

ULU NEWS



Arctic
Winter
Games



A special publication of the Fort McMurray Today

February 29, 2004



GAMES UNDERWAY — The more than 8,000 people at the opening ceremony for the 2004 Arctic Winter Games last night were seeing more than red. The ceremony began with the Myth of the Arctic Winter Games, an artistic display describing the events and activities taking place from now until March 6.

Photo by TAMARRA PRICE, Ulu News

2004 Games
kick off in style
at Atco Plaza

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After years of
waiting,
McMurray cheers

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Clarkson tours
oilsands, praises
the North

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All the comforts
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Fort McMurray
Today

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RARIN' TO GO — Excitement is spreading as Team Greenland cheers and waves after their entrance into Atco Plaza during the opening ceremony of the 2004 Arctic Winter Games Saturday night. The teammates not only enjoy meeting the athletes from other countries, they also enjoy celebrating together.

Photo by TAMARRA PRICE, Ulu News

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The Management and staff of Tuccaro Inc. would like to extend our congratulations to the organizers, athletes and all coaching staff involved in the 2004 Arctic Winter Games.

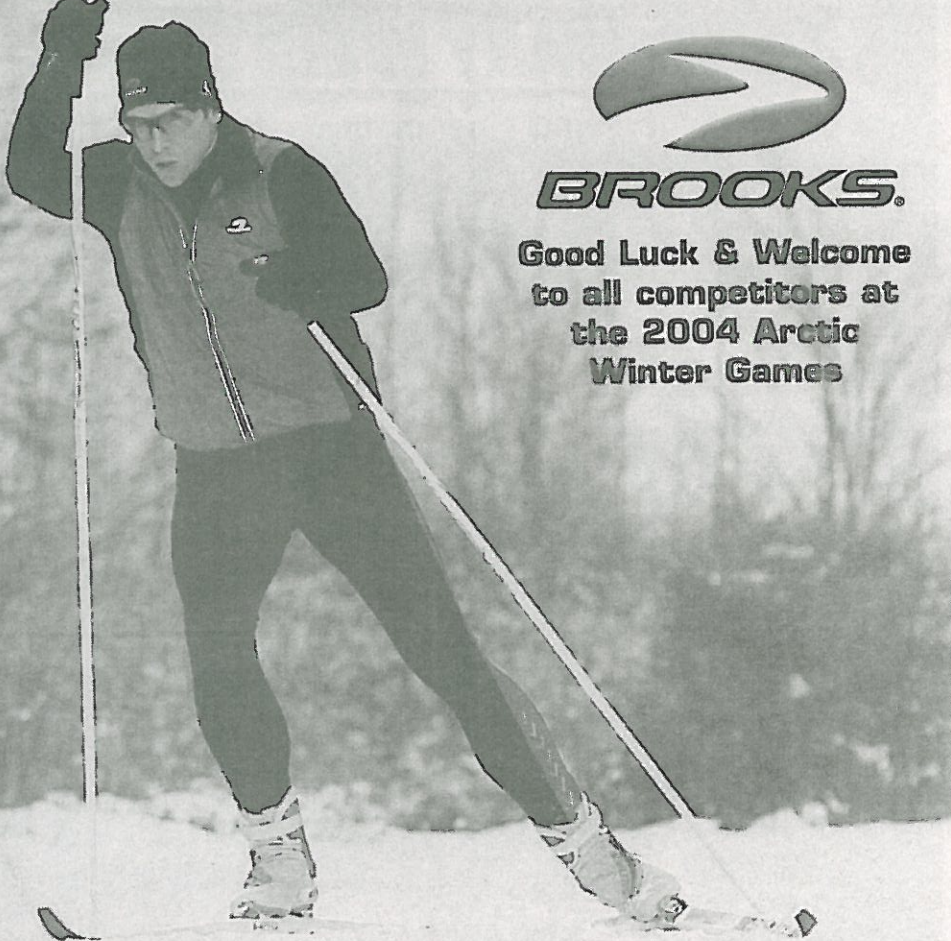
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Good Luck & Welcome to all competitors at the 2004 Arctic Winter Games



Brooks, a proud sponsor of Canada's National X-Country Ski Team and the 2004 Arctic Winter Games

Ready to roll

■ Opening ceremonies thrill crowd

By PAULA OGNOSKI
Today staff

Fits of compulsive cheering, waving and noisemaking echoed through the Atco Plaza as the opening ceremonies of the Arctic Winter Games commenced Saturday night.

Premier Ralph Klein and master of ceremonies CBC sports commentator Terry Leibel compared the event with the 1988 Olympics in Calgary.

"There's more energy here during these Games,"

Klein said.

"It's the most enthusiastic ceremonies I've ever witnessed," Leibel said.

The ceremonies began with an interpretive dance by local dancers from the Taylor Dance Studio, Myth of the Arctic Winter Games.

Wood Buffalo Elder Elsie Yanik, delivered the opening prayer, while aboriginal dancers from Slave Lake, Spirit Child, performed a traditional native dance.

Please see
'Dignitaries'/Page 5



Team Alberta North enters Atco Plaza to a loud reception at the opening ceremonies of the 2004 Arctic Winter Games. They were joined by 10 other teams from around the country and the world.

Photo by CARL PATZEL, Ulu News

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Dignitaries welcome participants

Cont'd from Page 4.

The crowd kept the momentum going while the parade of athletes began.

More than 2,000 athletes, coaches and delegates marched with pride as more than 5,500 spectators cheered.

Ten contingents from the Yukon, the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Northern Alberta, Nunavik-Quebec, Greenland, Yamal-Nenets, Magadan and Sami paraded together to showcase the best athletes and cultural representatives their communities have to offer.

The audience remained standing for 20 minutes while athletes made their way through the Plaza.

"The excitement is palpable. You're all feeling it, as athletes, as coaches, as spectators. Participation is also about the competitors and those who support them," Canada's Gov. Gen.

Adrienne Clarkson said in her speech.

"But just as importantly, it's about the volunteers, over 4,000 I'm told, who make these Games go,"

Clarkson. "Without you, the athletes wouldn't be able to show their stuff and none of us would be here to enjoy it as spectators. You have put a deeply personal commitment into these Games, making it possible for all of us to enjoy this week. I can't tell you enough how thankful we are for all your work."

Dave Tuccaro, co-chairman of the Games, addressed the athletes during his speech, reminding

them why they're participating.

"It takes more than crossing the finish line to be a champion. A champion is someone who surpasses personal limits."

“ A champion is someone who surpasses personal limits. ”

”

One of the highlights for the participants was the playing of all seven national anthems.

"I'm so excited to see so many people from different parts of Canada and throughout the world," Klein said.

Mayor Doug Faulkner welcomed all the guests to Fort McMurray and thanked the volunteers and sponsors for their support.

Local performers Johnny Guitar Blues Band

and rap group FunHouzE Crew got the crowd riled up before the headliner, homegrown Canadian Country Music Award winner Aaron Lines, took the stage.

The athletes took their oath of sportsmanship and fair play and the Games were officially opened with the lighting of the torch, lit by the Ladouceur family, a local family that has excelled in the Games for two generations. They entered the Plaza by dog sled to light the torch.

"We are here to celebrate athletic competition, cultural exhibition, and social interchange," Clarkson said. "I wish all of you a dazzling and memorable week."

Speeches were also made by international president Gerry Thick, co-president John Wilson and Fort McMurray MLA Guy Boutillier.



Elder Elsie Yanik, 87, originally from Fort Chipewyan, said the opening prayer for athletes, delegates and those who attended the 2004 Arctic Winter Games opening ceremonies Saturday night at Atco Plaza.

Photo by CARL PATZEL, Today staff

BOOMTOWN CASINO

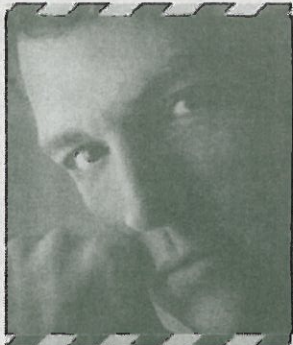
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McMurray welcomes Games participants

By JEFF KORENKO
Ulu News

It was a display unlike any ever seen at a previous Arctic Winter Games and residents of the Municipality of Wood Buffalo, and their guests from the circumpolar north relished every second.

More than 8,000 elated people crammed the outdoor tent known as Atco Plaza on MacDonald Island on Saturday night to kick off the 18th Arctic Winter Games with the Syncrude Opening Ceremonies.

To call the atmosphere electric would be understating things just a tad. The spirit of what makes these Games so special could be felt much before the festivities even got underway, with spectators booming the noisemakers that were handed out with the programs and doing

the wave.

Although he wasn't one of the announced VIPs, the province's health minister and his family were among the enthralled masses.

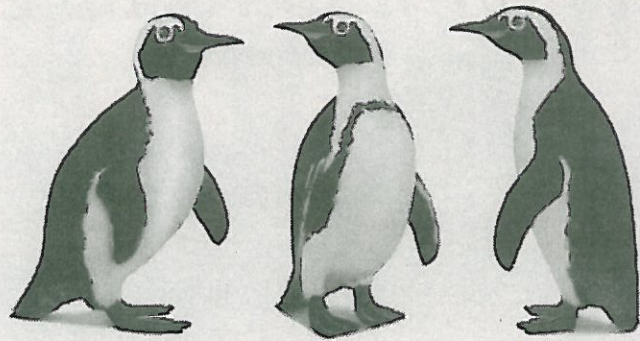
Gary Mar said he was simply ecstatic for the people of Northern Alberta and Fort McMurray in particular.

"The Arctic Winter Games is just a fantastic event. What it does for a community is just terrific. It's a great feeling to be here," Mar said over the mounting din.

Please see
'McMurray'/Page 7

More than 8,000 people, including spectators, volunteers, dignitaries and athletes, filled Atco Plaza on MacDonald Island on Saturday night for the opening ceremonies of the 2004 Arctic Winter Games.

Photo by TAMARRA PRICE,
Ulu News



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McMurray comes alive

Cont'd from Page 6.

"Fort McMurray has really come alive. It's exciting to be here in this tent. You can just feel the energy, and when those athletes come in you're going to hear a big roar and I'm really looking forward to it."

"The spirit here is great; you can hear it in the background. Nobody puts events like this together like Alberta's north and particularly Fort McMurray."

Mar drove up from Calgary with his wife and three children Saturday morning. He added the family plans to take in as many of the events as they can while they are in town.

"There's lots of sports that our kids participate in, but the ones they are really interested in are the (Arctic Sports and the Dene Games)," said Mar.

"Things like the knuckle hopping and the high kick.

They've never seen them before and I've told them about it and they are really looking forward to seeing something very different."

People walking into the \$600,000 facility for the first time seemed to be in awe at what they were witnessing.

"It's huge. The size of it and the way it is set up is just amazing. This is excellent," said High Level's Joulia Whittleton of the tent being used to put on the Games' opening and closing ceremonies.

Whittleton, who was waiting to see her 15-year-old son Vladimir Kopaed enter with his Alberta North contingent, said her family moved to High Level from the Yamal, Russia area when Vladimir was six years old.

Yamal, a Russian oblast, is participating in an Arctic Winter Games for the very first time in 2004.

"I'm so happy for him,"

she shouted regarding her son, who is competing in cross-country skiing.

The tent's intimate setting meant there wasn't a bad seat in the place.

Leanne McFadyen, who has been a Fort McMurray resident for the past six years, said she was looking forward most to welcoming all the athletes.

"I'm sure the opening ceremonies will be a big success. There's lots of people and lots of energy," McFadyen appraised.

By the time the delegations began their march into Atco Plaza, it was evident this region had enough of waiting.

It was time to celebrate.

"To be at an event like this is overwhelming," said Fort McMurray resident Kirby Morency.

"For a community this size, they did an excellent job in preparing. It's obvious a lot of people showed up to offer their support."

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CBC brings the games home

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Wild Rose Country - Alberta with host Donna McElligott
Monday, March 1: Tune-in for a live broadcast from the Arctic Winter Games in Wood Buffalo. Host Donna McElligott will give Alberta listeners a flavour of the games and a preview of the rest of the week.

Wild Rose Country - Alberta

March 1 to 5: Reporter Adrienne Lamb will deliver reports to Wild Rose Country for the duration of the Games with athlete profiles, games information and Ulu results, targeted to the Alberta listener Adrienne will also be contributing to National Arts reports.

ON TELEVISION...

CBC Canada Now - Alberta with host Portia Clark

Monday, March 1: Tune-in for a live broadcast into the Alberta supper hour program from Wood Buffalo 6:30 to 7:00 pm. Host Portia Clark will give Albertans a taste of the activities on Day 1 of the Games.

CBC Canada Now - Alberta

March 1 to 5: Video journalist David Gerow and the CBC North Television crew will deliver reports to **CANADA NOW ALBERTA** during the week, with updates on Ulu results, sports and cultural activities.

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north.cbc.ca

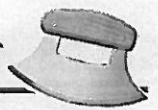


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ENJOYING THE SHOW
— Governor General of Canada Adrienne Clarkson, joined by Arctic Winter Games international committee president Gerry Thick and Alberta Premier Ralph Klein are introduced during the open ceremonies of the 2004 Arctic Winter Games. Photo by CARL PATZEL, Ulu News



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YUKON PRIDE — Showing off their colours, members of Team Yukon join in the cheering and the celebrating during the opening ceremonies of the 2004 Arctic Winter Games Saturday night at the Atco Plaza on MacDonald Island. Photo by TAMARRA PRICE, Ulu News

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Governor General of
Canada Adrienne
Clarkson greets ath-
letes from the Yukon at
the opening cere-
monies of the 2004
Arctic Winter Games
on Saturday at Atco
Plaza.
Photo by CARL PATZEL,
Ulu News

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Celebrate the Arctic spirit!



Photograph by Carlie Archiboud

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THE SMELL OF MONEY — Governor General of Canada Adrienne Clarkson gets a nose sample of high grade tarsand from Suncor Energy employee Leon Keeping on Saturday at their Millennium Mine, 45 kilometres north of Fort McMurray. Clarkson met with employees and several oil company executives while visiting the city.

Photo by CARL PATZEL, Ulu News

Gov. Gen. Clarkson impressed by oilsands tour

■ 'Marvelous, wonderful' says Clarkson

By PAULA OGONOSKI and Sun Media Ulu News

Canada's Gov. Gen. Adrienne Clarkson said she was impressed as she toured Fort Chipewyan and Fort McMurray on the weekend.

Clarkson, who was in Northern Alberta for the Arctic Winter Games, took an air tour of the oilsands on Saturday with her entourage of five — including her husband,

philosopher and author John Ralston Saul.

They also took a ground tour of Syncrude's Millennium Mines.

Ulu News met with the Governor General while she received a personalized tour of a 797 Caterpillar Heavy Hauler.

The Governor General said she is pleased with the Games and the communities.

Please see 'Games'/Page 12

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Games 'about excelling,' says Clarkson

Cont'd from Page 11.

"It's been marvelous, it's wonderful getting back up north.

"This is our 41st northern community we've visited since I've become Governor General ... it's good, very very good, we miss it," said Clarkson of her trip.

"We believe in the North as a really important part of Canada. And I like the Games, I think the Games are fun and interesting. I must say people don't know enough about the fact that (the sports) have been developed into games that were probably necessities, like the Dene games," she said.

Clarkson said she is happy the Games offer northern athletes a chance to compete against athletes with similar training opportunities. She added that she likes that the competitors are striving to improve on their skills.

"It's about excelling and

not about beating people; it's about beating yourself, to beat your personal best," she said.

Clarkson said attending Fort McMurray in person is essential.

"It's very important to connect with people where they are and where they're living. That's why coming to Fort McMurray is really important because this has always been a big deal in people's imaginations, that we could extract oil from the sands," she said.

Clarkson said what impressed her about the tour was the oilsands commitment to protecting the environment.

"I think as we go around the country we see that people are very concerned that we can maintain ourselves in a sustainable economy and be part of it," she said.

Clarkson stands strong on the importance of her tours despite a parliamentary committee being

launched to examine the spending habits of the Governor General, after spending \$5.3 million during a recent circumpolar tour.

"I think it's absolutely essential for the Governor General to go around and Ottawa is not Canada, Ottawa is Ottawa. So I don't think the Governor General should stay there and just have people come there," she said.

Clarkson added that since becoming Governor General she has visited 300 communities, traveled 200,000 kilometres and delivered more than 600 speeches.

She became Governor General in 1999.

McMurrayite Ida Stepanavich agrees with Clarkson, saying having the Governor General

come in person does a lot for the community by giving it national exposure.

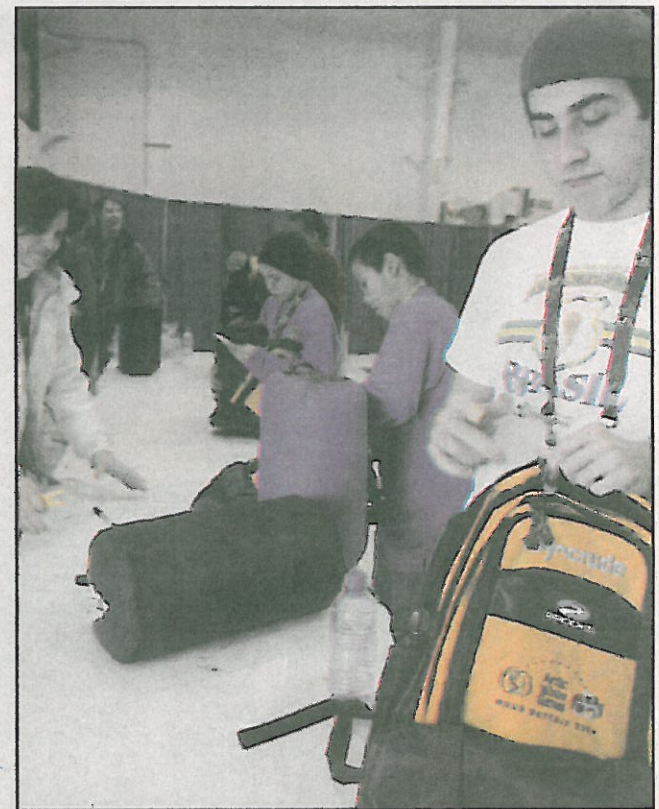
Stepanavich, the driver of the 797 Caterpillar heavy hauler, said it was excit-

ing to meet the Governor General and give her a tour of the equipment.

"It was an honour to meet her excellency the Governor General," she said. "It's not every day she's here."

Stepanavich added that Clarkson was engaged in the tour and asked questions about how the machine operated.

“ We believe in the North as a really important part of Canada ”



READY TO ROLL — Joel Fortier, right, a volleyball player with Team Nunavut, packs his new sleeping bag into his goodie bag backpack, while Steven Gordon and Wager Ford collect their athlete's packages in the Syncrude hangar Friday morning.

Photo by TAMARRA PRICE, Ulu News

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Pour plus de renseignements sur les programmes et services du ministère du Patrimoine canadien, veuillez consulter : www.patrimoinecanadien.gc.ca

Canada



Wall of Honour unveiled

By JACQUIE MCFARLAND
Ulu News

Even after the 2004 Arctic Winter Games end Fort McMurray will forever have a legacy of Team Alberta North's past, present and future athletes.

A permanent Wall of Honour has been installed at the C.A. Knight Recreation Centre and will contain Games information and the names of all athletes, coaches and mission staff who participate in the Arctic Winter Games.

"It's a chance to recognize the accomplishments of the participants in the games," said Roger Kramers, who was chef de mission for Team Alberta North in 2002 and 2004. "Everybody that's a part of Team Alberta North is going to be forever remembered."

As part of the opening weekend of the Games, Alberta Community Development Minister

Gene Zwozdesky was on hand to unveil the Wall of Honour, which commemorates Team Alberta North members from 1986 to 2002, representing over 1,600 athletes, coaches and mission staff. It also provides information on each individual year, including final medal count. This year's athletes, coaches and mission staff, approximately 300 names, will be added later. The wall will be added to after every Arctic Winter Games held.

The idea for the Wall of Honour originated within the Department of Community Development and is modeled after similar displays at the Alberta Sports Hall of Fame in Red Deer, which honours participants in other athletic competitions, such as the Canada Games and the Olympics.

Alongside Zwozdesky at the opening were MLA Guy Boutilier and intermediate women's soccer coach

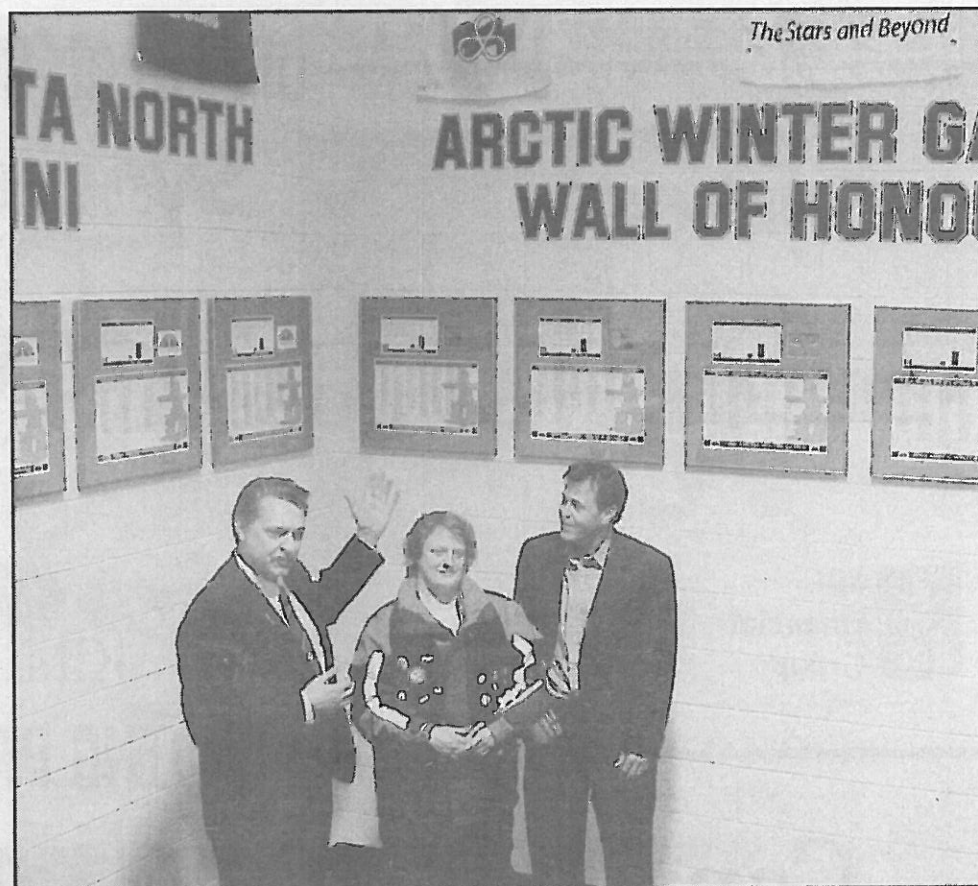
Koralee Samaroden of Fort McMurray.

"It's an honour to be asked to be there and represent Team Alberta as I have," said Samaroden, prior to the official opening. Samaroden is participating in her sixth Arctic Winter Games, having competed twice as an athlete and four times as a coach.

The unveiling of the Wall of Honour was a low-key event because officials didn't want to overshadow the opening ceremonies and the opening of the RBC Olympic Fanfare, an interactive area.

Many people were unaware of the Wall of Honour being installed but appreciated the recognition being given to the athletes.

"I'm looking forward to seeing it because I never heard anything about it," said former athlete Allan Beaver, who won a silver ulu in junior men's volleyball in 1986.



Gene Zwozdesky, Koralee Samaroden and Guy Boutilier unveil the Team Alberta North Wall of Honour.

Photo by JACQUIE MCFARLAND, Ulu News

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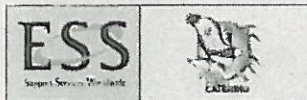




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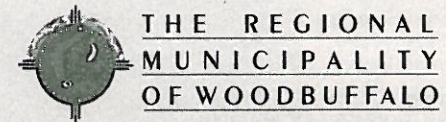


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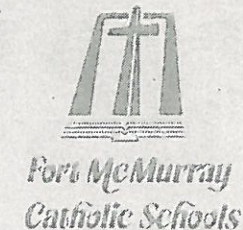
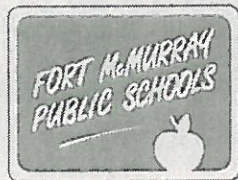


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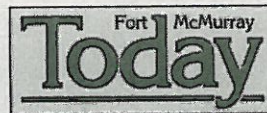
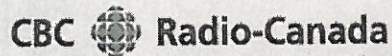
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Torch-bearers Ladouceur family carry on Games tradition

By ALEXANDRA COLLINS
Ulu news

The Arctic Winter Games torch was not only carried in by human athletes at this year's Games, but by canine ones as well.

The torch was carried into the Atco Plaza by Fort McMurray dog mushers Ed, Moe and Karlee Ladouceur, and their fleet of snow dogs.

Games organizers agree watching a family involved in a traditional Arctic sport, bringing in the torch with their dogs was something special for the Games.

"It was a very unique way to bring in the torch," said Games

spokesman Alain Moore.

"It was a neat tie all the way around," said Roger Kramers, Team Alberta North chef de mission.

Kramers said since he's been involved with the Games, he's never seen a torch lighting like this year's.

"Every host community tries to add something special for the Games and this was something special for our Games," he said.

Games co-chairman Dave Tuccaro said a committee was formed to chose this year's torch bearer and that the Ladouceur family was a perfect choice for the honour.

He said the Ladouceurs were chosen because of the family's past involvement with the Games, and the sport is being passed down through the family.

"They represent the sport of family — the family is carrying on the tradition of the Games," Tuccaro said.

Ed has been a coach for Team Alberta North for the past six games and his son Moe, now 16, first appeared in the Games in 1998, where at the age of 10, he took home three gold ulus.

Moe's cousin Karlee sat in the sled and held the torch as the family raced through the Atco Plaza.



Torch bearer Karlee Ladouceur is mushed by a dog team while officially opening the 2004 Arctic Winter Games in Fort McMurray on Saturday. Ladouceur was joined by uncle Ed and cousin Moe for the ceremony. Photo by CARL PATZEL, Ulu News

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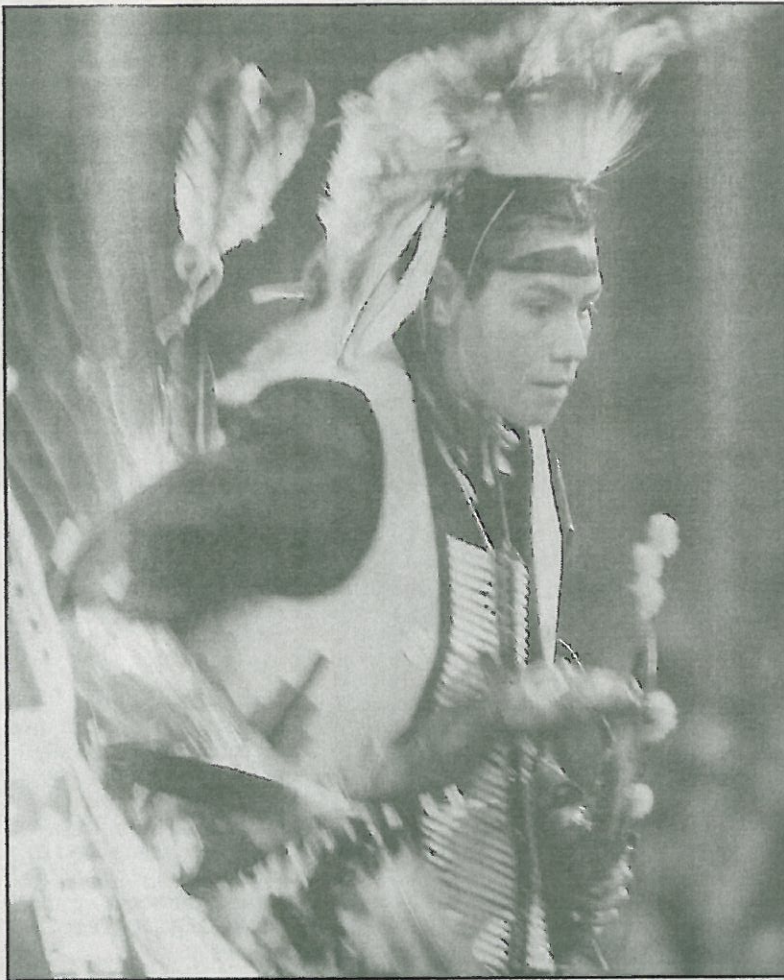
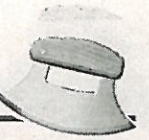
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CULTURAL CONTINGENT — With brilliant costumes and traditional steps, Spirit Child, an aboriginal dance troupe out of Slave Lake, Alta., entertained spectators at the 2004 Arctic Winter Games opening ceremonies.

Photos by CARL PATZEL, Today staff



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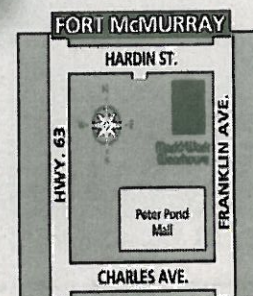
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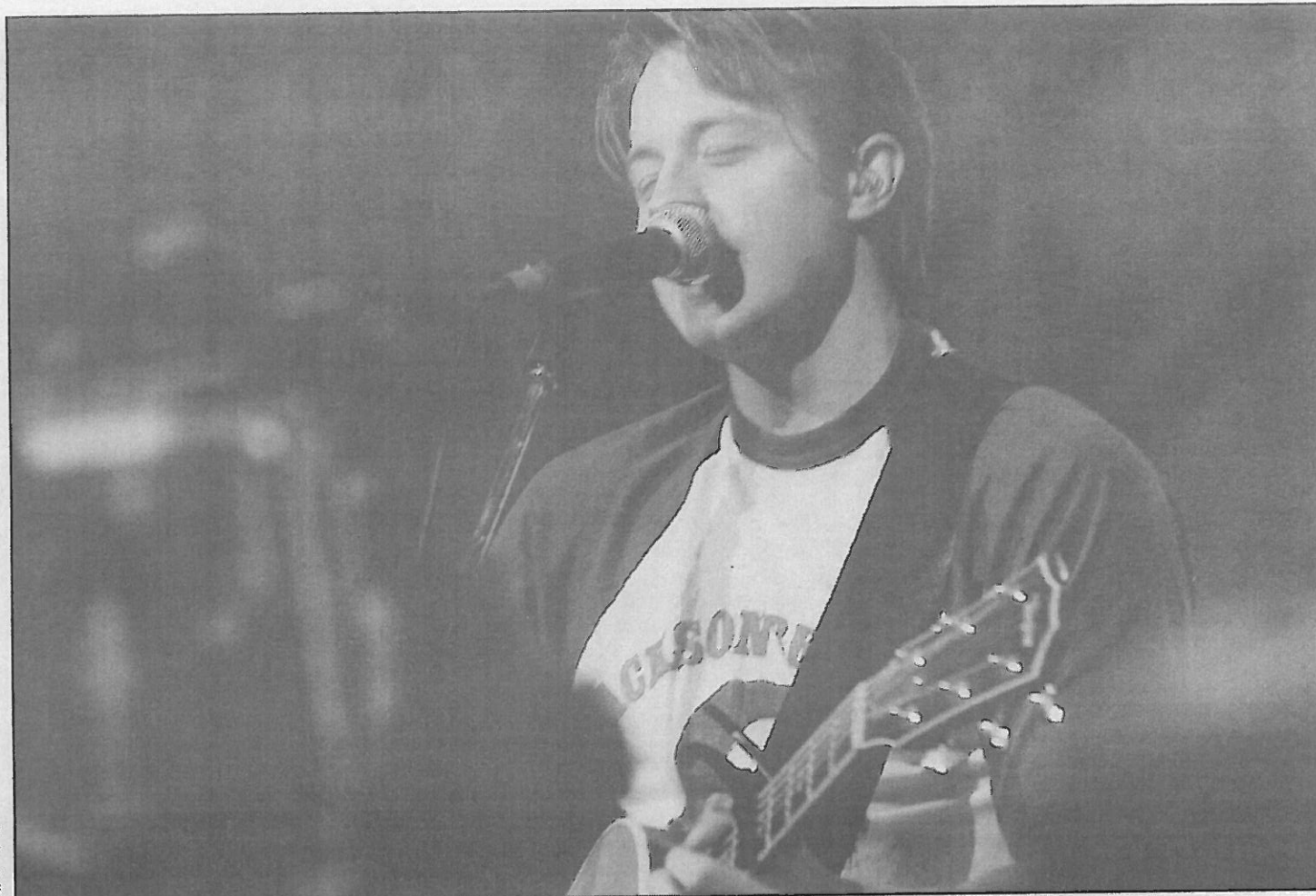
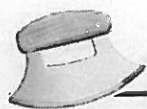
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Fort McMurray's own country star, Aaron Lines, lights up the stage at Atco Plaza while performing for the opening ceremonies Saturday night.

Photos by CARL PATZEL, Today staff

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Security and luxury in the athlete's village

JEFF KORENKO
Ulu News

Shawn Chaulk didn't immediately respond when asked Friday if he thought the more than 2,000 young athletes taking part in the 2004 Arctic Winter Games would be well looked after.

He just smiled proudly. That's because all Chaulk — one of two security supervisors charged with ensuring the participants lodged at Keyano College are kept safe and behave themselves — had to do was let a tour of the facility speak for itself.

What was witnessed shouted volumes concerning the extent organizers have gone to in their attempt to have the 18th edition of the circumpolar north's ultimate sporting and cultural extravaganza be regarded as the best ever.

Tight security mea-

sures, a state-of-the-art Internet café, spacious sleeping quarters, cozy confines to relax in and a week's worth of nourishment costing more than \$500,000 should help the youngsters overcome any pangs of homesickness.

"What you are going to see this week are the typical dormitory-type rules in regard to behaviour and horseplay and whatnot. Of course (the kids) have their curfews and their designated places to eat and hang out," Chaulk said.

Keyano College will be home to the male participants of six contingents — Yukon, Nunavut, Alaska, Alberta North, Nunavik-Quebec and the N.W.T. — while the other athletes will be dispersed among six other local schools.

At least six to eight Games' security volunteers will be on site at any given time from 7 a.m. to midnight, while from 10

p.m. to 8 a.m., regular college security will be present.

Chaulk and his crew are taking their responsibilities with the utmost seriousness.

"To get in this facility, you absolutely have to have the correct accreditation," said Chaulk. "Anyone that even works in this facility the rest of the year is carrying (the AWGs) ID as well as their staff ID."

"The people at the checkpoints will be working very hard to ensure anyone coming and going should be here."

All athletes, coaches and mission staff have access to Keyano College's Games' main-floor services.

However, the boys' sleeping quarters are off-limits to everyone but those who belong there, Chaulk said.

The boys' teams have

been separated into 13 different rooms for sleeping. The number of beds in each room is dictated by its size, but there are between 16 and 24 beds around the perimeter of the room with open space in the middle, Chaulk said.

"They are very large rooms with bunk beds and ample common space. There's lots of room for the kids to put their (belongings) down and kind of hang out and get ready for their events," he noted.

The Internet café — situated in a swanky Information Technology wing of the college just completed in late 2003 — has 46 computer work stations with flat screen monitors, so the kids can check their e-mail or surf the Net.

Yukon female hockey player Darcy Whiten, who is competing in her third Games, was happy with everything she saw the

facility had to offer, save for one minute detail.

"I don't like how everyone is separated. We're staying 15 minutes away and we have to come here to eat," said Whiten, who is staying at Westwood Community high school.

Whiten was nonetheless enthralled with how modern the equipment was in the Internet café.

Comparing it with the other ones she's experienced at previous AWGs, she offered, "the machines are way better, a lot newer and a lot faster."

It is expected as many as 250 athletes will drop into the Games' Polyclinic located at Keyano to nurse the aches, bumps and bruises that inevitably arise during the week's action.

And the staff there are definitely prepared to handle the load.

Local doctor David Killick will head up a team of area coun-

terparts to provide physician care six hours a day, while there will be three nurses on staff from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m.

Please see 'Home' Page 19

“What you are going to see this week are the typical dormitory-type rules.”

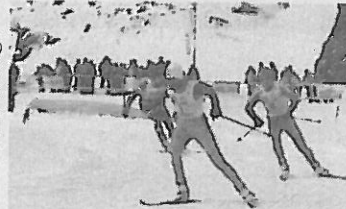
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Home away from home

Cont'd from Page 18.

"The majority of the complaints we will see will be muscle strains, bruises and contusions," predicted Killick, who works in the emergency department at the Northern Lights Regional Health Centre, as well as part-time with oil companies as an occupational physician.

The eight-bed Polyclinic has therapeutic massage and physiotherapy services available and has receptionists and data processors on hand to provide statistics to the team chefs de mission and keep track of injuries.

Helping the athletes stay energized will be what Carolyn Slade, the care and comfort director, hopes will be one of the most well-balanced menus provided at a Games.

About \$500,000 worth of food means 56,000 meals will be served, as the kids consume amounts such as 18,000 litres of milk; 2,600

dozen eggs; 16,000 kilograms of beef and 10,000 kilograms of potatoes.

The Keyano cafeteria seats 600.

Up for grabs for last night's first dinner was chicken, lasagna, potatoes, vegetables, soup, breads, fruit cookies, milk juice and pop, Slade said.

After a hard day of competing, the athletes can wander over and unwind in the King's Lounge, which is ordinarily the campus pub.

While no alcohol will be served during the week, it has all the feel of your average watering hole, with a large-screen television, two pool tables and bubble hockey.

When it was mentioned to Chaulk the athletes may just have more than the average comforts of home while at these games, he finally piped up.

"In a boomtown like McMurray, we don't cheap out on anything," he said.



ALL SMILES — In the spotlight, members of Team Alaska enter Atco Plaza during the opening ceremony of the 2004 Arctic Winter Games Saturday night. Some of young athletes seem to be enjoying the more than 8,000 people present to watch the ceremony.

Photo by TAMARRA PRICE, Ulu News

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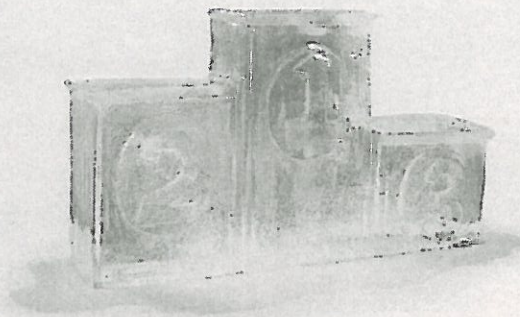


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