



Red River Current

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FORT MCKAY AFFECTED BY OIL PRICE DECLINE

The recent decline in oil prices is having a significant impact on the local economy. Headlines were made recently when Sun-cor announced roughly 1000 layoffs and Shell Albian Sands announced it would be cutting 300 positions, both to take place within the next few months. As well, a number of projects are being delayed, such as CNRL's Kirby North expansion project. One of the most visible signs of the oil price decline is the price of gas at the pump, which is cheaper now than it has been in years.

There are many reasons for the decline in oil prices, but simply put, the world's supply of oil outweighs its current demand –

more oil has been produced than what is required by consumers, driving down oil prices. Companies all across the oil sands industry are slowing down development and cutting costs.

Fort McKay First Nation (FMFN) and the Fort McKay Group of Companies (FMGOC) are also reducing spending. In response to declining revenues, the FMFN administration has held back on a number of items outlined in its Capital Plan. A number of Capital Projects employees and a number of salaried employees have recently been laid off by FMFN, and budgets are being reviewed. However, every effort will be made to keep

community members employed at both FMFN and at FMGOC.

Those in the oil sands industry are not only concerned about the uncertainty of oil prices, but also about how long it will take oil prices to peak once again. Until the oil prices recover, the FMFN will be concentrating on conserving cash while maintaining high quality programs and services to the people of Fort McKay. In the meantime, some community members may take comfort in that the oil industry cutbacks also means that the development of Fort McKay's traditional territory will slow down for the time being.



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THE SKY IS THE LIMIT WHEN IT COMES TO ACHIEVING YOUR DREAMS



He started his journey as he left Fort McKay in 2005 and immediately fell in love with the world of aviation. Since then, Charlie L'Hommecourt has never stopped and continues to prosper with his career as a

Helicopter Engineer/Commercial pilot.

After graduating high school, L'Hommecourt was accepted into Canadore College's Aircraft Maintenance Technician Program. His interest in becoming

and introduced himself, welcoming the class to AMT-210: Rotary Wing Aircraft. I thought to myself, Rotary Wing... as in Helicopters? The second I realized we would be learning about helicopters I couldn't even blink. I always had an interest in aviation, but that was the day where my love for helicopters was ignited. My two years at Canadore School of Aviation flew by." Two years later, he graduated the program with academic honors and an astounding 4.0 GPA.

Upon graduation, the young professional was offered many opportunities including one to work with Great Slave Helicopters. "After hearing their presentation, I was mystified by the opportunity to explore Canada's Arctic," he explains. He spent his next five years working in Yellowknife as a Helicopter Engineer Apprentice until his career began to plateau.

At this point, L'Hommecourt had been endorsed on the most popular types of intermediate helicopters operated in Canada: Bell 206 A/B/L1-L4, AS350 BA/B2/B3, EC 130 B4, and the Bell 407. With these qualifications, the young engineer was

"The second I realized we would be learning about helicopters I couldn't even blink."

a pilot led him to apply for the aviation program in North Bay, Ontario. Charlie describes his departure from home; "When I left McKay, I had no idea where I would end up; only after I opened up a map did I realize where I was going to live for the next two years."

"At the start of my second semester I walked into a new classroom that was filled with aircraft parts I had never seen before. The instructor came in



FMFN LEADERSHIP TEAM

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

George Arcand, CEO
Larry Hewko, CFO/COO

ADMINISTRATION DEPT.

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Fort McKay, AB T0P 1C0
Phone: 780-828-2430

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

SUBMISSIONS

If you have any photos, stories or ideas for the Fort McKay Current, please contact Nancy Robin at:
780-715-4512 or
email: nancydoire@msn.com



now able to work anywhere in Canada. "When I realized there was no longer an opportunity to grow at GSH, I applied to the University of the Fraser Valley to complete their Aviation Business Degree (BBA)."

It wasn't too long after that Charlie was conditionally accepted into the program. But before starting, the young Engineer needed to upgrade his Math and English to a University level. The next three months would prove to be more difficult for L'Hommecourt this time around, as he now was a single father of a five year old while he also studied for hours every night. All his hard work paid off, and L'Hommecourt passed his Math with an A- and challenged his English exam.

Now, Charlie is attending his third year of the four-year degree at the University of the Fraser Valley and is also working towards his Multi Engine and Flight ratings at Coastal Pacific. Charlie obtained his Fixed Wing Commercial Pilot license and has been at the top of his class since the very first semester and on the Dean's list each year. He is legible to get the Honors Degree, and if he attains this, will be the only student who ever completes the program with Honors in the University's history.

Amongst all of this, L'Hommecourt continues to work seasonally as a Helicopter Engineer. He works hard to find a balance between his studies, work, and spending time with his son. "My son and I are building an RV-



Charlie and his son currently reside in British Columbia while he works seasonally and finishes a 4 year program in Aviation Business Degree (BBA).



Charlie L'Hommecourt loves to fly recreationally during his free time, and sometimes even brings his son along.

10 together in the garage. An RV-10 is a four seat single engine Airplane that is capable of 220mph. Among all my accomplishments I feel that sharing my knowledge with my son to be the most rewarding."

When it comes to Charlie L'Hommecourt, only the sky is the limit. "I have been in Aviation since I graduated high school and I am extremely eager to become a successful member in the industry; I know it will happen someday, the only question is when."



SHARING FORT MCKAY'S STORY

In early December, Chief Boucher was invited to address an eclectic audience of industry engineers, health and safety experts and senior managers at the second gathering of SPE HSSE-SR: Beyond Conventional Oil & Gas: New Social Opportunities and Risks Workshop.

This group, otherwise known as

If you would like to submit a story to the Red River Current, please email Nancy Robin at: nancydoire@msn.com or call 780-715-4512

the Society of Petroleum Engineers (SPE) and Health, Safety, Security, Environment and Social Responsibility (HSSE SR), gathered to focus on Social Responsibility issues related to project development.

As a speaker and panelist, Chief Boucher discussed effective engagement between industry and Aboriginal people in the region, relating the topic to the experience of Fort McKay. He addressed attendees on the community's strong opposition to development in the region due to its negative effects on traditional life and damage to the environment, and how, over the years, Fort

McKay has been able to build relationships with the surrounding industry to help mitigate the negative impacts and create economic and social benefits for the whole community.

The Chief also discussed how the council continues to address the community members' ongoing concerns when dealing with new and existing oil sands exploration projects. The panel included David Bouchier, CEO Bouchier Group and J.P. Gladue, CEO Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business. The group discussed the involvement and importance of the relationships between industry and Aboriginal groups.

NEXT QUARTERLY GENERAL MEETINGS

Tuesday, March 3, 2015
Fort McKay – Band Hall @ 6:30 pm

Wednesday, March 4, 2015
Edmonton - Chateau Nova @ 7:00 pm

Thursday, March 5, 2015
Fort McMurray - Stonebridge Hotel @ 6:30 pm

All band members of the Fort McKay First Nation are welcome to attend.



FORT MCKAY REP JOINS WBEA GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

The Wood Buffalo Environmental Association (WBEA) is pleased to welcome Fort McKay First Nation representative, Ryan Abel, B.Sc., B.Ed., to its Governance Committee. Ryan is the Environmental Lead, In Situ & Forestry with the Fort McKay First Nation, and he currently represents Fort McKay on the WBEA General Members board.

Ryan works closely with Environment Canada in his role with Fort McKay to manage the Oski-ôtin Air Monitoring Site in an effort to better understand air emissions in the oil sands and their impacts on local communities. Ryan's role with Fort McKay also includes mitigating environmental impacts by developing agreements with companies looking to operate in Fort McKay's Traditional Territory.

Through this work, Ryan helps to ensure that the Fort McKay First Nation can exercise their rights. Good air quality is something that Ryan is keenly passionate about, and he believes strongly in the WBEA's efforts to monitor, evaluate and report on air quality trends and environmental health in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo (RMWB).

WBEA Executive Director, Dr. Kevin Percy, is pleased to work with Ryan, and the Fort McKay First Nation, at the Governance Committee level. "Fort McKay has always been a very important stakeholder for WBEA, and we are pleased to welcome Ryan to our governance table. As we



Located near the northwest corner of the Fort McKay Water Treatment Plant, the Bertha Ganter-Fort McKay Air Monitoring Station continuously measures air quality in the community. Real-time readings can be viewed at www.wbea.org.

move forward to further enhance environmental monitoring in our region, it is critical to have the perspective and voice of Aboriginal communities strongly represented," said Percy.

Ryan is excited about the opportunity to serve the WBEA and the Fort McKay First Nation by being a member of the Governance Committee. He is very grateful for the support of his fellow WBEA members in his nomination to work on behalf of the Fort McKay First Nation, and to help support high caliber, independent air quality monitoring in the RMWB. Both Ryan and the Fort McKay First Nation greatly value locally run, regional organizations that are truly interested in collaborative problem solving when it comes to oil sands emissions and environmental impacts.

Ryan replaces Linda Aidnell from the Chipewyan Prairie Dene First Nation Industry Relations Corporation. Linda stepped down from her position as WBEA Director in December of last year.

The Wood Buffalo Environmental Association (WBEA) is an independent, community based, not-for-profit organization that monitors the air in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. This is done through a variety of air, land and human monitoring programs. The air quality information collected is openly shared with stakeholders and the public.

For more information please visit www.wbea.org.

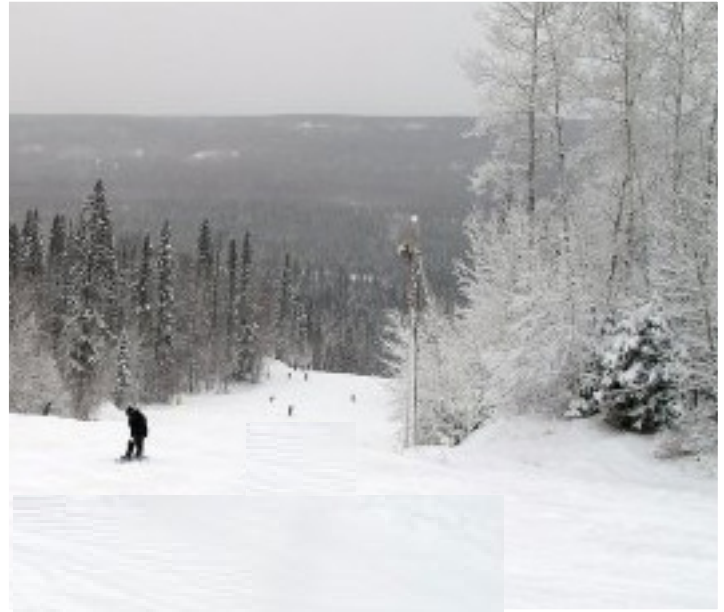


ATTENTION ALL YOUTH: *Hit The Slopes With McKay's Ski Club*

Join the Fort McKay Youth Centre's Ski Club and head out to the Vista Ridge Ski Hill with your friends to hit the slopes. No experience is necessary! All you need is a great attitude along with the willingness to try and the rest will come.

The Youth Centre currently has 25 youth registered. The Ski Club is for ages 12-18 years old of any ability. Next trips to the Vista Ridge are: February 7, 11, 12, 13, 25, 26 and 27th.

To register with the group or to receive more information, please contact the Youth Centre at: 780-828-4462.



GIRLS INC. HOSTING SESSIONS TO EMPOWER ALL YOUNG WOMEN

Girls Inc. will be starting sessions this month at the Youth Centre.

Girls Incorporated of Northern Alberta is a non-profit organization with a mission to inspire all girls to be strong, smart and bold. We provide girls 6 to 18 years old with the knowledge and skills needed to break free from gender stereotypes, create social change, be proud of who they are and be confident in their own skin.



Our programs are well developed and researched based, and we partner closely with local schools and youth organizations in order to implement them. Our programmers and volunteers care deeply about the general well-being of our girls, changing the systems within which girls and young women function and working to create an equitable society.

Girls Inc. of Northern Alberta serves communities all over the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, and has partnership agreements with organizations throughout Western Canada to deliver our programs and positively influence girls' lives.

Mission – Vision

Empowering girls to realize their full potential through gender-specific programming that inspires all girls to be Strong, Smart and Bold.

For more information about these sessions, please contact the Youth Centre at: 780- 828-4462.



R.A.R.A. 2015

**JOIN US FOR AN EVENING OF CELEBRATION AND
FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT AT THE
27th ANNUAL R.A.R.A. EVENT!
(RARA is a non-alcoholic family event)**

**Saturday, March 7th, 2015
Sawridge Inn & Conference Centre**



RARA logo created by: Marsha Whiteknife

**Entertainment: "On the River" - the story of Fort McKay
through the lens of Former Chief Dorothy McDonald-Hyde,
featuring live music by ASANI and Maria Dunn.
Presented by Ground Zero Productions.**

Master of Ceremonies: Mrs. Cheryl Alexander

Tickets will be available: February 7, 2015

Anzac Municipal Office: (780) 334-2298

Conklin Municipal Office: (780) 559-2235

Janvier Municipal Office: (780) 559-2230

Fort Chipewyan: Aboriginal and Rural Relations (780) 697-3600

Fort McKay: Fort McKay First Nations Office: (780) 828-4220

Fort McMurray First Nation Office: (780) 334-2293

For additional information or assistance, please call Nora Flett 780-792-1565

Email: raravol@shaw.ca



STORY OF THE TALKING FEATHER

A Sioux Legend

Many winters ago the people received a gift called the talking feather. I will share with you the story of how this came to pass.

When the call came to the young mothers in the village to take their baskets and gather the fruit and berries, the old grandmothers, whose legs had lost the fast walk and sure foot of the doe, were left to care for the young children. The mothers honored the grandmothers by giving them this responsibility on those days.

It is believed that the young children have many dreams and visions to collect before they are grown. They were given a bit of sleep in the warmth of a darkened lodge before Sun has traveled his full path each day. Now let me tell you what happened on one of these days.

Crow and Magpie, two of our noise making winged ones were having a terrible argument outside the lodge of the sleeping children. "Caaaw-caaaw" screamed Crow. "Kaaack-Kack" yelled Magpie. They were both speaking at once and they could not hear each other's point of view on the subject of which tree belonged to which bird.

Now first, one of the grandmothers asked Creator to quiet the voices outside. This was easier than going out to take care of it herself. But Creator let the grandmother know that it was her job to go out and scare off the birds. You see Wakan Tonka knew that a great gift was coming to the people and he wanted the grandmother to see it happen.

There was an eagle in a tree close by. When she could not get the attention of the screaming Crow or yelling Magpie, she called on Eagle, most Wakan winged one. "Oh brother Eagle, can you chase off these two noisy ones so our children can still dream", asked the grandmother.

With a mighty flap of his wings and a leap from the limb he sailed towards the noisy pair. He gave a call of warning to the Crow and Magpie as he came close, but they were so busy fighting they did not even hear him. When Eagle saw this he yelled

louder and came closer, and that is when it happened.

"Caaaw-caaaw, Caaaw-caaaw", Crow screamed as he flapped his wings in the air so hard he nearly fell off his perch. "Kaaack-Kack", yelled Magpie as his wings too flapped up a storm. Suddenly they both felt the contact of a sacred Eagle wing and saw a feather fall as they froze in mid squawk! Oh my what had they done? Crow swooped down and caught the feather before it landed on Mother Earth. As he came back to the branch he heard Magpie speaking to Eagle.

"Oh brother Eagle most Wakan of our family we did not hear you so near. I am truly sorry for the injury I have caused you."

Eagle with crow Crow was surprised to hear such an honorable thing come from the mouth of this rude neighbor. He held the Eagle feather in one claw and spoke with dignity. "I have many times been a naughty bird but brother Eagle I think this may be the worst I have done in many moons. I am very sorry for this bad thing I have done."

Magpie was shocked, could this be that unruly Crow who spoke such wise words? Crow handed the feather to Magpie so he could give it back to Eagle. As Magpie took the feather their eyes met and with no words at all they both knew that this mistake would not have happened if they had not been fighting. Magpie spoke as he took the feather and said, "I am ashamed, brother Eagle, that my loud talk and harsh words were more important to me than solving our problem."

He looked to Crow for a sign of understanding. Crow took the feather back from Magpie and said, "We have disturbed the two legged children and torn from your wing a sacred feather and now we return it to you with a request for your forgiveness."

Feathered headdress Eagle had watched all this with wise eyes and an open heart. He knew the





Charles McDonald © 2015

Black-billed Magpie
photograph taken by Charles McDonald

lesson of listening had been learned by his little brothers and he saw that the grandmother looked on with learning eyes also. So he said to Crow, "Give my feather to the grandmother so that she might dress it with beads and leather and fur to make it even more beautiful. Let her keep it in her lodge and teach others to create this fine looking feather."

Eagle said, "We will call this sacred item a Talking Feather. You have seen it's power grandmother. Tell all the people that when they come together for Council Fires or at any gathering where ears might be shut, to bring out the Talking Feather and let only the holder speak. This will be done in an honorable manner letting everyone have his say. Begin with the highest ranking Elder and pass the feather until all have spoken."

"When the feather is held with its back to the listeners and the inside curve to the speaker he will hear his own words first as they come back to him. This will help to tame the harsh tongue of the two legged. If disagreements are still between two people they will turn the feather away from themselves so the words can go straight to the one they are at odds with", explained Eagle. "When all have spoken a vote can be taken and the side who gathers the most votes will make the final decision", said Eagle.

As Eagle spoke these words Crow brought the feather to the grandmother. She was very honored to have learned this lesson and she brought the feather to her lodge and every grandmother from that day on has told this story and helped the young ones to make Talking Feathers.

excerpts taken from:
<http://nativeamericanencyclopedia.com/>

From the Family of Dana McDonald

We would like to extend our gratitude to our extended family members and our many friends for their thoughtfulness and support on the loss of our mother, sister and daughter, the late Dana McDonald.

Special thanks to the Fort Elders Centre, the Fort McKay First Nation, the Fort McKay Group of Companies, Robert Anderson Funeral Services, Scotty Stewart, Fort McKay Capital Projects, Printing Unlimited and all the organizations and individuals who have been so caring during our time of grief.

Feather, Alexis, Braden, Rod, Dayle, and Dakota

COMMUNITY TUBING AT VISTA RIDGE!!



Friday, February 27th, 2015

You and your family are invited to join the Fort McKay Wellness Center and the Fort McKay Recreation Department with an evening of tubing at Vista Ridge as part of a private booking.

When: Friday, February 27th, 2015

**Time: Bus leaves the Fort McKay Wellness Center
(Please park at the arena) at 4:00 PM SHARP**

**Buses Leave Vista Ridge at 8:30 PM SHARP to return to Fort
McKay**

Who: The Wellness Center will be bringing and supervising children ages 6-13 as part of our Pre Teen Night. All other children MUST be accompanied by an adult

Pizza and drinks will be provided upon arrival at Vista Ridge.

THIS EVENT IS FREE! Registration is required as transportation spaces are limited. To reserve your spot:

**Please contact Julia at the Wellness Center at 780-828-4312
Or Stefany at the Recreation Department at 780-714-709 with
any questions!**

GINGERBREAD HOUSE MAKING AT THE WELLNESS CENTRE



FEBRUARY SCHEDULE

To register for a course please
contact the office at: 780-828-2496
or (780) 370-1772

February 3 2015	Fall Protection - OSHA (MWV)
February 5 2015	ARGO Awareness
February 9 2015	Sustainable Construction
February 10 2015	PPE Awareness
February 11 2015	First Aid
February 12 2015	First Aid
February 13 2015	Chainsaw Awareness
February 17 2015	WorkPlace Harassment
February 19 2015	Business Etiquette
February 23 2015	Stress Management
February 25 2015	Leadership & Influence
February 27 2015	Emergency Preparedness



COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

RECREATION DEPARTMENT

New Fitness Centre hours:

Monday-Friday

9am-10pm

Saturday-Sunday

2pm-10pm

Yoga classes

Tuesdays and Thursdays 12-1pm

Volleyball (18yrs+)

Mondays and Tuesdays

7-9pm

Soccer

*FC Edmonton soccer players/coaches are coming to Ft McKay on Sunday Feb 1st, register your kids from ages 5-12yrs old

Family Swimming

at MacDonald Island Feb 20th leaving at 4:00pm (transportation and entry fee) Registration is Mandatory

Family Tubing

at Vista Ridge on Feb 27th bus leaves @ 5:30pm (tubing from 6-8pm) Registration is mandatory (deadline to register is on Monday Feb 23rd) Anyone interested in registering their child for swimming lessons contact Stefany @ 780-714-7094

WELLNESS CENTRE

780-828-4312

Monday to Thursday:

3:00 PM to 5:00 PM After-school Activities (Ages 6-17)

5:00-6:00 PM Supper Program (Ages 6-17)

Mondays:

6:30-8:00 pm Homemade game making (Ages 10+) Tutoring (gr.1-3) 6:00-7:00pm

Tuesdays:

6:00-8:00pm Snowshoeing (Ages 10+)

Wednesdays:

6:00-8:00 pm Craft Night (Ages 10+)

6:00pm-8:00pm Tutoring (gr.3-8)

Thursdays:

6:00-8:00 pm Dodgeball (Ages 10+)

Teen Night

February 6 & 20

*Permission slip required

Ages 10+

Bus leaves at 5:30 pm

*Kids 9 and under MUST be picked up by 5:15

*We will be open 9 AM to 5 PM from Wednesday, February 11th to 13th to accommodate for no school during the Fort McKay Teacher's Convention.

Skiing at Vista ridge

Saturday February 7th and 21st, 2015. Bus leaves at 9am and returns at 4:30pm.

*We will be closed February 16th for Family Day.

Girls Sleepover Party

Friday, February 27th.

For Girls Ages 7-10 ONLY. The sleepover will start once we return from tubing at Vista Ridge. Permission slips and more information will be handed out closer to the date.

YOUTH CENTRE

780-828-4462

Ski Club

for ages 12-18 years old.

Dates: February 7, 11, 12, 13, 25, 26 and 27th.

Dinner is offered at 5:00 pm. Monday to Friday.

Operating hours are 3:00-9:00 weekdays.

Our evenings activities range from, sledding at amphitheater, making crafts, baking, building lego, movies, hide and seek and tag.

Girls inc. will be coming to do workshops this month.

FORT MCKAY FAMILY SUPPORT CENTRE

780-828-4048

Mondays

ATC Child & Family Services – Foster Program & Family Enhancement.

Alcohol Anonymous (AA) Meeting 7:00pm – 8:30pm. Last Monday of month-probation/ parole Services.

Tuesdays

Women's Sharing Circle 7:00pm – 9:00pm.

Wednesdays

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

Thursdays

NEAFAN – Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Assessments. Karaoke – 7:00pm– 9:00pm.

Saturdays

Sweat Lodge – 1:00pm.

HEALTH CENTRE

780-828-2450

Mondays-Wednesdays

The Doctor is in

Tuesdays and Thursdays

Physiotherapy & Dr. Taiwo *please call in advance to verify

february 25th is pink tshirt day for anti-bullying

