



Winter 2010

explorer

Leonard Adam & Sons: A New Take on a Family Business

As a child growing up on the trapline, Leonard Adam remembers visits to Fond du Lac as hugely exciting events. When he was about 13, he moved into town. That's when he first got interested in music. "My extended family, aunts and uncles, were all musical. I learned my first two guitar chords from a cousin," he says. "They'd never seen anyone pick it up so quickly."

By 15, Leonard was playing in an old-time fiddle band with his uncles and cousins; by 17, he was playing electric guitar in a country band at weddings, dances and parties. His life took a new direction when an Elder asked him why he didn't write songs in his own language.

"That really inspired me. I knew nobody had written songs in Dené before. Some of my family lived to be over 100 years old, and they had seen many different worlds. There was so much history - growing up on the land, living in isolation, losing our traditions. I thought, 'wow'. That's inspired the song 'Relatives'. It's about who we are and where we come from, and showing ourselves to the rest of Canada."

'Relatives' became one of the most popular tracks on Leonard's first CD, *Spirit Flies*. The album was released in

1999 by Turtle Island Music. Since then, Leonard has played gigs across the province and around the north. But family comes first and he spends most of his time with his wife Dorothy and their four children: Shannon (19), Len (17), Dakota (15) and Dené (10).

Dené showed interest in music at a young age. "He was just this little guy, but he kept saying, 'let's play together, dad.' One day, I got out an old drum set and he started to follow along while I played guitar. It just came out so naturally for him," Leonard says. "It blew me away." Dené blew everyone away when the 4-year-old got behind the drums and backed up his dad at a wedding gig.

Meanwhile, son Len was secretly practising the base guitar. "About three years ago, I was phoning around trying to find a base player for a gig. I couldn't find anyone. My son was listening and said, 'how many songs do you need to know?' Well, he played that night and didn't miss a note."

Leonard has been playing with his sons ever since, and Leonard and Sons is working on a new album. His other two kids are not on stage, but they are big supporters. Dakota is more interested in computers, and has helped get the band on Facebook. Songs can also be downloaded on Amazon.com and iTunes.

This past December, Leonard and Sons performed in Prince Albert at the premiere showing of *Where the Spirit Flies*, an 18-minute video that highlights the growing opportunities in the Athabasca Basin. Leonard provided the soundtrack as well as narration for the video. "The best part was seeing the video at a gathering in Fond du Lac," he says. "It was the first time I'd ever seen it, and when the music came on I thought, 'wow, that's my song.'"

Watch *Where the Spirit Flies* on the ABDLP website at www.athabascabasin.ca. For more information on Leonard Adam, upcoming performances and CD information, please contact us at newsletter@athabascabasin.ca.



www.athabascabasin.ca

Message from the Chairman

There is a time for achieving and also a time to stand back and assess our achievements. One cannot help but admire the success that we have had in the short time ABDLP has existed. Our companies have achieved national recognition in the prospecting and mining industry as well as awards for business excellence. We continue to be a major employer for the Athabasca and we deliver quality to our customers.

Our philosophy of building capacity and achieving wealth for the Athabasca region is working. We strive to have top management in place and we believe in continued development of our employees.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all that are involved, from our customers to our management, staff and employees. Thank you to the institutions, Government, programs and people that believe in the Athabasca. Without all of you we would not be where we are today.

It is with this continued support and investment that we will see more success and achievement from our people. We have witnessed the talent of the Athabasca residents, and I know there are more superstars waiting to emerge.

Let's celebrate our success with pride and let's continue, each of us, to be our best.

Glen Strong
ABDLP, Chairman



Points North Celebrates 25th Anniversary

Points North Group of Companies celebrated its 25th anniversary at a Customer Appreciation Night in Saskatoon on December 1, 2009.

The evening featured plenty of stories about the "old days", but there was also an air of excitement about the company's new partners and new directions.

A month earlier, the Prince Albert First Nations Business Development Limited Partnership and Peter Ballantyne Developments Limited Partnership announced the purchase of ownership positions in the company. They join existing partners Athabasca Basin Development Limited Partnership and Grab Holdings.

"ABDLP became a significant owner in Points North in 2006 and the relationship has proved to be very rewarding," said Norm Eikel, one of the company's founding owners. "Now with increased First Nations ownership, we are even stronger and ready to take on new challenges in the growth of the business."

"We are pleased to expand the ownership to include more First Nation participation," said Geoff Gay, CEO of ABDLP. "First Nations understand the north and the tremendous economic opportunity it holds for the Athabasca region and the entire province."

The company has rebranded itself the Points North Group of

Companies to reflect its expanded services. It continues to operate out of Points North Landing, where it acts as a base camp for mining and exploration companies and as an expediting service for outfitting lodges and northern communities.

But there's much more to Points North. The company now has eight divisions: the original Freight Forwarding service plus Trucking, Bulk Fuels, Repair Services, Equipment Services, Camp Services, Lumber and Homes.

"Housing and lumber are the two newest divisions, and both are a good fit for us. There's a need for housing in the north," says Mark Eikel, Points North president. "We manufacture ready to move (RTM) homes to high standards onsite at Points North Landing and then deliver them to the final location. It not only meets a need, it is a good way to offer training opportunities for Northerners in the trades."

Mark is part of the second generation of Eikels to be involved in the company. Points North was established in 1984 by his father and uncles: Andy, George and Norm. Mark has worked at Points North most of his life, starting as a labourer and working his way up to pilot and then to management. He took over as president when George retired last year, and he's upbeat about the company's future.



It's All About Teamwork

An interview with Angie Whitedeer, Points Athabasca Contracting



Since its inception in 1999, Points Athabasca Contracting has engaged the people and businesses of the Athabasca in building capacity and regional prosperity. It is a company where people come first, and that is evident in employees like Angie Whitedeer.

Angie is a carpenter with Points Athabasca. She was hired after

(It's All About Teamwork continued)

taking a trades course in carpentry, and she's currently working on projects at Cameco's Rabbit Lake Mine. It can be physically heavy work and she is outdoors a lot of the time, but Angie likes the work and she enjoys the sense of teamwork. "We work as a family, we look out for each other," she says.

Home for Angie is Fond du Lac. It's a 45-minute commute by air, depending on whether the plane is making any other pick-ups or drop-offs. That's not too bad when you consider the traffic jams in cities like Saskatoon and Regina. And home is definitely where Angie's heart is.

She enjoys spending time with her 16-year-old son, as well as friends and family in the community. In the winter, snowmobiling ranks high on her list of things to do. After our interview, she was planning to head outside to machine through the fresh powder left behind by a January blizzard. When spring comes and the snow melts, she'll park the snowmobile and head outside on an all terrain vehicle. For Angie, easy access to the outdoors is one of benefits of living and working in the north.

Keeping the Supply Lines Open

An interview with Lawrence Bueckert, Athabasca Basin Road Services



Lawrence Bueckert has been with Athabasca Basin Road Services since 2005. He works with local contractors to coordinate the annual maintenance of three key roads. There's the Athabasca Seasonal Road from Points North to Stony Rapids/Black Lake, the overland/ice road from Stony Rapids to Fond du Lac and the temporary ice road from Fond du Lac to Uranium City.

The 185-km long Athabasca Seasonal Road needs a snow pack to provide a good driving surface, and work usually begins in mid-October. Depending on weather conditions, the road stays open until the end of March. The 51-km Stony Rapids to Fond du Lac road follows the south shore of Lake Athabasca before it starts onto the ice at Shasko Bay. It is open from late January to the end of March. The 90-km Fond du Lac to Uranium City road is only open for about two weeks, usually starting in

late February or early March. Even though it only operates for a short time, it is a critical road.

"The seasonal road and ice roads are essential for the north," Bueckert says. "Residents rely on the roads for supplies. Uranium City is completely dependent on the ice road for its fuel supply. The roads are the only way to get to these northern communities, other than flying in or travelling by river barge in the summer. Winter is when residents can get in their trucks and head south for supplies."

Maintenance continues throughout the season, mostly blading to keep the roads clear. The Stony Rapids to Fond du Lac road is about 150 feet wide (about 12 lanes), so you wouldn't think drifting snow would be a problem. Wrong. "An open lake is just the same as open prairie," Bueckert says. "We use the same kind of equipment you see on the highways - except for the flotation device on the back. It's mostly blading to keep the routes clear."

When he's not keeping winter roads open, Bueckert is coordinating maintenance on Highway 905 up to Stony Rapids. Home is Brabant Lake, about 175 km north of La Ronge.

Message from the CEO

Ever since I was introduced to the Athabasca region over a decade ago, I have been amazed at the promise and talent the residents of the region possess. This issue of the ABDLP Explorer highlights Leonard Adam, a very talented Athabasca musician. He also recently played the role of narrator in the regional video, *Where the Spirit Flies*.

In December a gathering was held in Prince Albert to showcase the video, and it was followed by a few songs performed by Leonard Adam and Sons. Leonard and his family are truly talented musicians and I must make mention of Leonard's drummer, Dené, who is only 10 years old and has no formal training. In addition to musical talent there are many great Athabasca artists and craft makers, and given the right access it is a potential long-term industry for the region. I am a firm believer that the Athabasca region's economy will continue to grow if access is the focus - access to the same services, knowledge, infrastructure, programs and facilities as the rest of Saskatchewan. There are many great initiatives underway to improve access in the Athabasca and there is a solid long-term return for the region, government and industry. Let's get the Athabasca region their access so they can unleash their full potential.

Geoff Gay
ABDLP CEO



Team Drilling Receives ABEX

Team Drilling LP was the proud recipient of the 2009 ABEX award - New Venture, in a ceremony held by the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce on October 24, 2009.

The New Venture award category is presented to a new business venture which has been in existence for 3 years or less and which has shown positive performance in terms of current or expected profitability, job creation and/or entry into new markets.

"As a start up company with one year of operation under our belts, we at TEAM Drilling are most honored to have received the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce 2009 New Venture ABEX award." Says Bob Fleming, President and General Manager of Team Drilling.

"Our success over the last year has truly been a TEAM effort, and there are many to thank. Our people in the field and support staff must be highlighted, as their quality of work and loyalty to our mission statement have greatly contributed to our recognition. Special thanks is also given to our First Nations partnerships within the Athabasca Basin Development LP group of companies, for their continued support and shared belief that Saskatchewan is the place to be for business, as well as the place to call home" continues Fleming.

Building Pride

Wollaston Road Appreciation Dinner

On December 9, 2009 Points Athabasca Contracting held a special appreciation dinner for trainees involved in construction of the first 10 kilometres of the Wollaston Lake all-season road. The dinner was a fun way to thank everyone who worked on the road and to celebrate the success of the individual trainees.

"The appreciation night was a great time of team building and reflecting on the meaning of our work. It was impressive to see everyone together in one room...it really put into context how many people worked on the building of the road," said Points Athabasca manager Brad Darbyshire.

Geoff Gay, CEO of ABDLP, agrees. "Points Athabasca's mandate was to involve as many local residents as possible on the project. It was overwhelming

to see that many people on the job from the community. When they read out every name of the Wollaston residents who worked on the project, you could see the pride as they received their plaque and posed for pictures."

The road construction involved 38 employees, including 30 from Wollaston Lake and three from other northern communities. It helped show the important contributions Points Athabasca is making in building capacity and regional prosperity. Other guests in attendance included representatives from industry, community leadership and the provincial Ministry of Highways.



Positive Response to Dené Safety Orientation Video

Imagine it's your first day on the job with Points Athabasca Contracting Limited Partnership. When you arrive, they sit you down to watch a 25-minute video on safety. This is important stuff, so you really pay attention. There's only one problem - you speak Dené, the video speaks English.

"We wanted to give the same safety education to every worker at every location, and the Dené Safety Orientation Video lets us do that," says Doug Buzowsky of Graham Construction. With Graham Construction being a part owner of the company, Points Athabasca orientates their employees on safety using Graham's training program. "New workers can now watch a video that is speaking directly to them. That's important, because the more a worker understands about safety, the safer they'll work."

The video is getting a positive response from new workers and from Athabasca communities. It is narrated by Freddie Throassie, an Athabasca Dené who is a well-known and highly respected community leader.

"It's important to give workers in the north training in their own language," Buzowsky says. "The Dené Safety Orientation Video is also a way for us to show that we're committed to northern communities. We want to be a good partner."

Points Athabasca Contracting plans to translate other safety material to Dené, as well as several other languages in the future.

Checking Out Young Talent *Athabasca Post-Secondary Student Dinners*

Last fall, the Athabasca Basin Development Limited Partnership invited post-secondary students from the region to join them for dinner receptions held in Saskatoon and Prince Albert. "The dinners were an opportunity for us to get to know the Athabasca students studying in the Saskatoon and Prince Albert areas," says Darryl Kotyk, Marketing and Communications for ABDLP. "We got a chance to meet up-and-coming talent and to celebrate the success of these students in furthering their education."

For a list of ABDLP's corporate social responsibility please visit www.athabascabasin.ca.

 Watch for our next newsletter - September, 2010.

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