

Local news

Indian blockades spark formation of citizens' group

by MARILYN STORIE
Citizen Staff

Members of the United Northern Citizens group formed in reaction to Native road blockades, hammered out four key resolutions here Thursday that they hope to present to B.C. Premier Bill Vander Zalm this month.

Formed in reaction to continuing Indian roadblocks, the group is calling on the government as well as all Canadians to stop sitting on the fence and to get involved in the issue of Native land claim settlements.

"It's time for all Canadians as well as the government to jump off the fence and do something," said Colleen Reynolds at the evening meeting of 25 UNC community representatives.

Reynolds, who said she decided to "get off the fence herself" after talking with other Lillooet residents frustrated by road

see them and wonder if there's going to be any shooting. Every time a person in the resource industry loses a job, five more lose their jobs."

"Many of those jobs are in the metropolitan centres," added Andy Burton of Stewart. "The city centres will feel the effects, too."

Kitwanga residents report tourist routes normally active during the summer months such as Highway 37 from Kitwanga to Alaska are experiencing a dramatic drop in tourist traffic.

"It's not only tourism," said Brian Hobenshield of Kitwanga. "We're concerned because northern communities rely on resource-based industry. Any town that relies on mining or forestry gets hit first when a blockade is put up."

Reynolds said it is obvious B.C. residents are concerned that the government give ordinary citizens input into any moves it makes toward land claim settlements.

A July 16 petition offered to more than 1,000 motorists passing through Lillooet garnered all but nine signatures, Reynolds said.

"That was a clear sign. Of the nine who didn't sign, six of them were government employees."

"We didn't set up in the neighborhood of a blockade, either. These were not people who had recently passed through a blockade."

UNC members said they want to get their message out to metropolitan centres in particular. "They don't live side by side with the Indians like we do in small communities and they don't understand the issues involved," said Hobenshield.

"All they ever see on the TV is footage of old houses and how badly the Indian people are treated. Well, we all have the same problems in the North. Poor housing, inadequate education and lack of discipline are problems of society as a whole. We have these problems, too."

The UNC membership includes a number of Native people who fully support the group.

Two Gitksan Indians from the Hazelton area were present at the meeting. One of them, Judy Marsen, said not all Native people are in support of blockades.

"Myself and others believe very strongly in the concept of one Canada and one people," said Marsen. "The Native Indians who support blocking roads do not speak for all of us and sometimes reporters are getting their facts from people who do not have the right to speak for others."

"Their chiefs are like our politicians," said Breault. "Chiefs have different opinions just like different politicians do."

"We're finding that an explanation of what the Natives want varies. It all depends on which person you talk to."

All of the members say they particularly resent being branded as "redneck loggers" or "bigots."

"What with environmental issues so strong in the news today, that gives us a negative connotation... and we're not loggers," said Dan Weir of Lillooet. "We're from all walks of life, all cultures and all facets of society. We want a non-violent solution to the problem."

The members say they are less upset with the road blockades than they are with the provincial government.

"It's time for them to do something," said Hobenshield. "It's against the law to obstruct the highway, but the RCMP are not enforcing the law. They keep telling us it's a grey area."

"The police are in a no-win situation, too. They're being told by their bosses to stand back."

'FUTURES' PROGRAM HELPED

by BERNICE TRICK
Citizen Staff

The Prince George Community Futures Committee has received a \$100,000 grant from Canada Employment and Immigration to cover operating costs for the next year.

The committee, headed by local businessman Ton Steadman, was set up by the federal government to encourage entrepreneurs in the area.

It is the parent organization of the Prince George Business Development Centre, which gives loans to people starting new businesses and hopes to start a Self Employment Initiative in the fall.

The new program would provide grants to people receiving unemployment insurance or on social assistance who wish to start their own business.

The committee has a full-time staff member, who works out of the Business Development Centre office.

The new operating money is separate from the Business Development Centre budget.

Summit Lake access at centre of dispute

There's a feud between Islanders and Mainlanders at Summit Lake over congested lake traffic and parking, which Fraser-Fort George Regional District directors will attempt to solve.

The Islanders, who have cottages on islands in the middle of the lake, about 50 kilometres north of Prince George, presented a 53-signature petition to the regional district board Thursday requesting more access roads to the lake and boat-launch landings.

The only way the 37 island cottage owners can get to their weekend retreats is by boat, hence the need for better access to the lake, they say.

Islanders complain, although there are four existing access roads, only one is in use because the others are in poor condition and have no landings.

"A real problem has come out of this and we feel better service

should be provided for our tax dollars," the petition states.

On the other hand, the 24 mainland residents of the village, complain the weekend crowd of vehicles, boats and trailers disturb their "quiet enjoyment."

Speaking for the villagers, resident Gordon Bryant, a former mayor of Prince George, told directors there are 30 to 40 vehicles, boats and trailers severely crowding the one access road being used.

"The situation there is unbearable for the immediate residents," he said.

According to Bryant, there are other existing accesses, but the Islanders prefer to use the one closest to their destinations "and where the village residents residing adjacent give them some security for their cars and boats."

"The Islanders have a right to plead for parking, access and security for their vehicles. In turn, the village residents are entitled

to quiet enjoyment of their homes," Bryant summed up.

Because most FFRD directors are unfamiliar with the issues, they directed administration to launch an investigation and report back with recommendations for solving the matter.

During presentations, island resident Bill Vos took FFRD director Jim Scott (Crooked River-Parsnip electoral area) to task.

Among other things, he accused Scott of not coming up with an answer to the problem during the past five years, after researching the issue, and opposing the petition presented to him Aug. 11.

In reply, Scott said he'd completed a feasibility study in 1985, but his proposals — presented in 1986 — had been turned down by island residents.

"I said at that time the problem would not go away and would have to be addressed. Now, here it is — four years later."



Colleen Reynolds

blockades in July, organized the first meeting of northern community representatives.

"We're the first group of communities to band together," she said. "There's a lot of anger, a lot of hurting people in Lillooet."

"There's a potential for worse violence there and in Kitwanga than currently exists in Oka (the site of a five-week Native dispute in Quebec)."

The 25 community representatives from Lillooet, Pemberton, Hazelton, Stewart and Kispiox, were joined at the meeting by eight Prince George residents interested in starting a group of their own. "It's not off the ground yet but I'm sure they'll be publicizing themselves in the near future," said Reynolds.

The four key resolutions of UNC are:

■ That all the people of B.C. have fair representation at talks about aboriginal claims issues.

■ That the public be kept fully informed of facts and consequences of any actions proposed as a result of negotiation meetings between the government and Native groups involving land claim settlements.

■ That one law for all people be put in place.

■ That equality of rights and responsibilities for all citizens be put into effect.

All representatives at the meeting said they are suffering financially as a result of blockades.

Lillooet resident Helen Breault operates a campground with her husband and says it is uncharacteristically empty.

"They say for every tourist who has a bad experience, there's five more he'll tell when he gets home that will decide not to visit based on his experience," she said. "The tourists don't like the blockades."

"They get scared when they

Hotel robber sought here

A robbery at the Simon Fraser Inn on Brunswick Street overnight has police asking the public's assistance in identifying the culprit.

At 3:20 a.m. the night services clerk was approached by an unarmed man, who robbed the clerk of an undisclosed sum of money and fled on foot.

The suspect is described as six feet tall, weighing 170 pounds and believed to be about 35 years old. He was wearing blue jeans and a blue shirt at the time of the robbery.

Anyone with information about this robbery is asked to call the Prince George RCMP at 562-3371

or make an anonymous call to Crimestoppers at 564-TIPS.

A 27-year-old Prince George woman was sexually assaulted in her home on Lorne Crescent by unknown male shortly before 5 a.m., Prince George RCMP reported today.

The woman was asleep in bed when an unknown man entered her residence and assaulted her. A struggle ensued and the man fled on foot. Police surrounded the area and searched it with dogs, but the man was not apprehended.

No description of the man is available because he was wearing a nylon stocking over his head to

disguise his identity. Anyone with information about this crime is asked to call the Prince George RCMP.

Residents here are also asked to be on the lookout for a missing 35-year-old Prince George woman who may be suffering from disorientation.

Gordana Djuric was last seen at noon Thursday in the Woolco department store in the Pine Centre Mall. Djuric is described as a white female, five-foot-10, 195 pounds, with brown hair. She was wearing a short-sleeved white blouse with red dots and blue jeans at the time of her last description.

Djuric had no money or identification and is without the medication she takes for a medical condition.

Five in the running for UNBC president

by TINA CRESSWELL
Citizen Staff

The new president of the University of British Columbia will be appointed sometime near the end of next month, board president Murray Sadler said today.

Five candidates for the job will be interviewed by a search committee next week, but a decision cannot be made quickly — "It's a process and it marches along," Sadler said.

Sadler was responding to comments by Bruce Strachan, Minister of Advanced Education, to city council Monday night, when Strachan said a decision would be reached by Aug. 25.

Sadler said candidates, who are expected to bring their spouses, will undergo a three-hour interview, with a program for spouses and some entertainment by the board also on the agenda.

"These people are candidates... some of them will have to be wooed. Hopefully we're going to leave them with a good opinion of the city of Prince George."

After interviews, which will take all of next week, the following week will be spent talking to the candidates again to narrow the field to one or two, Sadler explained.

Further discussions will follow, and one candidate will emerge, perhaps by the first or second week of September, he said.

It will then be time to discuss the "nuts and bolts" of the appointment with the successful candidate, Sadler said, which he hopes will come near the end of next month.

The search committee is looking for "a builder" who can guide UNBC through its formative years, he said. "They're starting with a clean sheet of paper."

There was a long list of applicants, and the five candidates selected from that list are "people of the very highest calibre," Sadler said.

Fears that a northern university could not attract good personnel are unfounded, he said — "I can tell you that we have excellent candidates and are very pleased."

The search committee includes Sadler, Hans Wagner from Kitimat, Wally Harwood from Hudson's Hope, third-year UBC student Jean McFee and Drs. Peter Larkin and John Chapman from UBC.

Meanwhile, the question of co-ordination of effort between community colleges and UNBC is being addressed by a task force made up of representatives from the boards, faculty and chief executive officers of the institutions involved.

Paul Gallagher, president of Vancouver Community College, has been appointed as the consultant to the task force, which will provide a "unique solution, made in the North and found in the North," Sadler said.

"We are extremely lucky to get someone of the calibre of Paul Gallagher... he'll be starting to pull the pieces together," Sadler said.

The task force, which will examine ways to co-ordinate the efforts of UNBC and community colleges, will have "long-range and far-reaching positive effects on course delivery in northern British Columbia."

Its report is expected by early next spring, Sadler said.

RIVER FRONTAGE WANTED
Need Getaway within 2 hrs. of Prince George. Lease or purchase, 4-wheel access necessary. Hydro optional. Clear, medium sized river only. Not Fraser or Nechako.
Tom Steadman - Canadian Tire
562-8258 or 962-2911 eves

MUSIC LESSONS ENROLL TODAY
563-0691
THE B & B MUSIC LTD.
316 George Street

ICE CREAM
99.9% fat free
No Preservatives
Less than 9 calories per ounce
\$1.35 per cone
Honey & Herbs
1541 THIRD AVENUE, 562-5816

ATTENTION ALL BUSINESSES
The Prince George Chamber of Commerce is ...
NOW RENTING
Display Booths are now being rented out for what will be the most exciting Trade Show in the Chamber's 79 year history. This statement is obvious by the Fair's theme ...

ENVIRONMENT 90 TRADE SHOW
Fri. & Sat., Oct. 19, 20
Prince George ROLLER RINK
Businesses from every segment of our community will be represented. They'll be featuring the very latest products, methods, equipment, etc. that harmonize with our environment.
Booth Rates (8'x10')
Chamber Member \$350
Non-Member \$375
Hurry! Last year's exhibitors are rebooking now and once the booths are gone... they're gone.
Phone or write today.
562-2454

FOR HIRE
Robi Recycle
Got a special promotion coming up between now and the Trade Show? Robi Recycle, along with his galactic friends, Laser Lady and Capt. Ozon, is available. For \$150 per day (any 8 hrs.) Robi and one of his friends will entertain and inform your customers. Book Now!

OUR EXPERTS HAVE IT... EXPERIENCE!
Chris Hanson, Packaging Manager, has over 10 years commercial lending experience with FBDB. A six year resident of Prince George, he is aware of the financial needs of small and medium sized businesses in the area. For the past year, Chris has been Manager of the Bank's Packaging Services. This is designed to assist businesses in their efforts to obtain funding. For a modest fee, a quality financial report is prepared which can then be presented to financial institutions or government agencies.
CHRIS HANSON
As an experienced banker, Chris is able to address issues of concern to lenders, in their language. A quality presentation improves the chances of funding approval as well as shortening the processing time.
Call Chris and find out how his experience can benefit your business.
#200 - 299 Victoria Street
Prince George, B.C. V2L 5B8
Phone 561-5323
1-800-663-5724
Federal Business Development Bank / Banque fédérale de développement
"Backing Independent Business" Canada

SUPPORT THE BLOCK PARENT ASSOCIATION

DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING YOU WOULD LIKE TO SELL?
Bring it into the Parkhill Flea Market Open Every Saturday & Sunday For more information Phone 561-1576
PARKHILL FLEA MARKET
"Oldest Flea market in Prince George"

NO MONEY DOWN
1985 HYUNDAI PONY
Automatic, sun-roof, cassette, one owner..... \$4150
Check and Compare
City Centre Mazda
760 VICTORIA ST. DLN8848B 563-2233