

OUR COMMUNITY

TRAINING RUNS AND TEA

Afternoon Tea at the Goose Creek Turn-Off

I caught up with Charlie Lundie at his dog shack, an old RCAF portable generator building, plunked down beside his dogs. You can still see the motor mounts on the floor and wheel wells buried beneath bags of dogfood. It's pretty cozy for a tough old building.

Checking his training calendar, you can see the training runs and distances scribbled in, some days 13 miles, some ten, twenty, even up to thirty six miles. Looking at the blank spots in January, it's a pretty good record of the severe winter we have had. Not much point training in minus fifty plus.

This year, his third Hudson Bay Quest, Charlie is running ten dogs, almost the same as last year's race with a couple upgrades. Copper and Girly are his leaders. They are two gee-haw (right-left in musher talk) command leaders, Copper coming over from Christopher Lake, SK and Girly in a trade with another musher from La Ronge, SK. He prefers smaller dogs, easier to handle and less food but still strong.

He started out dog sledding six years ago, first contracting with Dave Daley's Wapusk Adventures and then going out on his own a couple years later. He explains, "I moved away in the late 70s, first to BC and then working for Highways in Thompson. When I came back to Churchill (in 1999), getting back into dogs was the first thing on my mind."

Now, he runs Charlie's Dog Sled Tour on his own, slowly building up equipment, dogs and clients.



"Dogs and my family go back a long way. Me and George had dogs and George used to trap with my uncle," he says. "It's like it's in the blood, I guess you would say."

"My uncles were Fred Oman and George Oman, they were trappers across river. My Dad, Dave Lundie, trapped from North River to Arviat in the 30s. He traveled all around up north, other guys like old Eddie Batstone, Cliff Cochrane, Reg Ayotte, there were lots of guys. Mostly trapping arctic fox, staying out there and living off the land.

"That was the biggest reason why I went into the Hudson Bay Quest. I wanted to see how those guys made it out there, how they survived. In those days, there was no GPS, no satellite phones, no fancy equipment, who knows what they had, nothing I guess."

Sled dogs used to be a mainstay of Churchill life. "Back in the 50s and 60s, there used to be teams parked in front of the Churchill and Hudson Hotels, in front of the Bay (Hudson's Bay Company Store). Guys would come

in off the trap line to pick up food, get supplies, go for beers. Everybody traveled by dogs in those years."

He smiles, saying, "It's important to remember that dogs were here first, so they have the right of way over the snowmobile.

"There used to be shacks across river. Joe Bighead, Omans, Lundies and old Borge was over there too. There were lots of people at North River then too, the Dene stayed there, when they weren't following the caribou inland, around Caribou Lake or Duck Lake.

"At one time, the Flats was a small community, so was Jockville, and Akudlik. There were a lot of people up there but everyone moved into town once the kids got older.

"Remember DPW and the Port were big things back then. The Port was booming, workers would come in from Alberta and Saskatchewan, a lot of people came up here to work at the elevator.

"There were lots of dog races back

then, everyone traveled into town to race in the Winter Carnival, the Dene, Cree, trappers would all come in. Big names back then were Frank Spence, Bill MacDonald (Robert's dad), Frank Martin to name a few. It used to be a big race at one time.

"Hockey was a big thing here too, the Navy had two teams, Navy Whites and Navy Blues, Camp had teams, in town there were two, I think the Seals and the Red Caps.

"The army would station guys here who were good hockey players just so they could win, that's how competitive it was back in those days. Even the HBC would send up employees who were good players, they'd play for the town. There was a league here, they'd play three times a week, Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday. I think there were eight hockey teams at one time. Lots of fastball teams, everybody in Churchill played hockey or some kind of sport, now it seems no one is interested. I blame TV for that, it's harder to get people outside now.

"The Quest is a really good thing for this town. There's lots of interest this year too. Its going to be a good race. Still, I think we should race more up here. There's lots of guys with dogs now, we could have a race almost every weekend.

"I don't think it will be too cold this quest, should be good weather. I think it will be a northerner this year who takes it all. Still, it all comes down to whoever has a couple days of good running with his team. If your team is in the right mood on the right days, you'll be in the top five."

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WE'VE GOT YOUR LUMBER.

OUR COMMUNITY

NEW BUSINESS

WELL, WELL, WELL



Churchill leads the way in progressive mental health programming.

So progressive, in fact, that at the Churchill RHA, it is referred to as Community Wellness, removing the stigma associated with the term 'mental health', and implying its focus on treating the whole person, physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual.

Debbie Leggett is Churchill's newest Community Wellness worker. "I did my research on the program offered here in Churchill and chose it for its more holistic approach," she says. With ten years of experience in her field throughout rural Manitoba, Debbie says that our program, with its broader, less structured, more culturally sensitive approach allows for she and her co-workers to meet the needs of a more diverse population.

"I like the philosophy behind this program and this RHA, and I have worked for all of them." She continues, "there is a lot of talk of such a holistic approach in other places, where it's not actually happening, and here it's happening, and no one's talking about it."

She has resources available to her here that were not available to her elsewhere. Resources that she can pass on to her clients. Like a 'Journey of Self and Relationship Discovery' workbook, and little personalized books on meditations and positive affirmations. "Traditionally, daily meditations may have been considered kinda out there," she says. And



though she used such tools in the past, this is the first time she has been able to implement them into the program with the full support of the health authority.

The service is open to anybody in Churchill and throughout the Kivalliq region. Clients can come in on their own, or may be referred by a doctor, a parent or by the school. The service is individually suited and absolutely confidential, "no coffee talk," she says.

In spite of the cold, Debbie says she thinks Churchill is really beautiful and looks forward to seeing it in the summertime. She is enthusiastic and has a truly positive outlook on her position here. "I really believe in this program," she says.

For more information, contact Community Services at 675-8322.

Prepared by Carmen Spiech

Main Street Gas

Take pride Churchill, we have a gas station again! On March 1st, deMeulles Auto Service & Gas Bar officially opened for business sporting a new 10,000 gallon gas tank.

Daric deMeulles opened the garage in December, buying the former Northwinds garage on Kelsey boulevard and filling a niche for small repairs and maintenance. They service automobiles, snowmobiles and ATVs, and are equipped with a diagnostic computer to handle newer vehicles.

The shop is named for his grandfather, Dan deMeulles, who used to operate a service station in the seventies. He thought it would be good to carry on the family name, keep the business personalized.

The old Northwinds showroom has been renovated into a confectionary

selling chips, bars and drinks. And, of course, his Uncle Bob's coffee chair and mug are set up by the front window.

Backporch Music

Is Churchill becoming too urbanized!?! Not only do we have a gas station now but we will soon have our very own music store! Terry and Joanne Stover are opening up 'Churchill Backporch Music' in, logically, the backporch of their home at the end of Hendry Street.

They will have a small inventory, featuring Coast Guitars and Martin strings and accessories. Terry will offer 'Beginner' guitar lessons while Don Zueff, from the D.Rangers and regular Churchill visiting piano tuner, will provide online advanced guitar lessons from his shop in Beausejour. Joanne will, of course, provide fiddle and piano lessons.

Hello Citizens of Churchill !!!

My name is Peter Chabursky, the new CAO of your town. I am happy to be here in Churchill replacing Mr. Rod MacKenzie who has been assisting me over past several weeks in this transitional period. Every day I am becoming more familiar with the "pulse" of this community and its vibrant nature. As you know Churchill has a lot to offer to both residents and visitors alike, yet both have different requirements.

In the coming weeks when you will see me around come over and say "Hello!" I am always eager to hear a variety of views from the citizens on all aspects. The town staff and I are working hard to make sure the all services and recreation facilities are offered at the highest levels. Sometimes there will be a situation which is beyond our control; however please be rest assured that when that happens we are busy behind the scenes working on a solution(s).

Looking forward to seeing you around town,

Peter Chabursky

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