

Town choking in tar sands filth, says band chief

by Bill Overend

Government and industry are ignoring the people of Fort MacKay as they choke in the petrochemical filth of tar sands projects, says Fort MacKay Indians band chief Dorothy McDonald.

Chief McDonald outlined the

plight of the 300 native residents of the northern Alberta community at a Green Party-sponsored forum Saturday.

"In Fort MacKay, we're sitting right on top of the tar sands," said McDonald. The community is situated on the Athabasca River directly

downstream from the Suncor and Syncrude plants.

Instead of resolving the many problems inflicted upon the community, McDonald feels industry and government simply want to relocate the Indians.

She said the Fort MacKay township was first surveyed in 1913 but native traplines have existed in the area long before that.

Before the tar sands were developed, the people of Fort MacKay lived off the land. McDonald remembers decoding correspondence from the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. Her father was the band chief for thirty years until his death in 1976.

When the tar sands plants started up, Indians forfeited their right to work traplines by accepting high-

paying jobs at the plants.

McDonald said the culture shock was too great. Spare time and easy money turned many Indians to alcoholism, which turned many of them from their jobs.

Pollution from the plants soon made return to normal life for Indians impossible. Petrochemical pollutants now coat the area, affecting fish, wildlife, vegetation, water supply and the residents' health.

"When we melt rainwater to drink, there is a black, oily substance on top," said McDonald.

In Fort MacKay, where there is no indoor plumbing and no nurse, unexplained rashes, infant convulsions and several other pollution-related afflictions concern McDonald.

Through all this, she has met frustra-

tion in her dealings with companies involved and with provincial and federal governments.

"It's really amazing how the government is deceiving the people of Fort MacKay," said McDonald.

"We're all alone in our stand against these multinationals."

McDonald believes government and industry are colluding to move the Indians from Fort MacKay. She wants the government and industry to sit down with the community and "work this out."

"We'd rather die from pollution than move from Fort MacKay," she said.

"Once you give up hope you're done for. Damn it, we're going to keep fighting."

Math contest winners

by Suzette C. Chan

The Department of Mathematics has announced the winners of the undergraduate math contest held last week.

Winners of prizes are Terry Gannon in first place, Arthur Baragar in second and Dave Salopek, third. Gannon is a third year student and Baragar and Salopek are fourth year students.

Murray Klamkin, the math professor who organized the competition says the three will probably go

on to represent the U of A at the Putnam Intercollegiate Mathematics Competition in the U.S.

Klamkin says the U of A placed 10th last year with an honourable mention, not 12th, as he had stated earlier.

There will be a special math competition for first-year students in January.

The answers to last week's competition are posted on the Math Contest Bulletin Board, 6th floor CAB, opposite room 605.

Yard Apes



by Hans Beckers

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