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newsletter

May 2005

"Eye on Today" Provides Tools for Tomorrow

Conference filled to capacity with 250 delegates

"Eye on Today", the first Northwest Territories (NWT) Governance Conference, was a huge success with 250 delegates from Towns, Hamlets, Villages, Band Councils, Metis Locals, boards, agencies, volunteer and Aboriginal organizations gathering in Yellowknife on April 12 – 14 to discuss good governance issues and best practices.

"We were extremely pleased to see 28 of the 33 NWT communities represented at the conference," said Michael McLeod, Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA). "This conference assisted with capacity building at the local level by providing the information, skills and tools needed to govern effectively."

The Conference featured several prominent speakers with Minister McLeod offering an inspirational keynote address on the "Evolution of Governance in the NWT". Premier Joseph Handley provided an overview of the "Northern Strategy" and encouraged delegates to get involved in developing this pan-territorial blueprint for Canada's North.

Other "Eye on Today" highlights included a speech by former NHL player and head coach Ted Nolan whose dinner speech "Accentuate the Positive" focused on self-determination and believing in oneself as an individual and community; Tlicho negotiator John B. Zoe's presentation "Gonaewo: Our Way of Life" which mapped out the road to self-governance for the Tlicho people; and presentations from the Eskasoni First Nation and the Sandy Lake First Nation on successful community development models.

A unique feature of the Conference was a series of interactive facilitated discussions chaired by the Northwest Territories Association of Communities (NWTAC), where participants had the opportunity to voice their thoughts and ideas on issues such as healthy communities, economic development, capacity building and a look at the future of governance of the NWT. A report on these issues will be published in the near future and will be circulated to all conference delegates and organizations.

"We are very pleased with the representation at the conference, the quality of presentations and support we received from communities," said Dan Schofield, Executive Director of the School of Community Government with MACA. "We have received very positive feedback from delegates that this should be an ongoing event."

The Conference was hosted by: MACA, NWTAC, Northwest Territories Housing Corporation, Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE), and Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.



Ron Rusnell Retires

Moving on after 15 years

Mr. Ron Rusnell has retired from his position as the Municipal Works Officer for the Inuvik Region after more than 15 years of service with the Department. Ron's last day of work was March 31, 2005. Ron and his wife are going back home to their farm in Saskatchewan to enjoy the country life and boating and fishing on a nearby lake.



Ron will be sadly missed by his colleagues in MACA and by community government staff who have grown to depend on his knowledge, expertise, sound advice and assistance in all aspects of community public works activities. Over the past 15 years, Ron has provided a valuable training service to community governments in the Inuvik and Sahtu Regions; he has also assisted the Department with special initiatives and program reviews.

Most recently, Ron was seconded to Fort Good Hope for six months, where he was tasked with reorganizing the community's public works department and providing training to local government staff to assist in operating more effectively and efficiently.

We wish Ron all the best in his retirement.

Pembina Institute Comes to the North

In March 2005, the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, in partnership with MACA, hosted the Pembina Institute's Northern Oil and Gas and the Environment workshops. The workshops took place in three Inuvik Region communities and provided a new and refreshing approach to discussing potential impacts and benefits from the proposed Mackenzie Gas Project.

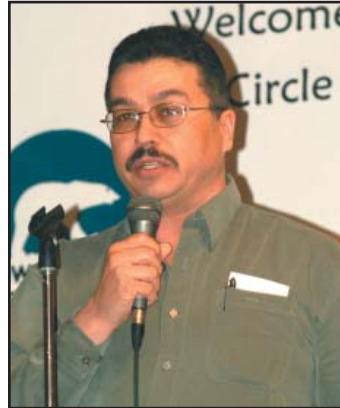
The participants built their own pipeline model, discussed potential impacts of the pipeline on their communities and environment and heard the first hand accounts, both positive and negative, of an Albertan who owns and lives on land that is occupied by oil development activities.

The workshops were well received by all that attended and we look forward to future successful partnerships.

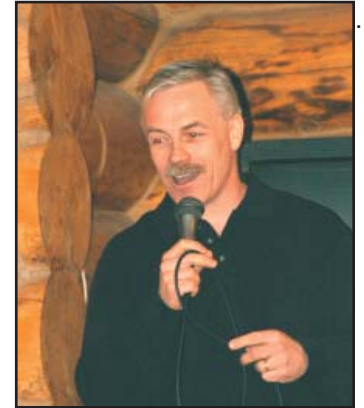
2005 Outstanding Volunteers Honoured in Inuvik on April 18, 2005

At a ceremony in Inuvik on April 18 2005, Minister McLeod and Peter Clarkson, Mayor of Inuvik announced the recipients of the 2005 Northwest Territories Outstanding Volunteers Awards.

Recipients of the NWT Outstanding Volunteer Awards for 2005 are:



Michael Lafferty, Fort Resolution - Individual Category



- **Joe Punch**, Trout Lake - Elder Category
- **Brittany Scott**, Fort Smith - Youth Category
- **Ecology North**, Yellowknife - Group Category

MACA, in partnership with the NWT Power Corporation, presents the Outstanding Volunteer Awards annually during National Volunteer Week to individuals and groups who have helped improve the quality of life in the NWT through their work as volunteers.

Check out the MACA website for further details about the NWT Outstanding Volunteer Awards and this year's award recipients.



Get Active NWT Community Challenge

Encouraging northerners to get moving!

The "Get Active" challenge is off and running!

On February 23, 2005, the territorial challenge to "Get Active" was officially issued to all NWT communities and residents. If you haven't signed up already, what are you waiting for? Now is your chance to get involved and be active this spring.

This challenge is supported jointly by the departments of MACA, ECE and Health and Social Services. The goal of the contest is to encourage NWT community members to lead more active lifestyles.

The challenge is simple. You and members of your community track the time spent on physical activity between April 1st and July 1st and then submit it online through the Get Active website, by fax or by mail. The most active community wins!

Communities will compete for the honour of being named most active community in the NWT, and a \$5,000 grant for recreational equipment in four categories based on community size. When you get out, get active, and track your hours, you are also eligible for individual prizes.

What counts towards active hours? Any kind of active movement: jogging, skating, walking, playing sports, skiing, dancing, and playing with your kids – it all counts!

As a response to the increase of health problems related to the inactivity of residents of the NWT, 'positive lifestyle choices' and 'physical activity and personal development' were set as priorities in the Government of the Northwest Territories' (GNWT) Strategic Plan launched in May 2004.

Feedback from the territorial Active Living survey indicates that 54 per cent of respondents said walking was the top activity they used for staying active. Simple daily activities such as this can increase your overall health. The goal of this contest is to challenge NWT residents to start

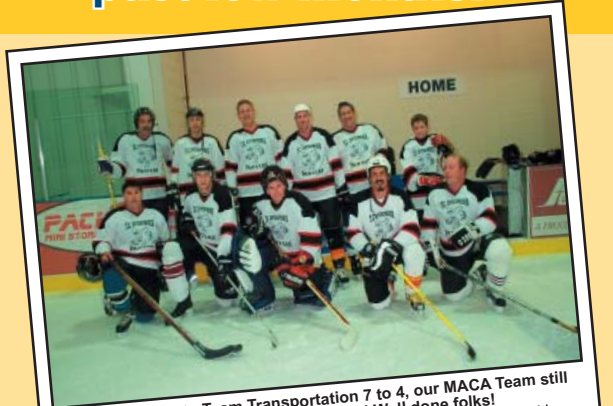
incorporating physical activity into their daily lives.

So don't wait, get out there, get active and record that time!



STAFF CORNER

Photos of our active MACA staff over the past few months.



Despite losing to Team Transportation 7 to 4, our MACA Team still makes a good looking bunch! Well done folks! Andy Couvrette, Damon Crossman, Kevin Smith, Mike Yakabuski, Jack Poitras, Robin Sproule, Ron Dennill, Benji Straker, Ivan Gloeden, Jean Soucy and Gary Schauerte (and don't forget Coach Dave Earle who took the picture!)



All of these folks worked hard to make sure the first ever NWT Games were a huge success! Colin MacPherson - Norman Wells, Sherri Olsen - Fort Smith, SarahJoy Kallos - Yellowknife, Patti Kay Hamilton - Fort Smith, Ian Legaree - Yellowknife, Sharon Firth - Yellowknife, Benji Straker - Yellowknife, Janie Hobart - Fort Smith, Sherry Wiseman - Yellowknife



Lona, Chelsey and a bashful Lori from the School of Community Government run the registration table at the Eye on Today NWT Governance Conference held at the Explorer Hotel April 12-14, 2005.

Do you have something you would like to see included in the MACA newsletter? We are always looking for content submissions. Please forward your ideas to: amy_hacala@gov.nt.ca

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Youth Consultations Getting a fresh perspective

As part of the consultation process for the Northern Strategy, the Honourable Michael McLeod, Minister Responsible for Youth and the Honourable Joseph Handley, Premier of the NWT met with a group of young people from across the territory on April 21, 2005 in Yellowknife.

Seventeen young people between the ages of 14 and 19 were given the opportunity to speak frankly with the Minister and the Premier about the things they see as important for the future of the NWT.

Many of the youth identified a lack of recreation facilities in their communities as one of their primary concerns. Organized sport and recreation activities are seen as positive alternatives for kids, giving them somewhere to go and something to do.

Overall the consultations were very successful, providing young people an opportunity to speak with their leaders about what needs to happen in their communities to improve their futures.

For more info:

Contact the Regional Superintendent in your region to learn more about MACA's programs and services.

Inaugural NWT Winter Games Bringing young athletes together

During the closing ceremonies of the inaugural NWT Winter Games, nearly 350 athletes, coaches and officials from 27 communities marched into the gym of the Fort Smith Recreation Complex to the sounds of "We are the Champions".



The words from this sport anthem summarized the feelings of all the young people assembled for the closing ceremonies. They gathered to listen to words of congratulations from local and territorial dignitaries and to say good-bye to the new friends they made over the course of the Games.

When the NWT Games began, many of the young people knew only the participants from their community. By the end of the three day event, most of the athletes had made many new friends and had thoroughly enjoyed their experience. Participants also took away a new appreciation for a wide range of sport activities and a passion for being physically active.

The NWT Games were made possible by contributions provided by the Pan Territorial Sport Strategy - a partnership between the GNWT and the Government of Canada. The Sport North Federation acted as the lead organizer for the Games with assistance and support from the Aboriginal Sport Circle of the Western Arctic, the Beaufort Delta Sahtu Recreation Association and the Mackenzie Recreation Association.

In order to have been considered eligible to participate in the Games, young people could not have participated in any other major sporting event such as the Arctic Winter Games or the Canada Games. All NWT communities were asked to select four male and four female youth between the ages of 10 to 14. A male and female chaperone/coach were also selected from each community.

Sports featured at the Games included snow soccer, curling, biathlon and cross-country skiing, ringette, speed skating, hockey, ski sledging, ultimate frisbee, dog mushing, Inuit Games, Dene Games and basketball.

Asked to summarize her experience, one young athlete said "This must be like the first Olympics".

The inaugural NWT Summer Games will be held in Inuvik, in July 2005.