



A Looking Glass Into the Community's Future June 2017

## Virtue of the Month: **Determination**

### Dates of Note / Upcoming Events

- June 29: Awards Day
- June 29: Last day of classes
- June 30: Teacher Administration Day – Summer holidays begin
- July 1: “**Canada 150**” Celebrations
- July 2 – August 30: Taking the Pow-Wow Trail
- July 16 – 23: North American Indigenous Games, Toronto ON – Support our athletes, tour “The Big Smoke”, take in a Blue Jays game
- August 6 – 11: FSIN Summer Games in Regina – Come support Hall Lake’s student athletes
- August 30: Back to School – “Tranquillity Day” for Parents

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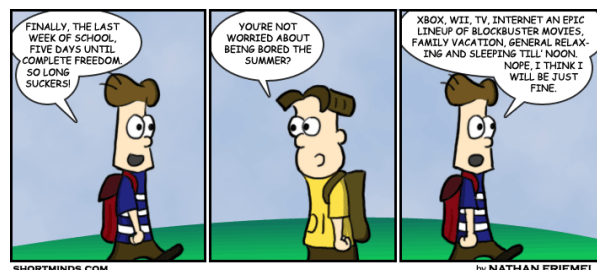
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SHORTMINDS.COM

by NATHAN FRIEMEL

## GRADUATION – NOW “THE REST OF YOUR LIFE” CAN BEGIN

By Ken MacDougall, B.A., B.Ed., M.T.M.

High School Mathematics / Science Teacher, Sally Ross School

When you get to be “my age” (I’m older than most people think), time has this disconcerting influence upon your life, namely, it’s going by really fast – way, way too fast, and in the minds of we Elders or equivalents, starts us on our mad rush to think about a life – in our estimation, at least – still unfulfilled.

Students have a different way of looking at time, particularly when it comes to school. First, their summer is “ruined” because school is going to start by at least the first week in September, and even up here in what the average American would consider to be “The Great White North”, it’s still warm enough for you to be working on your tan – and besides, the school’s air conditioning units really don’t cool the place down all that much.

Worse, this “torture” won’t end until late June, when it’s again time to work on your tan or fish-catching abilities, AND for good measure you’re only going to be given a couple of breaks in those ten months where it’s too cold to go hang out with friends or the road out to the main highway more closely resembles the track in a “rice rocket” race (high speed cross-country motorcycles, most of which are made in Japan or China) after the race is done and the track has been reflooded.

However, with the coming of the summer and just before we close down shop for that two-month break, we have special events at the school, which the teachers call “graduation ceremonies”, wherein the youngest of the lot, our Kindergarten attendees, can look forward to worrying about what they can expect from having to attend “real school” next year.

The most senior of the lot, on the other hand, having attained sufficient academic credits from an Education Department’s perspective (a point of view not necessarily shared by their teachers) so as to have the ability to NOT come back to Sally Ross next year, have only one thing to look forward to – life – and with it the prospect of every day getting shorter and shorter, just like we old folk.

If you had the opportunity to attend the high school Graduation ceremony on June 24<sup>th</sup>, you’ll have noticed

something rather “odd” about the Class of 2017 – they’re all, for the most part, a “little long of tooth”, which is to say that after the ceremony was over, you’re probably not going to have seen them rush home to change into traditional grubbies and sally forth to party harder than most people do on New Year’s Eve.

My question is: Why is that the case?

The answer to that question is hard to pinpoint, and often leaves people with the feeling that they’re being “attacked” and blamed for the inadequacies of a school system in disarray, or coming from a teacher’s perspective, the “failure” of students to recognize the fact that, once they’ve graduated from high school, the only direction for them to pursue is in driving out to the intersection of Highway 2 and either turning left to go to La Ronge, or right to head towards Prince Albert and beyond – or as we like to call it, “the real beginning of their adult lives”.

After all, the purpose of all that schooling was to prepare us for adulthood, wasn’t it? So, why is there this “aversion” in the minds of many of our youth to face that reality that they can just up and “quit” going to school whenever they feel like it, or only show up whenever there’s a “fun” class going on? Moreover, why aren’t the parents doing something to make certain their children make it to school on time, homework done, fed and ready for another day’s challenges – or have many of these already adult personalities forgotten that, in a First Nation setting, the education of one’s children is the responsibility of ALL its people?

Sure, there are reasons for such conditions to exist and plague the school system with their influence; however, aren’t there enough people within the community recognizing the fact that, without an education in today’s increasingly complex society, you’re dooming yourself to a failure to fulfill even the most basic of your aspirations as an adult, and in the process making your eventual parenting role one of marginal endeavour?

**(Continued on Page 4)**



## CLASS TOUR: A VISIT TO GOVERNMENT SERVICES IN LA RONGE

By Jackie Bell

May 23<sup>rd</sup> saw the Grade 6 / 7 class head out for La Ronge on a tour of the town: the police station, fire hall, airport, ambulance station – the town’s infrastructure – and, of course, the beach.

Our first visit was to the RCMP police station. Here, the students all got to sit in the cell block, as well as sit in a service van where some students even got to control the lights and siren. They also were shown the gym, call station, interrogation room, family room and the break room. Later, they got to ask questions and received stickers and tattoos.



*The lock-up - hopefully, never "for real"...*



*The "Break Room" - Sally Ross should have one of these...*

Once they finished eating, students went to the town beach just to play and explore. There, they had the good fortune to meet people on their own lunch break who then provided everyone with a chance to learn how to play tennis; all took a turn and thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

After lunch, we made our way to the airport where the Director also gave us a tour. The students got to see a plane land, and how baggage was handled.



*"On the Beach" = mercifully, no one wanted to swim; water was too cold...*



*Learning tennis - Move over, Milos and Eugenie...just a big badminton court - a game we can play really well...*

The next building we toured housed machinery that cleared the runway; everyone got a chance to sit in the driver’s seat of the big trucks. they all got to take turns going into the big trucks.



*Watching a small passenger plane land - looks "easy", but apparently having an ATV license doesn't qualify you enough to fly one of them...*

The last stop was the big old plane where the students also got to sit in the cockpit.



*Standing inn front of aviation history - "Can we get Microsoft Flight Simulator put on one of the school's computers - PLEASE?"*

At the Fire Hall, students learned why there are different types of trucks for different fire tasks, and were shown different nozzles, hoses, masks, and the Jaws of Life. They were then given an explanation on how each part of a fire suit protects them when they enter a fire zone.



*Drive this baby and EVERYONE has to get out of your way...*



*Lots of stuff to take out and use - but what happens when the fire is out? Is this like my parents coming home and making me clean up my room?*

Finally, at the Ambulance Building, students were split into groups and put into an ambulance; they then had their blood pressure checked, shown how each instrument worked, and were taken on a cruise.



*Learning how an ambulance can save lives - better to be part of the crew manning the vehicle as opposed to being its passenger...*

Back to Hall Lake – lesson learned

## GRAD TIME: WHEN THE REST OF YOUR LIFE ACTUALLY BEGINS... (Continued from Page 2)

Failure sucks – and it is hurtful, to boot, because often that lack of success starts to convince you that you can't do anything right, no matter how hard you try. Ignored, however, is the actual “fact” that, in “failing” at a task, you're also “learning”.

The point here is, IF you take the time to reflect upon why things are going wrong, you usually can “fix the problem”. And right about now, having come face-to-face with one of your own hurdles you are finding it difficult to overcome, you're probably wanting to say to me, “Yeah, big deal; you've got a job, you've got an education – what's your problem, then?”

If you're think that way, you don't know me very well.

Yes, I went through Grade 12 with good marks, and I graduated with the idea that I could do anything I wanted in this world. That feeling lasted right up to the last day of my first try at university, when I realized that education alone just wasn't “cutting it” for me.

So – I quit.

After two or three lousy jobs, I tried to go back – and this time didn't last until the end of the first semester. This time, I spent another five years driving trucks and screwing up a marriage before I had to look at myself in the mirror and say, “What's wrong with me?”

So, I went back, took opportunities outside school that would expand my world's vision – and in April, just as my first year was coming to an end, I walked into my Biology professor's office and began bemoaning the fact that, no matter how badly I screwed up between then and examination time, I couldn't “fail” any more.

He looked at me as if I were nuts – and maybe I was, because by that time I'd “wasted” almost ten years of my life.

And so, when you look at the graduates as they come on stage to receive their matriculation diplomas, note the fact that each one of them had to confront “failure” in one form or another – and yet, here they are, seemingly perfectly happy and “normal”.

Somewhere in Hall Lake there are adults ready to look into life's mirror and decide that “enough is enough”, and it's time to do something with their lives. Somewhere in this community, as well, there are

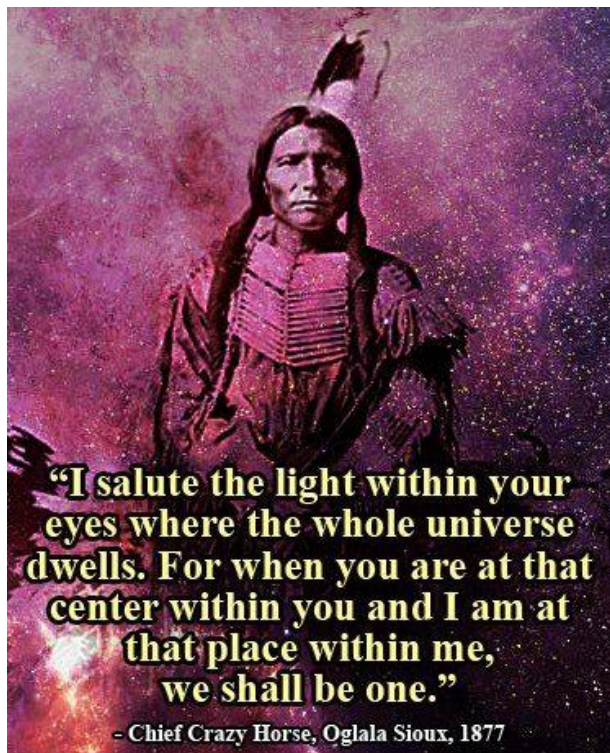
parents who are looking at themselves as roadblocks to their children's success, and must now confront that fact, even if it means that on occasion they're going to have to say “No!” to their child's attempts to avoid facing educational life, and potentially creating more strife within their own lives.

These are the types of adults that this community needs in order for their school to survive and prosper. And if Hall Lake can provide such individuals, either as role model parents or “new” students for the “graduation mill”, teachers will notice – and things will get better in the future.

To quote someone who actually knew what he was talking about, “Overcoming failure is like climbing a steep hill; for most of the journey you can travel on your own, but to get up that large cliff at the end of the road, you may need some help getting up there.”

Just make certain you've got someone making that journey with you, in case you do stumble and need a little extra help.

And to this year's “grads”, congratulations on a job well done.





# REFLECTIONS FROM OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

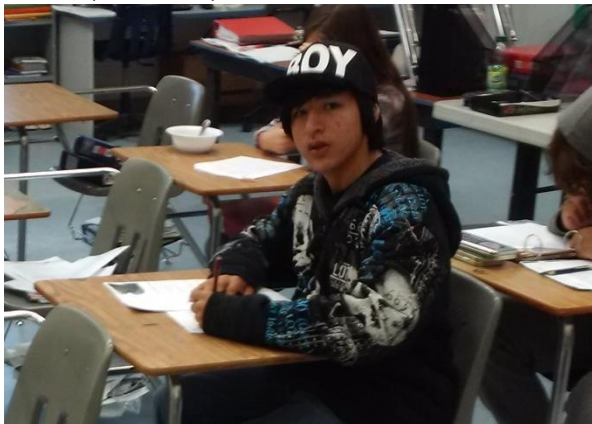
## THE INCOMPLETE AND AS YET UNWRITTEN STORY OF DESMOND ROSS

By Ken MacDougall, High School Mathematics / Science Teacher

Desmond Ross has a story to tell; unfortunately, it doesn't have an ending. The story doesn't have an ending yet because Desmond, right now, doesn't want to think about an ending, but a beginning – and as most writers will tell you, that's the hardest part of telling the story itself.

It's not hard for anyone reasonably trained to coach a sport that Desmond has what people would call "a gift" – a natural talent for running, and jumping, and all of the little things the less discerning observer would simply call "play". And that, unfortunately, is where the "problem" of finishing this story even begins, because in the so-called "academic" world of Sally Ross School, there's no one out there capable of convincing him that the two worlds of sports and academia are intertwined, and that success in one brings out success in the other, in effect feeding upon the achievements of one to challenge the other to be equal – or better than – the standards created by its competitor.

This month, Desmond should have been looking forward to competing in the SHSAA Track and Field championships in Regina; unfortunately, because he's – well, "a typical teenager on the rez" – he goofed off in school a few days before the Districts were held in Prince Albert, and didn't get to go – which means that he couldn't go to Regina because he couldn't qualify for any event in which his talent exceeded his ego's size. And so, this chapter in his life has yet to be written, not because it wasn't meant to be, but rather because, somehow, he was "afraid" to let it be.



*Eric Venne - Desmond's "competition" - or his teammate to future greatness? For both, the challenge is in their own will to succeed, both on and off the field of battle...*

Desmond can run like the wind; he is constantly telling me this, and I'd like to give him the benefit of doubt once in a while.

However...

Taking first place in every event he entered during our school's Track and Field day, I prefer to see talent expressed when you have absolutely no idea as to just how good the competitor in the lane next to you really is. This "nearness" instills something within a true athlete - call it what you will, ego or personal challenge – that tends to bring out the best in you, and right now in Hall Lake, the only person that may eventually challenge Desmond's reign of first place victories is a Grade Nine student, Eric Venne, whose run to the podium is only now beginning to become noticed.



*Desmond Ross, looking in awe at his gold medal. Sally Ross High School Male Athlete of the Year - but is that enough when the world could be his next stage?*

And so, rather than arguing with Desmond as to achieving some personal goal, I ended up dragging him to Prince Albert to compete in Prince Albert Grand Council's Senior Track and Field event, entering him into events that I had absolutely no idea as to what he would achieve, where he would "place", and how he would react to being confronted with others whose talents he could not fathom through years of familiarity.

In other words, it was, "Desmond, don't talk; just show me what you've got..."

**(Continued on Page 6)**

## REFLECTIONS: DESMOND'S STORY... (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5)

The start to the day's activities was almost predictable. The first event he had entered was the 800 meter run, and almost instantaneously I began regretting even opening myself up to such observation of Desmond's potential. When I asked him to warm up, he refused, then reluctantly changed his mind when I started to go catatonic. More whining ensued when I made him switch to shorts and free his legs from the constriction of his blue jeans. Finally - the race began.

At about the 300 meter mark and already well ahead of his closest competitor, Desmond almost effortlessly kicked it into high gear for a few strides, leaving his opposition "in the dust", at least 150 meters behind him. He then LOPED the last 400 to what should have been a convincing victory – but wasn't, because his closest rival, not wanting to be embarrassed by the earlier lead Desmond had enjoyed, closed the distance between them to less than 20 meters. This, as it turned out, would become a "trend" later in the competition.

However, it was time to compete in the Triple Jump.

It turned out that Desmond had never competed in a Triple Jump; he had, in fact, absolutely no idea as to what it involved – technique, skill, "whatever"; he'd just agreed to enter the event because it had that one word in it – "jump" – that he knew he could do well.

The officials to the event, however, were a tad more "skeptical" as to his talent and qualification to compete, belatedly demonstrating the techniques to employ in the three phases and not default. After a couple of trial runs, he was "ready" – and this time already wearing his shorts, took off – landing just over a meter longer than any previous jump recorded by his competitors.

One of the judges, however, was unconvinced, maintaining that Desmond's "hop" (the original name for the event being "Hop, Skip and Jump) "didn't look like" those attempted by the rest of the field. Another official more familiar with the event was called over to render his "opinion" on the matter. His conclusion, after watching Desmond do another six trial runs, the last of which was still another meter longer than his first attempt: his form and jumps were "legal".

OK, so Desmond could "jump", after all...

Now, all we had to do was wait for Saturday morning and the start of Event Three, the 400 meter run.

We arrived at the field early on Saturday morning, only to find a young female member of the St. Mary's Track and Field team who'd qualified for the SHSAA Regina meet already working out. Jokingly, I suggested that Desmond go make her acquaintance, but he refused, albeit noting that she was "really cute".

Meanwhile, competitors from other reserve schools were showing up, stretching, doing take-off short sprints, as well as other exercises you'd expect athletes would be doing when competing in this event – and there was Desmond, still in his jeans, pretending to do stretches and only marginally breaking into a stride slower than a six-year-old pursuing the local ice cream truck, wanting to spend that toonie before his mother realized it was even missing from her purse.

Jeans finally gone, the race began, and Desmond won – well, the "senior" component, at least. The "problem" here is that, once again he'd tried to blow away the competition, this time at 200 meters. A Junior runner competing with the Seniors wasn't having any of that nonsense; and ignoring my frantic arm movements near the end to pick up the pace a notch or six, Desmond again loped to the finish line, only to have the Junior jump by him with his last stride and finish "first" by less than half a second.



*Desmond "warming up" - part of being good at something is being willing to put in the work - and learn how things should be done "right", regardless of who's teaching the lesson - and WHY that should be a lesson in sports AND school...*

After the "set-back" in the 400 meters, Desmond predictably developed leg cramps and was now threatening not to enter the 3,000. Noting with some fury that his gait seemed just fine when he felt no one was watching him, I called for some "help" – this time from another female member of St. Mary's Track and Field team.

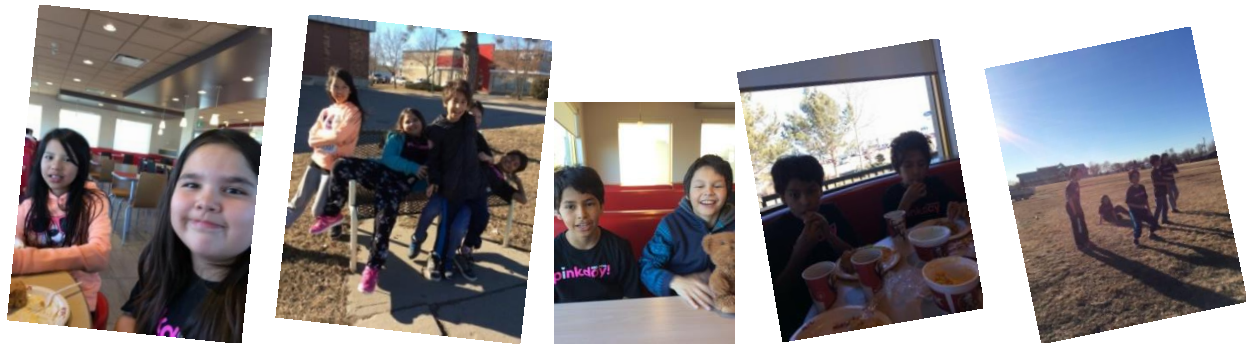
Flustered by my "move", but unwilling to appear ridiculous in front of a female athlete, Desmond half-heartedly tried the routine. Noting the fact that I wasn't impressed with his efforts, he tried again, only to realize that the routine was not only simple in nature, but actually had the effect of both stretching his muscles, while simultaneously relieving his leg pains.

And so, at the very last minute, Desmond decided to run the 3,000 – and yes, he won, this time – again – loping across the finish line barely ahead of another Senior competitor from Montreal Lake that he'd thought he'd left well behind by the time they'd both covered 2,500 meters.

**(Continued on Page 8)**

# **THE FINE ARTS FESTIVAL**

## **PERFORMANCES BY OUR DIVISION TWO CREATIVE DANCERS**



***Good Job students! Very good effort. They had lots of fun. We are so proud of you: Sandra Halkett, Atlee Charles, Jolene Charles, Travis Halkett, and Jarek Halkett.***



## REFLECTIONS: DESMOND'S STORY...

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6)

And so Hall Lake – Sally Ross School – finished “last” in the competitive field of eight teams, BUT won every event the school entered – and for that 4-for-4 effort, Desmond Ross also won his first “real” gold medal.

Missing from this mathematical exercise, though, is that with nine more people with the natural talent Desmond possesses, we'd have finished in first place, overall - **and would have had yet another banner to hang in our gym next year.**

So, what's the point of this story, or partial story, anyway? Is Desmond “good enough” for the community to consider spending the recreation department's money necessary for him to receive proper coaching and training experience, and potentially create an Olympic-level athlete whose home town is Hall Lake? And are there “others” worthy of the same consideration, if the community decides to get behind them?

I'm not a Track and Field coach, but given the fact that once upon a time many years I asked a nine-year-old girl by the name of Kelly Parker to join my daughter's all-girl U-12 team, and she now possesses a Bronze medal from the 2012 Olympic Games as a member of the Canada's women's soccer team, I'll try to extend my winning streak and offer a “Yes” to the question – but only IF certain conditions change in Desmond Ross's life.



*Kelly Parker (15) being congratulated by Canadian team captain Christine Sinclair and fellow Saskatonian Kaylyn Kyle in 2012 Olympic Summer Games - guts, determination, brains, and a whole lot of work...*

Kelly was to eventually hone her soccer skills to perfection, and following her graduation from Saskatoon's Evan Hardy Collegiate – with Honours – she was awarded an athletic scholarship to attend the University of Texas.

What was most remarkable about this meteoric rise to the level that she had attained - to myself, at least – was that, prior to playing her last game at Evan Hardy and winning the league's scoring title, she made it a point to thank me for that opportunity in a sports item written for Saskatoon's *Star Phoenix* newspaper.

I carry that article with me to this day...

What was Kelly's “trick” in gaining that opportunity for advancement? Not much, really; she followed one simple principle – stay in school, graduate, and the success can only hope to follow you, even if your marks may not.

In Hall Lake, “that” is THE “problem” - few of our students take school seriously. Even more of concern is the fact that there exists a class of adults in the community that, irrespective of whatever talents their children might demonstrate, remain indifferent to the mental “connect” between athletic prowess and academic potential.



*"Birds of a feather" Curtis Halkett, Zach Halkett, Simon Ross, Jasmine Halkett-Ross, Iesha Smith, Megan Halkett, Ashley Ballantyne, Allen Smith, and duelling PAGC Doubles Gold Medalists Evelyn Venne and Lillian Halkett. Winning? Yes; now get another Gold by graduating and putting Hall Lake on the academic map – WITH its OWN postal code...*

Kelly is not the only world class athlete I've had the good fortune to teach. While at Athol Murray College, I had Garry Leeman, the Courtnall brothers, Rob Brindamour, and even Washington Capitols coach Barry Trotz studying Physics or Mathematics, and contrary to the usual “jock jokes”, they were all good students. Moreover, their coaches, former Minnesota North Stars and Canadian Olympic team members Terry O'Malley and Barry MacKenzie, made certain that, even while competing in an 80 game Junior schedule, their studies remained Priority One.

**(Continued on Page 12)**



# CULTURE CAMP REVISITED



*Ilesha Smith working on loom techniques with baby brother Allen Smith - who says men can't learn from women?*



*Janet Bell and Yvonne Roberts stirring up stuff – in this case, food, not trouble – that's the students' responsibility...*



*Grade 7 student Natasha Roberts working on her looming techniques while Grade 8 student Dani Gardewine goofs off – no, Dani's mother didn't teach her to teach this way...*



*Retention Worker Joanne Halkett "retention-ing" this poor beaver carcass – and if you think this is scary, you should watch her carve up a moose...*

## ADULT LEARNERS: ARE YOU LOOKING TO GRADUATE IN THE NEAR FUTURE?

Sally Ross School administrative staff are currently interested in knowing how many adult learners living in the community want to finish their high school program, starting at the Grade 10 level or beyond.

As a result of the success in attracting adults into the Sally Ross academic program in January, the school is now considering establishing such programs through regular or evening sessions over the complete academic year, utilizing high school staff.

It may be possible to attain federal funding for adult students are 25 years of age or older who are prepared to demonstrate that they won't require subsidization of income, have the ability to arrange responsible daycare for their children during classroom times, be addiction free, and be willing to submit to CPIC and vulnerability checks through the local RCMP office in La Ronge.

Adults wishing to enrol should contact Mr. Johnny Bear, Guidance Counsellor, at (306) 425-5041.

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### A WORD ABOUT BIKES AND BICYCLE THEFT

Community members should be aware that there has been a recent "run" on bicycle theft in the La Ronge area, and as a result the RCMP are asking parents to speak to their children about properly storing and locking their own bicycles so as to avoid theft. To protect your own property, it is in your best interest to record the serial number of the bike, which is usually found under or near the seat on the chassis.

If you are looking to buy a bicycle on e-Bay or elsewhere, check to see if the serial number is still on the chassis. If your children find a bicycle, whether on

the roadway or ditch, please make every effort to return that unit to its rightful owner. If you cannot find that person, the RCMP will place it in "Lost and Found". If not claimed within 90 days, it may be returned to you.

### OBTAINING A SOCIAL INSURANCE NUMBER

Many parents are unaware that if their child either wants to obtain a social insurance number or a driver's license, they must first acquire a birth certificate.

If a parent requires assistance in obtaining a certificate of birth for their child, they should contact Johnny Bear at the school, by phoning (306) 425-5041.





# ACHIEVEMENTS AND AWARDS

## THE CLASS OF 2017 – GRADE 12



*Nora Halkett*



*Myriah Ross*

## THE CLASS OF 2017 – KINDERGARTEN



## SALLY ROSS SCHOOL ATHLETES OF THE YEAR



*Male Athlete of the Year - High School -  
Desmond Ross*



*Sally Ross Female Athlete of the Year  
Dani Gardewine*



*Male Athlete of the Year - Elementary  
Atlee Charles*



## REFLECTIONS: DESMOND'S STORY...

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8)

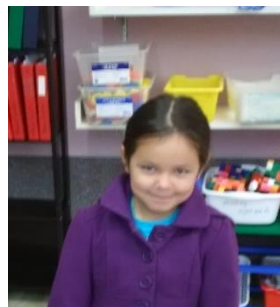
There are a lot of good athletes in this community that could do well to learn the same lessons these hockey players – and Kelly – learned early in life. Curtis Halkett has already heard my sermon; however, there are others, especially within our adult population, who should be “stepping up” and championing academic success in combination with athletic prowess. Just in this year alone, several of our students, even some with “attitude”, have caught my attention, and deserve to be given a break, so long as they continue to take their academic careers seriously.



*PAGC Junior Girls Basketball Champions: Coach MacDougall, Faith MacKenzie, Ilesha Smith, MVP Dani Gardewine, Jerralynn Jobb, Natasha Roberts, Shantel Venne, Faith Halkett, Eagle Heart Lamontagne-Bear and Assistant Coach Justin Crain - not lost; scared – maybe, but still ready to go to new places*



*Natasha Roberts - "Tough as nails", but still responsible, studious and capable of becoming a role model and leader at Sally Ross and elsewhere...*



*Kaidance Ross - Big deal; it hurt - get up and try again. Failure is the first step in learning to do something right - including your homework...*

One such individual is Natasha Roberts, who at times looks as though she could go twelve rounds in the Octagon with Ronda Rousey, and still have enough energy to go one-on-one on a basketball court with her Assistant Coach Justin Crain. Still another with the “game” in her eyes is Grade Two sparkplug Kaidance Ross who, despite her diminutive stature, when put on the soccer field you’ll see her in her oversized shirt mixing it up with “the big boys”, occasionally getting run over, but always getting up and playing the game like someone “kicking butt and taking names”.



*(L to R) Jarek Halkett, Chantel Charles, Travis Halkett, Arthur Venne, Shantel Venne, Natasha Roberts, Allen Smith, Coach MacDougall, Dani Gardewine and Orlen Halkett - on the big stage "kicking butt and taking names" – their futures have already started; now, how far will they go?*

Still, I have lived in this community for just over nine months, and while by now I should know all of those students who are of school age, this isn't the case. About three weeks ago, I drove past a house where a number of teens were congregating; I didn't know any of them. One male, no more than sixteen, a 26er of cheap Vodka clutched in his hand, staggered from individual to individual, seemingly wanting to communicate something – anything, really – to anyone who wanted to listen, yet saying nothing at all.

And then, I started to wonder...

The booze wasn't the issue here; it was just that in remembering my own high school experiences, none of them would remember anything they'd done the previous evening. In effect, they were “lost”, spiritually, and afraid, not because some mythical “God” had forsaken them, but because the community had seemingly done so.

As a teacher, it's not my “job” to impose moral “obligations” upon either an individual or community; besides, my own skills are limited by personal experiences in shaping who I am today. Only the customs and traditions of Canada's indigenous peoples can provide these guidelines, and my understanding of their workings are still on a theoretical plateau.

In other words, that's the community's “job”...

I have certain “skills” that will allow me to help Desmond or anyone else I've mentioned achieve their ever-changing life's goals, and eventually make them both proud of self and member of this community. But none of us at Sally Ross can achieve this success without guidance from the people of Hall Lake.

They are, after all, your children...