

# WISDOM

The logo for Grande Prairie Regional College (GPRC) is a yellow circle containing a black silhouette of a building with three towers, with the letters "GPRC" in black to its right.

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### Public Art Builds Community



Carmen Haakstad,  
VP External Relations

*"Imagine, if you can, a world devoid of public art: no Statue of Liberty, no*

*Eiffel Tower, no Vietnam Veterans Memorial, no Tribute in Light. No murals, memorials, or monuments. What would life be like without fireworks displays, puppet parades, sculpture parks, and visionary roadside folk art? These landmarks and special events enhance our experience of a place and our quality of life. They engender a sense of pride and community identity. They reach audiences outside museums, galleries, and theaters, and they add to the beauty of everyday life. They declare the worth of a place and a time in our shared culture."* – Jack Becker  
Public Art: An Essential Component of Creating Communities" (Monograph, March 2004)

GPRC is very proud of the DJ Cardinal architecture of our building, and of the sculpture installations in the green spaces surrounding our Grande Prairie campus. Over the summer and fall of 2012, our College and our community were extraordinarily proud to be the recipients of a very special "loan." "Granite carver Stewart Steinhauer delivered a beautiful collection of new works created especially for our community, which together tell the old Cree-Ojibwe cultural origins story, "Eaglechild."

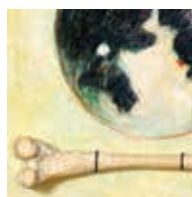
We will have two full years to enjoy them before they are made available for purchase by individuals, corporations or municipalities. This gift is the topic of our cover story in this edition of Wisdom – and this gift has prompted much thought and conversation about the importance of public art in a community.

The installation of the sculptures

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## IN OUR WISDOM

was an amazing experience, as the heavy granite sculptures arrived and were settled in place by transport trucks and picker trucks usually used for the movement of heavy oil equipment. Their unusual cargo was a pleasant surprise to the passers-by watching these heavy granite sculptures being suspended in the air like feathers in the wind. There was an immediate response of pleasure and gratitude from all who witnessed this installation.

I encourage you to read the artist's story in this issue explaining why he chose to create these sculptures for our campus. This was a huge challenge and very costly venture, as he had to transport thousands of pounds of granite from all parts of the world to Creston BC,

then to Grande Prairie Alberta.

While reading his story I was thinking about our students. I see these sculptures as a symbol of a peaceful society where all humans of all races and the animals of our planet live in harmony, not conflict. The sculptures along the park trail and in front of our main entrances combined with the beautiful architecture of Douglas J. Cardinal are a spectacular addition to our community, and I hope we are able to secure some of them for the generations of the future.

The youth of our community are our future. What is it we are teaching, as a college, as a society? How are we preparing the citizens of our future? It is our role as a post-secondary institution to be a source

in our community for art, sports, science - to share the teachings of the great philosophers, scientists, artists, poets, mathematicians and the many professional trades. It is our responsibility to help build a society which values art, and which cherishes public art such as this collection of granite sculpture.

At GPRC we are grateful to Stewart Steinhauer for his vision for our College, and for his generosity in making it available for the enjoyment of all in the coming months. It is my personal hope that our community will become known for its support of public art, and that these sculptures will remain in our community, beautifying our public spaces, and enriching our lives.



*The photo is a closeup of the incredible highly-polished stainless steel "Cloud Gate sculpture" in Chicago's Millennium Park, by world renowned artist Anish Kapoor. The reflection is of the famous downtown Chicago skyline. This photo was taken by Carmen Haakstad while on vacation. "Gail and I, like many others, enjoy visiting the public art and galleries that are in so many cities around the world...I hope people will come to see our sculptures at GPRC and enjoy the beauty that we have in our part of the world." - Carmen Haakstad*





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# GPRC

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A Community Information Session hosted by the Peace Health Advisory Council was held at GPRC on November 29 to share facts and progress updates regarding construction of the new Grande Prairie Regional Hospital.

The Alberta Infrastructure project team, architects, construction manager, and representatives from GPRC and Alberta Health Services were present to answer questions from the public and to present the architectural drawings.

"This is a one-of-a-kind collaboration, a new way of doing business," said Don Gnatiuk, GPRC President and CEO. GPRC, which donated the land for the project, is busy planning for the exciting education opportunities afforded by the 4000 sq. metres of teaching and learning space which is part of the design.

The new Grande Prairie Regional Hospital is scheduled for completion by 2017, and Alberta Health Services is working to plan for the new care model and future equipment needs.

- Current QEII Hospital was designed to serve a population of 22,000. Grande Prairie population alone is well over 52,000, plus the surrounding region.
- The new hospital will continue to serve as regional hospital for the region
- Radiation therapy will be provided in the new facility for cancer patients, reducing the need for travel to Edmonton to receive treatment.
- GPRH will open with 200 beds, and will have the capacity to expand as needed.



## Grande Prairie Regional Hospital on G

- An 1100-stall parkade will be built as part of the new facility, and will open at the same time as the hospital.
- QEII will continue to serve the region providing services such as ambulatory care, public health, community mental health.

The project partners – Alberta Infrastructure, Alberta Health Services and Grande Prairie Regional College – are working together to connect community, health and education as never before.

In the words of Alberta Infrastructure Salvador Ibarra, Project Implementation Director, North, "We are not distinct organizations, we are one cohesive group whose objective is the best space solution to deliver the best health programs, the best results for patients, that are possible. I can assure this community that this facility will be second to none."

**To view the full presentation from the community information session please visit [www.gprc.ab.ca/livevideo\\_archive.html](http://www.gprc.ab.ca/livevideo_archive.html)**







## PRC Campus – A Facility for the Future



### CONSTRUCTION FACT

- GPRH will be constructed on 533 piles.
- Each pile holds 30 meters of concrete.
- Drilling of the piles was completed in mid-November



*If* you are interested in what's going on at GPRC, we now "have an App for that!" Jordan Pickup, director of Information Technology at the College, has custom-designed a native app for three mobile platforms, which is now available in the appropriate app stores for iPhones, Androids or Windows Phones, and at [gprc.ab.ca](http://gprc.ab.ca).

Don Gnatiuk President and CEO of GPRC, is very excited about the new app, which was announced to the Board of Governors at their public

meeting on January 24. "I have been looking forward to this for a long time!" Gnatiuk says. "I am especially proud that our staff is so accomplished. Jordan Pickup, who created the GPRC App to serve our students, is not only an esteemed member of our staff, but is an alumnus of our GPRC computer technology program."

As of this week, the GPRC App is available free at the App Store for iPhones and iPads, in Google play for android phones, and in the Store for

Windows Phones. Visitors to [www.gprc.ab.ca](http://www.gprc.ab.ca) can download the free GPRC App from the community page or the student homepage. Everyone from students to the general public will find the App a handy addition to their mobile phones. Contact information, important dates, events listings, theatre events and news releases are available to all users. Quick links take the user directly to the GPRC website, the Students' Association website or the myGPRC portal for students and faculty.





# Custom-designed GPRC App

*Now available!*

GPRC students who download the App will find a few more buttons, with courses, marks and class schedule among their available links. GPRC faculty have links to their teaching schedules and information such as numbers of students registered in any given class, and all staff have access to a button to search employee listings.

Jordan custom-designed this app especially for GPRC, with GPRC look and feel and function. "I wanted it to be functional and rich in content,

not just links to events and news," Pickup says. "This App has features students need, things to make student life more manageable. "

He has been working on the app in evenings over recent months, while working with Student Services to establish the myGPRC student portal. "It was important to have the online student portal up and running before launching an App. All the online services for students are in myGPRC – now the App provides a convenient link to that information."

The App is already flying off the "shelves" of the various locations for download, and Jordan is looking forward to tracking the numbers as the word begins to get out about its availability. The demonstration to the Board of Governors was the formal "debut" of the GPRC App; next week the opportunity will begin to be pushed out to current and prospective students.

It is all about services for students. At GPRC, "We have an App for that!"

*Download our App!*



## DONOR PROFILE

# Cyril Gurevitch

By Joanne Ballance

Cyril Gurevitch is a lawyer in the City of Grande Prairie and longtime supporter of the GPRC student awards program; he is also a leader, community builder, planner, advocate, Rotarian, coach, and lifelong learner.


While preparing to interview Cyril I reflected back on how our paths first crossed and realized that over 30 years had passed! We first met in 1980 when he and his wife, accomplished artist Brenda Strom, moved to Grande Prairie. Cyril had served three years with the Alberta Attorney General's office in Edmonton before relocating north to work as an associate and then partner with the late Steven Burgess in what would become Burgess and Gurevitch Law Office. At that time I

worked for Legal Aid of Alberta and our office assigned pro-bono work to lawyers on a rotating basis. I remember clearly that Cyril always took our requests, even on short notice. My first impression of him was that he was community-minded and generous. It turns out some things never change...

When I caught up to him for this interview Cyril was back in the city for just a few days; his role as a President of the Canadian Bar Association – Alberta Chapter, keeps his schedule as busy as ever. He was heading out as an invited guest to speak to the Manitoba Bar Association and would be participating in their provincial conference. Not surprising as lifelong learning is one of the

constants in his life, something he credits his parents for instilling in him early on. "They believed in Education; to them, attaining a University education was simply a natural progression from High School – something I like to think we passed on to our children," said Cyril. (All three have graduated with degrees ranging from interior design, to nursing, to business.)

His personal educational experience and how he arrived at a career in law, though, is somewhat circuitous. After attending Henry Wise Wood High School in Calgary, Cyril contacted the University of Calgary counselling service to enquire about taking university courses. Not having a clear idea as to what to study, it was suggested



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that Cyril undertake 'interest tests' – and the results showed both Engineering and Law as potential careers worth pursuing. "At the time the U of C offered a double BA/LLB degree, and so I registered in it." After his 2nd year of University however, Cyril took a break and travelled extensively – first hitchhiking across Europe and eventually visiting family in Israel where he worked for three months in a Kibbutz. These were interesting times: The year was 1973 and the Yom Kippur War was underway at that time.

Eventually he completed his Law degree from the University of Alberta, and soon after moving to Grande Prairie, Cyril's support for GPRC began. First his partner Steven Burgess, an avid runner, suggested their firm establish an award to support the College's Cross-Country Running Team – something Cyril supports to this day. Fast-forward 15 years and local MLA Bob Elliott suggested to Cyril that he apply for a position as a member of the College's Board of Governors. He completed two 3-year terms and was involved in numerous committees including Negotiations and Board Development.

During his tenure the College increased the number of degree offerings, the Carver model was introduced for board governance and there were discussions about the use of college lands across the By-Pass Road. Restrictions were put on commercial development on that parcel of land. "We were vociferous and said we cannot give this land up," recalls Cyril. And today, this is the site of the \$620 million dollar regional hospital and education centre.

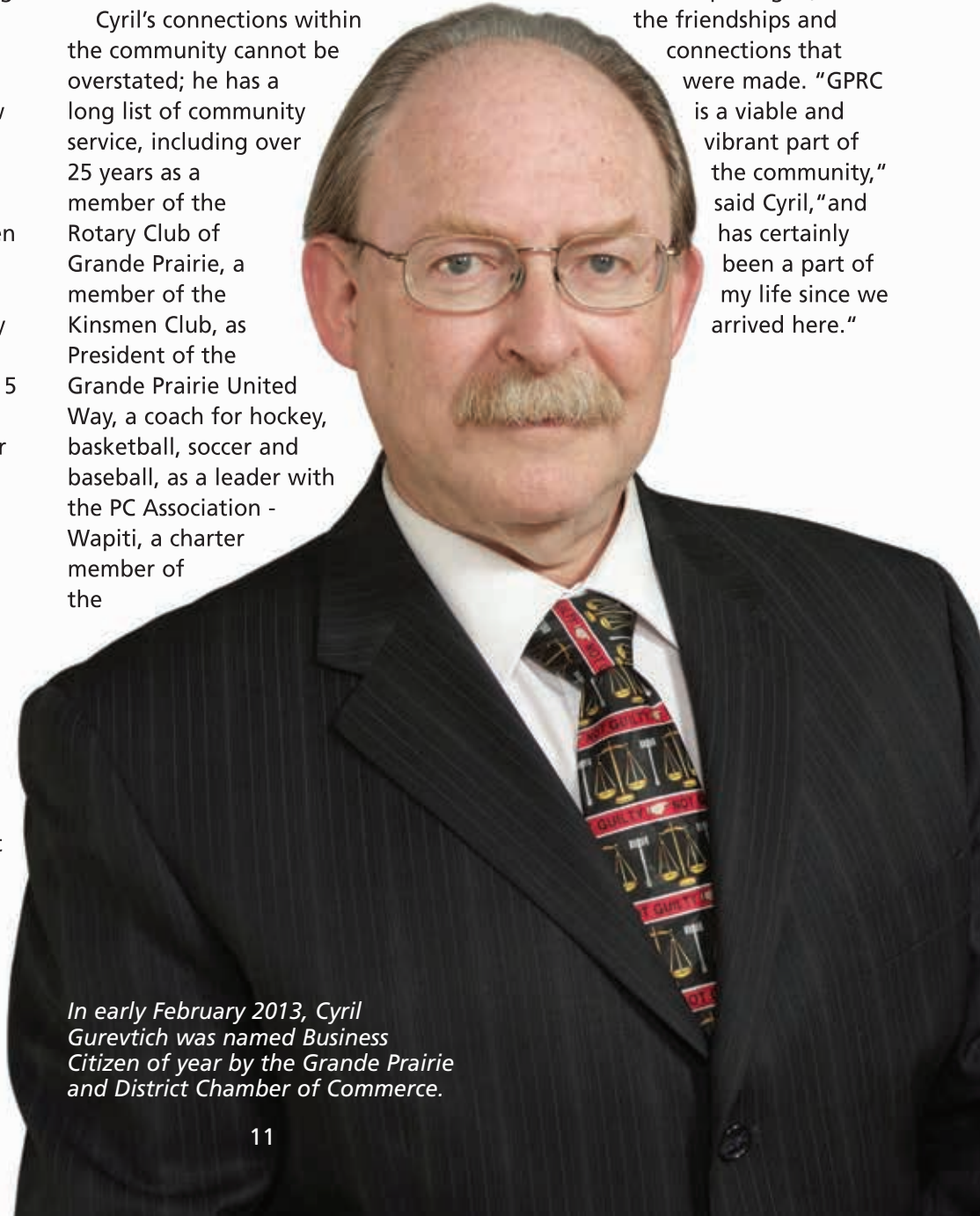
While his children were young

Cyril would coach them in the GPRC Mini-Wolves Basketball Program, and he even took his eldest daughter on an Art History course in Paris, France with GPRC instructor Lane Borstad. The College has twice honoured Cyril's law firm with the Award for Community Involvement in GPRC Athletics at the annual Festival of Gold Gala, and Cyril was inducted to the GPRC President's Council in recognition of his work on the Board of Governors.

Cyril's connections within the community cannot be overstated; he has a long list of community service, including over 25 years as a member of the Rotary Club of Grande Prairie, a member of the Kinsmen Club, as President of the Grande Prairie United Way, a coach for hockey, basketball, soccer and baseball, as a leader with the PC Association - Wapiti, a charter member of the

Heritage Club at the QEII Hospital in Grande Prairie, a director on the Grande Prairie & District Chamber of Commerce and member of the Airport Commission. Currently Cyril is serving his profession as a President, Canadian Bar Association, Alberta Branch and National Council Voting Member.

Cyril looks at his years of leadership and involvement with the College fondly, especially noting the relationships forged, and the friendships and connections that were made. "GPRC is a viable and vibrant part of the community," said Cyril, "and has certainly been a part of my life since we arrived here."



*In early February 2013, Cyril Gurevich was named Business Citizen of year by the Grande Prairie and District Chamber of Commerce.*

**GPRC**

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Randy Glenn  
Mike Hussey  
Bob Martens  
Serge Martin  
Ian Perry  
Ron Thomson  
Joanne Ballance  
Lynne Ness  
Meghan Noftall

### 2012 College Classic Winners

1st Team - Taxes, Tires and Money  
Brody Thomson, Don Lindsay, Kevin Chrenek and Jordan Bombier

2nd Team - The Weed Whackers  
Randy Glen, Chad Wnuk, Art Stirrett and Mike Fredrickson

3rd Team - The Playboys  
Darren Kjemhuis, Stewart Wilson, Vince Vavrek and Pete Merlo

4th Team - The Water Hazards  
Ian Perry, Marg Martel, Natalia Reiman and Kevin Tink

**McCullough Cup**  
Low Gross Men Keith Aiken

**Boccioletti Cup**  
Low Gross Women Natalia Reiman

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Low Net Women Marilyn Kapellar



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# GPRC PRESIDENT'S BALL

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Art Work - Ed Bader  
Art Work - Joan Doll  
Art Work - Laura St. Pierre  
Art Work - Melissa Finlay  
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Indigo Boutique  
International Star Registry  
Lion's Den Pub  
Love Life Hot Yoga  
Marathon Training - Bill  
Corcoran  
Marcy's Flower Boutique  
Mirage Holistic Spa  
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### THANK YOU

Art Gallery of Grande Prairie  
G.P. Dancers Academy  
GPRC Office Administration  
and Hospitality Student  
volunteers  
Grande Prairie Boys' Choir  
Harpist - Hannah Irwin



*The President's Ball was planned and organized by a committee of volunteers under the leadership of Chair Sharron Barr. l-r Candace Boyne, Darcie Coulter, Whitney Card, Lori Bombier, Carly McLeod, Gail Sherman, Lynne Ness, Sharron Barr, Meghan Nof tall, Susan Thompson, Sharifi Houssian, Carolyn Vasileiou, Derek Hall.*

Over  
**\$83,000** Raised

*Thank you!*





## RECENT GIFTS



Grande Prairie RCMP Officer in Charge, Ray Noble, and the Archie Harvey Memorial Golf Tournament organizing committee, presented a cheque in the amount of \$13,370 to the GPRC Alumni/Foundation. On behalf of the College, Joanne Ballance, GPRC Community Relations, accepted the cheque, which represents the past five years of support for two student bursaries at GPRC.



Ron Regnier, General Manager of Grande Prairie's Canadian Tire Store, presents a cheque to GPRC President and CEO, Don Gnatiuk, and VP External Relations, Carmen Haakstad. This generous donation represents their annual sponsorship for the College Classic and President's Ball.



Joanne Ballance, Alumni Development Manager receives a \$40,000 donation from Jason Zelling, Food Service Representative for Pepsi Bottling Group



Bear Creek Broadcasting donated \$30,000 once again this year with \$20,000 going to scholarships and \$10,000 to the Peace Country Idol event.



## Donations to Room of Plenty at GPRC

Donations helped the Room of Plenty at GPRC provide support to 140 students and over 80 children in the 2011-2012 academic year, and is on track to equal or exceed those numbers in 2012-13.

The Room of Plenty is an on-campus food and supplies bank which can be accessed by students, and which helps to stretch the often tight finances of a student budget. The Room of Plenty also gathers donations of cash, toys and groceries to prepare Christmas Hampers to help make the holiday season a little brighter for students in need.

Donations are generated at a variety of social events at the College, and the fund is the appreciative recipient of individual and group donations. A donations jar at Bernie's coffee bar in the GPRC concourse gathered donations of over \$900 in just over one year. The "stuff-the-window" initiative of the Bookstore staff generated donation of 1462 items plus \$100 in gift cards and \$60 cash just in time to support the





Don Gnatiuk, GPRC President and CEO, and Joanne Ballance, Alumni Development Manager accept a cheque in the amount of \$25,000 from RBC representatives Kevin Kleininger, Regional Vice-President, and Fred Gardner, VP Commercial Banking. The funds support a scholarship in the Business Department and Aboriginal programming at GPRC.



The landscape at GPRC Fairview Campus was transformed when equipment and buildings from a former Shell Canada pilot project arrived and called the campus home. Don Gnatiuk, GPRC President and CEO, and Malcolm Mayes, General Manager of Shell's In-Situ Operations, unveil the Shell Canada Learning Lab sign on-site at GPRC Fairview Campus.



David Dunsworth, Xerox Sales Agent (Micro Computers Plus Ltd.) presented GPRC with a cheque in the amount of \$5,000. Jordan Pickup, Director of Information Technology, and Carmen Haakstad, VP External Relations accepted the donation, thanking Xerox for the support.



Joanne Ballance and Carmen Haakstad of GPRC Community Relations receive cheques from Kevin Chrenek, Vice President & Associate Portfolio Manager at Chrenek Dion & Associates, in the amount of \$3,200 in support of their named scholarships at GPRC.

## we provide needed support to students

hamper project in December.

The United Church is one community group which has been an ongoing supporter of the Room of Plenty, and organizers extend a special thanks to them for the continued extraordinary generosity.

Cash donations are always welcome, as are non-perishable food items and household items. Items always in short supply are: kids lunch supplies (granola bars, juice boxes, fruit cups, puddings, etc.); nutritious quick meal components; personal hygiene items such as shampoo, conditioner, soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, feminine hygiene items, toilet paper, or deodorant.

The kindness and generosity of donors throughout the College and in our community has made the Room of Plenty a very successful and well-utilized program, which has really helped our students succeed in their education goals. Thank You!



GPRC was a beneficiary of the third annual TD Tree Days event in 2012. TD Friends of the Environment Foundation chose GPRC as one of the locations selected across Canada. TD Canada Trust employees and several GPRC employees volunteered their time on a sunny Saturday afternoon in April to plant twelve large trees near the former site of the now-demolished Anderson Hall residence.

# FACULTY PROFILE

By Elizabeth Beaulieu



## KEN HOUSEGO

I first met Ken Housego at Grande Prairie Regional College while he was getting ready to teach drawing class. As I watched him gear up with a thick canvas apron and a leather tool belt, I had to wonder – just what kind of heavy-duty drawing does he teach? Now that I have seen his exhibition titled ‘Then and Now’ - his exhibition at The Center for Creative arts in 2012 – I think I understand.

Ken Housego’s work is a contemplative exploration of materials – his paintings are drawings, are sculptures, are assemblages, are poems. His work doesn’t worry about medium-specificity; his surfaces hold paint, pastel, ink, pencil, and found objects while negotiating both two and three-dimensional spaces at once. In his own words: His paintings are built. They go in and out of planes – flipping between aerial views to stable horizon lines, they are half shelf, frame, object and collection. Images and objects engage in a dialogue creating a counterpoint narrative that celebrates materials and a life. Repeating themes like boats, hearts, moons, farming tools and bones create a rhythm of story telling. These icons seem to map out a personal narrative, a persistence, demanding that these symbols mark a weight, a memory and echo.

In Susan Stewart’s book “On Longing” she suggests that there may be a phenomenological correlation between the experience of scale and the experience of duration. She explains that when looking at things in miniature, time feels arrested, that it does not correspond to the change and flux of real lived time and thus opens us to reverie. I think of this while looking at the miniature hand carved wooden shovels, spades, grain silos and trees placed strategically against the painted landscapes in Ken’s work. These



assemblages are almost like dioramas, they draw you in to a place of stillness, nostalgia and imagination. The toy-like miniature objects are like prairie artifacts connoting a pioneering history. The assemblage- paintings seem to reflect on work of the hand and of the land with a gaze set upon horizon lines and light that can only describe prairie knowledge. This gaze is philosophical; it questions distance, gravity, and perspective in the material world and in the realm of emotion.

Typically ships and boats connote voyage and travel, Ken's boats and ships are shapes, they are like apparitions, ghosts or dreams lacking detail but understood. Integrated into Ken's paintings one will find: Tin ornaments from Mexico, mooring cleats and pieces of ocean-worn wood – hearkening to places far away from Northern Alberta where his studio is located.

Hand-carved wooden sculptures of bones are attached with wire to several paintings.

work is a large texturally developed painting hung upside down with the silhouette of a boat on an ocean horizon and a breathy red heart flying through the picture plane. Other works hold carved boats on shelves that extend strings that tether weights set out just inches from paintings of ocean and prairie landscape. Similar to reading poetry



work is that it is unique, it does not conform to an aesthetic that is familiar. It is challenging because it breaks rules, and particularly so because it breaks rules with such maturity and persistence.

The boat-lined horizons in Ken's work remind me of Joyce Wieland's film 'Sailboat', his color and typeface are reminiscent of Greg Curnoe (though I might only be saying that because I know Ken likes Curnoe's work). His persistence of symbolism reminds me of Rene Magritte – but really Ken's work is definitely his own and that is the greatest accomplishment an artist could achieve.

It is difficult to write about Ken's work without writing about Ken. At his opening for "Then and Now" he spoke warmly of family, acknowledging his son Ian's influence on his work, expressing his appreciation for the local figure drawing classes at The Centre for Creative Arts and his role as a Professor at Grande Prairie Regional College. He described his exhibition in terms of sharing and

## Paintings/Assemblages/ Drawings Balance, Form, Object-symbol Place, Distance, Mind. Artifact. Glow. Heavy.

These large femur bones are plain and strong, acknowledging the mortal body with confidence as they frame images of painted moons.

The reoccurring imagery of the moon in Ken's work has the presence of a portrait, centered on the canvas – meeting the viewer's eye almost in a contest, almost like a mirror. For me these painted moons speak of enduring time and of wisdom. Their volumous weight suspended on the canvas is both reassuring and vulnerable as you explore their cratered surfaces and the material treatment of glowing light and textures.

There is a constant play of floating and sinking in Ken's compositions. In one work text wraps and bends around the image of a giant lobster claw suspended by a string. The text reads "every day is a good day unless you become trapped, boiled and eaten and your ship- family is sinking". Beside this

there is suspense between the stanzas of his images and objects; there is space, balance, timing and repetition.

Color also shares a strong presence in Ken's work. His bold coloration using deep oranges, reds and yellows juxtaposed with sensitive tonal variations of pastel blues seems to break all the rules. As the old adage goes "you have to know the rules the break the rules" and with Ken's work this rings true. Similarly there is a sophisticated sense of humor that arises in the work – a sort of play within grand themes. For instance in his painting 'I do' -that he describes as being about marriage - there is an almost comical image of a baked turkey. This 'quirky' symbol quickly nestles into the rest of the work as being firmly rooted in a sense of place and time, like much of Ken's personal lexicon.

What is most striking about Ken's

acknowledged that all the viewers were patrons. As he has done in previous exhibitions he arranged for one painting to be won in a ballot draw during his opening.

The exhibition 'Then and Now' brings together a practice that feels alive, the result of an artist who is actively investigating materials with courage and is firmly rooted in his artistic line of inquiry. The feeling of discovery and lack of pretense in the work is refreshing. I was delighted to see Ken touch his paintings and demonstrate how they were hung – removing works from the wall to show their hardware in the middle of his opening. Ken's presence as an artist, teacher and member of the creative community is an anchor in the vast northern prairie. His work generously shares lessons about materials, composition, craftsmanship and personal exploration.









# Steinhauer Sculptures On Loan to GPRC

*By Lynne Ness*

Grande Prairie citizens have been enjoying the public sculptures by Stewart Steinhauer which are now on loan to GPRC. From the grizzly mom and cubs at the top of Borstad Lookout (sliding hill in this season!) to the "Sweetgrass Teachings" black bear and white bear flanking the main entrance, these massive granite works are attracting plenty of attention.

The series was created to tell an old Cree-Ojibwe cultural origins story, as described by Steinhauer in his "The Good Life" on page 22. The telling begins with the Grizzly family situated near Borstad Lookout at the eastern edge of the campus.

The grizzly family is called "Happy Time", representing the first stage in the seven life stages from the "eaglechild" story. "Happy Time" is meant as a lead-in piece to the

entire exhibition, when approached from the city end, along the Muskoseepi Park walkway," explains Steinhauer. The mother and two cubs are an evident attraction for local families utilizing the park – little footprints in the snow and granite cubs from which mittened hands have tenderly brushed the snow are clear signs of the affinity children feel for the sculpture.

Happy Time was situated carefully by Steinhauer, who positioned the mother and cubs on the base so that, "when placed on Borstad Lookout, they would be watching people coming up the footpath out of the valley bottom, except for the 'wandering' cub, who would be looking at people on their way back to town. "

Steinhauer says the piece is playing on several themes simultaneously. "First, of course, is

the reference to the Eaglechild story; in that positioning it is foreshadowing the Eaglechild sculpture at the far end in front of the College. Secondly, it is also an obvious reference to the name of the park, Muskoseepi, which is Cree for Bear Creek. Thirdly, it is a less obvious reference to the fact that Grande Prairie lies in grizzly territory, not vice versa. Fourthly, at least in my mind, the grizzly family is asking the human viewer: 'Is there room here for each of our species to peacefully co-exist?'"

The tall and graceful StarWoman is nestled into a curve of the signature Cardinal architecture which is the exterior wall of the Theatre. StarWoman appears in a Cree legend recounting the creation of Turtle Island (North and South America). As soon as the land has taken form, she comes hurtling out



of deep space and crash lands on the new earth. Jumping to her feet, she is pregnant with the first human, a being conceived by the mixing of earth life and star life.

#### The Four Directions

Grandmothers assembly has been placed near the parking lot at the north side of the College. The granite from which they have been carved has come from quarries in their respective directions: in the south is the Thunderbird Grandmother, in the west is the Bear Grandmother, in the north is the North Wind Grandmother, and in the east is the Moon Grandmother.

"The four direction Grandmothers are the feminine counterparts to the circle of Grandfather faces on the base of the Eaglechild sculpture, using the same corresponding type of granite in each of the four directions, explains Steinhauer. *Eaglechild*, situated on the island near the Theatre entrance, is the centerpiece of the collection.

The four base rocks represent the Grandfathers of the south, west, north and east with related colours and implied values. Above sits the mysterious woman who turned into a sweatlodge; she is Mother Earth. Sitting in her lap, loved, protected, nurtures, is the little Eaglechild in his first sweatlodge ceremony. Down Mother Earth's back are the seven stones, speaking of the seven stages.

Two imposing bears flank the main entrance near the flagpoles. The white Spirit Bear stands to one side, and on the other is Sweetgrass Teachings bear, with the teachings carved into his base: Humble Kindness, Sharing, Honesty, Determination.

"I enjoy the Cree stories as magical realism, a now popularized literary form," says Steinhauer. "I also enjoy Cree stories as profound metaphor, speaking in coded poetic form about universal realities. "

For the coming month until fall 2014, the citizens of Grande Prairie are enjoying the Cree story Eaglechild in the form of imposing granite sculpture – thank you Stewart Steinhauer!



Photos: J. D. Robert Wiebe Photography



*“I enjoy the Cree stories as magical realism, a now popularized literary form”*







## Miyo Pimatisiwn - The Good Life: an indigenous perspective in granite

*By Stewart Steinhauer*

In March of 2011, I visited the Douglas Cardinal-designed Grande Prairie Regional College, looking for a potential exhibition site for a collection of new works not yet created. Stimulated by the combination of architecture and geography I found there, aided and abetted by the enthusiastic response of college staff, I began work on a ten piece exhibition, based on the telling of an old Cree-Ojibwe cultural origins story, "Eaglechild".

Although 20 years have passed since I first heard the Eaglechild story, told to me in my late uncle's sweatlodge, at Saddle Lake Cree Nation, as an answer to a "tobacco question", I continue to discover new meaning from the story. Without formal training as either an artist or a stone sculptor, I have been earning my living carving stone since 1991, an activity I began as a spontaneous response to the birth of my first child, the day after that child was born, in July of 1973.

The Cree cultural explanation for my stone carving activities is based on a Cree worldview concept about spiritual gifts received at birth, hidden inside, which one must seek as one grows to maturity. In this explanation, my gift is to work with stone, as an assistant to a spiritual being, the Rock Grandfather, who has an obligation to help fragile humans with communication.

In this particular exhibition of sculpture, the Rock Grandfather is talking about the vision of what a good life is, as gifted to Cree Peoples in a very distant past, but still alive and well today, and perhaps an indicator of an important possible future path for all of humanity."





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July 2013 – reunion for charter class of 1951 – days and times being negotiated among the members of the charter class.



Animal Health Technology program 40th anniversary is the weekend of July 18, 19, 20, 2013 at Fairview Campus



# IN MEMORIAM

## Lucien Arthur Côté

Lucien Arthur Côté, resident of Donnelly, passed away in June 2012 at Morinville, at the age of 78. Lucien was born in McLennan, lived all his life in Donnelly and was a farmer at heart. Lucien was a charter student of Fairview College, class of 1951.

## Aleda "Perky" McCullough

The name of Perky McCullough has long been synonymous with sport and with the College Classic golf tournament. Following her passing in February 2012, a scholarship



endowment was established at GPRC in her honour. The Perky McCullough Leadership award will annually recognize students who have had significant involvement and outstanding leadership in the field of athletics, as either an athlete or a volunteer.

## Mike Mercer

Mike Mercer, a second-year Heavy Equipment Services student at GPRC Fairview, whose home was in Vancouver, passed away in a motor vehicle accident near Grimshaw, Alberta in December 2012.



## Trenton Perrot

Trenton Perrot was a volunteer on the GPRC Alumni/Foundation Board of Directors at the time of his passing in November 2012.

Trenton was highly regarded for his involvement in numerous community organizations.



## Kendel Tang

Retired GPRC Psychology instructor Kendel Tang passed away in September 2012. He started at GPRC on September 1, 1979 as a part-time

instructor in Grouard. On August 15, 1988, he became a full-time Psychology instructor. Kendel was an extremely active participant with the College - in the classroom, taking runs around the reservoir or playing basketball in the gym. He was known for his encouraging influence on GPRC students.



## Donna Tink

Donna Tink, a lifelong resident of the Grande Prairie district, was known to be a lifelong enthusiast for literature and education. She served

as Chair of the GPRC Board of Governors, served terms as president and treasurer with the Friends of the library, and for years operated her

own bookstore The Compleat Reader. Donna was president of the local, provincial and national Councils of Women. She was appointed by the Prime Minister to the Federal Advisory Council on the Status of Women. Donna Tink passed away in January 2013.

## Roger Warner

Former Fairview College staff member Roger Warner passed away in January 2013. Roger was the Director of the Community Relations for Fairview College and later NAIT until 2008, when he went on medical leave until his retirement last year.



## Melodie Wilton

Melodie Wilton, former GPRC Director of Continuing Education, was a highly esteemed supporter of the Friendship Centre

movement locally, provincially and nationally. At the time of her passing in January 2012 Melodie was Executive Director of the Grande Prairie Friendship Centre, and a steady presence at GPRC in support of the on-campus friendship centre and initiatives such as the Elder-in-Residence program.

## Morgan Szmata

GPRC student Morgan Szmata, resident of Grande Prairie, passed away suddenly on Saturday, December 22, 2012 in Grande Prairie at the age of 19 years.

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# RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS



## AWARDS and RECOGNITIONS

Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Medals: GPRC President and CEO **Don Gnatiuk** was among the Albertans honoured with the Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee medal, presented "to community builders" by Lt. - Gov. Donald S. Ethell at a ceremony in Grande Prairie on January 18. The medals were presented to "community builders."

Other members of the GPRC community who were recognized included long-time instructor and coach **Leigh Goldie**, and retired history instructor **Jerry Petryshyn**.

**GPRC Athletic Department** has been awarded a 2012 Crime Prevention Award cited for "commitment by staff to teaching your athletes to be leaders in our community; through various mentorship ideas, involvement with the community on varying levels is extraordinary!" Drama instructor Annie Smith and the **Fine Arts Department** were also awarded for their involvement with teaching their students the Virtues Program, and for the students' productions and performance of the Anti-Bullying plays.

Anthropology instructor **Scott Johnson** has been awarded the prestigious *National Geographic – Committee for Research and Exploration Grant* which will fund his research in the Yucatan and Gulf of Mexico in summer 2013.

GPRC nominee **Senator Dennis Patterson** was the recipient of the 2012 *PACE Distinguished Achievement Provincial Award*.

At the 2012 GPRC President's Awards Luncheon, **Elizabeth (Beth) Sheehan** was presented with GPRC's highest recognition for contributions to excellence in

education, the 2012 *Board of Governors Award of Distinction*. **Christina (Tina) Nelson** received the *GPRC Distinguished Volunteer Award 2012*, and **Gary Allen Borstad** was awarded the *GPRC Distinguished Alumni Award 2012*.

**Charles Sanderson** – Nominated for the 2011 Top Instructor Award. The Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board requested nominations from registered apprentices who took technical training between November 2010 and November 2011. Charles was noted by his nominator as being consistently positive and enthusiastic and always very kind and completely approachable.

**Jim Smith**, P. Eng., former chair of the GPRC Alumni/ Foundation Board, was granted Honorary Life Membership with APEGA. The award was presented on April 19 at the prestigious Summit Awards® held at the Shaw Conference Centre, Edmonton. APEGA regulates the practices of engineering and geoscience in Alberta. The Association's authority is derived from provincial statute. With over 60,000 Members, APEGA has served the public and its Members since 1920.

**Dr. Melissa Day** of the Centre for Research & Innovation (CRI) and economics instructor **Dr. Charles Backman** have each been awarded an AACTI CAP Talk's seed grant to advance their applied research and innovation interests.

**Kelly Socha** received a CARNAT/D Meloche Monnex Scholarship for Master's Level studies awarded by the Alberta Registered Nurses Educational Trust (ARNET).

Nursing instructor **Liz Richard** was the recipient of the Alberta Nursing Education Administrators (ANEA) Nursing Education Leadership Award for 2012.

The GPRC Students' Association created a new *Award of Recognition* in 2012 to recognize members of support staff who "go above and beyond what is required in their jobs, to help us succeed, and therefore help serve the students in general." The first ever recipient of the new award was **Phil Gorman**, office and classroom support technician in Information Technology.

Heartfelt accounts, written by students, support the annual nominations for the

*Excellence in Teaching Award*, and are an indication of the impact an excellent instructor can truly have to a student's post-secondary experience. **Susan Beaumont**, Academic Upgrading instructor, was the 2012 recipient of this Students' Association award.

The annual GPRC Employee Recognition event included presentation of the *Distinguished Employee 2012* awards to Librarian **Jennifer Thomas** and Animal Health administrative support **Lenora (Lin) Roy**, based upon nominations from colleagues and final assessment by a selection committee of College executive members.

The Grande Prairie & District Chamber of Commerce celebrated some outstanding accomplishments of their more than 1150 members at the Canadian Tire Chamber Ball held February 2, 2013. Gordon & Carol McLevin of Cardon Homes accepted the *Dan H. Minchin Award*, in recognition of their longstanding support of the Chamber and the community. **Carol McLevin** serves GPRC as a current director on the GPRC Alumni/Foundation and Gord and Carol are members of the GPRC President's Council through their Planned Gift to the College. Past Chair for the GPRC Board of Governors **Cyril Gurevitch** was recognized with the *Business Citizen of the Year Award* and past Board of Governors Chair **Michael O'Connor** was recognized with the *Above and Beyond Award*.

## ACADEMIC CREDENTIALS

**Carolyn Vasileiou**, instructor and coordinator of the Hospitality and Tourism program at GPRC, has fulfilled all the requirements of the Master of Arts in Leadership program at Royal Roads University.

**Sheryl Heikel** has fulfilled all the requirements of the Graduate Diploma in Instructional Design (GDID) through Athabasca University. Heikel is an instructor in the Academic Upgrading department at GPRC.

**Matthew Bain** has received his Master of Sport-Exercise Psychology from Argosy University.

## APPOINTMENTS

**Dr. René R. Gadacz** (Arts & Education, Sociology) has been appointed to the executive board of the Canadian Ethnic Studies Association (U of Calgary) where he will serve a two year term as member-at-large. He will also assume duties as a member of the editorial board of the Canadian Ethnic Studies Journal, published out of the U of Manitoba.

**Susan Bansgrove**, VP Academics and Research, has been appointed Vice-Chair of the Council of Senior Academic Officers, Alberta Association of Colleges and Technical Institutes.

**Laurie Sutherland**, VP Administration, has been appointed Vice-Chair of the Council of Senior Business Officers, Alberta Association of Colleges and Technical Institutes.

## ATHLETIC ACHIEVEMENT

Student athlete **Katie Spaidal**, Wolves Women's Soccer, was named a CCAA All Canadian at the CCAA Awards Banquet held in conjunction with the CCAA Women's Soccer Nationals. This prestigious award adds to an illustrious athletic career for Katie. She has been named to 4 ACAC All Conference teams – a GPRC record, won a number of ACAC and CCAA Academic awards, ACAC Athlete of the Week awards and has been selected as the GPRC Female Athlete of the Year. She is in the Teacher Education North Program, works full time with the GP Soccer Association, plays hockey and indoor soccer. And she was part of the GPRC Wolves Women's Cross Country Running team that won the ACAC Silver medal at the Conference Championships.

**Wolves Women's Curling** team won their second consecutive Conference Championship defeating NAIT 8-2 in the Gold Medal game, and went on to achieve Silver at the CCAA National Invitational in March in Ontario. Congratulations to Coach Caryl Sallows and all the members of the Wolves Curling Program.

GPRC congratulates Alumna **Heather Nedohin** who placed Third in the 2012 World Women's Curling Championships.

**Jason Haldane** and the Funk Family siblings were inducted into the Wolves Wall of Fame in October 2012. Jason Haldane played GPRC Wolves Volleyball from 1990-1992 and has not quit playing since. He was part of Canada's National Team Program from 1992-2004. Recently Haldane participated in the 2012 London Olympics as a member of Team Great Britain, and continues his pro career today. **The Funk Family siblings** –

**Tanya, Rick, Brad and Bryan** all played volleyball for GPRC. Starting with Bryan in 1991 and finishing with Rick in 2001, they have amassed quite a record. Together they have acquired seven ACAC All Conference selections and one CCAA All Canadian Award. The three brothers were all members of the 1999-2000 GPRC Wolves team which won the CCAA bronze medal here at home. The involvement did not stop with playing as they have coached and officiated, and are continuing to coach.

## RETIREMENTS

**Jackie Wilson** – Jackie worked started working at GPRC in 1982, shortly after moving to Grande Prairie from her "Bonnie Scotland" with her husband Stewart. She continues to be part of the College Community. Her husband Stewart and her two children Patrick and Kaitlin are all alumni of GPRC and Stewart is currently serving on the Board of Governors.

**Omana Pillay** – Omana joined the Department of Science at GPRC in 1982 as a laboratory technologist in Chemistry. One of her favorite parts of her job was interacting with students who were new to chemistry courses and watching them go from being shy and afraid of the lab, to being bold and confident in their skills.

**Medha Karnik** - Medha came to GPRC in 1984 and worked as a Physics/Earth Science Lab Technologist in the Science Department. At that time, her husband Subhash was also working at GPRC as a Math Instructor in the Science Department.

**Dianne McDonald** - Dianne joined the Arts and Education Department at GPRC in September 1999. Over the years, Dianne was an active member on many College committees, and was also a keen volunteer in the community at large.

**Bert Reynolds** – Bert retired after 30 years as an instructor at GPRC Fairview, beginning in the Plumber/Steamfitter program, and later instructing in ESL, Small Powered Engine Mechanics, Welding and Turfgrass.

## PUBLISHED WORKS and EXHIBITIONS

The works of **Elisabeth Belliveau**, artist and GPRC instructor, were featured in the first show of the year at *aka gallery* in Saskatoon. The exhibition of new drawing writing and video work, titled "if found – return to me" was at the gallery January 11th to February 16th, 20 *Urban Vernacular*: Residency and Billboard Project Residency are projects of artist **Laura St. Pierre**, who is also a GPRC instructor, and are presented at *aka*

*gallery*, Saskatoon, for the month of March 2013. Her *Urban Vernacular Series* was also a feature exhibit at Gallery 44 in Toronto in March 2012



Fine Arts instructors **Elisabeth Belliveau** and **Laura St. Pierre** are both among the 36 artists from nine Alberta communities featured in the *2013 Alberta Biennial of Contemporary Art*, presented January 26-May 5, 2013 at the Art Gallery of Alberta.

The book "Translating Maya Hieroglyphs" written by **Scott A. J. Johnson**, who is an instructor at GPRC, is now available for pre-order on Amazon.com.

The novel "Whitetail Shooting Gallery" by **Annette LaPointe**, is now available on Amazon.ca. LaPointe, in addition to being an award-winning author and Giller Prize nominee, is an English instructor at GPRC.

An exhibition of the work of artist (and GPRC instructor) **Ken Housego** was hosted at the Creative Arts Centre in



Grande Prairie in February 2012. "Then and Now" contained nine new works and a sampling of works from his two-year traveling exhibition, "Dreams do not Come With Titles," which returned home in Fall 2011.

**Carmen Haakstad** and **Jim Stokes** presented a collection of works as the opening exhibit of the newly renovated Prairie Art Gallery – *Journey 2012*. The two artists planned this duo exhibition to relate their personal journeys in the 30 years of their friendship, and those of their homesteading ancestors, inspired by the Peace Country's bountiful prairie landscapes.



# At Work in our Community

## Grande Prairie Regional College Aims to Shoot Down Breast Cancer 2012-13 "Tough Guys Wear Pink"

By Chris Nichol

A broken ankle, a broken nose but no broken heart. Third year point guard and GPRC team captain Josh Nicol is a tough kid. In the opening game of the first season he suffered a minor ankle fracture but was back to play with a bone chip the following weekend. In the first game of the second semester an elbow to the face broke his nose, Josh stopped the bleeding and finished the game only to have it broken again the following weekend. However, it was the heart wrenching news this summer that his mother was diagnosed with breast cancer that truly had the potential to break his heart. But true to form, Josh stepped up and got back in the game.

The quiet, undisputed leader of the team chose to respond to the



news through positive action. Josh took it upon himself to organize a fundraising event called "Wolves Shoot Down Breast Cancer". Team members joined in by sporting pink laces, socks, bracelets and warm-up tops. The coaching staff, led by the author (Josh's father Chris,) had dressed with pink shirts, ties and ribbons throughout the season. Our

women's team opened in the pink warm-up tops while students from D Taylor School sewed pink ribbons on the uniforms.

The final cheque presentation took place this past weekend as the Wolves hosted Augustana who also chose to wear pink for the game in support of Josh's mom. Josh's initiative has raised over \$4000 for the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation.

Josh's mom has been a pillar of positivity throughout and her treatments and has felt the love and support of family and friends. Aum recently completed her treatments and is doing well. We intend to return to Tobago to complete our 25th anniversary trip that was cut short last summer.

*Tough Guys Wear Pink and Love Their Moms.*

The **GPRC Wolves Women's Volleyball Team** ran a very successful Dig Pink weekend in the fall to create awareness and raise money for Breast Cancer Research. They conducted some fund-raising activities during the weekend and were generated some contributions from businesses. The team made their contribution to the Canadian Cancer Society: the total amount raised was \$1319.00.

**Team GPRC** was part of the very successful Relay for Life 2012 in Grande Prairie, and honored to achieve Gold status with a total of \$12,815.56 toward our community's total of \$560,000 – an amount which was the highest in Alberta once again. "We have such an amazing community spirit in our little city!" says team captain Tanya Kinderwater. Team GPRC is already enthusiastically at work to beat their own record at the Relay for Life 2013.

The **GPRC United Way Team** raised a total of \$17,597.50 for the 2012 United Way Campaign. Individuals throughout the institution made donations through pledges as well as to the Bake Sale and the Silent Auction, United Way Breakfast and 50/50 ticket sales. The GPRC United Way Campaign Committee included John Agak, Natalie Amyotte, Sharron Barr, Dianne Bedford, Bonnie Braun, Shelly Brown, Maureen Clarke, Pete Dechant, Lori Fleming, Gaitane Gilje, Alan Iwaskow, Casandra Jordan, Marian Mark, Velda McKenzie-Diederich, Lisa Osterhold, Marian Pickup, Jean Reston, Kim Richardson, and Karen Workun. Former GPRC Board of Governors Chair, Mike O'Connor, is the Honorary Chair of the Grande Prairie and Area United Way Campaign Cabinet. Susan Bansgrove, VP Academics & Research, and Marg McCuaig-Boyd, VP Fairview Campus are also members of the Campaign.



### Marketing Students Give Back

Marketing Students Give Back The students of Cibylla Rakestraw's Marketing Strategies Class recently presented a cheque to the Swan City Rotary Club in the amount of \$9,235 in support of their educational and health projects in southern Ethiopia.

This amount represents half of the money raised through their annual class project - organizing and producing the popular Peace Country Idol competition. The other half of the funds raised will be used for the students to visit various businesses and organizations in San Francisco during reading week.



## IN CONVERSATION

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By Lynne Ness

**T**he atmosphere at *nine10* pulses with the positive energy of the partners and staff – and with the passion of potential. After all, that has been one of the key qualities behind what is becoming a notable go-forward team: passion. Or, as one partner puts it, “That passion to learn and to grow.”

There have been many parallels along the path to this partnership for GPRC alumni Cris Seppola and Richard Podsada. Both graduated from the Composite high school in Grande Prairie. Both were students at GPRC from 2000 to 2002. Both were employed by GPRC after graduation. Both loved working at the College, but felt a strong drive to start their own businesses. And both have the talent

# GPRC Alumni M

and energy to make a success of whatever they decide to tackle.

It was several years before those parallels began to converge. Cris, who completed a blended office administration/business administration diploma specializing in e-commerce and marketing, launched *nine10* in 2006. She and her first business partner started in a home basement, and began to develop a client base.

Richard meanwhile, with his Fine Arts diploma in Interactive Digital Design, had set up shop working from home as a freelance web developer (in the basement, of course!) and his client base included GPRC where he was contracted to redesign the website.

When a *nine10* client’s marketing needs included a website, Richard and Cris ended up working together. “We

did that, and a few other projects here and there, and learned that we worked well together. It seemed like a good fit; we decided to join forces,” Cris explains. *Nine10* acquired Dream Digital Ltd. and they have not looked back since.

“We have a very good partnership,” says Richard. “We started out with a lot of great ideas, and are just really on the same wavelength. My longtime dream was to own a business – a real bona fide business, not a sitting-in-the-basement-on-a-computer type of business – you know, staff, growth potential, that type of thing.”

“It is a big decision, coming out of a job you love, leaving the good salary and the benefits and the amazing people and the opportunities for education,” Cris adds. “It is a big leap





## Fresh, Energetic, and Talented: Make Successful Partners

of faith – in yourself! It is so interesting. You start doing something like this because you love it, and one day you wake up and Whoa! Wait, I own a business! And suddenly your job changes, your whole focus has to change, and instead of being the person who does all the technical work, suddenly you are contributing to other peoples' lives. There are so many people here who are depending on us to do a good job. So really, now I am working for my staff – I feel a massive responsibility – some days you wake up and you think wow, this is really hard...and then there are all these people in your life who are so important and there is just no way you would ever let them down. That's just one more reason to keep going, other than drive and success and all that."

The company is still building and expanding its team and defining its business model. They share space with Competitive Edge Business Solutions – another young company owned by GPRC alumna Emily Tarney. The relationship is deeper than just space: Competitive Edge provides the administration function for nine10 – everything from reception to payroll to financial development.

The two companies are committed to growing together, rather than apart – and they cannot help but be aware of their start together at GPRC. "Emily was Students' Association president when I was attending, and a good friend of mine," says Cris. "It is so interesting because all of the people we are close to now who are our business peers – they are all people we

met and worked with at GPRC."

"It is interesting how one institution puts you on a path, connections are made, and your future is affected," note Cris and Richard. "You don't really think about it at the time, but it is so evident now."

"Nikki Thompson, for example, our marketing coordinator," Richard points out. "She is a graduate of GPRC – tourism and marketing. She is one of the most creative people I've ever met - and really passionate too. I think that is a big thing in terms of bringing people on and building a team. I want people that...I guess I kind of want people who are a little like me. I mean, nobody paid me, nobody told me to sit for hours and hours to learn to design or do whatever – I just loved doing it. That passion to learn and to grow is

something I look for in people. "

The future just keeps getting more and more exciting at nine10. The recent merger with Go Social, Ryan Blais, is a development which Cris and Richard are proud to announce. "It is really fascinating because the whole social media marketing is something our company was missing – we knew a little, but Ryan is really, really brilliant," Cris says. "The transfer of knowledge between us already in just a couple of months has been enormous. We are all very focused on the same goal, which is a really great thing, because you can't run a company if everybody is all scattered. We are very fortunate to have this kind of partnership – he approached us in October, so this has



*We always have some sponsorship going on. In 2011 we implemented a program where we are always doing one major sponsorship project for an organization in the city at any given time.*



been very sudden, but we knew about each other and had worked together a little bit, so it was an easy decision."

"He is really good at business, a go-getter!" Richard adds.

"We do a lot of business development here for ourselves," they point out. "It is very important to set a goal and direction and then go for it. This is such a good partnership because we all want the same thing: the goal is definitely to be a well-recognized full-service marketing agency where we take all the types of media and put them together to provide the client with measurable results. And the beautiful thing about digital is we know exactly what the return on investment is. We can track what is working, what isn't. You can tweak it as you go. Really fascinating, a great flow."



*We are all very focused on the same goal, which is a really great thing, because you can't run a company if everybody is all scattered.*



For Richard, the development of the business is never very far from that of the community at large. "I always like to keep things as local as possible, sometimes it's not realistic or won't happen because you just can't find it here or whatever, but this is a growing, moving and shaking kind of town. A lot happening here – we have found some great employees – and partners! - here.

"I actually think giving back to the community is important, has always been important to us. We always have some sponsorship going on," Richard explains. "In 2011 we implemented a program where we are always doing one major sponsorship project for an organization in the city at any given time. We just finished one for Odyssey house – rebranded them, gave them a new website. They really needed it. We do some research to select the projects – look at the need and a variety of other factors. We want to give back. We did a poster recently for Big Brothers, Big Sisters. It has always been important to us to give back and help organizations grow – ultimately it makes the community better. It feels good. "

"I like contributing the economy, and being able to give jobs – whether its one or three or seven doesn't matter. I think that helps everyone in the community. As we grow and get more involved in the community, there is so much I am learning about what goes on here," Cris adds. "There is so much to learn about the business community, it is so supportive. At the end of the day, in our line of work, you are selling to other businesses. We are really

fortunate to have been able to start this business here in Grande Prairie, and really fortunate to have the support that we do. And it is fascinating that suddenly part of our job is to be a part of the community and make it better – a huge job, but also fun and interesting at the same time. Sometimes finding your voice is a little intimidating, but you just have to get out there and do it. "

"Someone posted on our facebook page – 'a young talented team'," Richards says. "It makes me think about our team, and the fact that I would always pick attitude over skills.

Somebody can know everything in the world but if they're just downright grumpy and mean to people or don't want to learn, or grow or adapt, they just wouldn't survive here, especially in this industry. You have to adapt, be flexible. We are constantly evolving. "

"We are well on the road to our goal," Cris says. "Getting our team together. The comments from our clients are sometimes surprising, and often gratifying. We hope people see us as the full-service agency we strive to be – and I think they do." The partners are already hinting at another announcement in the near future. Meanwhile they are concentrating on strengthening their market position, and refining their client base.

"I am always looking for a good fit, a good energy in the room, when meeting with a new client," Richard says. "That is the kind of relationship where those things matter – where positive ideas come out instead of sitting at the table challenging each other, you both look in the same direction at the goal. For us as an agency, our target is the larger clients – clients with the budgets and resources to get really creative. That's what we want to do – to create work, and get great results. You can't do that without budget and resources. Something I have learned especially in my transition from contractor working for myself to running a business, is that the word 'no' will get you much further in business than the word yes. A hard-won lesson over time, but I remember being a freelance contractor, you say yes to everything, take stuff on, and pretty soon you get bogged down and things start falling apart around you. You don't have focus, and you can't move ahead. The word 'no' is very useful – and honest."

For both Richard and Cris the



relationship with GPRC is ongoing – both as client and as alma mater. They are frequently asked to come speak to current students – to provide encouragement and motivation. They accept without hesitation.

“I love coming back and sharing with people what is possible, because 10 years ago there is no way I would have believed I could be doing what I am doing now,” says Cris. “GPRC kind of gave me that kickstart. I always wanted to go to College, but did not feel confident. Thoughts like ‘it’s kind of scary, I don’t know if I can get in, am I smart enough’ were enough to keep me from starting. I was working at GP Inn, with someone who also worked at the registrar’s office. He brought me an application, and made me fill it out. He was adamant, said you are doing this! That’s where it all started, and eventually I learned that I could do it, that it was okay for me to be there. If it hadn’t been for Tracy, I don’t think I would have gone. If I could talk to him now I would most certainly tell him that he did the right thing. It is interesting being in this position now, because I would certainly take that knowledge and apply it – I can entice other people like me to actually attend because I understand it can actually be terrifying. I was afraid. Plus, I can now tell them college life is awesome!”

“I am really grateful to the College – to my instructors, to fellow students, to everybody there for the opportunities I’ve been given,” Richard adds. “I gained so much through my education there, through working there, developing a network there – GPRC has had a huge impact on my life. I went there to get into 3D animation – then learned that what I was doing (website development) was what I actually liked. I tell students now that you can learn things about yourself at various stages along the way. It is okay to change your mind, to choose a new direction. The important thing is that you are able to say to yourself ‘this is what I want to do, what I want to do for other people’.”

“Running a business is fascinating. It is the hardest work!” says Cris. “But it is also the most rewarding, because you do it. Some days you wake up and you don’t want to do it, but you get through it, and then suddenly you can handle things that you never dreamed you would be able to. We are so fortunate!”



## Two GPRC Alumnae Admitted to Veterinary School – Direct from GPRC!

“Exams are never ending in vet school it seems,” according to Michelle Lange. Michelle is one of two GPRC students who were accepted direct into the prestigious School of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon. She and fellow GPRC alumna Jeleena Neufeld both achieved the highly unusual acceptance into the program after completing two years of undergraduate Science studies; the majority of students in their program have full B.Sc., multiple science-based degrees or even Masters degrees.

“The small class size and individual attention that instructors could provide was a huge benefit while at GPRC,” says Michelle. “In vet school, I am surrounded with students from a variety of educational backgrounds. Two years of undergraduate studies is the minimum to apply for vet school, however, being accepted with only two years is definitely not the norm. My quality education at GPRC has enabled me in many aspects to have the background needed to succeed while surrounded with such experience even though I only have two years of undergraduate studies. Michelle is in her first year of the

Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, with plans to practice as a vet in a mixed animal practice and return to the Peace Region. “Also, I’d like to become actively involved with Vets Without Borders and facilitate spay/neuter programs in developing countries,” Michelle adds. “I have a passion for animal welfare - pet overpopulation is a key component of many of the challenges and issues animals face today.”

As a mature student who had attended other post secondary institutions in former years, Michelle says she found GPRC very accommodating while providing a solid education. “As I was almost twice the age as the average student, I naturally had some concerns about how I would fit into the classroom dynamics and adjust to life once again in school while trying to gain acceptance into a highly competitive program like vet med. However, the instructors were wonderful! They recognized many of the challenges I faced and helped guide me through the initial stages of my readjustment until I had my bearings once again. Without that extra effort on their part, I’m not sure if I would have been able to move forward and succeed as I did.”

# ALUMNI UPDATES

## 1971-1972

### Sharon (Wald) Stanich Bachelor of Arts

After completing two years at GPRC, I attended Mount Royal College in Calgary and took Interior Design for one year. I came back to Grande Prairie the next year because my boyfriend/fiancee/husband (whom I met while I was at GPRC) was back here. I became a floral designer here and worked for Campbell's Flowers, Roses Flowers and Flowers by Tracy Belle. I also had my own home-based flower business for several years. I started working for Carlton Cards in 1985 and am still merchandising for them today. I also do merchandising for a company called Powerhouse. Harvey and I were married in 1975 and we have one 19 year old daughter, Robin, who took the Unit Clerk program at GPRC in the Fall of 2011. I chose to attend GPRC because it was close to my home town of Fairview, AB. I thoroughly enjoyed my college experience. Some of my favourite professors were Bibi Laurie, Irene Hutton and Paul Lemay.

## 1979-1981

### Barbara (Bain) Veldhuis Pre-Law / Commerce

I served as a Provincial Court Judge, Calgary Criminal Division from June 2007 to June 2011. I was then elevated to the Court of Queen's Bench of Alberta in Calgary on June 24, 2011. I am a cutting-horse enthusiast and have competed in major competitions in Calgary, Oklahoma, and Texas.

## 1984-1986

### Brent Lanti Computer Systems Technology & Electronics Engineering Involved with Wolves: 1984 -Wolves Mascot)

I've been working for Shaw Cable Systems since 1988. I currently live in Vegreville, AB and have been married for 17 1/2 years and have three children. My favourite memory of GPRC was meeting so many great people. I loved being the mascot for the basketball games even if it was for a short time - got to hang with fellow computer nerds, and with the jocks with their bizarre handshakes and

greetings. I also spent some time with the break dancers...lots of great memories. Is the campus paper still called the "Grapevine"? There was a Name-the-Paper contest and they picked mine as the winner WOW what a legacy eh?

## 1996-1998

### Jennifer (McDonald) Keay Bachelor of Education Transfer Program

#### Involved with Wolves: 1996-1998

I am currently a high school Social Studies teacher at Hilltop High School in Whitecourt, AB and keep in close touch with my BFF from GPRC - Joe Bissell. If it wasn't for Joe (who was my roommate 1997-98) I would never have become involved in the Wolves Swim Team or Drama Productions - in particular Alice in Wonderland. My favourite memories of GPRC revolve around the drama program - particularly with Roxanne, Dick & Rob (the Tech. Instructor). Being the stage manager for Alice was incredible and ignited a love for theatre in me that I cannot extinguish!

## Jason Simigan

Jason attended GPRC in 2007 as a University Transfer student in Engineering. He went on to the University of Alberta and in 2011 he obtained his degree in Electrical



Engineering with a focus in Nano Engineering. Jason returned to Grande Prairie after graduation and works with Aztec Engineering as an Engineer in Training (EIT) where he provides project management in the area of pipeline design and licensing. Jason says GPRC provided him with a smooth transition into the demanding engineering program; the smaller class sizes and personable instructors helped him adjust to the heavy workload required. Jason enjoys the field of engineering because of the continuous learning environment it provides. You may recognize Jason because his photo was (and still is) emblazoned on the GPRC bus wrap.

## Doris (Labrecque) Landry

Doris was raised in Falher, Alberta and attended both Fairview College (1982 - Secretarial Certificate) and Grande Prairie Regional College (1986-88 - University Transfer, Education). Doris met husband Marc Landry at GPRC who was studying music and science. They were both active on student council where Doris was VP Student Activities. "I loved my time on council. I learned about politics on a small scale and gave back to the College Community", said Doris. "I was also involved with the College newspaper - The Tapestry - where I did proofreading and wrote an advice column called Ask Rita. "And for a time Doris performed a one-act comedy show called Rita Rae at the on campus pub nights. "I have nothing but good memories of GPRC - I loved my instructors and the small classes. Any bad experience was easily resolved."



Doris has a keen interest in education and youth oriented activities and has been involved as a volunteer in a variety of community organizations since her teen years. Fully bilingual, Doris is

presently employed at Ecole St. Gerard in Grande Prairie where she has the opportunity to use her organizational skills and interact with youth in an educational setting. She is a past recipient of the Swan City Rotary Club Excellence in Education - Service above Self Award.

Doris served as volunteer, as well as Assistant to the General Manager and President for the 2010 Arctic Winter Games Host Society. Doris believes strongly in the philosophy and values of the Arctic Winter Games, specifically that they provide opportunities for Northern Youth to travel and interact with their peers culturally and athletically in a safe fair arena. Her knowledge and hands on experience with the Grande Prairie 2010 Host Organization were recognized and in 2012 Doris was appointed to represent Alberta as a director for the Arctic Winter Games International Committee. "I am honoured to be a part of the Arctic Winter Games because they are so youth and Northern-centered. They are so much more than a sporting competition," said Doris, "the cultural component of these games is an opportunity for all participants, whether you are an athlete, a performer, coach, or mission staff to share your own culture while being exposed to those of others."



**1999-2002**

**Emily (Tarney) Thiessen  
Business Administration**

I currently work in the Business Development 2area of Competitive Edge Business Solutions Inc. "My time at GPRC created some of the fondest memories of my life. Thank you GPRC!"

**2000-2006**

**Cris Seppola  
Office  
Administration  
and Business  
Administration**

After graduation in 2002, I got a job at GPRC in the Workforce Development (now Continuing Education) department. While employed at GPRC, I also took classes. After four years of learning and development, I founded nine10 Incorporated. What started as a design agency has now developed into a full-service marketing agency. This industry is always moving and shaking! After seven years of running this



business, I've learned so much; thanks to GPRC, I had an excellent foundation to help me get started. I don't think there's only one favourite memory about GPRC that I could mention; it was the whole experience that was amazing. Caring instructors, interesting classes, life-long friends, and an instilled desire to keep learning are the things that make GPRC great!

**2000-2002**

**Richard D.  
Podsada  
Fine Arts –  
Interactive  
Digital Design  
Major**

Owner/Managing Partner of nine10 Incorporated - a full-service marketing agency in Grande Prairie, AB. My favourite memory of GPRC: Meeting a good friend by going to the same wrong classroom on the first day of school.



**2004-2007**

**Michelle (Davis) Pimm  
Teacher Assistant (Disability &  
Community Support Specialization)**

I got married in 2007 and have been working in the disability field at various agencies in Grande Prairie for six years now. I have been a front line worker and I am currently a Planning Facilitator for Rehoboth Christian Ministries.

**2010-2012**

**Michelle Lange  
Bachelor of  
Science**

I am currently enrolled in the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine program at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine in Saskatoon, SK.



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*Nominations welcome for our annual Alumni Awards.*

**Alumni Award of Excellence**

This award is intended to recognize specific, recent accomplishments of GPRC alumni. The accomplishments may include such things as local, national or international honors, major championships, appointments to high office. This award will be offered when appropriate candidates are nominated, not necessarily each year.

**Steps to the Greater Award**

New in 2013! This award recognizes the outstanding achievements of GPRC alumni early in their careers or community service (within 12 years of receiving a GPRC credential).

**Distinguished Alumni Award**

The most prestigious award of the GPRC Alumni/Foundation, this award was established to recognize GPRC alumni for outstanding accomplishments in their professions, and/or in service to their community, society or GPRC. The Distinguished Alumni is an example of alumni success for current and future GPRC students.

Members of the public and the College community are invited to submit nominations for these awards.

**Go to [gprc.ab.ca/alumni](http://gprc.ab.ca/alumni)**

Download the nomination form and submit before December 31 each year.

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