

In Brief...

- The Quebec environmental assessment agency reported in January that 19 **shale gas fracturing, or "fracking,"** wells in the province are leaking natural gas. The province of Quebec is currently considering banning natural gas development.
- **Friends of Rockwood Park** are condemning municipal re-zoning plans by Saint John City Council that would allow a housing development and include a toxic waste dump inside the park.
- **Mass protests in Tunisia** resulting in the ouster of President Zine El Abedine Ben Ali have inspired similar uprisings in several Middle East countries including Egypt, Yemen, and Jordan. Protesters have decried food shortages and mass unemployment. They are demanding democracy and an end to government corruption. About 50 people in Moncton, including students from Tunisia and local supporters, rallied on Jan. 15th to mourn those killed in the protests and to celebrate steps towards democracy.
- Sandra Finley, former leader of the Saskatchewan Green Party, was found **guilty of not filling out the census.** Finley did not fill out the census in protest of arms manufacturer Lockheed-Martin being contracted by the Canadian government to complete the 2006 long-form census. The Judge gave Finley an absolute discharge, which means that Finley is free to go and she will not have a criminal record. Finley is considering appealing the guilty verdict.
- **Target purchased Zellers** from the Hudson Bay Company for \$1.83 billion. Target will take over up to 220 Zellers stores in Canada. Iain MacKenzie writes in The Canadian that, "Target is so anti-labour than even Wal-mart criticizes them. Canada's corporate media applauds the Target take-over of Zellers stores. However, Zellers employees can look forward to an end to any wage benefits, and other rights, they now enjoy as unionized employees under Canadian labour codes."
- More than 100 supporters of **detained high school student Daniel Garcia** gathered in downtown Toronto on New Year's Eve to demand that the Canadian government not deport Garcia. At 8:30 am on January 1, Garcia was forcibly boarded onto a plane back to his home country of Mexico, where he and his sister face ongoing homophobic threats and violence.
- A year after the **earthquake in Haiti**, Canadian public sector unions announced in January that they will provide financial and technical assistance to rebuild the headquarters of Haitian labour organization, the Confédération des travailleurs et des travailleuses des secteurs public et privé (Confederation of Private and Public Sector Workers), in Port-au-Prince.
- A federal court upheld a **security certificate against refugee Mohamed Harkat** on Dec. 9th, allowing for his possible deportation to Algeria. The Canadian government believes Harkat poses a threat to Canadian national security. Harkat, who came to Canada in 1995 after fleeing Algeria as a political dissident, says he faces torture or death if returned. The campaign to support Harkat demands that all security certificates be removed, and, if any case against them actually exists, that they be allowed to defend themselves in fair trials with full disclosure of the case against them, and that Harkat not be deported.
- **US drone strikes** killed 2,043 people in Pakistan in the last five years, with 2010 being the deadliest, according to an annual report by the Conflict Monitoring Centre.
- Reports of **mass deaths of wildlife** all over the world continue. Birds, fish, and now crabs have been dying en masse in Arkansas, Louisiana, Brazil, New Zealand, Italy, England and several other places.

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Christmas Mountains (cont'd)

Since the mountains are public land, New Brunswickers felt they had a fighting chance to save the area from clearcutting. Two dozen environmental groups in the province petitioned the province to implement a 15-year moratorium on logging and road building in the Christmas Mountains but they were unsuccessful. The Frank McKenna government, with Allan Graham, as Natural Resources Minister, broke its 1995 pre-election promise to protect the Christmas Mountains and signed away the forest to Repap.

David Coon, executive director of the Conservation Council recalls how the government broke the news on the fate of the Christmas Mountains. "The government hoodwinked the press and played us. They invited all of us to the news conference where the Minister announced his so-called compromise, which was really no protection of the Christmas Mountains. Instead, we got two small ecological reserves and a 'conservation area' established well outside the region."

Repap began building logging roads and started clearcutting over the next several years. The wood fed their Miramichi pulp and paper mills. In November of 1994, while men harvested wood in the Christmas Mountains, a wind storm ripped through the area, knocking down trees, which amounted to a million cords of wood being tossed on the ground. It was estimated that the wood kept the Miramichi mills going for about two years. Coon argued that clearcutting would only make the effects of wind storms worse but his advice was not heeded, and the clearcutting continued after the wood was salvaged from the wind storm.

Hank Bear, a Tobique resident living downstream from the cutting, publicly decried the impact of cutting the Christmas Mountains. He said the cutting affected the local fishery, increased floods and lowered the water table.

When UPM-Kymmene from Finland bought Repap in the year 2000, they continued harvesting wood from the area. By that time, the Christmas Mountains old growth forest was largely gone. Fornebu Lumber, a subsidiary of UMOE Solar from Norway, has taken over UPM's license and has been harvesting wood from the area since 2009. The company was recently clearcutting an area near North Pole Stream.

Matt Sheridan-Jonah, originally from Bathurst with roots in Sackville, worked with the Friends of the Christmas



Matt Sheridan-Jonah (second from the right) and members of the Friends of the Christmas Mountains celebrate their winning of the Conservation Council's 1996 Milton F. Gregg Award that recognized their efforts to protect the forests of the Christmas Mountains. Photo: CCNB

Mountains while a student at Mount Allison University. In December 1996, Sheridan-Jonah took a year off from university to work on the campaign to save the Christmas Mountains. Until recently, he was the Associate Registrar at Mount Allison University and is today the Executive Director of Appleby College in Oakville, Ontario. He is quoted in a 2001 Saltscapes article by Trudy Duivenvoorden Mitic saying that, "if the goal was to protect a large tract of continuous forest, the battle was lost. But if the wider goal was getting people to know about forests and Crown land and helping them realize that they are owners, then this struggle was successful, particularly in a province that has so much Crown land."

In 2008, the Shawn Graham government announced they would increase the area of protected areas, including national parks, to 3.29% (237,500 ha). Roberta Clowater with the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society points out that New Brunswick still has the lowest proportion of its public land in permanent protected areas of any jurisdiction in Canada.

Community Calendar

For details and updated event listings, visit nbmediacoop.org. To list your event or to receive the community calendar by email once per week, email: community@nbmediacoop.org

"Made in Dagenham" Screenings in Moncton and Fredericton. "Made in Dagenham is a dramatization of the 1968 strike at Britain's Ford Dagenham car plant where female workers walked out in protest against sexual discrimination. These ladies were directly responsible for equal pay legislation across the globe – no small feat during any era, especially in the male-dominated world of late 1960s Britain." Moncton: Tues., Feb. 8 and Wed., Feb. 9 at 8pm at the Amphithéâtre 163, Édifice Jacqueline Bouchard, Université de Moncton. Hosted by Far Out East Cinema. Fredericton: Mon., March 28 at 8pm. Tilley Hall, Room 102, UNB Fredericton. Hosted by the NB Filmmakers' Cooperative.

"Gasland" screenings in Harvey and Fredericton. A witty and frightening investigation into natural gas extraction in the US. Harvey High School Theatre, Thurs., Feb. 10 at 7:00pm. Hosted by: Harvey Environmental Action Team. Fredericton on Fri., Mar. 25 at 7pm at Conserver House, 180 St. John St. Contact: water@conservationcouncil.ca

Native Awareness Days. The Native Student Council will be hosting Native Awareness Days from Feb. 14-18 at St. Thomas University. Speakers include D'Arcy Vermette, Chief Hugh Akagi and Dr. Roland Chrisjohn. Contact: nativestudentcouncil@gmail.com

2011 Red Tie Affair. AIDS NB presents the 4th Annual Red Tie Affair. Sat, Feb. 26 at 7pm-12:00am at the Fredericton Convention Centre. With special host, Steve Patterson of CBC Radio's The Debaters. The Red Tie Affair will be an elegant social evening of fine dining, entertainment and dancing with Pretty in Pink: That 80s Band. Tickets start at \$125 each (includes complimentary glass of wine, hors d'oeuvres, entrees, dessert and entertainment). Tickets for the dance: \$25 each. Contact: info@aidsnb.com / 506 459-7518.

21st Century Socialism and Education in Venezuela. UNB's Faculty of Education is pleased to announce that Dr. Mike Cole will present "Twenty-First Century

Socialism and Education in Venezuela" on Thurs., March 3, at 6:30 p.m. in Marshall d'Avray Hall, rm 261. Contact: Dr. Emery J. Hyslop-Margison at ehyslop@unb.ca

Spring Into Action Auction: Conservation Council's Annual Fundraiser. Join Marshall Button and friends on Sat., April 30th for the annual "Spring into Action" Conservation Council Auction. Auction includes outdoor gear and canoes. Contact: info@conservationcouncil.ca / 506 458-8747.

Kidney Foundation Door-to-Door Fundraiser. The Canadian Kidney Foundation is getting ready for its annual door-to-door fundraising campaign this March. To volunteer or donate, contact the Kidney Foundation of Canada at 506-453-0533.

Otesha 2011 Cycling and Performing Tours. Teams of a dozen or more motivated and energetic young people, aged 18 to 30, will set off on Otesha Project's cycling and performing tours in 2011. Tour members will cycle from performance to performance, braving the elements, connecting with communities along the route, and exploring all the ups and downs of directly addressing environmental and social justice issues through their own every day actions. No bike touring experience is necessary, just a willingness to give it your all! Applications for spring tours are due March 1, 2011. More info/to apply: www.otesha.ca or (613) 237-6065.

2011 Maliseet Moon Calendar available. The calendar recalls the traditional means by which Maliseets and most Indigenous Peoples around the world reckoned time. It is based on the fact that there are 13 moons every year. Each moon begins on the new moon, and the first moon of the year always ends on the shortest day of the year (Dec. 21). The remaining 12 moons are generally named according to activities or characteristics unique to each particular moon. The images for each moon in this calendar have been chosen to illustrate some of the oldest versions of a Maliseet origin story. Info: 506-452-0637.