

# BEST FEATURE STORY

A Gift of Tobacco by Jesse Staniforth could be in any of the finishing positions as well, but there are only three top awards. So: Honourable Mention to Jesse. There were a lot of entries. Perhaps half were especially strong and among them a number gave ample reason for pride among their publishers. Those glowing spots in a landscape of 39 articles were a joy to examine and a challenge to judge. One expects from Quebec to find a great, deep pool of literary excellence. In so many of the other cases one would wonder why a story was entered at all. Perhaps it was internal politics, perhaps it was just to participate in QCNA. That latter reason is a meritorious one, even when tough on a judge. Participation in our Associations is as vital to the health of our industry and our individual publications as they are in providing for our collective needs and ambitions.

## CORY WILSON

### The Equity

This very contemporary story is overwhelming on several fronts and thus it stands above even the fine writing and journalism in a dozen other entries. There but for the grace of God, as you perceive God to be, is any one of us. The machinations of state and commerce are stripped naked and the result is a citizen tormented in a score or more manners. Kafkaesque Quebec.

## LISA GREGOIRE

### Nunatsiq News

Sensitive examination of the horrors our dominant culture has dumped upon the under-races, resulting in lives that are mottled with hurt and despair, in an anti-Santa background of the coming Christmas.

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**Treatment residents hopeful, wary, about the holidays**  
"The depth of trauma among Inuit is breathtaking"

**LISA GREGOIRE**  
OTTAWA — Nine men and two women, ranging in age from mid-20s to over 50, sit in a circle in an Ottawa basement surrounded by home-made posters about anger, depression, anxiety, alcoholism, child sexual abuse and guilt. They are talking about forgiveness.  
"I think it's a very important part of my recovery. As long as I don't let things go, I will have resentments. Therefore, I learn how to forgive myself," says one woman.  
"It's so complicated," she goes on. "I didn't see that I was hurt. I thought it was my fault... I have childhood trauma but I have to take care of myself."  
Another man, a little older, is less generous. "I'm having a hard time forgiving some stuff right now. It makes me really angry," he says. Tears fall down his face and a younger man hands him a box of tissues.  
"I have three cousins dead, brothers dead, because they were physically and sexually abused. I tried to forgive those people who did that but it's so hard... I thought sexual abuse was part of life. It's not part of life."  
These men and women are taking part in group therapy in their final week of residential addiction and trauma treatment at the Mamiarvik centre in Ottawa, one of only two Inuit-specific treatment centres in Canada. The only other centre is a small one in Kujuaq called Inuait.  
Some 500 Inuit have undergone treatment here in the 10 years since Mamiarvik began operating under the umbrella of Tunguvuvinngat Inuit, the Ottawa-based service organization for Inuit. While the centre does address addiction, it is more focused on treating trauma and other root causes of addiction.  
But the centre will undergo a massive restructuring in 2014 now that the federal government has discontinued the Aboriginal Healing Foundation fund which gave the centre \$806,000 annually — about half their budget.  
Ben Bridgstock, the centre's new director and former head of a Salvation Army addiction program in Ottawa, said Mamiarvik isn't the only organization suffering under the loss of AHF funding.  
Counsellor Natasha Aaluk, who is helping to lead the sessions, says clients must have a plan in place, so they're not caught unprepared when anxiety, fear, panic or anger overtake them after they leave Mamiarvik. "This is something I learned from Rick," says one man, referring to counsellor Rick Mayoh. "One thing you can't take away from me is how I react to what you do to me. I can choose to believe and act the way I choose. No one can make me feel a certain way."  
Mayoh, who is in the room, whispers a victorious, "Yes," pleased that his teachings are getting through.  
Mayoh, who started working at Mamiarvik in 2004, is very discouraged by the collapse in federal funding. "I just go over it and over it in my head. This is one of the brightest jewels in the Inuit world, in a barren landscape of resources. How can they let this happen?" Mayoh asks.  
The timing is particularly bad given the latest revelations in the trial of disgraced priest Eric DeJaeger, convicted of the sexual abuse of children in Baker Lake and facing dozens of new charges from his time in Igloolik about 30 years ago.  
Bridgstock said studies show the average sexual predator has 200 victims. Those victims learn inappropriate sexual behaviour and often victimize others to the point where the abuse becomes widespread within a small population.  
"So there's a massive need for treatment, to break that cycle and that repetition of abuse and re-victimization," Bridgstock said.  
From what Mayoh has seen over the past decade, he agrees. "The depth of trauma among Inuit is breathtaking," he said.  
They come with tremulous courage and trust and they say, "Help me." One reason it works is because this is a safe place," he says, gesturing to walls covered with Inuit art and Inuktitut chatter from the kitchen. "They can say, 'I'm safe here. I can take a risk and I'll be OK."  
Mamiarvik is a crucial training ground for Inuit social workers and counsellors, he added, but there are other unique aspects to Mamiarvik as well.  
The centre holds daily co-ed group therapy sessions a variety in counselling circles that perhaps reflects the need Inuit feel to stick together and support each other, Mayoh said.  
Colleen Ulayuruluk and Danny Napachee in the Mamiarvik kitchen. It was Napachee's turn to clean up after lunch Dec. 6. Residents who are physically able share cleaning duties throughout the week and cooking duties as well on the weekend, when there is no staff cook. (PHOTOS BY LISA GREGOIRE)

## ERNEST WEBB

### the Nation

Well-covered story of a cultural event/statement as an Indigenous people recall and assert their standing in Canada.

### Honourable Mention:

## JESSE STANIFORTH, the Nation

Judge: Frank Touby, Editor & Associate Publisher, The Bulletin, Toronto, ON • Number of entries in the Best Feature Story category: 39

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**THE EQUITY**  
Volume 120, Issue No. 20  
The voice of the Pontiac since 1883  
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**The spirit of Christmas in Chapeau**  
NOT ASKING FOR MUCH ...

**JUST A LITTLE HELP**

**Innovative building in Pontiac**

**About \$500 worth of food stolen from Quyon Food Bank**

**feature**  
Nadia Poucachiche with friend  
Philip Rupert of Chassabi with David Kawapit, from the original seven

**his epic journey**  
Hundreds of determined youth walkers make history and spread a message  
Story and photos by Ernest Webb

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