“Today we gain strength by remembering past struggles and we use that strength to find ways to move forward,” proclaimed Gary Lipinski, President of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO), during Louis Riel Day commemorations at Queen’s Park in Toronto on November 16. President Lipinski’s remarks eloquently captured what many Métis people felt across the Homeland as they gathered in their communities to both remember Riel, the heroic defender of Métis rights, and to celebrate their own growing Métis pride. This year’s Louis Riel Day was especially full of meaning because it took place during the Year of the Métis, a time designated by the governments of Canada and Ontario to recognize the contributions of Métis people. Even this designation is rich with irony, because the Year of the Métis also commemorates the 125th anniversary of the end of the Northwest Resistance, where these same governments attacked the Métis and executed our leader.

As has happened for 18 years in Ontario, Métis people across the province gathered in their communities on November 16, the day Riel was executed, to commemorate Louis Riel through speeches and celebrations of Métis culture. The Métis flag was raised in special ceremonies in many cities and towns across the province. At each of these ceremonies, local Métis leaders and elders along with local officials spoke of the significance of Louis Riel Day during the Year of the Métis. Métis dances and songs were performed and our stories re-told. People gathered together for traditional feasts and celebrated with friends and family.

Every Riel Day celebration is special, but it is perhaps the ceremony held at the provincial legislature in Queen’s Park in Toronto that captures most strongly the historical significance of the day. It was the Government of Ontario in that very legislature that declared Louis Riel a criminal, and placed a price on his head, after the Red River Resistance in 1870, which prevented him from taking his duly elected seat in the House of Commons. It was the Legislature of Ontario that on its very own grounds raised a monument to the soldiers who had fought the Métis in Batoche in 1885. Despite this tragic history, on November 16, 2010, Ministers of the Ontario Government gathered with Métis people to remember Riel and recognize his remarkable legacy, and to speak hopefully about the growing positive relationship between Ontario and the MNO.

While often in the past, November 16 has not been a pleasant day for the outdoor ceremonies held at Queen’s Park, this year was a glorious fall day. President Lipinski with the Honourable Chris Bentley, the Ontario Attorney-General and the Honourable Chris Bentley gathered with local leaders and elders along with local officials spoke of the significance of Louis Riel Day during the Year of the Métis.
The Gift of Sight

Councillor Donald Crawford of the Grand River Community Métis Council recently celebrated the birth of his first great-grandchild, Joseph Vernon Parsons Crawford. Above left to right: Donald Crawford, Vernon Crawford Sr., Vernon Crawford Jr., and Joseph Crawford. Donald has served with the GRCMC since its 2007 inception as interim Senator and councillor.

Letter to the editor

Fern Tremblay and Timmins Mayor, Tom Laughren, proudly display wallets with the bilingual donor vinyl stickers.

The Boese Family and the Niagara Region Métis Council received a very special Christmas present. About a week before Christmas Kevin Boese returned to his family after a tour of duty in Afghanistan. He was greeted by his parents Doug and Huguette Boese at the airport in Toronto. Welcome home from your friends at the MNO and the Voyageur!

First Hunting Trip

Joel Healey, President of the Kenora Métis Council, and his six year old granddaughter, Hailey Fortier. This was Hai- ley’s first hunting trip with her Papa. It was a very exciting and successful day for both of them.

Santa at the Dentist

Do you recognize this Métis Santa? He was discovered getting a little work done at the Rideau Dental Centre. (It’s our frequent poet, Raymond Tremblay, who helps out the “big guy” from time to time.)

Homecoming

The next
Voyageur deadline: February 21st, 2011

Publication #: PM 40025265

The Gift
of Sight

Dear Linda,

My name is Fernand (Fern) Tremblay. I have been involved as a volunteer with the Canadian National Institute for The Blind since 1986.

You will agree with me that we are born to die and what a beautiful gift we could leave to someone when we die such as our eyes and organs.

To promote the donation of tissues and organs I have developed a bilingual donor vinyl sticker to place on a wallet or card holder to identify the bearer as someone who is willing to donate their eyes or organs at death. There are so many visually impaired persons that could benefit from a cornea transplant to allow them to clearly see their loved ones and live a better and more productive life after receiving the gift of sight.

I would be happy to provide the Métis Nations’ Regional Health Offices with these bilingual donor vinyl stickers at no charge to promote and identify would-be donors.

Proud family member of the Métis Nation.
Fern Tremblay
PROVINCE-WIDE CONSULTATIONS ON MNO REGISTRY:

Over 600 Métis citizens joined MNO President, Gary Lipinski and MNO Chair, France Picotte at 12 Métis Identification and Registry Community Consultation meetings held before Christmas in Welland, Hamilton, Kitchener, Mississauga, Owen Sound, Midland, Parry Sound, Toronto, Oshawa, Peterborough, Flinton and Ottawa. At these meetings, President Lipinski updated citizens on the progress the MNO continues to make towards advancing its agenda throughout Ontario. As well, the meetings provided citizens with an opportunity to discuss their priorities and interests in such areas as harvesting rights, social housing, economic development, the Crown’s duty to consult, scholarships and bursaries, promoting Métis culture and care for our elders.

Another key aspect of each consultation meeting was a presentation and discussion on the MNO Registry, and its importance to the credibility and integrity of the MNO and our rights-based agenda. These discussions are part of a multi-year, province-wide consultation process about the Métis identification and registration that the 2010 MNO Annual General Assembly directed the MNO leadership to carry out. These community consultation meetings are Phase 1 in this important process.

In all, over 30 community consultation meetings will be held throughout the province over the next few months. Details on upcoming meetings will be posted on the MNO website and every MNO citizen will receive an invitation to the meetings held in their communities.

2011 AGA

Moon River Métis Council to host 2011 MNO Assembly in Parry Sound

The Town of Parry Sound on Georgian Bay will be the venue for the 2011 AGA, taking place at the Bobby Orr Community Centre.

On December 8, 2010, the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (PCMNO) announced that the 2011 Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Annual General Assembly (AGA) will be hosted by the Moon River Métis Council in the small picturesque community of Parry Sound, Ontario, August 29-22, 2011. The business meeting and cultural events of the weekend for the last few years have been preceded by two days of workshops and it is hoped that format will be available this year as well. It looks like an exciting venue for MNO citizens to connect to the business of the nation, celebrate our proud heritage and culture and reconnect with friends and family. “On behalf of the Moon River Council, we would like to express a warm welcome to all the staff of the Métis Nation of Ontario and to all the Ontario Councils and citizens to this year’s AGA. We are honoured and excited to be hosting this event and promise to make it very memorable,” stated Larry Duval, the President of the Moon River Council. “We are extremely honoured to be hosting the MNO AGA for the first time,” exclaimed Louise Goulding, Chair of the Moon River Council. “Parry Sound will be an ideal location as it is right on Georgian Bay. The Bay was very important to all Métis as our ancestors lived on, and traveled extensively as voyageurs, fishermen, trappers and lumbermen. The Moon River Métis Council and the Town of Parry Sound will ensure that this will be one of the most memorable MNO AGAs ever!”

Pauline Saulnier, PCMNO Councillor for Region 7, which includes Parry Sound, congratulated the Moon River Council for taking the initiative to host the AGA. “This will be a great event,” she said. “Let’s show the Nation what Region 7 is capable of accomplishing!”

MNO President, Gary Lipinski stated: “The Moon River Council has a lot to offer, and along with the local council, I look forward to welcoming MNO citizens to the 2011 AGA. I am confident this will be another productive AGA, where we both learn a lot and enjoy ourselves as we experience the flavour of Métis communities from across the province.”

Hugging the shores of Georgian Bay, the Town of Parry Sound is the world renowned jewel of the 30,000 Islands of the Georgian Bay. Located approximately two hours north of Toronto, and 45 minutes away by air, Parry Sound has a year-round population of 18,000 and will welcome the MNO with its small-town charm.

The AGA business meeting and many of the associated events are taking place at the Bobby Orr Community Centre with several other great venues as the Charles W. Stockey Centre for the Performing Arts, which coincidentally is the home of the Bobby Orr Hall of Fame.

Announcements about registration, activities, venues, accommodations and meals will be forthcoming, but for now, mark August 19th-22nd on your calendar for the 2011 MNO AGA!
Métis Nation of Ontario signs seventh Regional Consultation Protocol

On October 18, 2010, The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) signed the seventh of its Regional Consultation Protocols. The Protocol was signed between the MNO and the Ottawa Regional and Seven Rivers Métis Councils to help ensure Métis in the region are effectively engaged and consulted.

Gary Lipinski, President of the MNO of Ontario (MNO), joined Robert Pelletier, President of the Ottawa Métis Council, Tom Thompson Jr., President of the Seven Rivers Métis Council; and JoAnne Wass, Region 6 Councillor.

The Protocol was developed based on province-wide consultations on the Crown’s duty to consult and accommodate back in 2008.

The signing of this Protocol is an important part of the MNO’s Consultation Framework, which was developed based on province-wide consultations on the Crown’s duty to consult and accommodate back in 2008.

MNO participates in founding of ‘Women of the Métis Nation’

On November 23, 2010, the federal government announced $10 million in funding to address the tragedy of hundreds of murdered and missing Aboriginal women.

The Women of the Métis Nation President, Melanie Omeniho, says, “Although it is promising that the federal government is taking steps to address the issue, it is disappointing that they did not recognize the need for consultation and importance of working at the grassroots level to make best use of this opportunity for change.”

“The decision to provide the RCMP with $4 million dollars to expand their missing women and girls program,” she adds, “only includes the western provinces and has no Aboriginal-specific nor women and girls-specific requirements for approval.”

The police and authorities cannot help find solutions without first understanding the communities they need to work with and for.

Other notable concerns include imposing a region-specific funding requirement that only includes the western provinces and has no Aboriginal-specific nor women and girls-specific requirements for approval.

Ontario is partnering with the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres to build or renovate friendship centres so they continue to play a prominent role in the lives of urban Aboriginal people.

Over the next three years, a number of friendship centres will receive funding through the $8 million capital initiative for renovations of existing facilities and new building projects.

This program will support the creation of short-term construction and renovation jobs across Ontario and is part of the “Open Ontario Plan” to create jobs and strengthen the province’s economy.

Sylvia Magarize, Executive Director of the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres, said, “Friendship Centres desperately need to address health and safety issues and space requirements. This new capital will permit them to better provide their services and programs to urban Aboriginal people.”
MNO to receive $30.6 million for Employment & Training over five years

“This funding will have a lasting inter-generational impact. It will help our citizens develop skill sets and qualifications that will have ripple effects across the province.” — MNO President, Gary Lipinski

November 22, 2010, was a great day for the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) as MNO President Gary Lipinski, welcomed to the MNO head office in Ottawa, Shelly Glover, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Secretary Glover, who is a proud Métis woman from St. Boniface, Manitoba, the home of Louis Riel, spoke warmly about feeling she was among family at the MNO. “I usually don’t smile quite this much,” said Secretary Glover, “but when you are with family, that’s what happens!”

With CBC cameras present, and before an audience of MNO and Human Resources and Skills Development (HRSDC) staff, the MNO and HRSDC formally announced the MNO’s new five year $30.6 million agreement for employment and training programs through HRSDC’s Aboriginal Skills and Employment Strategy (ASETS) program. The MNO’s solid employment and training delivery foundation combined with an ongoing commitment to partnership and skills development culminated in MNO being the first ASETS agreement approved in Ontario.

President Lipinski thanked the HRSDC for investing in the MNO over the next five years stating: “Métis are a proud people who have contributed to the building of this province and Canada. This funding will have a lasting inter-generational impact. It will help our citizens develop skill sets and qualifications that will have ripple effects across the province because having a career will improve life in all other areas, which will then have positive impacts on families and communities.”

Parliamentary Secretary Glover, who was representing the Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of HRSDC, congratulated President Lipinski and the MNO for its record of success. “The MNO has grown under your leadership” she told President Lipinski, “and while you have faced many challenges, you and your team have overcome them.” Secretary Glover called on Métis to celebrate their success and not to rest, “until the Métis story is one success story after another from beginning to end.”

Bruce Stanton, the Chair of the Parliamentary Committee on Aboriginal Affairs, also attended the media event. Commenting on the large Métis population in his own riding of Simcoe North, Chair Stanton said: “The Métis are very connected with the success in our region. Announcements like the one today demonstrate that we will continue to work together. I look forward to many new accomplishments in the months and years ahead.”

MNO Chair Franois Picotte, who has worked tirelessly for the advancement of Education and Training issues within the MNO, was unable to attend the media event and was missed by all participants. Her work has been critical to MNO’s ongoing success in the education and training field. The ASETS agreement will allow the MNO to expand upon an established employment and training delivery structure and design new programs and services for Métis people in Ontario.

As a result, many Métis will secure jobs over the duration of the project, and Aboriginal youth will get help to return to school or to find full-time work.

“Métis people across Ontario,” concluded President Lipinski, “understand the significant benefits of this agreement to their families and communities and to all families and all communities in Canada. Long term investments like the one announced today benefit all of us.”

MNO congratulates Audrey Poitras on receiving National Aboriginal Achievement Award

November 23/10 — On behalf of Ontario Métis, Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) President Gary Lipinski, congratulated Audrey Poitras for being selected to receive a 2011 National Aboriginal Achievement Award.

The Awards were created by the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation in 1993 in conjunction with the United Nation’s International Decade of the World’s Indigenous Peoples. The awards recognize the outstanding career achievements of First Nations, Inuit and Métis people, in diverse occupations.

Audrey, as the President of the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) has been selected to receive the award for political service. She was elected as the first female president of the MNA in 1996. Since then, Audrey has been re-elected by Alberta Métis for four consecutive terms. As MNA President, she has advanced the interests and rights of Alberta Métis as well as the Métis Nation as a whole. Her full biography is available at www.naaf.ca.

MNO President, Gary Lipinski, said, “Over her years of dedicated service to the Métis Nation, Audrey has been a shining example of Métis leadership with integrity and credibility. She is a role model for many and is known for unswerving commitment to advancing the interests and rights of the Métis in Alberta and the entire Métis Nation. This award could not go to a more deserving Métis citizen.”

In August 2010, President Lipinski and President Poitras signed a MOU to strengthen the relationship between Ontario and Alberta Métis as well as to share best practices between the MNA and MNO in order to benefit Métis in both provinces.
An Afternoon of Celebration

Métis Nation of Ontario signs agreement with Central East LHIN

By NATALIE LLOYD
Health Branch Supervisor

Natalie Lloyd (seated on left) signs the Central East Local Health Integration Network (CE LHIN) LHIN Terms of Reference on behalf of the MNO. Signing with Natalie is Debora Hammons, CEO of the CE LHIN. Standing to the left is Foster Loucks, Chair of the CE LHIN who also signed the agreement with the MNO. The other four people were signers of a separate agreement with local First Nations.

On Sept 30, 2010, I had the pleasure of attending the signing ceremony for the Terms of Reference with the Central East Local Health Integration Network (CE LHIN) for the Métis, Inuit and Urban and Non-Status Indians. At the same event, the First Nations Terms of Reference was also signed by representatives of local First Nations communities. Representatives from the main health care system also attended. The Alderlvie First Nation was the host for the day, and welcomed everyone into their beautiful community centre.

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) was well represented with approximately ten citizens attending including: Senators Reta Gordon, André Bosse, Olive Tiedema, and representatives from the Northumberland, Wapiti and Oshawa and Durham Métis Councils. All of the Métis in attendance proudly wore sashes for the occasion.

Senator André Bosse carried the Métis flag during the opening that also included an honour song and youth and adult traditional dancers. The youngest dancer was a jingle dance dancer who could not have been more than four years old, but who danced with intensity beyond her years. Representatives of the Alderlvie First Nation welcomed the participants and spoke of the importance of addressing the health issues through the CE LHIN. An Elder from the community provided a prayer, which was followed by a smudging to clean the room to ensure the energy going into the signing was clear of any negativity; and also supported the CE LHIN moving forward positively.

The chiefs from Curve Lake and Hiawatha First Nations shared powerful words on the significance of this day, and then I had the honour of speaking on behalf of the MNO. I reflected on my drive to Alderlvie First Nation with Senator Gordon and how we both enjoyed the beautiful colours of the changing leaves in the slow steady rain. I then spoke about how the signing in 2010 is special for Métis people in Ontario and across Canada because both the provincial and federal government declared 2010 the “Year of the Métis Nation”. For too long the contributions of Métis people to both the Aboriginal community and to Canada have been downplayed, ignored or denied, but with the signing of the CE LHIN Terms of Reference, we can say the Métis voice has been heard and today we can say “you count”.

Several local Métis citizens were instrumental in opening the doors of the CE LHIN to the MNO. These included Art Henry, his mother Rose and his sister Kelly Semjans. Marsey (thank you) should also be extended to Senator Andre Bosse, Brad Boston and Jai Mills who pre-worked with the LHIN to develop the Terms of Reference. Jai Mills, the Aboriginal Liaison Representative, with the CE LHIN also played a critical role by asking questions, listening and understanding the concerns and reality of the groups involved in CE LHIN.

The importance of tying the Métis relationship with the CE LHIN was signified with the presentation of a sash to Foster Loucks, the CE LHIN Chair by Senators Bosse and Gordon. They shared that the sash was not just a garment, but also a tool to help Métis voyageurs carry large loads. We asked the Chair to use it to help carry the large load necessary to move forward on issues of Métis and Aboriginal health.

Following presentations by James McSche, the Senior Director of Planning, Integration and Community Engagement, and Deborah Hammons, CEO of LHIN, the two Terms of Reference were signed with drummers providing a suitable accompaniment. Following the ceremony, Chair Foster presented everyone with a gift of tobacco to signify the sealing of the agreement.

To say the least, the attention to detail and the respect shown throughout the day was truly beautiful. The MNO looks forward to building on these relationships and future meetings are already being planned. I would encourage all Métis citizens to learn about the LHIN in their areas and check out the www.lhins.on.ca website.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH INDUSTRY

Detour Gold and MNO sign Memorandum of Understanding

Detour Gold Corporation (TSX: DGO) (“Detour Gold” or the “Company”) is pleased to announce that the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) and Detour Gold have formed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to guide their working relationship in regard to the development of the Detour Lake gold mine in north-eastern Ontario.

“Based on positive relationship building that we have been making over the past year with Detour Gold, we developed this MOU collaboratively to guide engagement and consultation with the regional rights-bearing Métis communities in the James Bay/Abitibi-Témiscamingue traditional territories. I am pleased that the MNO was able to sign its first MOU in the mineral sector with Detour Gold and I applaud Detour Gold’s proactive efforts in working with the Métis Nation,” said MNO President, Gary Lipinski.

Richard Meloche, President and CEO of Detour Gold, added: “Since the acquisition of the Detour Lake project, we have been committed to working and consulting with all local communities, including the First Nation and Métis people. This initial agreement represents a milestone in our continuing working relationship with the Métis community as we plan to build upon it to provide opportunities to the regional Métis. The development of the Detour Lake project will provide positive economic and employment benefits to all the local communities in the region.

“The MOU details the way the local Métis have been and will be consulted regarding the development of the project and if there is an impact on Métis way of life, then the parties will work together to address them in an accommodation agreement based on impacts.”

MNO Regional Councillor Marcel Lafreniere, Chair of the James Bay/Abitibi-Témiscamingue Consultation Committee, commented: “Our community has worked hard with Detour Gold and we are very proud of our positive relationship and successful negotiations.”

About Detour Gold

Detour Gold is a Canadian gold exploration and development company whose primary focus is to advance the development of its flagship Detour Lake gold project located in north-eastern Ontario towards production.

Union Gas and MNO sign relationship Agreement

Formalizes the process for engagement and consultation

On October 14, 2010, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) and Union Gas Limited, a Spectra Energy company, signed an agreement that will guide their future working relationship in Ontario.

“Based on province-wide consultations with Métis communities on the duty to consult in 2007, the MNO’s leadership was directed to establish positive working relationships with companies like Union Gas in order to guide future engagement and consultation with regional Métis communities in Ontario. I am very pleased that the MNO was able to sign a relationship agreement with Union Gas and I applaud Union Gas’s proactive efforts in working with the Métis Nation,” said MNO President, Gary Lipinski.

“The agreement formalizes the process for engagement and consultation between Union Gas and regional Métis communities in Ontario on construction projects occurring within Métis traditional homelands in the province.”

Julie Dilll, President of Union Gas (left) and Gary Lipinski, MNO President (right).

“Union Gas strives to be the partner of choice for communities and that includes building long-term productive relationships with citizens of the MNO based on mutual respect and economic opportunity,” said Union Gas President, Julie Dilll. “That’s why we are thrilled to be entering into this new partnership.”

The two-year agreement reflects the MNO and Union Gas’s ongoing efforts to work together in a forward-looking, productive and transparent manner. It builds on the process for Union Gas to make use of the MNO’s consultation framework in order to engage and consult Métis communities as early as possible in the planning for projects that have the potential to impact their traditional way of life, in areas such as hunting, fishing and harvesting of medicinal plants and herbs.

Union Gas also seeks to identify business development and procurement opportunities that assist Aboriginal peoples by creating jobs, introducing training opportunities or addressing the social or economic needs of a particular community.”
Anniversary of Framework Agreement with Ontario marked

Following a series of successful Louis Riel Day and “Year of the Métis” events held throughout the province on November 16th, the MNO’s leadership and the Ontario Government issued a progress report on the MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement.

“The Métis Progress Report” was developed in collaboration with the Ontario Government, and outlines many of the collaborative initiatives that have been pursued and achieved through the Framework Agreement.

“This marks the two year anniversary of the signing of our historic Framework Agreement with the Ontario Government. I am pleased to provide this progress report to our citizens and communities in order to show the tangible results we have achieved so far,” said MNO President, Gary Lipinski.

Lipinski added, “This anniversary also provides us an opportunity to take stock and assess where we have been successful and where we want to go in the future with respect to priorities under the Framework Agreement process. I look forward to hearing about the priorities of our Métis citizens and communities, as a part of the MNO’s province-wide community consultation process that is currently ongoing.”

The MNO’s leadership and the Ontario Minister for Aboriginal Affairs signed the MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement on November 17th, 2008. The Framework Agreement commits the MNO and the Ontario Government to promote the mutually agreeable objectives of strengthening the MNO, recognizing and promoting Métis history and culture; enhancing the well-being of Métis individuals, families and communities; and facilitating the recognition of Métis rights in Ontario.

For information on the MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement, visit www.metisnation.org

MNO contributions recognized at Prince Arthur’s Landing

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) was front-and-centre at a ceremony held on September 17 in Thunder Bay to celebrate the one year anniversary of the Prince Arthur’s Landing Waterfront Development Project. The first phase of the Prince Arthur’s Landing Development involves preparation for future construction and the development of attractions. Preparations include electrical installations, water systems, foundation piles for piers, boardwalk renewal and break wall relocation. When the project is complete, the attractions will include a water garden, skating rink, splash pad and a spirit garden. It is anticipated that Phase 1 will be completed by the end of March 2011.

The MNO is among the partners involved in the project, along with the federal government, the provincial government and the City of Thunder Bay. As the terms of reference for the project include Aboriginal consultation, particularly in respect to the environment, the MNO has been directly involved in the development and consultations on the Spirit Garden that will be located on Wilson Island in Lake Superior.

The MNO delegation was joined by Prime Minister Stephen Harper, provincial Minister of Northern Development, Mines, Forests, Environment, Michael Gravelle; and the Mayor of Thunder Bay, Lynn Peterson. Minister Gravelle and Mayor Peterson both specifically acknowledged the contributions of the MNO in their remarks, and Minister Gravelle introduced our MNO representatives to Prime Minister Harper at the Prime Minister’s office.

MNO leadership meets with Premier McGuinty

On November 12, 2010, the Métis National Council (MNC) expressed approval of Canada’s endorsement of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) as a positive step for the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms for Canada’s Aboriginal population.

MNC President, Clément Chartrand says, “Ever since September, 2007, when the UN adopted the UNDRIP, the Métis Nation has been urging Canada to reverse its decision not to support the UNDRIP. Today, Canada finally listened and we congratulate the Government on taking this important step.”

President Chartrand adds, “This decision helps to clear the way for a positive, constructive path forward for the Métis Nation and all Canadians in addressing many of the challenges facing our people across the Homeland.”

The Métis National Council and its governing members are ready to work closely with the Government of Canada in adopting the UNDRIP’s core principles of mutual respect, equality, partnership and good faith.
Métis Rendezvous ‘10

by Rachelle Brunelle-McColl

M y family and I have been involved with the Métis Rendezvous from its first year and it has become a family tradition. It has made us even more proud of who we are and our culture. It represents learning, living and loving everything about being Métis. The music and dancing have always been in our blood and when the fiddle starts to play our feet just need to move.

My children have also learnt many wonderful things by being at the Rendezvous—more than anything, respecting the culture and being able to say they are proud! My first son, Camden, was only eight weeks old when he first attended in 2006 and experienced his first smudge. It was a beautiful moment and he slept for almost eight hours straight as well! (Not sure what all that tobacco was spiked with.)

His second year he was dressed to impress with his voyageur shirt made by our friend Ruth Quesnelle and his sash given to him by Scott Carpenter. That year he sat on top of his pépère’s shoulders (Victor Brunelle) and wandered the grounds of the Rendezvous in amazement at everything he could see, hear, smell and taste. This was his first real experience of being Métis. It brought happy tears to my eyes to see him on the cover of the fall/winter 2007 Voyageur—a close up picture of my father with my son on his shoulders. My uncle even had a print of it framed for us for our wedding. It is just so beautiful and it is a picture at the front entrance for everyone to see.

This year, my youngest son, Nathan, who is 14 months old wore his brother’s shirt and sash and had his own real Métis experience: You could smell hickory cooking over an open fire, hear fiddle music playing on a beautifully decorated stage along with laughter from the children at the voyageur games area. There was so much to see and learn that my son just walked everywhere over and over looking at what best describes his Métis pride—geese hanging on display, hides and furs, along with many arts and crafts. Even if it wasn’t the warmest fall day, the warmth in the air was beyond belief. To see my children grow with the opportunity to learn and be part of their culture is more than I could ever ask for.

To sum it up: The Métis Rendezvous is more than just a yearly event; it’s tradition and always will be. Thank you to the planning committee along with all the volunteers who made this day so successful and so special for my family.

GRAND RIVER MÉTIS COMMUNITY COUNCIL:
Métis receive grant to bring cultural knowledge to youth

by Barb Ruskin

The Grand River Métis Community Council recently received a grant from The Department of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages.

Presented by Stephen Woodworth, Member of Parliament for Kitchener Centre, on behalf of the Honourable James Moore, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, the purpose of the grant is to help bring cultural and traditional knowledge to the youth of the community.

“Like every ethnic group, it is important for their cultural heritage to be passed from one generation to the next, otherwise it will be lost forever,” said MP Woodworth. “I am pleased that our government places such a high value on preserving the traditions and culture of all Canadians.”

Métis Nation in the Thunder Bay Christmas Parade

by Joan Panizza

C onfirm November 20 was National Child Day and in Thunder Bay it was our annual Christmas Parade. Kerry New, CAP/C Co-ordinator seized the opportunity to enter a float for the Métis Nation.

It is estimated that up to 35,000 people line the parade route for this annual event. Seeing ourselves showcased was a proud Métis moment. From the snowman and snow shoes to the 20 foot long sash and traditional games this float was the culmination of many hours of planning, organizing, decorating, and the inevitable troubleshooting. Kerry was able to get the help of more than 12 different families to pull this feat off. We have to give a big hats-off to Kerry, Lisa, and all their families. You did the Métis Nation of Ontario proud for this annual event!

Council Prez wins at Seniors’ Games

The Ontario Senior Games, held in Oshawa with 1,260 athletes requested to compete in 20 different sports, ranging from golf to slow pitch, swimming, tennis, bocce, darts and bowling among others. To compete at this level, athletes must have qualified as seniors champions in their local division, which allows them the chance to test their skills against other champions across Ontario.

The Ontario Senior Games provide adults 55 years plus an opportunity to increase their social interaction and to maintain and enhance their physical and psychological well-being through participation in recreational activities and sports. Congratulations to Trent Desaulniers on winning the gold medal in golf. Trent is President of the Superior North Shore Métis Council and was sponsored by the Geraldone and Area Métis Council.

Former MNO President, Tony Belcourt, has given Trent fair warning that he intends to challenge him next year. Stay tuned!

Canning Workshop & Harvest Feast in Renfrew

by Shannon Davis

T he Renfrew office would like to express its appreciation and sincere gratitude to Darlene Gauthier, Linda Tibodeau, Monica Owl and their help in preparing for our work- shop and feast. On September 15th the smell of fresh tomatoes, onions, peppers and spices filled the air as Linda Tibodeau facilitated a canning workshop. Linda showed the community how to make and can salsa.

On September 29, 2010, laughter and conversation were heard throughout the Renfrew office. Elder Darlene Gauthier made delicious bannock for the citizens. The Renfrew community united to celebrate the beauty of autumn and the harvest that the earth had provided us this year. On behalf of the Renfrew office we would like to wish the Métis Nation a happy and safe New Year!
By Anne T rudel

Invitation to
above: Jacinthe Trudeau and daughter Victoria.

Winter 2011

The Métis Dance Club of Algoma, encompassing the Historic Sault Ste. Marie and North Channel Métis Communities, continues to offer fun, physically active heart pumping step dancing. Started in 2006, the club practices on selected Monday nights from 7:00 to 8:00 P.M. at the Sault Métis Centre. For specific times and events, contact either Senator Brenda Powley or me, Anne Trudel.

This year we are very pleased to introduce Elders Clifford Saunder-
s (First Nation fiddle player) and Eugene Provencher (mouth organ). With Elder Saunders on the fiddle we have started our organ). With Elder Saunders on the fiddle we have started our (Bran-
ders (First Nation fiddle player) and jew’s harp (Cody Rydal), Rebekah T rudel), mouth organ and accordion/key board (Anne Trudel). The list of musicians fluctuates. Because our events are held at a variety of locations and times during the day, not all musicians or all dancers are available for every event. If you are a musician, dancer or square dance caller, please share your talents. Do not let skill level or shyness limit your involvement. We do not force anyone to perform, but sometimes strongly push a talented youth who just needs some encouragement.

We have yearly events in the Algoma and Sault Ste. Marie region such as Bruce Mines Community Day, Fort St. Joseph Parks Canada, Old Stone House Fall Rendevous, Passport to Unify. We also exhibit at local Métis gatherings.

This year the dance club stepped out of our region and were invited to Sudbury for the “Northern Aboriginal Festival” held the first weekend of October. This yearly grand scale powwow event held in the Sudbury Arena comes to fruition due to the hard work of First Nation and Métis volunteers. Local Sudbury Métis, Gail Charboneau, Métis Facilitator from Cambrian Col-
lege, and Bobbi Aubin, Laurentian University Métis Outreach worker volunteer their time to make this event a reality. They even pro-
vided us with the outstanding music of Jacinthe Trudel and her band “Jacinthe Trudel”. Being optimistic. I foresee Sudbury Region having its own Métis dance club in the future, espe-
cially with access to fiddle playing musicians like Mrs. Trudel. I even challenge our MNO Region 4 youth representative Mitchell Case and his drum group White Frost to be in attendance at the next festival.

Rebekah and I had the opportunity to return to Sudbury to perform and present Métis culture at the Ontario Native Women’s Association’s 39th Annual General Assembly on October 16, 2010. Once again, we danced to the music of Jacinthe Trudeaume and guitar player Geoff Horricks of Ottawa. Mr. Horricks is also interested in the Métis dancers and would like to have a Métis dance group in Ottawa to access. To our enjoy-
ment, at this assembly we met fel-
low Métis women. It was a warm welcome that we received from our Métis Nation of Ontario Provincial vice chair Sharon McBride:

“In the same cordial sincerity, the Métis Dance Club of Algoma challenges and invites Métis people throughout this province to join us for fun, physically active heart pumping step dancing. Enjoy your heritage. get jigging!”

by Rebekah Wilson

Since before I can remember, I have wanted to be a writer. I have always had a creative flare for things and recall finding a particular joy in tagging along with my dad to work on days that I stayed home sick from school. When I was young, my dad worked for The Thunder Bay Her-
ald, a local weekly newspaper. On days that I was too sick to go to school, my dad would take me to the office with him where he could keep an eye on me. He would sit me down with a notepad and a pencil and I would write away to my heart’s content. Occasionally, I would also draw pictures, cut them out and then stick them back in my notebook using the office’s glue machine. One of my most exciting adventures was when my dad let me put a photo through the glue machine and place it in the newspaper layout (yes, this was before the layout process became digital).

In elementary school, I always excelled in my English and writing courses. I was even told in seventh grade that my writing skills topped out at a grade twelve level! So, while my fellow students were dreaming of careers as actors and lawyers and movie stars, I was fantasizing about my byline on the Globe & Mail’s front page.

After high school I took a year off and moved to Calgary to work as a portrait photographer but returned in 2007 to begin studying Print Journ-
alism at Sherbrooke College. The program was phenomenal and taught me aspects of print, video, online and new media journalism. I also delved into some photojournalism and dabbled in broadcast. These were long, exhausting days but I loved each and every moment.

I was in class almost daily from 9am to 6pm which didn’t leave much time for part-time work, and so I was finding it hard to afford rent in student housing and to keep food in the fridge. I was near at my wit’s end – I couldn’t give up on my dream but I didn’t know where to turn.

Through connections with my family’s local Métis community, I got in touch with Scott Carpenter who helped me to fill out an application for post-secondary funding through the Métis Nation of Ontario’s Education and Train-
ing Branch which came through at just the right time! My school schedule got even more intense and textbook costs were piling up. Finally, with financial support from the MNO, I could focus on my class work and assignments and not have to worry that when I got home, my cupboards would be bare.

In November of 2010, I began my work with “Motivate Canada”, a Canadian charity that encourages youth to become positive role models through engaging in sport and physical activity and taking on leadership roles within their communities. I am the pro-
gram coordinator for one of the organization’s Aboriginal programs called the GEN7 Aboriginal Role Model Program. GEN7 aims to engage First Nations, Inuit and Métis youth in sport and physical activity while also tackling the unique issues that face them. My job duties include coordinat-
ing travel for GEN7? Role Models to Aboriginal commu-
nities, website updates and maintenance as well as the design and creation of promo-
national materials.

Thanks to MNOET, I was able to enjoy my college years without financial worry and landed a job I love working with motivated youth like myself!
Feast of the harvest moon

by Brian Cockburn

The cars are loaded in the dark, goodnights abound, as I drive down the lane I notice one more sign to be taken down, tied from a fence post to a lone birch tree. Harvest day is over and many thanks go out to Mike Stevens and his staff at Dutrisac Cottages in Sturgeon Falls. The hall he donated for the fourth year was bouncing with music all afternoon, as his staff set up the deep fryers that supplied the huge crowd with a great pickerel dinner cooked by Marc Laurin and supplied by the North Bay Métis Council. The Feast of the Harvest Moon, put on by programs and services, was one of the warmest I had attended. Visitors came from all over and included Chair, France Picotte; Region 5 PCMNO Councillor, Maurice Sarrazin; and Captain of the Hunt, Richard Sarrazin.

The North Bay Métis Council held their Annual General Meeting (AGM) on October 27th, during a major storm that had the lights out from Sturgeon Falls to Mattawa. Marc “chef” Laurin moved upstairs in the dark to use the gas stoves for his spaghetti supper, as David Potvin set up the tables and other volunteers lit candles and placed them about. Senator Marlene Greenwood, Doris Evans, and President Walter Deering, joined 45 members that evening for a meal and Métis business at hand. All the staff from the programs were there for introductions and to provide information on their services.

During the contacting of members for the AGM, there were a lot of phone numbers and addresses out of service on the list we use. If you are not sure if you have updated your address in a while, send a letter to the North Bay Métis Council (address below). An email list is growing (northbaymetis@gmail.com) or check on Facebook, “North Bay Métis” for events.

On November 5th, Amanda Deshiers, MNO’s Healthy Babies Healthy Children Co-ordinator in North Bay, and Jaynne Jansen, Aboriginal Best Start Co-ordinator with the North Bay Friendship Centre, organized a “Métis Awareness Day” at the Early Years Learning Centre in North Bay. Fiddler player, Samantha Deputate along with her two students Chloé and Dusanka Gravelle performed for 88 children and 42 parents. Other activities included crafts, colouring contest, and learning about animals and identifying their tracks.

On November 11th, Remembrance Day, Senator Greenwood laid a wreath for the Métis Nation of Ontario Veterans at a ceremony in North Bay, while veteran Gerry Potvin attended the observation in Sturgeon Falls.

On the 17th of December, programs and services celebrated “2010 the Year of the Métis”, with their annual open house and potluck lunch, along with music and activities, and conversation. A “Métis on Ice” day is in the planning stages for February 19th, 2011, to be held on Lake Nipissing.

We wish everyone all the best in the new year from Lise Malette, Long Term Care; Stacy Rivet, Community Wellness; Amanda Deshiers, Healthy Babies; Brian Cockburn; Susan Van Der Rassel, Linda Krause, Education and Training; Jason Jameson, Community Wellness Supervisor; and all of the North Bay Métis Council.

ONTARIO POWER GENERATION

John Murphy, Executive Vice President, Hydro, Ontario Power Generation (OPG) is pleased to announce the appointment of Art Rob as Plant Manager, Northwest Hydroelectric Plant Group. Mr. Rob replaces Mike Martelli, who was recently appointed Plant Manager of OPG’s Niagara Hydroelectric Plant Group.

Mr. Rob received his Bachelor of Engineering from Lakehead University and is a graduate of its Management Leadership Program. Since joining OPG, he has worked in various capacities in both the thermal and hydroelectric divisions of the company.

The Northwest Plant Group, headquartered in Thunder Bay, operates 11 hydroelectric generating stations across Northwestern Ontario with work centres in Kenora, Ear Falls, Cameron Falls (Nipigon) and Thunder Bay.

Ontario Power Generation Inc. produces about two-thirds of the province’s electricity. With 12,000 employees working at 73 power plants across Ontario, our focus is on producing reliable, low-priced electricity in a safe, open and environmentally responsible manner.

ONTARIO POWER GENERATION

Frank Chiatotto, Senior Vice President, Thermal, Ontario Power Generation (OPG), is pleased to announce the appointment of Chris Fralick as Plant Manager, Northwest Thermal. Mr. Fralick is responsible for OPG’s Attikanian and Thunder Bay generating stations. He replaces Derrick Brooks who will be retiring from OPG at the end of 2010.

A Chemical Engineering graduate from the University of Waterloo, with an MBA from Wilfrid Laurier University, Mr. Fralick joined OPG in 2000 in the Graduate Engineer Training Program. Moving to Nanticoke Generating Station in 2002, he held a number of technical, supervisory and management positions before being appointed Production Manager at Thunder Bay Generating Station in 2009.

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ONTARIO POWER GENERATION
Beautiful day, beautiful people

by France Picotte
Chair, Métis Nation of Ontario

I
ently had the pleasure and privilege of attending the New Harvest Moon Celebration with the North Bay Métis Council. The day was beautiful and so were the people; the musicians were fantastic. I was impressed with the families who are so musically talented and also the fiddle playing students were very good. Now let’s talk food—mooose, deer and much more for lunch, then to top it off—a fish fry for supper. What else can one say about good people, and there were lots of those. I want to thank the volunteers who helped put this on—the council, the staff and many others. The conversation whether it’s business, family, or whatever, is always informative and enjoyable. I love being able to speak with people hearing our stories are told and that is what we are about.

At the edge of the continent

(A) t the end of December, Gar rent Gauthier and the rest of the team were making their way down the rainy, windy Oregon coast. They have already made the 5500 km trek across Canada. When they reached the BC coast, Garret experienced a sort of epiphany thinking back, he said: “I recalled seeing a sign in north ern Ontario indicating that Wawa was only 190 km away, and I remember thinking: ‘Golly, we’re really out there, and we’ve come all this way on our bikes!’ I mean, gosh, Wawa!” “To tell the truth, the distance between here and Wawa doesn’t seem any more significant than the distance between Wawa and home. I can vividly recall the mountain passes, the thrilling descents, the cold mornings, the sunny days, the rainy days, the furious headwinds, and the innumerable warm people of our journey thus far, and it all feels like a logical progression...”

You can keep track of Garrett’s adventures and read his blog at www.pedalcrosscanadameetme.com

Crab Berries

2 cups all-purpose flour
1/4 cup sugar
1 tablespoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/3 cup brown sugar
1 cup whipping cream
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1 egg white
1 teaspoon orange zest
1 cup fresh cranberries, chopped

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. In a large bowl, combine flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt. Gradually add butter until mixture is coarse and crumbly. Add whipping cream and stir until mixture is moist. Mix in cranberries, nutmeg, and orange zest. Place on a lightly floured and lined 9 x 13 inch pan. Roll with a rolling pin 1/2 inch thick. Cut with a biscuit cutter and place each scone 2 inches apart on a lightly greased baking sheet. Brush tops of scones with egg white and bake for 20 minutes or until golden brown. 12 servings.

Devonshire Cream

3 ounces cream cheese
1 tablespoon powdered sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup whipping cream

Beat cream cheese, sugar, salt, and vanilla until well blended. Add whipping cream and beat until mixture is stiff. Cover and chill at least 2 hours. Spread on scones.

Temiskaming Métis hold Harvest Time Gathering

by Tina Nichol
Temiskaming Métis Community Council

T
he Temiskaming Métis Community Council (TMCC) held its annual Harvest Time Gathering on Nov 13, 2010, in Haileybury, Ontario. Approximately 50 members came out to be able to have fun and enjoy the activities, a silent auction and cultural display. The feast was put together by members of the TMCC, and included everything from wild berries to caribou to moose stew. The entire feast was traditional and delightful. We also took the opportunity to remember our Senator, Mr. Earline Lavallee who passed away this fall. The feast was in his honour this year. The TMCC also took part in the Kik Lake Community Forest Committee, who is a partner in the TMCC’s Way of Life project. The project is researching our Métis citizens to map out their traditional hunting and gathering activities, and it also tracks the route of the Métis people who arrived in the Temiskaming area beginning in the 1600s. In addition, the TMCC will be launching a new website in the coming year. It was designed by JR Printing in North Cobalt, Ontario. We cannot wait to share it with our other councils and the MNO who made it all possible.

Méťis youth Angelica Laurin speaking at Red Day ceremonies in Toronto.

Making new friends, renewing some old friendships, being as it’s what that day was about. The children were entertained and also encouraged in their artistic endeavours. We have a talented Métis generation coming up waiting to take our places as they should.

I had a conversation with the Métis youth role model, Angelica Laurin, she is an articulate, intelligent, young woman. We must nurture our youth for they are our future. If you want her to speak at one of your events invite her. Her expenses are covered by the role model program.

Congratulations North Bay on a successful day and all the other work you are doing. I thank you again.

NORTH BAY MÉTIS COUNCIL | NEW HARVEST MOON CELEBRATION

Red River Cart rolls in Wine Fest parade

T
he Niagara Region Métis Council (NRMC) took part in the St. Catharine’s Grape and Wine Festival during the fall of 2010 giving those in attendance a taste of Métis culture. “Unfortunately we could not use our canoe, ‘Second Chance’, as the water ways were not on the parade route,” said NRMC Women’s Representative, Barb Wright. However, Derrick Pont was strong enough to pull the Red River Cart along the route with Valerie Boese as his lead hand. Next year we hope to get the paper work straightened out so we can have our fiddler, camp tent, canoe and yes, the cart again,” she continued.

Among those attending the event from the Niagara Region Métis Council were: Derrick Pont, the main work horse; Valerie Boese; Amanda Pont-Shanks; Sarah McDonald; Kirby-Lynn Wright, who carried the Banner; Suzanne Matte and Barbraranne Wright, who proudly carried the Métis flag.

Thanks to everyone who made this day possible.

Temiskaming Métis Community Council

Red River Cart in St. Catharines’ Grape and Wine festival parade.

 NIAGARA REGION MÉTIS COUNCIL:

Red River Cart rolls in Wine Fest parade

CREDIT RIVER MÉTIS COUNCIL:

Métis community activities in Peel

The following workshops and activities have been planned for the Peel Region. If you are interested in any of them or want more information, please contact Simon Bain.

Nintendo Wii: Use the Wii for recreation, leisure, and exercise. Learn how to use the Wii and its various fitness programs. These classes will be held every week during January and February.

Open Circle: This will focus on Holism and Health. Bounding and Finger Whirling. During the month of February beading and finger weaving will be available on Sunday afternoons. Contact the council (crmc@rogers.com) for information about location and times.

The Community Wellness Program includes workshops and educational outreach, counselling services, friendly visiting, advocacy and referrals, assistance for people with disabilities, access programs, stress management, health issues and awareness, prenatal care, child safety, gambling awareness and prevention. If you are interested in any upcoming activity, or would like more information contact: Simon Bain
Community Wellness Coordinator
Tel: 905-625-3351 or simonb@metisnation.org

Visit the Credit River Métis Council website for more activities and up-coming events at: www.creditrivermetiscommunity.com

NIAGARA REGION MÉTIS COUNCIL:

Red River Cart rolls in Wine Fest parade

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Métis heritage festival

by Senator Cecile Wagar

On June 26 and 27, 2010, we hosted our fourth Annual Métis Heritage Celebration at Memorial Park in Oshawa as a perfect event to commemorate the contributions of the Métis Nation to the formation of Canada during this 125th anniversary of the “Year of the Métis” and the 125th anniversary of the North-West Resistance.

As this was our third year at this location, we had many return visitors and many new ones; the furthest came from New Zealand. Upwards of 5000 people attended the event, young fiddlers from southern Ontario: Alicia Blore (Toronto) and Rajan Anderson (Guelph). We were pleased that Métis citizens from Quebec, New Brunswick, and Ontario returned as vendors, presenters, and visitors to strengthen national Métis unity.

As a highlight of our Métis Heritage Celebration, we offered to our audience the collaborative fiddling efforts of master fiddler James Cheechoo (Moose Factory) and elder fiddler Ruth Wagner (Bracebridge) with two young fiddlers from southern Ontario: Alicia Blore (Toronto) and Rajan Anderson (Guelph). We were thrilled that our event provided the mechanism where knowledge-holding elders were able to pass their knowledge on to our youth and that Métis and non-Métis alike were able to share in this experience.

It was also exciting to have the Métis Fiddler Quartet (Alyssa, Danton, Conlin and Nicholas Delbaere-Sawchuck) return to our stage for the fourth year in a row with their unique style. We appreciate that we were a stop on their very busy summer tour. We look forward to the release of their next CD in the new year.

Fiddler J.J. Lavallée closed out our Celebration. The crowd kept asking for encore after encore, and J.J. was happy to oblige. His Métis fiddling while we were breaking down our tents and packing up ended our weekend appropriately and satisfactorily.

We held a free draw for those who completed our survey. Brandi Mackeod and her family from Oshawa were the proud recipients of the first prize: a VIA Rail/Travelodge trip to Montreal. Dave Davenport from Whitby was our second prize: a large dream catcher made by Sylvie Gagnon.

The results of the survey were very enlightening. They will help us in our planning for next year’s event.

I would like to acknowledge some other very important individuals who made the event a success: B.C. Métis artist, Dennis Weber; Québec Métis, Archie Martin, slash finger player, Louise Vien; hand drum entrepreneur, John Somosi; Manitoba fiddler, J.J. Lavallée; MNO Senators and presenters, Andrew Bose, Ruth Wagner; Alis Kennedy, MC Serge Courtois, MNO President, Gary Lipinski; Wapiti Métis Council President, Helena Sayer, Oshawa Deputy Mayor, Nester Pidwerbeck; Brock Township Métis Mayor, Larry Rick Morgan. Most important, the Métis Heritage Celebration would not have been the success that it was without the countless hours and effort of so many committee members and volunteers. I offer a resounding Chii Miigwetch, Mansee, Merci, and Thank You to each one of you!

Finally, we sincerely wish to thank our financial supporters. They include: Celebrate Canada; the City of Oshawa; the Ontario Arts Council – Aboriginal Arts Projects Program; CIBC; OPG; VIA Rail/Travelodge; the Durham District School Board and a private donor.

MÉTIS VOYAGEUR

The Oshawa and Durham Regional Council is constructing a new website. The old website will no longer be up and running for now. Watch the new website at www.oshawadurhammetis.com as it develops. Lots of new pictures and videos coming soon.

MÉTIS TRIO: jig, fiddle, canoe

(clockwise from top) Rajan Anderson, Ruth Wagner, Alicia Blore, James Cheechoo and Daisy Cheechoo; Colleen, Ian, and family at the Métis Heritage Celebration; Honourary Senator Olive Tiedema and PCMNO Senator Joseph Potrass; J.J. Lavallée and Marianne; Métis Fiddler Quartet on stage.
It was a pleasure to have Robert Pilon, President of the Oshawa and Durham Métis Council, join us. During the evening festivities Robert presented our council with a gift of a framed photograph of a view of the church at Batoche, with many Métis citizens holding the Métis flag as our Métis float passed right in front of me. What better way to get our message out to the public? I urge all Métis Councils across Ontario to do the same. This will encourage our Métis citizens to come out and be proud of who they are.

This unique project has been the result; they were made of beaded art. These mittens are the result; they were made by a very talented Olinide Bousquet Métis Dancers from Oshawa, who were amazing, as usual.

Throughout the years the harvest dinner has become bigger and more successful and this is due in part to the hard work of those who diligently work in the background. Without them, the harvest dinner would not be the success that it is. It is time to acknowledge and give much thanks to the Board of Directors, Turbo Wintle, Long Term Care Coordinator; Rebecca Vander Sanden, Healthy Babies Healthy Children Coordinator; and Terry Lynn Longore, Community Wellness Coordinator. Thank you! We appreciate all that you do.

Kokomis Tchiman

Birch bark canoe being built in Oshawa

by Art Henry

I n November 10, 2010, the Durham District School Board announced the official unveiling of a voyageur canoe creation project led by Métis master birch bark canoe maker, Marcel Lavelle, at G.L. Roberts Collegiate in Oshawa.

This unique project has been funded by a generous grant from the Department of Canadian Heritage to the Oshawa and Durham Region Métis Council. The Durham District School Board thanks the Oshawa and Durham Region Métis Council and the Department of Canadian Heritage for giving our students, staff and the community a unique opportunity to learn the teachings of the canoe,” said Chair of the Board and Oshawa Trustee, Larry Jacula.

Marcel (Mahigan) has begun constructing a full-sized, 25 foot birch bark voyageur canoe in a specially prepared room at G.L. Roberts CVI in south Oshawa. The canoe not only provides transportation for First Nations and Métis, it is also an important vehicle for the cultural teachings which have been passed down from generation to generation.

Lessons which can be learned from the canoe include: balance, cooperation, and harmony. The Marcel constructs Grandmother Canoe (Kokomis Tchiman) studies, teachers, and community members will be invited to visit, take part, and learn.

The creation of Kokomis Tchiman can be viewed on the DDBS Aboriginal Education website: http://spintalking.ddbus.ca.
and Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, raised the Métis flag outside the legislature and then joined a procession led by a colour guard of Métis veterans and accompanied by a Métis fiddler, Roger Giroux. The long parade of over one hundred people made its way across the legislature grounds to the Northwest “Rebellion” monument where everyone gathered for official ceremonies.

Francois Picotte, the MNO Chair, acted as MC for the ceremony and called upon each speaker, starting with Senator Rita Gordon who provided the opening prayer. Senator Gordon recounted some of the indignities suffered by the Métis who were even initially denied the right to provide Riel a decent burial. The Senator concluded, however, that despite his death, Riel was a great success. “Because they killed Riel,” she explained, “they thought they killed us too, but we all accomplished in life what he [Riel] couldn’t do in death. We could be robbed of our lands but we cannot be robbed of our dreams.”

The presence of government ministers and MPs as well as opposition party MPs at the Queen’s Park ceremony testifies to the new relationship developing between the MNO and Ontario. Minister Bentley commented on the many successes of the MNO and how these successes enrich the entire province. “Every year can be the Year of the Métis,” stated Bentley, “because if there is a brighter future for the Métis, there is a brighter future for Ontario and a brighter future for everyone.”

In his remarks, Progressive Conservative MP Ted Arnott called on the Ontario Government to re-dedicate the Northwest “Rebellion” monument to all the combatants rather than just those who fought for the Canadian Government. New Democratic Party MPP Michael Prue commented on the “delicious irony” of staging Riel Day ceremonies at the monument. “Today they [the people who erected the monument] are all gone and we want to forget what they said,” Prue pointed out. “What is remembered today is that this was an uprising of people who had a story to tell. [This ceremony helps us] understand that we have changed.”

The Honourable Michael Chan, Minister of Culture and Tourism; the Honourable Linda Jeffries, Minister of Natural Resources and MPs; Dave Levac, Maria Van Bommel and Garfield Dunlop also attended the ceremony.

The theme of growing Métis pride figured prominently in the remarks of many of the speakers. Chair Picotte commented: “While 125 years ago it would not have been the case, today Métis people are proud to say ‘I am Métis!’ By proclaiming the Year of the Métis, people are discovering their culture: ‘I am Métis, I live the culture, I speak the language, or I remember my grandmother speaking it.’”

Jean Toilett, a Métis lawyer, who has defended Métis rights before the Supreme Court, and who is also a descendant of Louis Riel, called on the Canadian Museum of Human Rights, which is being built in Winnipeg, to include a statue of Louis Riel in the new building, saying, “Louis Riel was fighting for the rights of all Canadians, not just Métis rights.”

Angelica Laurin, a representative of Métis youth said that celebrating Métis heritage was about knowing who you are and called for the abandonment of old stereotypes, stating: “When we share our Métis doctors, lawyers, CEOs, nurses, teachers, actors, actresses or like me, an honour-roll student, we are telling the world, ‘be proud of who you are, believe in yourself, and reach for the stars.’”

President Lipinski reflected on the history being commemorated on Louis Riel Day and on what he described as a “failure of leadership” that led to the tragic events of 1885. He described how Riel had tried to negotiate with the Canadian Government and how the government’s intransience finally led Riel to the decision: “The Métis way of life is worth protecting and I would put my life on the line for it. Canada lost a great opportunity when it executed Louis Riel,” concluded President Lipinski. “But fortunately, today many of the things he worked to build are becoming a reality. It is our job to keep building on that vision.”

President Lipinski also spoke with great hope because in the very legislature that had once condemned Riel, members of that legislature voted unanimously this year to declare 2010 the Year of the Métis. He suggested that the presence of so many Ministers and MPs at Louis Riel Day ceremonies points to the success and significance of the MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement, which was signed just one day after Louis Riel Day two years ago. “The government’s willingness to sign the framework agreement with us,” stated President Lipinski, “signalled there was a new way of doing business with the Métis, and that the process of reconciliation had started.”

With the completion of the speeches, Bob Goulais of the Nipissing First Nation was called upon to perform the Métis Honour Song in Michif. After much research and investigation, the Métis Honour Song had been recovered in North Dakota and Mr. Goulais is one of a few people who have learned the song so far. Following his performance, wreaths were laid at the Northwest “Rebellion” monument by Senator Gordon and Métis veteran Joe Paquette. The wreaths— with a portrait of Riel—are placed on the monument each Louis Riel Day to honour Riel and all the Métis who fought for our rights.

As the ceremonies closed, the participants moved inside the legislature where a traditional Métis feast was served. Following Louis Riel events across the province, MNO citizens felt a renewed sense of purpose, which was captured by a quote from Louis Riel with which Angelica Laurin closed her presentation: “We must cherish our inheritance; we must preserve our national integrity for the youth of our future. The story should be written down to pass on.”
Métis flag flies in Oshawa

by Kathy Bazley

On November 22, 2010, the Durham Catholic District School Board, with the assistance of members of the Oshawa Durham Métis Council, raised the Métis flag at its Catholic Education Centre at 650 Rossland Road West in Oshawa in recognition of Louis Riel Day. The staff of the Catholic Education Centre was invited to attend the ceremony and a large number came out to watch the event.

Cécile Wagar and Claire Kearns, Oshawa Durham Métis Council, started with a drum song, and then Tiffany Harrington, a student at Monsignor Paul Dwyer Catholic High School and the Student Representative on the Board’s Aboriginal Advisory Committee recited the poem “Ode to the Métis”.

The flag was then raised and flown for the remainder of the week. This is the second year that the Durham Catholic District School Board has publicly paid respect to Louis Riel and recognized his special day as an employee of the Board and a proud Métis (and the only Métis working in the Catholic Education Centre), it is a very emotional ceremony for me to be involved in.

As I said last year, “Never in all my years of walking on Mother Earth did I ever think I would see a day when I would see the Métis flag flown and recognized in such a public manner.”

Whose History? Whose Narrative? Whose Story?

The Importance of Métis History to Our Nation

by Brenda Hadsdougan, Member of the Law Society of Upper Canada on Riel Day, November 16, 2010

A few years ago, I asked an elder from home to read my PhD dissertation and give me feedback on some significant cultural concepts and ideas that I had used about family and the significance of family in a Métis worldview. I was a friend of this man’s son and other relatives so when I was uncertain about my work, both these people encouraged me to approach him. The elder had been a high school teacher for many years and was raised by his parents who are still acknowledged in my home territory as important cultural, educational and spiritual teachers who were instrumental in getting Native Studies and Cree language courses into Saskatchewan’s universities. We spoke a bit about Riel, the Métis, First Nations history courses I had developed for the Department of Native Studies at the University of Saskatchewan.

Before agreeing to read my work and comment on it, though, he asked me one question. Why not leave the teaching of Aboriginal history to mainstream history departments because, after all, wasn’t our history also Canadian history?

Without hesitating I replied that our history belongs first and foremost to Native Studies and treated as an area of study distinct separate from Canadian, and mainly from Métis history, culture, or territory as important cultural concepts and ideas that I had used about family and the significance of family in a Métis worldview. I was a friend of this man’s son and other relatives so when I was uncertain about my work, both these people encouraged me to approach him. The elder had been a high school teacher for many years and was raised by his parents who are still acknowledged in my home territory as important cultural, educational and spiritual teachers who were instrumental in getting Native Studies and Cree language courses into Saskatchewan’s universities. We spoke a bit about Riel, the Métis, First Nations history courses I had developed for the Department of Native Studies at the University of Saskatchewan.

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needs to change. (The full text of Dr. MacDougall’s presentation may be found on pages 15, 16 and 22, titled “Whose History?”)

Mr. Zimmer pointed out that the relative percentage of the population in Ontario, particularly in urban areas, who are Métis is declining significantly compared to the rising immigrant population. He suggested this is a noteworthy challenge for the Métis and asked the question: “How does the Métis perspective not get swamped with all the other perspectives out there?”

Ms. Teillet provided the audience with an overview of legal issues surrounding Métis rights across Canada. She outlined the challenges she has faced in defending Métis rights in court and discussed the various types of documents and other sources used in these cases. Métis rights court cases are crucial to the future of Métis people because according to Ms. Teillet: “Right now, history is being written by judges.”

Ms. Carling discussed how her personal identity as a Métis was formed and the challenges it presented her and her family. Following the presentations, a question and answer period was held and then MNO President Gary Lipinski gave a keynote address discussing the overall significance of the Year of the Métis. President Lipinski pointed out that, “125 years is too short a period of time when discussing the Métis Nation. The tragedies of 1885 were not the beginning of Métis rights or the Métis people.” President Lipinski provided background on Métis people asserting their rights prior to 1885 and examples of the Métis making contributions to Canada prior to that date as well. “Even after the War of 1812, which we were a part of,” stated President Lipinski, “even when we worked with, fought for and died for Canada, we were still not recognized.” Unfortunately, as President Lipinski pointed out, the situation today has not changed appreciably as Métis governments are being forced to go to court to defend and gain their rights. “Governments should negotiate,” explained President Lipinski, “but when they don’t, we have to litigate.”

The evening’s presentations and discussions proved every thought provoking and provided a basis for discussions about the Métis in the next 125 years. The Law Society of Upper Canada recorded the presentations and will be making them available through their website, which can be viewed at www.lsoc.on.ca.
On November 14, 2010, the Credit River Métis Council and citizens gathered at the Port Credit Royal Canadian Legion Branch #82 in Mississauga on the Credit River. The event was to celebrate and remember Louis Riel, as well as to see old friends and make new ones. The day included arts and crafts, music and a wonderful feast to be enjoyed by all.

A special presentation was made on behalf of Heritage Mississauga to the Credit River Métis Council by Elder Joseph Paquette, Chair of the Sub-Committee for Maanjidowin. It was given in recognition of the council’s participation in Maanjidowin in July of this year (2010). The council was touched by the acknowledge-ment of their efforts and will cherish the plaque, book and thank you note for many years to come. Debbie Alves, President; David Babcock, Vice-President; Joyce Tolles, Treasurer; Kevin Alves, Youth Rep.; and Jim Tolles, Councillor; were on hand to accept and unable to attend were Ray Bergie, Senator and Roger Lauzon, Councilor.

During the afternoon, guests were invited to participate at the various craft tables. Sharon McBride, Vice-Chair of the Métis Nation of Ontario was helping guests make medicine pouches. Judy Carter of Peel Aboriginal Network had an assortment of children's crafts including bracelets, finger weaving and creating the Métis infinity symbol with paper, and Carol Walters was beading. We also had the pleasure of hosting MNO Community Wellness Coordinator, Simon Bain, Daniel Davey, and Lisa Scott, Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy Worker from Hamilton, who pro-vided an informative display on Métis culture and had various games and activities for the enjoyment of the guests. Shehnaz Fakim of Mississauga Halton Local Health Integration Network pro-vided the Aboriginal Health Needs Assessment Final Report. Jim Tolles supplied the Credit River Métis Council display which included trapping, taxidermy and crafts exhibits. Elder Doris Marion was so touched by one of Jim’s mandala creations that she commented on how it reminded her of her hus-band and how much she liked it. Jim was very drawn to and impacted by Doris and asked if he could take her picture because she reminded him of his Grandmother Vasseur. She agreed, and in appreciation, he presented her with his creation—a very touching moment for both. It was time to feast on goose breast, shep-pard’s pie, tourtière, venison and moose pre-pared in a variety of ways. The meal also included fresh baked bannock, wild rice casserole, delicious sugar pie and cake.

We want to send a warm note of “thanks” to all who attended and to the hard-working, dedicated volunteers who were involved in the planning of this event. Their work and efforts are greatly appreciated. We would also like to extend a special “thank-you” to Roger Lauzon for his contribution to making this event a success—Métis heritage and culture kept alive by celebrating Louis Riel.

Keeping Métis culture alive
by Joyce Tolles
Aboriginal and Métis women were instrumental to the growth of fur trade society

by MARIA VAN BLEEK

Here it is 2010, and yet many still know little about women’s roles in Canadian history, in particular the fur trade society. Some would argue that women are mentioned in our history and that is true, but details are lacking showing the importance of the Aboriginal and Métis women’s participation in history. They are often seen as victims or harlots. However, women played a much bigger role than what is assumed. Although sexual contact between Aboriginal peoples and Europeans had happened historically, in the west it was unique because there was a co-dependency between the European men and Aboriginal women. The growth of intermarriage between the two nations developed and gave way to diverse family unions, as the marriage rite combined both Indian and European customs known as “à la façon du pays” (after the custom of the country). It is important to note that the Natives saw these marriages as an alliance, and that Native women did not marry out; rather, they integrated their French or English husbands into a Native society of customs and traditions. The marriage of a daughter brought status and security to the Indian families, as well as privileges, such as free access to the posts, and provisions such as pots, pans and guns. A ‘trade’ of ‘marriage’ of a daughter brought benefits for the trader as well. It assured the traders who married these women of a benefit over their rivals with inclusion as members of indigenous communities; it facilitated access to furs. Because of the mutual dependency between the two people, a unique society emerged that was derived from both Indian and European customs and technology. Despite this, the arrogance of the Europeans was apparent, as they thought that the Aboriginal women had everything to gain by becoming the wife of the trader. This is how it has been depicted in the history books. It was a social and cultural complex as well as an economic structure that was to endure for nearly two centuries. These women were the backbone for many of these traders and expressed that the Indian women might not have been as subtle without their knowledge of different dialects and tongues. Examples of how Native women were useful in building birchship ties are throughout first-hand accounts written at the time. John Rowand’s wife, Louise Umfreville, a Native woman, built her husband access to territory to hunt. Other examples show how they were instrumental at times in saving their husbands’ lives, such as how Nor’Wester John Haldane got to keep his scalp because of his wife who had been able to act as mediator. Other examples of how these women could be resourceful as well as excellent liaisons in times of crisis. As time went on, these Aboriginal women had children who were born as mixed bloods and became known as “Métis”. The boys usually continued in the trade of their fathers, whereas the girls were sent East to be educated. When these young women returned, they were known to be some of the best interpreters, as they could speak a variety of Native languages, as well as English. These mixed-blood women had ties to the Native people and their customs as well as the European traditions, and assumed the role of intermediaries between the two cultures. It took a lot to be a trader’s wife, as they had to go where their husbands went, which was often into remote areas where the trader needed to rely on his partner for translation and other duties. These other duties included dressing the hides, making the moccasins, pounding the pemmican, netting the snowshoes and acting as porters when no animal power was available. By many accounts the women liked this kind of life, as many had a strong sense of duty, and many had a strong sense of duty, and many.”

They had to hide their Aboriginal ancestry, and many were ashamed...

After this scandal broke out, intermarriages continued, but with the growth of racial prejudice there was an ever-stronger emphasis on the total eradication of respectable Victorian society. Many ‘half-blood’ women were abandoned by their husbands’, as well as their tribes, leaving them to fend for themselves. They were women ‘en milieu’, neither white, nor Aboriginal. The assimilation of Métis children was successful, but not without consequences. They had to hide their Aboriginal ancestry, and many were ashamed. This continues today, as my family is of Métis descent and many barely acknowledge this connection. Were women important in fur trade society? Do they merit better representation in our school books? To this, I say “yes”; their voices need be heard, and we need to learn, and be reminded that we can work together, despite our different cultural upbringings. Aboriginal and Métis women were instrumental for the growth of this society, as well as for their people. Their marriages insured provisions for themselves as well as their families. Their language, social skills, their knowledge of furs, their Aboriginal family ties, as well as their economic contributions aided their men in the fur trade.

Even today, Métis and Aboriginal women play an important part in the Canadian mosaic. Many still work side by side with their trapper husbands. While I have met many of these women, my friend and her husband remind me of my roots. They own a store located in the north where they also rent canoes and offer guided tours during the spring, summer and fall. In the fall and winter her husband traps. While he is trapping, she is putting the skins in the running river for the winter, skinning hides, making moccasins, leggings, mitts and drums. She is a living reminder of what was and still is today.

Marianne van Beek is an MNO citizen from the North Bay area. She is currently working toward obtaining a B.A. in history and her teaching certification. Her daughter, Jessica, is a teacher as is her foster son, Ben.
Laying Wreath at National Ceremonies a passion for two MNO Citizens

as they have every year since 2004, Senator Reta Bota Gordon and Métis veteran Shaun Redmond participated in the national Remembrance Day ceremonies in Ottawa, by laying a wreath at the national cenotaph on behalf of all of the citizens of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO). Senator Reta Bota and Shaun have performed this important gesture on behalf of the MNO in good weather and bad because it is very meaningful on a personal level for both of them, and because they want to recognize our many Métis veterans who gave and continue to give so much in securing and sustaining the rights and freedoms that we all enjoy.

Shaun enlisted in the Canadian Army in 1971 and rose to the rank of Lieutenant prior to joining the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in 1980. Although retired, he still serves as a Captain in the Reserves and trains cadets. “My father’s brother was killed in action in Italy during World War II,” explained Shaun, “and I [laying the wreath] is a way to remember him.” Shaun also feels that the MNO’s involvement reminds Canadians that the Métis have played a part in conflicts throughout the history of Canada. “We have participated in everything from the War of 1812, to peacekeeping missions, to now in Afghanistan, not just in the two ‘World Wars,’ Shaun pointed out.”

“It is important that the MNO is present at the ceremonies to communicate this fact to all Canadians.”

Each year following protocol, Shaun, as a veteran, presents the MNO wreath to Senator Reta who then lays the wreath on the cenotaph. Senator Reta’s father and her nine uncles all participated in World War II. Then later in the 1950s, her four brothers also served in the military and one of her brothers, George Kelly, even participated in the national Remembrance Day ceremonies this year. “It is good to let everyone know the Métis are here and that we support Remembrance Day,” explained Senator Reta. The Senator also believes the ceremonies of Métis veterans are a great relationship builder with First Nations, who like the MNO laid wreaths following the Governor-General and the Government of Canada. “While wanting, Shaun and I stand in a little area with the First Nations,” Senator Reta pointed out, “and I think it helps us feel closer to each other.”

Senator Reta and Shaun are also involved in remembrance through Health Canada. Each year Health Canada invites Shaun to lead remembrance activities for the week of Remembrance Day at the Iskatew Lodge at Tunney’s Pasture in Ottawa. The MNO (Algonquin fire from within) Lodge highlights different aspects of Aboriginal culture throughout the year and during the week of Remembrance Day focuses on the contributions of Aboriginal veterans. Shaun invites Reta to assist him in leading activities at the Lodge for the week, which helps increase awareness of the many contributions of Métis veterans.

PORT CREDIT | REMEMBRANCE DAY

Another reason to remember on the 11th by Joseph Paquette

very year on November 11th, we remember our fallen soldiers and their contributions to this great country, Canada. At war memorials and cenotaphs various veterans’ associations and organizations conduct ceremonies. This year, 2010, November 11th has provided an opportunity that affected me in a very profound way.

Please allow me to explain. I am a veteran, my father was a WWII veteran, and my grandfather was a Merchant Marine Veteran. So being able to participate in any of the November 11th ceremonies is very important to me.

This year, I had the wonderful opportunity to participate in the Remembrance Day parade held at the Port Credit Royal Canadian Legion Branch #42. I carried the Métis flag as part of the colour party and it had very special meaning indeed, 2010 being the “Year of the Métis”. This year also commemorates 125 years since the Northwest Rebellion of 1885.

This was the first time the Métis flag had flown in a Remembrance Day parade in Port Credit. It may very well be that it is the first time in Peel Region as well. Being Métis gave me a certain pride that I really cannot explain. Recognizing the contributions made by Aboriginal veterans and in this case, mine, I am very proud of this day.

As we marched to the cenotaph, I could not help but remember all those that came before me who fought for peace and freedom, so that I, on this day, could carry the Métis flag in a Remembrance Day Parade.

This was only the beginning! Little did I know what was to follow.

When the colour party was in position, a uniformed man approached me from the Port Credit Legion. She said, “You’re Joe, right?” I acknowledged that I was. She went on to say, “We have a wreath for you to lay for the Métis veterans”. At that moment, I became paralysed. I did not know what to say. I remained steadfast and said “thank you.”

The wreath for the Métis veterans took its place at the cenotaph, alongside all those veterans remembered, on this day.

With this duty done, I realized, we—the Métis—were moving from the place of a forgotten people in the past to a place of acknowledgement in the present.

Métis Council takes part in Remembrance Day by Stephen Quesnelle

Sunday, November the 7th, 2010, the Niagara Region Métis Council, for the first time, was honoured to be involved in the Remembrance Day ceremonies at the Welland Legion, Branch 4. Three of our citizens, one being a veteran, carried the Métis flags in the colour party. We were greatly privileged to be able to show our respect for the Métis citizens and other military personnel who fought and died for our country and for those who continue to serve in our military.

Pride and Remembrance by Ted Schinbein

I am just sending you a picture of a wonderful Métis lady, Yvette (whom I married 44 years ago) with our grandson, Devon, laying our annual Métis wreath at the November 11th, ceremony in Mitchell, Ontario. They make me proud to be so thoughtful of their heritage!

Yvette is originally from St. Boniface, Manitoba, (nee Pellan, Naal). I moved our family here in 1973 after several years in the Arctic. We now own Schinbein Music in downtown Mitchell


The Warrior Spirit

By DONN FOWLER

I t seems absolutely incredible that my ancestry—my family—of Osnaburgh Township, in Peterborough County, and later of Kingston, Ontario, had managed to keep the “aboriginal” part of my family secret, not just from me, but from so many of my cousins. In fact, it took me 52 years of genealogical research to make the discovery in 1977 of my first known European immigrant to Canada, in 1790, and also my first known indigenous ancestor, Mary Corrigal (born, c. 1790). She became the beloved country wife of Jacob Corrigal formerly of Etive-Randall Parish, Orkney, Scotland. Jacob was 27, and Mary died in 1802 to 1812.

In 1790, when Mary was 12, she married an HBC commissioner named William Nourse, of Edinburg, Scotland, and my great-great-grandmother, Mary (Corrigal) Scollie, who married Robert Scollie, of Orkney, who was a HBC employee working for Jacob Corrigal at Martin Falls.

More recently we have learned that Jacob’s a la façon de pays (country wife) apparently carried an Anishinaabe mDNA (mitochondrial DNA) of the genetic aboriginal haplogroup ‘A’ and therefore Mary was a haplotype “A2k1”, which would have been naturally inherited by each of her six Métis children, and subsequently would be passed on to their female offspring.

One of Mary (Corrigal) Scollie’s daughters is my Métis great-grandmother, Margaret Charlotte (Corrigal, Scollie) Fowler. “Magpie,” as she was known, was born in 1850, just north of the Missisau First Nation (Orchaa-cum-Missisau of Osnaburgh) on Manitoulin Island. She quietly married Samuel Fowler at Conravilage, Minnesota, in 1862, where my grand- father, their first child, was born in 1872. Maggie, an accomplished organist, died in 1936 when I was age ten. It was she who had prevailed upon my mother in 1925 to give me the “aboriginal” first name of “Donald,” from which I use the nickname of “Don,” but for two very personal reasons.

By June of 1940 I was already a trained boy soldier and a military bandsman in a Kingston and Ontario (Connaught Ranges) Militia, and a trained machine-gunner with the PWOR (Princess of Wales Own Regiment M.G.). I was following in the same footsteps as three other soldiering and ancestral war-experience PoWerfuls: my great-grandfather, Samuel Fowler, his son, my grandfather Alfred Herbert Fowler, and my father, Herbert James Fowler. We fought the Penin Incursions; in the Boer War; in WWI; and, in the case of my late father, WWII (C1004 Herbert James Fowler EM, enlisted in September 1939, with the quickly mobilised 1st Division’s Scottish Canadian Horse Artillery and arrived in England by December of that same year).

Following the May, 1945, termination of the six-war-years served in the United Kingdom, and on continental Europe, we overseas war-veterans were made ready and point-process to return home to our families in Canada on the basis of returning the 1939 volunteers first, followed next by the 1940 volunteers, then the 1941, 1942, 1943 and other remaining overseas troops. But because the war with Japan did not end until the atomic bombs were dropped on Japan, many of us volunteered for the conflict with Japan. Fortunately, that war ended before it was necessary to become engaged against Japan.

Mary of our Europe returned on a brief repatriation leave to the United Kingdom. We had been issued just enough travel-war-rations, ration cards, and on-leave passes in order to have reasonable time to journey somewhere in England, Wales, or Scotland, where we were then able to bid farewell to our British friends, and to any known U.K. ancestors. These visits, of course, were for the many friendships that had been established there during the war years from December, 1939 until D-Day, the 6th June, 1944. We Canadians, still in our armed forces uniforms, included thousands of aboriginals.

Accordingly, we entrained from our last location in north-west Europe to be embarked on one of the ships returning to England. Following our repatriation leaves, we were soon cleared for embarkation to Canada on one of the many passenger ships returning all the “war-lords” from the war areas. We were not required to become part of the Canadian Occupational Force (COF) Battalion units. These units were made up of many experienced war-volunteers, who wanted to remain in the service, and by other service men who did not have enough points to qualify for an earlier repatriation home.

Those special wrap-up forces returned to Canada later, generally, as individual units. My unit, the 1st Battalion Stormont, Dar- das and Glengarry (SDG) Highlanders, returned, (after a very rough ocean crossing) to New York City, and a day later, to a major welcoming reception in the Cornwall, Ontario, Armoury on the 20th of December 1945. We Glengarians, known as “Glers” were earliest home because of our higher point scores. Some Glens still serve in a different and uglier kind of war-zone, in Afghanistan, fighting once again toward that often elusive democratic freedom from another tyranny. Our warriors continue to “Bash on.”

Donald (Donn) Fowler enlisted as a 14-year-old in the Canadian army in June, 1940. As a member of the Glen- garry Highlanders he landed in Normandy, France with a wave of D-Day reinforcements in 1944.

FUNDRAISING GOLF TOURNAMENT

By TONY BELCOURT

I am pleased to announce that plans are now under way for the “1st Annual Tony Belcourt Golf Fundraiser” to be held June 17, 2011 at the beautiful Mississippi Golf Club near Ottawa. Proceeds from the tournament will be to benefit the Dr. Tony Belcourt Endowment Fund for Métis in the Arts at Ottawa College of Art & Design University (OCADU), and for the Building Expansion Project of the Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health in Ottawa.

The endowment fund in my name granted to OCADU by the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) is a great honor to me personally but it also gives me the opportunity to encourage Métis people to consider a career in the arts, something that I am passionate about. I am equally grateful to the Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health for providing the quality health-care and related special programs that are so greatly appreciated by the people here and for the wonderful care and attention I receive for my own health needs and those of my family. I appreciate the chance to provide my sup- port for both of these most worthy endeavors.

Tourment details will be announced soon. To become a sponsor, donate prizes, or volunteer for the organizing committee, please contact me at tony@tonybetcourt.com or call me (613) 791-3506.

Mark your calendar, June 17, 2011, 1:00 PM

Mississippi Golf Club, Appleton, ON

Marc Meegwich, Quidanikin Tony

For information on MNO Scholarship and Bursary Programs; www.metisnation.org

For information on the Wabano Expansion Project; www.wabano.com

For information on OCADU; www.ocad.ca

For information the Mississippi Golf Club; www.mississippi-golfclub.com

CF personnel present to GBMC on “Black Bear” program

On November 28, 2010, at a special ceremony, held at the Georgian Bay Métis Council was pleased to offer the Métis citizens of the GBI a presentation of a special present by Canadian Forces Base Borden. The “Black Bear” program is a Canadian Forces Aboriginal Entry Program.

This is an employment training opportunity for Aboriginal youth from across Canada.

Seven weeks in July and August provide youth aged 16 to 29 with physi- cal fitness and life skills. It is open to Aboriginal youth aged 16 to 29 and there are no obligations attached. Georgian Bay Métis Council presented the personnel from Base Borden with sashes.
Taking a real gamble

Did you know youth have the highest risk of developing gambling related problems? The MNO has started to respond to this growing concern with the development of a “Leaders in Training Program” that will empower youth to become role models in their communities and to educate their peers. Upon completion of the program youth leaders can receive credit for their mandatory 40 hours of community service towards their high school diploma with a letter of recommendation from the Métis Nation of Ontario.

We have many exciting new ideas to help spread the word about responsible gambling. We are working with our staff and steering committee across the province to develop new culturally appropriate resources and presentations that can be delivered to our communities. We are also currently working on a reference guide for referrals to treatment programs, family counselors and credit counsellors throughout Ontario.

An educational casino simulation video has been developed which highlights the ease with which one can become caught up in the “thrill of gambling.” This video implements real life scenarios such as paying bills and unexpected expenses that may have to be addressed after “the thrill is gone.” If your community is interested in hosting an event to assist citizens in your area embrace healthy gambling practices, please contact a health coordinator in your area or the Provincial Aboriginal Responsible Gambling Coordinator at the MNO head office.

The MNO will hold Steering committee meetings. The purpose of our provincial gambling steering committee is to review program goals, develop and review resources, assure citizen engagement, and that our Provincial Coordinator is on track to address the real needs of our citizens and is able to maximize outreach to Métis communities across the province. The role of a steering committee member is to meet at least four times a year to videoconference to provide input to the Coordinator on the activities of the program and to ensure Métis cultural perspective is carefully minded throughout all activities. This said, we are looking to fill a few vacancies on the steering committee and encourage anyone interested to contact our Provincial Coordinator at the head office.

Take a gamble that is worthwhile. Just a little of your time and participation can play an important role in making a positive impact in our communities. If your community is interested in hosting such events, or you would like to participate in the Leaders in Training Program or be part of our steering committee please contact our Provincial Aboriginal Responsible Gambling Coordinator.

CONTACT
Lorna Rowlinson
Provincial Aboriginal Responsible Gambling Coordinator
Office: 1-800-722-4225
Cell: 613-299-2598
lornar@metisnation.org

Texas Hold’Em, BINGO, Blackjack, Lotto, Casino, Stock market, Races? Make a bet that counts. Invest wisely and join us!

Osteoporosis best treated by prevention

OSTEOPOROSIS CANADA announces new 2010 clinical practice guidelines for the diagnosis and management of osteoporosis in Canada, with focus on identifying fracture risk

There are almost two million Canadians who live with osteoporosis, a disease that causes bones to become thin and weak, resulting in fractures from minimal trauma, such as a simple fall. Osteoporosis is often not diagnosed until a fracture has occurred, most commonly in the wrist, spine or hip.

Risk factors for osteoporosis and fracture include being 65 or older; a parent having had a hip fracture; having a fracture after age 40; low bone mass; cigarette smoking; excessive alcohol intake; and long-term use of glucocorticoid medication, such as prednisone.

To keep bones healthy, the new guidelines indicate that adults 19 to 50 need 1000 milligrams (mg) of calcium daily, while those over 50 require 1200 milligrams. As much as possible, the calcium should be from food sources. Dairy products such as milk, yogurt and cheese offer the best sources of calcium, but other foods, such as canned salmon with bones, sardines, fortified beverages (orange juice, soy and rice beverage) and almonds contain calcium too. Supplements are recommended if calcium intake from diet is not enough.

Vitamin D is vital to the absorption of calcium and bone health. Osteoporosis Canada recommends daily supplementa
tion of vitamin D3. For those under 50, vitamin D3 intake is recommended, over 50, vitamin D3 intake should be in the range of 800-2000 IU. Risk factors for osteoporosis and fracture include being 65 or older; a parent having had a hip fracture; having a fracture after age 40; low bone mass; cigarette smoking; excessive alcohol intake; and long-term use of glucocorticoid medication, such as prednisone.

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To keep bones healthy, the new guidelines indicate that adults 19 to 50 need 1000 milligrams (mg) of calcium daily, while those over 50 require 1200 milligrams. As much as possible, the calcium should be from food sources. Dairy products such as milk, yogurt and cheese offer the best sources of calcium, but other foods, such as canned salmon with bones, sardines, fortified beverages (orange juice, soy and rice beverage) and almonds contain calcium too. Supplements are recommended if calcium intake from diet is not enough.

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LOUIS RIEL DAY  •  November 16, 2010

PHOTO: METS VOYAGEUR

Whose History?

There is not one MNO Health Metis Manitoba staff member who would not go the extra mile for our citizens and their families. This is the reason we have prided myself and my esteemed colleagues on our due diligence, but is “due diligence” enough?

Wednesday November 24, 2010

On this particular cold day I received a call from a citizen—mother of two children, living in subsidized housing. She was in need of food and had no transportation with which to access the food bank. I thought to myself, “this should be simple, I will just go to the food bank and pick it up.” So, with great confidence and bravado I set out on my quest for food. I entered one of the local food banks only to find that, I was the first one there, great! There were loaves of bread on a table, could I just take some? It must not be very fresh. I proceeded to give my business card to the receptionist and explained to her that I was here to pick up food for my client. Immediately, there seemed to be a great amount of form-filling and looking into my request. Suddenly, my credentials meant nothing. What I thought was a simple task, became a huge ordeal! I was asked if I had a letter of authorization from the client. I was asked if I had her telephone number. How many children? Why wasn’t the client picking the food? Could I not be their recent address? How many people does she have registered with us? What am I just here to pick up before the bank closed? I was being cut off from me. Then I thought, “Terrylyn you are so naive.”

I am just one of the many, many people involved in the task of obtaining food for my client. I had been informed by the first food bank that I could seek out another local bank to fortify the small amount I was allowed.

Poverty Stats

• Almost four in ten Aboriginal people in Thunder Bay live below the poverty line.
• Nearly one in five Aboriginal people in Kenora lives below the poverty line.
• More than 40% of too many Aboriginal people live in poverty in Canada.

The statistics speak for themselves.

Recent Census data shows that 23 per cent of Aboriginal people live in houses in need of major repairs, compared to just 7 per cent of the non-Aboriginal population.

The majority of Inuit people in Nunavut live in remote northern Nunavut communities that make it difficult for them to access medical services and consumer goods. A 2005 Statistics Canada report found that 56 per cent of Nunavut residents stated that their household lacked the money over the past year to buy enough quality food to eat. In the north, junk food is often much cheaper than nutritious food, because it is so much easier to ship.

Care in four First Nations children live in poverty.

“Whew, how does everybody do this?” This takes time and trans- portation. This is a job in itself! My that least I was able to meet this expectation. I was about to once again not only look poverty in the eyes, but feel the reality of what it means to be heart and soul as a person in need.

I arrived early and was told to wait 15 minutes until they opened. Okay, now I am beginning to feel intimidated yet chastised by those who were helping me. What is the big deal about 15 minutes? Fifteen minutes later I once again arrived; I was told to pick a number.

And so there I was filling a number and waiting in line. Here, my fourth lesson in poverty: Patience. At this precise moment I was no different from anybody in the community seeking help. I saw a table that had different foods items on it, this time there was a sign: “Select three at your own risk.” These items were “expired” for one reason or another. This was through the same process as the day before even though I had a let- ter of authorization from the client. I was told that I must also have the client’s statement of earnings, children’s identification and a phone call from the client. I felt raw and vulnerable: Is this what a person in need must go through to ask for help? This is a totally invasive and shameful process. I was then sent downstairs to pick up my food. This time, I did not have the lux- iury of picking out my food. My fate rested in the hands of two volun- teers who were seeking help. “Now I get milk and eggs!” Then I simply asked if they have any meat; where- upon, I was given bacon. Oh, this is too good to be true! Really? How can I not wait to deliver this food to my client, and so I did.

My quest was completed.

This worker had learned the lesons well. From this experience I have gained an in-depth understanding and a broader perspective about poverty and those in need. From this experience I want to reach out and ask for help is a huge undertaking that involves many personal issues and greater disclosure. I applaud each and every one of you. Mets Citizens and readers I leave you with this:

Matthew 25:35

For I was an hungry, and ye gave me food: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: (36) Naked and ye clothed me: I was sick and ye visited me: I was in prison and ye came unto me. "And there I was picking a number and waiting at the local food bank..."
A tribute to our Senators

The Solitary Carver

By Terry Lynn Longpre
Community Wellness Coordinator
WELLAND

He may not be a Métis citizen, but he has a Métis Heart!

Inspiration
Sash & Feather

And while we’re at it—a tribute to Reta

Reta Gordon seems to be everywhere, looking after everyone and everything. Like her models are not just to inspire your youth, sometimes those of us who haven’t been a “youth” for a long time need a little inspiration. Reta is that inspiration. She was recently presented with an Eagle Feather by Minwawoo Lodge. She was also a prominent speaker on Parliament Hill this fall in support of Sisters in Spirit where nearly 400 people gathered for this 5th Annual Sisters in Spirit Vigil.

Even though more than 2% of the over 600 Aboriginal women who have been murdered or are missing in Canada are Métis, this was the first time a Métis Elder had been invited to speak on this terrible situation.

And what else has Reta been doing? She is a Métis veteran. Shaun Redmond participated in national Remembrance Day ceremonies in Ottawa, by laying a wreath at the national cenotaph on behalf of all the citizens of the MNO. On Riel Day, Reta was at Queen’s Park to lay a wreath.

In September, Reta represented the Métis Nation at the Four Directions Aboriginal Student Centre at Queen’s University in Kingston for the 4th Annual Educational Powwow, “Celebrating the Harvest of the Three Sisters.”

During Aboriginal Awareness Week, 2010, Reta performed the opening ceremony for the Métis celebration held by the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat.

I could fill an entire night talking about Reta’s activities; doing so would enable us to provide greater service to those citizen in need.

In the fall 2009, at our Annual Harvest Dinner we raffled off Joe’s carvings. We made enough money to buy a new fridge, microwave stand, cutlery and other small items to furnish our kitchen. I cannot tell you the difference it has made to the staff, citizens and all the services we offer!

Please take a look at Joe’s beautiful carving and join me in thanking him for helping us along the way.

Joe, on behalf of the Métis Nation of Ontario I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your great contributions and help along the way!

Solitary Carver
By Joseph W. Horvat
A carver’s knot; I hold in my hand,
Carving things both humble and grand.

Seeing what they want, people look a while,
Some pieces are comical and make them smile.
Others stand our with appearance so bold,
While others are too beautiful to behold.

But the time will come when my life’s work is done,
I will finally carve my last setting sun.

If you look closely in the sky,
You will hear you to all the Senators
of our teaching and their tenacity,
Hearing the grass dancers beat down is a path
flatten, the grass that our Métis
road is not without bumps, but more important, it has been flattened in a respectful manner in tune with Mother Earth. The path set by our Senators, past and present, will ensure our position as a proud and strong Aboriginal people within Canada. We mourn the recent death of our Senators, but we celebrate their lives. They will always be with us in spirit; their contributions and achievements will be their lasting tributes to their time with us. I wish to pay tribute to our Sen-
ators: all those who have gone before us and those with us today. If there is one thing I have learned from all these senators, it is a sense of optimism. Our Senators are like the long grass, they bend, and then they bounce right back up. Sometimes the path must be walked on many times before the direction becomes entrenched. One foot after another our Sena-
tors have lead the way and they continue to ensure that we don’t stray off the path.

Thank you to all the Senators of our Nation. I am proud to walk alongside of you and I ask the Creator to give us the strength to continue on this journey.

MOON RIVER MÉTIS COUNCIL SENATOR

Our flag, sash and a little taste of bannock

by Senator Verna Porter
Moon River Métis Council

While speaking with Senator Reta Gordon at the AGA in Thunder Bay this past summer we discussed a newsletter which I had done over the past year which included events and things that might interest other Senators and that they in turn, might want to share some of their stories as well. So here it is.

January 2010 came in with very cold weather. We had about three days of -20 or more. So, if that doesn’t give you a jump start nothing will. I also started a New Year with my life as a widow when my husband of 49 years passed away. With the support of family, friends, my Métis family and of course, the Creator, I have been able to move on and embrace life with my life as a widow when

I have made my share of ban-
nock this year. During the annual MNO meetings as a Senator of Moon River Council and have always contributed to the best of my ability to ensure that there is a little inspiration. Reta is that inspiration. She was recently presented with an Eagle Feather by Minwawoo Lodge. She was also a prominent speaker on Parliament Hill this fall in support of Sisters in Spirit where nearly 400 people gathered for this 5th Annual Sisters in Spirit Vigil.

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Others stand our with appearance so bold,
While others are too beautiful to behold.

But the time will come when my life’s work is done,
I will finally carve my last setting sun.

If you look closely in the sky,
You will hear you to all the Senators
Fresh Tracks is about the wanderings of a lonely spirit who returns to earth to find his lost song.
MNO and University of Sudbury sign historic agreement

UNIVERSITY OF SUDBURY

Centre Louis-Riel opens doors to Métis students at Collège Boréal

by Clement Benoît

SUDBURY – Collège Boréal held an official opening at its Centre Louis-Riel on November 18, 2010. This new centre, located in the heart of the college’s main campus in Sudbury, provides Métis students a vast array of services in a culturally responsive environment conducive to their academic success.

The Centre Louis-Riel facilities include mainly work stations, a seminar room and a relaxation space. The Centre Louis-Riel also offers tutoring, help with career placement and the application process for student financial assistance.

In addition to government officials, Collège Boréal also received François Picotte, Vice-Chair of the Métis Nation of Ontario. “I am particularly pleased and honored to be here for the official opening of the Centre Louis-Riel”, she said. “This resource centre is tangible proof of the work being done by Collège Boréal and its commitment to ensuring that the culture and heritage of the Métis Nation of Ontario can be fully supported and appreciated.”

In August of 2009, Collège Boréal and the Métis Nation of Ontario signed a first memorandum of understanding whereby the partners would work together to better meet the specific needs of the Métis people in Ontario. Denis Hubert, President of Collège Boréal, said that over and above supporting aboriginal and Métis persons, he appreciates the value-added benefit of this cultural heritage to the programs of study at the college. “The contribution of the Aboriginal and Métis peoples to the development of Ontario and Canada is immeasurable. More than ever, Collège Boréal wants to preserve the history of these founding peoples, while at the same time contributing to the realization of the aspirations of their descendents.”

Collège Boréal also took the opportunity to unveil two new programs at this official opening which are dedicated to Aboriginal and Métis students. Electrician and Carpenter. A number of programs at Collège Boréal have options geared to the First Nations, such as Police Foundations. Métis student, Sean Martine, a student in the Centre Louis-Riel’s Electrician program, is one of several aboriginal people in Sudbury preparing to enter the workforce.

The new centre is part of the University of Sudbury’s “Access for all” initiative. “The Centre Louis-Riel is a vital component of this initiative, as it offers Métis students a high level of service that includes a high emphasis on post-secondary education, including scholarships,” explained MNO Vice-Chair, Gary Lipinski.

“We are proud to have established this relationship with the University of Sudbury in order to better identify and operationalize educational opportunities for the Métis of this province,” said Zundel. He further stipulated that “our tricultural and bilingual environment continues to influence our overall approach and makes this partnership a logical step forward.”

The MOU with the University of Sudbury is part of a process of building bilateral partnerships with post-secondary institutions that began with an earlier MOU signed between the MNO and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. According to President Lipinski, “this MOU is a significant achievement for the Métis people in Ontario because it demonstrates a commitment to forge a lasting relationship between post-secondary institutions and the MNO Education and Training branch. Like all past MOUs, the agreement with the University of Sudbury builds on the MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement, which the province signed with the MNO two years ago.”

The occasion also marks the establishment of a new Métis bursary for all Métis students meeting the requirements as set out by the University of Sudbury and the MNO.

Both the MOU and the opening of Centre Louis-Riel are testament to the hard work going on to improve post-secondary education for Métis across Ontario. They represent great strides made by the Aboriginal and Métis Council in cooperation with the MNO Education and Training Branch.

MNO BURSARIES
Assisting Métis learners

MNO has always placed and continues to place a high emphasis on ensuring educational opportunities for Métis students. As well, MNO has and will continue to make significant investments in post-secondary education, including scholarships and bursaries at some 32 institutions across Ontario. Each year, these institutions provide scholarships to eligible Métis students based on endowments MNO has established.

Helping Métis individuals, families and communities has and will continue to be one of our highest priorities. It is rewarding to see how the work that so many of you do within your respective regions and communities all comes together to assist Métis learners. Each of you should take pride as I do in seeing young people benefit from MNO programs and services that offer them the opportunity to reach their full potential. I congratulate them and you all the best.
Improving Post-secondary Education recruitment, retention and graduation rates for Métis

by Chris Paci

The MÉTIS VOYAGEUR

The MNO has signed several Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with colleges and universities. MOUs establish a relationship between the provincial and federal governments, to improve Métis post-secondary education in Ontario. The seventh agreement signed in November between the University of Sudbury and by MNO Chair France Porte, is an important part of the work the Education and Training Branch is doing to advance Métis interests in Ontario related to post-secondary education. Building positive relations by signing MOUs with both Ministries was the first step in our efforts to narrow the student achievement gap for Métis in the province. Across Canada, federal funds are used to support research, to support capital projects such as new college and university buildings, and to support students. Ideally, there should be regional, collaborative, high quality post-secondary education in all parts of Ontario. Student fees, tuition and books can be a very expensive proposition. Both federal and provincial governments subsidize, to some degree, the actual cost of education. In addition, each year Métis students can apply at many, but not all, colleges and universities, for the Métis bursary. MNO understands that post-secondary education is expensive and our work with the federal and provincial governments is aimed at identifying barriers in Ontario and finding support for Métis in Ontario to improve access to college, university, or apprenticeship. Over time, our work will look at costs in other provinces and the problems that come when Métis students want to study abroad. The financial reality facing most students and their families in Ontario is: raising costs of tuition, fees, books and the cost of living out pacing the minimal wage. Statistics show, however, that students who decide to pursue the post-secondary path and complete their schooling do see a significant return on their investments over the long run. It is for this reason that MNO continues to work to improve PSE recruitment, retention and graduation rates for all Métis.

“Student fees, tuition and books can be a very expensive proposition.”

Consulting on Métis Education

Regional education meetings are coming to a school board near you

by Jennifer St. Germain

Regional outreach meetings began in late December, 2010. Chris McLeod, MNO Education Officer and Analyst organized a series of regional community meetings with school boards and schools. These meetings are taking place throughout the nine MNO regions. According to Manager of Education and Training, Chris Paci, “the meetings are a result of some hard work by a lot of staff, community councils, and PCMNO, that began two years ago when MNO signed a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of Education.”

One of the key projects within the larger work MNO is initiating is collaboration with the Ministry, involving building relationships between Métis community councils and school boards across Ontario. Many school boards have been working independently and others in collaboration with community councils to develop programming for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students. By building relationships between school boards and Métis Community Councils, MNO is looking to increase community awareness and capacity to improve educational outcomes for Métis students. Important topics, such as self-identification, student achievement, and student retention will be discussed during these regional meetings. According to Jennifer St. Germain, Director of Education and Training, Education and Training Branch staff attended several meetings in preparation in order to better engage with the Ministry and to educate superintendents to know a bit more about our community in their areas.” Meeting with school board representatives to share and discuss best practices, programs and policies, is a way to improve the implementation of Métis education at the board and classroom level. Through these meetings the MNO has been invited to collaborate more closely with many school boards in the province and to review, with the help of community councils, their programs and policies.

These first meetings have set the stage for additional collaboration and future connections for every community council in Ontario. The Region 2 meeting was held on March 13, 2010, and included the Thunder Bay Métis Council and Lakehead Public School Board. The Region 1 meeting happened on December 13, 2010 (Sunset Métis Council & Rainy River District School Board). Stay tuned for other meetings near you. For more contact: Chris McLeod, Education Officer chrism@metisnation.org

ARE YOU A MÉTIS CULTURAL PRESENTER?

The MÉTIS VOYAGEUR

The MNO Education and Training Branch would like to hear from you! We have produced some resource materials and will soon have the Métis Education Kit to assist Métis presenters. The kit provides you with up-to-date Ontario cultural material to use in the classroom or when presenting to school boards.

The MNO has also put in place a process to track the number of presentations that are taken place across the province, if you are representing in your Métis community or if you sit on a committee for the MNO or a community council, we would also like to hear from you. There is a great deal of wonderful work being done out there and we want to be able to share this good work with one another. We want to hear from you about what you can do to support your good work.

CONTACT

Bonny Cann, Provincial Education Initiatives Coordinator bonnyc@metisnation.org

Chris Paci, Manager of Education and Training chrisp@metisnation.org

ABORIGINAL WRITING CHALLENGE

Are you an Aboriginal Canadian between the ages of 14 and 29? Now you can showcase your talent and creativity and have won you reviewed by the foremost Aboriginal storytellers. You can win cash and prizes and even have your work published in a national magazine. Now is the seventeenth year, the Canadian Aboriginal Writing Challenge, presented by Enbridge Inc., has expanded to include Arts submissions. The deadline is March 31, 2011. For details visit: www.our-story.ca

Partnering for student success

by Bonny Cann

I

mplementing MNO’s Statement of Prime Purpose, “to encourage academic skills development and to enable citizens of the Métis Nation to attain their educational aspirations”, is a tall order. Métis face a number of barriers because we do not have the same access to federal funding for post-secondary students as First Nations and Inuit. Because of this, MNO has found innovative ways to support Métis students in pursuit of higher education. The Education and Training Branch is always looking for opportunities to expand on our current Métis bursary program. This year, the Power Workers’ Union generously donated $25,000 to a bursary for Métis students pursuing careers in the electricity sector. Through careful planning and research, the MNO identified a partner in Sault College and we were able to secure additional funding opportunities for this bursary. Sault College secured three more matching donors, which enabled our bursary to grow to $100,000. This is a great endowment and will serve Métis students training for electricity sector careers at Sault for years to come.

The MNO would like to thank the Power Workers’ Union for their generous support. We would also like to thank Sault College for the effort they put forth to secure matching funds.

MNO will continue this important work, bringing together funders and institutions, in order to better serve all our students on a post-secondary needs. We know we have a lot of work to do together to ensure Métis students have access to post-secondary pathways, as well as the support and funding in place to succeed. If you are interested in learning more about our endowments or wish to discuss a potential bursary opportunity with Bonny Cann, Provincial Educa- tion Initiatives Coordinator.

We invite corporations and industry partners to join us in continuing the growth of our Métis bursary program. Please contact Jennifer St. Germain, Director of Education and Training and Business Partnerships at 416-779-9881 to discuss ways to best support the Métis citizens who can pursue their career aspirations long into the future.

Bonny Cann bannet@metisnation.org

Jennifer St. Germain jennifers@metisnation.org

Tel: 1-800-263-4889
MÉTIS POST-SECONDARY ROLE MODEL / MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

New program supports Métis students entering first year of post-secondary education

by Benny Michaud

A recent publication by Statistics Canada found that only 35% of Aboriginal people receive a post-secondary education. This is still below the national average of 61% (Statistics Canada, 2012). This is an area of focus for both the MNO and its member communities as the survival of our culture relied on the ability of community members with specific knowledge in trading, food preparation, hunting, languages and medicine to pass these skills on to those less experienced. Today, the future of the Métis Nation relies on the same principles of mentorship that have always been a part of our culture.

While there are a number of mentorship programs available at colleges and universities throughout the province, there is currently no program designed with the specific intent of partnering current Métis PSE students with incoming or potential Métis students in a mentorship framework. If you have any questions or would like to know more about the development process of this program contact:

Benny Michaud
Post-Secondary Education Officer, Ottawa, ON (613) 798-1488 ext. 137
benny@metisnation.org

I have recently been hired as the new Post-Secondary Education Officer/Analyst for the Métis Nation of Ontario head office in Ottawa. Over the past eight years I have been involved with the MNO in a variety of capacities. I have attended four Annual General Assemblies, served on the MNO Youth Council as a Region 7 Youth representative, and been part of the Cross Cultural Exchange where I and eight other Métis youth travelled to Ecuador in 2006. I am currently completing an M.A. in Indigenous Studies at Trent University. My research focuses on Métis narrative traditions as a resistance strategy against externally imposed notions of Métis identity. I intend to defend my thesis in early March.

I am very excited about my new role within the MNO and will be working on a number of education initiatives. Currently, we are in the beginning stages of developing a Métis Post-Secondary Education Role Model Mentorship Program. This program will be designed to provide support for first year Métis students at colleges and universities throughout the province. We hope that this support will help increase recruitment and retention rates of Métis students in post-secondary institutions.

I look forward to hearing from you!
Links to the most recent MNO news are posted on the home page with a picture gallery highlighting major stories! If you would like activities featured on the MNO website send the story with pictures to Mike Fedyk at mikef@metisnation.org.

**AROUND THE MNO**

Updated at least monthly, Around the MNO is a photo gallery spotlighting Métis people and events throughout the homeland! Local, provincial and national events and activities can all be found here. If you would like your community included in the photo gallery send a picture with a 30 word or less caption to Mike Fedyk at mikef@metisnation.org.

**FEATURES**

All the latest information on community council elections, branch programming, downloadable copies of key MNO documents including branch reports, the annual report and Voyageur back copies.

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