With final exams upon us and students busily lining up for summer jobs or graduation, the MNO Education and Training staff is equally active. This looks to be an important year for moving Métis post-secondary education issues ahead. It all started March 2-3 when the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities hosted the first Aboriginal Post-secondary Education Gathering with the theme “Learning from Each Other”. The event brought together over 400 participants interested in talking about post-secondary education and a better place for Aboriginal students. The event facilitated a dialogue between participants regarding the barriers and possible solutions Métis and other students encounter when transitioning to higher education.

Throughout the event the Métis Nation of Ontario was well-represented. President Gary Lipinski was a keynote speaker and eloquently discussed the obstacles faced by Métis students who want to attend post-secondary schools. Raised in Fort Francis, Ontario, he shared his own journey to attend university which brought him from his small northern community to the urban centres of southern Ontario. President Lipinski currently holds degrees and certificates from Lakehead University, Queen’s University and the University of Western Ontario. In sharing his story he inspired those students in attendance to continue working towards achieving their academic goals.

In addition to encouraging meaningful dialogue between participants, the event also provided a venue for releasing the newly established Ontario Aboriginal Post-secondary Education Framework Policy. This framework was created by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities in collaboration with Aboriginal representatives, including MNO staff and community members. The framework is intended to inform policy development and program design within the Ministry as well as “initiate and enhance meaningful partnerships with Aboriginal leaders and communities”. President Lipinski, as well as other keynote speakers, made a point of challenging the Ministry to commit...
**Announcements**

**New Arrivals**

No bouquet of flowers or box of chocolates could compare to the sweet, wonderful Valentine’s gift Melissa Pilon and Joey Charron (former Youth representative for Region 5) received on Valentine’s Day. Their first child was born. At approximately 5:30 P.M., Joseph Charron Jr. (the 4th) was born, weighing in at 7½ and 2 ounces. Proud parents are Nicole (Region 3, Employment & Training Officer) and Joe Charron, the proud grandparents are Jim and Cindy Pilon.

Leodas and Justin McCarville are proud to announce the birth of their daughter, Grace Lucy McCarville; born on December 1, 2010, at 1:10 P.M. weighing 7½ lbs 15 oz and 22 inches long. God bless our precious little gem. Proud grandparent’s are Andy and Maureen Broder of Ottawa and Debbie and Dave McCarville of Thunder Bay. Special thanks for the wonderful care and support provided by Sandra, Alex and Nathalie of the Community Mid-Wives of Thunder Bay. Justin McCarville is in the Building Systems’ Technical Advisor Internship Program (BSTATIP) in Thunder Bay.

Elliott McPhearson Banville was born on November 14th, 2010, and weighed 9 lbs. 6 oz. at birth. The parents are Derek and Allyson Banville. Elliott is a proud Métis and attended the first Métis potluck (put on by the Os- trava and Durham Region Métis Council (ODRMC)) with dad, mom, and grandma on January 8th, 2011. I am quite sure that at one point during the jigging Elliott kicked his foot out in an attempt to join in. We are now on the lookout for a Métis sash that will fit him. Thanks to ODRMC for making our son’s first Métis experience a memorable one.

“**What more could we ask for?”**

Congratulations to Bertha (nee Vassuer) and James Tolles who celebrated their 57th wedding anniversary on February 20, 2011. I would like to acknowledge this milestone and congratulate them on having a wonderful and loving marriage for 57 years. I would also like to add how blessed we are as a family to have such role models and teachings that have shaped us into the adults we are.

My daughter asked them what their secret is for staying together for so long and their response was, “We never had much, so losing each other and working hard together is what gave us the strength and determination to make our marriage work. We have been very blessed with eight children, over 20 grandchildren and great-grandchildren. What more could we ask for?”

Congratulations mom and dad, we love you today and always. From Darlene (Dooy), Karen (Dave), Jim Jr. (Karen), John (Claudette), Tom (Mary), Ben (Bonnie), Julie (Dooy), Joyce (Mike) and your many grandchildren and great grandchildren. Joyce Tolles is the treasurer of the Credit River Métis Intern Council.

**New Grad Nunavut-bound**

By Chris Acton — Métis youth, Nicholas Dubuc-Lavallee, recently graduated from the Surface Diamond Drilling Assistant, Common Core program which was specifically for Aboriginal people, held at Northern College in Kirkland Lake. Nicholas is the son of Chris Lavallee and Diane Dubuc; he is the nephew of the late Senator Ernie Lavallee. President of the Temiskaming Métis Council, Liliane Ethier, attended the graduation ceremony and addressed the graduating class.

Nicholas has been hired by Bourn Longyear Drilling and will begin his career in Nunavut. Congratulations Nicholas, we are proud of you.

Chris Acton is a Councillor for the Temiskaming Métis Community Council and a Training Consultant at Northern College.

**MNO launches Direct Toll-free Number for Registry**

As part of the continuing improvements to the Métis Nation of Ontario Registry, we now have a dedicated Registry phone line. The number for the line is:

1-855-798-1006 (toll free) or 613-798-1006 for local (Ottawa) calls.

The advantage of using this line is that calls are not routed through the MNO reception desk but enter an automated system that enables callers to quickly and easily access the correct individual to assist them. The automated system provides three options:

Line 2

| Citizenship applications or replacement card |
| Genealogy inquiries |

Line 3

| Harvest applications or Harvest cards |

In addition to improved access, calls to the Registry may now be monitored and recorded for training and quality assurance purposes.

**Christmas Remembered**

Rollande Piton of Sudbury created a Métis Christmas tree this past December. It was decorated with feathers, corn cobs, cook- ses, carrots, marshmallows and walnuts as well as strings of cranberries and popcorn. Red and white bows provided the final festi-

C ongratulations to the family of Pauline Saulnier, PCMNO Region 7 Councillor and Volunteer of the Year 2010. Pauline is the proud grandmother of Jolene Paula Saulnier, born December 4th, 2010, and weighing in at 8 lbs 8 oz.
Oshawa & Durham Region Métis Council

Another Successful Holiday Gathering!

By Robert Pilon
Oshawa & Durham Region Métis Council

January 8th marked the Oshawa and Durham Region Métis Council’s 6th Annual Holiday Gathering and Potluck with 150 people attending this important event. This year, we moved to a new venue, Sinclair School in Whitby with an auditorium big enough to accommodate a growing number of participants. The hall was decorated with Métis flags, we had some great displays and vendors as well as our beautiful painted teepee and Marcel Labelle’s birchbark canoe—all of which contributed to a very festive atmosphere.

As with past gatherings, there was a wide array of delicious offerings: ranging from those foods more familiar to us, to wonderful meats and delicacies and traditional Métis fare like boulettes. People from all over the region as well as from other councils and communities joined in the feast to celebrate the season. 

Aside from the unlimited choices of great food, the evening included a full suite of entertainment. The Oshawa Fiddlers—students who just started learning late in 2010—braved the stage and played two tunes: “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star” and “Mary Had a Little Lamb”—not exactly Métis music, but they’re just learning! Young Rajan Anderson from the Grand River Council area played the fiddle, as did Alisha Blore and Bob Didier. Michael D’Amonte entertained the crowd with his guitar and great voice, and the ‘All My Relations’ group drummed for the audience. John Samosi brought want-to-be drummers on stage, testing them to see how fast they could drum. The Olville Bouguet Métis Dancers, led by Tina Lavallee, danced better than ever, impressing the crowd with their footwork. But the lead entertainer of the night was award-winning J.J. Lavallee who wowed the crowd with great songs accompanied by his guitar, and topping off the night with his amazing fiddling—especially the Orange Blossom Special: a rendition that I’m sure none of us will forget!

As usual, the evening would not have been possible without a host of volunteers. Everyone pitched in to make this a success, and I want to sincerely thank each and every one of you. Additionally, a big thank you to the donors who generously gave to our silent auction. Once again we were able to cover the costs of the entire event and continue this get-together as something that everyone can afford to attend—plus a lot of people went home with great prizes!

Overall the ODMRC is very proud that we’ve been able to maintain and grow this great Métis event for our community. For six years this has been an occasion for families to come together and celebrate our rich culture and traditions.

Métis fiddles & wild game

NEW MÉTIS COUNCIL!

MNO Council Charter signed in Atikokan

On Feb. 26, 2011, a Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Community Charter signing ceremony took place in Atikokan. The signing ceremony officially established the Atikokan and Surrounding Area Métis Council. “Métis citizens are the heart and soul of the MNO,” explained MNO President, Gary Lipinski, “and are represented at the local level through MNO Charter Community Councils. The councils are the cornerstone of a strong foundation for the MNO in its push toward its inherent right to self-government. The local councils are also an important communication hub for MNO and play a significant role in fostering community empowerment and development for Métis citizens living within the geographic territory of that council.”

The Charter Agreement was signed by Marlene Davidson, President of the Atikokan Council, and by MNO President, Gary Lipinski, and MNO Chair, France Picotte. Around 50 people witnessed the ceremony: “We have worked hard,” stated President Davidson. “to put this charter in place and we are looking forward to using it to build an even stronger Métis Nation Community Council here in Atikokan.”

“I congratulate the Atikokan Métis Council for all their efforts and hard work in getting their Community Charter Agreement signed,” commented President Lipinski. “The dedication that brought us here today is a demonstration of what can be achieved by working together to advance Métis rights and improve the social well-being of our Métis citizens, families and communities. The Métis citizens in the Atikokan area will be well served by those who have stepped forward to ensure these constitutional rights.”

Community councils operate in accordance with MNO Charter Agreements, like the one signed in Atikokan. These provide councils with the mandate to govern, while ensuring accountability, transparency, and consistency. The Charter Agreements along with the “Community Code” and “Community Electoral Code” are the governance and policy documents community councils refer to when conducting council business, and for ensuring accountability through good fiscal management and governance.

Métis Council Returns!

Back row, l to r: Robert Bird, Chair; Jason Foster, Councillor; Christine Skura, Youth Rep; Marilyn J. Hew, Secretary/Treasurer. Front row, l to r: Gary Lipinski, President MNO; Janet Foster, Councillor; Alis Kennedy, Senator; Donna Grenier, President; France Picotte, Chair MNO.

GTA Métis

By Marilyn Hew
Toronto York Region Métis Council

After several years of silence, the Toronto and York Region Métis now have a voice and representation in Region 8. The new Toronto and York Region Métis Council was elected on March 27, 2010. The council is made up of men and women who are dedicated to helping Métis in their region find their voice and access resources that are available to them through the MNO and other agencies.

The Council President, Donna Grenier, has a lifelong history of participation in Métis traditions to call upon to serve Region 8. Alis Kennedy is an experienced bilingual Senator and a veteran of the Canadian Armed Forces. Chairperson, Robert Bird, and Secretary/Treasurer, Marilyn Hew, are enjoying a growing awareness of their Métis background. Youth Rep, Christine Skura’s rich heritage has been passed down her grandmother, Senator Olive Tiedema. Councillor Janet (Aselin) Foster brings a rich knowledge of Métis history. Her son, Councillor Jason Foster contributes enthusiasm and dedication to rounding out our council. We usually meet the second Sunday of each month from 1:00-3:00 PM at the recently acquired location—the Community Room at 31 Division of the Toronto Police Services. Located at 40 Norlich Drive it is easily accessed from the Toronto Transit Commission and major roadways near its Finch Ave. and Hwy 400 site.

All Métis are invited to attend our meetings! This elected council is dedicated to informing all Métis citizens of Toronto and York Region and advocating on their behalf.

torontoyorkregionmetis@hotmail.com

You can leave a voice message by calling 647-933-1885
Full circle success story at Ontario Power Generation

From Kathleen Lamigan
Employment & Training Coordinator

HAMILTON

Ontario Power Generation (OPG) is justifiably proud of Jason Prevoost, a shy and remarkable young Métis man who has already racked up a number of successes in his fledgling career, with undoubtedly many more to come.

In 2006, Jason was a recipient of OPG’s John Wesley Beaver Award, an award that fosters Native entry into post-secondary disciplines such as engineering and technology. The award recognizes Native engineer John Wesley Beaver’s contributions and is administered by OPG’s Native Circle, a support and mentoring network for Native employees. Every year, the award recipient receives an education bursary and a limited edition print by Native artist Rick Beaver (John Wesley Beaver’s son).

Jason is particularly proud of this award because he feels that his father, Jack Beaver, a WWII fighter pilot of Ojibway descent, who subsequently held many engineering and management positions at OPG’s predecessor, Ontario Hydro, exemplified many of the personal and professional qualities he admires. Jason finds it rewarding to know that what he and his department accomplish adds significant value to OPG as a whole.

JasonPrevost.jpg

Upon graduation in 2008 from Laurentian University with a Bachelor of Commerce degree and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Native Studies, Jason was hired as a Human Resources Intern by the Talent Management team at OPG’s head office in Toronto, for a one-year contract. He hadn’t worked in an office environment before and the experience was valuable and advantageous. Just prior to completion of his contract, he was encouraged to apply to OPG’s internal job postings.

Successful with his application to a financial analyst position in taxation, he’s been in the role for more than a year. At the department’s request and with OPG’s financial assistance, Jason is continuing his education by working toward his Certified Management Accountant designation. He wrote and passed the entrance exam in October 2010, and is well on his way. Although his days are busy, Jason still finds time to play on a baseball team in the summer and on a dart team in the winter.

Métis Athlete Wins Gold

Jamie Triskle, a young Métis woman from Kenora, recently won the gold medal at the 2011 Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations’ Nordic Skiing Championship. Jamie is a grade 12 student at St. Thomas Aquinas High School in Kenora and is part of the Métis community in that area. Jamie’s aunt, Sandy, is the Treasurer for the Kenora Métis Council and one of her cousins is Theresa Stenlund, the Regional Councillor on the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario for Region 1, which includes Kenora.

Jamie, who suffers from cerebral palsy, won gold in the Para Nordic Three kilometre free event at Ottawa’s Nakkertok Cross-Country Ski Club. Her time of 4:58 was almost two minutes faster than her nearest competitor. She was among 11 athletes from her school, and among over 500 in total, to compete in the championship.

She is the first gold medalist in any para-athletic event for the Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations and a great role model for young Métis.

I enjoy working in OPG’s Tax Department. I am able to use my knowledge and skills. The department has provided me the opportunity and support to further develop my skills and achieve my professional goals in pursuing my CMA designation.

Jamie Triskle

Lakehead University is committed to helping Aboriginal people further their aspirations. Aboriginal programs at Lakehead offer academic, research, and cultural support services tailored to Aboriginal needs. The programs are designed to meet the educational needs of Aboriginal students and to provide a supportive environment for their academic success.

Lakehead University

Office of Aboriginal Initiatives
aboriginalinitiatives.lakeheadu.ca
807-766-7219 or toll free 1-888-558-3388

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- Native Language Instructors’ Program (NLIP)

Administrative & Support Services
- Office of Aboriginal Initiatives (AI)
- Aboriginal Cultural & Support Services (ACSS)
- Lakehead University Native Student Assoc. (LUNSA)
- Nanabijou Aboriginal Graduate Enhancement (NAGE)
- Lakehead University Aboriginal Alumni Chapter (LUACC)
- Elders Program

Lakehead UNIVERSITY
Once again we have a contemporary story that shows that the voyageur spirit is alive and well. Many of us have been following the adventures of our Métis cyclists who are on route to Costa Rica in an effort to raise environmental awareness and help make the earth a brighter shade of green. (See Voyageur 63, pages 11 and 27, www.pedalacrosstheamericas.com).

Members of the Toronto and York Region Métis Council attend the Governance and Finance Course earlier this year.

Scaling Mt. Everest for a cause

By Dan Nelles

In preparing along with 40 other participants for an expedition up Mount Everest, the expedition will go to the first base camp and it will take over two weeks as participants hike to an elevation of almost 5,400 meters or almost 17,600 feet. After that, four of us will climb another 2000 feet to Island Peak, which will take another five days. This will be more technical with crampons and ascenders. This climb will have a 50 degree snow covered slope. There will be others in the group proceeding to attempt the summit of Everest which will take more than 60 days.

While the cost and time is prohibitive to making a campaign for the peak of Everest, we will be dealing with a lot of tough conditions at the base camp. One major difficulty we will encounter is operating in an oxygen deprived environment. It’s like walking around with a paper bag over your head. Hikers will be dealing with other difficulties too. We will need to purify all the water we drink, change our diets to include yak meat and may be hiking in areas during the rainy season. Like all participants in the expedition, we will be footing the cost of the expedition ourselves.

The trek will likely cost between $6000 and $7000. Our personal expenses could be quite a bit less if we dealt with a different trekking company. The organization that was chosen pays its porters and staff a fair wage and some of the money goes to building schools, hospitals and orphanages in Nepal and Africa. You may have heard of it before, it is called “Moving Mountains Bust Fund.”

While participants are paying their own way up the mountain they are making the trek to help raise money for the Sarnia-Lambton Big Brothers. Each member of the team is trying to raise a minimum of $5000 for the organization.

For me, being raised by a single mother on a fixed income, the Big Brother cause is close to my heart. I understand the importance of a positive role model for young boys, it can make a real difference.

This is the second such event being held by the local Big Brother chapter. In February of 2008, an expedition of 23 people headed up Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania. The event was a success and each participant raised around $7000 for Big Brothers. Besides being a major fundraiser for the Big Brothers it also sets a positive message for the children they mentor.

Moon River Needs You!

Do you have photos, memorabilia, cultural practices and/or stories that relate to your family and the Métis way of life?

If so, please contact Louise Goulding to express your interest in contributing to an upcoming oral history research project that the Moon River Métis Council is about to embark upon. Meetings and interviews will be carried out with Métis people from the historic Métis community of Penetangoshene and area starting in the spring of 2011 to capture the history of the area on tape, video and in photos.

The final result will be an oral history archive that is intended to be made into a community-celebration video and coffee table book that can be used as a fundraiser for the council in the future. This study is a follow-up to the written history report completed in 2006 titled, From the Straits of Mackinac to Georgian Bay: 300 years of Métis History.

Your involvement—however big or small—is important and would be greatly appreciated. For more information and to express your interest in being involved contact Louise Goulding at: moonland@hughes.net or 705-766-4974.

The McGuinty Government in partnership with the Ontario Trillium Foundation helps build healthy and vibrant communities across the province. The investments made through these community grants support local organizations working to enhance the well-being of all Ontarians including children, youth, parents and seniors alike,” said Michael Chan, the Ontario Minister of Tourism and Culture.

Timmins Métis Council receives Trillium funds for renovations

The Ontario Trillium Foundation recently announced a number of grants in north-eastern Ontario. One of the fortunate recipients was the Métis Nation of Ontario-Timmins Council who will receive $77,588 over one year to renovate the community centre by installing new windows, siding and insulation in order to reduce energy consumption and create a more comfortable gathering place for members. Accessibility will also be enhanced with the construction of an accessible washroom and the installation of a ramp and automatic door opener at the main entrance.

“The McGuinty Government in partnership with the Ontario Trillium Foundation helps build healthy and vibrant communities across the province. The investments made through these community grants support local organizations working to enhance the well-being of all Ontarians including children, youth, parents and seniors alike,” said Michael Chan, the Ontario Minister of Tourism and Culture.
Prime Minister opens dialogue with Métis Nation

The Honourable John Duncan, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, on behalf of the Honourable Chuck Strahl, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, announced March 25th that improvements to the Métis Skills and Employment Centre in Abbotsford, B.C. and the Métis Crossing Historic Site expansion near Smoky Lake, Alta., will be a priority for funding consideration by the Government of Canada.

The Government of Canada will consider investing up to 50 percent of their projects’ total eligible costs, to a maximum of $1.45 million and $5.5 million, respectively, on condition that the projects meet federal eligibility requirements with respect to the Building Canada Fund-Metis Infrastructure Component as well as the signing of contribution agreements. The Métis Nation of British Columbia and Albertans must each demonstrate that they have secured the funds necessary, any time commitments for these projects. The total cost of the Métis Skills and Employment Centre is estimated at $2.9 million, while the total cost of the Métis Crossing is estimated at $7 million.

These projects are priorities for the Métis Nations of British Columbia and Alberta," said Minister Duncan. “Our government is proud to support infrastructure projects that create jobs, stimulate the economy, and strengthen our communities.

Métis National Council President Clément Chartier, said: “The Métis Nation has waited more than two years to hear these announcements, so today’s news is very welcome—especially for our Métis citizens in B.C. and Alberta. I am especially pleased that Prime Minister Stephen Harper kept his promise made last month to ensure Métis do not fall through the cracks.”

The Métis Nation British Columbia will be using the $1.45 million to improve its Métis Skills and Employment Centre in Abbotsford, B.C. This support will help to increase the number of Métis who will be able to learn a trade and join the workforce. Currently, MNBIC provides training to more than 1,500 clients per year.

Meanwhile, the Métis Nation of Alberta plans to direct its $3.5 million to the construction of a cultural interpretive and gathering centre at Métis Crossing. This historic site located northeast of Edmonton, is quickly becoming one of Alberta’s top tourist attractions. Absent from today’s announcement is a third stimulus funding proposal from the Manitoba Métis Federation which aims to build a National Métis Museum to be located in the heart of the Métis Nation, at the Forks in Winnipeg.

President Chartier said: “This third stimulus project is important in that it will allow the Métis Nation to capture and display our history, culture, and language, and to show our pride. While the project has not been announced at this time, we will continue to pursue this cultural imperative. Now that an election appears imminent, we hope the government at all levels to directly engage industry partners through round tables and trade shows. I believe the Métis Nation Protocol is an effective instrument which, for Canada and the Métis Nation, is yielding good dividends.”

The first regional round table was organized for March, 2011, in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. In addition to Métis Nation Economic Development projects, President Chartier also touched on certain employment and training matters, the outstanding Métis residential school issue, struggles with Health Canada and support for Métis veterans.

Prime Minister Harper listened closely to President Chartier’s words offering welcome comments that the Métis should not fall through the cracks. After President Chartier’s discussion with the Prime Minister, he came away confident the infrastructure projects raised during the last meeting with the Prime Minister will soon be announced.


Support for Métis infrastructure projects

The Manitoba Federation (MFF) is the official democratic and self-governing political representative for the Métis Nation’s Manitoba Métis community.

In what has become an annual event, Prime Minister Stephen Harper has opened his door to National Aboriginal leaders to discuss economic development and other pressing matters. Métis National Council President, Clément Chartier, represented the Métis Nation at this year’s meeting held on Parliament Hill on February 16th.

He told the Prime Minister, “the Métis Nation Protocol signed in 2008 set the foundation for a solid relationship between the Government of Canada and the Métis Nation.” President Chartier added, “We are looking forward to working with your Ministers and we are open for business.”

President Chartier indicated that the Métis Nation has been fully engaged in the Federal Framework for Aboriginal Economic Development which fits into the Métis Nation business model. The model is based on solid, professional management through economic development institutions such as Métis capital corporations offering small business loans, venture capital corporations, education and training centres including the Gabriel Dumont Institution.

Federal Interlocutor for Métis, the Honourable John Duncan, and the Minister responsible for Human Resource Development, the Honourable Diane Finley, also attended the meeting which lasted about an hour in the Prime Minister’s office.

In January, Minister Duncan hosted a very successful Métis Economic Development Symposium (see page 7) to which he invited his provincial counterparts from the five western provinces, Métis Nation leaders and industry. President Chartier explained: “the Métis Nation wants to bring the Symposium to the regional level to directly engage industry partners through round tables and trade shows. I believe the Métis Nation Protocol is an effective instrument which, for Canada and the Métis Nation, is yielding good dividends.”

This page image is from the April 2011 issue of Voiageur.
Métis participation in the Canadian economy received further impetus with the Métis Economic Development Symposium (MEDS), held the week of January 22, in Vancouver. Following two days of discussions involving Métis leaders, the Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-status Indians, and the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Aboriginal Affairs Ministers from the five westernmost provinces, and their senior officials, agreement was reached to establish a working group toward the development of a long term Métis economic strategy.

This strategy will consider areas such as encouraging sustainable and substantial Métis entrepreneurship, ways to engage with the private sector in economic development, and participation in the workforce. The working group will report back to the principals in 2013.

Métis National Council President, Clément Chartier, says, “We’ve reached the point in our discussions that we are now ready to take the Métis Economic Development Strategy (MEDS) to the next level. MEDS has been a great opportunity to exchange views and build goodwill with our federal and provincial counterparts. Now it’s time to get down to developing a long-term strategy, and for this we are keen on engaging private industry.”

The first Métis Economic Development Symposium was held in Calgary in December, 2009, to discuss ways to promote Métis-specific economic development initiatives at the policy and program levels. MEDS 2 in Vancouver reported on the progress made since then on successful approaches to economic development and expanded discussions to focus on strengthening entreprenuership among Métis women. Métis leaders are looking forward to forging long term partnerships with industry as an integral part of the Métis Economic Development work-plan during the next two years.

President Chartier adds: “Hearing the progress that has been experienced across our Homeland is very encouraging such as the recent $4 million investment by the federal government and the Province of Manitoba in a fund to be operated by the investment management arm of the Manitoba Métis Federation. It’s these kind of initiatives we need across the Métis Nation to aid our Métis-owned businesses increase their participation in the country’s economy in areas such as the resource and energy sectors. We are definitely on the move.”

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The Supreme Court of Canada reserved its decision.

IN THE COURTS

Métis Settlements case reaches Supreme Court

On December 17, 2010, lawyers for the Métis Nation of Alberta went before the Supreme Court of Canada to hear the constitutional challenge brought by the Métis Nation of Alberta, the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan, Louis Code and the Métis Nation of Canada. The challenge, known as the Métis Settlements case, is centered on whether a 1985 federal agreement to set up Métis settlements in Alberta and Saskatchewan was constitutional. The Métis Settlements case is one of the most high-profile cases in years. It involves the rights of Métis people to establish and maintain Métis settlements in Canada, and the ability of the federal government to provide funding and support for these settlements.

The Supreme Court of Canada is expected to hear arguments in the Métis Settlements case in the spring of 2012. The court will hear from both the government and the Métis parties regarding the constitutionality of the 1985 agreement. The decision of the Supreme Court of Canada will have significant implications for Métis people in Alberta and Saskatchewan, as well as for all Indigenous peoples in Canada. It will determine whether the federal government can unilaterally negotiate and implement agreements with Indigenous peoples, or whether such agreements require the consent of all affected parties.
MÉTIS VOYAGEUR

In Memorium

GEORGE MCGUIRE 1925-2011

George McGuire, age 85 years, passed away peace-
fully in Thunder Bay Re-
centre, on December 29, 2011.

George was born on July 17, 1926 in Fairbanks, Alaska to parents Rick and Phyllis McGuire. At the age of 15, George joined the Canadian Forces and served in the Royal Canadian Artillery. He was stationed in England and returned home in 1945. After the war, he worked in mining and forestry until 1969. George was a founding elder of the MNO, and was a tireless worker for the Métis cause.

OBITUARIES

Lesley Jane Leroux

Lesley Jane Leroux, passed away on March 5th, 2011, at the age of 61 years. It is with profound sadness that the family announces the passing of a wonderful wife and loving partner of 30 years. She was predeceased by her husband Michael.

Remmington William Goodchild

Remmington William Goodchild, of Webbwood passed away at the Espanola General Hospital on December 5, 2010, at the age of 88. Remmington was born May 15, 1922, in Birch Lake, and raised in the Webbwood area.

Stephanie “Irene” Marie Beauchamp

Stephanie “Irene” Marie Beauchamp, (nee Cadieux) (passed away peacefully at home on February 15, 2011, in her 92nd year surrounded by family. Irene was a tireless worker for the Métis Cause.

Thérèse (Theresa) Vieillefeuille

Thérèse (Theresa) Vieillefeuille, age 71 years, passed away in Peace and宁静 on December 10, 2010.

MÉTIS VOYAGEUR

In Memoriam

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OBITUARIES

Lesley Jane Leroux

Lesley Jane Leroux, passed away on March 5th, 2011, at the age of 61 years. It is with profound sadness that the family announces the passing of a wonderful wife and loving partner of 30 years. She was predeceased by her husband Michael.

Remmington William Goodchild

Remmington William Goodchild, of Webbwood passed away at the Espanola General Hospital on December 5, 2010, at the age of 88. Remmington was born May 15, 1922, in Birch Lake, and raised in the Webbwood area.

Stephanie “Irene” Marie Beauchamp

Stephanie “Irene” Marie Beauchamp, (nee Cadieux) (passed away peacefully at home on February 15, 2011, in her 92nd year surrounded by family. Irene was a tireless worker for the Métis Cause.

Thérèse (Theresa) Vieillefeuille

Thérèse (Theresa) Vieillefeuille, age 71 years, passed away in Peace and宁静 on December 10, 2010.
Métis historian changed
Canadian perspectives
on Aboriginal Peoples

By Linda Lord

Dr. Olive Dickason, a renowned Métis historian and one of the original members of the Métis Nation of Ontario Cultural Commission (MINOCC), passed away March 12th at the age of 91 from a heart attack.

When the MNO Cultural Commission was incorporated in 2000, Dr. Dickason was appointed by the Provincial Council of the MNO to serve as one of its original members. She served on the Commission until 2005. Olive’s academic accomplishments made her a natural and prestigious choice for the Cultural Commission.

MNO President, Gary Lipinski, commented that, “Olive offers Métis people, especially our young people, a shining example of the kinds of achievements that are within our grasp. She changed the Canadian perspective on Aboriginal people and the MNO is proud of its association with Olive through our Cultural Commission.”

Olive Dickason was born March 6, 1920, in Winnipeg, Manitoba, but when her family lost everything during the Great Depression they moved to the Interlake region. It was here at the age of 12, that Olive, her sister Alice, and her mother Phoebe resorted to trapping and fishing to provide food for the family. In later years, Dr. Dickason recalled this experience. “Living in the bush as I did during my adolescent years, I very soon learned that survival depended upon coping with each situation as it arose, which calls for common sense and realism,” said Olive. She neither give up nor play games.

Olive Dickason graduated high school by correspondence and learned Greek, Latin and philosophy from a Scottish immigrant who moved into the bush nearby. She went on to get her Bachelor of Arts degree in philosophy and French from Notre Dame College, an affiliate of the University of Ottawa, in 1943.

Over the next 23 years Olive worked as a journalist with a variety of Canadian daily papers, including the Regina Leader-Post, the Winnipeg Free Press, the Montreal Gazette and the Toronto Globe and Mail. During this time she received many awards including the McClaren Award for typography and layout in both 1965 and 1967. She left the Globe and Mail in 1967 to become Chief of Information Services at the National Gallery.

At the age of 50 and with her children grown, Olive entered the graduate program at the University of Ottawa where she received her MA in Canadian History in 1972. She then began work on her PhD. She started out with an interest in French colonial history but soon her own genetic heritage led her to European- American contact history. At that time, there had never been a doctoral dissertation based on the premise of First Nations’ history, but Dickason was a trail-blazer and received her PhD in 1977.

Along the way, Dr. Dickason gathered Aboriginal peoples’ oral histories and waded through volumes of texts in the archives of the erstwhile European colonizers. Her doctoral thesis, titled “The Myth of the Savage”, was eventually published as were three important books. Her doctoral thesis, titled “The Myth of the Savage”, was eventually published as were three important books. Her doctoral thesis, titled “The Myth of the Savage”, was eventually published as were three important books.

However, her pioneering research opened the door for early Canadian history and her work helped to establish Aboriginal participation in this field. When Olive Dickason decided to study Aboriginal history over 50 years ago, the academic view was that no Aboriginal history existed. However, her pioneering research shattered the myth that Canadian history began with the arrival of the European explorers, and fostered the recognition of indigenous peoples as this country’s founding civilization.

“Most of my adolescent and teen years I spent up north on the trap lines and you learn a view of life that you certainly don’t get in the cities and in the schools. When I [was first introduced to] Canadian history, Aboriginal history was just dismissed;” she once said of her motivation to pursue a new career setting the Canadian history record straight.

“This country is deeply founded and deeply linked with Aboriginals. When I realized that the courses being taught didn’t reflect this at all, I got very disturbed.”

Dr. Dickason’s deep passion for early Canadian history and her pride and interest in her own Métis heritage are reflected in her life’s work—a work that literally changed history.

Olive Dickason’s ground-breaking textbook, A Concise History of Canada’s First Nations, became an essential contribution to history courses at the high-school level.

Dr. Olive Dickason received many awards and much respect over the years, including the Senior Rockefeller Fellowship in 1989, the Order of Canada; Métis woman of the Year Award; the Sir John A. MacDonald History Prize; the Aboriginal Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation; Ryerson Polytechnic University Fellowship, several honorary degrees and the title of “Professor Emerita” from the University of Alberta. When Olive Dickason decided to study Aboriginal history over 50 years ago, the academic view was that no Aboriginal history existed. However, her pioneering research shattered the myth that Canadian history began with the arrival of the European explorers, and fostered the recognition of indigenous peoples as this country’s founding civilization.

Dr. Dickason’s deep passion for early Canadian history and her pride and interest in her own Métis heritage are reflected in her life’s work—a work that literally changed history.
By Janice Landry

Rick Lemieux designed and manufactured “the Drillmaster”, especially for the Crazy Horse Memorial. The rig is emblazoned with the motto, “Never Forget Your dreams.”

Equipment from a small shop into a globally competitive mining equipment manufacturing firm. With such a distinguished and successful past, Rick decided the location would be ideal to establish RDH Mining Equipment. After all, for thousands of years, the French River, a major historical trade route, had been a place to meet and exchange trade goods. The French River was not only a historical trading area, it was also the territory of his ancestors and an integral part of his Métis identity.

In 1979, Rick was born in the village of Alban, in the French River area. He was raised, along with his five brothers, in this small community by his parents, Emile and Yvette Lemieux. Hunting, fishing, and working on the family farm filled his days, but his nights were filled with music, for each member of the Lemieux family played a musical instrument, making evenings at home and social gatherings a musical occasion. Rick’s industrious nature and inventive spirit was evident very early in life. At the young age of eight, he began taking apart his father’s farm equipment to build buggies and other motorized contraptions. His first invention, a motorized go-cart, with the exception of brakes and a clutch, was a roaring success. The go-cart was built from parts found around the farm and taken off his father’s rototiller. This early invention would foreshadow Rick’s future success in mining equipment design and would be the first of many prototypes.

Rick entered the workforce as a young man in the late 60’s. He worked for various mining companies, repairing and servicing equipment. He absorbed everything like a sponge, studying how each piece of equipment worked and always thinking of how he could make it better. The intrinsic inventiveness Rick had felt since he was a child and the inclination he felt to improve the function and capabilities of equipment would be the driving force behind his decision to forge his own path and, in 1985, he started his own mining equipment repair and rebuild shop in his hometown of Alban.

Since 1985, Rick has Rostered RDH Mining Equipment and it has grown from a small rebuild and repair shop to a global company, manufacturing underground mobile mining and tunnelling equipment for the world. In continuous operation since 1985, RDH now offers a wide range of mining equipment specifically suited to the harsh conditions of underground mining and tunnelling. The company offers a broad range of equipment which includes scoops, fuel/true trucks, flat bed crane trucks, one to three boom drill jumbos and roof bolters, secondary drill rigs, four to thirty-five ton haul trucks, one to four yard LHD’s, fully battery powered LHD’s and trucks, concrete mixers, and AN-FO loaders. RDH mining equipment can be found working on nearly every continent, from beneath New York City’s Grand Central Station to the steppes of Patagonia to the isolated coastlines of the Arctic Ocean.

While RDH satisfied Rick’s mechanical inclinations, he was still searching for an outlet to help him fulfill his spiritual and musical interests. Rick met his wife, Daniele, set out on a business venture that would provide him with this opportunity. They purchased a rustic tourist lodge in the Monetville area and named it “Saenchiur Flechey Resort”, developing it into a world-class establishment. The name, “Saenchiur Flechey”, the Michif word for the traditional sash, was chosen because it symbolized the goals of the resort. Situated on the picturesque shoreline of the West Arm of Lake Nipissing, it was more than just a fishing lodge; it would offer the northern Ontario experience while promoting both ecological and cultural awareness. The resort allowed Rick to develop and promote Métis traditions and local legends to his guests. The resort continues to provide guests unique opportunities to learn about the local environment and culture.

When asked what he owes his success to Rick recalls his experience with Crazy Horse. “ The motif of the Crazy Horse Memorial, I never forget my dreams. I chose to do what I loved to do—what I was good at—that way, you do it with all your heart, and if you do something with all your heart, how can you fail?”

As one pulls up to the wooded area, visitors to the Crazy Horse Memorial in South Dakota are able to spot the bright yellow and blue of the RDH Drillmaster as it works to carve out the mountain. The Crazy Horse emblem affixed to the side of the Drillmaster reads, “Never Forget Your Dreams”, and is a longstanding appeal to supporters for help to speed the carving of the mountain.

The Crazy Horse Memorial is the world’s largest sculptural undertaking and was the dream of Chief Henry Standing Bear. The carving was officially started on June 3, 1948, and the memorial’s mission is to honour the culture, tradition and living heritage of North America’s Aboriginal peoples.

RDH Mining Equipment, from Alban, Ontario, makes the Crazy Horse team members at a mining equipment show, and the more they discussed the carving project, the more enthralled Rick became. Once he learned of the memorial’s mission, Rick wanted to help out with the project and the best way he knew how was by working equipment. Rick would design and manufacture a drill rig, “the Drillmaster”, especially for the Crazy Horse Memorial.

United by a common purpose, the Crazy Horse team and the RDH team worked together to design the Drillmaster to suit the very specific needs of the project. With 320 degree drilling and automatic return capabilities, the Drillmaster provided the accuracy and speed that was needed to carve out the mountain. On June 30, 2005, the Drillmaster began work and joined the Crazy Horse team. To this day it is still carving out history, quite an achievement for a company from the small village of Alban, Ontario, and a very fulfilling personal accomplishment for Rick Lemieux.

As one pulls up to the wooded entrance of RDH Mining Equipment, it is hard to imagine that such a successful underground mobile mining equipment firm could be located there. Nested within a maple sugar bush and on the land of his ancestors, Rick Lemieux has built up RDH Mining Equipment from a small shop into a globally competitive mining equipment manufacturing firm. With such a distinguished and successful past, Rick decided the location would be ideal to establish RDH Mining Equipment. After all, for thousands of years, the French River, a major historical trade route, had been a place to meet and exchange trade goods. The French River was not only a historical trading area, it was also the territory of his ancestors and an integral part of his Métis identity.

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The RDH Drillmaster carving out history at the Crazy Horse Memorial in South Dakota.

Saenchiur Flechey Resort on the West Bay of Lake Nipissing.
Métis Senators

Do you see it? Can you smell it?

Spring is in the air

S

pring is the time of re-birth in the cycle of life; things start anew. We wonder: how do we plant annuals or stick with perennials? Sure, the annuals bring new colour and a short burst of splendour; but we are people who have more in common with perennials—our roots run deep.

Our future grows from the deep roots of our past. Our garden has been pruned of some of our best and brightest flowers. However, their roots live on, in some cases a graft gives us another chance to reap the beauty of some of the heartiest rootstock; some cases a graft gives us an opportunity to rejuvenate our best and brightest flowers. They will be remembered as the brightest flowers in the Métis garden, and from their extensive root system new branches are sprouting. We welcome the growth of the new, because we know where it came from, how it was nurtured, and where it will go.

We can expect the same endurance during stock and bountiful harvest. We are comforted by the knowledge that we have established a secure foothold that is well entrenched, and deeply rooted, and firmly entrenched Senators and Elders, to whom we as a Nation must trust. Their steady and historic ways have cut a deep furrow in the soil. Their steady and historic ways have cut a deep furrow in the soil. Their steady and historic ways have cut a deep furrow in the soil. Their steady and historic ways have cut a deep furrow in the soil. Their steady and historic ways have cut a deep furrow in the soil. Their steady and historic ways have cut a deep furrow in the soil. Their steady and historic ways have cut a deep furrow in the soil. Their steady and historic ways have cut a deep furrow in the soil. Their steady and historic ways have cut a deep furrow in the soil. Their steady and historic ways have cut a deep furrow in the soil. Their steady and historic ways have cut a deep furrow in the soil. Their steady and historic ways have cut a deep furrow in the soil. Their steady and historic ways have cut a deep furrow in the soil. Their steady and historic ways have cut a deep furrow in the soil. Their steady and historic ways have cut a deep furrow in the soil. Their steady and historic ways have cut a deep furrow in the soil. Their steady and historic ways have cut a deep furrow in the soil. Their steady and historic ways have cut a deep furrow in the soil. Their steady and historic ways have cut a deep furrow in the soil. Their steady and historic ways have cut a deep furrow in the soil. Their steady and historic ways have cut a deep furrow in the soil. Their steady and historic ways have cut a deep furrow in the soil.

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They didn’t need the burst of colour to reap what really matters. It is our deeply rooted and firmly entrenched Senators and Elders, to whom we as a Nation must trust. Their steady and historic ways have cut a deep furrow for our people. We can obviously stop to look at the beauty of the annuals, but we must plant our own seeds, nourish them, and continue to grow the strong roots of the Métis people. Some would have us believe that we need that bright flash of glitter to get noticed, but when it comes to what matters in this harsh environment, we need to be well planted, well entrenched, and deeply rooted to blossom in the future. Our MNO garden can grow even more remarkable if we all work together to that end.

To our new council Senators, “welcome”! To all our citizens, look to our past, be grounded in our present and bring forth the flowers of our future.

Ontario Métis veteran attends MNC AGM

by Donald M. Fowler

I want to offer my sincere thanks to Lynette Davis of the Métis National Council (MNC), and Monique Richard (MNO), for the helpfulness of the “run up” enabling me to attend the MNC Annual General Assembly and for all the excitement of the excellent week-end of the 12th December, 2010. (My what a wonderful pre-yuletide time that was learned a great deal on those two days, especially from the presentations made to us personally by our genial president and his “side de camp”, David Chartzrand, of Winnipeg—two very remarkable and energetic Métis men. I was much more than just enlightened by Clement Charter’s remarkable book: Witness to Resistance: Under Fire in Nicaragua, in which he so kindly inscribed a personal message to—and for—me, following our first meeting on Juno Beach in November, 2009. After reading Clement’s remarkable experiences, while he was entrenched in Nicaragua, and then learning of that man’s personal commendable and courageous exploits there, it is clear to me that he is a unique and special kind of world-class warrior, one who is well deserving of several special kinds of medals and commendations.

I am at a loss for words to say how very much I appreciate all that was given to me and how very deeply I am affected still, by the kindness and generosity of so many wonderful Métis men and women.

VETERANS

MNO Veteran awarded Medal from Aboriginal Veterans Association

On December 11, 2010, Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizen, Master Warrant Officer Chris Plummer, was presented with the Canadian Aboriginal War Veterans Millennium Medal during the Ontario Regional (RCAC) Annual Barrack Room Dinner.

The medal was presented by Honourary Lieutenant Colonel J. Wright on behalf of the National Aboriginal Veterans Association (NAVA) of Ontario. The medal is presented to members of good standing of the Provincial Chapter or Affiliated Association and NAVA, as well as Aboriginal Serving Members in good standing, currently serving in the Canadian Forces, recipients of a Good Conduct Medal or other Canadian Forces merit service.

Chris Plummer has served in the Canadian Armed Forces since 1981 with the Canadian Regiment (RCAC). He has also received the Canadian Decoration (CD), recognizing 12 years of service in the Canadian Forces, along with the United Nations Protection Force Bonn-Herzenbergova and the Canadian Peacekeeping Service Medal.

I will wear it (the medal) with pride and honour,” stated Plummer, “to show that as a member of the Métis Nation we are part of the fabric of the Canadian Forces.

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SPRING 2011
Camping

Seventy-five acres of natural paradise awaits you less than two hours north of Toronto in the heart of Georgian Bay Country, the world's largest freshwater archipelago—home to 30,000 islands. 

Settle into a spacious open or wooded site among windswep t pine trees and nature at its finest. Feel the sun tickle your face and warm your soul by day, then gather by the fire and marvel at the "Near North" starry skies by night. ATV and nature trails are accessed directly from your site. Enjoy the heated pool, trampoline, mini golf, gift boutique, wagon rides, bingo, two nearby sandy beaches, playground and more! Fishing and golfing are nearby. Keep in touch via free Wi-Fi. 

As August is a busy vacation time in Parry Sound we strongly encourage people that are planning on attending the MNO AGA to book their camping sites early. Come see how this KOA "rocks!" 

The distance between the Bobby Orr Community Centre and the KOA Campground is 15.9 kilometres or approximately 20 minutes.

Reserve online at Parry Sound KOA website at

www.koa.com/campgrounds/parry-sound

The following story is reprinted with the generous permission of the Parry Sound North Star, Regional Managing Editor, Jack Ynusen, and writer, John Macle. The story was brought to our attention by Louise Gouding of Moon River.

Was this Parry Sound's first business establishment?

By John Macle
Parry Sound North Star

This is a postscript to my previous column, which described how Florida resident Bill Arthur recently learned that his great-great-grandmother Elizabeth de LaRonde was born near Dillon, in Carafling Township. In the process, Bill answered a question I’d wondered about for 50 years, ever since investigating the LaRonde trading post site at the mouth of the Shebeshekong River. On the chart that Lt. Henry Bayfield, R.N. made circa 1822, following his survey of the 30,000 Islands, the site is indicated with the words "Old Trading Post," suggesting it was already abandoned. Our exploratory dig revealed that the main building was destroyed by fire, and physical evidence coupled with historical and photographic records indicated that it burned no later than the mid-19th century. But when was it built, this snug, hewn-log building in which Elizabeth de LaRonde presumably lived? Birth records provided by Bill note several children born to Charles de LaRonde and his wife, Madeleine, at "Shebeshekong in Lake Huron." The first of these was Michel Antoine, born there on January 1, 1798, which pushes the structure's apparent beginnings back into the 18th century.

But this hanges on the assumption that "Shebeshekong" is the place we know today as "Shebeshekong." The LaRonde family had long been engaged in the Upper Great Lakes fur trade (Charles's grandfather Louis Denis de LaRonde built a trading post on Lake Superior in 1733), and at the time of the American Revolution, Charles himself was trading on Drummond Island, near Sault Ste. Marie. When he found himself on the wrong side of the International Boundary, he, like many other "voyageurs," moved south to Penetangushene in order to remain in Canada. Just when Charles relocated to Georgian Bay is uncertain. Some sources suggest it was not until 1800 or later, when shebeshekong-born Michel Antoine would have been eight or more years old. Just possibly Charles called his Drummond Island post "Shebeshekong," and simply transferred the title to the new location, thus giving the Shebeshekong River its name. But whatever the case, the trading post at Dillon still ranks as probably the first commercial establishment in the Parry Sound vicinity.

Charles de LaRonde died in 1840. In his will he left his second wife (Madeleine had predeceased him) the sum of 125 pounds and his children equal shares of the remainder of his estate. But there was a catch. The money in question existed in the form of an outstanding debt owed to Charles by his brother Denis. Seemingly the estate never collected the debt (Denis predeceased Charles), leading to discontent among the heirs that would echo down the years. There was a lingering suspicion that Charles was worth more in money and property than that outstanding loan. In 1962, Jack Ramsay of Dillon, owner of the property adjoining the trading post site (the building stood on the Crown shoreline reservation) told me that "long ago" two boatloads of people from Penetangushene visited the site, tearing down stone walls and shoveling over the ground in a futile search for money thought to have been "buried in cans." Jack, then in his 60s or 70s, spoke as if he had witnessed this personally, so it must have occurred in the 20th century.

The few artefacts recovered in the 1961 dig were handed over to the Caruliana Department of the Royal Ontario Museum, together with a recommendation that the site be professionally investigated. This was never done, and eventually the collection was returned to Parry Sound and stored in the museum on Tower Hill.

Around the 1970s, the Shebeshekong River shoreline encompassing the trading post location was subdivided into summer resort lots. I revisited the spot five or six years ago and found that a trace of the LaRonde post could still be seen in a corridor of the former front lawn, in the form of a token few rocks outlining the base of the former fireplace.

Editor's Note: The original story appeared February 2, 2011, and may be found on-line at www.cottagecountrynow.ca. In his first article, Mr. Macle featured how he became interested in the LaRonde site and provided more details about the LaRonde family.

Daycare

If you have children that will be needing day-care accommodations during the business days only of the Annual General Assembly (Saturday from 7:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. and Sunday / Monday 8:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M.), please complete and submit the following application on or before Friday, August 7th in order to assure your needs are met. Lynne Picotte and Dale Xilon will be assisting with the organization of the daycare. If you have any questions or concerns, you can contact Lynne at lynneep@metisnation.org or Dale at dalex@metisnation.org.

Please note: Only the parents or caregivers who have signed below will be able to drop off and pick up children at daycare.

NAME OF PARENTS OR CAREGIVER:

NUMBER OF CHILDREN ATTENDING DAYCARE:

NAME AND AGE OF CHILDREN:

Does your child have any allergies/special needs? YES NO

If yes, please provide details:

Please note you must provide the daycares with where you can be located in case of emergency, and an emergency contact number (cell phone number, if you have one).

I fully understand and agree that I will be responsible for the following:

• The actions/behaviour of my children while in daycare
• Provision diapers, wipes, bottles
• Dropping off and picking up my children between 8:30 A.M. & 5:00 P.M. each day.

Parents/Caregiver Print: __________________________ Date: __________________

Parents/Caregiver Signature: __________________________

Falling water levels:

A once-favouring wild rice bed fronting the LaRonde trading post is now mostly bare ground, thanks to falling water levels in Georgian Bay. The latest official figures indicate still lower water to come. The cause might be complex, but the remedy is simple: a new concrete structure at Sarnia–Port Huron to manage outflow from Lake Huron. The lowly beaver figured this out eons ago. We need a Canadian beaver on the international body dealing with management of the Great Lakes.
MNO Housing is the delivery agent for several of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation’s (CMHC) assisted housing programs in the Thunder Bay, Kenora, Algoma and Cochrane Districts as well as the counties of Simcoe, Muskoka, Parry Sound and Nipissing.

• The Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP) assists eligible homeowners who occupy existing substandard housing, to repair or rehabilitate their dwellings to a minimum level of health and safety.
• The Emergency Repair Program (ERP) assists eligible homeowners or occupiers in rural areas to undertake emergency repairs required for the continued safe occupancy of their houses. A significant portion of this program is directed to the Aboriginal people of Canada.
• The Home Adaptations for Seniors’ Independence (HASI) assists low-income seniors over the age of 65 who are in need of adaptations to live in their homes independently.

The MNO Housing Branch has been providing program delivery for CMHC since 1994 and has assisted over 2000 low-income homeowners to rehabilitate their homes. Here are two of their stories:

### STORY 1 | SOUTH RIVER, ONTARIO

**Before:**

- The homeowners had lived in their house for well over 10 years and over the years has found it increasingly difficult to maintain her home. As a last effort she applied for CMHC’s RRAP to bring her home up to CMHC standards. The homeowner, CMHC, the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) and the Housing Branch’s RRAP administrative team worked together to make this story a success.

**After:**

- Within four months the repairs were completed. The homeowner is now confident in her surroundings and is enjoying her newly rehabilitated home.

### STORY 2 | SUNDRIEGE, ONTARIO

**Before:**

- The next story is about a couple in Sundridge, Ontario, who are both living with a disability and the hardships of maintaining their 35 year old house. This has become exhausting to the homeowners due to its deplorable condition. They were without an adequate septic system, their house was being exposed to the elements due to ineffective exterior finishes, their front landing was crumbling, and their window and door frames were rotting.

**After:**

- The Housing Branch would like to thank the homeowners who have allowed us to publish their stories and photographs. Merci & Meegwetch!
Blackstone can be seen Tuesday's on APTN and Friday's on Showcase, check your local listings for time (It's 11:00 P.M. in southern Ontario).

By LINDA LORD

If you're a bit of a night owl, you may have discovered APTN’s new show, “Blackstone”. Despite its First Nations' content, writer Gil Cardinal, is of Métis descent. This award-winning filmmaker wrote the pilot for Blackstone after gathering extensive research on the issues facing many Aboriginal communities.

The greater part of his work has related to an exploration of Aboriginal themes. With numerous credits as a director on Aboriginal topics, Gil believes Blackstone provides an opportunity for Aboriginal communities to intimately understand their own issues.

The Métis connection continues with Ron E Scott, Blackstone's producer-director-writer, who is also Métis and a citizen of the Métis Nation of Alberta. Under the banner of Prairie Dog Film + Television, he has written, produced and directed several diverse film and television productions. Besides Blackstone, his credits include Mixed Blessings, Cashing In, Hank Williams First Nation, Adventures of Artie the Ant (animation), Bubbleman and Consequences. His lifestyle credits include My Green House, Cowboy Country, Coal Green Canada, Young as You Look and Race and the River. His television programs have aired on ACCESS, APTN, CBC, Citytv, CTV, Global, SCN, Vision TV and in several international broadcast markets, including the US, China, Hong Kong, eastern and western Europe and South Africa.

He considers the tragic death of his own cousin the inspiration for Justice, and even the downtown eastside of Vancouver, the Walk Porter Tina House referred to as the tragedy of missing Aboriginal women. Remarks episode, “Missing Women”, is a powerful examination of the tragedy of missing Aboriginal women. Reporter Tina House references reports about the downtown eastside of Vancouver, the Walk for Justice, and even the tragic death of her own cousin.

MÉTIS ARTISTS

Exhibit celebrates Métis culture

On Being Métis: Solo art exhibition by NATHALIE BERTIN
Where: The Art Space, 2-58 Main St. East, Huntsville, ON
When: June 3 to July 3, 2011

The exhibition is a personal celebration of Métis culture past and present. The show brings together contemporary artworks from Nathalie Bertin's various series, presented in vignette format throughout the gallery. From images of traditional trades to political statements, tied together by designs inspired by the art of the “Flower Beadwork People”, the exhibit honours the Métis tradition, recognizes the courage of early Canadian settlers, and acknowledges the debt we owe to our First Peoples.

For more information visit: www.nathaliebertin.com.

POETRY

B’en Proud to be Un Métis

by Raymond D. Tremblay

I wasn’t born d’en les plaines de l’Est
But I’m b’en proud to be un Métis.
I never owned or rode un wild mustang
But I’m b’en proud to be un Métis.
I never fired une carabine 30-30 Winchester
But I’m b’en proud to be un Métis.
I never hunted le Roi de l’Est: the buffalo
But I’m b’en proud to be un Métis.
I never ate du pemmican frais
But I’m b’en proud to be un Métis.
J’ai souvent hunté la partridge avec mon père
Et I’m b’en proud to be un Métis.
J’ai aussi souvent caché des hares avec lui
Et I’m b’en proud to be un Métis.
La pêche, j’en ai fait lots of time
Et I’m b’en proud to be un Métis.
Cher nous, nous avions beaucoup de parties
Et I’m b’en proud to be un Métis.
Mes parents travaillaient dur dans leurs vies
Et I’m b’en proud to be un Métis.
Nous sommes une famille très proche
Et I’m b’en proud to be un Métis.
Yes, I’m b’en fier de mes Métis ancestors.
Grâce à eux, I’m b’en proud to be un Métis.

POETRY

Missing Women coverage earns APTN Human Rights Award

A boriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN) Wins Amnesty International Canada Human Rights Award

The Amnesty International Canada Media Awards recognize the efforts of journalists to help Canadians become aware of human rights issues within the mission of Amnesty International and for their vital importance in motivating the public to act and help force governments and opposition groups to change. The award celebrates journalistic accomplishments in raising public awareness of human rights violations. The APTN Investigates episode, “Missing Women”, is a powerful examination of the tragedy of missing Aboriginal women. Re- porter Tina House referred to reports about the downtown eastside of Vancouver, the Walk for Justice, and even the tragic death of her own cousin.

MEDIA

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Andrea Menard in APTN’s Blackstone.
Caught in the Web

You may think you are playing an honest game online but you may be playing against a cybernomad. These people use software tracking programs that memorize your style and betting patterns and calculate your odds of winning. This software then plays your cards for you to maximize your winnings. They also use programs that will record and analyze you and your opponents playing styles and hand history then give an analysis, thus giving them an advantage over honest players. Table scanner programs are also used to search and locate the easiest tables to play at to maximize winnings. Last, there are buddy list programs that allow you to add the weak poker players you come across then alert them whenever they sit down at a table to play.

Cybernomads

Cybernomads are individuals who work alone, often with an education in computers, specializing in software and programming. Their purpose is to steal, using computers, specializing in software and programming. Their purpose is to steal, using computers, specializing in software and programming. Their purpose is to steal, using computers, specializing in software and programming. Their purpose is to steal, using computers, specializing in software and programming.

Dot.Cons

Dot.cons criminals are either “cybernomads” or “insiders”, staff members of the online casinos who come together to work on a specific project. These people commit fraud and theft by targeting online gaming websites which allow them access to all of the website’s users’ personal information. They install backdoor programs into the websites and when unsuspecting users download the program that allows them to play on the website, the backdoor program gets downloaded onto the Dot. Con’s computer which then allows the Dot. Con to steal log-in and personal information.

Organized Crime

Members of online crime organizations are most commonly known for running cyber-extortion rings, phishing scams, and money laundering. Cyberextortion is perpetrated by members of the crime organization who hack into a gaming website, slow it down or completely shut it down. Then they demand that large sums of money be wired to offshore bank accounts to stop the attacks. If the owners refuse to pay, the attackers continue to shut down the website until the ransom is paid.

Phishing

Phishing scams work by creating identical websites to legitimate gaming websites but members of the online crime organization control and send out fraudulent emails to the unsuspecting users stating that if they click on the link and sign in, they could win a large bonus. Once the attackers have access to the user names and passwords, they can take over your account and steal your personal and financial information.

What is the solution?

It is impossible to stop all cyber crime. There are cybernomads working on their computers, and they are difficult to catch. But there are some steps you can take to protect yourself:

1. Be aware of the risks. You can always find something interesting online, but you must be aware of the financial risk.
2. Use a secure network. Make sure you are not using a public network, as this can allow anyone to access your information.
3. Use strong passwords. Make sure your passwords are strong and unique, and do not use the same password for multiple accounts.
4. Be cautious when clicking on links. Phishing scams often include links that will download malware onto your device.
5. Be careful with financial transactions. Make sure you are using a secure website and that you are not giving out any sensitive information.

In conclusion, cybercrime is a serious issue, but there are steps you can take to protect yourself. Be aware of the risks, use a secure network, use strong passwords, be cautious when clicking on links, and be careful with financial transactions. By taking these steps, you can reduce your risk of becoming a victim of cybercrime.

RENFREW | VIOLENCE AND HEALING

A Healing Plan

Workshop develops healing plan for people exposed to violence

By Shannon Davis

Community Wellness Coordinator

On February 11, 2011, the Métis Nation of Ontario Health and Wellness Branch in Renfrew held a workshop on the prevention of violence and on the healing process. Eleven people participated in the workshop.

A medicine wheel was used to generate answers on how violence impacts individuals, families, and society as a whole. Participants discussed the emotional, physical, spiritual, and mental consequences of violence on people. The participants shared their thoughts on what their community needs to help in the prevention of violence.

The group made the following recommendations:

1. Build an emergency safety house in Renfrew, as the majority of the shelters are 45 minutes to 1 hour away;
2. Educate people on the resources available to the public that assist in the prevention of violence;
3. Hold weekly sharing circles for women and a separate one for men to help in alleviating stress;
4. Speak with local officials to facilitate the offering of anger management courses in Renfrew;
5. Speak to parents about the dangers of exposing their children to violence in the media and on video games;
6. Explain the importance of age-appropriate games, movies, and television shows to parents;
7. Develop a community safety plan so individuals have guidelines they can follow to keep themselves safe and offer support to loved ones who are experiencing violence.

The participants also developed a healing plan for people that have been exposed to violence. The healing plan includes a weekly sharing circle, individual and family counseling and substance abuse counseling if needed. To maintain a positive outlook the healing plan also suggests healthy eating, participating in positive social relationships and taking part in positive leisure activities.

The workshop was a success and organizers and participants would like to thank Monica Orl for making her green chili dish.

OTTAWA | CANCER PREVENTION

Staff receives cancer prevention training

By Melissa Pigeau

Community Wellness Coordinator

On March 9, some of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Health and Wellness staff from the Ottawa, Renfrew and Bancroft offices participated in a one day “train-the-trainer” workshop on colorectal cancer prevention. The workshop was presented by Cancer Care Ontario in cooperation with the MNO Jo MacQuarrie provided opening and closing prayers.

The goal of the training was to provide staff with information and resources on colorectal cancer prevention and screening methods to bring back to their communities. The training was provided by Dr. Maureen Donohue. She had an excellent way with words and the presentation did not come across as too clinical.
The Benefits of Breakfast

by Melissa Pigeau
Community Wellness Coordinator
OTTAWA

“I’m on a diet.” “I don’t have time.” “I’m just not hungry in the morning.” How many times have you told yourself this? Eating a well-balanced, healthy breakfast lays the foundation for the busy day that is ahead for most of us.

No more, “I’m on a diet” excuse! Eating breakfast every morning assists in maintaining a healthy weight. Those who skip breakfast are prone to making less nutritious and unhealthy convenience food choices. Furthermore, many of us do not consume essential nutrients, such as vitamins and minerals needed daily.

“I don’t have time,” is another excuse people who don’t eat breakfast use. If you are feeling rushed in the morning try healthy choices like a bowl of cereal, oatmeal or a hard-boiled egg, all take less than five minutes to prepare. Some people just aren’t hungry when they wake up in the morning. To sneak in some essential vitamins, try a glass of 100% fruit juice, a smoothie or a glass of vegetable cocktail when you first wake up then later on in the morning have a piece of whole wheat toast or a boiled egg.

Here is a quick and easy breakfast option that can be made ahead of time and stored in containers that are great to grab and go when you are in a hurry.

TROPICAL SUNRISE GRANOLA

- 1/3 cup honey
- 1/3 cup light brown sugar
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- 4 cups old-fashioned rolled oats
- 1/3 cup wheat germ
- 1/2 cup sweetened coconut
- 1/2 cup each of dried mango, dried pineapple, and toasted macadamia nuts, chopped

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat the oven to 300º. Line two cookie sheets with aluminum foil.
2. In a large bowl, combine the honey, brown sugar, butter, and salt. Add the oats and wheat germ, then, stir the mixture until it is evenly blended.
3. Spread the granola on the prepared cookie sheets and bake for 20 minutes, stirring once halfway through to keep it from burning and encourage even baking.
4. Remove the pans from the oven and stir the granola again. Add the coconut, and then return the pans to the oven to bake 10 minutes more. Note: Keep an eye on the granola during this period and stir it occasionally so that it doesn’t burn.
5. Remove the granola from the oven and stir it one last time. Allow it to cool completely in the pans, about 15 minutes. When it has cooled, stir in the dried mango, the dried pineapple, and the toasted macadamia nuts, then, transfer the granola to an airtight container. The granola can be stored for up to four weeks. Makes about 7 cups.

by David Clark
Community Wellness Worker
OWEN SOUND

It started innocently enough, a quick chat with a community agency about doing a joint diabetes workshop. As we chatted, Judy (Osteoporosis Canada) suggested we involve Lynda of the National Aboriginal Diabetes Association (NADA). The Métis Nation of Ontario sent representatives from several MNO programs, including Community Wellness, Long Term Care, Aging at Home and Chronic Disease Surveillance.

There were many learning opportunities during the two day conference held at the Delta Hotel and the Winnipeg Convention Centre. Participants had the opportunity to take part in workshops that included: Healthy Food Preparation, Diabetes in Pregnancy, Promoting Healthy Lifestyles to Aboriginal Children and Families, Trends in Diabetes and many more. In true NADA style, attendees were encouraged to take part in the nutrition breaks and to engage in “Brain Dance” or “Cool Stretching” during an energy blast with Jennifer “Dance” or “Cool Stretching” during an energy blast with Jennifer.

The MNO is a special group of people who have a vested interest in diabetes. Exhibitors included the Diabetes Initiative (SOADI), Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB), Canadian Diabetes Association, Grey Bruce Health Services, South West Self Management, MNO, and Osteoporosis Canada/Ontario Osteoporosis Strategy.

The MNO Healing and Wellness Branch partnered with other agencies in an all-day diabetes awareness event at the Heritage Place Mall in Owen Sound.

As the moment we opened the doors, we had a steady stream of visitors, with over two hour slow downs around lunch and dinner. Screening was provided with about 40 people taking advantage, and almost 30 people pre-booked and attended the foot clinic.

We planned the event, it drove home the necessity for a holistic approach to health in general, but specifically regarding diabetes. Exhibitors included Southern Ontario Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative (WOADD), Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB), Canadian Diabetes Association, Grey Bruce Health Services, South West Self Management, MNO, and Osteoporosis Canada/Ontario Osteoporosis Strategy. The BIG approach to this function, we believe, made it more inviting for people to consider making the trip out to visit the event, also, invitations by attending agencies to each other for more partnering opportunities were discussed, with several new connections made. The presentation also generated attendance by staff from other agencies who were not a part of the event, achieving more networking. A total of 14 staff and volunteers hosted the information displays.

Go BIG! Get BIG results!
MNO Healing and Wellness Branch staff in Toronto hosts a drum-making workshop for local Métis

Spring 2011

A New Year, a New You!

The staff at head office started the new year off with one goal in mind: “A New Year, A New You”- Over-indulgence and socializing, coincided with insufficient exercise throughout the Christmas season, so workers formed a healthy living/weight loss group that meets every Tuesday at lunch hour. With the support of others, their journey to healthy living is a path that does not need to be travelled alone.

On Tuesdays personnel come one by one to the community office where they begin by weighing in, and every three weeks thereafter their body measurements are taken. These measurements are then charted using the website www.sparkpeople.com, which is a free healthy lifestyle website that tracks measurements and creates individualized meal and fitness plans.

During the lunch meetings, staff members discuss their successes and failures, the challenges they encountered, and share ideas for the next session. Using the “W” in the community office, workers participate in physical activity challenges on their lunch hours. They may choose to do a personalized workout, or play against each other in weekly challenges with the “Biggest Loser” game.

With summer fast approaching, the group will take full advantage of the office’s proximity to the Bayward Market and Parliament Hill to increase cardio-vascular exercise. These walking groups, highlighted with various exciting competitions, will stimulate personal motivation.
Metis on Ice

By Brian Cockburn
NORTH BAY

The start of 2011 saw the Métis Nation of Ontario program offices in a shamble, as the Education and Training section brushtook a fresh coat of paint—the first since they opened the doors at this location in 1998. Many cabinets, files, desks and computers found new locations, and not to be outdone, Long Term Care, Healthy Babes, and Community Wellness also cleaned up old files or put a new look to their offices and the Greenwood Room.

Métis on Ice was a storm. February 19th the community gathered for a day of ice fishing, snowshoeing, and broom ball followed by an evening with dinner, music, cards, and a presentation on the North Bay Métis Council web page.

The morning started with a 70 km wind blowing so hard that the city had to close the road to our location for ice fishing. President Walter Deering was the first to drive around the barrier and by 9:30 A.M. he had the Métis flag flying out on Lake Nipissing. Debbie Cronk arrived with the muffins. Before you knew it 20 more Métis drove around the wooden horses in front of the railway tracks. Another Métis flag was soon flying on the back of one of the trucks, to let our members know we were still ice fishing.

As the morning drifted on, I watched a lot of the local vehicle traffic being turned around at the city’s “Road is Closed” sign, while our flag proudly flew. One car that did stop was the local TV crew who had come to see the Métis blockade at the railway tracks along the water front.

Our blockade continued in good fun with a baker’s dozen going out on the ice, even in the -30 wind-chill and blowing snow; many thanks to volunteers Gerry Greenwood, Pierre Malette and Marc Laurin who had brought their snow machines, ice augers, and wind barriers, and Jason Thibert for the first coffees. Iase Malette of Long Term Care made a hot chilli lunch for the gang that her grandson Patrick Landry “waitered” out onto the lake on a four-wheeler.

By 5:00 P.M. the fishermen were ready to join the events being put on by the Healing and Wellness Branch at Le Club Les Bon Amis, 327 Dudley St. in North Bay. The musicians, Tim and Larry Ellery, entertained the growing crowd as Amanda Desbiens and Stacey Briel chopped the vegetables and Jason Jamieson stirred the moose stew. An introduction to the new website and a great dinner were soon served—a very enjoyable evening. The North Bay Métis Council announced it was election year, with the date being early June, 2011. Members were invited to run for the many positions on council.

If you would like to join in one of our family days there will be a large one planned by the Healing and Wellness Branch for July at the North Bay waterfront.

VOLUNTEERS

MNO LTC program playing an important role in Timmins Métis Community

By Judith Williams
AH/HC Coordinator

Speaking of warming up, January was “hot” with new energy. LTC Coordinator Kathleen Tardi and I brainstormed our programs together as much as possible and worked with our community partners.

The first weeks of January, Healthy Babies Healthy Children (HBHC) attended committee meetings to review program information with other agencies planning 2011 events and welcoming new members to the Kenora Family Coalition (KFC) to which I have been a contributor. Discussion and involvement with KFC has enabled me to participate in future events and programs, as well as training seminars held in the Kenora area.

New Year’s resolutions were the focus. Healthy Eating, Smoking Cessation (RCC), Healthy Environment for Children, Breastfeeding, and Accreditation maternity ward for Lake of the Woods District Hospital, Community Engagement Committee, and the Kenora-Rainy River Communities Early Development Instrument Committee (EDIC).

The Kenora Healing and Wellness Branch hosted the first quarterly diabetic clinic day, facilitating with the Kenora Area Health Access Centre (KAHAC). Diabetics were screened, and consultations arranged for clients who expressed a desire for further direction in the care of their medical concerns associated with diabetes. Extending diabetic education and services, assessments of clients with “skin breakdown”, and a foot care clinic were held February 28th, 2011. These specific clinics will repeat throughout the year. KAHAC has expressed their commitment and involvement with the MNO Healing and Wellness Branch. We also had unexpected media coverage by the Kenora Daily Miner and News.

Collaborating with other HBHC the Northwestern Health Unit and local dentists assisted in the 2011 Circle of Friends Day Care presentation to promote dental care.

The MNO Healing and Wellness Branch’s LTC Program in Timmins was very busy during the winter months with several community service events.

On February 24, the LTC program and the Youth Coordinator hosted a presentation by Mary Fortier. Mary is a survivor of the residential school system. She told her story of coping with her painful memories throughout her youth and adulthood. “It was amazing with Mary’s quiet courage,” stated Shirley Potvin, a member of the Timmins Métis Council, “while it was heartbreaking to hear her story, it is important for all of us that she tells it.”

On March 3, twenty participants attended a workshop on Alzheimer’s disease organized by the LTC. The workshop was provided by Graham Lee and included a movie about the impact of Alzheimer’s disease. Following the workshop, council member Regina Rosignol said, “It is a hard subject, but I really appreciated what Graham had to say and I think it helped us all understand Alzheimer’s disease.”

The LTC held an appreciation luncheon for volunteers on March 17 at a local restaurant. Each volunteer received a certificate acknowledging their dedicated service. Some volunteers had been supporting MNO Healing and Wellness programs for as long as 17 years. “Our program wouldn’t be possible without our dedicated volunteers,” said LTC Coordinator Louise Cloutier. “We are so grateful for everything they do to make our program a success.”


**THUNDER BAY | NEW HEALING AND WELLNESS STAFF**

**New faces for T-Bay Healing and Wellness**

By Kerrie New
CAP-C Coordinator THUNDER BAY

Thunder Bay Healing and Wellness Branch has some fresh faces this year: Cher-ity Calder as Healthy Babies Healthy Children Co-ordinator, Kerrie New as Community Action Program for Children Co-ordinator, and Lisa Hyamander as Pre-poor Natal Nutrition Co-ordinator. They have jumped right into the community facilitating some wonderful family events and offering support.

Over 200 participants celebrated a community Christmas party while feasting and listening to the delightful music of the Kam Piddle. It ended with a fun-filled day at Centennial Park with a horse drawn sleigh ride, snowshoeing, sledding and a hot lunch. Mothers celebrated with some henna, belly casting, sling making and baby quilts.

Our calendar is jam-packed for the spring so we look forward to continuing the positive adventure as part of the Thunder Bay Healing and Wellness Branch team.

CONTACT: 226 May St. S., Thunder Bay, ON Tel: (807) 624-5012

![Staff members of the MNO Healing and Wellness Branch participate in Life Skills Training held in Toronto on Feb. 22-23, 2011.](Image 42x506 to 458x721)

**LIFE SKILLS**

**SUMMIT TO END VIOLENCE**

**Protecting our children from violence**

By Shelley Gonneville
Manager, Child and Family Initiatives OTTAWA

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO), along with the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres, the Ontario Native Women’s Associations and independent First Nations, organized this year’s “Summit to End Violence Against Aboriginal Women” on February 28 to March 2 in Toronto. The Summit was sponsored by the Ministry of Child and Youth Services. Shelley Gonneville, the MNO Healing and Wellness Branch Manager and Family Initiatives rep-represented the MNO on the Sum-mit steering committee.

The Summit theme was “Pro-ecting our Children from Vio-

ence: Our Sacred Responsibil-
ity”, which focused attention on

children and youth by delivering powerful messages and stories about those who lived—or con-tinue to live—with the long-last-

ing effects of family violence. Speakers, including many youths, shared stories of re-

silience and how their culture played a significant part in their healing processes. The MNO was well represented at the confer-

cence and MNO speakers in-

cluded MNO Chief Operating Of-

ficer, Doug Wilson, MNO youth, Mitch Case and Senator Roland St. Germain who participated in opening and closing prayers. MNO Healing and Wellness Branch Managers, Lisa Pigeau and Shelley Gonneville, were among the facilitators of break-out sessions that provided fur-ther direction on how to move the issue of violence against Abo-

ginal women forward.
"Round the campfire"
by Verna Porter

As I listen to Métis citizens speak at round table discussions, around a camp fire, or at moc- casin camp training, the same story seems to surface. Some found they had "mixed blood"—that they were Métis, people—but at a later age. Some were fortunate enough to grow up knowing their heritage and prac- tising their beliefs, a way of life, maybe a little different than their school peers. I was one who found out in my late 30's that there was "mixed blood" in my family tree. It takes a lot of work paper, asking questions, digging and getting government papers in order, but the end result is very satisfying to know where you came from and the history that surrounds those findings. I am from up north, and while moose hunting with my husband years back, I sat on my watch and was thinking of ancestors and what it would have been like to sit and wait for your moose to ap- pear (if you were lucky enough). As these thoughts went through my head I wrote a little song. I sang it for some students during one of our Aboriginal Days and felt maybe I should share it with you as well.

Verna Porter is the Senator of the Moon River Métis Council.

Proud To Be Métis

This is a song about me and you How I found out I was Métis too It was a secret in most our families Pride and shame, but who’s to blame

My great-grandfather James Miller Was kind and brave A fortress to the world’s storms A beacon to the world’s hopeless

He felt perhaps that those who were born Métis... felt maybe I should share it with one of our Aboriginal Days and sung it for some students during my head I wrote a little song. I

Pear (if you were lucky enough). and wait for your moose to ap-

and ever the food was. In the past 50 years, that has changed drastically. Our people are no- longer active in order to survive. New technology such as cars, even shopping for food doesn’t len 60 years, that has changed drastically. Our people are no longer active in order to survive. New technology such as cars, even shopping for food doesn’t need more time and energy to exist in a healthy way.

Good food makes healthy bodies

By Lisa Scott

Community Wellness Coordinator KENORA

The Métis Nation of Ontario Healing and Wellness Branch launched in 2011 with a di- abetes clinic at the Kenoza Métis Centre on January 24th.

“Our goal as a health branch is to get out there and provide community workshops with learning or educational aspects to them,” said Long-term Care Coordinator Kathleen Tardi. “We’re targeting the community at large, not just Métis people.”

Judith Williams, the branch’s Aboriginal Healthy Babies Healthy Children Coordinator helps with family planning needs as well as with such parenting elements-as- 

terthing, breastfeeding, signs and symptoms of illness, and general maternal health.

Philuna Sky, the branch’s diabetes nurse educator, works with Wassy Gergh Stjah Nahin Dahn We Igamuj Kenoza Area Health Ac- cess Centre. Her team travels to 15 regional First Nations com- munities to provide services in- cluding blood sugar and healthy lifestyle management, nutrition and even mental health, within a holistic framework.

“Traditionally and historically, our people were very active. They needed to be physically ac- tive in order to survive. They are what was available from the land and they moved around a lot ac- cording to the seasons—where- ever the food was. In the past 50 or 60 years, that has changed drastically. Our people are no longer active in order to survive. New technology such as cars, even shopping for food doesn’t need more time and energy to exist in a healthy way.

Our services are holistic-based,” she said. “We have a bal- ance of traditional services and mental health services to help our clients to be able to take care of themselves whole heartedly.”
Basic Jigging

Event brings together school community through laughter, physical fitness, socializing and culture

By Tracey Dale
Community Wellness Coordinator & Tammy Hoover
Aboriginal Healthy Babies/Children Program Coordinator

On February 9th, 2011, the children from Bird’s Creek Primary School in Bancroft were invited to share Métis traditions and culture. It combines the intrinsically linked footwork of Na’tive dancing with the instruments and form of European music.

Throughout the day 116 students participated in a fun inter-active learning experience that showcased Métis culture and community cohesiveness. Each class was brought together to learn four individual jigging steps that when combined with fiddle music, completed a full dance. By the end of each class the children were keen on performing with their peers and teachers. This event brought together the school community through laughter, physical fitness, socializing and culture. It was an honour to be invited to share Métis traditions with the children of our community.

To provide students with a glimpse of the voyageur world, teams participated in outdoor games mimicking those of earlier days but with a contemporary twist. Students learned that effective teamwork takes a great deal of hard work and compromise. Older students welcomed a leadership role by setting a good example and promoting morale and communication. “Snowshoeing”, “Hike through the Woods” and “Dog Sled Race” were just a few of the games. I helped with dog sled race, a timed event in which all team members worked together to manoeuvre voyageur like equipment (nobotugga, rope, snowshoes, bags, wood) through the course. The lighter kids were able to walk on the top layer of the snow but for the rest of us, breaking through the snow proved an exhausting task.

Voyageur inspired games were followed by a pot luck lunch with many parents in attendance and clothes to share. The Healing and Wellness Branch offered a display of beading and other Métis symbols for the school to admire. Following lunch, students made their own dot painting masterpiece by dipping the end of a paintbrush into paint and pressing it onto canvas. The end result was the effect of hundreds of raised dots that simulated floral beadwork.

Just like the real clothing that voyageurs wore, students sported their best voyageur costume. Two primary and two junior students were selected as the “voyageurs of the year”. Sunset Country Métis Healing and Wellness staff presented each of them with a distinctive red Métis sash. To complete the day, teams were judged on tunes and flags combined with points from the voyageur games. First, second and third place received voyageur ribbons and Métis Nation of Ontario Healing and Wellness water bottles.

We want to thank the students and staff of Our Lady of the Way School for their invitation to be part of Voyageur Day and their ambition as modern voyageurs to preserve our cultural heritage.

Charmaine Langlais is the MNO’s Community Wellness Worker in Fort Frances.

By Charmaine Langlais
Community Wellness Coordinator

Students of Our Lady of the Way School in Stratton participated in Voyageur Day on March 4, 2011, when a celebration of Aborignial, French and Métis heritage was in full swing. The student body divided into six teams and fulfilled the task of creating a team name, a tune and a flag that proudly decorated the gymnasium walls. Together “The Mighty Métis” team chanted:

“We’re tough, we’re buff
We’re the mighty Métis!
The mighty Métis!
We’re buff ‘n buff.
We bust ‘n we trap
We honour our parents past
We’re the mighty Métis!
The mighty Métis!
Ya! Ya! Ya!
The MIGHTY Métis!”

To provide students with a glimpse of the voyageur world, teams participated in outdoor games mimicking those of earlier days but with a contemporary twist. Students learned that effective teamwork takes a great deal of hard work and compromise. Older students welcomed a leadership role by setting a good example and promoting morale and communication. “Snowshoeing”, “Hike through the Woods” and “Dog Sled Race” were just a few of the games. I helped with dog sled race, a timed event in which all team members worked together to manoeuvre voyageur like equipment (nobotugga, rope, snowshoes, bags, wood) through the course. The lighter kids were able to walk on the top layer of the snow but for the rest of us, breaking through the snow proved an exhausting task.

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Charmaine Langlais is the MNO’s Community Wellness Worker in Fort Frances.

By Amanda Desbiens
Aboriginal Healthy Babies/Children Program Coordinator

Normally I’m not a winter fan; I don’t like to be outside in the cold or dressed up in all that winter gear that makes it hard to move. I do have to admit that I love snowshoeing! The best part for me is taking a hike in the snowshoes down some trail when the sun is blaring through the trees. I feel so connected with Mother Nature and a higher power when I’m out in the middle of the forest walking around breathing in the cold air through my lungs and listening to the birds chirp and the wind slowly blow the snow off the trees.

As the AHBBC program coordinator in North Bay I get the privilege of doing some physical activity workshops that I normally save for the winter so I can take participants out snowshoeing. This year we borrowed snowshoes from the MNO Timmins Council and went to École publique Jeunesse-Active in Sturgeon Falls for their winter carnival.

Our Community Wellness Coordinator, Stacey Rivet, and our second year Social Service Worker program student, Debbie Cronk from Canadore College, assisted with snowshoe soccer for all the students in the school on February 10, 2011. We played boys against girls in every grade and it was a blast!

We didn’t think the snowshoes would fit the kindergarteners but they were anxious to get them on, so we gave it a go. They put those snowshoes on and walked around like champs. They did an amazing job, although we were really tired from running after them putting their snowshoes back on and picking them up when they fell in the snow. It was an awesome morning with a great bunch of kids!
**COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

**Moccasin Camp**

The MNO’s Education and Training branch holds a Moccasin Camp a meaningful and useful experience for Métis citizens

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) established an award for Métis students attending Seneca College. The award, called the “Moccasin Award,” is part of the ongoing work that MNO is doing to provide financial assistance to Métis students. The award is available to full-time students who are enrolled in any program at Seneca College and who have demonstrated financial need. The award is intended to encourage Métis students to pursue their education and to help them develop the skills and expertise necessary for today’s careers.

The MNO established the Moccasin Award in partnership with Seneca College, recognizing the importance of Métis education and the need to support Métis students in their pursuit of higher education. The award is one of several initiatives that the MNO has undertaken to support Métis education and to help Métis students succeed in their studies.

The award is open to full-time students who are enrolled in any program at Seneca College and who have demonstrated financial need. The award is available to students who have been accepted into a program at Seneca College and who have met the eligibility criteria.

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Ready-to-Work first graduates

On December 3, 2010, students from Sault Ste. Marie in the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Ready-to-Work (RTW) program were in the mood to celebrate. Students from Sault Ste. Marie and Midland in the same program on December 17. On each of these days, students held graduation parties to recognize their achievements in completing the program.

The Ready-to-Work program is a partnership between the MNO and the Ontario Tourism Education Corporation (OTEC). Its purpose is to provide tourism and hospitality training for Aboriginal people. Graduates receive essential skills development within "eminent" Tourism Essentials (TPE), Service Excellence, and Canadian Workplace Essentials (CWE) training to help them successfully transition into the tourism and hospitality workforce. Participants also received the core industry certifications needed to get a job in tourism and begin working toward their eminent National Tourism Certified Professional (TCP) designation in any of the 21 recognized tourism occupations.

"Ready-to-Work really built up my confidence," explained RTW graduate Sarah Hassan. "I feel very prepared and excited to launch my new career." At least 28 individuals graduated from the RTW program in December, 2010. These recent graduates are part of over 60 people who have successfully completed the program, most of whom are already employed in the tourism and hospitality industry.

Canada's Ministers of Education urged to endorse a Métis-specific forum on Education and Training

by Chris Paci

A meeting with National Aboriginal leaders and Canada's provincial and territorial Ministers of Education (CMEC) on February 24th, Métis National Council Minister of Education, Robert Doucette, called for Métis-specific solutions to educational challenges.

He explained education funding should be responsive to the specific needs of Métis people and with 52% of the Métis population under the age of 25, it is time for Canada's governments to take action to ensure Métis don't continue to fall through the cracks. Doucette informed CMEC that the Métis National Council recently received support from the Honourable John Duncan, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Minister responsible for MNO, to meet with provincial leaders, Indigenous Canadians, and to engage in discussions.

Non-Aboriginal and Métis students—First Nations, Inuit and Métis—attend post-secondary education at a rate of 18% versus 7%. Doucette says our economy stands to make great gains if we can increase those numbers.

"Minister Duncan is aware of our issues, and now we all need to sit down at the table to ensure we're able to come up with solutions to educate our Métis population youth and how it engages the education system—18% versus 7%.

Doucette says our economy stands to make great gains if we can increase those numbers. "Minister Duncan is aware of our issues, and now we all need to sit down at the table to ensure we’re able to come up with solutions to educate our Métis population youth and how it engages the education system—18% versus 7%.

Doucette explains that the country will prosper when Métis people prosper and I’m confident that message will be resonated loud and clear by the First Ministers to Minister Duncan.

A Métis-specific forum on education will address the need to revamp the K-12 system, examine ways of improving access to post-secondary education and look at providing support for adult learners among other things. Doucette says all Métis Nation governments need to be at the table including the Métis Nation of Ontario, Manitoba Métis Federation, Métis Nation - Saskatchewan, Métis Nation of Alberta and the Métis Nation British Columbia.

Métis student receives honour

Melanie Smits is a self-identifying Métis woman who has worked for the Métis Nation of Ontario as a summer student and who attended the 2010 MNO Annual General Assembly as part of the youth contingent. She recently received the Sword of Loyola, the most prestigious award offered by the University of Sudbury. Melanie is the first Métis student to receive this honour.

A bilingual honour student, she is currently completing a degree with double specializations in Native Studies and Religious Studies—Religious Studies in French and Native Studies in English.

In addition to her academic studies, Ms. Smits is the Aboriginal representative on the board of the Association des étudiants francophones (AEF); a representative of the Métis students on the Board of the Indigenous Students Circle; a member of the Undergraduate Program Review Team for the Department of Native Studies and a member of the Department of Religious Studies search committee.

Off campus, Melanie is a volunteer coordinator of the Native Education Program, a Native volunteer program at the University of Sudbury.

A bilingual honour student, she is currently completing a degree with double specializations in Native Studies and Religious Studies—Religious Studies in French and Native Studies in English.
The week of December 6-10, 2010, was a big one for the students enrolled in the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Building Systems Technical Advisor Internship Program (BSTAIP).

The BSTAIP students participated in a one-week seminar led by Gail Lawlor, the President of Energy Matters. Gail is a leading consultant in making homes more energy efficient. Based in Thunder Bay, the purpose of BSTAIP is to develop a Métis workforce of highly skilled building inspection and energy conservation advisors, who are knowledgeable on current housing trends, and who are equipped to enter the labor market.

Gail’s training was part of the BSTAIP Building Science week, which focused on the concept of “Housing as a System.” Topics covered during the week included air leakage, moisture control, heat flow, mechanical systems, air and ventilation sizing, thermal comfort, and indoor air quality. Gail took a practical approach to teaching with assignments that required research and class presentations. It was very informative and interactive,” commented BSTAIP intern Peter Ducharme. “We all learned a great deal from Gail that will be very useful to us when we enter the labor market.

The new class started in early April, 2011. The BSTAIP interns will complete their first year of the program in mid-2011.

Many challenges met by first-year BSTAIP Interns

by Peter X. Ducharme

The MNO Building Systems Technical Advisor Internship Program (BSTAIP) pilot project is a partnership between the Métis Nation of Ontario, the Métis Nation of Ontario Education and Training (MNENET) Branch, the Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services (OAHS), the Ontario Power Authority (OPA), Confederation College and the Government of Canada’s Aboriginal Skills and Training Strategic Investment Program (ASTSIP) and runs out of the MNO Housing Investments Inc. Branch located in Thunder Bay, Ontario. It is a one-year internship with in-class learning and on-site training with applied learning in shops, labs and the workplace.

Since our last report in November, 2010, the interns have completed the first academic year for the BSTAIP with great success. This winter, the interns attended several workshops and seminars, and finished several accredited courses.

Patrick Laroche, Senior Technical Officer for the CMIC, was invited to the BSTAIP class to discuss the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP), which is a self-study program. Patrick gave a PowerPoint presentation followed by a question and answer period where students had an opportunity to ask questions pertinent to their own experiences in the inspection field.

Jean McIsaac-Wiitala, Executive Director of MNO Housing Investments Inc., and Terry Desaulniers, CET, Senior Technical Advisor and BSTAIP Coordinator, as part of “Achieve Global”, gave the student on-line assignments and concluded the course with a field trip to inspect the Mechanical department of the building. Terry Desaulniers, BSTAIP Coordinator, gave the interns a 19-lesson, self-study program.

One of the big highlights this year was the Building Science Class. Gail Lawlor, President of Energy Matters, was invited into the weeklong insight into the science behind “Housing as a System.” Gail touched base on several topics throughout the week. It was a participatory seminar as Gail gave out assignments for every student to research and present in front of the class. The week ended with a field trip to inspect an HRV system in one of MNO’s Housing Branch rentals.

The second highlight for the BSTAIP interns was attending the Canadian Aboriginal Festival at the Copps Coliseum in Hamilton, ON. At the trade show, the interns set-up a display table to promote the Building Systems Technical Advisor Internship Program and also attended the cultural events of the festival.

Finally, Dale Kauzlarick, from Confederation College, instructed the interns on contracts, laws and ethics. Dale taught the basics of laws and legalities as they pertain to the construction field.

The new class started in early April, 2011. The BSTAIP interns have completed their first year. During this time, both the interns and BSTAIP Coordinators met the many challenges.

Housing expert provides BSTAIP training

Building Systems Technical Advisor Internship Program (BSTAIP) Interns at the Canadian Aboriginal Festival in Hamilton.
MNO promotes Métis Education agenda at Post-secondary Gathering

On March 5-6, 2011, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities organized the first Aboriginal Post-secondary Education Gathering in Toronto. The event brought together over 300 education leaders, faculty, practitioners, administrators, learners, elders, senators, and youth to share the common goals of improving the educational achievements of Aboriginal people, and closing the educational attainment gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal learners in Ontario, and to “learn from each other” - the theme of the gathering.

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) President, Gary Lipinski, was one of the dignitaries who provided opening remarks and he was also a member of a panel that discussed the theme. In his comments, President Lipinski recalled some of the challenges and obstacles Aboriginal students have that he had observed while teaching, and also the challenges he had faced as a university student. “Compared to other Ontarians, Métis people still face considerable socio-economic challenges including lower income and education rates,” explained President Lipinski, “but our population is young and growing and we are working to ensure that our young people complete high school and post-secondary studies.”

The gathering provided the MNO the opportunity to showcase the considerable success of its education and training programs:

- MNO Director of Education and Training, Jennifer St. Germain, explained how MNO programs prepare Aboriginal students for the labour market and a successful transition into post-secondary education.
- Robert Karlkins, Manager of the MNO Aboriginal Apprenticeship Centre at Sault College, presented figures that assist Aboriginal learners transition into the labour force.
- MNO Post-secondary Analyst, Benny Michaud, and MNO youth, Ginny Gonneau, discussed the success of theIS-26 to start the process of developing a Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) program to provide role models and mentors for Métis post-secondary students. The post-secondary institutions represented were University of Toronto, Sault College, Cambrian College, University of Sudbury, Sutherland-Chan School of Massage Therapy, Athabasca University, Carleton University, McMaster University and Laurentian University.

The students were brought together by Benny Michaud, MNO Post-secondary Education Analyst with the Education and Training Branch, as a focus group to help the MNO develop a new program to assist Métis students attending post-secondary institutions.

“We had two major purposes for our focus group,” explained Michaud. “First, we wanted to identify obstacles facing Métis post-secondary students as well as discuss solutions to these obstacles. Second, we wanted their ideas on how to effectively implement a role model and mentorship program in Ontario post-secondary institutions.”

MNO President, Gary Lipinski, MNO Chair, France Picotte, and Senator Roland St. Germain all took the time to attend parts of the focus group meeting and provided the students with inspiration and encouragement.

“Encourage the Métis people you know,” President Lipinski said, “and let them know what they can be in that way we can all be role models.” He also told the students: “Tell us what the Métis Nation can do to help you in your post-secondary education; we are behind you! Let us know what the MNO can do to help.”

The students identified a number of difficulties that Métis students commonly face during their post-secondary education, including surrounding funding and poverty often create difficulties as do concerns related to feeling isolated because Métis students often are far from their families and there are no visible Métis communities on many university and college campuses. In addition, because they are frequently the first person in their family to attend a post-secondary institution, relating their experiences to their family is sometimes challenging. For these and other reasons, the students felt that the MNO mentorship and role model program would function best as a network.

“The students envisioned a community of Métis learners, learning from each other,” explained Michaud, who was impressed by the students’ ideas. “The approach they are suggesting would impact more people than we initially thought,” she said, “and will expand the boundaries of the project. I’m excited and can’t wait to start implementing this program.”

Our Population is Young and Growing and We Are Working to Ensure that Our Young People Complete High School and Post-secondary Studies.

PAYIN program in engaging Aboriginal young people:
- As part of a student panel, Janine Lanyard, Thunder Bay Council, Youth Representative, described her experiences attending Lakehead University. Janine expressed her gratitude to the MNO for the support she had received from its programs.
- Senator Ab Kennedy shared her perspective on the Elders and Senators panel.
- Dr. Beverley MacDougall, Chair of Métis Studies at the University of Ottawa, explored different approaches and concepts of learner success. The session was moderated by Dr. Chris Paci, the MNO Manager of Education and Training. Dr. Paci was also a member of the organizing and steering committee for the gathering.

In addition to these speakers, on the second day, MNO Chair, France Picotte, joined the Honourable Chris Bentley, the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, the Honourable John Milloy, the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, and Ontario Regional Chief, Angus Toulouse, in providing opening remarks when the Ontario Government released its “Aboriginal Post-secondary Education and Training Policy Framework.” Senator Roland St. Germain provided the opening and closing prayers.

Further information about the conference, including copies of presentations and speeches, can be found on the Aboriginal Post-secondary Education Gathering website.
Métis and non-Métis mark Louis Riel Day in Manitoba

February 21st was Louis Riel Day in Ontario, but it was "Louis Riel Day" in St. Boniface. The Musée de Saint-Boniface offered all-day free admission as an enticement to learn more about Riel and Manitoba’s Métis heritage.

Among those in attendance were NDP MP Pat Martin, and St. Boniface Tory MP Shelly Glover. Martin was there to perfect his knowledge of Riel’s story in preparation for a debate against well-known conservative Senator Toni Fralican, in May. The two will go head-to-head on the question of whether Riel was a traitor who deserved to hang. Martin has drafted a private member’s bill asking Parliament to exonerate Riel.

Tom Flanagan, in May. The two will go head-to-head on the question of whether Riel was a traitor who deserved to hang. Martin has drafted a private member’s bill asking Parliament to exonerate Riel.

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President Chartier was joined by Aboriginal performers, including Tracy Bone and Tribe of One.

Festival du Voyageur

Founded in 1969 by a group of Saint-Boniface entrepreneurs, this once three-day event, held in Winnipeg’s French Quarter, has evolved into a 10-day province-wide celebration of sights, sounds, snow and spirit.

Dubbed ‘The World’s Largest Kitchen Party’, Festival du Voyageur celebrates the joc de vie of the fur traders, who established the Red River Colony and the ever-growing French-Canadian community in western Canada. The spirit and culture of the voyageur is present in the vibrant community that comes together to celebrate its history through this event every February.

In honour of the voyageur spirit, the Festival du Voyageur’s emphasis is on the beauty of winter, with numerous historical, educational and entertaining activities—truly something for every age and every taste!

Visit: info@festivalvoyageur.mb.ca

MANITOBA

MÉTIS EDUCATION

Higher education, higher aspirations

Continued from page 1

fully to the goals outlined in the framework in order to ensure that Aboriginal students have equal access to post-secondary education.

According to Statistics Canada only 9% of Métis people have achieved a university degree, as compared with 25% of the non-Aboriginal population. This disparity points to the need for increased support for Métis who want to attend post-secondary institutions. At a Métis Post-secondary Education Focus Group facilitated by the MNO Education and Training Branch in March, Métis students identified a variety of factors impacting access to higher education. Some of the barriers identified during the course of the discussion included: lack of funding for post-secondary education, persistent poverty, discrimination, lack of student support specific to Métis, and a lack of awareness by other students and faculty about who Métis people are in Ontario.

Recently, President Gary Lipinski appeared on the TVO program, The Agenda with Steve Paikin, as part of a panel discussing Aboriginal post-secondary education. President Lipinski was quick to address the misconception that Métis students get a free ride for their education. There is no federal, provincial funding for Métis students for post-secondary education except for whatever their parents might save or whatever they can get through scholarships. President Lipinski also noted that the Métis Nation of Ontario is working with post-secondary institutions to create support for Métis students. “I have found educational institutions are very willing to partner with the Métis Nation of Ontario and I certainly think that’s an important step in moving forward.”

Continuing to look for ways to assist Métis students and their families, the MNO has partnered with various post-secondary institutions across the province and currently has signed Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with the University of Ottawa, University of Saskatchewan, Laurentian University, College Boréal, Confederation College, Georgian College, and Sault College. These MOU represent a shared commitment by post-secondary institutions and the Métis Nation of Ontario to find ways to support Métis learners. In order to assist students in covering the rising costs of education, the MNO continues to invest in bursary endowments at some 35 colleges and universities throughout the province.

In January, a new Post-secondary Education Officer position was created through an agreement with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. Benny Michaud is on board in this role and is currently working with post-secondary institutions to increase recruitment and retention of Métis students. Mr. Michaud will also be implementing a unique mentorship and role model program set to be launched at various schools in September. If you have questions regarding post-secondary education initiatives please contact her at 1-800-263-4889 extension 137.

By Jennifer St. Germain
Director, MNOET

and

Chris Paci
Manager, MNOET

and

Benny Michaud
Post-Secondary Analyst
ABORIGINAL EDUCATION

By Chris Paci
Manager, ANGE
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On Thursday, March 10, 2011, 7:30 A.M., The Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, in cooperation with the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, hosted a breakfast talk by Dr. Dwayne Donald, University of Alberta, Faculty of Education, titled, “On What Terms Can We Speak?” His talk focused on Aboriginal-Canadian relations as an educational priority. As I passed through Parliament’s visitor entrance, I was a little nervous. This same house three times denied the rights of Manitoba’s first elected Member of Parliament, Louis Riel, and twenty years later condemned him to death after an unjust trial. I breathed deeply and besides taking off my belt and emptying my pockets at security, was admitted without fuss.

Aboriginal education is increasingly a hot national issue. Last June, National Chief Shawn Atleo made a passionate plea to all levels of government to support the Assembly of First Nations’ vision of creating a strong educational foundation for First Nations students. At the February 2011 Council of Education Ministers meeting in Toronto, Métis National Council’s Minister of Education, Robert Doucette, called for Métis-specific solutions to education challenges. Aboriginal governments and the provinces are developing emerging educational initiatives aimed at engaging and re-taught Aboriginal youth in the school and post-secondary education systems. During his presentation Dwayne Donald argued that much of the research informing these initiatives focused on identifying culturally-relevant educational approaches that foster higher rates of Aboriginal student success. He says these are important, but the focus implies only a concern for Aboriginal students, their families, and their teachers. Dr. Donald proposes that the priority should be placed on helping all students and educators better understand the historic and current character of Aboriginal-Canadian relations. Such a shift in educational priorities would enhance chances to repair and far from perfect, the policy marks the beginning of the inclusion of First Nations, Métis and Inuit in crafting the Treaty. Here in Ontario, the approach MNO is advancing with the Ministry of Education is respect for Aboriginal rights. In 2007, the Ontario Government adopted the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework as a result. This framework was crafted with input from First Nations, Inuit and Métis. While still in its early days of change, and far from perfect, the policy marks the beginning of the inclusion of First Nations, Métis and Inuit in crafting curriculum, teacher training, resources, and the like. Another good example of change is Pearson Good Minds’ new texts for Native Studies 10 and 11 that provide students with more of a reflection of Aboriginal cultures, histories, and a sense of place in Ontario. Métis are not pushing for separate schools in the same way that some First Nations do, and there is no rally cry like “Indian Control of Indian Education”. The history of Métis relations in Ontario is marked by Metis exclusion from Treaties which resulted in 160 years of quiet resistance. The MNO approach is simply to ensure Metis relevance and content for all students at all levels and for all subject areas, and in this regard we agree with Dr. Donald. The Ontario Government’s Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy supports the MNO approach, but it is not a replacement for the importance of Aboriginal education for all students.

Sadly, constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights, in 1982, has not been matched by a sustained effort by the federal government to decolonize Aboriginal education. Certainly we have not seen Canada make the same efforts they have on bilingualism, or trade, or even the development of national parks. The next twenty years will be an opportunity for Canada to step up to and do more than apologize, but rather to make real structural changes to include Aboriginal peoples in education.

The project is subject to the Class Environmental Assessment for Minor Transmission Facilities in accordance with Ontario’s Environmental Assessment Act. Pending the necessary approvals, construction is expected to begin in spring 2012 with the new facility in service by December 2012.

Public Information Centre (PIC) Hydro One is committed to consulting with First Nations and Métis communities, the public and interested stakeholders. At the PIC, you will have an opportunity to view detailed maps and information panels and provide your comments to our project team. Please contact:

Alexandra Stadnyk
Hydro One Community Relations
Tel: 1-877-345-6799
Email: CommunityRelations@HydroOne.com
Visit the project website at: www.HydroOne.com/projects
Pauline Saulnier is a courageous Métis woman who is dedicated to promoting and preserving her culture. She gives freely of her time to ensure that others’ experience and get to know more about the rich traditions and colourful culture of the Métis. For that reason Pauline was chosen as the “2010 Volunteer of the Year”. Like the woman for whom the Volunteer of the Year Award is named, “Suzanne Rochon-Burnett”, Pauline exemplifies the definition of “volunteer”. If you know or work with someone who, like Pauline, deserves recognition as the Volunteer of the Year, the time to nominate them has arrived.

The objective of the Suzanne Rochon-Burnett Volunteer of the Year Award is to recognize individuals who contribute as a volunteer to the Métis Nation of Ontario year round and have done so for a number of years. Each year a volunteer meeting the criteria is named as the recipient of the Suzanne-Burnett Volunteer of the Year by a selection committee of the Métis Nation of Ontario.

Louise Goulding, deserves recognition as the MNO Volunteer of the Year, please nominate them for this prestigious award. The 2011 Suzanne Rochon-Burnett Volunteer of the Year winner will be announced at the 2011 MNO Annual General Assembly in Parry Sound, August 20-22, 2011.

The attributes that earned Pauline the 2010 award include working hard for the community, respect for others and giving more than she takes. Louise Goulding’s 2009 award, has been with the Métis Nation of Ontario since 1996 and it through efforts like hers and those of other dedicated volunteers that the Métis in Ontario continue to earn the recognition they deserve as a distinct Aboriginal people in Canada. One of the greatest strengths of the Métis Nation of Ontario is that there are many, many volunteers within the organization who demonstrate qualities like these on a daily basis.

Any MNO citizen can nominate a volunteer for the award by completing a nomination form and sending it to: Volunteer of the Year Selection Committee, Métis Nation of Ontario, 500 Old St. Patrick Street, Ottawa, ON K1N 9G4. The deadline for nominations is July 2, 2011.