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## The Mission accomplished!

2008 has been quite a year at the Chapel Island Mission! Even after a couple of hundred years of annual gathering on the Island, there is still work to be done. This year, UINR's Laurie Sutor coordinated a team of students, community volunteers and staff to continue the recycling and sewage efforts from last year, while initiating a number of new projects.

Joining Laurie this year was a core team including Barry Bernard, John Johnson, Dennis Nevin, Clark Paul, Ekkian Lafford, Emma Johnson, Tobias Doucette and Keenan Bernard. Workers from Eskasoni took time from their regular projects, and other community members volunteered their time to help meet the Mission's environmental goals.

"It is gratifying to see how much this project has affected youth. Without them we could never have moved forward," Laurie explains. "They brought a spirit to the work that has inspired others, and we are very grateful for all of the community support."

Work starts long before the Mission begins. Old waste dumps were cleared behind and between cabins and damage from fallen trees from last year's storm was repaired. Emergency service roads and seven new, small roads were constructed and used this year for emergencies and garbage pickup.

During the Mission there were daily garbage runs and special containers provided for propane tank disposal and recycling. Tons of garbage, recyclables and over 1,000 propane tanks were removed from the Island. Porta-potties and sewage disposal services were provided both on the mainland and Island. The work is not done with the Mission—there was plenty to do afterwards. After the Mission clearing of garbage and construction debris continued.

This year, Anthony Marshall's vandalized cabin was repaired and a wheelchair ramp was built. Anthony was a bell ringer at the Mission for 68 years.

Funding for these projects came from the Pitu'paq partnership, the Province of Nova Scotia, various Mi'kmaq communities and corporate sponsors. The organizers are especially grateful to the many corporate and business sponsors who donated both dollars and water for the Elders.

This year, challenges were identified that need to be addressed in the future. Laurie and her team are working to put together a program to address environmental requirements in the upcoming years.

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Left to right: Tobias Doucette, Laurie Sutor, Clark Paul, Keenan Bernard, Emma Johnson, Ekkian Lafford taking a break from the Chapel Island clean-up.



Tim Cremo

# The Oyster Garden 13

## Lobster in Area 28 (Part 2)

Story by Chief Charlie Dennis

The sad part of our story is that with the 50 traps we put out, we only got one small lobster that was undersized and we had to throw it back in. This went on for about two weeks, until one day, my friend Lawrence and I were out and the wind was picking up. I thought we'd better get out of the mainstream of the Bras d'Or Lakes. Lawrence was a non-swimmer and I could never get him to wear a life jacket. If he drowns, there goes me too, because I would try to save him.

In the Eskasoni area around Boom Island, just off Crane Cove, there's a nice little cove in the McPhee Islands. It is always calm and you don't have to worry about the wind. We took ourselves in there and, to our surprise, there were three boats there, French fishermen from French Cove. They were glad to see us, asking if we wanted some tea? Well, Lawrence loved tea and a cigarette, so he jumped right on their boat to have tea with them.

One of the fishermen asked, "Oh Charlie, since you got the license how are you doing?" "Not too good," I answered, "we only got one little lobster in two weeks." They laughed. There was a bit of controversy at the time over our Treaty rights and non-native fishermen were concerned we were going to fish all the lobster.

My buddy Lawrence didn't care, all he wanted was a cup of tea. I had two lobster traps in the boat. Georgie Carter from St. Peter's way asked me if these were the traps we were using. "Yeah, we paid five dollars a trap in Cheticamp. We got a real good deal." I couldn't understand why they burst out laughing.

George said, "Throw that trap over." I was curious, so I threw it on the deck of their boat. He hauled a case of lobster that was floating on the side of their boat and opened it. Inside I saw huge lobsters, giants compared to what we caught. Georgie put one up to the ring in our trap where the lobster go in. He said, "How the (a word I can't use here) can this lobster fit in here? It's impossible. Somebody saw you coming and wanted to get rid of those traps. They are canner lobster traps. They have little rings where only small cannery can fit in." Never in my life did I feel so embarrassed! George said we shouldn't feel bad, and that they were happy, "We don't have to worry about the Mi'kmaq fishing!"

Their advice was that we should change to seven-inch rings and he guaranteed we would catch lobster. News spread like wild fire—don't worry about the Mi'kmaq fishing, they don't know where to put traps, what kind to use or what kind of bait. I went to the DFO office in Sydney where Aubrey MacKinnon was the area manager. As soon as I walked in, all the fisheries officers were smiling and looking at me real funny. Aubrey saw that and said, "Come into my office, Charlie." I said, "I suppose you heard what happened. Hasn't everybody?" This was a headline that didn't get need to get into the Post!

Aubrey, who was a great friend of mine, said, "Come on down" (like The Price is Right). When we got down to the basement, there were over 200 traps there that had been seized from fishermen for different violations. They were ready to use. They had rope, buoys, everything except the bait! Aubrey said, "If you can get a truck and get these traps out of here by today, they are all yours. You don't have to pay anything, but all we ask is that you use them in the Bras d'Or Lakes but not in the Atlantic." Boy, we were excited! My stepfather, John T. Johnson had a one ton truck and we called and in half an hour he was there. It took three or four loads to get them all home.

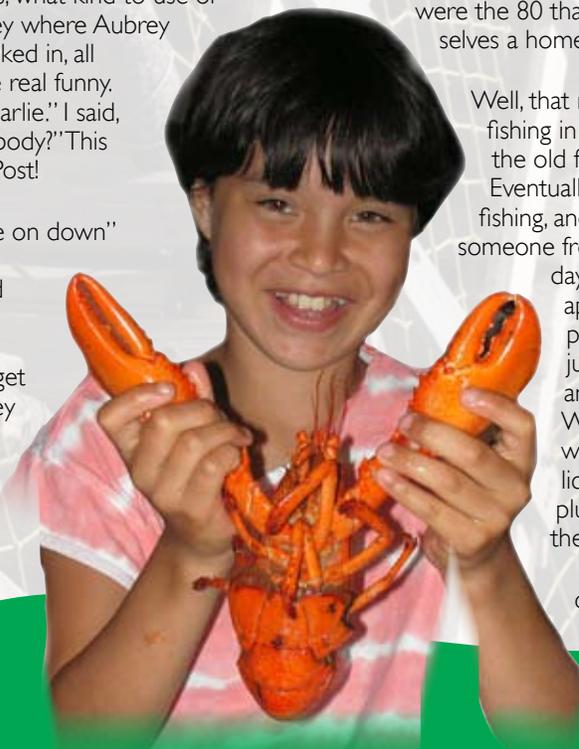
Some of the traps were huge and the only thing we had going for us was our aluminum boat. I remember putting out 200 traps in a couple of days. The excitement came when it was time to check them. Lawrence hauled the first five traps and that was it for him that day. He had to sit down and have a cigarette. We were in excellent shape, but Lawrence was in worse shape than I was, so the next 195 traps I hauled by hand. As long as you caught lobster you didn't care, you could haul 300!

We learned from talking to old fishermen where to put traps, and how to use the map and compass. You look at the map to see if there are any rock ledges or piles of rocks, as this is where lobster gather. Some of the younger fishermen told us to use cod heads as bait. They lasted longer but the lobster are wise. If they see a cod looking at them in the face when they approach a trap, there is no way that lobster is going in there. So I said to Lawrence, "Let's stop using heads and use the bottom parts and make it nice and bloody!" Sure enough, the next day we had more lobster than ever. I think the most we got during a season was 900 pounds of lobster which was great as the markets were very high at that time.

Now, we had it all figured out and pretty soon our traps were spread out, moving ten a day, another ten the next day, so we were not fishing in just one area. One day I said to Lawrence, "What if we went across to Irish Vale?" We took about ten traps, baited them, and threw them in. A couple of days later I had forgotten these traps, but Lawrence said, "Didn't we put ten traps here somewhere?" So we started looking around and sure enough I saw a buoy that was our marker and in that first trap there were about eight gigantic lobster! We checked all the traps and there was about the same amount. We got about 80 lobster in those and, I mean, these lobster were over five pounds. We got a little too anxious and put more traps in and the next day we checked again and there was nothing in the traps. I guess they were the 80 that had kind of made themselves a home in that area.

Well, that ruined that idea, but lobster fishing in the Bras d'Or Lakes is what the old fishermen call very spotty. Eventually we got out of lobster fishing, and sold our lobster license to someone from Iona for \$5000. The next day a retired RCMP officer approached us, offering to pay \$10,000 for our license. I just looked at him and said, "I am sorry, I sold it yesterday." We lost out on \$5,000 but we only paid \$2,000 for the license so we did quite well plus we still had the gear and the aluminum skip.

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pjila'si

After the wettest summer that anyone can remember, I am sure I am not the only one hoping for nice weather through the fall.

We are pretty excited at UINR to be a part of what we think is going to be a landmark event for our people and self government—Mawikwamk Wjit Tia'muk, Mi'kmaq Gathering on Moose. We are seeking consensus on some of the big issues on the Mi'kmaq moose hunt to develop a set of guidelines that will govern the annual hunt. We are bringing together delegates from all the First Nations communities in Nova Scotia to talk about the issues on September 25 and 26 in Wagmatcook.

The forest is an important resource for our people and UINR is in the process of developing some new strategies for the management of hardwood in Unama'ki. Our recent conference on Sustainable Hardwood Management was the first step in this process. If you missed the conference, stay tuned, as we will be publishing the proceedings in the next couple of months.

The Chapel Island Mission is a long standing tradition and we have been working hard with our partners at Pitu'paq to address some of the environmental concerns that come along with thousands of people gathering on the Island each year. Thanks to the hard work of Laurie Sutor and her team of students and community volunteers, we have been making some real progress before, during and after the Mission weekend.

I would like to take a minute to welcome a new member to UINR's Board of Directors, Potlotek's new Chief Kenneth Basque. Potlotek has always been a great supporter of UINR's initiatives and I am sure that Kenny and his Council will continue to be actively involved in managing and protecting our natural resources in Unama'ki.

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## Coming up

We are all set to launch our new UINR Website in early Winter and it's going to be great! Tons of video, a new library of information, news and plenty of other things to do and learn. There will be ten all-new video interviews with UINR staff in which they will tell you all about what's going on in this busy and dynamic organization!

www.uinr.ca



## Welcome back!

Shelley Denny, UINR's biologist, is back from her year-long maternity leave and has some exciting projects up her sleeve!

Shelley's interest in Mi'kmaq traditional knowledge and her science background are a combination that gives her a unique perspective in her work. Responding to the concerns of First Nations Elders, Shelley is continuing her research into eels in the Bras d'Or Lakes.

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## New on board!

Dean Denny is no stranger to UINR and now he's back for an eight week term as a Research Assistant..

Dean will be working with Shelley Denny and her team on various projects relating to the science and traditional knowledge of the Bras d'Or Lakes.

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# Mawikwamk Wjit Tia'muk Mi'kmaq Gathering on Moose Moose symposium

Moose have provided so much to the Mi'kmaq through the years and now they will provide a model for self-government. Clifford Paul, Moose Management Coordinator explains, "The moose symposium is a significant event for Nova Scotia's Mi'kmaq as it sets the framework for self-government. By empowering communities to take an active role in management, we will ensure our roles as stewards."

The Wagmatcook Culture and Heritage Centre will host Mawikwamk Wjit Tia'muk-Mi'kmaq Gathering on Moose on September 25 and 26.

Chiefs and Councils from Nova Scotia's First Nations communities each selected four delegates to participate in the Gathering with four additional delegates selected by Grand Council. Delegates have experience with moose hunting issues, genuine concerns regarding the moose population and harvest, and understand how collaboration can instill the concept of Netukulimk to create Mi'kmaq Moose Management Guidelines.

Delegates will go back to their communities and share the thoughts, discussions and consensus of the Gathering in a clear, concise way. The objective of this Gathering is to reach consensus from community delegates on four main topics:

1. Non-native accompaniment on the hunt;
2. Selling of moose meat and products;
3. The acceptance of a two-month, no hunting season in the height of the summer;
4. Creation of Hunter Advisory Groups to aid Chief and Councils in administration and education of community members.

If the gathering can reach consensus on these four topics, technical people will then draft the Guidelines. Once delegates are satisfied that the draft represents the view of the Gathering, it will be provided to Chiefs and Councils and the Assembly for discussion and approval.

At first, the Guidelines will be voluntary and it will be the task of the Assembly, Chiefs and Councils, UINR, KMK and hunters to discuss and promote the Guidelines in the community. Eventually, we can turn the guidelines into enforceable Mi'kmaq law.

Netukulimk is the use of the natural bounty provided by the Creator; for the self-support and well-being of the individual and community. Netukulimk simply means achieving adequate standards of community nutrition and economic well-being without jeopardizing the integrity, diversity or productivity of our environment.

The Mi'kmaq way of resource management includes a spiritual element that ties the people to the plants, animals and the environment as a whole.

"Our elders maintain that, with rights, come responsibilities. By developing a Moose Management Plan, the Mi'kmaq Gathering on Moose will put into practice the responsibilities that accompany our treaty rights," says Clifford.

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## Red oak



This spring, UINR distributed over 800 Red Oak seedlings to schools and Unama'ki community members. The photo above shows a couple of acorns planted by UINR's Director of Forestry, Mark MacPhail, and photographed next to a UINR mug so you can see how big they grow in a couple of seasons!

Next year, we will have more seeds and even some seedlings to give away. Watch our newsletter!

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## Scholarship winners

Every year, UINR awards \$15,000 in scholarships to Unama'ki students interested in science, technology and forestry. Funding for these scholarships is provided by New Page and Georgia Pacific.

This year, scholarships were awarded to: (left to right) Teedaze Paul (\$2000), Katherine Denny (\$1000), Trudy Paul (\$1000). Missing from photo: Christina Fraser (\$2000), Janice Basque (2000), Ellen Cabot (\$2000).

Visit uinr.ca for information on how to apply next Spring: www.uinr.ca





a conference on  
best management practices  
for sustainable forest communities

## SUSTAINABLE in today's Acadian forests HARDWOOD MANAGEMENT

UINR's conference on Sustainable Hardwood Management in Today's Acadian Forests was the first step in our process towards developing a First Nation's management plan for Unama'ki's hardwood.

Internationally renowned speakers, Mi'kmaq Elders, forestry experts and industry leaders met over a two-day period in Membertou to share their forestry experience and knowledge.

Dr. Ralph D. Nyland, presented five different sessions over the two days, on a broad range of topics related to hardwood management. Dr. Nyland specializes in northern hardwood silviculture and is Distinguished Service Professor—Silviculture at State University of New York College of Environmental Science of Forestry.

Elder Albert Marshall talked about the direction that he felt UINR should take in hardwood management as a First Nations organization. Together with Dr. Ralph Nyland's 48 years of experience, provincial Department of Natural Resources staff and other presenters, UINR is on the right track in our goal to develop our management plan.

Mark MacPhail, UINR's Director of Forestry explains, "Forestry is a dynamic science and as we look to the past and see what worked and didn't work before, we can use this knowledge to ensure mistakes will not be repeated."

"The broad spectrum of knowledge that the speakers brought to our conference ensured that anyone—from a layperson to an experienced forester—could take something away." Mark adds, "We are working on publishing the proceedings from the conference so that people that were unable to attend the actual conference can still benefit from the event." The proceedings will be available as a free download from our website. Watch our newsletter for details on when the proceedings will be available.

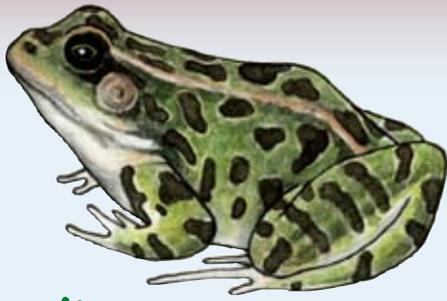
UINR's next step is to work with Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources towards developing permanent sample plots to track the reaction of the stands to different silviculture methods.

The conference was sponsored by Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources with assistance from Nova Forest Alliance and Canadian Forestry Service's First Nations Forestry Program and Canadian Wood Fibre Centre.

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*Photos—Above: Dr. Ralph Nylans, Mark MacPhail, Dale Sylliboy and Elder Albert Marshall. Below: Ed Swift and talking circle participants: left to right, Edwin Swift, Jane Nicholson, Patricia Amero, Sandy Hyde, and Mark MacPhail*





## Samqwane'j

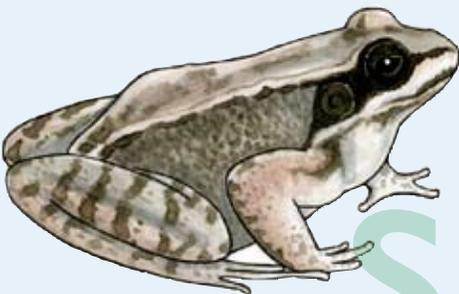


### Northern Leopard Frog *Rana pipiens*

Leopard Frog is a slim, green frog, 5–9 cm long. He has many dark spots that are often ringed with

bright green or bronze, and can make his colours darker to match his surroundings. Leopard Frog's song sounds like a low snoring sound followed by a throaty grunt . . . IRAaH RAH! Leopard Frog lives in old fields, meadows, grassy-sedge woods, roads and grassy roadside ditches.

Female Leopard Frog lays 2000 to 6000 eggs in a flattened, rounded jelly mass. She prefers to lay her eggs in shallow water at the edge of lakes, ponds, or slow-moving streams. Leopard Frog eats beetles, spiders, snails, slugs, worms and sometimes leeches.



## Samqwanti'j

### Wood Frog • *Rana sylvatica*

Wood Frog is a small frog, 6 cm long, with a dark mask across his face. Wood Frog's song sounds like the soft quack of a duck . . . GWAK! Wood Frog lives mostly on land in wooded places (hence his name). Wood Frog prefers temporary pools for breeding, for example, big puddles, ditches filled with water, or swampy areas.



Female Wood Frog lays 500 to 1200 eggs in a round jelly clump. Wood Frog eats spiders, snails and beetles, and other bugs.

Illustration: Basma Kavanaugh, printed with permission from CBU Integrated Science  
<http://msit.capecbretonu.ca/>



## Any eels to spare?

UINR has been fortunate again this year to receive support from the Aboriginal Funds for Species At Risk program to expand our nearshore mapping of eel habitat and Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge project. Our original project took place in Potlotek, Waycobah, Wagmatcook, Malagawatch, Membertou and Eskasoni in 2007-2008.

This year we will address knowledge gaps in the life history and ecology for eels residing in the Bras d'Or Lakes through a series of surveys for elvers (juvenile eels less than 10 cm in length) and adult eels.

Elvers grow into adult eels that we fish, so it's important for us to understand the habitats that are necessary for their survival. Over the next several weeks, UINR will be sampling the nearshore marine habitats outside each First Nation community to get an idea of what types of habitat elvers are found.

We are also looking for samples of adult eels caught by the Food, Social and Ceremonial eel fishers. If you are willing to spare a couple of eels, we would greatly appreciate it! Your eels will be examined for the presence of the swimbladder parasite that was recently found in eels around Cape Breton, and to take measurements on length, weight and age. This information will be used to determine growth rates for the Bras d'Or Lakes' eel population.

The swim bladder parasite impairs the eel's ability to swim and escape predators. It also may affect their ability to make the lengthy migration to spawning grounds in the Sargasso Sea in the Atlantic Ocean between Bermuda and the Bahamas.

If you see us sampling in your community, don't hesitate to see what we are doing or ask questions!

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# *it's all about the people*

*"I feel very lucky to do work every day that I believe in, that is consistent with my beliefs and my history, and to work with people of extraordinary talent and leadership."*

Laurie Sutor is UINR's Intergovernmental Relations & Partnership Advisor. Her job is to ensure that Mi'kmaq interests, concerns and priorities are included in environmental and resource management issues. Sometimes this involves on-the-ground project management and coordination, such as the Chapel Island Mission, sometimes it involves influencing policy and procedures within government.

At UINR, we do this, wherever possible, through collaboration and partnership. A significant portion of Laurie's work is to ensure those partnerships happen and deliver effective results. These partnerships are between Mi'kmaq communities, between Mi'kmaq government and non-Mi'kmaq government, and between all levels of government (Mi'kmaq, Province of Nova Scotia, Municipal and Federal governments) and various combinations.

Laurie has a double major in English Literature and the History of Science and Technology, and a graduate degree in Education. The History of Science and Technology was a specialized degree offered in few institutions; it was created after the second world war by James Bryant Conant, president of Harvard University, who felt that if scientists had a better understanding the context in which scientific "theories" and practice had emerged, and the context in which they are practiced, then the war and the role science played in its tragedies would have been significantly altered. He felt scientists needed a more rounded education. People like Thomas S. Kuhn were practitioners of this approach to science.

On the arts side of her education, she worked in education and social work. On the science side, she worked for several years for the Department of Environment and Labour as the Bras d'Or Lakes coordinator.

Laurie was provincial Co-chair of the Sustainable Communities Initiative, and Co-ordinator of Bras d'Or Lakes Collaborative Environmental Planning Initiative (CEPI). She is currently on the Board of Directors of the Bras d'Or Stewardship Society.

Despite her years of formal education, Laurie feels that the most significant education she received did not involve school. For much of her childhood she grew up in a small cabin on an isolated lake in northeastern Ontario. She learned from the environment—the rocks, moss, fish, trees, insects, birds, animals, wind and water. This, she feels, was her most significant education.

For several years Laurie performed as a songwriter and pianist, and has won awards for her poetry. She still write music and plays piano every day. She is an avid swimmer and reads anything, except science fiction.

Laurie has spent a lot of her time learning traditional Mi'kmaq culture and tradition from the Elders. This has allowed her to understand the Mi'kmaq perspective in her dealing with government and allows her to translate "governmentese" into a form that Mi'kmaq people can relate to. Her ability to exist and communicate in both worlds has made her an invaluable asset at UINR.

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## **Some of the projects and partnerships that Laurie initiated or works on include:**

- AAROM
- Bras d'Or Lakes Collaborative Environmental Planning Initiative (CEPI)
- Bras d'Or Atlas
- Cape Breton University
- Chapel Island Mission
- Environmental Assessment Protocols
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada
- Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn (KMK)
- Natural Resource Officer Program
- Youth and Elders Council
- Pitu'paq

Laurie is pictured below right with the Pitu'paq committee, an example of collaborative partnership that works.



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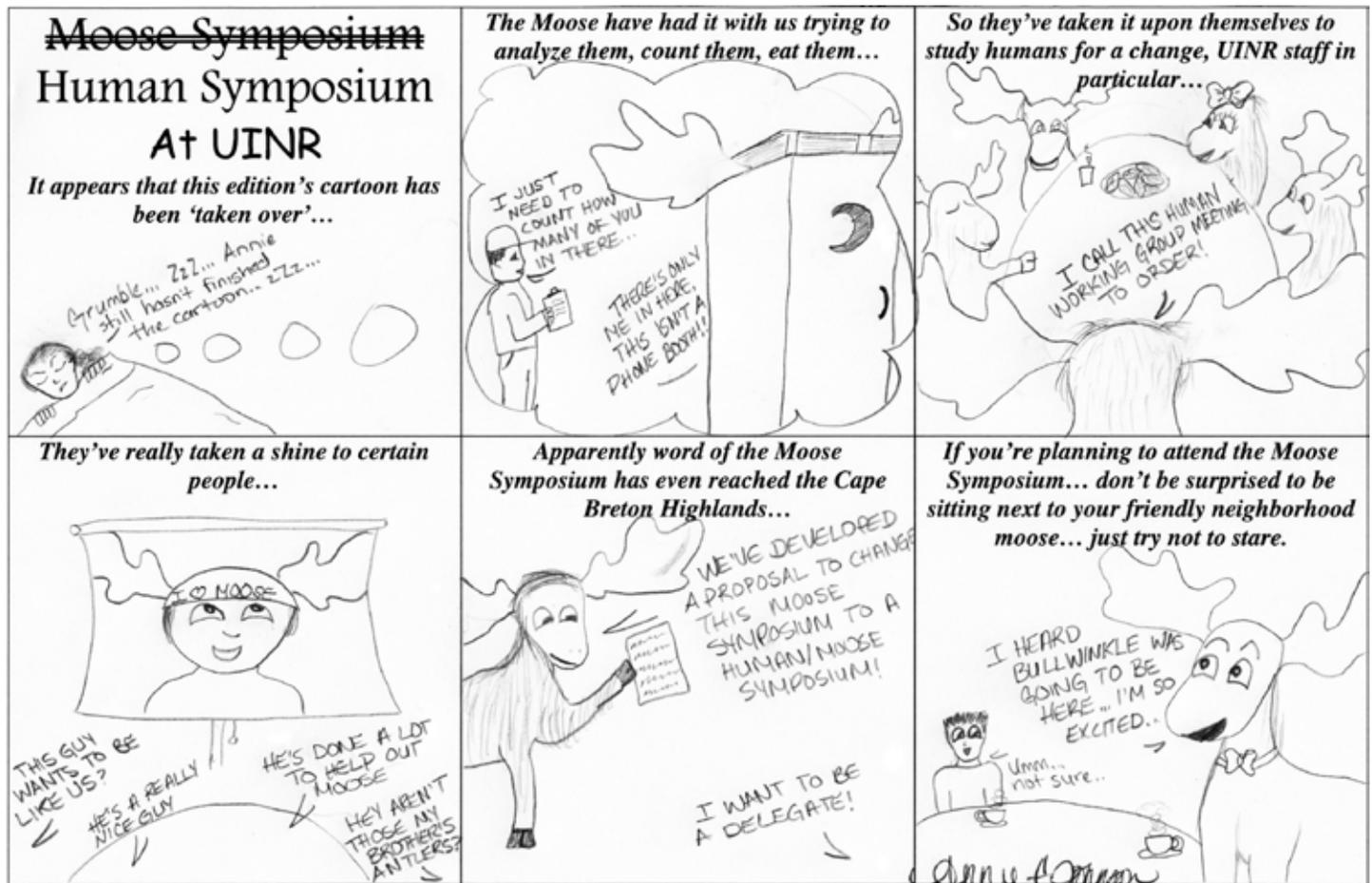
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