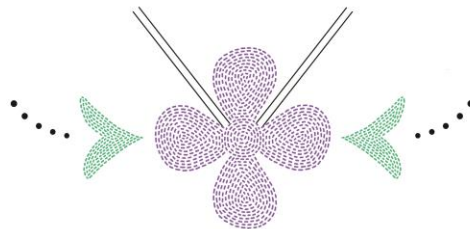


National Inquiry into
Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls



Enquête nationale
sur les femmes et les filles
autochtones disparues et assassinées

**National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls
Truth-Gathering Process
Part 1 Public Hearings
Edmonton Inn, Courtyard Ballroom
Edmonton, Alberta**



PUBLIC

**Wednesday November 8, 2017
Public Volume 22**

Virginia Littlewolfe-Hunter;

**Nancy Chalifoux, Adele Willier & Danette Petie
Chalifoux, In relation to Elizabeth Angeline Willier;**

**Connie Francis, Mary Francis, Henry Francis,
Lane Francis & Lance Francis,
In relation to Lori Lee Francis;**

**Nicole Weesemat & Keanu Gladue,
In relation to Gloria Gladue**

INTERNATIONAL REPORTING INC.

II

APPEARANCES

Assembly of First Nations	Non-appearance
Government of Alberta	Ashley Gelinas (Student-at-law)
Government of Canada	Anne McConville (Legal counsel) Christine Ashcroft (Legal Counsel) Tania Tooke (Paralegal)
Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women	Non-appearance
Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, Saturviit Inuit Women's Association of Nunavik, AnânuKatiget Tumingit Regional Inuit Women's Association Inc., Ottawa Inuit Children's Centre, Manitoba Inuit Association	Non-appearance
Women of Metis Nation / Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak	Non-appearance

Note: For the purpose of establishing this record of attendance, counsel and representatives are considered present whether they attended one or all of the public hearings held over the course of the day at the Edmonton Inn and Convention Centre - Courtyard Ballroom (Public # 1).

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NO.	DESCRIPTION	PAGE
Witness: Virginia Littlewolfe-Hunter Exhibit (code: P1P05P0201)		
1	Copies of Conviction of James Terrance Allan, registered February 10, 1972, by H.J. Buchanan, local Registrar in Battleford, Saskatchewan, and Indictment, signed by Norman F. Miller, agent for the Attorney General, Province of Saskatchewan, each document one page stapled together top left Note: The word "Registrar" handwritten top right corner of Conviction document in black ink	15
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1	Digital folder of two photos a) Nicole Weesemat and Keanu Gladue after the hearing b) photo montage created by Nicole of her mother Gloria, both of which were discussed during the hearing	108
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Edmonton, Alberta

--- Upon commencing on Wednesday, November 8, 2017 at 9:04
a.m.

Hearing # 1

Witness: Virginia Littlewolfe-Hunter

Heard by Commissioner Brian Eyolfson

Commission Counsel: Lillian Lundrigan

Grandmothers, Elders, Knowledge-keepers: Laureen "Blu"

Waters, Florence Catcheway, Miyna Manniapik, Pauline

Paulsen, Mr. Campbell

MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN: Thank you. Good morning. (Speaking in Inuktitut). I'm Lillian Lundrigan. I'm Commission counsel with the Inquiry. Good morning, Mr. Commissioner.

I'd like to introduce Virginia Littlewolfe-Hunter. I anticipate Virginia will be sharing her story of survival.

And before we begin, I would like her support team that is with her, behind her, to introduce themselves before we begin if that's okay?

MR. COLIN LAVANCHIE: I'm Colin Lavanchie, a friend of the family.

MS. ALICE (INDISCERNIBLE): I'm Alice (indiscernible) from Onion Lake. I'm here to support Virginia.

1 **MS. DOREEN WASKEWITCH-ROSA:** Good morning.
2 I'm Doreen Waskewitch-Rosa. I'm also from Onion Lake and a
3 long-time friend of Virginia's, but I'm also here as a
4 health support worker today. Thank you.

5 **DR. DARLENE AUGER (ph):** I'm Dr. Darlene
6 Auger and I'm here to support Virginia as well.

7 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** Thank you. And I'd
8 like to honour the -- the Elders that are also sitting
9 behind us this morning. Thank you very much.

10 Before we begin, I would like to ask the
11 Registrar to come and assist Virginia with her promise with
12 the feather, please.

13 **VIRGINIA LITTLEWOLFE-HUNTER, Affirmed**

14 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** Thank you.
15 Virginia, can you grab the microphone and speak into the
16 microphone?

17 **MS. VIRGINIA LITTLEWOLFE-HUNTER:** The what?

18 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** The microphone.

19 **MS. VIRGINIA LITTLEWOLFE-HUNTER:** I promise.

20 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** That's okay. It's
21 on, yes.

22 **MS. VIRGINIA LITTLEWOLFE-HUNTER:** Hello.

23 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** Yeah, it's on.

24 Okay. Thank you.

25 Thank you, Virginia, for being here with us

1 today. So when -- when you're comfortable and how you're
2 comfortable, you can start sharing your story of survival.

3 **MS. VIRGINIA LITTLEWOLFE-HUNTER:** Good
4 morning. Good morning. My name is Virginia Littlewolfe-
5 Hunter. I'm from the Onion Lake First Nations in
6 Saskatchewan. I speak fluent Cree. I am a mother, a
7 grandmother, and soon to be a great-grandmother. I'm here
8 today to tell you about my horrific story of survival.

9 I'm a survivor. When I was 15 years
10 old -- this happened to me when I was 15 years old. I was
11 with my friend, Shirley Dylan-Wolfe (ph). Shirley Dylan
12 Wolfe is from Onion Lake, but married in Maskwacis and
13 that's where she lives. She's unable to be here to tell
14 her story and she's asked me to -- to share her story too.

15 Me and Shirley, we were on the Highway 16
16 from North Battleford. We were stranded in -- in the Town
17 of Battleford, so we -- we walked to the highway, heading
18 west. We were on our way back to Onion Lake. This -- this
19 happened in -- in August. It was very hot. It was a hot
20 day.

21 A car pulled beside. We were standing
22 on -- on the highway there. It was a white man. It was a
23 four-door car and he asked us where -- where we were going
24 and we said, "Lloydminster." He said, "I'll give you a
25 ride. That's where I'll be driving to," he said. So

1 Shirley Dylan-Wolfe got in the car first, in the front seat
2 beside the driver, and I sat by the passenger door.

3 So on our way down the highway, we dozed
4 off, very tired. We hadn't ate or drank anything, it
5 seemed, like all -- all -- I don't know how many hours, but
6 a long time, so we were in distress already. We just
7 wanted to go home.

8 And he -- he asked us if we were hungry and
9 we said we were. I looked down -- down the highway and I
10 could see Lloydminster. It was -- it wasn't far. And he
11 said that he had some sandwiches, but he had to go off the
12 highway.

13 So he turned off the highway and drove down
14 a gravel road. I remember we passed a farm on the
15 right -- right side of the -- the road and it wasn't far
16 from -- from the Highway 16. And we passed another farm on
17 the left side of the -- of the road, kept going, and there
18 was a driveway. That's where he turned off, to the right
19 side -- I mean -- yeah, right side of the road, and this
20 road is in a wooded area. It was a windy -- a windy road.
21 There was a granary in a big field, a wheat field, and lots
22 of trees. So he made a U-turn and parked the car facing
23 the -- the road we just came from, from the gravel road.

24 He got off the car. He opened the trunk and
25 he came back to the car and he -- he gave us sandwiches and

1 he had Kool-Aid. He gave us each a cup of Kool-Aid. We
2 were sitting there. We were talking and Shirley -- in our
3 language -- and we were waiting for him. And Shirley was
4 looking, you know, "Where -- where'd he go?" And Shirley
5 said, "He's -- he's walking back and forth." He's like
6 pacing back and forth behind -- close to that granary
7 back -- back of the car.

8 And then he opens the car -- the car door
9 where I'm sitting and he's pointing a gun at me. He tells
10 me, "Get out," so we -- I just felt extreme terror. I was
11 just terrified. I got off the car. I was standing and he
12 has in his hand some rope. He gives the rope to Shirley
13 and tells her to tie my hands together behind my back, and
14 Shirley is shaking. He has the gun pointed at Shirley.
15 And then Shirley couldn't tie my -- so he -- he comes and
16 ties that rope like real tight, like, and he orders me to
17 walk to the back of the car. And then all of a sudden he
18 trips me. I'm falling. I'm on the ground behind the car
19 and I'm laying on the -- on the ground facing the back of
20 the bumper of the car. All I could see was the licence
21 plate and he leaves me there.

22 He takes Shirley. This is Shirley's story
23 now. Shirley told me he took her to the front of the car,
24 points the gun at her and orders her to take her clothes
25 off. I can't see. All I could hear is Shirley screaming,

1 crying. I didn't know what he was doing, but -- but
2 Shirley's story, she said that he was trying to rape her.
3 He tied her to the front of the bumper.

4 He then untied her and he took her to
5 the -- to the bushes and tied her to a tree, and I hear
6 more -- more screaming. He attempted to -- to rape Shirley
7 again and he -- I was laying on the -- on the ground facing
8 the licence plate number and the whole time I was laying
9 there, I heard an almighty voice saying to me to keep the
10 numbers, to remember these numbers.

11 He comes back. He pulls me up, grabs
12 my -- my shirt by the -- and he pulls me up, so that I'm
13 standing now. (Speaking in Native language.) He was
14 naked. With the gun behind my back, he tells me to walk.
15 I'm walking to where -- where he -- he came from before we
16 got there and -- and I'm walking real slow.

17 Out of the corner of my eye on the left, I
18 seen Shirley, just a glimpse of her standing by a tree, and
19 I just froze. He pushes that gun behind my back, says,
20 "Walk," he said, so I was walking again. And he says, "Go
21 that way," he says, "into the bushes." Walking into the
22 bushes and then there was a pit, like ahead, and I kept
23 walking until we got in front of that pit. He trips me so
24 I'm -- I'm falling inside the pit. I'm laying there.

25 He leaves me there and then again -- I need

1 some water -- I hear screaming. He had a tire wrench and
2 assaulted Shirley on her head with the tire wrench.

3 Shirley said that not only once.

4 I'm laying there. All of a sudden I could
5 hear him coming. He -- he turned me over where I'm laying
6 on my back and he comes and sits on my stomach. He's
7 naked. In his hand, he had a rag and a can, and he's
8 spraying that can -- I mean the rag and he puts that rag on
9 my face and I'm fighting him and I'm screaming. The smell
10 of that is horrible. And -- and he's -- keeps the rag on
11 my face and he's spraying and at one -- I open my eyes and
12 he's spraying -- sprayed my eyes. And the voice came to me
13 again, "Stop. He's trying to kill me. You have to play
14 dead, (speaking in Native language), so I -- I just went
15 limp. Like I just laid real still. I didn't move. I had
16 a hard time breathing. I felt dizzy, nauseated.

17 He gets off me and he leaves, and I hear
18 Shirley screaming again, and then there was no -- there was
19 no sound anymore.

20 I hear him coming again. He's close by. I
21 felt his arm around my -- my neck and he's -- he's choking
22 me and I'm (speaking in Native language). "You have to
23 play dead. (Speaking in Native language.) A voice told me
24 (indiscernible). I felt like I was drowning, like -- it
25 must be -- I almost lost consciousness. Again, I lay very

1 still. I don't move. I had a hard time breathing. He
2 let's -- he takes his arm off of my neck and leaves me.
3 And then I hear the car start and he's driving -- driving
4 down the road. I hear the car leaving and I'm laying
5 there, trying to regain myself.

6 It seemed like forever. "I have to get up.
7 I have to get up," so I slowly sat up, still my hands tied
8 behind my back. I sat there for a long time. "I have to
9 get up." I was telling myself, "I have to get up," so I
10 slowly stand up.

11 I walk to that road and I'm standing there.
12 I start walking to where we had parked. I looked all over
13 where I had seen Shirley standing in the tree. She was in
14 there and I started screaming. I start calling her name as
15 loud as I -- then all of a sudden that field was moving.
16 Something was coming from the field. It was Shirley. She
17 was bleeding. She had blood all over her face. We cry.
18 We -- I was just crying.

19 We -- we were talking. She said she was in
20 pain and I told her, "Try -- try and untie my hands," and
21 she couldn't. The ropes were tied too tight to untie. She
22 was too weak anyway. I says -- I told Shirley, "We have to
23 walk to that farm (indiscernible)," I told her. "It's not
24 far."

25 We started walking to the gravel road. We

1 walked up to the -- to the house and there was people home.
2 We seen people. They were at home. We're knocking on the
3 door and they wouldn't open the door.

4 I told Shirley, "There's another farm down
5 the road I seen. Shirley, we have to go there." I told
6 Shirley, "Put your hand inside my -- grab my arm." So we
7 were walking back to the gravel road. That was the longest
8 walk ever. We had no shoes. We're walking barefoot.

9 We collapsed on that farmer's lawn and the
10 farmer called the -- the RCMP.

11 And then my -- my next memory is that we're
12 in the hospital. Shirley had to have stitches, more than
13 20 stitches on her head. And my eye -- my eyes were all
14 red from that spray.

15 And the next memory I have is that the
16 RCMP -- from our statements, I had given the -- the plate
17 number. They found him in British Columbia. I don't know
18 how long we -- we were in the hospital. The RCMP took us
19 to the Lloydminster police station and had us identify in a
20 line-up. And my -- I didn't know at the -- at the time
21 about the PTSD.

22 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** Before we talk about
23 that, can we talk about the charges that were laid
24 against --

25 **MS. VIRGINIA LITTLEWOLFE-HUNTER:** M'hm.

1 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** -- the man that
2 assaulted you and Shirley?

3 **MS. VIRGINIA LITTLEWOLFE-HUNTER:** M'hm.

4 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** You gave me a copy
5 of some documents --

6 **MS. VIRGINIA LITTLEWOLFE-HUNTER:** Yes.

7 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** -- that showed that
8 he was charged and convicted for his crimes and I'm just
9 going to present that to the Registrar and to the
10 Commissioner for their copies.

11 **MS. VIRGINIA LITTLEWOLFE-HUNTER:** M'hm.

12 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** Just give me a
13 second here.

14 Virginia, the documents show that this man
15 was charged with unlawfully kidnapping Shirley and unlawful
16 assault on you and he served two years less a day; is that
17 correct?

18 **MS. VIRGINIA LITTLEWOLFE-HUNTER:** Yes, yes.

19 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** Now, the -- the
20 story you just shared is horrific and the --

21 **MS. VIRGINIA LITTLEWOLFE-HUNTER:** Yes.

22 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** -- and the trauma
23 that you and Shirley suffered was horrific. Do you feel
24 that this wasn't fair?

25 **MS. VIRGINIA LITTLEWOLFE-HUNTER:** Yes, it's

1 appalling, yeah.

2 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** He should have been
3 charged with more charges and served more time for what he
4 did to you and your friend, Shirley?

5 **MS. VIRGINIA LITTLEWOLFE-HUNTER:** Yes, many
6 charges. He left us for dead. He should have been charged
7 for attempted murder, assault causing bodily harm.

8 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** Assault -- yeah,
9 assault with a weapon.

10 **MS. VIRGINIA LITTLEWOLFE-HUNTER:** Assault
11 with a weapon, sexual interference, attempted rape.

12 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** And these charges
13 were never laid, just -- just the simple two charges that
14 he was -- that were laid against this man and none of the
15 other charges were. Do you feel that the RCMP didn't do a
16 good enough job in investigating your -- your horrific
17 ordeal? Do you feel that they didn't do the proper job
18 that they should have done by you and Shirley?

19 **MS. VIRGINIA LITTLEWOLFE-HUNTER:** No, they
20 didn't. Me -- me and Shirley, we -- we suffered
21 discrimination because we were -- we were Indigenous.

22 Because of this horrific story of me and
23 Shirley Dylan-Wolfe, I just want to talk about Shirley for
24 a minute.

25 The injury she suffered from being assaulted

1 with a weapon on her head developed -- she developed a
2 tumour. She had to have surgery. After surgery,
3 she -- she suffered more. She suffered loss of memory.
4 She had seizures, epileptic seizures. She wanted to be
5 here today, but she's unable to travel. She has problems
6 walking. The seizures caused a loss of walking, like it
7 affected her, and she's unable to walk well, like she's
8 wobbly.

9 And I suffered PTSD.

10 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** Virginia, you've
11 also shared with me that you -- how you've suffered through
12 the years as a result of this -- this traumatic experience
13 with addictions --

14 **MS. VIRGINIA LITTLEWOLFE-HUNTER:** M'hm.

15 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** -- as well as PTSD.
16 Do you want to talk about --

17 **MS. VIRGINIA LITTLEWOLFE-HUNTER:** M'hm.

18 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** -- the -- the
19 addiction problems that you've suffered throughout?

20 **MS. VIRGINIA LITTLEWOLFE-HUNTER:** M'hm. The
21 trauma I suffered when I was 15 caused -- excuse me -- it's
22 like psychological. It's like I hated who I was. I didn't
23 give a shit about who -- who I was. I became fearless. I
24 even went as far as being with the Hell's Angels and then
25 affiliated. I had many kinds of addictions in my life.

1 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** Do you agree that
2 when you were suffering through these -- these addictions
3 and the trauma that there was a lack of victim support
4 services for you and Shirley to -- to get the help that you
5 needed?

6 **MS. VIRGINIA LITTLEWOLFE-HUNTER:** Yeah.

7 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** Yeah. There was no
8 help for you?

9 **MS. VIRGINIA LITTLEWOLFE-HUNTER:** No, there
10 was no -- m'hm, there was no help, no counselling, nothing,
11 and I became being racist myself towards white people, but
12 today I am free of addictions. I've been sober 30 years.

13 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** And you're on your
14 healing journey --

15 **MS. VIRGINIA LITTLEWOLFE-HUNTER:** Yes.

16 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** -- (indiscernible),
17 Virginia. Yeah. Thank you. Thank you, Virginia, for
18 sharing your story.

19 **MS. VIRGINIA LITTLEWOLFE-HUNTER:** Thank you.

20 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** If you don't have
21 anything to add, then I'll ask Commissioner Eyolfson if he
22 has any questions for you.

23 **COMMISSIONER EYOLFSON:** Virginia, before we
24 finish, are there any recommendations you would like to
25 make to the Inquiry today?

1 **MS. VIRGINIA LITTLEWOLFE-HUNTER:** There
2 should be more trauma counselling for victims' families,
3 survivors because this pain I've been carrying myself for
4 50 years has to stop. They should have groups. There
5 should be groups for women like myself, to be proud of who
6 we are, mostly to love each other, because love is the
7 greatest thing ever in this world.

8 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** Thank you, Virginia.

9 **COMMISSIONER EYOLFSON:** Thank you, Virginia.
10 I want to thank you for having the strength to come here
11 and share with us today this horrific ordeal that you and
12 your friend, Shirley, went through. And I want to thank
13 you for your recommendations.

14 **MS. VIRGINIA LITTLEWOLFE-HUNTER:** M'hm.
15 Thank you.

16 **MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS:** So, Virginia,
17 before we finish, Commissioner Eyolfson is going to offer
18 you some tobacco, one for you and one for Shirley, because
19 you've told us her story and it's very valuable just as
20 yours, so Commissioner Eyolfson will give you that tobacco.

21 And as well, Virginia, on behalf of the
22 Commission, we'd like to offer you as well, for you and
23 Shirley, each of you an eagle feather to help you with your
24 journey, to continue your journey, and to help you pray to
25 that one that guided you through your ordeal, that helped

1 you while you were going through that. And there's also
2 some seeds here so that you and Shirley can plant some
3 seeds to continue your growing, so we'd like to offer you
4 these. Thank you so much for your courage.

5 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** Thank you, Virginia.
6 Thank you, Commissioner Eyolfson. This concludes
7 Virginia's testimony today.

8 **Exhibits (code: P1P05P0201)**

9 **Exhibit 1:** Copies of Conviction of James Terrance Allan
10 registered February 10, 1972, by H.J.
11 Buchanan, local Registrar in Battleford,
12 Saskatchewan, and Indictment signed by
13 Norman F. Miller, agent for the Attorney
14 General Province of Saskatchewan, each
15 document one page stapled together top left
16 Note: The word "Registrar" handwritten top
17 right corner of Conviction document in black
18 ink

19 --- Upon recessing at 10:01 a.m.

20 **Hearing # 2**

21 **Witnesses: Nancy Chalifoux, Adele Willier,**

22 **Danette Petie Chalifoux**

23 **In Relation to Elizabeth Angeline Willier**

24 **Heard by Commissioner Brian Eyolfson**

25 **Commission Counsel: Breen Ouellette**

1 **Grandmothers, Elders, Knowledge-keepers: Laureen "Blu"**
2 **Waters, Florence Catcheway, Miyna Manniapik**

3

4 --- Upon resuming at 10:56 a.m.

5 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Thank you,
6 Commissioner Eyolfson. For the record, my name is Breen
7 Ouellette and I'm a lawyer with the National Inquiry.

8 It is my honour to introduce Nancy
9 Chalifoux, Adele Willier on the end -- and that's Nancy's
10 sister -- and then Nancy's daughter in the middle, Petie
11 Chalifoux.

12 Nancy has travelled here from Driftpile.
13 Adele has travelled here from Hinton and Petie has
14 travelled here from Merritt, BC. They have brought people
15 in support who I will ask Nancy to introduce.

16 **MS. NANCY CHALIFOUX:** The lady behind Adele
17 is Adele's support person, Marj. And our family members on
18 the front row there: My son, Ray; my daughter-in-law,
19 Carlene (ph); my grand-baby, Kitarnow (ph); my other
20 daughter, Shannon; and the little boy, Mason. This
21 is -- this is the family that we were able to gather
22 together because we're so spread out.

23 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Thank you.

24 Mr. Registrar, Nancy, Adele and Petie have
25 requested to affirm together using an eagle feather.

1 **NANCY CHALIFOUX, Affirmed**

2 **ADELE CHALIFOUX, Affirmed**

3 **DANETTE PETIE CHALIFOUX, Affirmed**

4 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Adele, I want to offer
5 you this tobacco tie in support of your testimony today.

6 Petie, I want to offer you this tobacco tie
7 in support of your testimony today.

8 Nancy, I want to offer you this tobacco tie
9 in support of your testimony today.

10 Adele, would you please tell us the full
11 name of the person you have come to speak about today?

12 **MS. ADELE WILLIER:** I'm here today to talk
13 of my mother, to tell you who my mother is. Her name is
14 Angeline Willier.

15 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And I understand that
16 she's also sometimes known as Elizabeth Angeline Willier;
17 is that right?

18 **MS. ADELE WILLIER:** Yes.

19 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Are you here today
20 because your mother is missing or because she was murdered?

21 **MS. ADELE WILLIER:** We're here today because
22 we don't know what happened to our mom and I think we will
23 never know. She was found in -- in the bush in 2001 and
24 nothing really was done at the time and then, 11 years
25 later, an investigation was done, but Nancy and Petie will

1 go into all those details.

2 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And when she was found
3 in the bush, was it August 30th of 2001?

4 **MS. ADELE WILLIER:** Yes.

5 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** How old was your
6 mother at that time?

7 **MS. ADELE WILLIER:** She was 72.

8 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And could you share
9 with us what your mother's early life was like?

10 **MS. ADELE WILLIER:** My mother lost her
11 parents when, I believe, she was seven and went to live
12 with an aunt and an uncle, and she was placed in a
13 residential school. And the residential school thing has a
14 big impact on -- on her life and -- and our life as well.
15 Her parents were also in a residential school and
16 my -- both sets of our grandparents were in residential
17 schools and our parents were in residential schools. And
18 my mother is -- she was a survivor of the residential
19 schools and a survivor also of the life that she had with
20 her aunt and uncle. And -- and then meeting my dad and
21 then having us kids. And I remember we lived in a log
22 house that I faintly remember my dad and some people
23 building. And I remember the cracks being filled in the
24 log house with the mud and the grass, and we lived in this
25 log house.

1 And as kids, like our mom, she taught us
2 to -- well, I can't actually say taught, but she made us
3 work. Like we had to haul water. We had to haul wood. We
4 had to chop wood and chop the ice in the barrel and get the
5 water out of the barrel, and hang clothes, and -- and all
6 these things that people can't even imagine today that we
7 had to do, but she really showed us how to work and she
8 always -- she always was moving, moving, moving, moving.
9 She was always doing something. She always had something
10 to do and just a really busy woman.

11 And then later in life, then we moved to
12 Hinton. My dad went first and went to work for the mill,
13 and -- and then we went and my mom took us. There was
14 seven of us kids. She took us from Faust on a train. I
15 can't even imagine having to take the train with seven kids
16 from Faust to Edmonton and then from Edmonton to Hinton,
17 and she did this all herself, looking after all seven of us
18 kids, and then making our home in a little shack, just in a
19 little community outside of Hinton.

20 And as we got older, then mother went to
21 work. She cleaned houses and she worked in a number of
22 places in Hinton. She worked for people cleaning their
23 houses, and -- and then she worked in some hotels and she
24 worked as a housekeeper, and then she worked as a -- as the
25 head housekeeper, and then she made us work also.

1 And -- and through -- later, I remember in
2 1970 when we lost my sister in -- in a horrible, horrible
3 accident, and it's from those things that my mother
4 survived losing her daughter, and then later my brother,
5 and then my other sister, and then my other sister, so she
6 lost like four children, and I remember how she broke apart
7 when my nephew committed suicide. And I remember how
8 strong she was when -- she handled everything for me when
9 my baby died.

10 She's a very, very strong woman. And she
11 started to work for the people and she helped to form the
12 Voice of Alberta Native Women chapter in Hinton. And then
13 she went to work for Harold Cardinal for the Indian
14 Association. And she also worked for -- I think it's
15 called Children Services in High Prairie with Child
16 Welfare, I think it was. She worked there briefly for a
17 while, but she was always doing those sort of things,
18 constantly busy.

19 She did a lot of travelling across Canada,
20 attending rallies and marches and working for the people.
21 And I remember asking her one time, "Why do you do this?
22 Some of these people are just talking about you," and she
23 answered me, like, "They need help." And it didn't matter
24 to her that people talked about her negatively, but she
25 just wanted to help people and she wanted to help her

1 people, and this is what I remember about my mother and how
2 busy she always was, and so giving.

3 So when -- and I feel like I'm tired now,
4 that I don't want to do this anymore, but I feel like I'm
5 abandoning her too, but I'm tired. I think I'm tired of
6 hurting. I have to accept I will never know what happened
7 to my mom. I just have to give it up.

8 I think that I'm -- I'm ready to let my
9 sister and my niece carry -- carry it on and I think that I
10 can still be there and be a support, but I can't do this
11 anymore. I can't -- I can't speak anymore.

12 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Thank you, Adele.
13 Nancy, what were your mother's circumstances in the weeks
14 before she was found?

15 **MS. NANCY CHALIFOUX:** Before she was found,
16 she living in Driftpile. She was living with a man who I
17 can only describe as 24/7 drunk. I don't recall
18 ever -- him ever being sober.

19 She had separated from my father and she was
20 living with that man and she was in Driftpile. She would
21 come to my house often, at least once a week, sometimes
22 more than once a week. She would come and see my kids.
23 When she didn't, when we didn't see her anymore, we
24 knew -- we knew something was wrong.

25 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Can you tell me a

1 little bit about the circumstances of -- of a previous
2 injury that she had?

3 **MS. NANCY CHALIFOUX:** In May of 2001, she
4 ran over herself. I can't describe how that happened. She
5 didn't put it in park, and got out, and it rolled over her,
6 and it was a really bad injury where the bone was sticking
7 out of her leg. She ended up requiring surgery. There was
8 a rod put into her leg, so as a result of that and the
9 healing process that goes along with broken bones, she was
10 using a walker. So around about the time in the weeks
11 before she disappeared, she had been using a walker to get
12 around.

13 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And would it be safe
14 to say that she was dependent on the walker to get around?

15 **MS. NANCY CHALIFOUX:** Yes. She was not
16 physically strong enough to just walk without that.

17 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Do you know the last
18 time your mother was seen alive?

19 **MS. NANCY CHALIFOUX:** August 8th, 2001.

20 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Petie, can you tell
21 the Commissioner about the last time you saw your
22 grandmother?

23 **MS. DANETTE PETIE CHALIFOUX:** The last time
24 I saw her, I was heading out of town, out of Driftpile, and
25 our reserve, there's only one way in and one way out, and

1 the road I was taking, just before you leave the reserve,
2 she was the last driveway on the right side, so I pulled in
3 to say hi because we would visit a lot. And I remember
4 pulling off the highway down to her driveway and seeing her
5 truck coming out towards -- towards me and she was waving
6 at me to -- to back up, so I back up and we park along the
7 highway and I asked her what was wrong because she was very
8 frantic and she said, "Nothing's wrong. I'm okay," but
9 I -- I knew something was wrong because she was -- she was
10 very agitated. And as I was talking to her, I was standing
11 at her window of her truck and I looked inside and I could
12 see her purse beside her and her walker was in the back of
13 the truck. And I asked her where she was going and she
14 said she was going to go visit my auntie in Hinton, my
15 Auntie Adele.

16 And as we were talking, the man she was
17 living with, George, he came walking down the driveway and,
18 as my mother said, he -- he's a 24 drunk and he was
19 staggering down the driveway, and it was a stagger we
20 became used to because he was always drunk. And he got to
21 the truck and he was trying to tell her to stay and not to
22 leave. And -- and then I looked at them and I asked her
23 again, "Are you okay?" and she said, "Yes," and then she
24 started talking in Cree. For me at the time, I could
25 understand very little Cree, so she knew by speaking in the

1 language that I wouldn't know what they were talking about.
2 They were arguing through that window. And George reached
3 in to try to grab her keys and she hit him, told him to
4 leave, shut the window, and she looked at me and she said
5 she'll see me again, and she left.

6 And these fights that -- that they would
7 have, they would happen I don't know how regularly. But I
8 remember talking to her that day. I remember seeing her.
9 I remember the clothes she was wearing and I remember what
10 was in her vehicle when she left. And when she was found,
11 she was wearing the exact same clothes that I saw that day.

12 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** She was wearing the
13 exact same clothes, but do you recall the medical
14 examiner's report detail about her shirt?

15 **MS. DANETTE PETIE CHALIFOUX:** When I read
16 the report, it said that her shirt was turned inside out.
17 And when I saw my grandmother that day, her shirt was on
18 properly. And when you read the report, it says her shirt
19 was inside out, so to me that's clear that something had
20 happened to her.

21 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Nancy, you said
22 earlier that you knew something was wrong because she
23 visited at least once a week and time had passed and she
24 hadn't visited?

25 **MS. NANCY CHALIFOUX:** That's correct.

1 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Did you report her
2 missing to the police?

3 **MS. NANCY CHALIFOUX:** My niece was actually
4 the one that reported her missing and when I realized that,
5 yeah, something is wrong, she should have visited by now, I
6 started to search for her and when you're searching for
7 someone, it's everywhere, and even now I still find myself
8 searching. It never really ends.

9 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Do you know which
10 police force she was reported missing to?

11 **MS. NANCY CHALIFOUX:** At that point in time,
12 the police force on the reserve, I believe, was called the
13 Lesser Slave Lake Indian Regional Police and the RCMP
14 referred to them as the Slirpies (ph).

15 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And what was the
16 reputation of the Slirpies as a police force?

17 **MS. NANCY CHALIFOUX:** They were eventually
18 shut down for non-investigations. Apparently, there was
19 several cases that they didn't investigate and they were
20 eventually shut down.

21 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And was it mid-August
22 when you reported her missing?

23 **MS. NANCY CHALIFOUX:** I believe that was the
24 timeframe, yes.

25 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** When did you learn

1 that your mother had passed away?

2 **MS. NANCY CHALIFOUX:** I was in Hinton at my
3 sister's place when I got the call from the -- the police
4 force at the time, the Slirpies, and I was out. We were
5 out in town shopping, got the call, and he said, "You need
6 to get to a landline. We need to talk," and I knew. I
7 knew right away it was very serious.

8 So we go back to her house and I call him
9 back from the landline and that's when he tells me they
10 found -- they found the truck and a few feet from the
11 truck, they found the body.

12 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Where was your mother
13 found? How would you describe it, the -- the location in
14 the area?

15 **MS. NANCY CHALIFOUX:** The closest town would
16 have been -- well, it was Swan Hills. And it would -- it
17 was about an hour and a half drive through a gravel road /
18 dirt road / wagon trail / quad trail type of thing to the
19 site where the truck was, and then it was another kilometre
20 and a half from where the truck was to where her body lie
21 at the bottom of a steep gully in a ditch.

22 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And do you remember
23 what you were told about how the truck was found on the
24 road?

25 **MS. NANCY CHALIFOUX:** The truck was stuck in

1 some ruts and I guess when we saw the truck, when we were
2 allowed to see the truck, it really stood out that it
3 wasn't muddy. It wasn't muddy outside. It wasn't muddy
4 inside, and yet it was stuck in these deep ruts.

5 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** When you got the news,
6 what -- what was the family's response? Where -- where did
7 you go?

8 **MS. NANCY CHALIFOUX:** When we got the news
9 and I informed the rest of the family, the family gathered
10 in Swan Hills. The police took us to the truck. They had
11 towed it out, towed it into town, and we went and had a
12 look at it and there was a lot of odd things about that
13 truck that just -- I don't understand. They're very
14 questionable. The tire -- one of the tires was recently
15 changed, but there was no jack. There was no tire iron.
16 There was a two-foot dent in the front driver's side.
17 There was blood on the passenger door and there was hair on
18 the snowbrush. Just a lot of things didn't add up.

19 And then the officer drove us out to the
20 site. It's about a 50-kilometre drive, but, like I say, it
21 takes an hour, an hour and a half to get through those
22 types of road conditions.

23 When we -- when everyone arrived there,
24 we -- we went down to the site and for me this is really
25 hard. We did a ceremony and my family members started to

1 find things on the ground. The police released the site to
2 us, but my family members found things on the ground; her
3 dentures, one of her running shoes, one of her socks that
4 was oddly filled with grass and twigs, and her keys, the
5 keys to the truck. So here's this 72-year-old lady in the
6 middle of nowhere, a kilometre and a half from her truck at
7 the bottom of a steep gully and items all over the ground.
8 Did the police really search that area? Did they not find
9 it strange?

10 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** I have a few other
11 questions about the -- the items for you and then I also
12 have some questions for Petie about the items. So did you
13 know that the tire had been recently changed because the
14 blow-out tire was somewhere to be seen?

15 **MS. NANCY CHALIFOUX:** That's correct, the
16 blown out tire was in the -- in the box of the truck, so we
17 knew that was recent -- that recently happened.

18 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And can you tell me
19 what you noticed about the ashtray in the truck?

20 **MS. NANCY CHALIFOUX:** The inside of the
21 truck, when we looked at it, the ashtray was full of
22 cigarette butts and my mother did not smoke. She did not
23 like people that smoked. She wouldn't allow people to
24 smoke in her truck. That -- to me, that was odd, really
25 odd. Why would that ashtray be open and overflowing with

1 cigarette butts?

2 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And, Petie, can you
3 tell us what you also noticed about the truck? You had
4 just seen it. You were the last person to see it before.

5 **MS. DANETTE PETIE CHALIFOUX:** When I saw the
6 truck in Swan Hills, for me, it being as clean as it was
7 for the conditions where it was found, was -- was out of
8 place. But also my grandmother had things in her vehicle
9 that were very grandmotherly, as I would call it. She
10 would have photos of her grandchildren, photos of her
11 family, candies and -- and things like that for when she
12 saw the great-grandchildren, but in that truck that day it
13 was clean. There was nothing in there. And when I looked
14 around, seeing the bloodstain on the -- on the passenger
15 side was very alarming and I showed it to the officer, the
16 RCMP officer, and I said, "Look right here. This looks
17 like blood," and he leans in, "Oh, yeah, maybe," and that
18 was it. And I asked him if he was going to test it or if
19 he was going to look at it, but there was no response.

20 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Do you remember the
21 officer's name?

22 **MS. DANETTE PETIE CHALIFOUX:** Officer -- I
23 can't say his last name -- Coutrey (ph) -- Coutrey.

24 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Alex Coutrey?

25 **MS. NANCY CHALIFOUX:** Yes.

1 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And this dent on the
2 driver's side of the truck, it was how large?

3 **MS. NANCY CHALIFOUX:** It was about two feet
4 across and it -- it -- to me, it seemed like a very weird
5 dent. It wasn't like she ran into the corner of a building
6 or something. There was no sharp -- it was just round. It
7 was odd.

8 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And, Petie, did you
9 remember seeing that dent on the driveway when you had last
10 seen your grandmother?

11 **MS. DANETTE PETIE CHALIFOUX:** No, her truck
12 was -- was very smooth. She was a very careful driver and
13 she -- she kept it -- she kept it nice.

14 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And so then after the
15 family saw the truck, you said the officer took you out to
16 the place where she was found. And the direction that her
17 body was away from the truck, did it make sense for
18 somebody that was stuck and was trying to get out back to
19 town?

20 **MS. NANCY CHALIFOUX:** No, it did not. She
21 was going in the exact opposite direction of civilization.

22 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** At this time, the
23 family has asked that the AV crew display the first photo
24 that they've provided on the screen. Petie, can you
25 describe the area where your grandmother was found?

1 **MS. DANETTE PETIE CHALIFOUX:** In this photo,
2 you don't see how big the -- the hill or the ravine down to
3 where this is, but this is where her body was found and the
4 bush, it's -- it's very -- it's thick bush, like a lot of
5 small trees and shrubs and thorns, tall grass, willows, and
6 larger trees, so, yeah.

7 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And you said it's very
8 steep. Would you expect a person with a broken leg would
9 be climbing down that ravine?

10 **MS. DANETTE PETIE CHALIFOUX:** I highly doubt
11 somebody with a broken leg could -- could walk down there.
12 When we walked down, we had to be very careful and we
13 had -- our legs weren't broken.

14 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And what was the
15 distance again from -- from the truck to this spot?

16 **MS. DANETTE PETIE CHALIFOUX:** It was one
17 kilometre, just -- just over one kilometre. And at the
18 site, there was no cane and no walker, so there's no way my
19 grandmother could have walked that far and down a steep
20 ravine with no assistance.

21 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Was her walker ever
22 found?

23 **MS. DANETTE PETIE CHALIFOUX:** Her walker was
24 never found and neither was the cane.

25 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And so do you remember

1 discussing this with the officer?

2 **MS. DANETTE PETIE CHALIFOUX:** I remember
3 asking him how it was possible that she could be there
4 because he had told the family that it appears this elderly
5 Indian woman got lost, got out of her truck and ended up
6 here. I said, "So you're telling me you think this elderly
7 woman got lost, walked a kilometre down a steep ravine and
8 decided to lay down and die?" and he didn't respond to
9 that.

10 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Do you remember asking
11 about the search?

12 **MS. DANETTE PETIE CHALIFOUX:** Yes, when my
13 family was there, we were all looking at the site and
14 standing near where the remains were, and I remember asking
15 the officer if he did a search because to me when
16 somebody's missing and -- and has been found, there should
17 have been a search, a ground search of some type, to try to
18 help find anything that leads to what happened. He said,
19 "Yes, they did." And as I'm standing at the site, I
20 feel -- I feel drawn to the head of where the site was.

21 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Petie --

22 **MS. DANETTE PETIE CHALIFOUX:** Yeah.

23 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** -- you had asked that
24 the video crew show the --

25 **MS. DANETTE PETIE CHALIFOUX:** Yeah.

1 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** -- second photo on the
2 screen while you describe this, so I would ask for that
3 second photo.

4 **MS. DANETTE PETIE CHALIFOUX:** So when we
5 were standing at the site, I felt drawn to go past her, so
6 I walked towards the bushes behind her and I stopped
7 because I have a sudden feeling of -- of heaviness. And
8 another family member continued to walk where I was and
9 they found her dentures there.

10 Yeah, I returned back to the site and again
11 the feeling was pulling me to the left of where her body
12 was found and that's where the shoe was found.

13 I returned to the site, again being pulled
14 in another direction, and I stopped and another family
15 member goes further and they find that sock filled with
16 grass and twigs as you see there. And I ask the officer
17 again, "Did you search the area because look at what we're
18 finding?" and he said, "Yes, we searched the area."

19 I go back to the site and there's some dirt
20 that looks different than the rest or -- and where her body
21 was, and I start kicking it. And I stopped kicking the
22 dirt because the same feeling -- and my father continues to
23 remove the dirt in the same area, and that's where we found
24 her keys. They were buried beside where her body was.

25 I'd like to -- I'd like you to hold this and

1 look at this. This is what we found. When the police said
2 they did their search, this is what my family found.

3 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** The -- the sock is
4 red?

5 **MS. DANETTE PETIE CHALIFOUX:** Yes.

6 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And was it easily
7 seen?

8 **MS. DANETTE PETIE CHALIFOUX:** Yes. It
9 was -- it was on top of the grass. If a police officer
10 really did a search, he would have seen that. If they
11 really searched the area, they would have found her
12 dentures. They would have found her shoe and who knows
13 what else they would have found. If they had taken a metal
14 detector, they could have found other items, but none of
15 this was done.

16 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** What did the officer
17 have to say about the items that your family found?

18 **MS. DANETTE PETIE CHALIFOUX:** He just said,
19 "Oh, wow," and to me, again, "What do you mean wow? If you
20 searched this area, why are you amazed that we found these
21 items?" And to me it seemed very much that we were being
22 treated -- my family was being treated disrespectfully and
23 that this case with my grandmother was just being brushed
24 aside as another dead Indian. There was no respect and
25 there was no proper help or investigation done.

1 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** What items were never
2 found by either you or the police?

3 **MS. DANETTE PETIE CHALIFOUX:** My
4 grandmother, she loved these rings and I remember seeing
5 them as a child all the way up until she was gone.
6 Her -- her fingers were filled with rings and on her rings,
7 she had a stone, a birthstone for each child and
8 grandchild. Beautiful rings and when they found her body,
9 those rings weren't there. And the only items that came
10 back to my family was one ring and one watch.

11 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And at this time if
12 the video crew would display the third photo?

13 Would you like me to share this with the
14 Commissioner?

15 **MS. NANCY CHALIFOUX:** Yes, that's all that
16 we got back. That is all that we got back from the medical
17 examiner.

18 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And were there other
19 items that were never found?

20 **MS. DANETTE PETIE CHALIFOUX:** My
21 grandmother, in addition to having her purse and knowing
22 elderlies, they have -- their purses are full of things; a
23 bunch of different items, family photos, again candies
24 and -- and a wallet and things like that. Her purse was
25 never found. And she also carried a knitting bag because

1 whenever she had spare time, she'd be knitting. The
2 knitting bag was never found, and the walker was never
3 found, and the cane was never found, rings were never
4 found. These are all things that she would have had with
5 her and I recall seeing them in the truck on August 8th.

6 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And after the family
7 had exhausted a search of the scene, was that when you held
8 your ceremony for your grandmother?

9 **MS. DANETTE PETIE CHALIFOUX:** Yes, we -- we
10 gathered around the site. We prayed. We sang songs and
11 after that, we -- we left, but by that time the officer
12 that was there was gone, so he didn't stay with us to lead
13 us back out to the community, to -- to Swan Hills, not that
14 we needed help getting back, but it was still -- would have
15 been nice to have the officer there the entire time.

16 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Was an autopsy
17 performed on your grandmother?

18 **MS. DANETTE PETIE CHALIFOUX:** Yes.

19 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Do you recall the
20 cause of death as being undetermined in that report?

21 **MS. DANETTE PETIE CHALIFOUX:** Yes, it said
22 it was undetermined and further down into the report, it
23 says, "Death due to exposure."

24 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Do you recall that the
25 medical examiner report shows any unusual marks or

1 abrasions on your grandmother's body?

2 **MS. DANETTE PETIE CHALIFOUX:** Yes, we were
3 re-reading it yesterday and the day before and after
4 reading the report over and over and over again, it stood
5 out that in the report it said that there's post-mortem
6 abrasions on both knees, so, again, if my grandmother was
7 there, she could not crawl away while she's dead, so, you
8 know, this is alarming. She could have been dragged out
9 there and placed there, but this did not trigger any
10 investigation by the RCMP. It was still labelled and
11 listed as "Death due to exposure. Lost her way."

12 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Was your family
13 offered an opportunity to view your grandmother's remains?

14 **MS. DANETTE PETIE CHALIFOUX:** No.

15 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Do you think they did
16 that to -- to try to spare you some pain?

17 **MS. DANETTE PETIE CHALIFOUX:** Probably, but
18 I feel like we should have still been given the opportunity
19 for those of us who wanted to see.

20 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And do you believe
21 that the family should be consulted about their desire to
22 have remains handled in a culturally-appropriate way before
23 and after an autopsy is performed?

24 **MS. DANETTE PETIE CHALIFOUX:** Yes, I think
25 that would be the better and more respectful thing to do

1 with Indigenous people is to have proper protocol in place,
2 to have our Elders to come out and do a ceremony before
3 those remains are touched.

4 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** When did you have the
5 funeral?

6 **MS. DANETTE PETIE CHALIFOUX:** September 6th.

7 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Did you have any
8 further contact with the police after the funeral?

9 **MS. DANETTE PETIE CHALIFOUX:** None.

10 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Did you eventually
11 have contact with the police a much longer time --

12 **MS. DANETTE PETIE CHALIFOUX:** Yes, in -- it
13 would have been my mother, but in -- in 2012, she
14 was -- she made contact with the RCMP.

15 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Nancy, could you tell
16 us about why you contacted the police in 2012?

17 **MS. NANCY CHALIFOUX:** So in May of 2012, a
18 construction crew of workers in Driftpile, in our home
19 community, were tearing down an old skating change room
20 shack. They were taking that down. And what the crew
21 discovered, inside of that shack, there was a hole and in
22 that hole under that shack, parts and pieces of what would
23 have been in my mother's purse were discovered. This is
24 ten years after her body was discovered two hours away.
25 That crew gave those pieces to my niece. They held onto

1 them for a while, I guess, not knowing what to do with
2 them. They gave them to my niece. My niece called my
3 sister, Adele. Adele called me, and we took those items to
4 the Faust RCMP. And the way that things are handled,
5 because we come from Driftpile, we're immediately diverted
6 to the other police force and, at that time, they were
7 known as Lakeshore Police and they have replaced the
8 Slirpies that we spoke about earlier.

9 When we spoke with the sergeant of that
10 department, the -- there was a stark contrast in the way
11 that we were treated. It was a night and day kind of
12 thing. We told him why we were there. We told him where
13 the ID was found. We told him where her body was found and
14 the time span between the two and he immediately grabbed
15 his notepad and he started taking all kinds of notes. He
16 said, "There's something wrong here. There's definitely
17 something wrong here. This needs to be investigated," and
18 he got right on it.

19 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** When was the first
20 time you were put in touch with Victim Services?

21 **MS. NANCY CHALIFOUX:** The Lakeshore Police,
22 on taking our statements that day, got the Victim Services
23 people involved immediately and they came to my house the
24 next day, and that was the first time we had ever been put
25 in touch with Victim Services. And Victim Services told

1 us -- well, one of the questions they asked us was, "What
2 came out of the summary of the investigation in 2001?" and
3 we were like, "Summary? We were supposed to get a
4 summary?" We had no idea.

5 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Did Lakeshore's
6 renewed investigation have an impact on the RCMP response?

7 **MS. NANCY CHALIFOUX:** It did, but it was a
8 very slow response. It -- it caused them to do a few
9 things, but I didn't feel like it was as much as Lakeshore
10 was doing. Lakeshore was very -- very active and
11 continually giving me updates and phone calls and emails
12 and coming to my house and actually investigating for the
13 first time ever.

14 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** So the RCMP response,
15 would you describe it as reluctant or minimal or
16 what -- how would you describe -- they were responding, but
17 what would you say?

18 **MS. NANCY CHALIFOUX:** I would say that they
19 were responding because I was being so vocal that I was
20 calling them, that I was emailing them, that -- reminding
21 them, telling them that something's not right here and it
22 wasn't like -- with Lakeshore, it was one conversation and
23 they were -- they were on it and they were investigating.
24 With the RCMP, it was phone call after phone call after
25 phone call, to the point where I had to physically meet

1 with the sergeant.

2 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And do you -- do you
3 believe that the original investigation was informing the
4 way that they were responding in 2012?

5 **MS. NANCY CHALIFOUX:** Yes. In 2001, they
6 had made up -- the RCMP had made up their mind that this
7 72-year-old woman drove off an hour and a half into the
8 bush and then walked another kilometre without her walker
9 and somehow got down into that gully and laid down and
10 died; that's their decision. They carried that forward ten
11 years. So when I asked them to look at it, they felt it
12 was open and shut. They couldn't see -- they couldn't take
13 off the blinders. They couldn't see the confusion that the
14 family had, the obvious things that didn't add up. They
15 couldn't see that. They refused to see that.

16 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Did the Lakeshore
17 investigation find any answers for your family?

18 **MS. NANCY CHALIFOUX:** That Lakeshore
19 investigation didn't tell us what happened, didn't tell us
20 who did what. They exhausted all leads and we still don't
21 know who did this to our mother.

22 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** So were you contacted
23 by Lakeshore and told that they had reached a dead end on
24 their investigation; do you recall?

25 **MS. NANCY CHALIFOUX:** Yes, the officer that

1 I had been in contact with, with Lakeshore -- and that's
2 another thing. With Lakeshore, it was one person, one
3 point of contact that maintained that relationship with me,
4 that kept me updated. He was my contact.

5 With the RCMP, it was at least three
6 separate officers that I went through in the same time
7 period that I worked with Lakeshore and there was no
8 consistency and so when Lakeshore told me that they have
9 exhausted all leads and they can't determine anything, I
10 asked for a summary because Victim Services told me I
11 should have had a summary back in 2001, so now there's the
12 end of this investigation in 2012. I asked for a summary
13 for my family and for the summary to be delivered by the
14 police. And I don't understand jurisdiction. I don't know
15 why Lakeshore couldn't give us that summary. It had to go
16 back to the RCMP.

17 So August 29th of 2014, I met with the
18 sergeant of the Swan Hills Detachment because I wanted to
19 get this summary. So I make the appointment. I go to the
20 detachment. I'm in the entryway, in the room there, and I
21 can hear someone in the back saying, "I need blah-blah
22 file. This shouldn't take long," and then the door opens
23 and the fellow calls me in.

24 We go into the room and he's like, "This is
25 pretty much an open and shut case. She died on the side of

1 the road of exposure. What would you like to talk about?"
2 And I said, "Wait a minute. There are many, many
3 unanswered questions here. This is not open and shut. Why
4 is there a dent in the front of the truck?" He pulls out
5 the pictures, the police pictures, out of the file. He
6 pulls them out and he says, "Oh, yeah, there's a dent
7 there." They've had those pictures for over ten years and
8 they're seeing the dent for the first time?

9 And I said, "What about the missing items?
10 Where's her purse? Where's her walker? Where's her cane?
11 Where's the rings? Why were those items found after your
12 search? What was she doing out there so far?" so many
13 unanswered questions. "Who changed her tire? Where are
14 those items?" And at that point he said, "You're right.
15 Something's wrong here." Ten plus years later, he says
16 that. That was the first time they acknowledged something
17 wasn't right.

18 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** So did that cause the
19 sergeant to agree to provide that summary?

20 **MS. NANCY CHALIFOUX:** It -- it did, but it
21 wasn't that simple. It was calling and emailing and
22 calling and emailing and pushing and pushing and not going
23 away and -- and keeping at him and keeping at him until I
24 finally got that date to have that summary delivered to my
25 family. It was at least ten points of contact to get that

1 summary and three months later.

2 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And how many pages was
3 the summary?

4 **MS. NANCY CHALIFOUX:** The summary was a mere
5 three pages long.

6 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Were you surprised
7 that you received the summary?

8 **MS. NANCY CHALIFOUX:** I was actually shocked
9 because with my experience with the RCMP, the feeling that
10 I had the entire time was that we didn't matter, that we
11 were just Indians, that we were being brushed aside, that
12 we were being provided with minimal action just to make us
13 go away. I had to become a very strong advocate. I had to
14 keep at it and keep at it. And when we finally got that
15 summary, to be honest, I really didn't expect to get that
16 far, but it wasn't easy getting there.

17 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And were you -- were
18 you satisfied with the summary when you finally received
19 it?

20 **MS. NANCY CHALIFOUX:** I don't know that
21 everybody could be satisfied with a -- with a summary in
22 this case. We found no answers. We still don't know what
23 happened to her. We don't know why this happened.

24 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Adele, I want to give
25 you the opportunity to speak about the strengths and gifts

1 of your mother because you speak so beautifully about her.

2 **MS. ADELE WILLIER:** I think what I would
3 like everybody to know about my mother is she was very,
4 very vocal and so committed to helping our people, as I
5 said, being involved in marches and rallies and -- and a
6 strong desire to -- to improve the life and conditions of
7 our people. She worked so hard on that, to the point of my
8 sister, Nancy, here at one point had found a little saying
9 that said, "My mother belongs to a group" -- or, "My mother
10 belongs to a group and she's not home much." It was some
11 kind of a saying like that, but I remember my sister,
12 Nancy, coming across that and that's -- that's how it was.
13 Mother was gone a lot and -- and doing that type of work,
14 so I would really like to remember that part of her. And
15 she was very vocal and very up-front and in-your-face, just
16 much like my sister, Nancy, is now.

17 And my mother used to be called, I guess,
18 from when she was younger because of how she was -- in
19 Cree, they called her, "Mutcheechawas" (ph), and I
20 think -- I'm not sure what that means.

21 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Big meany.

22 **MS. ADELE WILLIER:** Big meany? And so now
23 my late sister, Bobbie, started calling my sister, Nancy,
24 Mutcheechawas Jr, so now Nancy, we know her as MJ. But
25 this kind of humour is like within our family. Our -- our

1 father has that -- or had that. My father has dementia
2 now. But my mother had that also.

3 And I can remember a picnic that we had in
4 Laurier Park when we were celebrating my ten-year sobriety
5 and my son was 12 at the time. And I recall him teasing
6 his grandmother and -- and she started chasing him. And
7 he's running. He's just dashing right across, just
8 laughing, and there's my mother, running right behind him,
9 65 years old, just dashing across, just chasing my son, and
10 he's laughing, just how the grandkids were in teasing their
11 grandma and being able to tease their kokum. And she was
12 such a big part of their lives. And because of our pain,
13 we forgot our kids and what they went through and what they
14 still go through in losing their kokum, so I'd like to
15 remember her as -- as funny, as mean, as -- as being in-
16 your-face vocal and a really caring mother and kokum.

17 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Thank you. Adele,
18 what do you hope will happen as a result of your testimony
19 today?

20 **MS. ADELE WILLIER:** Well, I -- I am hoping
21 that this will continue even though that I step back. I
22 hope that there will be changes made in the -- in the way
23 that -- what kind of changes I'm -- I'm hoping for is -- is
24 that when they found my mother's body in the bush, you
25 don't just find an old lady dead in the bush and just treat

1 it as she went in the bush and died. I really feel that it
2 should have been investigated at that time, not 11 years
3 later when they find her ID, and then do a two-year
4 investigation and come up with nothing. I mean I
5 understand that.

6 Maybe, you know, 11 years later, what can
7 you come up with, but I really feel that at the time her
8 body was found, it really should have been investigated
9 because for me, you find a body in the bush, you
10 investigate. I -- I really strongly feel that. And right
11 from the beginning, this was not right, so that's what I'm
12 hoping for is that all the people here and their
13 testimonies will bring about change in -- in this kind of
14 treatment. And I really, really hope a desired respect for
15 our people.

16 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Thank you. Petie,
17 what do you hope will happen as a result of your testimony
18 today?

19 **MS. DANETTE PETIE CHALIFOUX:** I hope that
20 with this testimony, it will help many other families who
21 need to come forward and speak and that the RCMP and all
22 police force can look at Indigenous people as people, not
23 as Indians. We're all equal and that balance needs to be
24 there.

25 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And we've talked about

1 this in the past. Can you also tell me about healing,
2 trauma, healing?

3 **MS. DANETTE PETIE CHALIFOUX:** It would be
4 really nice to have in place healing -- healing support and
5 if you're -- in a traditional sense. I don't mean send us
6 all to counselling and we're -- we're healed in a week or
7 two. I mean real support, people who can be there to -- to
8 pray with us, to sing with us, to support us all the way
9 through, and not just, you know, a couple of family
10 members. We're talking entire families and the generations
11 that are coming.

12 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And I know you spoke
13 about it earlier, but for the benefit of the Commissioner,
14 do you want to say again about the handling of remains?

15 **MS. DANETTE PETIE CHALIFOUX:** And as I
16 mentioned earlier to you, I do believe it'd be really good
17 to have Indigenous -- for Indigenous cases, to have our
18 traditional people brought to the site to take care of the
19 remains before they're touched, to have the proper release
20 ceremonies done.

21 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Nancy, what do you
22 hope?

23 **MS. NANCY CHALIFOUX:** Well, I hope that out
24 of this, the police forces will start to treat everyone
25 equally. Everyone is a human being and deserves to be

1 treated as such. I also hope that when the institutional
2 inquiries that place, that the families are informed; that
3 this comes full circle, that we know what happened. We're
4 left hanging with our stories. We need to close that
5 circle. We need to know what happens.

6 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And, Nancy, after this
7 Inquiry listens to all the families and survivors who have
8 come to share their experiences with the Inquiry and with
9 all of Canada, what would you ask Canadians to do?

10 **MS. NANCY CHALIFOUX:** The message that I
11 want to get out to all Canadians is stop the racism. We
12 are all human beings. And I would also like to say that
13 the loss of our mother impacted more than the immediate
14 family. It rippled out to the grandchildren, the great-
15 grandchildren. Everyone is being impacted by this.
16 Addictions came about because of this. The children of
17 those addicted parents are affected. The ripples keep
18 going and going. When you brush aside somebody like they
19 don't matter, like they're just another dead Indian, it
20 hurts.

21 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Thank you. I will now
22 ask the Commissioner if he has any questions.

23 **COMMISSIONER EYOLFSON:** I just wanted to ask
24 about these documents that we -- we have here. I don't
25 think we've referred to them.

1 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** The documents are some
2 of the correspondence back and forth with the RCMP.
3 There's medical statements of benefit paid from the Alberta
4 Health Care Insurance Plan, which shows that last contact
5 may have occurred with a doctor on the day that she went
6 missing before -- before she was found later. And then the
7 certificate of the medical examiner and the autopsy report,
8 and those are our exhibits.

9 **COMMISSIONER EYOLFSON:** Okay. Thank you
10 very much.

11 I don't have any additional or any further
12 questions at this point. I just want to thank you for
13 coming and sharing with us about your mother and
14 grandmother, Angeline, and for sharing your recommendations
15 with the National Inquiry. And I just want to recognize
16 your strength in coming here and sharing that with us.
17 Thank you very much.

18 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** And so would any of
19 you like to say anything else to the Commissioner in
20 closing?

21 **MS. NANCY CHALIFOUX:** I would like to thank
22 you for this opportunity to bring this story and allowing
23 us to tell our story, to share our pain. Thank you.

24 **MS. DANETTE PETIE CHALIFOUX:** Thank you for
25 coming with openness in hearing us and being here today. I

1 thank all of you for being here and everybody back there.

2 **MS. ADELE WILLIER:** I thank you,
3 Commissioner, for listening to me and being able to see my
4 mother as the person that she was. I thank you for that.

5 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Thank you all.
6 Commissioner, those are all the questions I have for the
7 family. I request that you adjourn this examination at
8 your pleasure.

9 **MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS:** On behalf of the
10 Inquiry, Commissioner Eyolfson is going to gift each one of
11 you an eagle feather here and that's to help you with your
12 continued journey and to help you with your healing.
13 There's also a package of seeds there that you can plant
14 and that you can watch them grow and have pleasure in
15 seeing that, that plant flourish through your efforts, just
16 like you have done here and you'll continue to do to keep
17 searching and to keep advocating for those that their
18 deaths are not represented properly. And we really thank
19 you for doing this work and -- and we hope that that will
20 help you with your journey, so we just want to say hiy hiy
21 for that work.

22 **MR. BREEN OUELLETTE:** Thank you, Elder Blu.
23 If there's nothing else, we can bring this session to a
24 close. Thank you.

25 **Exhibit (code: P1P05P0202)**

1 Thank you.

2 I would like to present to you the Francis
3 family. The family will be sharing their story today of
4 their missing loved one, Lori Lee Francis.

5 Before we begin, I would like to ask the
6 Registrar to come and issue the promise with the feather,
7 with the family, please.

8 **HENRY FRANCIS, Affirmed**

9 **MR. REGISTRAR:** If you could pass the eagle
10 feather down the line, please?

11 **CONNIE FRANCIS, Affirmed**

12 **MARY FRANCIS, Affirmed**

13 **LANE FRANCIS, Affirmed**

14 **LANCE FRANCIS, Affirmed**

15 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** Thank you.

16 Before we begin, I will ask the family
17 members to introduce themselves. And behind the family is
18 their support sitting with them today, so we'll start
19 with -- with you, please.

20 **MR. LANE FRANCIS:** I'm Lane Francis. I'm
21 the youngest sibling of my sister, Lori Lee, and my big
22 brother, Lance. And I'm a -- I'm a survivor of the high-
23 risk lifestyle. I've lost both of my parents, my sister,
24 and I raised my son on my own. And I don't turn to booze
25 and drugs to heal myself. I stay strong for my remaining

1 family members, the ones that are here today and the ones
2 that are back home, and we're here to give Lori Lee her
3 voice today.

4 **MR. LANCE FRANCIS:** Hi. I'm Lance Francis
5 and I'm Lori Lee's -- one of Lori Lee's younger
6 brother -- brothers and I'd just like to share today my
7 sister's life. Okay.

8 **MS. MARY FRANCIS:** Hi. My name's Mary
9 Francis. I'm the grandmother of Lori Lee Francis. I'd
10 like to say a few words about her life when she was a young
11 girl.

12 **MS. CONNIE FRANCIS:** Hi. My name's Connie
13 Francis. I'm the aunt and I came to be supporting my
14 nephews, my mom, her cousins, and to speak for her, and I
15 want her voice to be heard.

16 **MR. HENRY FRANCIS:** Hello. I'm Henry
17 Francis, Lori Lee's uncle on her father's side. I want to
18 share some things about the family later. Thank you.

19 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** Thank you. Mary, I
20 will ask you to share first what you would like to share
21 about your granddaughter, Lori Lee.

22 **MS. MARY FRANCIS:** Yeah, I would like to
23 share a few little things, what Lori Lee used to like to do
24 when she a little kid.

25 Every time my -- her grandpa and I'd go for

1 a ride, the first thing she asked her grandpa is, "Grandpa,
2 can I come along?" and her grandpa used to obey her and
3 tell her that she could come. We used to go for rides.

4 That one time we went for a ride and we seen
5 a moose close to where we were sitting on -- on the truck
6 and she sat close to me. I told her, "Don't be afraid. He
7 won't do anything," so we just sat there. That moose took
8 off.

9 Another time she -- we were going for a
10 ride. Again, she asked her grandpa, "Grandpa, can I come
11 along?" Again, we took her. This time we seen a bear.
12 That bear, we heard it coming towards the -- we heard the
13 stick break, so we seen the bear. He started walking
14 towards where we were sitting. He didn't go too far and he
15 just stood there and looked and I guess he must have been
16 wondering what was that. So my granddaughter, she sat
17 right close to me and I told her, "Don't be afraid.
18 They're scared too," so we just sat there and he kept
19 standing there. So I finally said to him -- I talk in my
20 language and I told that bear, "Go somewhere. There's a
21 lot of place that you could go walk around. My little
22 granddaughter's scared of you. Go for somewhere else to
23 walk." Then that bear just stood there for a while
24 and -- for -- maybe he understood me or something. He just
25 turned around and walked away from us. And I told my -- my

1 little granddaughter, "See, that bear heard me, so he
2 listened to me. Now, he took off. Don't be afraid of it,
3 my baby," I told her.

4 She used to like to go for her ride with us
5 all over and I wanted -- I want to see if they could do
6 something to try to locate her. I'd really like to get her
7 back to us. I missed her so much.

8 She stayed with -- Lori Lee, Lance and Lane
9 used to stay with us quite a bit. I'm so used of them.
10 After her grandpa died now, it seems like I'm all alone,
11 but I hope the good Lord looks and listens to us and get
12 her back to us. That's all I think about. When I sit
13 alone sewing, I'll just think of her and I'll just leave
14 my -- put my sewing down and cry. Then I just pray and ask
15 the Lord to help us. I pray a lot, so I do that for her.

16 That's -- that's what I know about my little
17 granddaughter. She used to like bush life, going for a
18 ride. And thank you listening to me.

19 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** Thank you, Mary.
20 Thank you very much for sharing that.

21 Lance or Lane, I want to ask you if you can
22 speak about your -- your sister, Lori Lee, and how the
23 impact of missing her and losing her has had on your
24 family?

25 **MR. LANE FRANCIS:** I can. Well, we -- when

1 we were all younger, it all started out like any normal
2 family. We had my mom, my dad, my big brother, my sister.
3 Our Christmases were the best. We used to get lots of
4 presents. We were spoiled. My -- my dad always spoiled my
5 sister because that was their baby. That was his first
6 daughter. And then when he passed away, we were -- I was
7 about seven years old. Lori Lee took that really hard.
8 Then after that, my -- my mom took that hard also and then
9 we went and lived with my grandparents. That's how we got
10 raised.

11 My grandpa and my grandma raised all three
12 of us. And then we'd go stay with my mom and that's when
13 we'd see the stuff, like the drinking, and -- and then Lori
14 Lee would take care of us. She -- she raised up me and my
15 brother, showed us how to be parents. She took care of us,
16 took us -- sent us to school, got mad at us when we were
17 being bad. It was her main -- it was the way she was that
18 made me a parent, who I am today. She was like our parent.
19 When we lost her, it was just like losing another parent.
20 I'll never forget the way she treated us.

21 I remember when I was younger, my grandpa
22 took us for a ride. She hit me. I tried to hit her back
23 and then he stopped me and he told me that -- he said, "You
24 don't hit girls. That's not our way." He said, "Our
25 Creator gave us a gift and it was a woman. It's like you

1 don't yell and hit -- hit this woman. She'll cook and
2 clean for you. You'll always respect that woman," and
3 that's how I know for a fact that it's not these Native men
4 taking these women. It's these men that are coming here
5 with no respect, no morals for women. And I know for a
6 fact Native men wouldn't be doing this. My grandpa taught
7 me that when I was small. You always respect women and
8 that's how we respected my sister. She raised us up just
9 as much as my grandparents did.

10 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** Okay. Thank you,
11 Lane. Can you -- can I ask you about the impact of -- of
12 losing Lori Lee has had on your family and talk about when
13 she -- when she went missing. She went missing in October
14 2007, right?

15 **MR. LANE FRANCIS:** Yeah, and then when she
16 went missing, that's when the family started really
17 looking. Like we just had no answers. We got another
18 investigator, and then another one, and then another one.
19 It seems like that -- we were getting more investigators
20 than actual evidence on our case and that's what hurt my
21 mom the most. My mom's gone today because she missed her
22 daughter so much. That's all she wanted was her daughter
23 to come home and she never lost hope. Even today, I
24 don't -- I never lost hope. I still think she's out there
25 somewhere. That's all you got to do is never lose hope

1 because our Native women are strong, even today.

2 And the way it impacted all of us is we all
3 just need answers. We all just need something so we could
4 go at peace. If someone did something to her, that guy's
5 out there somewhere. We need something. We need justice
6 or something, at least some answers.

7 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** Thank you, Lane. Is
8 there anything else you would like to add?

9 **MR. LANE FRANCIS:** No, I think that's --

10 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** That's okay. You
11 can give it over to Lance.

12 **MR. LANCE FRANCIS:** Today I'm going to share
13 about how our sister was with us when we're growing up and
14 how she was, and how she is. She was happy, protective,
15 especially protective with her family. She would always be
16 there for us, like to make us laugh, to make fun of us just
17 to make other people laugh.

18 I can remember when we were younger, she
19 used to make my mother and our stepfather laugh. She'd
20 dress me and my brother up as -- as old ladies. And she
21 loved to dance, especially jig and jingle dress. She'd
22 practice all the time and she'd practice with us break
23 dancing. I always remember.

24 Me and my sister always -- we were close.
25 We were nine months apart, so we stayed on the same age for

1 a month, almost like twins. Me and my sister always talked
2 about the bad and the good. Me and my sister went to some
3 dark places together. I just -- I just want her back and
4 hopefully we get answers. Thank you.

5 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** Thank you, Lance.
6 If I can ask Uncle Henry to say a few words as well about
7 the family?

8 **MR. HENRY FRANCIS:** Yeah, I'm the eldest of
9 the family. Captain was my younger brother, from where
10 Lane, Lance and Lori Lee and his wife, Vivian -- I was
11 quite a few years older than anybody in the family, so I
12 was gone most of the time when my nephews and the niece
13 were being raised, growing up, but the memories I've had of
14 them are always great ones.

15 I've always called Lori "Baby." It came
16 from the one time I -- I got many nieces and nephews and I
17 hadn't seen her for a few months and she came running up to
18 me and I forgot her name, so I just called her Baby and to
19 me it stuck and that's what I've always called her.

20 And as she grew older, I sort of lost
21 contact with -- with her for a bit, you know, and then this
22 thing happened. We lost her father; then the same year we
23 lost Lori Lee, she went missing. I'm not saying we lost
24 her yet. Like the boys said, there's still hope, you know.

25 And any time in my travels -- I travel a lot

1 because I'm heavily involved with the First Nation
2 and -- and every town I go to, I drive around and hopefully
3 I see her. You know, I still do that. In fact, I went
4 driving around yesterday.

5 And I was talking to the family this morning
6 at the table, at the Elders' room there, and the things
7 that have impacted not only our family, but many, many
8 families, I told them this morning that as the first people
9 of this country, of these lands, we shouldn't even be here.
10 We -- we shouldn't have an issue of the police not doing
11 what they're supposed to be doing to find and help us in
12 missing people. They should be there to solve our -- the
13 crime or whatever happened to them. You know, it's -- it's
14 the way we're treated and it -- it hurts me a lot to see
15 all these people sitting around, you know, crying for
16 someone that they lost. Look it, there's blankets here
17 with all these names on them. We shouldn't have something
18 like that. We should have happy times.

19 You know, I -- I stood in the back
20 yesterday, listened to stories of another family, the same
21 as us. They shed tears. They hope. They pray and
22 nothing's been done. The justice system is not for the
23 Native people. It's working against us. The child welfare
24 system. You know, I could go on and on, but that's getting
25 off the subject, so I'll just go back to Lori Lee and say

1 once again, you know, that I hope something gets done. I
2 hope we do find her and we find out for sure what happened
3 so that the family could have a bit of closure.

4 There's some relatives sitting in the back
5 from her mother's side. They're the same as us.
6 They -- they hurt. They pray, you know, and we pray as one
7 strong nation, you know, and hopefully we'll get things
8 done.

9 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** Thank you, Uncle
10 Henry. And, Lane, can I ask you about a time that you went
11 to see your sister at the hospital and --

12 **MR. LANE FRANCIS:** Yeah.

13 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** -- the experience
14 that you shared with her?

15 **MR. LANE FRANCIS:** She was -- she went to
16 the hospital. She was about seven/eight months pregnant.
17 She didn't really have a stable home. She was staying with
18 my family in Grande Prairie and then she went into labour.
19 She had a baby girl. I -- I was the only family member in
20 town. I went there, me and my -- her best friend, Brandy
21 Lambert (ph). We went there and we watched her give birth
22 to a beautiful baby girl. She was so happy that day. She
23 was so proud of her daughter. And then the welfare system
24 came and told her she can't take her daughter. "You can't
25 leave the hospital with her." She didn't get no excuse

1 why. She didn't even get help. Like if you're going to
2 take someone's baby, at least help them or give them
3 something, a chance. No. She was so hurt that day. She
4 pulled those IVs right out of her arm and I walked with her
5 right out of that hospital that day. They didn't even give
6 her a chance that day, and I was right beside her and I
7 watched her say bye to her daughter and that was probably
8 the last time she saw her and the first time she saw her.

9 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** Thank you, Lane.
10 Can I ask you about the time in December 2007 when your
11 family became concerned because you haven't heard from her
12 or seen her in a while and the family wanted to report to
13 the police?

14 **MR. LANE FRANCIS:** Yes. When they reported
15 her missing, they told us we had to wait till October, the
16 last -- yeah, the last time a family member seen her was
17 Lance in October. And then when they reported missing, we
18 went out to go try look for her. And then they told us if
19 we go out and look, we'll end up behind bars too. And they
20 thought -- they took it a different way. We just said, "If
21 you guys don't go do your job, we'll do it. We'll go find
22 her on our own," and they just put us in a corner that time
23 too. Like we weren't allowed to go find my sister. And we
24 were ready to take action that time, right, when we -- we
25 knew she was gone. We should have been allowed to.

1 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** Your family wanted
2 to report her missing in December, before Christmas. Is it
3 true that the RCMP told your family to wait until after
4 Christmas?

5 **MR. LANE FRANCIS:** Yeah, they told us to
6 wait till after the holidays and that's a long time to
7 wait. A lot of things could have happened in that period
8 of time. If they sprung into action like it was an
9 ordinary person, I bet you we would have found her that
10 day.

11 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** Thank you, Lane.
12 Connie, if I can ask you a few questions?
13 Thank you, Connie.

14 **MS. CONNIE FRANCIS:** Hi.

15 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** You were close with
16 your sister, Vivian?

17 **MS. CONNIE FRANCIS:** No, Vivian's my sister-
18 in-law.

19 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** Sister-in-law?

20 **MS. CONNIE FRANCIS:** Yeah.

21 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** You were close with
22 her and --

23 **MS. CONNIE FRANCIS:** Well, I'm the paternal
24 aunt --

25 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** Okay.

1 **MS. CONNIE FRANCIS:** -- yeah.

2 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** Can you tell us
3 about when the family started to inquire and to ask the
4 police for help to help locate Lori Lee and how this has
5 impacted the family and your -- your sister-in-law, Vivian,
6 how it had impacted her?

7 **MS. CONNIE FRANCIS:** Well, back in December
8 of 2007, we had received a call. Vivian had called me to
9 go to the RCMP to see if I could get them to do a statement
10 or a report, anything to go searching for her. They gave
11 me the run around. They told me I had to phone the place
12 of residence and then, when I called the place of -- like
13 the Grande Prairie RCMP Detachment, they said, well,
14 because I lived up north, I had to go to my local, so it
15 was kind of like a phone thing. And when I finally got
16 through to someone, it was in Grande Prairie. They said,
17 "Well, okay. Well, are you the mother?" I'm like, "No."
18 I said, "You know, the mother's not here. She's too
19 distraught." In turn, I talked to Vivian, got her to go.
20 I said, "You have to go to the RCMP station." She then did
21 go and this is on December 24th.

22 She went to the detachment. They, in turn,
23 told her to come back after the holidays to report her
24 daughter missing. That was December 24th. She couldn't go
25 in there until December 27th was the day that they actually

1 took a report and we filed her -- and filed a missing
2 person. So can you imagine your Christmas if that happened
3 to you? What would you do? What would you do at that
4 time? You know, maybe there's a difference for other
5 people, but for us is it because we're Indigenous that they
6 have to put us in that -- in that -- I don't know how to
7 say it. They made us wait.

8 And then when we finally did -- when we went
9 in -- when Vivian went in, they, in turn -- that was when
10 Vivian and her younger son, Lynn, went to go searching
11 because the RCMP didn't want to do anything. They didn't
12 try. For three months, they never contacted us. For three
13 months, they never even tried to put her in the media.
14 They never did anything. They told us if we went searching
15 on our own, that they were going to charge us for
16 obstruction of their investigation. Now, how the hell is
17 that -- you know, who gave them that right to do this to
18 us?

19 For three months, we had to sit and wait
20 until the RCMP said, "Okay, now you guys can go and search
21 for her." And given the fact that they -- they went by
22 October, that's five months. That's half a year -- almost
23 half a year that we never -- we weren't able to do
24 anything. We had to sit there and do like nothing. Like
25 the stuff that we went through, the emotions, and like no

1 support, nothing. We never got anything from anybody.
2 They never even referred us to anyone. We weren't allowed
3 to -- you know, we couldn't even go close to Grande Prairie
4 to go look for her. Like it didn't matter. Some of the
5 family went anyway because we thought, "Like what the hell?
6 Like who gave you guys that right to do this to us?"

7 Every -- often it makes me wonder like what
8 the hell were they doing in those three months like saying
9 that they're investigating and searching, but then, you
10 know, when we went as a family, I found out by one -- this
11 one lady that, you know, the RCMP didn't even take
12 anybody's statement at that time, so it makes me wonder,
13 like, what did they do when they did go search or go
14 investigate her -- her disappearance?

15 I want to know why. That's the biggest
16 thing is I want I know why did they treat us that way. I
17 want to know why they never gave us support systems. Why
18 didn't they reach out to the family? Why didn't they reach
19 out to the mother? You know, especially the mother because
20 you carry this baby in you for nine months. You give them
21 birth. You raise them. Can you imagine? I can't even
22 imagine what Vivian went through, wondering where her
23 daughter is. And for her to, you know, leave this world
24 never knowing whatever happened to her kid -- because the
25 mother passed away last year, so.

1 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** So the -- the impact
2 of not knowing where her daughter has -- was difficult,
3 very difficult for Vivian. Can you talk about how
4 she -- she tried to deal with --

5 **MS. CONNIE FRANCIS:** The way she coped?

6 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** -- the way she
7 coped?

8 **MS. CONNIE FRANCIS:** She started -- she
9 started drinking more, a little bit more than usual, and
10 that was the only way -- and I do. Like I -- at times when
11 things -- when I think about what Vivian went through and
12 what my nephews are going through. You know, like
13 everybody has their way of dealing with stuff and, you
14 know, it's easy access to -- to get alcohol and it just
15 numbs it for a while. And with Vivian, it was really hard
16 on her.

17 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** M'hm.

18 **MS. CONNIE FRANCIS:** My daughter went and
19 stayed with them for a while a few years back and she used
20 to sit there with her auntie and she used to tell me
21 though, she goes, "Auntie" -- she goes, "Mom, auntie is
22 always crying in the morning," she goes, "especially when
23 Lance and Lane are not there," because she didn't want them
24 to see her that way, with the eyes, like. "Well, of
25 course, she's going to be hurting, you know. Like, you

1 know, I'm glad you're there with her," and -- but that's
2 with all of us, every single one of us in this family. Her
3 cousins on her maternal side, it hurts them just as much.
4 They all grew up together. It's a very close knit family.
5 Like it affects every single one of us. And all her
6 friends -- because every day people are saying, like, "You
7 know, I always think about her. I wonder where she is."
8 You know, our mind goes like from the worst-est (ph) fear
9 we could come up with to hope and one -- and, you know,
10 everything. Everything goes through your mind. Your
11 emotions are like up and down every day, all day.

12 I just -- I think it was -- like without no
13 support system, without the resources that they should have
14 given us in the beginning -- maybe things would have been
15 like different. Now, they have everything. Like they have
16 ESU. They have all these new agencies and stuff,
17 organizations coming out. Like where the heck were they
18 ten years ago when we needed -- like that was what we
19 needed the most. Like it took us ten years to get this
20 far, what it was like, trying to figure out where to start,
21 how to do this. I didn't even know either. Like I just
22 went to one conference and then started learning a bit
23 more. You know, I got Vivian and Lane into the one
24 gathering -- no, it was a conference. You met with a
25 Minister, I think, yeah, Minister Bennett.

1 Yeah, that was when -- that time when we
2 went to meet with the Minister, Vivian and Lane came. At
3 that time, I couldn't really stay, so I was like -- I think
4 I stayed with them for the day. At that time, I didn't
5 know -- you know, her health wasn't very great, like
6 Vivian's health. She was in the hospital that month before
7 we actually went there and then she wouldn't tell me what
8 was wrong with her, but then, you know, with her addiction
9 to her alcohol, I think that's -- you know, it really
10 affected her health. She had some health issues and it was
11 really hard to see because you could see the hurt and you
12 could see the love and -- but it was really hard to --

13 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** Connie, do you want
14 to take a break? Yeah? Okay. Commissioner, can we take a
15 five-minute break?

16 --- Upon recessing at 2:22 p.m.

17 --- Upon resuming at 2:35 p.m.

18 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** Okay. Thank you,
19 everyone, for your patience.

20 I just want to ask Connie a couple more
21 questions if she can just share about the process or the
22 lack of process with the investigation with respect to Lori
23 Lee's missing file and some incidences that have happened
24 over the years, Connie.

25 **MS. CONNIE FRANCIS:** Yeah, back in -- like I

1 was saying, back in 2007 when Vivian went and reported her
2 daughter missing, like I told you, they had threatened to
3 say that -- like if we went, they told us that we
4 were -- we will get charged. And then by the time they
5 brought it out to the media, they didn't even inform none
6 of us. Like they didn't inform the mother or -- I didn't
7 swear. They didn't inform the family about them putting
8 out -- putting it out into the media. They just called
9 like the day of. They didn't ask for a photo. They didn't
10 ask for anything. They just said, "Well, we're putting
11 out -- we're doing a media release," and that was it.

12 In turn, they had used some photo that we
13 never -- you know, the family didn't even know what they
14 were going to use, so, you know, we've been fighting with
15 them, the RCMP, to change her photo. The photo that the
16 RCMP used is not a very nice one. It doesn't make -- it
17 doesn't portray her as a person as everyone knows her and
18 they make her -- it was just a very bad moment in her life
19 maybe that -- where that photo came from that the RCMP
20 used. It took them ten years. They finally changed it and
21 I think the only reason is because of this, the National
22 Inquiry. I think that's the only reason why the RCMP are
23 finally listening to us.

24 For ten years we haven't had any
25 communication from them. They haven't tried to update,

1 anything. So like even with Vivian, like I thought they
2 were in contact with Vivian all these years. Vivian
3 thought they were in contact with me all these years. Then
4 when me and Vivian started talking, like we find out that,
5 "Hey, they didn't even call you (indiscernible)?" You
6 know, like year after year we'd never hear anything and
7 it's -- it's -- was getting really frustrating and -- you
8 know, especially trying to get them to change the photo.

9 They had different investigators. I don't
10 know how many. The last time I counted, it was four. And
11 there was actually -- within this one year, they already
12 switched the investigators. There's another lady in there
13 again. So every time a new investigator gets in there,
14 they have to research and do a background before they even
15 start to even do anything again, so it's like how many
16 times are they going to do this? If it happened once
17 already in one year, how many investigators is it going to
18 take before they actually do -- like Lane said, do their
19 job?

20 And, you know, like they -- the other factor
21 I wanted to bring up was April of this year, I got a phone
22 call, a voicemail. It was from Constable Boutillier (ph),
23 who was on Lori Lee's file, case file. She left a message
24 stating something about this other girl and that she needed
25 to speak with me in regards to Lori Lee. So I, you know,

1 just happened to be in Grande Prairie, so I go to the
2 detachment. I didn't get to speak to the investigator, but
3 I did go to Victim Services.

4 When I went to Victim Services, they pulled
5 up her file to find out -- they were going to go -- like I
6 figured Victim Services because they could advocate and go
7 find -- find out whatever, but, anyway, they had mixed up
8 Lori Lee's file with another girl's file. They mixed two
9 files and all I got was, "Oops, we mixed up two files."
10 That was -- and I was like, "What?" You know, like, I
11 said, "What do you mean like you mixed up her file?" And
12 the lady goes, "Okay, well, give me" -- and I -- I was
13 watching her, like she kept bringing it up on the computer
14 and she'll come back and then she'll ask me her name and
15 birth date, give her that. She'll go back and then she'll
16 come back and ask me, "Okay, what was her mother's name?"
17 so I'd give her the mom's name. And then she'll go back
18 and go back on there, and she kept coming back. And then
19 she always -- when she was like, "Well, the files were
20 mixed up, you know. Oops." I was like, "What?" "Oops."

21 This is -- like this is a serious matter.
22 It's not -- it's not an oops moment. Like how long have
23 they mixed up her file? Is this the first time or is
24 this -- like how many times have they done this throughout
25 the years? Is this why they're not contacting us? Is this

1 why they haven't tried to contact us? Is this -- you know,
2 all these -- and when you -- and now that I'm trying to be
3 in contact with them, they're -- they're not -- like
4 they're not calling back because they're probably trying to
5 fix up their oops, so it's like, "You know, what the hell
6 are you guys doing?" You know, maybe it's because there is
7 so many different damn investigators on her file
8 that -- you know, who knows what the hell. Like for ten
9 years, maybe it was every damn year that her file got mixed
10 up. Who knows? And I've been asking.

11 I finally was able to put in a request, say,
12 "Look at her file," to even get her case file and I don't
13 know. I'm still waiting, like waiting on word back on
14 that, but still the fact is is who's -- who do
15 we -- because this is coming from the -- the investigator
16 level and you want to go up and you want to ask questions.
17 You want to know why. Like who the hell do we talk to to
18 get all these answers from? How do we get these answers?
19 Who's going to help us? You know, like I want to
20 know -- not just me, but my family and probably other
21 families out there. Like who the who the hell do we talk
22 to that's going to be able to give us those answers?

23 You know, how far -- like how far up do we
24 go? Do we go to 'K' Division? Are they going to help? Is
25 there any investigators investigating the RCMP? Like do we

1 go there? Like no -- how do I get those answers as -- as
2 to why is her file mixed up and why can't we see it? Why
3 is there always a different investigator on her file? You
4 know, those answers need to -- that's what I'm looking for
5 is -- especially with the mix-up of her file with another
6 girl's file. How long has this been going on? And I'm not
7 getting anything back from the -- like the -- they're not
8 calling me back. They're avoiding me, I guess. I don't
9 know. They got caught more or less, I figure, and that's
10 what they're trying to do, is cover it up. And if they
11 cover it up, who's going to give us the answers?

12 And the same with her photo. We finally got
13 them to do that, but why did it have to take ten years for
14 them to even change a photo, just a photo? That's all we
15 wanted was -- and we gave it to them. If they had asked us
16 when they were going to do the media release, we would have
17 provided a photo, but they didn't ask us. They didn't even
18 say a damn thing to us, to anyone. Like Vivian didn't even
19 know. Like all of a sudden they have this picture of my
20 niece in the media and all this, you know, portraying her
21 in a way that she wasn't. You know, it's degrading. It's
22 degrading to her. Like what gives them that right to do
23 that?

24 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** Thank you, Connie.
25 Did you want to add any more?

1 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** If I could?

2 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** No, you can pass it
3 to me. I just want to ask Lane and Lance and Mary if they
4 want to add anything else -- Henry -- and if you have any
5 recommendations that you want to share with -- with the
6 Commissioner today.

7 **MR. LANE FRANCIS:** Yeah, one of my -- one of
8 my recommendations is we always know about the girls that
9 went missing, but what do we do about the girls today, the
10 girls walking around today that need help, the ones that
11 are about to be victims? Some of them, like they're scared
12 to go to police. Maybe a warrant, maybe some stupid
13 reason, but they won't call the police for help, I know
14 that. They need somewhere to go. They need some place to
15 go for help and that's -- that would stand for action.
16 These girls today nowadays that are still here, they're the
17 ones that we need to be watching out for and looking out
18 for. The girls that went missing, they're going to teach
19 us that.

20 One of my recommendations is we need a place
21 for these girls to go that are safe now, that are here
22 today before anything else happens.

23 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** Lance? Nothing?
24 Mary? You're okay? Henry?

25 **MR. HENRY FRANCIS:** Well -- well, Lane put

1 it in a good way there about today's girls that are lost in
2 the system. You know, there is a lot of our girls out
3 there and, like he said, you know, they need a place. They
4 need some help. That's why I just want to ask everybody
5 that's listening or everybody that's here, if you see
6 somebody in need of help, you know, us First Nations people
7 were taught to help one another. Let's not stop that.
8 Let's keep it going.

9 And then you mentioned something about they
10 won't go to the police. Well, my generation, when we were
11 kids, we were taught to fear the police because my Grandma
12 Weasel -- I was raised with my -- by my grandma. And
13 whenever police were around the rez, she'd -- she'd hide
14 us. That goes back to the times when they took her
15 children to residential school and they didn't see them for
16 many years, so we were taught to fear them. And to this
17 day, even if I'm driving down the street with my
18 grandchildren, I see police coming, I'll -- I'll just tell
19 them to hide, you know, for no apparent reason, but it's
20 in -- it's been taught. It's -- it's a learning experience
21 that I had that I'm trying to pass on, but it's the wrong
22 teaching, you know. I shouldn't be telling them we fear
23 the police, but after hearing all these testimonies, what
24 is the right teaching about the RCMP, about the police,
25 about the law, even the city police? What do we teach our

1 grandchildren? What do we teach our kids?

2 You know, it goes back many years that we've
3 been abused by the system/society. Like I said earlier,
4 you know, this -- we're the first people of the lands and
5 we're treated this way. You know, people that we
6 protected, people that we saved are the ones that are
7 trying to hurt us today. That's why we all got to join
8 together and be one strong body and look after one another.
9 It hurts me a lot when I see people cry for someone.

10 And there's another thing that we're taught
11 is men don't cry, but I always say how are we going to
12 teach the younger generation if we can't express our
13 feelings? And so I -- I tell guys, "Don't be afraid to
14 shed tears." You know, it helps. It -- it changes your
15 way of thinking at times.

16 I just hope something good comes out of this
17 Inquiry. I know you guys made big steps in bettering
18 things for the Native people.

19 And I said earlier that this Inquiry
20 shouldn't be happening because the people that should be
21 looking after us aren't, so maybe this will open the eyes
22 of the governments, of the justice system, and things will
23 finally start moving.

24 I want to thank you all. Thank you.

25 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** Thank you, Henry.

1 Connie, do you have any recommendations to -- to share with
2 the Commissioner today?

3 **MS. CONNIE FRANCIS:** Yeah, like what -- what
4 Lane said. Just one second.

5 One of the things I would -- I think -- I
6 don't know if you guys are doing this now, but I know in
7 Winnipeg they have this -- they started this website with
8 missing and what to do. It's like a toolkit, but I
9 wouldn't mind to have one of these toolkits made for
10 Northern Alberta because I know there's a -- like in the
11 major cities, there's like so many places girls -- families
12 could go to, but in Northern Alberta, it's so spaced out.
13 Towns are like miles -- hours -- and where we're from,
14 there's many communities around there and, you know, it's
15 like -- I don't want to say isolated, but it is sort of
16 like isolated area, but there should be something brought
17 to northern -- to the north and to be accessible to
18 everyone and respectful towards the nations that are there
19 and be able to have like interpreters because there's still
20 a lot that speak in their own language rather than -- so we
21 need interpreters there to be able to -- you know, because,
22 you know, if somebody goes missing, if all they know is
23 their Native tongue, how are they going to be able to
24 communicate that, so they need something like this.

25 And I -- for us, for the stuff that we went

1 through, we had to travel in order to be heard. Why
2 couldn't we be heard from where we're from, and that's like
3 in Northern Alberta, so I really -- I push for that. I
4 would want something to be brought in that area
5 since -- like we're part of Treaty 8, but Treaty 8's such a
6 big area, so. Yeah, it's a big area, so, you know, have
7 something done for that area, bring in more programs, more
8 anything. And that would be -- yeah, that's what I would
9 consider a recommendation.

10 I can't even think right now. Sorry.

11 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** It's okay. Okay,
12 thank you, Connie. Thank you. Lane, do you want to add
13 anything? No? Oh, sorry, sorry, Mary, share, yeah,
14 please.

15 **MS. MARY FRANCIS:** I just wanted to thank
16 the Opadee (ph) that's sitting here listening to what we
17 went through. It was a very tough thing till today and it
18 is yet, till we hear from my granddaughter.

19 Like one of my nephews, one of our brothers
20 said, "There's hope that she's somewhere out there." "And
21 if you hear us, my Baby, you know where we live. Come back
22 home. That's all I ask for you, my Baby, to come back
23 home. We miss you so much."

24 Like I'm always there for young people. I
25 talk to lots of young people because I was taught by my

1 grandpa, "Be kind to everybody like that. They'll be kind
2 to you. You're kind to somebody, they'll be kind back at
3 you," so I try to be kind to everybody, young and old. I'm
4 happy to see people.

5 The other day I seen on the TV, there was a
6 little girl that fell off the balcony. When I heard that
7 she fell off and she passed away, you know, I cried. My
8 boy was sitting there. I just cried. That's how my heart
9 is. I love people and I try to be kind to everybody, young
10 and old, and I'll talk to anybody and I'll tell my
11 two -- all my grandchildren I'm always there for them. And
12 that's all I have to say. And thanks for everybody that's
13 here.

14 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** Thank you, Mary.
15 Thank you. Thank you, everyone, for sharing. If
16 Commissioner Buller has any questions for the family
17 members?

18 **CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** Yes,
19 I -- I do. At some point we had a series of photographs
20 come scrolling through on the screen and I'm wondering if
21 we could have that again and would one of the family
22 members please describe who's in the photos and about
23 roughly when they were taken?

24 **MR. LANE FRANCIS:** That's me. My brother
25 Lance, and that's me, the baby in the middle, and my

1 cousin, Dèsirée, and that's Lori Lee in the blue sweater.

2 And that was Lori Lee in a jigging contest.

3 **CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** About how
4 old would she be there?

5 **MR. LANE FRANCIS:** Ten.

6 **MS. MARY FRANCIS:** That's about ten.

7 **MR. LANE FRANCIS:** She's about ten years
8 old. She was shy that day and she still -- she still
9 competed that day.

10 And that was her competing right there.

11 That was my -- my grandpa's sister, Albina
12 Bulldog, and that was my sister Lori Lee's graduation.

13 **CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** And about
14 how old is Lori Lee there?

15 **MR. LANE FRANCIS:** She was in kindergarten.
16 That was in Rocky Lane School.

17 And that's my -- my mom, Vivian, and my
18 baby -- my -- yeah, that's Lori Lee. And that's my dad,
19 Captain, feeding her when she was a newborn baby. And
20 they're both deceased now.

21 And that's my brother, Lance, and my sister,
22 Lori Lee, and my grandpa, Clifford Francis, and that's them
23 at a tea dance at the Friendship Centre in High Level.

24 **CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** Lori Lee
25 looks about maybe five years old?

1 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** Okay. Thank you,
2 Commissioner.

3 **CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** Thank
4 you.

5 **MS. LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN:** That -- that
6 concludes our testimony with the Francis family. Thank
7 you.

8 **CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** Thank you
9 all very much for coming and I appreciate your
10 recommendations. They're very helpful. Everything that
11 you've said today has been very helpful to all of us here.

12 We have some gifts for you because you've
13 given us a sacred gift today and that's your memory
14 of -- of Lori Lee, so we're grateful.

15 In British Columbia, on the coast, there are
16 islands called Haida Gwaii. The matriarchs there, the clan
17 mothers, wanted to reach out to families who came to
18 testify because they know how hard it is and -- and the
19 stress involved, so they asked that eagle feathers be
20 collected from the beach -- well, beaches, I guess, in
21 Haida Gwaii, and they sent those feathers to us. And
22 they've asked us to pass them along to family members and
23 survivors who -- to testify as a way of showing their
24 appreciation and a way of hopefully lifting you up and
25 supporting you as -- as you get on with your -- as best you

1 can with your lives. So these are from the matriarchs in
2 Haida Gwaii. Also, we ask people who come and share their
3 truths with us to plant some seeds that we're going to give
4 you. Seeds are very symbolic in -- in every culture across
5 Canada, so we're going to ask you to please plant those
6 seeds and if anything grows, will you please send pictures
7 of what does grow to us so we can keep track all across
8 Canada of what's happening and, of course, in a more
9 traditional way, we have tobacco offerings for you, so,
10 again, thank you. You've made such a big difference for
11 all of us here and -- and I'm truly grateful. Thank you.

12 **Exhibit (code: P1P05P0203)**

13 **Exhibit 1:** Digital folder of 12 family photos displayed
14 on the monitors during the hearing

15 --- Upon recessing at 3:10 p.m.

16 **Hearing # 4**

17 **Witnesses: Nicole Weesemat and Keanu Gladue**

18 **In Relation to Gloria Gladue**

19 **Heard by Chief Commissioner Marion Buller**

20 **Commission Counsel: Jennifer Cox**

21 **Grandmothers, Elders, Knowledge-keepers: Kathy Louis,**

22 **Audrey Seigl, Irene Morin**

23 --- Upon resuming at 4:52 p.m.

24 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Chief Commissioner, I
25 would like to introduce you to Nicole Weesemat; her

1 brother, Keanu Gladue; and at the very right is Guy and Guy
2 is Nicole's husband.

3 Before we begin, if we could do a promise to
4 tell the truth in a good way with the feather. And I need
5 a feather. So you just hold it, yeah.

6 **NICOLE WEESEMAT, Affirmed**

7 **KEANU GLADUE, Affirmed**

8 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So we need another
9 microphone. It's on the floor. Are we good? Okay.

10 So, Nicole, you're going to speak first,
11 right, or did you want Keanu to speak first? Okay, Nicole.

12 So, Nicole, why don't you start by telling
13 the Chief Commissioner a little bit about yourself?

14 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** Okay.

15 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** You lift up, yeah, the
16 microphone.

17 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** Okay. My name is
18 Nicole Gladue Weesemat. I'm the oldest of seven,
19 originally from Wabasca, Alberta, Bigstone Cree Nation.
20 I'm a mother, wife, most all a daughter and a sister, and
21 I'm here today to talk about my mom, who's been missing
22 since October 9, 2015.

23 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay. And where did she
24 go missing?

25 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** She went missing on

1 October 9, 2015, in Wabasca, Alberta -- was the last time
2 she was saw was leaving the Apple Drug Store, getting out
3 her medication, and that was the last time anybody had saw
4 her in person.

5 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay. And you said you
6 have seven -- there's seven of you?

7 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** Yes, I'm the oldest of
8 seven.

9 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So how many brothers and
10 sisters?

11 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** Three brothers and
12 there's four girls.

13 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay. And where did you
14 live growing up?

15 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** Well, by the age of
16 two, my parents -- I basically went into foster care and
17 that was pretty much since. A lot of us didn't grow up
18 together. I think my youngest were -- my youngest
19 siblings, my brother and sister, were probably the closest
20 ones to growing up a little bit longer than the rest of us,
21 who had the moment not too long after being born or a year
22 or two most of us family members, if not foster care, yeah.

23 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And where -- where did
24 you actually live as a child?

25 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** Oh, I bounced --

1 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Location?

2 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** -- bounced a lot, to
3 honestly tell you, but the last foster home where I finally
4 stayed put was in Slave Lake, Alberta, and they raised me
5 from six and up.

6 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay. And what about
7 your brothers and sisters? Did you have contact with them
8 when you were younger?

9 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** A little, not as much.
10 I felt like we were -- well, I was allowed certain visits
11 back home, mainly for like funerals, get-together, or I
12 think my aunt sometimes. My mom would get visits to see
13 me; the same with my dad, but not as much. There'd be
14 times once I got older as a teenager, I would just sneak to
15 Wabasca just to go see my siblings like him. He was just
16 small our first time meeting each other and he was just a
17 little boy and I was 13.

18 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And you're pointing to
19 your brother?

20 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** M'hm.

21 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Yeah. So when you said
22 you would sneak to Wabasca, what would happen if anybody
23 knew you were going?

24 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** I'd get in trouble,
25 more or less, grounded and, "Why'd you go there?" and it's,

1 well, that was my family. No matter what, I always went
2 back and I just wanted to get to know them, even my mother
3 and father, and despite all that, I still loved them
4 tremendously as my mother and father. I never thought of
5 them as less just because they gave up on me and because
6 they had drinking and drug issues, you know. Yes, it
7 angered me and -- but at the same time, I loved them. I
8 loved them a lot. Nothing would change that.

9 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And did you live with any
10 of your other brothers and sisters growing up?

11 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** Yes, we would bump
12 into each other because Slave Lake is just a little over an
13 hour from Wabasca, so I would bump into my parents, my
14 grandparents, my siblings; if not, I played a lot of sports
15 and would go play in Wabasca and that would be my way of
16 getting to see whatever brother and sister I could. Even
17 if it was just a moment, we would talk and hug and hope we
18 got to see each other the next time sooner.

19 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So when you got a little
20 bit older, you were able to reconnect with your mom; right?

21 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** Yes.

22 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So can you tell the Chief
23 Commissioner a little bit about how that happened?

24 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** I just got older and
25 then once I settled down and met my husband, which was

1 close to ten and a half years ago, maybe almost 11 years
2 ago, my mom started reaching out to me more and I started
3 inviting her to our place to come visit and -- and then we
4 just got to know each other more and she got to know me
5 more and our -- her grandchildren and my husband. And she
6 was wanting to make up for all the time she had lost with
7 us kids. She was really guilty about it and that was her
8 way of making up to us was to get to know us a little
9 better.

10 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And so can you tell the
11 Chief Commissioner some of the things that you guys used to
12 do together?

13 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** Anything. We used to
14 go for walks. We would bake together. We would make
15 outfits by scratch together. She's the one who taught me
16 how to sew. She was traditional, you know, make the
17 bannock, the stew and all about that stuff, but she was
18 also very funny, very easy going, just somebody that could
19 make you laugh no matter what even if she didn't try. And
20 she was very small, petite, but she was also very strong
21 minded and physically. Like she would not let
22 anybody -- you know. And overall, she was just -- the time
23 we were finally getting to know her and her to know us, we
24 were liking it, loving it and appreciating it and now it's
25 been taken from us.

1 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So just before she went
2 missing, you had a conversation with her, didn't you?

3 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** Yes.

4 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay. Do you want to
5 tell the Chief Commissioner a little bit about that?

6 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** Well, we all had a
7 plan to go to Wabasca, the ones that don't live there.
8 There was a wedding on my dad's side and she was very close
9 with my dad's side even when they broke -- broke up when I
10 was two, like they got along great. And so my plan was to
11 meet her at the wedding. And also she was visiting my
12 younger siblings who reside in Wabasca, like Keanu, Wendy,
13 Keisha, Angel, Randall, and she was in good spirits. Like
14 she said she was going to go. She was visiting with
15 everybody. She was laughing, smiling.

16 I was crying because I couldn't make it and
17 she said calmly, "My girl, it's going to be okay. There's
18 always a next time." She's like, "I love you. I'll tell
19 everybody I said hello for you. Don't cry because you'll
20 get sick." She always said that, and she would come try to
21 see us when she was done in Wabasca or her visiting, and
22 that she would call me the next day.

23 Well, later that night, she sent me a text
24 saying, "Good night. I love you all," at 10:51 or 10:57
25 p.m. That night was the last text I got from her saying,

1 "Good night. I love you all."

2 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So after she went
3 missing, you -- you did a lot to try to find your mom,
4 didn't you?

5 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** Yes.

6 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Did you want to tell the
7 Chief Commissioner about some of the things that you and
8 your family did?

9 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** Well, at the beginning
10 we didn't believe it. We thought maybe she just went on,
11 you know, drinking or something, so the first couple of
12 weeks, we didn't really think much of it, but once November
13 came, we panicked and -- because there's seven of us kids,
14 so if one can't get a hold of the other, we get a hold of
15 each other. Then we're like, "Okay, who talked to mom?"
16 That was our way of tracking her down basically and none of
17 us could get a hold of her and we started to panic again.

18 And we -- I told my sister, Angel, because I
19 live in Edson and I was like, "Do you think we should file
20 a missing report?" I was like, "I can't file because I
21 live in Edson and technically the last place where anybody
22 saw her or heard from her was Wabasca," so my sister, Angel
23 Gladue, went and filed a missing report November 17th, and
24 it began.

25 And I'm not sure because she was referred to

1 as a risky lifestyle. Like I remember waiting and looking
2 because there's Facebook, so now when you see somebody go
3 missing or anything, it pops up that this person is
4 missing, share or whatever, and I saw that they haven't
5 even put a missing file over her up yet, so I waited. It
6 came up to three weeks before I finally had enough and I
7 had made that one there where she's standing in the blue
8 with myself and I posted it on Facebook. There's hundreds,
9 if not thousands, already of that being shared until they
10 finally did make one of her, which is on the bottom, and we
11 just kept thinking, "She going to show. She's going to
12 show." Like time just kept going on and she still didn't
13 come back.

14 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So with respect to the
15 missing poster that the RCMP did, you put a new picture on
16 top of that, didn't you?

17 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** Because they used a
18 mug and I don't want them to think that's who she was
19 because she wasn't. I want them to look at her where she's
20 smiling because that's who she was.

21 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And some of the other
22 things that you and your siblings did to help try to find
23 your mom, did you want to tell the Chief Commissioner about
24 some of the things you did?

25 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** We have talked to

1 mediums, medicine women, medicine men. We have family who,
2 I guess you could say, are street smart. They know the bad
3 sides of the city and this and that and they went looking
4 in trap houses, crack houses. We went looking from Wabasca
5 to Colin Lake, driving, walking into ditches, into the
6 bushes, abandoned houses, just doing whatever we can. Like
7 at one point, there was a bunch of us and we had dogs and
8 everything. Like we were on a mission to find her one day.
9 I can't remember how far our family made it, but like
10 that's how far we went, to be looking in ditches and in the
11 forest and in abandoned houses, and reaching out to the
12 media, reaching out to sidekicks and everything. Like I
13 honestly don't know what else more we could have done. I
14 feel like if there is anything -- but I feel like we
15 literally went to the end of the earth trying to find her
16 and it's like a needle in a haystack trying to find her

17 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So when did you and your
18 family feel that you needed to look for her yourself?

19 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** I'd say once that
20 summer came, the first year she went missing, because
21 that's the best time. It's not as cold. The ground is not
22 that hard. You know, there's no snow and so that's what we
23 did. It was supposed to be -- well, we did an awareness
24 walk as well that summer, but we also did a private get-
25 together where it was strictly family, people we trust,

1 with some who had their guard dogs and whatever and we
2 literally just went from the beginning of Wabasca all the
3 way through down these other reservations, Colin Lake and
4 Chipewyan and Colin (ph), Sandy, and almost up to Athabasca
5 just looking in ditches, going into the forest. And
6 anything abandoned we saw, like we would mozy around in
7 there and see if we saw anything, like items of hers or
8 anything. Like honestly, I don't know, but it just got to
9 the point where, like I said, when you're so desperate to
10 find the person you love and you don't know where, you'll
11 look anywhere and that's what we did.

12 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And is there a reason why
13 you and your family did so much looking? Did you feel like
14 you needed to do that? Were the police doing that?

15 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** Well, I felt like they
16 should have did more on the search part, so maybe that's
17 why we did it more.

18 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And in terms of your
19 family, did any of your family members go to residential
20 school that you remember?

21 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** Just our grandfather
22 had told us that he got actually taken by the nuns is his
23 story, I believe. I know there was a few Elders in our
24 family, like from my mom's side, her -- the great-great-
25 grandparents, like our mooshum, JB, how he hid our kokum,

1 my mom's mom and all his daughters. He dugged this thing.

2 Like he had this nice white house, but
3 across the road he has a lake and it's beautiful, and a
4 shack, whatever, and how he hid them from that time, his
5 daughters, because there was no way he -- he was going to
6 let them take his daughters, like my kokum and them. He
7 dug this hole with a pallet over it, like so deep like you
8 wouldn't even think. You'd think it's just a pallet or a
9 board sitting on the ground, but you open it, you could go
10 hide in there and that's where my kokum and her sisters
11 were all hid for safety and they were never found. And I
12 thought that was pretty remarkable that our mooshum, JB,
13 did that.

14 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So when your mom -- at
15 the time your mom went missing, where was she living? What
16 was her lifestyle in terms of where she was living?

17 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** She was living with
18 everyone, I guess. Like she never really had anything
19 herself stabilized because she would stay with us for a
20 long -- like I have a lot of her stuff at my house. She
21 would also go stay with my other siblings or with friends
22 or with other family members. Her plan was to save up.
23 Like she's even got house stuff -- was to reside in Edson
24 and then she was going to get my younger siblings and they
25 were going to move up there; that was the plan.

1 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And at the time she
2 went -- disappeared, she -- or went missing, she was -- how
3 would you say she was doing? How was her plan working?

4 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** I'd say good. Like
5 she already talked to a landlord. It was just a matter of
6 giving the money and, like I said, she had house stuff
7 already. I put them in my attic because it was just too
8 much looking at. And she has how much clothes left at my
9 house. Like she was looking for a job as well numerous
10 times and she did have a job there for a long time at a
11 hotel, but that stopped and she went to Edmonton and
12 relapsed for a bit, and then she again became our mom and
13 went back to Wabasca like she had promised to meet
14 everybody and see everybody.

15 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So, Nicole, did you want
16 to talk a little bit about the poster that's -- that you
17 brought for the Chief Commissioner today?

18 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** I just wanted you guys
19 to see what we see, what -- who she was and, you know, to
20 us she's our mother. She's a kokum. Like my kids, my
21 brothers' and sisters' kids talk about her still. She's
22 got grandchildren from other siblings who just had babies
23 that they won't get to meet their kokum until we know what
24 happened. She was just beautiful inside and out and --

25 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** She would like you to

1 describe the different pictures, so she's pointing to the
2 top one there.

3 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** That picture is in my
4 backyard. We like to have fires in the summer, you know,
5 some beverages, and she was just laughing and that's my
6 mom, like sitting there beautifully, just laughing,
7 enjoying life.

8 That's her holding my youngest son and,
9 yeah, that's her being a kokum basically.

10 That's an old picture of my -- those two
11 little kids are my youngest brother and sister, Keisha and
12 Trent, and her sister, Norma, and her.

13 **CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** Thank
14 you.

15 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** I believe Keisha is
16 the baby. That's my youngest sister.

17 And that's me kind of being annoying to my
18 mom. You see on the other side, it's my kokum, Lillian,
19 but she had passed.

20 And that's just a collage I made, you know,
21 just for us that were her babies because she would always
22 say, like, "You guys are my babies. You're my beautiful
23 babies." Like she was proud of us all.

24 And that's my sister, Angel, and my mom. We
25 went to visit her. I can't remember what type of treatment

1 or facility she was in, but we went to visit her that day
2 and it made her happy.

3 That's her sitting on my front porch. I
4 just wanted to take a picture of her and she just kind of
5 gave me a smile, so I pointed the picture [sic] in her
6 face.

7 That's me and her. Yeah, that's the only
8 picture I have of me being that small with her.

9 And that is me; my mom; my sister, Angel;
10 and Randall, an old photo.

11 That is about where Keanu, my other
12 brothers, Trinity, Randall, my sister, Wendy, Angel, my mom
13 at a funeral of a relative basically.

14 That was her favourite spot to take a photo,
15 in my front yard, and she just looked beautiful and she
16 just -- the sun was beaming on her and it was just one of
17 those photos, you know.

18 That was our one-year mark of when she went
19 missing. We all got together in Wabasca at the hall. I
20 brought the sweaters that this nice man made from Hinton
21 for us for free. Yeah, that's the one I made.

22 That was the awareness walk. My brother
23 actually edited that. He has plenty and he was pretty
24 proud about making that.

25 That was her -- was it her prom or

1 her -- that was her and my grandparents, my Kokum Lily and
2 my Mooshum Norman, and that was her and I'm pretty sure
3 that was at her prom or something. She was a teenager
4 then.

5 And that's my husband and my mom as she
6 really adored him and said, "You got a good one. Don't let
7 him go." Thank you.

8 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So, Nicole, did you want
9 to give Keanu an opportunity to talk? So, Keanu, did you
10 want to tell the Chief Commissioner a little bit about
11 yourself first?

12 **MR. KEANU GLADUE:** My name's Keanu Gladue.
13 I'm the third youngest.

14 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Where did you grow up,
15 Keanu?

16 **MR. KEANU GLADUE:** I grew up in Wabasca. I
17 still reside there. I've been there all my life and I'm
18 24.

19 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And you came here today.
20 What is the message that you want to leave with the
21 Inquiry, Keanu?

22 **MR. KEANU GLADUE:** Just to get answers, to
23 find her. It's hard every day thinking that a person like
24 that's missing, one of the ones that brighten up this
25 world.

1 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So your hope is that by
2 bringing your story forward that?

3 **MR. KEANU GLADUE:** That more people will be
4 aware that -- I'm sorry. Continue with your questions.

5 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So, Keanu, you -- you
6 wanted to bring this story forward so that more people
7 would be aware. Do you feel like there's not enough
8 awareness of your mother's case?

9 **MR. KEANU GLADUE:** Well, like my sister had
10 said earlier, it's been two years now and it just doesn't
11 feel like people are taking it serious as it was the first
12 three months. And for us, every day it's -- it still has
13 the same impact. Not a day goes by that we don't think of
14 her and how she left her mark on us and just want her back.

15 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So you've made some
16 efforts in your own community, the walks and things like
17 that; right?

18 **MR. KEANU GLADUE:** Yeah, just been as much
19 help as I can with my sister. She's been pretty much the
20 mastermind behind it all, so I do as much as I can.

21 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** And if there was anything
22 that you could have used for support or help along the way,
23 is there anything that you would ask or recommend that the
24 Inquiry do to help people like yourself?

25 **MR. KEANU GLADUE:** No, I know the support's

1 out there and it's easy to find. It's great that it's
2 there. It's just -- yeah.

3 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** You just want answers?

4 **MR. KEANU GLADUE:** Yeah.

5 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Yeah. Is there anything
6 else we haven't talked about, Keanu, that you'd like to
7 share?

8 **MR. KEANU GLADUE:** Well, the same thing with
9 all of us is, yeah, as we got older, she started to get to
10 know us better. As I saying, those past few years before
11 she went missing was when I really started to get to know
12 her because I used to harbour a grudge against what her
13 lifestyle was. Then I finally started understanding that
14 she must have went through hard stuff as well just like the
15 rest of us and maybe she couldn't let go and those were her
16 safety nets, something where she can fall to and doesn't
17 have to think about the consequences. So we'd talk about
18 it and we'd trade our stories and just over time started
19 getting more warm-hearted and lighter and get to laugh,
20 share even happier moments. And she would tell me stories
21 every time she would come see me and I wouldn't remember,
22 but she used to be very proud of us all, just -- yeah.

23 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So, Keanu, did you have
24 anything to do with the police yourself? Did you have any
25 interaction with them?

1 **MR. KEANU GLADUE:** No, I did not.

2 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Okay. What do you
3 think -- what were -- can you share a favourite memory of
4 your time with your mom?

5 **MR. KEANU GLADUE:** Well, when she
6 was -- when she started getting better, when she would try
7 to get better is -- all those were my favourite moments,
8 just being around her and joking, and she did have a
9 childish side to her, so it was fun to just banter back and
10 forth and -- pardon my language -- she'd call me a smart
11 ass and I would say it back to her and we'd just go back
12 and forth like that all day until one of us just quit and
13 started laughing.

14 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So, Keanu, there was a
15 mention about your mom going for treatment. Do you
16 remember any of the places that your mom went for
17 treatment?

18 **MR. KEANU GLADUE:** Well, I haven't really
19 confirmed it, but I believe she was in treatment before and
20 then she had gotten better and she was starting to go out
21 and out, but then as -- well, not usual, but just one of
22 those weak moments she had, she must have relapsed.

23 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** Do you remember anything
24 that did help her, that was helpful for her?

25 **MR. KEANU GLADUE:** I would say talking to

1 us --

2 MS. JENNIFER COX: Okay.

3 MR. KEANU GLADUE: -- talking to family.

4 MS. JENNIFER COX: Being able to connect
5 with you guys again?

6 MR. KEANU GLADUE: Yeah.

7 MS. JENNIFER COX: Okay. Nicole, did you
8 have anything other than -- that you'd like to say? Is
9 there anything that you would like the Inquiry to consider,
10 recommendations, things that you could use support with?

11 MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT: No, I think they're
12 doing good, the support. I think you guys are doing as
13 best as you can with support. It's just when you're going
14 through this with a loved one, it's just -- it
15 doesn't -- like I'm not trying to be rude. It just doesn't
16 matter because in the end, all we want is our mom back or
17 to know what happened. And you could have the best of the
18 best telling us what we should do, but at the end of the
19 day, it's our mom.

20 Like we know what her heart beats like from
21 the inside, like, and nothing could lessen that grief,
22 that heartache that we have every day since it started. I
23 can only hope that if any other families are listening or
24 going through what we're going through, take the support if
25 you think you know -- if you need it, like. But at the

1 same time, for myself, it's like I've tried it, but I don't
2 think I'll ever get better or have that peace in my heart
3 until I know where my mother is.

4 But I do thank you guys for giving so many
5 families out here -- to talk, to put their loved one's
6 stories out because, you know, Canada needs to know this.
7 Everyone needs to take this seriously. And no one has that
8 right to take -- be taking another one's loved one.
9 That -- that is not meant to be and that is not supposed to
10 be happening. Like we are people too. She was a person
11 too and nobody is disposable in this life, so just thank
12 you all. And if the support's there, I will take it, but
13 for now I just want my mom back and that's the only way I
14 could be a little better in peace.

15 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So, Chief Commissioner, I
16 don't have any more questions.

17 **CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** Nicole,
18 how old are you now?

19 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** I'll be -- well, I'm
20 30, turning 31 on Christmas.

21 **CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** How many
22 children do you have?

23 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** Five.

24 **CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** Boys,
25 girls?

1 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** One girl.

2 **CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** Four
3 boys?

4 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** Yeah.

5 **CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** Wow.
6 Those are all the questions I have.

7 I want to thank you, all three of you, for
8 sharing your mother with me --

9 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** Thank you.

10 **CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** -- and
11 the rest of us today. She's truly a beautiful woman --

12 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** M'hm.

13 **CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** -- a
14 gorgeous woman, inside and out, and it shows --

15 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** Yeah.

16 **CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION**

17 **BULLER:** -- (indiscernible) in the pictures. I have
18 absolutely no doubt in my mind that she's horribly proud of
19 you, very proud of you, wherever she is.

20 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** Thank you.

21 **CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** I know
22 that. I just know in my bones that she's very proud of you
23 and loves all of you very much.

24 **MS. NICOLE WEESEMAT:** Thank you.

25 **CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** Because

1 you've shared your truths with us and -- and shared your
2 mother for a while with us, we have some gifts for you. We
3 take what you've told us today and shared with us as a
4 sacred gift and so to thank you, yeah, just -- we have -- I
5 think all across Canada, there's significance for
6 Indigenous people about eagle feathers, to lift us up, to
7 brush us off, to hold us up in the air and take our prayers
8 up to the Creator, so we have eagle feathers for you, as
9 well as the traditional gift of tobacco -- oops, I'm sorry,
10 I dropped that -- and we're going to ask you to help us out
11 a little bit more. We have seed packages for you and we're
12 going to ask you, of course, to plant those seeds. If
13 something grows, would you please take a picture of it and
14 send it to us. We hope to gather pictures from all across
15 Canada. So we're very grateful that you've waited for so
16 long today and been patient and -- and shared your
17 wonderful mother with us. We're so -- so grateful. Thank
18 you. Thank you.

19 **MS. JENNIFER COX:** So, Chief Commissioner,
20 for the purposes of the record, if we could adjourn this
21 matter. I think we're --

22 **CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** Yes.
23 Thank you. We're done. Thank you.

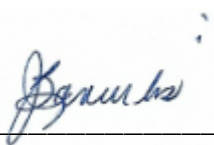
24 **Exhibits (P1P05P0204)**

25 **Exhibit 1:** Digital folder of two photos a) Nicole

1 Weesemat and Keanu Gladue after the hearing
2 b) photo montage created by Nicole of her
3 mother, Gloria, both of which were discussed
4 during the hearing
5 --- Upon adjourning at 5:31 p.m.

LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST'S CERTIFICATE

I, Jane Baniulis, Court Transcriber, hereby certify that I have transcribed the foregoing and it is a true and accurate transcript of the digital audio provided in this matter.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jane Baniulis", is written above a horizontal line.

Jane Baniulis

February 13, 2018