

The Westend Weekly

Bringing Communities Together



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First Native female Bishop in Anglican Church visits



The Right Reverend Lydia Mamakwa with Father Wayne McIntosh.

By Marlene Deschamps

The Right Reverend Lydia Mamakwa is the first Native Female Bishop in the Anglican Church. She is Bishop of the Northern Region in the Diocese of Keewatin which consists of 3 regions. She was elected March 6, 2010 and consecrated May 4, 2010. Her consecration took place in King Fisher First

Nation where she was born and raised.

This is not the first time Lydia (as she wants to be called) has visited the area and she said she had been here twice before. Besides speaking at a book launch held on Sunday, March 20th, she led services earlier in the day at St. John's Anglican Church in Fort Frances and at

the church in International Falls. According to some of the members of the Church, Lydia is well thought of and they really enjoy services when she visits. They say she speaks in both Cree and English during services and her message in any language is one that is very comforting.

Rainycrest celebrates "the green"



By Marlene Deschamps

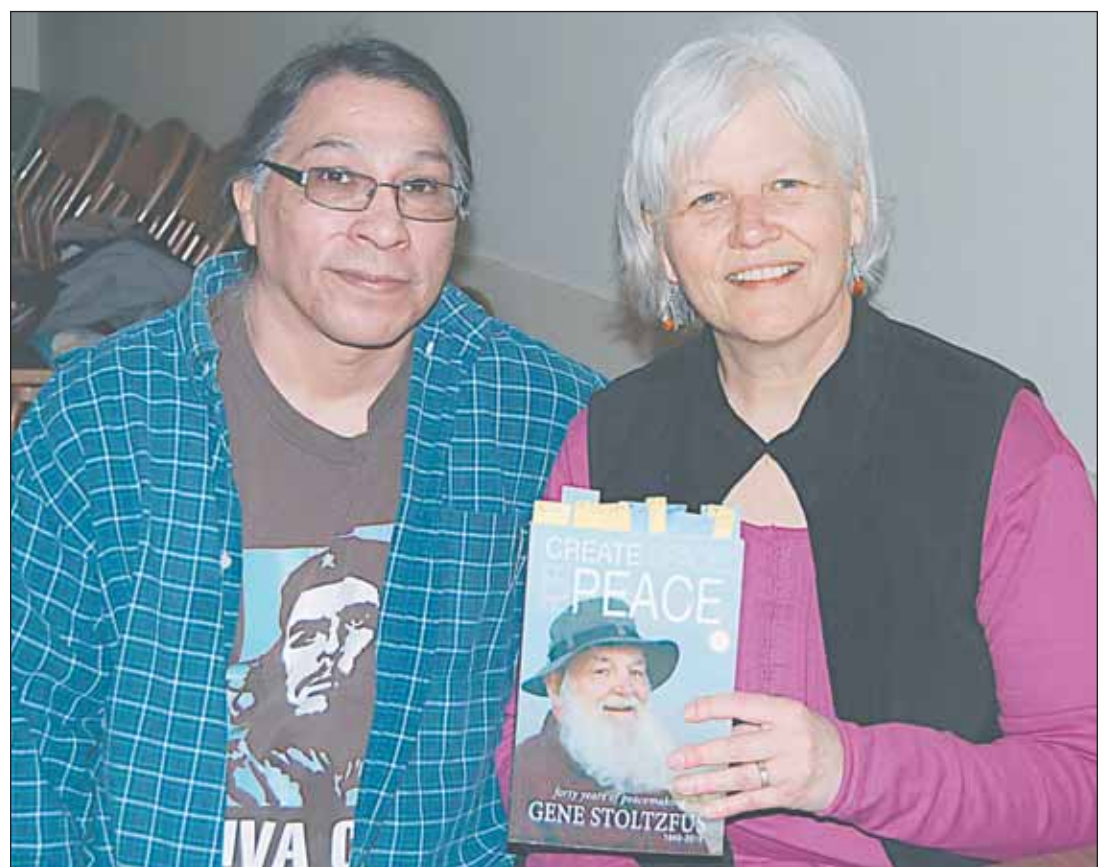
The Rainycrest Auxiliary again this year hosted a party for the residents for St. Patrick's Day. The hall and the members were all bedecked in green of course and they served fruit bread, cheese and green punch to the residents. Most of the residents were out in the hall to enjoy the company, the snacks and the music. Jackie Dobranski played piano and led a sing along of the Irish tunes everyone was familiar with.

Jaunty leprechauns Pricilla Wright and Judy Anderson made sure every had fun.

Yahoo!! Spring is here and the river is opening!



Local peace activist honoured



Emcee at event, Al Hunter and Dorothy Friesen Co-editor.

By Marlene Deschamps

"Create Space for Peace" was launched last Sunday and St. John's Anglican Church hosted the event which was filled with well wishers. The book is a summary of 40 years of peace-making by Gene Stoltzfus. It was also the first anniversary of Gene's passing.

Al Hunter was the emcee for the event and he was introduced by Alan Yerxa. Al had kind words to say about Gene, about the music provided by Jackie and Gerry Guimond and about Father Wayne McIntosh who was part of the committee who hosted the book launch. Al said that Father Wayne was really groovy and that to him, he rocked which brought laughter from the crowd. He introduced Bishop Lydia Mamakwa, who spoke in both Cree and English. She said she thanked the creator for the opportunity to be there and to remember what a special person Gene was and how his stories have a special place in their hearts. She led the crowd in a short prayer. Al then spoke of his relationship with Gene and how they had many laughs during some of their guy talks. He said Gene wanted human beings to be human and do what they could to make things better. He emphasized the importance of travelling, walking, praying and living this way of life to create peace. Al mentioned that he tried to live by this principle and was a director and founder of Good Life for Young People. They did a 350 mile walk with a group of young people over 7 days and will repeat this event again this summer. Al then spoke of how

he sent an e-mail to Gene saying he wanted to meet to talk about the creator but the meeting never took place because of his passing. Before bringing Dorothy to the front for readings from the book, Al said that Gene and his work was a bridge to unconditional love.

Dorothy Friesen, co-editor with Marilen Abesamis of Create Space for Peace, said it was a privilege to be there and acknowledged the team who helped compile the book and St. Johns and the committee who had hosted the event. She mentioned that this was the 1st anniversary of Genes passing and how he wanted to create a world wide culture of peace. She said that by healing ourselves we help heal others. She explained how the book came together by using excerpts from speeches and sermons and his many messages sent out on his website. She did several readings from the book which brought Gene and his message alive for any that had not had the chance to meet him. The book also contains many tales of adventures Gene had in various parts of the world and of his encounters with various people and attitudes. There is a lot of humour in the book, especially in details of how Gene dealt with some of the wrongs he was trying to right. There are pictures in the book that show Gene in various places in the world protesting against injustice and even the signs he held in the pictures were not confrontational such as one that stated -scones not bombs. There was a break from readings with more music

which saw everyone standing and joining hands and moving to the music. Then Dorothy did a few more readings before signing books for all those who lined up to purchase them. All profits from the books will go to Christian Peacemaker Teams who operate throughout the world.

Al then spoke again to the crowd. He said he had been in a self imposed exile and thinking about what he was going to do with the rest of his life. He went on to say that the message they should take away from today was what they could do to be a human being and reaching out unconditionally. He said they should remember there are no walls just bridges and that we are all somebody's child. He added that we are not really grown up until our parents are gone and we have to become adults. He mentioned the tragedy in Japan and the bombs being dropped in Libya and wondered why weapons of death carried native names. He told those gathered they should all greet each other as relatives and as human beings who although are one human family sometimes travel different paths. He, along with Dorothy and Jackie and Gerry were given a round of applause and then everyone was invited to get their books signed and to enjoy the snacks that had been prepared for them.

Create Space for Peace is available at Betty's in Fort Frances and at Cloverleaf in Emo. Dorothy will be at McNally Robinson in Winnipeg for a book reading on March 23rd.

Rafferty slams Conservative budget leaks

Member of Parliament John Rafferty (Thunder Bay-Rainy River) used his Members' Statement in the House of Commons to slam the Conservative government's budget leaks and warn that the RCMP may be called in to investigate the practice.

Rafferty made the following statement in the House of Commons today:

"Mr. Speaker - the contents of the federal budget are secret for good reason - because knowing where \$300 billion of public money is being spent is valuable information.

A reporter once leaked details of the federal budget and was charged with possession of

stolen goods.

Recently, a Conservative staffer was caught red-handed shopping around budget information to lobbyists for his own financial gain.

And just three days ago - someone from the office of the Science and Technology Minister contacted the newsroom at the Thunder Bay Chronicle Journal - directly - and released specific details of budget items.

And it gets worse.

Local Conservative candidates - with no security clearance and no accountability - also leaked budget details this week and have tried to use this informa-

tion for electoral gain.

Who else knows the contents of the budget? Conservative donors? Lobbyists? And are the Conservatives giving this information away or selling it?

Should these leaks be proven true Mr. Speaker I will be asking the RCMP to investigate this Conservative government - once again."

Following Question Period Rafferty said he will be listening intently to the budget presentation to ensure that the needs of working families in his riding have been respected, and to determine whether or not the Conservative government can be trusted to continue governing.



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