



NAHO Bulletin

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NAHO Board member named a Member of the Order of Canada

The National Aboriginal Health Organization (NAHO) congratulates Bill Lyall, a NAHO Board member, for being named a Member of the Order of Canada, one the country's highest honours for lifetime achievement. Governor General Adrienne Clarkson appointed Mr. Lyall, along with 70 other Canadians, to the Order of Canada on Aug. 5.

Lyall received the prestigious honour for his role in creating and expanding economic development in northern communities. Lyall, an Inuk businessman from Cambridge Bay, Nunavut, is the founding president of the Arctic Co-operatives Limited. He has held that position since 1981. Under Lyall's leadership, Arctic Co-operatives Limited has become one of the largest federations of independent community-owned

Aboriginal businesses in North America. His work in developing this federation of community-owned co-operatives garnered him a National Aboriginal Achievement Award in 1994.

He previously served as a board member and President of Nunavut Tourism, and as a board member of Kitikmeot Inuit Association and the N.W.T. Public Utilities Board.

Lyall has been involved in NAHO since March 31, 2001, when he was appointed to the Board of Directors and as Chairperson of the Ajunnginiq Centre Governing Committee.

For more information on the Order of Canada and other awards including recipients and their citations, visit the Governor General of Canada's Web site at www.gg.ca.



NAHO Board member Bill Lyall

NAHO works to protect traditional healing practices

By Mark Buell

The National Aboriginal Health Organization was recently given observer status at the World Intellectual Property Organization's Intergovernmental Committee on Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore.

One of NAHO's five objectives is to affirm and protect Aboriginal traditional healing practices. NAHO not only looks at ways traditional medicines are being used by individuals and communities, but also how our traditional medicines and rights need to be protected.

The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations, dedicated to the promotion and protection of intellectual property. Indigenous cultural and intellectual property rights have been increasing in importance for the last few decades. One of WIPO's initiatives is the Intergovernmental Committee on Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore (IGC). This committee

brings together representatives from WIPO's 179 member states to discuss issues related to the protection of Indigenous knowledge.

In July, the IGC held its fifth session at WIPO headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. In attendance were representatives from Aboriginal organizations in Canada including NAHO, the Assembly of First Nations, the Métis National Council, Pauktuutit Inuit Women's Association, the Inuit Circumpolar Conference Canada, and the Arctic Athabaskan Council. Together, these organizations have formed a network to increase knowledge of the issues and find possible solutions within Canada.

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NAHO joins network on international research

By Stefanie Arduini

July begun with the National Aboriginal Health Organization (NAHO) preparing for its October participation in an international research network to be held in Townsville, Australia.

Executive Director Richard Jock said the network will help NAHO compare its research capacity with other leading organizations.

“Part of what NAHO will do is some background work on the capacity that exists in Canada to do research in Aboriginal health. We will also look at some of the work that has been done by NAHO and others in order to identify what some of the trends are that might be used in

terms of developing a future research agenda,” he explained.

He said NAHO has secured funding that will help Aboriginal delegates from across Canada, including NAHO’s member organizations, become involved in the exciting new network.

“Health Canada is working with us to look at how NAHO could contribute to the Canadian Health Network and play a potential role in terms of providing good information on Aboriginal health to the general public.”

The organization is also trying to improve its ability to distribute information.

“Health Canada is working with us to look at how NAHO could contribute to the Canadian Health Network and play a potential role in terms of providing good information on Aboriginal health to the general public,” Jock said.

The Canadian Health Network is an affiliation of health organizations. It uses a series of partnerships to make information more comprehensive and readily available to the public. The network combines the strengths of all of its affiliates, with each individual organization con-

tributing information according to its own expertise.

For example, NAHO’s clearing house could play a key role in the health network because of its vast resources on Aboriginal health issues.

NAHO will also participate in a forum on social accountability, looking at how Canadian medical schools could help resolve issues facing Aboriginal health.

“This is something that is in the planning stages, but we’re looking at a potential forum in the fall that would enable this set of partnerships,” Jock said.

Other partners in the forum may include the Canadian Medical Association, the Canadian Aboriginal Leaders in Medicine, the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons, deans of medical schools, and associations representing patients and medical students.

Jock said he expects a busy month in August.

NAHO representatives will attend the Canadian Medical Association’s annual general meeting Aug. 17 to 20 in Winnipeg, Man. On Aug. 19, NAHO Chairperson Dr. Judith Bartlett will present at the meeting. Accompanying her will be First Nations Centre Director Valerie Gideon, Métis Centre Acting Director Lois Edge, and Ajunggingiq Centre Director Robert Watt.

The rest of August will be spent continuing capacity-building work and preparing for the Board of Directors meeting in September.



NAHO Bulletin

The National Aboriginal Health Organization, an Aboriginal designed and controlled body, will influence and advance the health and well-being of Aboriginal Peoples through carrying out knowledge-based strategies.

The NAHO Bulletin is an electronic publication produced monthly to provide readers with an update of the activities of NAHO and its First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Centres.

If you have any questions or comments about NAHO or its publications, including having this and other publications sent directly to you, please contact us at:

National Aboriginal Health Organization

56 Sparks Street, Suite 400

Ottawa, ON K1P 5A9

Phone: (613) 237-9462 ext. 510

Toll Free: 1-877-602-4445

Fax: (613) 237-1810

Web site: www.naho.ca

e-mail: sfraser@naho.ca

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NAHO will work closely with the Canadian government between these sessions to ensure Canada’s position at these international meetings includes Aboriginal Peoples’ perspectives and priorities.

Participation in meetings such as these allows NAHO to expand its knowledge of the issues and debates. NAHO can then pass on this information to communities and key Aboriginal stakeholders, such as traditional knowledge holders. Work on these issues will be ongoing.

NAHO staff will be developing fact sheets and other information items to be

made available to all stakeholders. Issues to be addressed will include:

- existing forms of protection, such as copyright and patent;
- gaps in protecting collectively-owned Indigenous knowledge when current laws protect individual rights for a limited time, and,
- summaries of different national experiences with unique forms of national legislation specifically aimed at protecting Indigenous knowledge and property.

For more information on the IGC, go to www.wipo.int/globalissues/tk.



First Nations Centre

130 Albert Street, Suite 1500,
Ottawa, ON K1P 5G4

Telephone: (613) 233-1543 ext. 501 Toll free: 1-877-602-4445

Fax: (613) 233-1853

Web site: www.naho.ca/fnc e-mail fnc@naho.ca

FNC reaches out at key national events

By Jocelyn Formsma

The First Nations Centre (FNC) of NAHO participated in a few events in Western Canada and filled July with many adventures.

The FNC sponsored a pizza lunch for youth attending the National Association of Friendship Centres 14th Annual Youth Forum in Prince Albert, Sask. Youth Policy Analyst Jason Whitebear presented FNC youth initiative to youth in attendance. "We hope to work with the NAFC Youth Council in the near future, such as through the First Nations Youth Health Outreach Strategy," Whitebear suggests, "Working and supporting each other is so important." Shortly afterward, Whitebear joined the group of youth participating in the 2003 Unity Ride and Run. "We carried eagle feather staffs, by horse and foot, to show youth that our traditional ways of doing things and philosophies are as valid today as in the past," Whitebear said.

Whitebear joined FNC Director Valerie Gideon, Special Projects Officer Allen Deleary, and Junior Policy Analyst Jocelyn Formsma in Edmonton for the Assembly of First Nations 24th Annual General Assembly. Formsma had the opportunity to update the AFN Youth Council on the activities and initiatives of the FNC. During the Assembly, the FNC distributed information material at its Tradeshow booth, including the



Privacy Tool Kit, the Surveillance Tool Kit, briefing notes and information sheets on health issues like the quality of water, changes to the prescription status of emergency contraception, the environment, West Nile Virus, First Nations opinion poll on health, the state of First Nations health and the proposed Bill C-19, the proposed First Nations Fiscal and Statistical Management Act.

"This year's Assembly was a milestone event for us that allowed us to talk about who we are, what we do and showcase our

products to several hundred First Nations representatives," said Gideon, "We were most happy to see that health was a dominant topic of discussions among Chiefs, with a long debate held on the Non-Insured Health Benefits consent issue. We hope to play a role in facilitating further debate on this issue and bringing legal minds together during the Fall."

The FNC Web site was updated in time to make sure that all of these materials would be available on the site, including the Tool Kits. The Ethics Tool Kit was added at the end of July. All three tool kits will be mailed out to First Nations communities and health facilities shortly. In the meantime, please visit the FNC Web site at www.naho.ca/fnc.

More than 18,000 surveys have been completed as part the 2002-03 First Nations Regional Health Survey (RHS), surpassing the total of 14,007 attained during the first round of the survey in 1997. Interviewers across the country are continuing with computer-assisted interviews through the summer.

The results of this far-reaching survey of First Nations children, youth and adults will meet a wide array of information needs.

The RHS is the first and only national survey under complete First Nations control. More information can be found at www.naho.ca/fnc/rhs or by contacting the National Co-ordinator, Jane Gray at (418) 845-1492 or e-mail jgray@naho.ca.

Let's hear from our young readers!



The National Aboriginal Health Organization focuses on health issues that affect Aboriginal Peoples of all ages.

We want to include information in NAHO Network News that interests children and youth. What would you like to see in the Newsletter? Stories? Health tips? Cartoons? What health topics do you want to know about? Drop us a line with your ideas.

Contact information:

NAHO Network News at 56 Sparks Street, Suite 400, Ottawa, ON K1P 5A9

Phone: (613) 237-9462 ext. 510 Toll-Free: 1-877-602-4445

Fax: (613) 237-1810 Web site: www.naho.ca e-mail: gboyd@naho.ca



Staff attends Métis Nation of Ontario AGA

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) held its 10th Annual General Assembly. Arts and culture complimented the meetings and presentations during the political gathering in Elk Lake, Ont., July 7 to 11, 2003.

Some of the Métis Centre staff joined hundreds of attendees from across Ontario and other parts of Canada perched in cabins and tents along the lakefront. The event gave the Métis Centre a rare opportunity to hook up with Métis from all walks of life, including Elders and Senators, community health representatives, cultural workers, and youth learning to string flower beadwork for the first time.

Gathering and sharing information at the community level is a priority of the Métis Centre. It helps build networks of individuals and organizations working in health and health-related fields, which is necessary for the Métis Centre to remain responsive to community needs.

“The Assembly gave us a chance to swap information with people working on similar goals but in a more relaxed setting than, say, across a boardroom table,” said Métis Centre Research and Policy Officer Michael Fisher. “Building trusting relationships is essential to the type of work we’re doing — much of it is of a very sensitive nature, and many community members, especially Elders, are reluctant to share information or work with people they don’t know.”

Of particular importance, said Fisher, was an outdoor presentation given by Métis Centre staff to MNO Elders and Senators, who sat outside in a circle under the main



Senator Earl Schofield of Windsor, Ont.

Photo by: Marc St.Germain, Métis Nation of Ontario

tent. Along with a general overview of NAHO and the Métis Centre, Acting Director Lois Edge, Community Liaison Officer, Ken Drury, and Fisher, gave a well-received presentation on the Alberta Mental Health Board, Aboriginal Mental Health Wisdom Committee project in the province of Alberta. The committee — made up of Elders and other key individuals from the First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities — acts as an advisor to the Alberta Mental Health Board to help bring down the barriers to mental health services for Aboriginal Peoples. Marty Landrie, Aboriginal Mental Health Adult Services Co-ordinator with the Alberta Mental Health Board, made a presentation to the Métis Elders’ Gathering held in Morley, Alberta in April 2003.

Senator Earl Schofield of Windsor, Ont., who has attended both of the Métis Centre’s Métis Elders’ Gathering held in 2003, is

working hard to promote the Aboriginal Mental Health Wisdom Committee concept. Later in the week, his motion to the Assembly to develop a similar project across the province was well received by the Assembly. “Now the real work begins, where people have to work together to form these committees,” said Senator Schofield, who was awarded the Golden Jubilee Medal by the Governor General in Edmonton last September for his service in the Second World War.

Senator Schofield said there’s a real need for a support system for Métis and other Aboriginal people suffering from mental illness. “People look down on them,” he lamented, “but you know, you haven’t walked in their moccasins so you don’t know the pain they carry.”

The Elders and Senators were unanimous in their opinion that a return to cultural traditions would go a long way toward improving the overall health and wellness of Métis communities. The Assembly proved that Métis culture is thriving and continues to evolve today. During the day, traditional cultural activities, including beadwork, storytelling and song and dance demonstrations, occupied young and old. The Voyageur games, where burly young men throw hatchets and carry hundred-pound sacks of flour for distance, also drew a crowd.

Ontario’s own Shane Anthony Band, led by Métis creative talent and web site

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Changes to Métis Centre Staff

The Métis Centre staff welcomes Lori Villebrun as the new Communications Officer.

Lori is of Dene and Métis ancestry. Her educational background includes graduating from a radio and television program, a degree in Communication Studies and a graduate degree

in Resources and the Environment.

The Métis Centre wishes Dawn Ottereyes-Lacasse the best of luck as she continues to further her post-secondary education. Her last day as administrative assistant for the Métis Centre was Aug. 1.



Ajunnginiq Centre

56 Sparks Street, Suite 400,
Ottawa, ON K1P 5A9

Telephone: (613) 237-9462 Toll free: 1-877-602-4445

Fax: (613) 237-1810

Web site: www.naho.ca/inuitcentre

It's a busy summer for the Ajunnginiq Centre

By Mark Buell

The staff of the Ajunnginiq Centre (AC) had a busy July. Centre Director Robert Watt travelled to the western Arctic to participate at the National Inuit Committee on Health (NICOH) meeting in Holman, N.W.T.

"It is very important that all of the Inuit organizations get together to talk, as we are all working together to improve the overall health status of Inuit," Watt said.

Watt presented an implementation strategy for the recommendations from the Meeting of the Minds held in December 2002, NAHO staff and technical health representatives from the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, the National Inuit Youth Council, Pauktuutit Inuit Women's Association, and the regions and land claims organizations. They clarified mandates and discussed ways these organizations could best work together.

One of the recommendations from this meeting was for the AC to develop partnerships with all of the regional Inuit land claim organizations. The AC has now sent information packages about the AC to all Regional Inuit Associations (RIA). A draft letter of understanding between the Ajunnginiq Centre and each regional organization was also included.

"This letter of understanding will clarify the roles and responsibilities of the organizations that sign it," said Watt. "It will clarify what we do as Inuit organizations with respect to Inuit health and guide us to work together."

To obtain a copy of an AC information package, contact Mark Buell, Communications and Liaison Officer at 1-877-602-4445 ext. 228, or by e-mail at mbuell@naho.ca.

Watt is preparing a presentation to the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) at their next annual meeting, to be held in Winnipeg in August. Watt will be presenting on the state of Inuit health in Canada.

NAHO will also have an information booth at this meeting to further highlight the unique health and wellness needs of Aboriginal Peoples.

The staff of the Ajunnginiq Centre is busy gathering resources to develop a resource book for Inuit patients who need to travel to southern centres to receive medical services. This resource book will be of great use to Inuit who live in northern communities. It will provide them with the information they need to fully benefit from their experience in the south, and hopefully help make the experience as stress free as possible. The resource book will include information such as what a patient needs to bring with them, what to expect on the trip down and back, as well as where to find help if needed.

Aboriginal women's health project

The AC has been participating on a steering committee for a project being coordinated by Oshki-Pimache-O-Win, the Native Women's Association of Ontario and the Centre for Rural and Northern Health Research at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay. This project examined common health issues that face Aboriginal women across Ontario, the availability of relevant and accessible consumer health information on these issues, and preferred strategies for distributing useful health information, as identified by the women who participated in the study. This project was commissioned by the Ontario Women's Health Council.

AC Senior Policy Analyst Tracy O'Hearn has been working with the project steering committee since February 2003. NAHO has enjoyed and appreciated the opportunity to assist with this project, and looks forward to implementing the recommendations from this unique research project on the NAHO Web site. This project has also allowed NAHO and the AC to develop new and mutually supportive working relationships with individuals and organizations in

Northern Ontario who are directly involved with Aboriginal health issues at the community and provincial level. The final report should be completed in August 2003.

AC staff changes

In July, the AC staff welcomed Karin Kettler to their team as a Junior Policy Analyst. Her work will focus on researching educational programs in health specifically for Inuit.

Kettler will be compiling information about health related training programs offered in Inuit regions as well as training opportunities available for Inuit in the south. In her work, Kettler will also be identifying gaps and barriers faced by Inuit students.

"My work will provide Inuit students information on what kind of programs are available in Canada in the health field," Kettler said. "Inuit can see what opportunities are out there and not feel they are restricted to only one program."

Kettler grew up in the Ottawa area, although her mother is originally from Nunavik. After graduating from Trent University and Queens University with a Bachelor of Education, Kettler taught for five years for the Kativik School Board in northern Quebec. Kettler is also a drum dancer and a throat singer.

As well, the AC staff thanked Special Projects Co-ordinator Mary Alainga for her work with the AC and wished her the best of luck in the future as she moves on to explore other opportunities.

Correction

Last month's story The Ajunnginiq Centre works with partners, should have read...The Pauktuutit Inuit Women's Association held its Board of Directors Meeting.

NAHO regrets the error and any inconvenience or confusion it may have caused.

Communications work their creative minds

By Colleen Toulouse

In July, the National Aboriginal Health Organization (NAHO) Communications Unit gathered their journalistic skills and creative minds to review operations and set paths for numerous projects.

“The month of July was busy — we hired two new staff, worked on the annual report, and held a two-day staff retreat,” said Director of Communications Melissa Lazore. “We are working on a national calendar and other targeted projects are on their way.”

NAHO continues to make progress in developing the 2004 Active Living Calendar. Summer students and staff are researching important health-related dates and gathering information on community health-related events.

“We will be using the photos from the national photo contest. We received over 400 beautiful pictures from the communities that highlight active living. This is also part of the active living poster we produced and distributed,” said Lazore.

A call was made for Aboriginal communities to submit information on health-related events. NAHO sees the calendar as a vehicle for Aboriginal Peoples in the communities to share their thoughts, promote their activities and to have messages that could be an inspiration for people to start living more actively.”

“We are starting to hear from Aboriginal communities from across the country that have expressed an interest in the calendar,” Lazore said. “The submissions we received are exactly what we wanted — events that promote the importance of an active lifestyle.”

At the end of July, the Communications Unit staff retreat took place. Communications representatives from the Métis and Ajunnginiq Centres also attended the retreat. The two-day retreat provided staff with team building exercises, brainstorming ses-



(Back row) Lori Villebrun (Second row from left) Melissa Lazore, Sharon Fraser, Gail Boyd, Colleen Toulouse (Front row from left) Veena Belsawer, Mark Buell, Virginia St-Denis, and Denise Rideout.

sions, developing key messages, and plan for future activities.

“It was a good time for everyone to regroup and look at what it is we are suppose to do in Communications. A few good things came out of the retreat, such as better strategies targeting information for the youth.”

It was an opportunity for newly staffed Denise Rideout, Media Relations Officer, and Lori Villebrun, Métis Centre Communications Officer, to meet the rest of the Communications team.

NAHO plans to hire a full-time Web master and a French translation co-ordinator. A full-time Web master will help with the constant work needed on the Web site, partly because NAHO has started to get more hits per day.

“A lot of people from the United States are checking out what we are doing here in Canada. NAHO is more than happy to post health-related information (events, job postings, request for research or consulting

work) on our Web site,” said Lazore. “As for the translation co-ordinator, some of our audiences have expressed concern about getting everything we produce translated. In Communications, we want to make sure we have internal quality control capacity.”

NAHO Communications continues to provide other services such as, referring people who are looking for general information to the appropriate organization and responding to general inquiries.

“The *NAHO Network News* will be out soon and monthly production of the *NAHO Bulletin* continues. We are starting to get a lot of good stories banked on Elders and healers, and community success stories about their health programs and activities,” said Lazore.

For information on the *NAHO Network News* contact Gail Boyd by e-mail gboyd@naho.ca, and for the *NAHO Bulletin* contact Colleen Toulouse by e-mail ctoulouse@naho.ca.

Métis staff attend AGA... *continued from page 4*

designer and film videographer, Shane Belcourt, performed nightly under the big top, which also staged Métis Juno-nominee Sandy Schofield (Earl's daughter) from Vancouver and Winnipeg Métis-folksinger Don Freed. The Edmonton Métis Cultural Dancers demonstrated the Red River Jig, and there was no shortage of old-

timers ready to pick up a fiddle. Singer, songwriter and TV host Loma Mathias emceed the week's proceedings, dubbed the Building Bridges Festival. The MNO also launched the first ever Métis online radio station, featuring contemporary and traditional recording artists — check it out at www.metisnation.org.