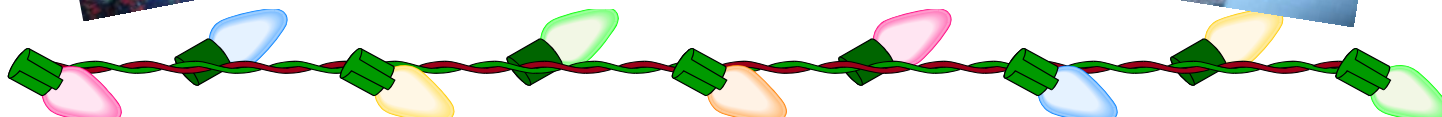
NO

- Plastic wrapping, containers, trays, milk bags **NO**
- Dryer lint, sheets **NO**
- Foam polystyrene, meat tray liners **NO**
- Hair, pet fur, feathers **NO**
- Fireplace or BBQ ashes **NO**
- Wood scraps **NO**
- Vacuum bags and contents **NO**

TERRACE CHRISTMAS PARTY



December 4, 2009



CLUBS AND PROGRAMS

New Mother Program

The New Mother Program is a new program that provides new mothers with the necessary supplies when their new baby arrives home with them.

All tenants are eligible to receive this basket of supplies upon the birth of a new child.

The program will run until Spring 2010.

Any mothers that are currently expecting a baby can contact Carla at (416) 281-2079.



BIRTHDAY WISHES

Do you or a family member have a birthday in February, March or April? Why not wish them a *Happy Birthday* in the *Wigwamen* newsletter?!

Just send us a quick note with the person's name and birth date and we will mention it in the next edition!

ZERO BALANCE CLUB - 2009 WINNERS

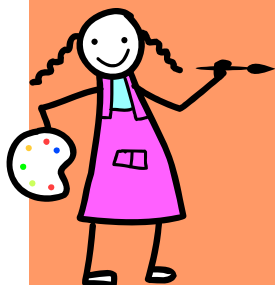
Jalal Ahmed
Rita Langga
Brian Roberts

Cassandra Scarlett
Kathreena Green
Sarah Recollet

Thelma Elliott
Osman & Rasheda Sheikh
Eleanor Pine



Wigwamen's Young Artist of the Month



You could have your piece of art-
work or writing here!

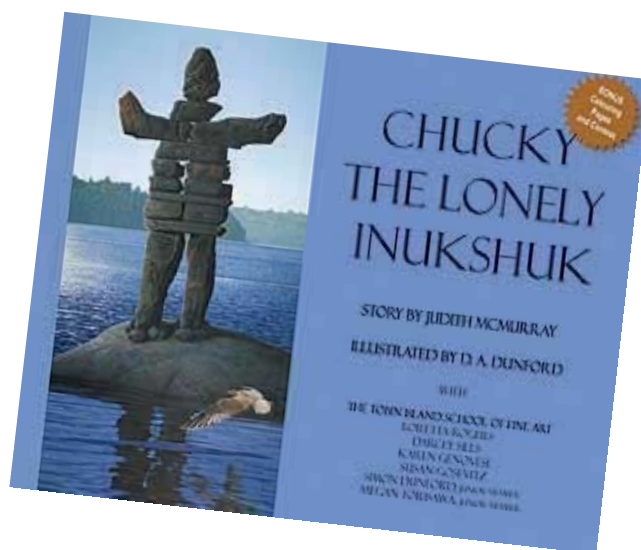
SEE PAGE 8 FOR DETAILS...

Book Review

A Toronto author and renowned artists have teamed up and released a new children's book in hopes of raising \$50,000 for charity.

Authored by Judith McMurray and with art from the Tobin School of Fine Art, *Chucky the Lonely Inukshuk* is going on sale at select stores across the GTA on Saturday Nov. 14.

The author and contributing artists, seven members of the Tobin School of Fine Art, including D.A. Dunford, Loretta Rogers, Susan Gosevitz, Karen Genovese, Darcey Sills and junior members Megan Torisawa and Simon Dunford, son of D.A. Dunford, who was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes at age five, are generously donating all net proceeds from the sale of the book directly to the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation Canada.



Calling all young artists...

Each month we would like to include a piece of artwork or writing (including poems, short stories, etc.) in our newsletter to highlight talent amongst our youngest tenants!

If you are between the ages 5 and 13 and would like to contribute your work to our monthly newsletter please contact Danielle Powell at (416) 481-4451.

PLEASE NOTE: Submissions must be no bigger than 5 1/4" x 4 1/4"
(approximately half a piece of paper) and should include your name,
address and age on the back of your work.



We look forward to seeing all of your wonderful submissions!

Check back each month to see if your artwork or writing is printed in the newsletter!



YOUR "HOUSE TO HOUSE" NEWS

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