

SUMMER
2005



Wisdom

Grande Prairie Regional College Magazine



THIS ISSUE

Ambassador
Carmen Sylvain

Actor Gerald Auger
returns to GPRC

Chris Warkentin
Parliament hopeful



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cordially
invited*



October 1, 2005

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evening
of dining
and dancing*

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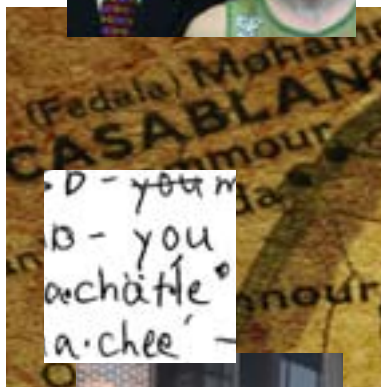
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Athletes as Ambassadors

Mike Weir and Steve Nash. These are names of two superb Canadian athletes that are instantly recognizable to people from coast to coast in this great country of ours. Weir, Canada's best golfer, won the 2003 Masters Tournament while Nash was recently named the Most Valuable Player in the National Basketball Association. Both of these accomplishments are the source of great pride to Canadians as these athletes represent the best of what it is to be Canadian. They are both immensely skilled players who have worked long and hard to develop their talents, and when they speak they come across as humble, respectful and pleasant. In other words, they are tremendous Canadian ambassadors.

Just as our professional athletes have the capabilities to make an impact in the world at large, so do our GPRC Wolves student-athletes have the potential to be positive representatives for our College. It seems that most of our athletes develop strong ties to the institution during their time here. The experience is intense as they try to balance their commitment to their studies with their desire to train and grow in their chosen sport. Fierce loyalties to their teammates, coaches and College develop as they go to battle together over the course of the seasons. Whether they win or lose, for many student-athletes their time at our College is one of the best experiences of their lives. Through sport, a significant number of them leave with a

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2005 Presidents Awards

Three prestigious GPRC awards were presented at the second annual GPRC President's Awards Reception on Saturday, February 12. The Alumni/Foundation Volunteer Award, Distinguished Alumni Award, and Board of Governors Award of Distinction are awards established by the College in recognition of the contributions of our community in support of post-secondary education in our region.

Board of Governors Award of Distinction - Recipient Les Longmate

The Award of Distinction is the College's highest tribute to individuals or groups within our community. This award has been established to honour individuals whose actions have made exceptional contributions to our community and to the advancement of higher education. Charles Leslie Longmate was born in

Holden, Alberta in 1922 but shortly after his family moved to Drumheller where his father started the Ford dealership. Upon graduation from Drumheller High School, Leslie pursued a diploma in Business from Alberta College in Edmonton. In 1940 Leslie joined the Canadian Air Force and served his country overseas until 1945 at which point he returned to Grande Prairie, Alberta where he started Windsor Motors with friend Bob Millar. In 1950 Leslie married his hometown sweetheart, Margaret Anderson, and moved her north to Grande Prairie where they started their life together. Leslie and Margaret raised four children and made many close friends in the 54 years they have made Grande Prairie their home. Apart from being a successful business entrepreneur, Leslie has served on many committees and community organizations: He was an Alderman on City Council, sat on the

GPRC Foundation Board as well as the Grande Prairie Public Library Board, the Police Commission, Rotary and has supported countless fundraisers and community events. Les Longmate has also proven to be a friend and mentor and has helped many to a better way of life. Leslie is best known for his profound sense of community and hilarious sense of humour.

Alumni/Foundation Volunteer Award - Recipient Willie deWit

This award recognizes GPRC Alumni for outstanding accomplishments in their profession, and /or in service to their community, society, or Grande Prairie Regional College. In 1978 Willie deWit was a 17-year-old Composite High School football quarterback working on a research project on boxing for a physical education class. Boxing quickly became his passion, and deWit went on to a



Willie deWit

Les Longmate

Dedication

Douglas Cardinal and his wife Idoia in front of the newly renovated and renamed Douglas J. Cardinal Performing Arts Centre. The Cardinals attended Dedication ceremonies held Feb 12, 2005.



career of 67 wins and 12 losses that included the North American Amateur Heavyweight championship, the World Amateur Heavyweight title and a silver medal for Canada in the 1984 Olympics. In his professional career he was ranked number 5 in the world. Upon his retirement from boxing in 1987, he enrolled at Grande Prairie Regional College in pre-law. He has said that this was the accomplishment he was most proud of. In countless interviews he has given credit to GPRC as "the perfect place for me to learn how to learn again..." Willie deWit attended GPRC from 1989-1991 then went on to graduate from the Faculty of Law at the University of Alberta and has been practicing law in Calgary ever since.

Alumni/Foundation Volunteer Award - Recipient Rick Hryciuk
 The Alumni/Foundation Volunteer Award recognizes a person who exemplifies the many volunteers

upon whose efforts the continued growth of our College depends. Rick Hryciuk joined the GPRC Foundation Board of Directors in 1999, having been recruited by former President Tom Thompson. During his years on the Foundation Board, Rick chaired the two major fundraising events – College Classic Golf Tournament and President’s Ball. Two years after his term on the Board ended, Rick was approached to be a member of the special committee established for the GPRC Theatre Heritage Project. Rick Hryciuk has lived in Grande Prairie since moving here at the age of three and has been a regular volunteer in our community. He was the inaugural president of the South Peace Ball Association, and was the VP Sports for the Canada Winter Games 1995 – a commitment of five years in total. "My philosophy has always been that when I am asked to do something, I give everything I've got."



On July 23 and 24, 2005 the Grande Prairie Aviation Society hosted the Grande Prairie Regional Air Show. This was the first air show here in over 10 years and featured the Canadian Forces Snowbirds, Sky hawks parachute team, any many other air acrobats who wowed the crowd.

The air show was a non profit venture and GPRC was is honoured to have been selected as the primary recipient of the charitable proceeds. The Foundation worked in conjunction with the Air Show board to market sponsorship opportunities to local businesses and the response from the community was enthusiastic. The Society plans to organize an air show every two years so we hope this was just the beginning of a new summer tradition.



Rick Hryciuk





Ainsworth College Classic

The **Ainsworth College Classic** tournament was held on June 3, 2005 at the Grande Prairie Golf and Country Club. The sun was bright at 1:00 pm when GPRC President Jim Henderson fired the gun allowing 144 golfers to get their round underway. It was the perfect day for golf...until around the 9 hole mark. For only the second time in the 18 year history of the Classic, clouds,

rain and hail quickly moved in forcing club manager and event emcee Don McFarlane to blow the horn putting an end to play. Despite the shortened game, spirits were high. Players enjoyed a fantastic barbecued steak dinner, then participated in a hugely successful live auction and silent auction run by Mr. McFarlane. At the end of the day a record \$42,000 was raised for the

college and its students.

We would like to thank our title sponsor Ainsworth Lumber for their involvement. Both Allan Ainsworth and his son Micheal flew in from Vancouver to play in the tournament. Other major sponsors were: Pepsi Bottling Group, Sportswear Plus, and Common Wealth Credit Union.



The final audience for **Annie Get Your Gun** applauded more than the successful run which entertained local theatre-goers. The company, driven by the energy of producer Rick Hryciuk, raised \$18,000 toward the GPRC Theatre Heritage Project.

Support for GPRC Arts Projects

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts has awarded a grant of \$12,150 for the support of arts activities at Grande Prairie Regional College. The funding is part of the Foundation's Post Secondary Institutions Grant Program, and is subject to the stipulations and restrictions of that program.

Five GPRC projects were identified in the GPRC funding submission, and the grant has identified monies for each of the five: Prairie North Artists Residency, Visitor in the Arts Series, National Arts Centre Orchestra, Piano Recital and Contemporary Showcase. These projects will be launched throughout 2005 - 2006.

The National Arts Centre Orchestra project is a new initiative, providing the 55-member Ottawa orchestra for two-day residencies geared to elementary school students. The GPRC National Arts Centre Orchestra residency will give music students of all ages in our area a wonderful opportunity to learn from and play with world-class musicians.

Grande Prairie Regional College is very grateful to the Alberta Foundation for the Arts for the grant, and for this grant program which does so much to stimulate arts activities in our region.

Lion's Club Provides Defibrilators

Every year, sudden cardiac arrest claims more than 400,000 thousand lives. Each year, over 12,000 North Americans experience cardiac arrest in a public place. Research has shown that AEDs, Automated External Defibrillators, can increase survival rates as much as 90%, and the devices have become a key part of health and safety procedures in many public areas such as airports, shopping malls, and public institutions.

The Swan City Breakfast Lions Club, represented by Norm Perra, provided GPRC with a cheque for \$9,500.00, funding the purchase of two defibrillators, a training defibrillator and training for 30 people. The training will be provided to the "first-responders" health and safety personnel at the College, which includes representatives from

throughout the institution.

The gift meets an identified but unfunded need; the College has been enthusiastic about the Operation Heart Safe program promoted by GPREMS which encourages access to AEDs in public spaces. "We are very grateful to the Swan City Breakfast Lions," says GPRC President Jim Henderson. "This gift truly makes a difference; through the generosity of the Lions, GPRC will be a safer place to work and learn. If the life of just one person is saved the value of the gift will be priceless."



Jim Richards, Norm Perra, Carment Haakstad, Hywell Williams.

The College is very pleased to be educating a significant percentage of its staff in the use of AED, By educating the general population on CPR and the use of Automated External Defibrillators (AED), care can start before an ambulance arrives.

NAC Orchestra tour comes to Performing Arts Centre at GPRC

Grande Prairie Regional College is delighted to host the National Arts Centre Orchestra on November 13, 2005 as part of the NACO tour of Alberta and Saskatchewan this year.

Consistent praise has followed this vibrant, classical-sized orchestra throughout its history of touring both nationally and internationally, recording, and commissioning Canadian works. The National Arts Centre Orchestra of Canada, now under the direction of renowned conductor/ violinist/violist Pinchas Zukerman, continues to draw accolades both abroad and at its home in Ottawa where it gives over 100 performances a year.

The GPRC performance is partially supported by a grant from the Alberta Foundation for the Arts, while the Alberta portion of this

National Arts Centre Orchestra Tour is supported by Alberta Presenting Sponsor EPCOR, and Alberta Major Sponsor CN. Tour educational activities are supported by Alberta Education Sponsor ConocoPhillips, and Education Donors NAC Friends – Alberta, and CIBC.

In addition to a full series of subscription concerts at the National Arts Centre each season, tours are undertaken to regions throughout Canada and around the world. Since the arrival of Pinchas Zukerman, education has been an extremely important component of these tours. He has led the Orchestra on tours within Canada in 1999, 2002 and 2004, to Europe and Israel in 2000, and the United States and Mexico in 2003 with educational activities ranging from master classes and question-and-answer sessions to sectional rehearsals with youth and community orchestras and student matinees. Teacher Resource Kits have been developed for distribution to elementary schools in the regions toured and across Canada, and the public has been able to follow each tour through fully interactive web-

sites which are now archived on the NAC's Performing Arts Website at www.artsalive.ca. The Orchestra's 2004 tour in British Columbia included 95 education activities in addition to the public concerts. The next tour is to Alberta and Saskatchewan in November 2005.

The NAC Orchestra has 40 recordings to its name, six with Pinchas Zukerman: Haydn, Vivaldi, Beethoven, Schubert and Mozart (a CD of flute quartets, and a CD of orchestral and string quintets). The commissioning of original Canadian works has always been an important part of the National Arts Centre's mandate with over 50 works commissioned to date.

The concert will be on Sunday November 13, 2005 in the Douglas J. Cardinal Performing Arts Centre at Grande Prairie Regional College.

Tickets (reserved seating) go on sale in September at the GP Live Theatre Box Office, phone 538-1600. Main Floor: \$30 adults, \$25 seniors, \$20 students & children. Balcony: \$25 adults, \$20 seniors, \$15 students & children



The past year has been a remarkable episode in the life of Carmen Sylvain. In September, 2004, Ms. Sylvain was formally accredited by King Mohammed VI as the Canadian Ambassador to Morocco, becoming the first woman Ambassador to an Arab country.

Just how did she get there from Girouxville Alberta? "Well, it is a long story, but it is incremental!" says Carmen Sylvain, speaking from the Embassy residence in Agdal-Rabat.

"It all started in Grande Prairie, and it actually started with Leigh Goldie." Carmen Sylvain was part of a group of players from Donnelly high school who had been recruited to play Wolves volleyball. "What happened was we were playing in a tournament once, and one of the referees was a Grande Prairie man who had spent some time in Alabama and worked with the university volleyball team. He saw a couple of us play in that tournament, and he

Peace Country woman Canadian Ambassador to Morocco

approached Leigh about doing a play video that he could send to the coach at that university to show off those of us he thought had some potential. Three of us participated in a video to send to the coach in Alabama. Leigh came back to us about three weeks later, and said "gosh golly gee, something went wrong, the video didn't work, could you come and do it again." And the other two women said, no, we're not going to do it again, it's too much trouble, we're not going to get selected anyway. But I said sure, I'll do it again, why not?"

Leigh Goldie submitted the videotape, and within a month Carmen Sylvain received a letter

offering her a full scholarship to the university in Alabama. "So I just went home, told my parents where I was going, and headed off all on my own to Alabama – I don't remember ever thinking twice about it. I just headed off, thinking YAY, I get to go to university, it's paid, I get to play volleyball, I get to live in the US and discover about it a little... I remember going to my mother and telling her about it and she said "where's Alabama?" I hadn't even taken the time to look yet, so I pulled out the map and we found it together."

And thus began the series of seemingly unrelated events which together positioned Carmen Sylvain perfectly for her entry into the diplomatic service.

Carmen Sylvain was considered a "foreign student" at the university in Alabama – part of a large contingency of foreign students. "They gave scholarships to students from all over the world. I joined the club for international students, and I

In Conversation

Ambassador Carmen Sylvain



met for the first time people from Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Japan, Saudi Arabia, several African countries – something like 70 different countries were represented. I really enjoyed that – I learned such a tremendous amount – you learn just from meeting people.

“That sort of inspired me in foreign affairs – between all of them, they all had something to say about whatever was happening on the international stage at that time. It was a good learning experience.”

That experience, combined with a course in Western Civilization, began Carmen on what would eventually lead her to the diplomatic services. “I had a really dynamic professor, who was very excited about history, and it was the first history “experience” for me – and combined with all of the people I was meeting, I was very taken with it. I thought, this is what I want to do: study history, get to know about the world and different cultures – that was where my interest started.”

History gradually overtook volleyball as a priority, and Carmen was immersed in her studies when the sudden death of her parents brought her back to Northern Alberta to care for younger siblings. “I was a bit depressed – I had thought I would complete my Bachelors’ and then go on to do a Masters degree in California, and suddenly here I was back in Girouxville. It felt like a setback. I thought, I am never going to get my Masters . . .”

Carmen got a temporary job teaching, and also began working for the French Canadian Association. While she was with the French Canadian Association, she interacted frequently with the Department of Secretary of State. “At the time, they had a promotion of women and multicultural programs, and they were looking for a community development agent who knew different parts of Alberta.” Carmen was hired to meet with women’s organizations and Francophone community orga-

nizations, analysing community development projects, and determining which ones the department would fund.

“I was there for about nine months and by chance I went to a concert in Montreal, where I met the director of the women’s program in Ottawa. She had a team in Ottawa, and she didn’t like the fact that practically everyone on her team who was handling national issues was from Ontario or Quebec – she was looking for people from the regions who understood women and agriculture, women in rural communities, and multicultural organizations. I had worked with some of them in Alberta, so I was invited to Ottawa for six months as a temporary replacement for someone. My appointment was prolonged, and after about a year I was offered a full-time job and I



decided to take it.”

Two years later, Carmen was finished that project and looking for a change. A neighbour who was working for the Privy council office, told her of an opportunity gathering input for constitutional talks. They wanted people who had worked with community organizations, and people who had worked across the country. “I had worked with aboriginal and francophone communities, with environmental groups, women’s groups, agricultural groups – so I put in my name they called me and said ‘when can you start?’

For the next year and a half, every important group in the country was making presentations to the central government on how the constitution should be reformed. “It was a very interesting experience,” says Carmen. “The job

gave me an opportunity to learn a lot about our constitution, and learn about all of the different interests of these organizations relative to the constitution, and the provinces positions. And then there were six constitutional policy conferences where they brought together experts and the research – historians and ordinary Canadians – it was an excellent opportunity. There was a referendum that followed – a very high profile event with the media following it minute by minute – a lot to learn in terms of working with the media.”

When that process was over, Carmen Sylvain was no longer needed at the Privy Council, and was looking for another job. The department of Communications had the responsibility for organizing Canada’s participation in World Fairs abroad. “What they needed were people to plan these spaces – essentially building a Canadian pavillion abroad. They needed somebody who understood the country, who had travelled or who had worked in various parts of Canada. I had done that in the womens program and I had done it in Privy Council. They needed somebody who had federal-provincial experience, because you had to negotiate with all the provincial governments, and someone who knew private industry because you had to recruit sponsorship from private industry to build these pavilions. They also needed somebody who knew media and communications because they are very large communications events. I wouldn’t say I had a lot of experience in all of them, but I had had a taste of all of these fields. Anyway, I wound up with the job – I had time to learn for about a year, and then plunged into it.”

Carmen Sylvain was Director of International Expositions, Department of Communications, from 1992-1994, and held various posts at Canadian Heritage in the years 1994-2001, including Director of International Events, and Assistant Commissioner General.

“I actually stayed in that job for





close to ten years because I enjoyed it so much. It is like a mini-embassy abroad that you build new each time. Each takes about three years to plan – you do everything: produce film, produce exhibits, put on programs – trade programs, public affairs programs. It's like Disneyland in a way – in Germany we created the largest Canadian pavilion ever abroad; the pavilion was the size of a football field. We were receiving 25,000 visitors a day, close to 3 million visitors in a five-month period. We made exhibitor programs for that audience, plus special programs for visiting dignitaries – producing a Canadian show abroad for five or six months. It was fascinating. Those events are extraordinary learning events for people.

“I did that for three events, and acquired a certain amount of experience. There is an international body similar to the Olympic committee – anyway, I wound up getting elected to the executive commission of the organization, and served as a member for about four years, and then when the presidency came up I was encouraged to run. I thought I was too young – who is going to vote for me with all these other candidates from various countries – but I thought I'll try anyway; I had learned my lesson in Grande Prairie when I got that scholarship.

“I tried and I was elected, and that gave me the opportunity to do some inquiry missions – China, Russia, Mexico, Korea, Poland and Argentina were bidding – I wound up leading a delegation of six members, from six different countries, to each of these bidding countries, and being received by the leaders of those countries. The President of China, the Mayor of Shanghai, the President of Mexico – the highest level officials of those countries – business and government. President Poutine of Russia, Gorbachev... really extraordinary people. I got this opportunity – partly chance, partly experience, partly interest and hard work – I had put a lot of hard work into the

organization.”

And then the Foreign Affairs bolt slipped into place, gathering Carmen Sylvain's long history of experience and expertise into its current direction.

“After Germany, the Canadian ambassador to Germany became the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. He had been so impressed with what we did in Germany – he saw us as a small embassy – he asked me if I would go and work at Foreign Affairs. I said yes, I would love to, because ever since I had been at university, I thought this is what I would like to do, and I had never had the opportunity to pursue it in a direct pass.”

Carmen Sylvain went to the department of Foreign Affairs and asked what they had to offer. ‘Have you ever thought of working in the Middle East?’ she was asked.

“I said never, ever, ever! To tell you the truth I had absolutely no interest. I thought about it, and decided that this may not be an area of the world that I am attracted to, but I will pursue those in my private life. If I take this on in my professional life, it forces me to learn about it, and I may like it. So I said okay.”

When Carmen Sylvain started her work in the Department of Foreign Affairs on September 7th, 2001, she was responsible for all the countries of the Gulf and all of the countries of North Africa. “Five days after I was there, I was sitting in my office in Ottawa, on the telephone with our ambassador in Saudi Arabia – we were chatting and he says ‘Oh, Carmen, do you have your TV on?’ I said no, and he said, well there is a plane that just flew into the World Trade Centre.

“I was talking to our Ambassador in Saudi Arabia about our program for Saudi Arabia, and then this occurred. Our whole department turned upside down. Of course in the immediate aftermath all the attention turned on the Gulf region – the two regions that I was dealing with, really, because they were all Arab countries. In a way it forced a tremen-

dous amount of work on me very quickly because I didn't know the region, and I was learning it, but on the other hand when a crisis happens like that the whole department comes together because they have to deal with the crisis – so I got to know all the areas of a new department very quickly. People were exceptionally generous in helping me learn – we wound up having more interaction with those countries because we needed to for security reasons.

“I just worked really hard and I guess they must think we did a decent job because after three years they decided that I knew the region well enough to go abroad. That is such a lo-o-ong story – but it all has to do with how I got here.

“You know, I didn't plan anything. I was always jealous of these people who knew what they wanted to be – I knew what I wanted to do generally, but there was no moment when I made the decision to be a Canadian Ambassador and began to work toward it specifically. A lot of people decide to study international affairs, and they join the department at a young age and begin to move up the ranks... it is extremely hard to get into the department like I did. Very few are able to do that... but now it is exactly that approach which is being encouraged. They are finding that international affairs personnel benefit from that broader experience – first-hand knowledge of other provinces and territories, work with industry – networks throughout the country so that they understand Canada well and can represent the whole country well abroad.

“People in the department used

to ask – how come you know so many people? How do you know that person, that issue, that resource? I think it was because I had come to the work so indirectly, had spent years working with so many other interests, that my contacts are strong and varied.”

And now Carmen Sylvain is on Canadian soil in Agdal-Rabat, where the official language is Arabic, and the language of business is French. The entire embassy is decorated all with Canadian materials – artworks, furniture, carpets – everything is purchased in Canada. “It is kind of a Canadian showcase.” Her staff includes several Francophone Canadians, but many more Moroccans.

“You definitely need French to work here – Arabic is the language spoken by mostly everyone, but French is the language of business, and the language used by government and in every official capacity. If you want to do anything here, you communicate in French. Definitely my Francophone heritage has been useful. What I find interesting is that everyone who has worked here in the past, absolutely everyone, has always been from Quebec. So I am the first one from another region.

“By sending someone from outside Quebec, first we are announcing that there is a Canada outside Quebec, and also we are able to draw interest to western Canada. I have already been talking about Morocco to people at the University of Alberta, and UNBC, and different industries in Alberta, the oil industry in Calgary – and I have talked here in Morocco about Alberta, and the various opportunities in industry and education for

Moroccans who want to go to Canada. So the language is useful, but I find that being from outside of Quebec is also an important thing.”

No two days are alike. On the day of the interview with Wisdom, Ms. Sylvain received a delegation of former chiefs of the Canadian Armed Forces – planning for some meetings with the chief of the Moroccan Armed Forces to talk about a convention on Land Mines. “Morocco is one of the few hold-out countries in Africa, which has not signed on. And they have not wanted to talk to us at all. We started discussions last fall, and finally talked them into receiving a delegation. So we're planning all of this – its very exciting because the object of course is to have as many countries on board as possible to rid the world of landmines. When you have a holdout who shows potential interest in coming on board, you want to be sure you get it right. So that's what I was doing today.”

Embassy personnel includes a person in charge of political program, the chief of trade programs, and someone responsible for immigration. “We oversee all of the immigration services for Moroccans to Canada – they immigrate mostly to Quebec. The RCMP is here, collaborating with the Moroccan government on issues such as drug smuggling, arms smuggling, organized crime. We have a team with CSIS (Canadian Security Intelligence Service – cooperating on anti-terrorism activities and trafficking, money laundering. They all work out of the embassy here.”

Morocco is the largest source of
–continued on page 22



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Education student spending her free time to preserve language of Beaver people

djā'g θ' - woma
 dā'zho' - man
 tow'iv.yun - warr
 ä.tun' - freezing
 kā.nā'ile - jō
 sa.lp' - mine
 k'ä - now
 häte co
 t'θ' - ouch
 mā'che' - you
 sp-θ - my nos
 no-o - your nos
 tā.kā' - ears
 dus'uk - listen
 hä'tä - moose
 säs - bear
 chi'j - duck
 gä - rabbit
 mā'chee - canit
 s'ä.ke' - river
 dus'but - hung
 lä.te' - tea
 lä.te'ta - cup
 yä - sky
 sä - sun



Only a few people are still speaking the Beaver language in the Peace Region, and as a young high school student Nell Friesen was fortunate to meet one of them. As she became acquainted with Dominic Habitant of the Eleske Reserve, Nell quickly became interested in his traditional language and in helping to preserve it. Now, about to enter her fourth year in the Bachelor of Education program at GPRC, Nell has recorded several hundred words, and spends summer free time collecting additional words from her elderly Beaver friend.

“It really started as a fun thing – actually it was several years ago when I was still in high school in Fort Vermilion, which is close to one of the few remaining Beaver reserves. There are very, very few people left who speak the Beaver language even on the reserve.”

Nell Friesen first met Dominic Habitant when he came to her mother for therapeutic massage. “He would come for treatment and stay for tea. He would tell us stories in English. He began to talk about how the Beaver language was dying out, and because I was interested he taught me a word or two when he would visit. It is hard to learn from him, because he cannot read or write English, and speaks it only a little. He would tell jokes, I would learn a few words, he’d tease me about my accent.

“Then I started writing down the words he told me. First of all, I

made up my own phonetic symbols to try to reflect the sounds of the Beaver language – it was hard because we don’t have English letters for some of the sounds. I collected quite a few, and started to research a little bit.

“Dominic tells stories, the oral history of his people. Some of the stories he has told us, I have researched and found in print, almost word for word as he told them to me – so the oral history is quite accurate. He said his grandmother would tell these stories, in the teepee when they lived out in the bush. Dominic did not ever attend residential school, and never learned to read or write, so he did not lose his knowledge of Beaver language, and his stories have not been affected by the English language.

“The first year I was in College here I located a few resource materials at the University of Alberta. There is an old book by linguist Pliny Earl Goddard who has worked with recording several native languages, and I also have some material done in syllabics by a missionary, Garrioch (1917) – even back then Garrioch had trouble finding people who could talk the language – and those who could did not speak English very well so he had trouble finding an interpreter.” The Gospel of St. Mark has been translated into these syllabics, as well a child’s prayer book, but resources relating to the language

'There are very, very few people left who speak the Beaver language even on the reserve.' – Nell Friesen

are minimal.

In fact, Nell Friesen, who makes no claims as a linguist, has become something of a resource herself. In the past few years she has been asked regularly to help with translations into Beaver language for Aboriginal Studies textbooks being published by Duval Publishing in Edmonton. "It is kind of exciting to be part of that. They had called Dominic, but couldn't understand his English. He directed them to me."

In recent months, two linguists from Germany have begun to pay visits to Dominic. "They fly over here and been paying Dominic money to tell them about his language. The Beaver language is among those that scholars know is almost extinct. I have not met the German women, but it would be interesting to know more about their project."

Nell's own project is modest, and her goal is clear. "I would like to do it in a form that even children, if they speak English, could look at it and get a sense of the words. I am not a linguist – I would not try to do it for linguists. Most of the Beaver descendants now speak either English or Cree. I'd like to be able to do it so that Beaver people who would like to know more about their language could look at it and get some sense of what it was. The thing with that is, it is more Dominic who has been encouraging this process more than me. He has kept pushing me along. It is very important to him that this get preserved.

"Their language is quite complex. I think I can get maybe a skeleton of it, but since I am only collecting from one person the result will be limited. And like Dominic himself said, the dialect would have been different from Fort Vermilion to Dunvegan to Ft. St. John. The Beaver Indians at one point were all along the Peace River, but the Cree

came in and pushed them back and kind of took over as a culture.

"I think at one time Beaver was a very complex language – and it still is for the people who know it – there are a lot of little meanings within the words, just saying the word differently with different accents or tone changes the meaning. Dominic will tell me a word means name, and then say the same thing means prophet – that sort of thing. When I ask about it, he will say 'Well, it's very much the same. You just say it a little stronger.' It is very hard."

Dominic and his wife Madeline talk together in Beaver, Nell says, but none of their children speak it. "He said his one niece had wanted to learn, but she lost interest. When there are not many people speaking it, there is not much incentive for them to learn it. Some of the Beaver people from the Ft. St. John area came to find out about what I had done – they wanted to know, to learn the language – but I had not done very much by that time."

Nell Friesen will be returning to GPRC in September to begin her fourth year Bachelor of Education. Perhaps some day her work with the Beaver language might be a subject for a Master's degree, but for the time being it is definitely a spare time endeavour. "When you are busy with classes it is hard to find time to work on this. It has been an off and on sort of thing whenever I am home – during the summers I collect quite a few words. Last summer I managed to do some – not as much as I would like. I hope to be working on it again this summer – I will be working at the museum in Fort Vermilion."

Beaver is one of the Athabaskan languages of the Na-Dene, the Native American language family. There are only a handful of known fluent speakers for the entire language family – and no recorded fluent speakers of Beaver.

Dominic Habitant is now in his seventies. "There was another man who was part Beaver who I worked with a little bit," Nell explains, "but he died last summer. That was too bad. There are not many left who do speak it. I would love to tape record Dominic, but he is very traditional. His grandfather was a medicine man. He says he doesn't like to speak on tape, or have his picture taken – it takes his power away – so I respect that. But that also means that when he is gone, the language he knows will go with him. He doesn't talk about it a lot, but once in a while he'll refer to the time when he isn't here and I will be one of those who helps to hold his language."

– Lynne Ness

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Chris Warkentin

GPRC Alumnus Chris Warkentin recently earned the right to replace Charlie Penson as the Conservative candidate in the upcoming federal election, an amazing achievement for a young man of 26. Warkentin has been involved in politics since he was elected to the Board of the local constituency association at the age of 18 and has helped in all Conservative election campaigns since 1993.

Warkentin got into politics because he felt, even from a young age, that there was “common sense missing from politics.” As a child, he even remembers thinking “if you make a promise just follow through with it, you know, what’s so hard about that?” Chris was very interested in politics as a young man, even though his family was not politically involved. “I remember dragging my dad to these political meetings before I had my drivers’ license. My

grandfather was political, in the sense that he was an armchair critic. Politics was something that he discussed, so maybe that’s where I got my sense of politics.”

Chris realizes that his age may be a factor for some voters but says it is both positive and negative. “There’s a sense that a few more years would be helpful and I agree. I think that when you are representing people with a history it is important to have a history yourself. At the same time, being young means that I have the energy that is needed for the job

because it is so rigorous in terms of travel and in terms of being out there and I hope that it is a major advantage.” In addition, Chris has been credited with attracting fresh new faces to the local party association. “You know you hear all these doomsday prophecies,” Chris explains, “that young people just aren’t

involved, and they will never get involved, no one cares about it [politics]. Well, there are a lot of people that do care. I think that we just haven’t allowed younger people to be involved and that’s what causes them not to want to engage in the process. Politics is a funny thing, it’s like anything, if people can’t see a way to get involved, they won’t get involved.” Warkentin would like to see this change. “I really care about the views of constituents and would like to see as many people as possible get curious about politics. If you are not representing the ideas that you were elected under, then democracy doesn’t work because that’s what the majority of the people elected you to do.”

Chris, a small “d” democrat by ideology, says his “passion lives in seeing democracy revitalized. I’d like to see policies that encourage parliamentarians to represent the constituents who elect them.” Warkentin believes in “a free vote in the house, where you’re not persuaded to vote the way that your party would. I believe that MPs should be encouraged to vote the way that their constituents want them to. I think the Party system if it was run in a different way might really work well to engage people in discussion, but when we are shutting down discussion by forcing or whipping the MPs then there is no discussion and nothing happens. If you could have four different parties all with different ideas to try to influence one another, then if they could vote across Party lines, we’d actually see the best ideas going forwards. That’s when we will see true democracy.”

Chris realizes that politics is not always easy and is realistic about the upcoming election. “I’ve been involved enough to know that there will be a lot of surprises and



that I don't know everything. I'm young enough to put up with a few disappointments in life and push forward to try and make some positive changes." This next election will be a challenge for Chris, but winning the candidacy under such time restraints was a definite confidence booster for him. "Winning the candidacy was a surprise in that, it happened so quickly. We had a very tight time frame because just this spring they felt an election was imminent, so they really forced things. I credit the organization, the people who came alongside me." Warkentin has also seen the nasty political tactics used by some during campaigning and hopes that it will not be an issue in the coming election. "It really disappointed me to see the dirty tactics because I fig-

ure if we cannot show that politics can happen different on the local level then on the national level it will never change. Especially in a community like ours, I think that we can have a positive discussion of ideas, and we all have to be neighbours in the end. I think that being decent during the campaign is something that needs to happen so that we can have a positive discussion."

Currently, Chris is organizing his own business, Neighbour Contracting, so that the moment an election is called he will be free to focus on the campaign. Politically, he is busy "networking throughout the constituency to get volunteers on board. "I want to meet with as many people as possible and try to con-

vince them that the Conservatives would be a good party to represent the people of Canada and that I would be a good representative of the people here."

Chris's long-term goal is to get into a political position to make positive changes in government. "My expectation is that I will be able to make some change; if I work hard enough, then something will happen. I'm young enough to put up with a few disappointments in life and push forward to try and make some positive change. I realize that we first have to get through this election, get elected, and then there is the issue of gaining credibility. I have the ambition to someday be in a role of leadership or a role of influence.

– Catherine Ridgeway

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Gerald Auger

returns to GPRC

Ten years ago I received a phone call from a friend. She knew of a young aboriginal GPRC student who needed a photo portfolio because he had been discovered by the North of 60 producers after he performed as a warrior dancer in the opening ceremonies of the Canada Winter Games in Grande Prairie. I did a photo shoot the next day, and when Gerald Auger sent the photographs along, he was changing the course of his life forever.

Before long he was filling regular roles on the popular CBC-TV North of 60 series. And his acting experience there led to many others: An IMAX spectacle known as *Lewis and Clark: The Journey West*, the Hallmark mini-series *Dreamkeeper* which aired on ABC and CTV, the 1998 movie *My West* starring David Bowie and Harvey Keitel, a topical music video by First Nations rap group Red Power, a controversial documentary about HIV/AIDS in Canadian aboriginal communities entitled *The Long Walk*, and a couple of movies for release this fall with award-winning producer Steven Spielberg.

Television work led to film. Film led to docudrama and commercial work – which led to radio, music videos, filmmaking, writing, modeling. That work led to motivational speaking, and special assignments like serving as a special advisor for SAY (Spirit of Aboriginal Youth) Magazine.

So, it was fate's good work that brought Gerald and I together again at the annual Business Conference organized each year by marketing students in a course I teach in the winter semester. I contacted him about serving as the motivational afternoon speaker at this year's conference held in the Douglas J. Cardinal Performing Arts Centre, and he was thrilled

and honored to accept the invitation.

Gerald was a marketing/management diploma student at GPRC from 1993 to 1995. As we walked through the college re-visiting his classrooms and instructor's offices, we found his place on the class list for 1995.

"At that moment I felt like I had come full circle," he recalled. "Walking the hallways and seeing the people who helped me right my life at that time in my life was a powerful experience," he said.

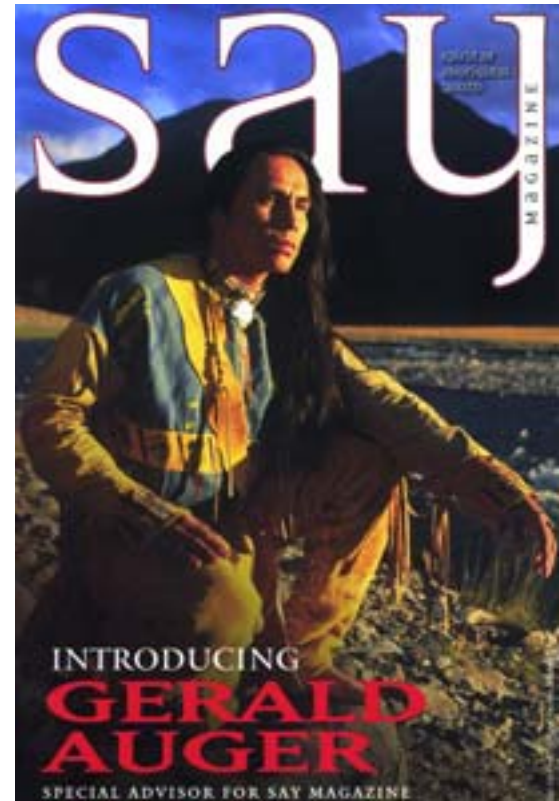
Indeed, Gerald has come a long way from his humble Cree origins in Wabasca, Alberta – where he was born into a world of poverty, abuse and strife. His many achievements would have seemed insurmountable when he abandoned his life on the reserve at age 12 and drifted from Edmonton to Toronto, Winnipeg, and Vancouver where he witnessed the horrors of street life for eight years.

He is a survivor of the urban squalor afflicting his people, routine alcoholism, drug abuse, violence and death. "When I look back I remember myself as a kind of 'walking dead,'" he said.

It was when he saw his companions and street brothers die one by one that Gerald came to terms with his situation: either do 25 years behind bars or land up six feet under.

Instead, he decided to get a life. He returned home, and planned to attend college. While enrolled in Business Administration at GPRC Gerald became the student president of the campus Circle of Aboriginal Students and helped form Canada's first aboriginal Toastmasters' Club.

He started tasting success. He passed his classes, and caught the eye of some of his instructors – like Bill Fletcher.



Gerald remembers Bill Fletcher taking him under his wing. "He saw something in me that I couldn't see in myself at the time. I have always been thankful for his extra support, and have kept in touch with him through the years. He has copies of every single article that's been published about me because I send them to him faithfully," Gerald commented.

The year after his graduation from GPRC, Gerald was appointed a National Native Role Model by the Governor General, and spent the next two years traveling across Canada speaking to youth, inspiring his aboriginal peers, and working to prevent other young people from finding themselves on the streets. In 1999 he was the first aboriginal recipient of the Rotary



International integrity award.

While Gerald has great passion for acting, producing, and film-making, he has one other far greater passion: inspiring young people.

At the Business Conference, appropriately named 'Leadership: Towards Tomorrow Today,' Gerald commented that "anything is possible if you have the courage to change and the conviction to follow your dreams. But, it takes sacrifice. It takes dedication, and it takes commitment," he advised. Gerald's presentation epitomized the conference theme. In his hour-

long talk he explained how his college education opened up a world of options for a better life that for too long he didn't even know existed. And though he's now working in an artistic area, he noted that "business is unavoidable."

"I am able to apply every day what I learned in Business at GPRC. I have hands-on input in day-to-day business dealings working with agents, and running my production companies known as Black Eagle Productions and Soul 2 Soul Entertainment Inc. Marketing and general business skills are transfer-

able to virtually every profession," he noted.

Gerald is based out of Vancouver these days, and is currently working on a three-part documentary series produced by the National Film Board of Canada. It portrays the realities and perceptions of Aboriginal gang culture. He's also working on a Hollywood feature film, in partnership with a Los Angeles based company, about native mythology, and a movie-of-the-week (MOW) which will be called *Brave Under Fire*.

– Rick Erlendson

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Just as our professional athletes have the capabilities to make an impact in the world at large, so do our GPRC Wolves student-athletes have the potential to be positive representatives for our College. It seems that most of our athletes develop strong ties to the institution during their time here. The experience is intense as they try to balance their commitment to their studies with their desire to train and grow in their chosen sport. Fierce loyalties to their teammates, coaches and College develop as they go to battle together over the course of the seasons. Whether they win or lose, for many student-athletes their time at our College is one of the best experiences of their lives. Through sport, a significant number of them leave with a heightened sense of themselves and what they are capable of accomplishing in their future lives.

Our Wolves student-athletes serve as outstanding ambassadors for GPRC while they are in attendance here. The community is able to observe them as they pursue excellence both academically and athletically in a very public forum. What could speak more eloquently



for what we do here at the College than the efforts of these young men and women? We have found that when they eventually leave the College to further their studies and careers that they become highly effective spokespersons for GPRC as they speak fondly of their time here and encourage others to follow the same route. Their passion for the Wolves is evident when we travel to play at other colleges around Alberta. Often our Wolves alumni in the stands will outnumber the spectators present for the home team.

The idea that our student-athletes are some of GPRC's greatest ambassadors is certainly a valid one. It applies during their time here when they are most visible and perhaps, more importantly, after they leave, when many

become lifelong advocates for the College. A great number of current students have chosen GPRC based on the recommendations of former Wolves. In addition, many alumni volunteer their time to GPRC as they serve on various College boards and committees. For those of us that work here at the College it is very gratifying to see that type of continuing support for our programs.

In the PEAK Department, when someone who has been here for an extended period of time leaves, we often give them some type of gift with the inscription "Once a Wolf, Always a Wolf". We feel that this is the attitude that most of our athletes carry with them as they become some of GPRC's "ambassadors extraordinaire".

— Leigh Goldie

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Recent Achievements of Faculty and Staff

Jane Friesen, recipient of the GPRC Distinguished Employee Award, 2005, for her significant contributions to the education of professionals in the field of human services

Dolly McArthur, received a Northern Woman of the Year award for her contributions to the community and her commitment to improving the quality of life for persons with disabilities.

Dr. Oswald S. Warner, Sociology Instructor in the Department of Arts, Commerce and Education, has published a paper entitled "Encountering Canadian Racism: Afro-Trini Immigrants in the Greater Toronto Area, Canada" in the May 2005 volume of *Wadabagei: A Journal of the Caribbean and Its Diaspora*. The multi-disciplinary journal is committed to facilitating the exchange of ideas among Caribbean scholars worldwide.

Christine Donkin, was commissioned by the Fine Arts Department of Grande Prairie Regional College to compose three choral pieces for the college Concert Choir. These pieces were written in celebration of Alberta's Centenary. The three pieces, settings of Psalm 23, Psalm 86, and Psalm 117, were premiered by the Choir at their Spring Concert. A Conservatory instructor at the college, Christine studied composition with Stephen Chatman at the University of British Columbia.

Robert Cole, received the "Best Documentary" award in the the GP Lions club held "It's Your Turn" film festival for his film of the restoration of the GPRC Theatre. The film received a standing ovation when it was presented at the dedication ceremonies during the President's Awards event in February.



Dr. Rick Erlendson, has been appointed Dean of Business, Grande Prairie Regional College, effective May 1, 2005.

Dr. Scott McAlpine, has been appointed Dean of Arts, Science and Education, Grande Prairie Regional College, effective May 1, 2005.

Marg Mazer, is honoured by the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) which has announced that she will one of ten recipients of the Outstanding Advising Certificate of Merit, Academic Advising Primary Role Category. Ms. Mazer is one of ten individuals across Canada and the US to be honoured with this award in this category this year.

Gordon Pellerin, was recognized by his peers in the Alberta Services for Students association, which presented him with the Dean Stetson Service Award in recognition of his enthusiastic and effective service to students of GPRC. Mr. Pellerin was an academic advisor at the time of the award; he has since been appointed to the position of Assistant Registrar Admissions at GPRC.

Trevor Thomas, Business Administration instructor, is the 2005 recipient of the Award for Excellence in Teaching presented by the Students' Association at GPRC; the award annually recognizes an instructor "who has demonstrated exceptional ability in conveying knowledge by presenting material in a fun and interesting manner."

Dr. Jaroslav (Jerry) Petryshyn, was elected Chair of the Alberta 2005 Centennial History Society, which is publishing a two-volume history of Alberta to be launched in October.

Bruce Galenza, has been named Triathlete of the Year in a tri-city competition this summer, achieving low aggregate time for his category in races held in Grande Prairie, Fort St. John and Fort Nelson. When he is not swimming, cycling and running, Galenza teaches Philosophy at GPRC. (photo above)

I N M E M O R I A M

David Doherty • Valedictorian 2001, 1998-2000

Grande Prairie Regional College regretfully announces the death of former student and valedictorian David Doherty. David's fami-

ly recalls that the years he spent at GPRC were a highlight for him. Specifically they recall him being inspired by Carmen Gorgichuk,

John Murray, Robin Bourke and Gerry van Nie. During his studies, "the College community became his family" while he was away.

–continued from page 13

immigrants from Africa to Canada. There are 50,000 Moroccans living in Quebec right now. The CIDA program provides funding to organizations and to the governments and agencies for everything from education, water supplies, building roads, professional training

“The other interesting thing here is that I am the first woman who has been an ambassador in Morocco – actually in any of the Arab countries. I think this country was ready for it. They said they were very happy that Canada sent a woman. About a year ago, the King changed the family code to give women a revolutionary series of rights that they had never had before – the most advanced of anywhere in the Arab world. They are very proud of it. When the nomination came, they saw it as Canada recognizing the progress they were making in terms of women’s rights. Because of the timing, they have been very open to me.

“To work in many different areas – trade, culture, international issues – to work on all of these issues within one country, and to be building relations with that country, is the chance of a lifetime.”

– Lynne Ness



GPRC alumni

'87 Paul Charest

Bachelor of Arts & Music Diploma, 1983-1987
“Since leaving GPRC I’ve found the training I received at The Tapestry prepared me for the many jobs I’ve held since 1986: interviewing, writing, editing, design, layout, proofreading, print deadlines and the whole ball of wax. Literally, as we cut and pasted our paper in the days before onscreen layout. It was a great time and, good or bad, it all lives on in the Tapestry archives.”
For the past three years, Paul has been working as a Detachment Clerk for the RCMP in McLennan.

'97 Teresa Martin

Business Administration Diploma, 1994-1997
“After completing my Business Administration Diploma I worked for a year and then went on to the University of Lethbridge. I graduated with distinction with a Bachelor of Management Degree majoring in Human Resources and Organizational studies. I am currently employed with Edmonton Public Schools in a role specializing in classification and compensation. I’m loving it!”

'98 Kassey Patterson (nee Pelletier)

Business Administration, 1996-1998
Kassey is as an Administrative Assistant for Meyers Norris Penney, in Grande Prairie.

'99 Cynthia Dives

Bachelor of Education, 1997-1999
Cynthia has gone abroad and is currently teaching in New York city.

'99 Shari Tucker

Business Administration, 1997-1999
Shari has completed a Photography II and Digital Imaging Program with honours from the Nova Scotia Community College in Halifax and is currently living in Truro, Nova Scotia. “I currently operate my own photography business called Shari Tucker Photography and look forward to going full force with it now that my education is complete. My favorite memory from GPRC is being instructed and motivated by Rick Erlendson. Not only did I get a business/marketing education at GPRC, but I also became interested in Photography. Throughout my years of education, he has been one of the best teachers there is. Pass along a pat on the back for doing a great teaching job!”

'00 Trevor Boychuk

Business Administration, 1997-2000
Since graduating Trevor has been “contracted to Pomeroy Group from 2000 to April 1, 2005.” He is now working with Hansen Ford in the Armour Production Testing department.

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'00 Lana Pfau

Bachelor of Arts Transfer, 1998-2000
Lana is currently employed as an Employee Benefits Marketing Assistant for Great-West Life here in Grande Prairie. “I am grateful for all of the friendships that I made during my time at GPRC.”

'01 Connie Musselman (nee Rigler)

Bachelor of Arts, 1994-1996
Bachelor of Education Collaborative, 1998-2001
Connie was enrolled at GPRC for her first two years of college, then moved on to the University of Lethbridge to complete her Arts degree, majoring in English. In 1998, Connie return to GPRC enrolled in the Teacher Education North program; a collaborative teaching program with the University of Alberta. Now Connie is teaching in the Grande Prairie Catholic School Board system.

'02 Richard Podsada

Interactive Digital Design, 2000-2002
Richard is currently running his own web design business, in Grande Prairie, called Podsada Consulting, and is the web designer for the GPRC website.

'03 Shawn Johnston

Business Administration, Bachelor of Social Work: U of C Access, 1998-2003
Shawn has gone on to work for YHSSA – Child Protection in Yellowknife, North West Territories.

'03 Catherine Ridgeway

Bachelor of Arts, majoring in English, 2000-2003
Catherine has gone on to Mount Royal College in Calgary to complete an Applied Degree in Electronic Publishing. She is currently working on her first Directed Field Study with Grande Prairie Regional College’s Advancement department. Catherine played soccer for the Mount Royal Cougars while in Calgary. The Cougars had a very successful year, making all the way to the CCAA National final where they lost to Quebec’s FX Garneau after two over-time periods and a shoot out. Catherine “credits the skills developed while playing on GPRC’s volleyball team” for all her success in Calgary. “The fact that I had already been a part of a CCAA National final while playing with GPRC’s volleyball team, gave me the experience and know-how to help lead the Cougars to a National silver medal. I really appreciate all that GPRC has done for me!”

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