Since 1983 NVIT has gone through many changes, growing by leaps and bounds. Those who have been with NVIT since the early years, will tell you they have witnessed the changes with some mixed emotion. There is sadness in seeing something comforting and familiar replaced by something new and unfamiliar. And yet, at the same time those changes have been welcomed as they meant NVIT was staying true to its mandate of providing a quality education to those wishing to further themselves.

Each change is another milestone for NVIT as new programs and courses are added to a growing curriculum. The growing number of courses has been a direct result of demand by the many students who now make NVIT their institution of choice to further their education. The student body of NVIT has grown with each passing year. This becomes readily apparent at graduation each May.

In 1983 there was just a hand full of students graduating from the fledgling Natural Resource Technology program. This year there were 56 graduates walking across the stage, this class represents 12 different programs, at the certificate, diploma, and degree levels of study. This is quite an accomplishment for NVIT, especially considering the doors only opened 22 years ago.

The achievements of NVIT are not purely academic, the institute along with architects, Waugh/Busby & Associates have made a mark in the architectural world. The building has received many awards for architectural design. The recognition adds to the dream of making NVIT an institute students will want to come to, and thus join a growing family.

With this academic year now at a close we look to the next year and the group of fresh faces that will grace the halls of NVIT. This interlude will give some time to relax, but for others the planning process for the upcoming year has already begun. This process will not only take into account upcoming events for the Fall term, it also extends into the Spring term and yes, even next year’s Graduation ceremonies. Those on the front line know all too well just how fast the year goes by. Deadlines creep up and before you know it, another year has come and gone in the blink of an eye.

**Congratulations Class of 2005**

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Biography: An NVIT Cowboy

This month’s feature biography is NVIT’s only resident cowboy, Eldon Nast.

Eldon was born and raised in Alberta, on a farm/ranch, where most of his joys involved cattle, horses, and driving tractor. True to the life of an old time ranch Eldon says, “No running water and hydro on that place! Eldon’s start with a formal education began in a country, elementary school to which he traveled by horseback everyday. Upon completion of high school, in Edmonton, and at the urging of his parents and older siblings, Eldon was off to Illinois to attend a teachers college. Eldon later received his bachelors and masters degrees from this same college.

In 1967 Eldon met and married Ellen. They are the proud parents of 5 children, 3 boys and 2 girls. Over a span of 25 years, Eldon taught, and was a principal at schools in a number of different states such as: Michigan, Illinois, Florida, and then here in BC.

After 25 years of service, in 1989 Eldon decided to put a stop to his teaching career. At this point he moved to the Nicola Valley (from Surrey, BC) and had plans to land work as a ranch hand. Eldon says his hopes and dreams were interrupted by an NVIT staff member who encouraged him to join the team of instructors at NVIT. In the fall of 1992 Eldon joined the NVIT family as an instructor, teaching math, English, public speaking, and more. Like many of those here at NVIT, Eldon has witnessed the internal and external changes that have taken place over the years.

The students have come and gone, and we are now located in a much larger facility, rather than the scattered buildings we once occupied. Even though Eldon joined the NVIT family, his dream of being a ranch hand didn’t end. In 1993 Eldon and his family purchased their ranch north of Merritt. When Eldon isn’t caring for his students he can be found tending to his ranch duties—repairing fences and corrals, herding cattle by horseback, and all of those “caring” duties, especially in the spring during calving time. The operation of the ranch adds balance to Eldon’s life in that it gives a welcome change of pace to his duties at NVIT.

Eldon doesn’t limit his time to just his work and farm. He also enjoys officiating recreational sports, such as men’s hockey and slo-pitch softball. Eldon is also an established “arm-chair” athlete and enjoys a good game of hockey, football, or baseball. Of course, Eldon would admit that his passion for music is still a vital part of his life. This busy man also participates in other activities, such as assisting in the decorating of the NVIT Christmas Parade Float, and using his truck to tow it. If you are ever on campus and are looking for Eldon he can be found talking with students, or staff, sharing his wealth of knowledge, and humour with those around him.

Anyone of his students, or colleagues, will tell you Eldon has a real passion for teaching, it shows in the manner with which he relates to, and, encourages his students.

In expressing his love for NVIT, and the students, Eldon states:

“Teaching adults as I do at NVIT has really turned out to be a rewarding venture. We have such a caring school environment. I really appreciate the expressions of respect, trust, and love shown by our family at NVIT.

God-willing, I’ll be able to work with our unique NVIT team of staff and students for years to come!”

We thank Eldon for joining the NVIT family, as well as the staff member who first encourage Eldon to become a part of it.
More Than a Medal: Athletes Among Us

Every now and again while you work, an item of interest will catch your eye; but most times it takes someone else to point out the things that you tend to miss. Since the first issue of this online version of our newsletter, there have been a few articles written about the many accomplishments of NVIT as well as the academic achievements of our students.

There have been articles about the students’ involvement in the contests and competitions held by NVIT, but there seemed to be just a little something missing. This is where one of those items, a person seems to miss, was pointed out and now the story finds its way into NVITLIVE.

This article is about two students, enrolled in the Law Enforcement Preparation Certificate program. Both Dustin Voght and Veronica Charters are from the Coldwater Indian Band, and were born and raised in the Nicola Valley. Dustin and Veronica were medal recipients at the “2002 North American Indigenous Games” which were held in Winnipeg. The games take place every 2 years in a different city across North America with athletes coming from different communities throughout Canada and the United States.

Dustin received a Bronze Medal in the 4x100 relay, and Veronica received a Gold Medal in the 4x100 relay, as well as a Silver Medal in the 100m dash.

At first glance one wouldn’t know that both Dustin and Veronica had participated in an event on a scale equivalent to those held in the Olympics. The contrast of these students is somewhat startling as both are quiet and a little unassuming, especially when compared to some of our more outgoing NVIT students. The only inkling you have of these two students being athletic is in they are often seen in their LEPP track suits.

In speaking to these remarkable students each voiced the same answer as to why they participated in the games; the answer was simply, “to test our skills and for the love of the competition.” This same attitude they took with them when it came to enrolling into LEPP, that and a curiosity about what opportunities can be found in the Law Enforcement field.

There may not have been any movie deals or huge ad endorsements after the games were over, but what did come out of it was a sense of pride and admiration from all the people who assisted them on their journey to those games back in the summer of 2002.

ABORIGINAL EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION and NVIT

The fall of 2002 marked the first intake of the Aboriginal Early Childhood Education (AECE) program at NVIT. This fall NVIT will be welcoming a new cohort of students into the program. According to information found at:

http://www.cfc-efc.ca/ecebc/j_dryden.htm

“AECE is a rapidly expanding field as many parents and our federal government are coming to realize the benefits of pre-school education for our children. There is also the hope that Ken Dryden, federal Minister of Social Development, will make the promise of a national child care policy a reality. At a national child care policy conference in November 2004, Minister Dryden addressed 600 child care professionals, policy makers, and advocates. He spoke of the federal government's commitment of five billion dollars over five years to build a national system of early learning and child care based on the principles of Quality, Universality, Accessibility, and Developmental (QUAD).”

For more information on the NVIT AECE program contact Clint Garcia at: 250-378-3392 or cgarcia@nvit.bc.ca