

# Valentine's Day

## Dining & Gift Guide

• Annual Valentine's Poetry Contest winner  
(and all the other contestants too)  
• Valentine's Day Gift and  
Dining Guide

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# The MANITOULIN EXPOSITOR



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## UCCM, Northland partner on McLean's Mtn. wind farm

### 50/50 deal inked between First Nations, developer

by Jim Moodie

MANITOULIN—In what might literally be described as a power play, area First Nations have joined forces with the McLean's Mountain Wind Farm developer for an equal share in the controversial project.

A major announcement concerning a "50/50 partnership" between Northland Power and the United Chiefs and Councils of Mnidoo Mnising (UCCM) will be made in Sudbury tomorrow (Thursday), according to a media advisory jointly issued by Northland and the First Nations group.

The deal for co-ownership of green power on Manitoulin "starts with the McLean's Mountain Wind Farm project, but includes all future renewable energy projects on the UCCM First Nations' traditional territory, and down the road may include solar, hydro, gas or electrical infrastructure projects," the advisory indicates.

Northland president and CEO John Brace said he wasn't at liberty to go into much detail pending the formal announcement on Thursday, but expressed satisfaction that an agreement had been reached with the First Nations.

"I can confirm the obvious, which is that Northland and the UCCM corporation are getting together on the McLean's Mountain project," he said. "We're happy with this, and think it's a good step. It's something we've been working on, and it's just coming to a culmination now."

While the Northland-UCCM col-

laboration is a major development, Mr. Brace pointed out that it's not an entirely new concept for the industry, or for his company. "We have worked with First Nations before on projects," said the Northland CEO. "We have a partnership with the Constance Lake First Nation near Hearst on a water power project, which is

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### Northeast Town to discuss Northland road use request

#### Concerns raised about disruption of wetlands

by Lindsay Kelly

NORTHEAST TOWN—Northland Power is seeking an amendment to its road use agreement with the Northeast Town to help facilitate access to its turbine project.

In a letter to the town dated January 31, senior manager of business development, Rick Martin, requests access to two areas of unopened road allowance. The first area, located immediately north of Perch Lake, is one kilometre long and is located in a wetland that has already been disturbed by other activity. The second area crosses a municipal road allowance near Highway 540 to private land where the road will actually be built.

"These two road allowance usages will not connect to any

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Traditional games like the log-sawing contest—one of many events held over the weekend at the Whitefish River First Nation winter carnival—harken back to the survival skills necessary for the good life of a time not so very long ago.

SEE MORE WINTER CARNIVAL COVERAGE ON THE SECOND SECTION FRONT

photo by Michael Erskine

## Tories accused of stalling on bill to bolster FedNor

by Jim Moodie

OTTAWA—Opposition MPs from this region are furious over the recent stonewalling of a bill that would make FedNor a stronger and more transparent agency.

C-309, a private member's bill

sponsored by Nipissing-Timiskaming MP Anthony Rota, calls on the government to transform FedNor into a stand-alone entity akin to other regional funders in Canada—including the newly created FedDev Ontario, serving the southern part of the province.

Based on a bill that was first introduced in 2007 by Sault MP

Tony Martin, the Rota proposal passed second reading in June 2009 but has been stalled in committee ever since. Its slow path through parliament continued last week, when a Tory motion deferred a vote on the bill and foreshortened discussion of its merits.

"We were supposed to have a

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## Public beach to take shape in Sheguiandah

by Lindsay Kelly

SHEGUIANDAH—The Hamlet of Sheguiandah will be home to the newest beach in the Northeast Town, after a community park is completed this spring.

The park is a follow-up to the community development plan conducted for Sheguiandah last year.

"When we did the community development plan for Sheg, one of the items that was identified was a beach or a swim area for local kids," explained town CAO Dave Williamson. "Right now they have the government dock, but they

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## Love and laughter key to enduring bond between Tehk couple

by Nancy McDermid

TEHKUMMAH—Humour and togetherness are two important reasons why Dick and Eunice Bowerman are celebrating their 52nd anniversary this year.

"The secret to a good marriage is being able to laugh at yourself and each other," Eunice Bowerman stated.

"We enjoy whatever we do and we see the funny side to everything," added hubby Dick.

The duo has a well-honed ability to find the humour in life; they share the storytelling and the punch lines are delivered on cue.

"I was 16 years old and working at a restaurant in Tehkummah when Dick came in to play pinball," said Mrs. Bowerman as an explanation as to how they met.

"Yes, I was looking for a cook," joked Mr.



Dick and Eunice Bowerman enjoy a hiking excursion at Meldrum Bay in recent years. As a couple they do everything together and go for a walk every day.

Bowerman.

They were married two years later in 1958 at St. Mary's Anglican Church in the Slash. The newlyweds invited everyone on the township voters' list to the wedding because Ms. Bowerman was a McCullough from Tehkummah and Mr. Bowerman grew up in South Baymouth so they literally knew each person listed.

Together they raised four children and now have seven grandchildren and one grandson-in-law.

The family home was located on Highway 6 in South Baymouth, and tragedy struck in 1969 when the house burnt to the ground.

"You really get your priorities straightened out when you lose everything you own,"

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# ...UCCM, Northland partner on McLean’s Mtn. wind farm

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now in the environmental permitting process, and in Quebec we have a relationship with the Pessamit First Nation on wind power projects.”

M’Chigeeng First Nation Chief Joe Hare noted that the UCCM formed the Mnidoo Mnising Power Corporation this fall as a way to become a player in renewable energy development on Manitoulin, and more recently approached Northland for a role in the McLean’s Mountain project.

“We went to them and said, ‘We want to be part of this development,’” he said. “At first they didn’t respond, but after a second approach they agreed. Once they agreed we had to get approvals through our respective band councils.”

All of the UCCM communities are on board, he said, including Aundeck Omni Kaning (AOK) and the Sheguiandah First Nation, which border on the McLean’s Mountain development and have previously expressed misgivings about the project. Wikwemikong, which is not represented by the UCCM and has its own sizeable wind project in the planning stages, “is not in on this,” he added.

The deal for a 50/50 share in the McLean’s Mountain project—meaning both its financing and profits—is “a major undertaking on the part of the First Nations,” said the chief, adding that the Sudbury press conference represents a chance “to broadcast to the industry in general, and other First Nations, a benchmark that they can aspire to.”

In most cases, “the developer takes most of the profit,” said Chief Hare. “This shows how corporations can enter into a good relationship with First Nations, and vice versa.”

The surprising move comes less than a year after the UCCM took a firm stance against the Northland initiative. In a statement delivered at a public meeting last March, UCCM tribal chair Franklin Paimbomsai complained that a duty to consult with First Nations “has been ignored and continues to be ignored.” Until such time as the province agreed to talk directly with First Nations, “the chiefs will remain opposed to the project,” he asserted.

To be fair, those objections were directed more at the Ontario government than the developer, but generally speaking there seemed to be little warmth between the First Nations and Northland Power until very recently.

AOK is also on record as resisting the project. A band council resolution from last January states that the First Nation “categorically opposes Northland Power’s wind-farm project proposal until such time as all encroachments of noise, low-frequency noise, health effects issues, and environmental concerns that will affect the health of our membership (are) addressed and to our satisfaction.”

Ray Beaudry, a non-participating resident of the project area and member of the Manitoulin Coalition for Safe Energy Alternatives (MCSEA), isn’t terribly shocked by the news, as he had a sense that something was in the works between the First Nations and Northland. But he’s certainly disappointed.

“It’s very upsetting for us,” he said. “We’ve been raising environmental awareness all this time, and First Nations are supposed to look after the next seven generations.”

Given that industrial wind turbines can have a negative impact on both wildlife (including eagles, sacred to Native people) and humans (some of whom report health problems like sleep disruption and arrhythmia), he feels supporting the project is inconsistent with “their future outlook” to protect the land and their descendants.

Chief Hare acknowledges that there are some concerns regarding wind energy, but in his estimation “it’s the lesser of evils” given the other options for power generation. “We feel that, as far as protecting Mother Earth as much as possible, it’s preferable to embrace clean, green energy,” he said. “When we looked at these alternative energy projects, we felt it was better to support them because they don’t disturb the climate and environment as much as coal or uranium.”

It is also, more practically, a way to generate some revenue for First Nation communities that otherwise have few development options. “On the economic side, there’s not much for First Nations to capitalize on with where we are situated,” said the chief. “The forests are not there, and tourism is limited.”

The McLean’s Mountain project might not be taking shape on lands currently owned by First Nations, but this corner of the Island remains a part of their traditional territory, not to mention spans road allowances to which they retain some claim, pending the resolution of the 1990 treaty process.

“The 1990 land claim settlement included us forgoing our rights in terms of resources like aggregates and water, but we don’t look at it that way,” said Chief Hare. “We believe we own certain rights of way, and you have to use that to your advantage. You go with what you’ve got and what you own.”

Partnering equally with Northland on the Island’s first major wind farm—at last count, it was to include 43 wind turbines that would generate 77 megawatts, and could expand—will represent a major investment on the part of the UCCM communities, but Chief Hare believes it’s doable because of the cachet that Northland has within the industry.

“It’s virtually impossible for First Nations to raise money on their own,” he said. “We can put up some equity, but the rest has to be borrowed, and it makes raising capital easier when you have a major corporation as a partner. They’ve been in business for many years, with projects in Europe as well as here in Canada, so they bring a lot of credibility when it comes to lenders.”

While Mr. Hare didn’t specify the exact amount of money that would have to be ponied up by the UCCM for the project, it certainly won’t be a trivial amount. In its environmental screening report issued in 2009, Northland estimated that “the construction of the McLean’s Mountain wind farm will require a capital (outlay) of approximately \$200 million on turbine components, civil construction, electrical, crane and many additional specialist contractors.” Half of that would be—you got it—\$100 million.

Mr. Beaudry hopes that the First Nation share of these funds won’t come in the form of low-interest government loans, as that would mean taxpayers will be on the hook (to some extent, at least) for a project that many on Manitoulin don’t welcome.

Mostly, though, he’s dismayed that a group that formerly represented an ally in resisting the development has gone over to what he would consider the dark side. “Until now, the First Nations have been a real stumbling block for Northland,” he said. “Now that they’re partners, it will probably roll full steam ahead.”

Northland was already poised to submit its revised bid for Renewable Energy Application (REA) approval this spring, in Mr. Beaudry’s understanding. He expects that application will go forward sooner now, if it hasn’t already been filed.

“We won’t know until it gets approved,” he said. This could take as long as six months, following submission to the Ministry of the Environment, although his hunch is it will “be approved in less time than that.” At that point, “you get 30 days to comment on it, and after that, there are 15 days to appeal.”

Mr. Brace said “there are still some documents that we have to finish drafting before the REA application can go in, but it will become fully public once it is assessed to be complete.”

While the odds now seem stacked against anyone who opposes the development, Mr. Beaudry believes a few tools are still left at the disposal of wind critics—one being the aforementioned REA appeal process, as is currently occurring in Chatham-Kent following a nominal green light for a project in that area. “We would appeal on the basis of irreversible harm to the environment,” he said.

Another avenue to thwart the process could well rest with members of the First Nations whose leaders have inked this deal, Mr. Beaudry suggested, particularly since the pact seems to have been reached without community input. “They should be holding community meetings and having debate on this,” he said. “I don’t believe the Elders would support this kind of environmental impact.”

Chief Hare noted that “we had discussion at the council level” on the issue of the UCCM partnership with Northland, while admitting that “we didn’t go to the community,” in part because there is already a process in place in which Northland is required to hold public consultations.

In Mr. Beaudry’s experience, however, the public meetings that Northland is obligated to hold are essentially pointless in terms of citizen impact. “They’ve never listened to any of the issues we’ve raised,” he said. “It’s basically: ‘We’re coming into the community and this is what we’re doing, whether you like it or not.’ It’s not true public consultation.”

That said, some accommodation does seem to have been made in regard to the concerns of Aundeck Omni Kaning, said Mr. Beaudry. In stating its objections to the project last year, the leadership of AOK asked for a buffer of at least two kilometres (as opposed to the provincial requirement of 550 metres) between turbines and dwellings.

Northland appears to have complied with that demand, or at least come close to it. “According to the map of the project presented at last Tuesday’s council meeting, they’ve moved some turbines away from AOK,” said Mr. Beaudry. “It doesn’t look like a full two kilometres from their fence lines, but maybe from the downtown core of AOK.”

That adjustment in the layout comes at the expense of Northeast Town residents whose land abuts the project area, however, according to Mr. Beaudry. “They’ve also moved turbines closer into clusters that will affect non-participating landowners, which they can do because of the latest EBR (Environmental Bill of Rights) ruling that hunt camps and severed lots don’t count,” he said.

Mr. Beaudry understands that First Nations

need to look out for themselves and seek economic development where it’s available—unlike some other folks in the Northeast Town, he has never had a problem with the hotel development in Little Current that will be First Nation-owned and -operated, as it benefits the community without posing any major environmental consequences—but he worries that this new arrangement between Northland and the UCCM is being carried out at the expense of both the environment and the non-Native residents of the area.

“First Nations are now recognized as stakeholders, but the same protection isn’t provided to non-First Nations people,” he said. “This project has already been divisive enough within the non-Native community—how is this going to affect the good relationship we’ve had over the years between Native and non-Native?”

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Your generosity is appreciated by Dianne and her family. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact 705-368-1086 or 705-368-2639.



# ...Northeast Town to consider Northland road use request

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actively utilized developed road areas,” writes Mr. Martin. “The adjacent landowners’ lands will be gated off where the road turns off the indicated allowance so it will not encourage any activity other than that of initial construction and later maintenance of the wind farm. We recognize that this will be fully overseen by the municipality and the roads superintendent as per the road user agreement.”

Noting that several constituents had contacted him about speaking to the issue, Councillor Bill Koehler suggested deferring the matter until the next council meeting on February 15. Mayor Joe Chapman agreed.

“I’m a little unclear on what’s being asked and why it’s being asked,” he said. “There are questions I’d like staff to follow up on with the MNR (Ministry of Natural Resources) with this.”

Although the proponents

are seeking expedition of the process, the town must complete its due diligence, he added. He said it was important to “satisfy ourselves,” in speaking with the MNR, that all requirements have been met by the company, and that waiting an additional two weeks for a seven-year project won’t be onerous.

“I’m a little reluctant to just push things through right now,” the mayor said, reiterating a suggestion from earlier in the term that he wants to see respectful, informed discussion on the topic. “We’re moving forward with this, but it’s very important that everybody feels their voices have been heard and has the opportunity to speak.”

Councillor Al MacNevin suggested that, should people be allowed to speak on the issue, they should be confined to addressing only the topic of road use.

“It’s important to me that when we go to this meeting,

speakers are talking about issues that have to do with this road agreement,” he said. “We’re not talking about bat mortality or bird impact, or whether or not the setbacks are appropriate where they are.”

He noted that emails that have been circulating to council address other factors, such as Northland’s company structure and First Nations involvement, all of which are off-topic and aren’t applicable to the municipality.

Addressing the road use issue was, at one time, seen as a way to derail the project, Councillor MacNevin noted, and if people are permitted to speak, they must focus on the issue at hand, and not veer off-topic.

Apprehensive about the impact on the wetland, Councillor Christina Jones voiced her concern that the study by the MNR has been completed.

The wetland “is very precious to us,” she comment-

ed, noting that its waters drain into Bass Lake, and down into Sheguiandah Bay, while it travels to White’s Point in the other direction. Any impact could also affect residents’ water source.

Councillor Michael Erskine noted that, in the leadup to Thursday night’s meeting, he had been accused of being both for and against the project from proponents and opponents of the project.

“It’s an emotionally charged issue,” he said. “If you’re not immediately on side with one side they think you’re on the other side of the issue.”

Although his initial concern was the town’s liability should the road use agreement be expanded, he believes the town should not be seen as placing “undue and unreasonable delays” on the project.

While he agrees that people should be permitted to speak to the issue, he also


noted that the company’s impact study still has to pass approval from the MNR and the Ministry of the Environment before going through.

The Northeast Town’s road use agreement with Northland went into effect on April 22, 2010, and outlines parameters for the use of town roads during the construction and maintenance of the wind turbines, including requirements that Northland has to meet.

The amendment would add additional roads to the agreement that could be used by the wind power company, and would fall under the same terms and conditions that exist within the full agreement.

Council will examine the

issue of the road use agreement further on Tuesday, February 15.



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# ...Public beach to take shape in Sheguiandah

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don’t actually have a beach area.”

To facilitate the project, the town is having a number of cottages removed that are currently sitting on the town-owned municipal road allowance. Owners of the cottages have already been working with the town to remove some of the cottages.

In the spring, the park will quickly take shape as the area will be cleaned up, including lawn maintenance and adding picnic tables. Playground equipment is being considered for a future date, although finances have to be raised

to fund that aspect of the project.

“The beauty of the park is that this really links that community development study,” Mr. Williamson says. “What we’re trying to do is get people off of the highway and have them wander through the community and really enjoy the Hamlet of Sheguiandah.”

The process began last year with the installation of playground equipment and the creation of new washrooms at the museum property. Research has shown that the single biggest reason the travelling public stop is to use washrooms, so the town’s

plan is to encourage those people travelling across Manitoulin—including the 260,000 ferry passengers—to stop to use the public washrooms and spend more time in the hamlet while they’re there.

In addition to the playground, washrooms and swimming park, the town will install signs at the playground area directing people to a walking trail that will lead from the museum to Batman’s Mill, to the fish-spawning viewing station erected by the Little Current Fish and Game Club.

From there, the trail will go out along the hamlet’s

boardwalk, over to the government dock, up along the Lewis Trail, and back to the museum, which will stand out as the hub for the route.

For inspiration, the municipality looked to the Township of Kagawong, which has a simple layout that doesn’t require much maintenance, but which attracts lots of visitors every year.

“We’re trying to emulate something that we see working very well with the people who come to the Island,” he says.

The town anticipates having the park in place by this summer.

# ...Tories accused of stalling on bill to bolster FedNor

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debate on the bill on February 2,” said Carol Hughes, MP for Algoma-Manitoulin-Kapuskasing. “The Conservatives moved to delay the vote and also curtailed debate, so there will be an hour less next time it comes up.”

Ms. Hughes had been prepared to speak to the bill, along with Nickel Belt MP Claude Gravelle, but didn’t get the chance to voice her support for the concept. “We were ready with our speeches,” she said. “It was obviously a deliberate tactic to avoid the issue.”

In her view, it’s essential that FedNor become a full-fledged agency “so that its mandate is developed by people here in Northern Ontario and there is an ability for the agency to work more in unison with projects here in the North.”

At present, FedNor exists within Industry Canada and functions as a program of that department. This is in stark contrast to the country’s other economic development agencies—such as the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Western Economic Diversification Canada, and the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec—all of which enjoy separate status

and are protected by legislation.

Northern MPs no longer have to look as far away as Atlantic or Western Canada, however, to see an example of a strong regional body that stands on its own and has lots of money to spend. In 2009, the Harper government established the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario—FedDev Ontario, for short—and committed \$1 billion over five years to this new organization.

“Why should southern Ontario have its own agency and not the North?” asked Ms. Hughes.

The lack of Tory MPs in this part of the province—only Greg Rickford of Kenora and Tony Clement of Parry Sound-Muskoka represent the North as members of government—might go some way towards answering that question, she suggested.

Chambers of Commerce in the North have endorsed Mr. Rota’s bill—the full name would be An Act to Establish the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Region of Northern Ontario—arguing that the move would assure “program continuity for both providers and clients of economic initia-

tives,” as well as provide “the ability to track investment dollars in the region instead of a blended Industry Canada budget.”

Ms. Hughes said the latter point is a key one. “Because it’s just a department initiative right now, the spending plans are not available to the public and you don’t get a snapshot of long-term planning for Northern Ontario,” she said. “If it was a full agency,

‘Why should southern Ontario have its own agency and not the North?’  
—AMK MP Carol Hughes

the spending plans would be available to parliamentarians for analysis when the government tables its main estimates.”

The AMK member feels it’s critical to not only strengthen the mandate for FedNor but also ensure that “there is transparency and accountability” for the agency.

Fellow NDPer Mr. Gravelle came out swinging in

the House last Friday—two days after the bill got short shrift in its scheduled debate period—taking particular aim at Mr. Clement, who has responsibility for FedNor as part of his portfolio as industry minister.

“Mr. Speaker, the minister of industry loves to use the name FedNor at press conferences,” said the Nickel Belt member. “But what the people of Northern Ontario really need is an independent economic development agency, like the ones in southern Ontario and Quebec.”

Noting that there is “a bill before the House of Commons right now that would make FedNor an independent agency that can meet the needs of people from our region,” Mr. Gravelle demanded to know why Conservatives are blocking the initiative.

“It’s clear this Conservative government and its industry minister, who considers himself a Northern Ontarian, have no respect for us in the North,” stated Mr. Gravelle in the House. “If they did, they would have made FedNor a stand-alone agency just like the one they set up for southern Ontarians. Why the double standard Mr. Speaker? Why the hypocrisy?”

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