Louis Riel Day

Louis Riel Day takes place on the anniversary of the execution of Louis Riel on November 16, 1885. Riel’s only crime was that he defended the rights of his people—our people—the Métis. Although he fought for Métis rights in the west, his resistance had repercussions for Métis in Ontario as well. We were labelled traitors and for generations our culture was forced underground. We became the “forgotten people.”

Over the years however, we began to assert ourselves and take up the mantle of Louis Riel. We founded the Métis Nation of Ontario, and with Steve Powley, we asserted our Métis rights. Every day that we work together as MNO citizens, we are seeking the same rights that Louis Riel defended.

Louis Riel’s battle did not end on November 16, 1885, because we are fighting it today. It is for that reason that Louis Riel Day, November 16, 2011, is a day that celebrates our strength as a people. It is the day we remember what we have achieved so far, and it is a day we steel our resolve, so Louis Riel’s dream can be a reality for our children.

Riel Day stories and photos begin on page 28.
Ten little fingers

Ten little fingers, and a cute little nose, everything's perfect from his head to his toes! Tracy Bald (Community Wellness Coordinator, Midland) and Brad Sinclar are excited to announce their son, Drew David Smclar. Drew was born on September 9, 2011. Proud grandparents are Yvonne and Andre Bald of Penetanguishene and Dave and Betty Sinclar of Capper Cliff.

Ciara the alien

Kathleen Lannigan’s granddaughters, Ciara, age 31 years dressed as a Na’vi from the movie Avatar for Halloween in Kincardine. Kathleen Lannigan is the Employment and Training Coordinator in Region 9.

Métis youth competes at Miss Teen Ontario pageant

By Jeanette Laurin

I t’s name is Jeanette Laurin and I am setting about my daughter winning titles at the Miss Teen Ontario North Canada Pageant 2011. My daughter Angelica Laurin is a Métis from West Nipissing Ontario. Her dad, Marc Laurin is the President of the North Bay Métis Council. Angelica attended the Miss Teen Ontario North Canada Pageant as “Miss Cache Bay” on October 14th and 15th, 2011. All the pageant contestants had to give a speech, be interviewed by the judges, write a test consisting of Canadian History, geography and some questions pertaining just to northern Ontario. They also had to answer a spontaneous on-stage question and learn and perform a dance for the audience. The best part for Angelica was meeting all the girls from other northern communities and making new friends. Angelica was honoured winning the titles of “1st Lady In Waiting” (equivalent to 1st runner up). She also won the talent award for best talent. She sang “Coat of Many Colors” by Dolly Parton. She also won “Miss Photogenic”. Angelica would like to thank everyone who helped her on her journey to the Miss Teen Ontario North Canada Pageant especially her sponsors, Mike Candeloro (RBC Dominion Securities) North Bay Ontario, Savage Ford (Sturgeon Falls) and Dr. Lorrie-Ann Mcgeis (Action Potential) Sturgeon Falls, Ontario. She would also like to thank Kim Krinithof, President of the Miss Teen Ontario North Canada Pageant, and the committee for all the hard work they did to put on such a wonderful event for all the girls and for making them all feel like princesses! If you have any questions just email me or call me at 705-850-0909.

Opinions expressed in the following commentary are solely those of the writer and do not reflect the policies of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) or the viewpoints of MNO officials or staff.

A poet and proud Grandpa

By Raymond D. Tremblay

A nother Métis baby was born to my son, Eric Tremblay and his wife, Erin Merry Baby Sebastien Daniel Thomas Tremblay weighed in at 7 lbs 9 oz, soon upon arrival and is enjoying excellent health. The day before his birth, I was moved to write him a poem. Needless to say, his four year old brother, Maxime, is also very excited about his birth.

A Miracle of Life

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President Lipinski congratulates Premier McGuinty on re-election of Liberal government

In October 7th, Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) President, Gary Lipinski, extended the heartiest of congratulations to Dalton McGuinty, Tim Hudak and Andrea Horvath for their hard fought campaigns and for the success achieved by each of their parties. “We are looking forward to building on our relationships with all parties represented in the Provincial Parliament but we are particularly delighted to be continuing the positive momentum, which has been the hallmark of MNO’s relationship with the Liberal government over the last few years,” said President Lipinski.

Lipinski also stated: “In the next several years the MNO expects to move forward with the McGuinty government, building on our historic framework agreement, which sets out our mutual goals of strengthening the Métis inclusion in child and family structures. By working together we will continue to achieve results for Métis citizens, families and communities; and facilitating the recognition of Métis rights in Ontario.”

MÉTIS MPP becomes Speaker of Ontario Legislature

On November 21, Métis Member of the Provincial Parliament (MPP) Dave Levac, was elected Speaker by his fellow parliamentarians. It is believed to be the first time that a Métis has served in that position. After his election, Speaker Levac stated “I’m very moved; this is a glorious place,” and mindful of the fact he would be serving in a minority parliament, also commented: “We can make this work.”

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) President, Gary Lipinski, welcomed Speaker Levac’s election saying, “Dave’s election over four other MPs demonstrates that he is held in high regard by his colleagues in all parties represented in the house. This is a crucial position in a minority parliament.” Lipinski pointed out that the new Speaker’s Métis heritage will be an asset in his new position. “Traditionally, Métis have worked for consensus and reaching common ground,” added President Lipinski and “Dave is very suited for that kind of work. He will help facilitate partnerships and lower the temperature of contentious issues whenever and wherever they may present themselves”.

Speaker Levac has served as MPP for Brant since 1999 and his parliamentary career has included the introduction of several successful private members bills. He has also served at various times as Parliamentary Assistant for Community Safety and Correctional Services, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Energy and Infrastructure and prior to becoming Speaker was serving as Chair for the Economic, Environmental and Resources Policy (EERP) Committee of Cabinet and a member of the Standing Committee on General Government.

Before entering politics, Speaker Levac had taught elementary and secondary school for 12 years, becoming a principal in 1989. In his capacity as principal, Speaker Levac developed Peace Park and conflict resolution programs, for which, among other accomplishments, he received the Ontario English Catholic Teachers Association’s (OECTA) Distinguished Teacher Award in 1994. “Dave brings many skills to the position of Speaker,” President Lipinski said, “and he is a great role model for our Métis youth, who can now see a Métis person rise to one of the most important leadership positions in Ontario.”

A new Aboriginal Affairs Minister

MNO President Lipinski welcomes appointment of Kathleen Wynne as Minister of Aboriginal Affairs

In October 20th, Premier Dalton McGuinty announced his new cabinet, which included a new Minister of Aboriginal Affairs (MMA), Kathleen Wynne, who previously served as Minister of Transportation and Minister of Education, is the new MMA, taking over from Chris Bentley who moves on to become Minister of Energy. “The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) worked closely with Minister Wynne when she was Minister of Education,” explained MNO President Gary Lipinski. “We found it a very productive relationship as evidenced by the strides Métis people in Ontario have made in the education sector over the last several years.”

The MNO expects the positive relationship between the MNO and the MMA will continue under Minis-
The Women’s Secretariat of the Métis Nation of Ontario (WSMNO) hosts summit seeking to end violence against Aboriginal women

The “Sixties Scoop” is a historical event that occurred in the 1960s and 1970s where thousands of Aboriginal children were removed from their families and placed in non-Aboriginal homes. This practice was driven by the government’s policy of assimilation and the belief that European culture was superior to Indigenous culture. Many of these children were placed in residential schools, which were known for their harsh conditions and limited opportunities for cultural preservation.

The so-called “Sixties Scoop” had a profound impact on the children and their families. Many of these children struggled with issues of identity and belonging. They often had difficulty connecting with their cultural heritage and maintained limited knowledge of their language, traditions, and customs. The impact of the “Sixties Scoop” was felt not only by the children but also by their parents and grandparents, who passed down the pain and trauma to future generations.

In recent years, there has been a growing movement to address the “Sixties Scoop” and provide compensation to the affected families. Various initiatives have been launched, including legal action and apologies from the government. The establishment of truth and reconciliation committees has also been a significant step in addressing the legacy of the “Sixties Scoop.”

In conclusion, the “Sixties Scoop” is a dark chapter in the history of Canada. However, it is essential to acknowledge the pain and trauma it caused and work towards healing and reconciliation. The government’s apologies and initiatives have shown progress in addressing this issue, but much work remains to be done to ensure justice and healing for the affected families and communities.
Modern-day Voyageur
Atikokan Métis first to travel solo along voyageur canoe route

By Joe Daze
Consultation Coordinator
LRC Branch

When I speak of “whirly birds,” I am referring to the wind turbines that have been proposed for placement on historic and beautiful, Nor’Wester mountain escarpment located in Thunder Bay, Ontario. This site was selected by Horizon Wind Inc. as an ideal location for Big Thunder Wind Park, which would consist of 16 wind turbines standing 138 metres high. The implementation of this wind park has met with stiff resistance in the area proposed for placement.

The Nor’Wester Mountain Escarpment Protection Committee has led a charge to stop the project. They found a great friend in the form of the peregrine falcon. The peregrine, sometimes known as the “cheetah of the skies,” is the fastest creature on the planet, attaining 300 kilometres per hour when in a full dive. You may be asking yourself, “what about this bird makes it a friend to the people of Thunder Bay?” Well, it’s simple, the peregrine is on the endangered species list and the Ontario Government has a recovery strategy for the peregrine falcon which happens to live high above the city in the majestic Nor’Westers escarpment.

Despite the obvious difficulties presented by the journey, Ranta has nothing but good things to say about the experience. “I felt great at the end of it,” he stated. He also warmly remembers the hospitality he was shown as he crossed the Métis Homeland. One example of the welcome he received everywhere he went occurred when a group of Aboriginal paddlers shadowed him all the way from Cumber- land House in Saskatchewan to Winnipeg, Manitoba. They even provided him with some pickerel during the trip. Ranta paddled into his home town of Atikokan, appropriately the canoe capital of Canada, on July 2nd, where he received a hero’s welcome. “We, in Atikokan, are very proud of Mike,” said Marlene Davidson, the President of the Atikokan and Surrounding Area Métis Council. Ranta’s future plans include writing a book about his journey, and in three to four years embarking on another canoe trip—this time from Vancouver to Cape Breton Island.

To learn more about Mike Ranta’s voyageur adventure, visit the Atikokan Youth Initiatives website: www.atikokanyouth.org/track_our_paddler.html.

Mike Ranta with his dog Spitzi, who was Mike’s only companion during his 5,200 KM canoe trek.

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Ranta remembers his family talking about their Métis roots and attributes his “good understanding of the bush” to this heritage.

MNO citizens attend 4th Annual Northern Aboriginal Festival

Many MNO citizens with the St. Mary’s Métis Council participated in the fourth annual Northern Aboriginal Festival that took place at the Cambrian College, Laurentian University, College Boréal and the City of Greater Sudbury. The main feature of the weekend included a pow-wow and a vendor market, which offered traditional foods, crafts, art and information to attendees.


Paddle for Peace kicks off annual Ottawa Peace Festival

The Fifth Annual Ottawa Peace Festival was held on Victoria Island in Ottawa on September 21 with a number of MNO citizens participating. These included Grand River Métis Council Senator, Ed Hass, and his son Duane who were part of the “Paddle for Peace.” They were among the many canoeists who travelled to Victoria Island from a variety of locations along waterways leading to Ottawa. Senator Hass and his son paddled all the way from Hillborough to Victoria Island. Executive Senator Reta Gordon and Ottawa Métis Council Senator Lois McCallum were also among the crowd that gathered on Victoria Island for prayers in reverence for Mother Earth, communal harmony, social justice and peace and indigenous wisdom.

Flag carriers, Sudbury Métis Council President, Roger Giroux, and College Boréal Métis Outreach Coordinator, Eric Dupuis, at the opening ceremony of the Northern Aboriginal Festival.
Jean Teillet awarded Indigenous Peoples’ Council designation

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) President, Gary Lipinski, on behalf of Ontario Métis, offered his congratulations to Métis lawyer Jean Teillet for being awarded the designation of “Indigenous Peoples’ Council” (IPC) by the Indigenous Bar Association (IBA). Jean has been legal counsel for the MNO since its creation in the early 1990s.

The IPC is awarded annually to an Indigenous lawyer in recognition of outstanding achievements in the practice of law. In particular, the IPC award takes into account the manner in which the individual pursues the goals and objectives of the IBA and serves his or her community and the Creator with honour and integrity. Previous designations include: Wilton Littlechild, Roberta Jamieson, Paul Chauncey, David Nahwegahbow, Delia Opeeukow, James [Sâkul] Youngblood Henderson, Don Worme, Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond, Roger Jones, Darlene Johnson, Math Stewart and Justice Murray Sinclair.

Jean was acknowledged for her well-known legal work on behalf of Aboriginal peoples generally and the Métis people specifically. Her work includes:

• acting as lead counsel at all levels of court in R. v. Powley – the first Métis rights case to be heard by the Supreme Court of Canada based on s. 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982;
• appearing before the Supreme Court of Canada and almost all levels of courts in Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, Yukon and NWT on behalf of Aboriginal peoples;
• acting as counsel for Aboriginal peoples in various modern day treaty making processes, including, the “Treaty in the Sticks” in B.C.;
• speaking at conferences on Aboriginal issues as well as teaching Aboriginal legal issues at various universities and colleges across Canada, and
• as a mentor to other Aboriginal law students and lawyers.

MNO President Gary Lipinski said, “I am pleased to see the Indigenous Bar recognize Jean for her passion and groundbreaking work on behalf of the Métis Nation and other Aboriginal peoples in this country. It is a designation that is well deserved, and I am proud that the Métis Nation’s own lawyer was recognized amongst other exceptional law minds.”

Métis Rights | Alberta

Métis Nation reacts to Alberta Court of Queen’s Bench decision on Métis harvesting right


“We are pleased that the appeal court overturned significant parts of the trial judge’s decision. In particular, the appeal court rejected the trial judge’s conclusions that because Mr. Hirschorn was exercising his right to hunt and fish, as a part of a larger political action led by the MNA, his constitutional claim failed,” said Audrey Poitras, MNA President.

Further, “the appeal court rejected the trial judge’s legal conclusion that in order to find a Métis harvesting right in Alberta, a Métis community must be a site-specific settlement located in Alberta prior to effective control. The MNA intends to appeal the appeal court’s decision on this fundamental issue.”

Chief Justice Wittmann recognized the “ironic” situation the case law creates for mobile aboriginal peoples such as the Métis...

Notably, Chief Justice Wittmann recognized the “ironic” situation the case law creates for mobile aboriginal peoples such as the Métis. He held that he would need to modify the Powley test’s site-specific requirements in order to address a unique situation where an aboriginal people historically was integral to a particular location, such as the Métis buffalo hunters of the plains. He concluded that it was inappropriate “to modify the Powley test at this level of court,” but highlighted that the evidence and fact situation in this case created an “anomaly” because the historical way of life and mobility of the Métis people ultimately resulted in the Powley test denying them s. 35 rights.

“We believe Chief Justice Wittmann’s decision is helpful in illustrating the important and unique legal issues in this case that need further judicial consideration. In Powley, the Supreme Court of Canada held that s. 35’s promise to the Métis protects their historic practices and traditions, yet parts of the Powley test are now being interpreted in a manner that effectively denies Métis from being able to continue the practices of their ancestors. This cannot be right based on a purposive interpretation of s. 35. We are pleased Justice Wittmann pointed out the legal anomaly that arises in this case,” said Jason Hadden, MNA Legal Counsel.

The MNA will now be seeking leave to appeal to the Alberta Court of Appeal in Calgary. It is expected that a hearing of the appeal will not occur until some time in 2012.

For additional information visit www.albertametis.com

Long-separated Métis siblings reunited

A Métis brother and sister separated decades ago, when they were small children had an emotional first meeting in Toronto this fall.

Ted Fraser, 63, and Debby Poitras-Precious, 56, were both taken from their birth mother in Saskatchewan as part of the so-called “scoop” in the 50s and 60s, when Native and Métis children were taken from their birth families and placed in non-native homes. Now that the siblings have met, they say all they want to do is have a big family reunion to catch up on a lifetime of memories.

Visit the link below to see video of the reunion.


Audrey Poitras re-elected as President of Métis Nation of Alberta

On behalf of Ontario Métis, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) President, Gary Lipinski, congratulated Audrey Poitras on her re-election as President of the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) on September 6, 2011. Unofficial results of the MNA election are online (www.albertametis.com).

President Poitras was first elected in 1998 and was the first female to hold the position. This will be her fifth consecutive term. During her tenure, she has advanced the interests and rights of Alberta Métis as well as the Métis Nation as a whole.

MNO President, Gary Lipinski, said, “Over her years of dedicated service to the Métis Nation, Audrey has been a shining example of Métis leadership with integrity and credibility. She is a role model for many and is known for unwavering commitment to advancing the interests and rights of the Métis in Alberta and the entire Métis Nation. I look forward to continuing our work together to further the cause of the Métis people.”

In August 2010, President Lipinski and President Poitras signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in order for the MNO and MNA to strengthen the relationship between Ontario and Alberta Métis as well as to share best practices between the MNA and MNO in order to benefit Métis in both provinces.
No October the 27th the Niagara Region Métis Council (NRMC), in partnership with the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Healing and Wellness Branch, held its 6th Annual Harvest Dinner. It cannot thank Glen Lipinski enough for doing the important job of Master of Ceremonies. Glen was instrumental in seeing that everything ran smoothly throughout the evening, and as usual, Glen did a fantastic job. Thanks Glen.

Our entertainment for the evening was provided by the Niagara Old Time Fiddlers, and once again they did a great job of entertaining us for the evening. We were honoured to have MNO President, Gary Lipinski, who took time out of his very busy schedule, join us as our special guest. President Lipinski shared with the citizens some of the many changes that are happening within the MNO. We were privileged to have with us Mayor Joyner of West Lincoln and Councillor Paul Grenier, representing the City of Welland and Councillor Mark Carl of Welland. Members of the Aboriginal Education Advocacy Committee, Georgia Groat from the District School Board of Niagara and Jacqueline Watson from the Niagara Catholic District School Board, whom we work to bring Métis presentations into the schools in the Niagara Region, were also in attendance.

We were happy to have with us, the Executive Director, Nora Reid; Curator, Penny Moomingaaz; and Communications Officer, Jodi Dickson, from the Welland Historical Museum. We worked closely with them to set up the “Infinite History: The Métis in Niagara” display and they are doing an awesome job. The display opened on November 19.

James Wagar, MNO Consultation Assessment Coordinator, Lands, Resources and Consultation Branch (LRC) was able to join us and share information with our citizens about the progress in the areas of “Duty to Consult” and “Traditional Knowledge”. We were pleased to welcome Felix Horne, a new MNO LRC Manager. It was also a pleasure to greet members of the MNO Grand River Council and the MNO Oshawa Durham Council.

It was a privilege to introduce our citizens to Mr. Darren Fry, Business Manager from Walker Industries, along with his family. Darren has been a great help and friend to the NRMC. He has been instrumental in providing financial contributions from Walker Industries. This evening he brought us a cheque to help us in our endevour to continue to bring Métis culture to the Niagara Region. Our citizens brought a great variety of food to share and to the delight of all, we had 10 culinary students from Confederation High School, who, under the guidance of their instructor Chief Matthew Cyr, prepared and served a variety of dishes that were thoroughly enjoyed by all. Our new Youth Representative, Stephanie Labelle, with the assistance of our local Métis artist Tracy Mae Chambers, entertained the young people with face painting, henna tattooing and various crafts. The children had a wonderful time. Our Youth Rep. and the young culinary students are a credit and an example to our young people.

I would also like to acknowledge and give thanks to our amazing MNO Healing and Wellness Branch staff and all the wonderful volunteers who do so much hard work, mostly behind the scenes and without whom, we would not be able to accomplish all that we do. It is because of them and the council, under the leadership of this year’s Harvest Dinner committee chair, Judy Baster, that our 6th Annual Harvest Dinner was the success that it was; we had 150 plus join us this year. We are looking forward to planning next year’s Harvest Dinner. Niagara Region Métis, come join us, help us grow.

Community Councils

Métis on the march

Council marches in St. Catharines’ Grape and Wine Celebration

By Barbara Wright
Niagara Region Métis Council Women’s Representative

The Métis Nation of Ontario Niagara Region Métis Council (NRMC) marched in the St. Catharines’ Grape and Wine Celebration on September 24th, 2011. There were over 200 floats this year! The weather was perfect for a walk with our family of Métis volunteers who came out to support their council. “Thank you” goes out to all those who participated, and special thanks to Doug Boese for taking our pictures.

Our youngest Métis was Holden Shanks, who charmed the crowds with his royal wave and contagious smile. The day ended with pizza and pop at the home of Barbara Wright where we reflected on the day, and looked forward to next year.

Niagara Métis celebrate harvest

Niagara Métis reach out to the community with successful Harvest Dinner

By Stephen Quesnelle
Niagara Region Métis Council President

NAIGARA REGION MÉTIS COUNCIL | COUNCIL MARCHES IN ST. CATHARINES’ PARADE

Niagara MÉTIS VOYAGEUR
Winter 2011, Issue no. 68

left to right: Derrick Pont; Harry Wright; Amanda Pont-Shanks; Holden Shanks; Barb Wright walk in St. Catharines’ Grape and Wine Celebration parade. Photo by Doug Boese.

NIAGARA REGION MÉTIS COUNCIL | HARVEST FEAST

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James Wagar, MNO Consultation Assessment Coordinator, Lands, Resources and Consultation Branch (LRC) was able to join us and share information with our citizens about the progress in the areas of “Duty to Consult” and “Traditional Knowledge”. We were pleased to welcome Felix Horne, a new MNO LRC Manager. It was also a pleasure to greet members of the MNO Grand River Council and the MNO Oshawa Durham Council.

It was a privilege to introduce our citizens to Mr. Darren Fry, Business Manager from Walker Industries, along with his family. Darren has been a great help and friend to the NRMC. He has been instrumental in providing financial contributions from Walker Industries. This evening he brought us a cheque to help us in our endevour to continue to bring Métis culture to the Niagara Region. Our citizens brought a great variety of food to share and to the delight of all, we had 10 culinary students from Confederation High School, who, under the guidance of their instructor Chief Matthew Cyr, prepared and served a variety of dishes that were thoroughly enjoyed by all. Our new Youth Representative, Stephanie Labelle, with the assistance of our local Métis artist Tracy Mae Chambers, entertained the young people with face painting, henna tattooing and various crafts. The children had a wonderful time. Our Youth Rep. and the young culinary students are a credit and an example to our young people.

I would also like to acknowledge and give thanks to our amazing MNO Healing and Wellness Branch staff and all the wonderful volunteers who do so much hard work, mostly behind the scenes and without whom, we would not be able to accomplish all that we do. It is because of them and the council, under the leadership of this year’s Harvest Dinner committee chair, Judy Baster, that our 6th Annual Harvest Dinner was the success that it was; we had 150 plus join us this year. We are looking forward to planning next year’s Harvest Dinner. Niagara Region Métis, come join us, help us grow.

Community Councils
The volunteers are amazing
Fort Frances Métis partner in Food Box program

Adapted from an article by Duane Hicks in the Fort Frances Times Online http://fftimes.com/node/246012

For the fifth year in a row, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) is involved in a community-based “Healthy Living Food Box” program, in Fort Frances. The MNO’s partners in the program include the Ontario Government, Northwestern Health Unit, the Sunset Country Métis Council, Valley Diabetes Education Centre and the Gizhewaadiziwin Health Access Centre.

Based out of the Sunset Country Métis Council Hall, the program brings together dozens of volunteers each month to sort healthy and, to the extent possible, locally-grown fruits and vegetables into colourful ‘food boxes’ to be sold at affordable rates to local residents. The program provides nutritious food for hundreds of people who utilize the program.

It’s open to everyone, regardless of race, income, or residence [in town, on reserve, or out in the country]. Many of the clients have friendly ‘stop-and-chats’ with the staff and volunteers while picking up their food boxes. There is a real sense of community spirit. While the program is open to all Fort Frances area residents, Anne Marie Armstrong estimates that approximately 25% or more of the clients are of aboriginal descent.

“The volunteers are amazing,” said Armstrong of the MNO, noting the volunteers really enjoy themselves while working on the program. She even cites one former volunteer who no longer is able to help but still makes muffins for the other volunteers who continue to participate. Clint Calder, President of the Sunset Country Métis Council, said the program is much-appreciated. “Thanks to the many, many volunteers who help to bring affordable, healthy foods to our communities,” he said.

During the summer, the number of boxes ordered averages 330-350 each month, but this number climbs to 450-500 in wintertime. One month, volunteers packed 860 boxes. Each box costs $20 but contains about $40 worth of healthy food. Armstrong noted that very little of that $20 goes into administrative costs. Each box also includes a newsletter featuring recipes.

MNO Community Wellness Coordinator, Joan Panizza (right) presents a draw prize to Margurite Martin. The painting is the work of Thunder Bay artist Kevin Belmore.

Métis Councils celebrate Rendezvous

This year MNO Healing and Wellness staff launched collaborative Rendezvous celebrations with MNO Community Councils across Ontario. Rendezvous events were organized because the MNO heard from citizens that due to distance, work or other variables they often can’t attend the Annual General Assembly (AGA) and feel they miss the opportunity to connect with fellow Métis. So, this year the MNO hosted one to two-day Rendezvous events to celebrate Métis people and culture right across Ontario.

For the Fort Frances and Thunder Bay Community Councils joined forces to host a Rendezvous in Sheshawaway on September 17. There was a great turnout of MNO citizens from all over the Fort Frances and Thunder Bay areas. Attendees participated in wild rice harvesting demonstrations, spent time painting and Métis crafts such as making felted wool slippers. There were several draws for great prizes including a lovely painting by Métis artist Kestro Belmore. Captain of the Hunt for Region 2, Ken Simard, ably served as MC for the festivities and kept everyone entertained with his good humour and positive attitude.

High Land Waters Métis hold successful Annual General Meeting

(NORTHBROOK, ON) The former Seven Rivers Community Council held its Annual General Meeting on September 24, 2011, at which the council unveiled its new name, “High Land Waters Métis Community Council”.

Entertainment was not scarce as the youth in attendance were taught how to jig and the traditions of sash weaving and bead work were demonstrated. MNO staff from the Healing and Wellness, Education and Training, and Lands, Resources and Consultation Branches attended the AGM and provided information about the MNO services they administer. This demonstrated the council’s focus on providing MNO citizens access to all resources and services that the MNO has to offer. Region 6 PCMNO Councillor, JoAnne Wass, stated, “I am very proud to be the Regional Councillor for High Land Waters; their commitment to the community is strongly felt in the area.”

Ottawa Métis Council President, Tom Thompson, indicated that both councils need to continue to be united and to work together, creating a stronger region.

Métis Youth learn traditional jigging at the High Land Waters Annual General Meeting.
Greetings from the MNO Sudbury Métis Council / Salutations du Conseil des Métis de Sudbury. Members of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Sudbury Métis Council wish to greet you all and let you know some of the activities members of council have organized and participated in since coming into office last December. There have been several regular and special council meetings held to ensure that the council and its Métis community prosper; our website has been updated; we actively reach out to our youth and involve them in issues and activities, such as meetings and workshops organized by MNO, as well as numerous meetings with various key persons and organizations in our community in order to create partnerships or raise awareness of Métis issues that are significant to us. Before proceeding, we need to stress the importance of our having an up-to-date citizenship list so that the Sudbury Métis Council and MNO can reach you. Please note that 2012 is an election year, so it is extra important that you provide us with up-to-date information. We urge all citizens of the Sudbury Métis Council to ensure that we have up-to-date contact information (address, postal code, telephone number and email). You may either send an email or write to us (contact info below). We are pleased to share with you some of the activities that our council and citizens have been involved in since December and to provide a few pictures of these activities:

- Beat the Winter Blues Day, in Sudbury, at Portes des Eaux (Watergate Building), on February 12, 2011, organized by our regional MNO Healing and Wellness Branch;
- The Protecting Our Children From Violence Summit in Toronto, on February 28 to March 2, whose purpose was to create awareness and develop strategies to end violence against Aboriginal children;
- Aboriginal Women’s Leadership Forum (March 26-27) and the Finding Your Voice Summit (September 9-11) both in Toronto, created awareness and developed strategies to end violence against Aboriginal women;
- Meet & Greet with members of MNO Lands, Resources, and Consultation, as well as other significant community stakeholders, on March 29;
- General Meeting in Sudbury, at Place des Eaux (Watergate Building), on March 30;
- Meet & Greet at the City of Greater Sudbury (City Hall), on April 20;

CONTACT
We urge all citizens of the Sudbury Métis Council to ensure that we have up-to-date contact information (address, postal code, phone number and email). You may either send an email: metisud@hotmail.com or Sudbury Métis Council 260 Alder Street Sudbury, Ontario P3C 3P4

...continued page 10
NRMC brings Métis culture to Niagara College

by Stephen Quesnelle
Niagara Region Métis Council

On October 5th, members of the Niagara Region Métis Council (NRMC) and Métis Natural Resources, Environment and Community Relations staff took the opportunity to promote Métis history and culture to the students and faculty of Niagara College.

NRMC President, Stephen Quesnelle, and Youth Representative, Stephanie Labelle, along with Métis Community Relations staff member, Glen Lipinski, facilitated the informational display on the Welland Campus. The display and table presented a variety of information about Métis history and culture in the form of banners, MNO publications and other periodicals.

Information days are planned for Niagara College (Niagara-on-the-Lake Campus) and Brock University in the very near future.

The Sunset Country Harvest Fish Fry. Photos courtesy of Diane Hids

Sunset Country Métis Council’s fish fry sells out

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Sunset Country Métis Council Fall Harvest Fish Fry attracted a sold-out crowd of 140 people to the Métis Hall in Fort Frances on October 20.

The fish fry was delicious, prepared by a team of volunteers with the fish provided by Blaine Tucker. The evening also featured music from Abby Calder, Sandra Allan, Brittany Hayes, Chantelle Allwood, Ericka Tymkin, and Justin Boshey and Company “We were very pleased with the terrific turnout and the awesome entertainers,” said Sunset Country Métis secretary Roz Calder “We have such wonderful talent in our district.”

Union Gas made a cash donation to help make the fish fry possible. MNO President Gary Lipinski was in attendance and offered words of encouragement and support to the local council. As well, Sunset Country Métis Council President, Clint Calder, gave a brief update on recent MNO activities.

A year in the life of Sudbury Métis Council

continued page 9

- General Meeting in Verner, at the Knights of Columbus Hall, on May 9.
- The Sudbury Métis Council Annual General Meeting and Fish Fry at the Mine Mills Campground in Sudbury, on June 11, where we had the pleasure of hosting several of our citizens. Mayor Matsak of the City of Greater Sudbury, several members of PCMO, and MNO staff, as well as other members of our community at large joined us for great Métis entertainment following the AGM.
- The Grow North Summit in Thunder Bay, on June 13-14, and in Sudbury on June 15-16, as well as meetings and dialogues sessions of the Sudbury and Region Economic Development Pilot Project Implementation Team and other key partners.
- A meeting and Meet & Greet with representatives and key stakeholders of the Northern Ontario School of Medicine;
- The MNO AGA in Parry Sound, on August 19 to 22;
- General Meeting in Webwood, at the Webwood Firehall, on September 17;
- Métis Roundup 2012 and Fish Fry in Massay, on September 17, an educational, fun-filled, family-oriented activity organized by our regional MNO Healing and Wellness Branch;
- The Water Journey 2011, on September 23, whose purpose was to raise awareness about the sacredness, protection, and rehabilitation of our water;
- The Way of Life Workshop offered by Dr. Annette Chrétien at the MNC Office in Sudbury, on September 23;
- Meet & Greet Fish Fry at Colledge Boreal College, including an opportunity to meet the Métis citizens who are in the process of building a birch bark canoe on the premises;
- Presentation at College Boreal in Sudbury, on August 30, to share Métis history and culture with new students in the Camp de transition;
- The Northern Aboriginal Festival at the Sudbury Arena, on October 1;
- General Meeting and Potluck Supper at the arena in North Bay, on October 6;
- Several meetings related to Duty to Consult;
- Several presentations in various schools to raise awareness about the Métis and their history and culture;
- Several meetings of Café-musique to plan and organize a multi-phase multi-cultural festival which will be held in 2012, portraying early Métis history in Canada;
- Several practice performances to prepare for Café-Noël, which is one of the phases of the multi-cultural festival which will be displaying an Indian village, the arrival of the French aristocracy in the “New World”, the Louis Riel Story, etc., in which several schools and members of our Métis community participated on November 23, 24, and 27;
- Participation in the MNO Michif Language Project.

These activities were most interesting and filled with an educational, cultural, entertaining, family-oriented or partnership-building component. For further details and pictures we invite you to visit our website on a regular basis at www.sudburymetis council.org.

We wish to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has joined us for our activities and those who have shared their views and comments in order that we may better serve you.

We also wish everyone and their families a very safe and most enjoyable holiday season and a happy and prosperous New Year 2012!

Joyeux Noel et Bonne et Heureuse Annee 2012 à chacun et chacune, ainsi qu’à tous les membres de vos familles! On vous souhaite tûtt dé belles Fêtes et à tûtt vos familles une très joyeuse nouvelle année 2012!

Oréni_win Tûtt dé bin belles Fêtes et à tûtt vos familles! On vous souhaite tûtt dé bin belles Fêtes et à tûtt vos familles! On vous souhaite tûtt dé bin belles Fêtes et à tûtt vos familles! On vous souhaite tûtt dé bin belles Fêtes et à tûtt vos familles! On vous souhaite tûtt dé bin belles Fêtes et à tûtt vos familles! On vous souhaite tûtt dé bin belles Fêtes et à tûtt vos familles! On vous souhaite tûtt dé bin belles Fêtes et à tûtt vos familles! On vous souhaite tûtt dé bin belles Fêtes et à tûtt vos familles! On vous souhaite tûtt dé bin belles Fêtes et à tûtt vos familles! On vous souhaite tûtt dé bin belles Fêtes et à tûtt vos familles! On vous souhaite tûtt dé bin belles Fêtes et à tûtt vos familles! On vous souhaite tûtt dé bin belles Fêtes et à tûtt vos familles! On vous souhaite tûtt dé bin belles Fêtes et à tûtt vos familles! On vous souhaite tûtt dé bin belles Fêtes et à tûtt vos familles! On vous souhaite tûtt dé bin belles Fêtes et à tûtt vos familles! On vous souhaite tûtt dé bin belles Fêtes et à tûtt vos familles! On vous souhaite tûtt dé bin belles Fêtes et à tûtt vos familles! On vous souhaite tûtt dé bin belles Fêtes et à tûtt vos familles! On vous souhaite tûtt dé bin belles Fêtes et à tûtt vos familles! On vous souhaite tûtt dé bin belles Fêtes et à tûtt vos familles! On vous souhaite tûtt dé bin belles Fêtes et à tûtt vos familles! On vous souhaite tûtt dé bin belles Fêtes et à tûtt vos familles! On vous souhaite tûtt dé bin belles Fêtes et à tûtt vos familles! On vous souhaite tûtt dé bin belles Fêtes et à tûtt vos familles! On you...
Collège Boréal unveils pedagogical Métis canoe

Adapted from a speech by Wendy Landry, President of the Thunder Bay Métis Council, given at a ceremony formally launching the new Faculty of Law at Lakehead University.

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) is one of the partners with Lakehead University in launching the first Faculty of Law at a university in north-western Ontario. Since signing the MOU with the MNO, Collège Boréal has opened the Centre Louis-Riel at its campus. Centre Louis-Riel is the first Métis Centre of its kind at a post-secondary institution in Ontario, and is a special place that welcomes Métis students.

On October 3, 2011, as part of the Northern Aboriginal Festival, Collège Boréal officially unveiled its new traditional Métis canoe construction project. This educational initiative aims to familiarize Collège Boréal and area school board students with the ancestral Métis techniques and traditions that were used to explore Ontario over 400 years ago.

This twenty-foot canoe built by Marcel Labelle and Christian Pilon is entirely made from natural materials such as birch bark and spruce roots. It has important historical and spiritual significance, as Collège Boréal’s President Denis Hubert-Dutrisac explains: “We see the construction of this canoe as a way to make our students aware of the richness of their past and the importance of respecting our environment.”

Construction of the Métis canoe began during the summer of 2011. The launch was scheduled for November 67, page 6 for more.)

Wendy Landry speaking at Lakehead University at the Ceremony launching the Faculty of Law.

From left: Denis Hubert-Dutrisac, President of Collège Boréal, Christian Pilon and Marcel Labelle.

THUNDER BAY | MNO PARTNERS WITH LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY

First Faculty of Law in northwestern Ontario

Since October 19, 2011, Collège Boréal’s Learning Centre has yet another asset to enhance the academic success and personal growth of their aboriginal students: Métis, First Nations and Inuit. In fact, the presence of a Métis Elder on campus every Wednesday in Sudbury is a true cultural resource for these students.

Elder Marie-Claire Vignola, a citizen of the Métis Nation of Ontario, is available every Wednesday from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. to meet these students either individually or in groups in the relaxed and friendly atmosphere of the Louis-Riel Centre. Besides offering cultural presentations and traditional teachings, she also welcomes at the Louis-Riel Centre any non-aboriginal students and staff interested in knowing more about Canada’s aboriginal cultures.

Marie-Claire Vignola is honored to work as a Métis Elder-on-campus at Collège Boréal in Sudbury and awaits visitors with open heart and mind!

SUDBURY | MÉTIS STUDENT SUPPORT AT COLLÈGE BORÉAL

Collège Boréal has Métis Elder-on-campus

Since the signing of the historic Memorandum of Understanding between the MNO and the Ministry of Colleges, Training and Universities, which in turn followed the signing of the historic MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement in 2009, the MNO hopes that this will mean new opportunities for Métis and other Aboriginal students. The MOU agreements demonstrate each institution’s commitment to Métis culture. MOU agreements with postsecondary institutions to Métis culture.

In Ontario, and is a centre for Métis culture.

EDUCATION

MÉTIS VOYAGEUR

Winter 2011, Issue no. 68

11

Marie-Claire is available to meet with students at Collège Boréal in Sudbury and provides guidance and support.

Projects, at Collège Boréal.

Elder Marie-Claire Vignola and Eric Dupuis, Coordinatrice - Collège Boréal Projects.

Due to the work of the Elder, students and staff at Collège Boréal have a greater understanding of Métis culture and traditions.

Since October 19, 2011, Collège Boréal’s Learning Centre has yet another asset to enhance the academic success and personal growth of their aboriginal students: Marie-Claire Vignola, a citizen of the Métis Nation of Ontario, is available every Wednesday from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. to meet these students either individually or in groups in the relaxed and friendly atmosphere of the Louis-Riel Centre. Besides offering cultural presentations and traditional teachings, she also welcomes at the Louis-Riel Centre any non-aboriginal students and staff interested in knowing more about Canada’s aboriginal cultures.

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The girl with the labyrinth tattoo

Métis writer’s first novel is a compelling mystery

Iola Bell, a Métis from the Simcoe Region of Ontario, has recently written and published her first novel, an art mystery titled “Akila’s Labyrinth,” set in the southwestern United States. She is a fourth generation Métis with family connections to the Red River Settlement and James Bay. In the novel, she wanted to explore the importance of artwork for Aboriginal welfare, while also detailing the desert landscapes of New Mexico. Some of the characters are inspired by her Métis and Cree heritage. Here is a summary of her novel.

Akila Peters works as an art consultant in Santa Fe. Wandering through the Georgia O’Keeffe museum, she discovers a man’s body with a labyrinth tattoo. While he tries to unravel why this man was killed, he discovers a series of southwest art thefts and a variety of interesting characters in the City Different. His neighbour, Ms. White, likes to spy on his apartment and while she seems innocent, she has a collection of Civil War era weapons and an assortment of southwestern jewellery that has gone missing. His one friend in town, Janine, works at a bookstore and has a knack for understanding people. She also spots a labyrinth tattoo. Although never one for believing in the supernatural, something is following him that won’t leave him alone, perhaps to his peril. Walking through the many art galleries and desert landscapes of New Mexico, Akila realizes that there is much more behind art than just an aesthetic appreciation; people’s lives depend on it.

This novel is available for purchase online ($2.99) at amazon.ca and smashwords.com. Bell plans on writing a sequel to this, where Akila Peters attends the Venice Biennale in Italy, the world’s largest contemporary art exhibition, and is drawn into a series of perilous events.
Even while many of Riel’s battles are still being fought, the MNO acknowledged that some progress has been made in Ontario towards achieving Riel’s goals. Some evidence of this progress could be seen at the ceremony itself where a large number of provincial cabinet ministers and Members of the Provincial Parliament were in attendance. These were: the Honourable Kathleen Wynne, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs; the Honourable John Gerretsen, Attorney General; the Honourable Chris Bentley, Minister of Energy; the Honourable Glen Murray, Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities; the Honourable Dr. Eric Hoskins, Minister of Children and Youth Services; the Honourable Margaret Best, Minister of Consumer Services; New Democratic Party Aboriginal Affairs Critic, Sarah Campbell; MPP, Michael Prue; MPP, Dave Levac; MPP, Grant Crack; MPP, Victor Fedeli; MPP, David Zimmer; MPP, Soo Wong; and MPP, Frank Klees.

The presence of these Ministers and MPPs at the Provincial Louis Riel Day event demonstrated the positive relationship the MNO has built with Ontario through the MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement, which was signed three years ago. “The government’s willingness to sign the Framework Agreement with us,” stated President Lipinski, “signalled there was a new way of doing business with the Métis and that the process of reconciliation had started.” Minister Wynne also spoke about the importance of the MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement. “That agreement is the foundation of a collaborative agreement between us,” she said, “and it has created opportunities, partnerships and achieved measurable results.” Minister Wynne also highlighted the development of the Métis Voyageur Development Fund (MVDF), which she described as “your biggest achievement together so far.” The Ontario Government has committed 30 million dollars over 10 years to the MVDF, which will help Métis entrepreneurs and businesses.

The Minister also outlined the work the MNO has undertaken with funding through the New Relationship Fund. “That work of helping people say who they are, self-identification projects, coming to realization is such an important part of what you do,” she said. “I believe Ontario and the Métis Nation of Ontario have come a long way together in a short period of time, but I recognize that there is a lot more work that we have to do together.”

Carrying on the work of Riel, however, is not just up to the MNO leadership and the government. MNO Chair, France Picotte, called on all MNO citizens to carry on Riel’s work by showing their Métis pride. “It is up to us, not necessarily up to the Métis Nation of Ontario. We are the umbrella, we might be able to help you, might be able to help facilitate you, but it is your responsibility to transfer that culture, that knowledge, to be proud of who you are.” As an example Chair Picotte spoke enthusiastically about the work done in the last year to help revive Michif, the Métis language. President Lipinski concluded his remarks by saying that although Riel’s work remains unfinished there is no doubt that the MNO is continuing his work. “It may fall to future generations,” said President Lipinski, “to the youth that are here today, to carry on, because that work will take time, but as long as we are making progress in the right direction, and we are, then I think we should celebrate that.”

The ceremony left no doubt that Riel’s execution, 126 years before, had not stopped the Métis cause, and in fact, as Métis youth Conlin Sawchuk stated: “The Heart of Louis Riel is alive and beating with us today.”

Leadership on these issues starts at the top, and I am committed to putting in place a comprehensive action plan to address the MNO’s existing debt, and the challenges in relation to cash flow for the MNO and its Community Councils. This plan will also put in place stronger financial management processes, increased transparency and effective checks and balances, to ensure deficits become a thing of the past within the MNO.
AN UPDATE ON MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO FINANCES

Financial Highlights and Measurable Results

Some of the measurable results achieved through the support and effort of our citizens, PCMNO and MNO administration include:

- The MNO has been able to reduce its cumulative deficit (i.e., assets minus liabilities) by approximately 40% since 2008. As of March 31st, 2011, the MNO’s cumulative deficit was $2.49 million versus $4.2 million in 2008/09 – a reduction of over $1.7 million in the last 3 years.

- The MNO has been able to cut its Total Service Debt (TSD) Ratio by close to 50%. Specifically, in early 2008, MNO’s TDS ratio was 31%. As of March 31st, 2011, it was at 15%.

- The MNO has significantly reduced its debts owing to the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) and Ontario for the Employer Health Tax (EHT). It has also negotiated debt repayment plans with these agencies. The amount owing to CRA was originally $2.1 million, but has been reduced to $553,000 at the end of November 30, 2011. The amount owing for EHT was originally $735,000, but has been reduced to $199,000 by the end of November 30, 2011. This equates to over two million in debt reduction. As well, debts owed to Service Canada and Health Canada (originally totalling $1.8 million) are being reduced through regular re-payment plans and negotiations are underway to reach a compromise settlement on the remaining outstanding debt.

- Funders who were ready to close our doors in 2008 have new faith in the MNO and since May 2008, MNO revenues have increased by approximately 65% from $12.5 million in 2007/2008 to over $20 million in 2010/2011. This growth, in the face of the economic downturn and government cutbacks, is a testament to how the MNO is now seen in the eyes of government and funders. Our risk assessment has dropped from high to medium and the MNO is seen as a credible partner to invest in. By way of caution, while we can indeed be proud of all we have accomplished, the work is just beginning, and it is not the time to rest on our laurels. We need to stay the course of accountability and transparency and we still have a debt which must be eliminated. We must find ways to get more funding to our communities to support the work and desires of the many volunteers, who continue to be the backbone of the MNO. We can only do this if we continue to do it – together!

Implementation of Financial Policies and Procedures

The MNO’s Finance Branch has fully implemented the stringent Financial Policies and Procedures adopted by the PCMNO in November 2009. The MNO Finance Branch, after in depth third party analysis has doubled in size and now has two Certified Accountants and six other trained and qualified staff in place. With a capable Finance Branch and with the right systems and oversight in place to meet the many complexities and challenges which confront a “not-for-profit corporation,” and with a myriad of funders each with different accountability requirements we can now effectively manage all necessary reporting and tracking.

Along with the day-to-day requirements, the Finance Branch continues to refine new software and to further automate systems to increase efficiencies, which will free up time for Branch staff to engage in actual program business analysis and to ensure timely responses to variances and reporting.

Growth in the Face of the Economic Downturn and Government Cutbacks

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**AN UPDATE ON MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO FINANCES**

**Province commits $30 Million to support Métis entrepreneurs and businesses**

Former Ontario Aboriginal Affairs Minister, Chris Bentley (left) and MNO President, Gary Lipinski (right) during media event announcing creation of the Métis Voyageur Development Fund.

**Growth in MNO Revenues 2006-11**

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Revenue</th>
<th>% Change from previous year</th>
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<td>2006/07</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010/11</td>
<td>$20,586,398</td>
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The figures above indicate a 65% increase in total revenue from 2006-07 to 2010-11.

Between 2006-07 and 2010-11, the number of contribution agreements between the MNO and funders increased from 37 to 83, which represents a 124% increase.

Between 2006-07 and 2010-11 the number of funders that the MNO had contributions agreements with increased from 14 to 28, which represents a 100% increase.

This increased credibility in the eyes of our funding partners has also led to their increased willingness to enter into multi-year contribution agreements with the MNO. In the last few years, the following multi-year, multi-million dollar agreements have been negotiated and signed:

- A five and a half year Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy to replace the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement with Services Canada for $30,692,737 million to support the work of the MNO’s Education and Training Branch;
- A five year Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy Agreement for $2.6 million to support the work of the MNO’s Healing and Wellness Branch;
- A five year New Relationship Funding Agreement for $2.1 million a year to support the work of the MNO’s Lands, Resources and Consultation Branch, MNO Community Councils and MNO Regional Consultation Committees; and
- A ten year agreement with the Ontario government for the Métis Voyageur Development Fund (The MVDF). The agreement provides for three million a year for each year of the agreement, 30 million dollars in total. The MVDF will support Métis entrepreneurship and investment in Ontario’s resource sector.
AN UPDATE ON METIS NATION OF ONTARIO FINANCES

MNO to receive $30.6 million for Employment & Training over five years

Increased Capacity for MNO Community Councils

In the past, the MNO was unable to provide any financial support to MNO Community Councils and their important work. MNO Community Councils had to rely entirely on the goodwill and efforts of volunteers. In May 2008, the PCMNO and I focussed on finding ways to change that reality. We wanted to make sure that the MNO's growth and increased financial stability also had direct measurable results for Community Councils.

Through our discussions on the New Relationship Fund with Ontario, the MNO was able to secure capacity funding for consultation activities through the MNO's Consultation Framework. Over the last four fiscal years, over $1.6 million has been dedicated to Community Councils to support their work at the local and regional levels on consultation related activities. Moreover, through the MNO's Consultation Framework, many Regions and Community Councils are now discussing economic development opportunities to support their future work at the local level. These realities would not have been possible without being able to demonstrate a willingness to be transparent with funders and much stronger financial management and accountability processes across the MNO locally, regionally and provincially.

The MNO has also significantly reduced the delay in making payments to our vendors, Community Councils and our own people. For example, on average, our trade payables are paid in less than 30 days. Moreover, our monthly accounts payable balances have been reduced from an average of 30.7% in 2007/2008 to 0.3% in 2010/2011. These improvements are due primarily to the fact that MNO now employs project and fund accounting and more sophisticated software which provides for improved cash flow and timely payments.

Today, any delays in payment are mostly due to a lack of adequate financial reporting (i.e., expense claims not being properly completed and coded, receipts not being provided, financial statements of Community Councils not being submitted, and monies not being received from funders, etc.) rather than the MNO not having money in the bank. This is a significant change in the day-to-day realities of the MNO.

As you can see, our collective sacrifices and efforts over the last few years have achieved measurable results. I believe we have “turned the corner” within the MNO when it comes to our financial management, administration and accountability. However, while we have “turned the corner,” we must remain committed to ensuring we do not fall back into old habits. We must constantly reassess our financial management and accountability in order to limit our financial liabilities and risks as a nation.

We cannot allow our recent achievements and successes to allow us to lose sight of our collective commitment to our children and grandchildren — to hand over a debt-free MNO with a strong economic base and opportunities for generations to come. A debt-free MNO will accelerate our ability to advance on the visions and objectives so well articulated in MNO's Statement of Prime Purpose. Your current leadership at the local, regional and provincial levels are committed to seeing that dream become a reality. It will require continued commitment and sacrifice, but it is achievable if we continue to work together.

If you have any questions about this update, please do not hesitate to contact me or any of my PCMNO colleagues.

Gary Lipinski
President, MNO
November 2011
Economic Development gets another boost at Métis Nation of Ontario

For Métis in Ontario, 2011 has already been a banner year for economic development! In addition to the creation of the Métis Voyageur Development Fund (MVD), the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) will begin to lay the foundation for business support for Métis businesses.

 Effective November 15, 2011, the MNO will provide “Advisory, Support and Referral Services” to the Métis business community in Ontario. This service will assist Métis entrepreneurs seeking to start a company, current business owners wishing to expand, or those seeking professional assistance with their company. Contact information for these services will be provided on the MNO website.

In addition, the MNO will be creating a database of Métis businesses in Ontario. Over the next several months the MNO will reach out to identify Métis businesses in all business sectors. Important business opportunities will be created through the ongoing Pan American Games in 2015 as well as through MNO’s relationships with industry proponents. The MNO wishes to identify, market, and provide opportunities for Métis businesses where possible.

Other initiatives planned this year are the development of a “Tool Kit for Small and Medium Enterprises” with a guide to business resources and funding sources to start or expand businesses, and the creation of a “Business Advisory Committee” comprised of financial and business experts to provide the MNO with guidance on how best to develop economic opportunities arising from its on-going interactions with industry proponents.

Finally, the MNO will host a Métis business forum with the intent of holding an information session on the MVD, providing information about upcoming business opportunities related to the 2015 Pan American Games, training on a topic of interest to Métis business; and listening to Métis businesses about the barriers they face and the supports they would like to see from the MNO to further their businesses.

Keep an eye on the MNO website (www.metisnation.org) for updates about these new and exciting initiatives.

For information contact: Jeanene Meyer Director Intergovernmental Relations (416) 977-9881 ext. 101 jeanene@mmetisnation.org

 Méétis entrepreneur named Business Woman of the Year

A s you may already know, I was chosen for the Business Woman of the Year Award by the Nishnawbe Aski Development Fund, which recognizes Aboriginal business entrepreneurs in Ontario. I had the honour of receiving my award at a special banquet and ceremony on October 26th, in Timmins, Ontario. There were eight awards given and mine was sponsored by Hydro One.

It was a very special evening indeed with about 350 guests in attendance. I want to sincerely thank all those who provided letters of support for this award. I am so grateful for that.

This award was certainly not achieved by me alone! I’ve had so much support from my family, friends and my community since opening The Silver Moccasin that the business has sort of taken on a life of its own. It does require dedication and hard work but I have been truly enjoying every minute of it and hope to continue doing what I love to do while supporting our native artisans. That’s a daily reward in itself!

For more info and list of the other recipients you can visit: www.silvermoccasin.com

Connie Boyd recently received a Business Woman of the Year Award. PHOTO by Gerry Robicheau

ABORIGINAL APPRENTICESHIP CENTRE | SAULT STE. MARIE

Apprenticeship jumpstarts careers in the trades

T he Aboriginal Apprenticeship Centre (AAC) is a partnership between the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) and Sault College, and provides a client-based approach to pursuing careers in the skilled trades to individuals in Sault Ste. Marie and the surrounding area. The AAC’s goal is to increase Aboriginal participation in apprenticeships; increase youth awareness of trades and provide support systems for successful completion of apprenticeship training.

Lyne Sinclair has been the project coordinator for the last two years, however, funding for her contract is coming to an end. The centre has been quite successful and we are pleased to announce that Sault College has agreed to bring Lyne on to their staff. As the project coordinator, Lyne can help you become an apprentice and begin your journey towards a successful career in the trades. MNO will continue to work in partnership with the college to move the initiatives of the centre forward.

If you have any questions or wish to contact Lyne, her office phone number is 705-759-2554 X 2387 and her new email will be lyne.sinclair@saultcollege.ca.

Tiffany Roehrlehuizen, the MNO Regional Employment and Training Coordinator in Thunder Bay has recently accepted an exciting new position with Waasa Airways. Tiffany has been working as the Coordinator in Thunder Bay for several years and has built strong relationships throughout the region. Her dedication and commitment to the Métis people in Region Two have been invaluable. While Tiffany’s professionalism and expertise will be missed we wish her the best in this new chapter in her life.

BUILDING SYSTEMS TECHNICAL ADVISOR INTERNSHIP PROGRAM (BSTAIP)

MNO’s Housing Interns work with Habitat for Humanity

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Building Systems Technical Advisor Internship Program (BSTAIP) interns were on the site of a Habitat for Humanity house on October 18, 2011.

Based in Thunder Bay, the purpose of BSTAIP is to develop a workforce of highly skilled building inspection and energy conservation advisors that will be leaders in the current trends influencing housing.

The interns assisted Habitat for Humanity by reviewing the building’s blueprints, and observing the construction details involved with the new construction in reference to the Ontario Building Code. The interns were supported by Paul Berry, who is one of the instructors at Confederation College who is assisting with the BSTAIP.

Connie Boyd
www.silvermoccasin.com

By Jennifer St. Germain Director, Education and Training OTTAWA

A Métis Cultural and Community Centre for Georgian Bay

The Georgian Bay Métis Council takes the next step towards a proposed Métis Centre

O n October 14, 2011, Georgian Bay Métis Council President, Brenda Larue, was notified by Jason Peltier, Business Development Officer for Waubetek Business Development Corporation, that GBMC was approved for a funding grant to hire a consultant to complete a business plan for the proposed Georgian Bay Métis Cultural and Community Centre.

The council has hired Joe Melrose, a consultant from the firm of RDO Canada to conduct this research. There will be community consultation meetings held in the area to ensure that all concerned citizens can have input into the uses and services to be supplied by this proposed centre.
**Re-Introducing the MNO Youth Council**

After a few years of relatively light activity, The Métis Nation of Ontario Youth Council has been rejuvenated and wants to hear from you!

We would like to introduce your MNO Youth Council Representa- tives and remind you that we are currently looking for Provincial Representatives from Regions, 1, 3, 6 and 9. If you are in one of these areas and would like to be part of the MNOYC, we would love to hear from you. You’ll be hearing from us!

Sign up for the Youth Email Distribution List at www.metisnation.org to find out about Opportunities for Métis Youth!

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**Generation Innovation: Métis Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge takes off!**

By Erin Tomkins MNO Policy Analyst

The Métis Nation of Ontario, with financial support from the Ministry of Economic Development and Innovation and numerous corporate sponsors, has developed an exciting new project designed for Métis youth (aged 13 - 29) interested in entre- preneurship—staring or expanding their own businesses and develop- ing skills in business planning, finance, budgeting and marketing strategies.

Generation Innovation: Métis Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge was launched in mid-October and met with great enthusiasm from around Ontario. Métis youth were asked to submit an application including a rough outline of their business idea or innovation. Phase two of our project involves providing program participants with train- ing and where possible pairing them with a business professional that will provide mentorship in all aspects of entrepreneurship including business planning, marketing and budget development.

In early 2012, participants will submit their completed business plans for review. Those with the best business plans will be flown to Toronto to participate in an intensive (and fun) Skills Summit where they will hone their skills in the all-important “pitch” (think Dragon’s Den). The youth will then pitch their business to a panel of esteemed experts and compete for prizes and glory.

First prize: $1000 cash and a new computer and printer! Second prize: $500 cash! Third prize: $250 cash!

Stay tuned for more exciting updates on the project and our innovative participants!

For additional information please check out the MNO website at www.metisnation.org or email info@generationinnovation.ca.

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**MNO Summer Youth Cultural Program**

This summer, Métis youth were given the opportunity to learn more about their Métis culture and history. A program, 2011 Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Summer Youth Cultural Program designed for Métis youth, was provided in Thunder Bay, Sault Ste. Marie and Midland MNO offices.

The main objective of the program is to equip Métis youth with the knowledge to speak about Métis people, their culture and history. The training and orientation activi- ties encourage the sharing, learning, and celebrating of Métis tradi- tions, with specific emphasis on the Ontario Métis history and culture.
Connecting generations through Métis storytelling

By October Foxley
AHHBC Coordinator
WINDSOR

In September 21, Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Windsor staff was delighted to host the “Connecting Generations—Through Métis Storytelling” event that focused on the importance of sharing the knowledge our Métis Grandmothers, Grandfathers, and Elders have with younger generations in order to preserve the traditions many of our families have forgotten or did not know.

It started with a sumptuous dinner of wild game stew, three sisters salad, butternut squash and apple soup, wild blueberry and plain bannock, and two kinds of cake—wild rice cake (a huge hit and everyone wanted the recipe), and a butternut squash spice cake. Oral historians that I have been working with over the past two years on the research project, the Indigenous Knowledge Network, which is focusing on gathering traditional Métis knowledge from our region, were invited in from Walpole Island, Ontario, to meet some of our community members and share their wisdom on a variety of topics. We were joined by MNO Windsor-Essex Métis Council Senator, Earl Scofield, and Vice President, Wilfred Rochon. Information was shared about child development and the importance of teaching our little ones to use their imaginations instead of buying them electronic toys. We also talked about fishing, farming, and relationships.

By the end of the evening, everyone was feeling very positive about their identity, and they wished the evening could have gone on. Since the event, I have fielded several calls from attendees who raved about the excellent meal, and the fun they had listening and sharing the stories of our people.

I would like to sincerely thank the Elders and Grandmothers who travelled to share with us, and our beloved Senator for his touching story about the tiny cross he has carried since his days serving our country. This very special evening showed us just how hungry our community is to learn more about themselves and their culture, to share in laughter and good food, and, to walk away feeling they have found a place where they belong. Thanks also to my team mates, Janna Mawa, MNO Long Term Care Coordinator, and Danielle Deniau, MNO Community Wellness Coordinator and to one of our community members, Gloria, many thanks for a fabulous meal, everyone loved it!

Journals
An easy and powerful way to accelerate your personal development

By Tracey Dale
Community Wellness Coordinator
BANKCROFT

The Bancroft office of The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) recently held a “Journaling for Wellness” workshop. Participants were given an opportunity to explore different types of journaling, including:

• Journaling thoughts and ideas
• The importance of journaling
• Journaling words from a loved one to pass on through generations
• How and why to keep a house journal
• Benefits of journaling
• Setbacks of journaling

During discussion it was apparent that the number one reason participants didn’t journal was confidentiality and a fear of having their journals read by someone. This lead to discussion on how to keep our journals safe. The group decided that purchasing a security safe to put journals in would be beneficial for those who feel vulnerable.

TIMMINS | UPCOMING HEALING & WELLNESS EVENTS

Timmins -- Healing Together

By Louise Cloutier
Long Term Care Coordinator
TIMMINS

Wow! Time sure flies when you’re having fun! Year end is just around the corner and we still have lots to offer in our surrounding community. First of all, let me say that we are very happy to have Jessie Dolan our Community Wellness Coordinator on our Healing and Wellness Team and Michelle Seguin, who started in November with the Aboriginal Healthy Babies Healthy Children (AHHBC) program.

We have many upcoming events to look forward to. The Long Term Care (LTC) Learning Circle group meets every Thursday at the MNO office to socialize, do crafts, knit, and quilt. We are very fortunate to be partnering with Aboriginal People’s Alliance Northern Ontario, Inabapikin Community Centre, Northern Lights Métis Council, and Ontario Aboriginal HIV/AIDS Strategy for a two-day event in Cochrane on January 17th and 18th. The event is promoted as “Learning Today for a Healthy Tomorrow”.

The event could have gone on. Since the event, I have fielded several calls from attendees who raved about the excellent meal, and the fun they had listening and sharing the stories of our people.

I would like to sincerely thank the Elders and Grandmothers who travelled to share with us, and our beloved Senator for his touching story about the tiny cross he has carried since his days serving our country. This very special evening showed us just how hungry our community is to learn more about themselves and their culture, to share in laughter and good food, and, to walk away feeling they have found a place where they belong. Thanks also to my team mates, Janna Mawa, MNO Long Term Care Coordinator, and Danielle Deniau, MNO Community Wellness Coordinator and to one of our community members, Gloria, many thanks for a fabulous meal, everyone loved it!

THUNDER BAY | Métis HERITAGE

A capote for Captain Ken

By Joan Panizza
Community Wellness Coordinator
THUNDER BAY

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Healing and Wellness Staff in Thunder Bay runs a traditional crafting group every Wednesday from 1:00 to 3:00 pm.

We have been very lucky to have a Métis citizen come forward and volunteer to teach us how to make capotes. Michelle Pringnez is a stellar lady with a wealth of knowledge and resources. We have been making capotes for a few months and enjoy getting together to work on our coats. It’s a process, making something like a coat by hand, but the efforts are well worth it. The best part is that our imagination and creativity are developed and grow as our garments are being completed.

Learn something new, make your own, and you get a warm coat to boot. What could be better? Michelle continues to be a dream volunteer with her knowledge and guidance. She is very dedicated to her Métis heritage and also enjoys attending Métis conferences, tanning hides, putting up preserves, gardening, making other traditional clothing, etc. She comes from a family that hunts, and thanks to her sharing, I have been able to enjoy some deer. Michelle was very gracious to donate a capote to the Thunder Bay Métis Centre recently. We hope to sell raffle tickets for it to help us with the purchase of door prizes for our 2012 Rendezvous.

right: Michelle Pringnez presents a capote to Captain of the Hunt (Region 2), Ken Simard.
Two Tired Cranes
A tale of the trials of parenting
By Jessie Dolan
Community Wellness Coordinator
TIMMINS
Two cranes, Carl and Cindy, decided that they wanted to fill their nest with love, for Cindy had always wanted children of her own. So Carl and Cindy started to get ready for life as parents. Cindy laid three whole eggs that would one day be their children. Day after day she sat on the eggs to keep them warm and protected, and day after day she thanked Carl for bringing food back to the nest for her, even though she wanted to fly very much herself.

Finally, the day came and their children hatched. Three little birds were now theirs to take care of. Carl and Cindy made sure that nothing bad happened to their little ones.

They brought food back to the nest to ensure that they were healthy, and kept a constant watch for other animals, and things that might hurt their children. As the children grew, they became curious and wanted to try things for themselves. They had been watching their parents very closely as they looked for food in the water, ran across the ground, and even flew and dipped and soared through the air.

Carl and Cindy knew that they must teach their children all of these things, but they did not know where to start. The first little crane was running across the field, the second little crane had left the nest to try finding food in the water, and the third adventurous little bird was trying to take flight.

Carl and Cindy tried to get the children together. The first little bird ran right back to the nest as Carl started towards her. The second little bird was stubborn and told Cindy he would not leave until he ate something, for he was having too much fun. And the third little bird was soaring over the water splashing away as she passed her mother.

Carl and Cindy feared that something might hurt their little children, as there are many dangers in the water and animals much bigger than they are. They continued to coax their children back to the nest, but they soon found that keeping all of them in the nest was almost impossible. They very much liked to run and play and soar with each other.

Finally, when the sun started to set their children started to yawn, and jine by one they went back to the nest to sleep and dream of all their adventures that day. Carl and Cindy, so tired from chasing and following their little ones all day, fell asleep right away.

The next morning the children were up and out of the nest with the sun, leaving Carl and Cindy to follow and try to keep their children safe. By the time the sun was up in the middle of the sky Carl and Cindy were again so tired that they sat down by the water.

The first little bird asked them why they were not chasing and playing with them anymore. The second little bird tilted and tried to get them to play for just a little bit longer. And the third little bird sat by her parents to wait and listen, for they had not yet answered the question her sister had asked. Cindy looked at her third child and smiled. When all three were listening she told them that she very much wanted to play with them, but she was very tired because they always went in different directions and wanted to play and learn different things.

The three little birds listened to their mother and decided that they could help. They talked amongst themselves and thought that they could solve their parents’ tiredness.

So it came to be that the three little birds agreed to play together so that their parents did not have to chase them in different directions.

They promised their parents that they would be home for dinner, so they knew they were healthy. Even their teacher told them that they would go and not go, so they knew they were safe.

Carl and Cindy were no longer two tired cranes. They were able to play with their children and watched them grow into big, beautiful cranes like themselves.

Carl and Cindy had their family and they were happier than ever knowing that their children were safe and would one day have little birds of their own.

Gabriel Dumont and his horse. In Dumont’s time the Métis had a reputation for being skilled riders.
A Proud Tradition of Service

Ontario’s new Aboriginal Affairs Minister remembers the sacrifices of Aboriginal people

By Kathleen Wynne
Ontario Minister of Aboriginal Affairs

November 11 is a solemn day for remembrance. Across the country, Canadians gather to honour veterans who served with courage to protect our freedom in times of war and in peace. Among them are the generations of First Nations, Metis and Inuit men and women who have served, and continue to serve, in the Canadian regular and reserve forces.

As my new role as Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, I would like to highlight the proud tradition of military service among Aboriginal people in this country. Of all groups in Canada, Aboriginal people have been among the most willing to volunteer for service.

During the War of 1812, Aboriginal people defended our borders and our shared principles. Inquisitive warriors fought on the side of the British, playing a significant role in preventing the American conquest of Canada. Aboriginal people were exempt from conscription during the First World War, but thousands volunteered to fight overseas, distinguishing themselves with their bravery and skill.

The sacrifices of these brave men and women did not end on the battlefield. Many First Nations veterans returned to Canada stripped of their Indian status and ineligible for the military pensions and land grants provided to their non-Aboriginal comrades. Despite this, Aboriginal people again answered the call during the Second World War. In Ontario, more Status Indians enlisted than in any other province or territory in Canada.

Aboriginal people continued to volunteer during the Korean War and beyond. Inuit, First Nations and Metis people have served in Afghanistan, as peacekeepers and as Canadian Rangers patrolling Canada’s remote areas and northern borders.

This year, we reached out to some of these Aboriginal veterans and began to record their stories. We’ve posted the first of these videos to our website (see below) to help Ontarians learn more about their contributions. Ontarians owe veterans an everlasting debt of gratitude. This Remembrance Day, I hope we all take time to honour the contributions and sacrifices of Aboriginal veterans and Canadian veterans of all backgrounds. Let us never forget.

Aboriginal veteran, Norman Horlock is featured in a video available on-line. www.ontario.ca/aboriginal

Lest We Forget

MNO Veterans participate in Queen’s Park Remembrance Day Ceremonies at the invitation of the Office of the Premier

By Senator Alis B. Kennedy

Toronto

Two Metis Nation of Ontario (MNO) veterans, Harvey Horlock and Senator Alis Kennedy, were honoured to be invited by the Office of the Premier to attend Remembrance Day Ceremonies held in Queen’s Park in Toronto.

“The ceremony was quite emotional and humbling,” said Senator Kennedy. “I was proud to wear my Canadian Decoration (CD) and even prouder to have my father’s World War II medals in my left pocket.”

Premier Dalton McGuinty spoke at the event as did Major-General (retired) Richard Rohmer, OC, CMM, DFC, QSO, CD, QC, CD, CD, CD, CD, OL, QC, QC, QC, JD, and Brigadier-General FA Lewis, FA, MSM, CD, Major-General Rohmer, who is 87 years young, is Canada’s most decorated citizen and Brigadier-General Lewis currently serves as Commander of the Joint Task Force Central/Land Force Central Area.

Senator Kennedy also attended and took several photographs. Thank you, Jim for providing me with your support of Metis veterans and your commitment to our people. As the parade assembled at Branch 82, the wind was blowing with great strength, and cold to boot; a certain pride came over me in that I was carrying the Metis Batoche flag to honour of our veterans. Just as we started to march, the wind blew off the top clip, which held the Metis Batoche flag in its proper place on the pike I was carrying. I became very uncomfortable knowing that the Batoche flag was now flying at half-mast. The Sergeant-at-Arms instructed me to remain in the Colour Party, so I had to keep going. I noticed, however, that the flags that were flying at the Legion Branch and government buildings in Port Credit were also flying at half-mast. It was then that I realized that perhaps it was meant as a tribute to our brave Metis veterans that died fighting in the War of 1812, Batoche, World War I and II, Korea, Afghanistan and many other conflicts around the world.

Arriving at the cenotaph, my eyes were met with a sea of wreaths representing many veteran organizations throughout Canada and abroad. This was overwhelming because so many were being remembered for their contributions. It was a reminder of the number who crossed the oceans to far-away lands and battled for freedom. Within the sea of wreaths, was the Metis Veterans’ wreath. Pride again filled my heart in the knowledge that the Metis are part of the Canadian fabric, of honours and honours. Among all Canadian veterans, we are now being recognized for having contributed to Canadian freedom.

PHOTO BY Jim Tolles

By Joseph Paquette
Secretary, MNO Veterans’ Council

T he sea of wreaths at the Port Credit Cenotaph, a wreath created by local MNO citizens to honour Metis veterans is third from the left in the second row.

As we do every November 1st, this year we honoured all the servicemen and women who contributed to the freedom of our country, Canada. Once again, I had the privilege of participating in the Remembrance Day Parade sponsored by the local Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 82, located in Port Credit.

It was good to see many familiar and friendly faces. Mr. Jim Tolles, a Credit River MNO citizen, also attended and took several photographs. Thank you, Jim for your support of Metis veterans and your commitment to our people.

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PHOTO BY Jim Tolles

Sea of Wreaths
**Witness to Resistance: Under Fire in Nicaragua**

*By Joseph Paquette, MNO Veterans Council Secretary*

Honouring Our Veterans

By Joseph Paquette

MÉTIS VOYAGEUR | Winter 2012, Issue 48

**REMEMBRANCE DAY | A SPECIAL TRIBUTE**

Métis Veterans Keep the Faith

It is something that never happened to me before this life,” explained Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) veteran Wilfred Rochon, when speaking about attending this year’s national Remembrance Day Ceremony in Ottawa. “It is one of those things that I will always remember, like joining the army.”

Wilfred was selected by the MNO Veterans’ Council to attend the National Ceremony. The council had raised funds at the MNO Annual General Assembly in Parry Sound in August to support bringing World War II veterans to the Ottawa ceremony and these funds helped cover the cost of Wilfred coming from Windsor. Wilfred had never attended the national ceremony before and the experience was very special to him. Participating in the ceremony with his fellow veterans he said: "Felt good, it felt like being home."

Wilfred served in the Canadian Army from 1944 to 1946. He served overseas in the Mediterranean and North Africa. His assignment was a term as a guard at the Ravenhurst Prisoner of War facility (for German officers) in British Columbia.

Mr. Rochon was always keenly aware of his Métis heritage and served the MNO in 1998, when along with fellow MNO veteran, Earl Scofield, they formed the Windsor Métis Council. Wilfred was the council’s first president.

Wilfred Rochon was joined at the ceremony by two other MNO veterans, George Kelly and Shaun Redmond, and by Executive Senator Reta Gordon. Senator Gordon and Shaun have for the last several years participated in the national ceremony by laying a wreath at the National Cenotaph on behalf of the MNO. Shaun comes from a long line of Métis who have been involved in the military. He is part of a small group of Indigenous peoples whose right to self-determination must be recognized and affirmed.

The history of Métis people is marked by continually standing up against oppression and bearing witness to atrocity. Struggle and conflicts over the last 200 years have honed a keen sense of seeing. “Witness to Resistance” is full of first-hand accounts. Reading it today, far removed from the jungle and decades later, their testimony sends shivers down my spine. In the chapter titled “Under Attack at Blackwater (Layaskiu)” Chartier documents an unexplored series of attacks. At one point following the aerial attack which Chartier is able to capture on tape, Misurasata leader, Brooklyn Riviera, (p. 186) states: “If the Sandinista revolutionary government did not want the world to know about their ill-treatment of Miskito, Mayangana and Rama Indigenous peoples...”

They travelled to Nicaragua to find out what the Sandinista revolutionary government did not want the world to know about their ill-treatment of Miskito, Mayangana and Rama Indigenous peoples. Not all must agree this is a book worth reading. But as a reminder that it is Indigenous peoples who suffer colonization and the struggles by others who fundamentally do not have their interests at heart. It reinforces the fact that Indigenous rights can’t be a subset of revolutionary movements, they must be upheld by all of mother’s brothers also served in the Credit River Métis Council. The wreath was created by members of the Credit River Métis Council.

Mr. Rochon remembers his uncle with the greatest fondness. Wilfred was selected by the MNO Veterans’ Council to attend the National Ceremony. The council had raised funds at the MNO Annual General Assembly in Parry Sound in August to support bringing World War II veterans to the Ottawa ceremony and these funds helped cover the cost of Wilfred coming from Windsor. Wilfred had never attended the national ceremony before and the experience was very special to him. Participating in the ceremony with his fellow veterans he said: “Felt good, it felt like being home.”

Wilfred served in the Canadian Army from 1944 to 1946. He served overseas in the Mediterranean and North Africa. His assignment was a term as a guard at the Ravenhurst Prisoner of War facility (for German officers) in British Columbia.

Mr. Rochon was always keenly aware of his Métis heritage and served the MNO in 1998, when along with fellow MNO veteran, Earl Scofield, they formed the Windsor Métis Council. Wilfred was the council’s first president.

Wilfred Rochon was joined at the ceremony by two other MNO veterans, George Kelly and Shaun Redmond, and by Executive Senator Reta Gordon. Senator Gordon and Shaun have for the last several years participated in the national ceremony by laying a wreath at the National Cenotaph on behalf of the MNO. Shaun comes from a long line of Métis who have been involved in the military. He is part of a small group of Indigenous peoples whose right to self-determination must be recognized and affirmed.

The history of Métis people is marked by continually standing up against oppression and bearing witness to atrocity. Struggle and conflicts over the last 200 years have honed a keen sense of seeing. “Witness to Resistance” is full of first-hand accounts. Reading it today, far removed from the jungle and decades later, their testimony sends shivers down my spine. In the chapter titled “Under Attack at Blackwater (Layaskiu)” Chartier documents an unexplored series of attacks. At one point following the aerial attack which Chartier is able to capture on tape, Misurasata leader, Brooklyn Riviera, (p. 186) states: “If the Sandinista revolutionary government did not want the world to know about their ill-treatment of Miskito, Mayangana and Rama Indigenous peoples...”

They travelled to Nicaragua to find out what the Sandinista revolutionary government did not want the world to know about their ill-treatment of Miskito, Mayangana and Rama Indigenous peoples. Not all must agree this is a book worth reading. But as a reminder that it is Indigenous peoples who suffer colonization and the struggles by others who fundamentally do not have their interests at heart. It reinforces the fact that Indigenous rights can’t be a subset of revolutionary movements, they must be upheld by all of mother’s brothers also served in the Credit River Métis Council. The wreath was created by members of the Credit River Métis Council. The wreath was created by members of the Credit River Métis Council.
Canadian Women’s Foundation is pleased to announce the call for proposals for initiatives working with girls aged 9 to 13. Funding will be available for 25 – 28 grants and will include both program grants and network grants. These are multi-year grants for a period of 4 years.

**a) Girls Program**

We will select approximately 25 programs focused on delivering programs to girls between the ages of 9 and 13 that are using one or more of the following approaches: leadership/empowerment; physical activities/sports; science/math/technology; media literacy; financial literacy; and/or Aboriginal culture and teachings.

Aboriginal culture and teaching is being added this year as an approach that will be considered for the girls’ programs. This decision is based on our learning from the past grant cycle. Previous evaluations demonstrated a positive impact on the lives of the Aboriginal girls in those programs that integrated cultural teachings into their programming.

All of these approaches are ways to engage girls in programs that will help build protective factors, such as confidence, connectedness, and critical thinking skills. These protective factors can mitigate the challenging environments girls may face and help them make positive choices along the way and avoid risky behavior.

Girls’ program grants will range from $25,000 to $40,000 annually for a four-year period.

**b) Enhanced Mentoring Component - Nancy Baron Mentorship for Girls Program**

Mentoring has been recognized as a “best practice” in promoting strengths and resilience and has always been an expectation in the funded girls’ programs. However, in this grants cycle, we are providing additional resources for organizations to create intentional, comprehensive group mentoring initiatives to complement their girls’ program.

Group mentoring involves matching groups of girls with one or more adults, older youth or Elders, in a supportive environment where they participate in group activities and ongoing intentional relationships are formed. Generally, in group mentoring there should not be more than four mentees per mentor, and most groups where there is a team of mentors involved includes three mentors for a group of ten girls.

For those organizations selected for funding to implement their group mentoring component, an additional $25,000 to $40,000 annually will be available for two years, and smaller amounts or supports in the other two years.

**Network Development Grants**

We will make up to three grants to organizations that are working to build the capacity of girl-serving organizations and to strengthen connections between programs and organizations working with girls in the above noted program areas. Network grants selected will be awarded a maximum of $40,000 annually for a four-year period.

**Diversity of Grants**

The selection process will ensure that the range of funded programs serves diverse populations of girls all across Canada.

Deadline Dec 20, 2011.
Opinions expressed in the following commentary are solely those of the writer and do not reflect the policies of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) or the viewpoints of MNO officials or staff.

THUNDER BAY COMMUNITY NEWS

Fighting Racism with Facts on Crime

The crime rate is going down but media creates a “climate of fear”

A boriginal leaders in Thunder Bay are criticizing the media’s role in creating a “climate of fear” underlined with racism among the public. The high profile given to the latest death of a young Native man and recent media reports of Thunder Bay being the “murder capital” of Canada.

Leaders in the city are also cautioning the public against reacting with racism against the Aboriginal community in the city, noting that crime rates continue to fall and a number of programs are having success dealing with underlying social issues.

“Overall, our crime rate is going down in Thunder Bay,” said Wendy Landry, President of the Thunder Bay Métis Council. “The average person is getting a blanketed perception (of the Aboriginal community). It’s not right and it’s not fair.”

During the past few weeks a number of letters to the editor have been appearing in the Thunder Bay Chronicle-Journal placing the number of letters to the editor have multiplied (of the Aboriginal community). It’s not right and it’s not fair.”

From Wawatay News On-line see original story at: www.wawataynews.ca/archive/all/2011/11/10/fighting-racism-facts-crime_22040

A Voyager reader weighs in on province’s Green Energy plans

continued page 2

huge difference. However, the price offered for electricity from other green sources is closer to 15 cents a kWh. You can remember all this online. The province hoped these high prices would drive innovation and job creation. Now, according to their Oct 31st press release, they will be looking at price reductions and possibly other changes.

All this is part of a larger, decade old effort by the provincial Liberals to decrease or eliminate coal fired generation that provides around 20% of our electricity. In that regard the province has received some unwarranted help. The ongoing economic slump, off-shoring and the high Canadian dollar has reduced the demand for electricity in Ontario and this may be one of the reasons the province started exporting power in 2006. The province is not exporting because of surplus green power. According to the Ottawa Canadian Press release from the Green Energy Act amounted to 95 megawatts (MW) of power – the equivalent of 34,982 MW of generation that currently exists in Ontario.” So green energy is already over produced.

There are many more aspects to this issue but I’ll end by saying that apart from new generation, province, like much of North America, needs improved transmission facilities as much as more generation. Roughly 20% of the power that is generated in Ontario is lost during transmission and through power management. Electricity has to be managed in order to keep it uniform everywhere and to do that you have to throw some of it away.

A more modern transmission facility would reduce these losses. We wouldn’t take as much of an improvement to match the total green energy flowing through the system.

The good news is that there are provincial incentives for transmission projects and generation projects with Métis ownership.

The Aboriginal Loan Guarantee Program and Aboriginal Energy Partnerships Program both appear to support projects with green energy facilities for green power projects. In addition, there is the Jobs for Nova Power Adder of the Ontario Financing Authority that could provide substantial loan and guarantees, the young man on the other end of the phone awkwardly confirmed that I, as an individual have always respected the policies of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) or the viewpoints of MNO officials or staff.

“Nevertheless, the government has continued to be a big economic driver for Thunder Bay,” the mayor said. “They buy a huge volume of products made in Thunder Bay, and committing crimes? Nobody has been able to solve that problem.”

Thunder Bay Crime Prevention Council was established in 2010 with the intent of educating the public on the root causes of crime and creating strategies for dealing with those causes. The council, made up of representatives of 28 organizations plus public and youth representatives, started its work by completing a preliminary audit of crime in Thunder Bay as Sheila Hendrick, acting coordinator or the council noted, the causes of crime often relate to social issues like drugs, alcohol and poverty that affect Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people alike. “A lot of things are happening to address those social issues, but the interpretation is often that nothing is being done,” Hendrick said.

The preliminary crime audit found that most crime in Thunder Bay is either domestic cases or public intoxication, and that “stranger violence” crime was extremely rare. The audit also states that people in conflict with the law “typically have histories of childhood abuse and neglect, and very low education and employment levels.”

Landry added that when it comes to Aboriginal people committing crime, the effect of residential schools cannot be overstated.

“Overall, our crime rate is going down in Thunder Bay,” said Wendy Landry, President of the Thunder Bay Métis Council. “The average person is getting a blanketed perception (of the Aboriginal community). It’s not right and it’s not fair.”

Landry said that much of the growth of the Aboriginal population in Thunder Bay is due to Native people coming into the city for education opportunities, either in high school or post-secondary education. “What’s the best way to get people away from crime? Give them an education,” Landry said. “We now have the most ever Aboriginal people going to post-secondary education.”

“Bunow, Chu bin contante dlouvrage du groupe qui mea avec lii michif. Oma com- men par sofrn sort prnt hvv a l’Assemblee Generale de la Nation Metie du l’Ontario”. On s’ouse da a chasse a lagual quiu ase war. Yaw que- tunn a Timmins quaw donné un magoral qui spasse law. Yaw que-

Bunow, Chu bin contante dlouvrage du groupe qui mea avec lii michif. Oma com- men par sofrn sort prnt hvv a l’Assemblee Generale de la Nation Metie du l’Ontario”.

Comité de Michel: Aline Cimino, Helenaire Savard, Joseph Paquette, Juliene St Denis, Liise Mallete, Louise Clouten, Lynne Picotte, Michel Thomas, Maurice Sarrazin, Natalie Durchor, Rousseau, Pauline Sauleau, Richard Meullier, Maurice Sarrazin, Francine Picote.
YOUR FIRST LINE OF DEFENCE
• Stay dry; even a few minutes in cold water can be fatal. When clothes get wet, they lose about 90% of their value. Wool loses less; cotton, down and synthetics lose more.
• Beware of the wind. A slight breeze carries heat away from bare skin much faster than still air. Wind drives cold air under and through clothing. Wind refrigerates wet clothes by evaporating moisture from the surface. Wind multiplies the problems of staying dry.
• Understand Cold. Most hypothermia cases develop in air temperatures between -2 degrees C and +10 degrees C (30F and 50F). Most people simply can’t believe such temperatures can be dangerous. They fatally underestimate the danger of being wet at such temperatures.

YOUR SECOND LINE OF DEFENCE
• Be brave enough to give up reaching the peak, or getting the fish, or whatever you had in mind.
• Get out of the wind/rain. Build a fire. Concentrate on making your camp or bivouac as secure and comfortable as possible.

YOUR THIRD LINE OF DEFENCE
Watch for these symptoms:
• Uncontrollable fits of shivering;
• Vague, slow, slurred speech;
• Memory lapses and incoherence;
• Immobile, fumbling hands;
• Frequent stumbling, or a lurching gait;
• Drowsiness (to sleep is to die);
• Apparent exhaustion or the inability to get up after a rest.

YOUR LAST LINE OF DEFENCE
• Get the victim out of the wind and rain.
• Strip off all wet clothes. If the victim is only mildly affected get them into dry clothes and a warm sleeping bag. Well-wrapped, warm (not hot) rocks or canteens will hasten recovery; provide warm drinks.
• If the victim is semi-conscious try to keep them awake. Give warm drinks if possible. Put the naked victim in a sleeping bag with another person (also stripped). Skin to skin contact is the most effective treatment.
• Build a fire to warm the camp.

Hypothermia is defined as having a core body temperature less than 95 degrees fahrenheit or 35 degrees Celsius. The time to prevent hypothermia is before it happens.

Step One: Exposure and Exhaustion
While you voluntarily exercise to stay warm, your body makes involuntary adjustments to preserve normal temperature in the vital organs. These adjustments are controlled by the part of the brain called the hypothalamus, which is responsible for recognizing alterations in body temperature and responding appropriately. Most heat is lost at the skin surface by convection, conduction, radiation, and evaporation. If the environment gets colder, the body may need to generate more heat by shivering (increasing muscle activity that promotes heat formation). But if heat loss is greater than the body’s ability to make more, then the body’s core temperature will fall.

Step Two: Hypothermia
The body starts to slow as the temperature drops. Aside from the cold that is felt and the shivering that may occur, mental function is most affected initially. A particular danger of hypothermia is that it develops gradually, and since it affects thinking and reasoning, it may go unnoticed. The heart and brain are most sensitive to cold, and the electrical activity in these organs slows in response to cold. If the body temperature continues to decrease, organs begin to fail, and eventually death will occur.
As has happened for the last number of years, on Louis Riel Day the Law Society of Upper Canada partnered with the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) to provide public education events related to legal issues surrounding Métis rights. This year’s program included a panel of three prominent Métis rights lawyers as well as a reading from Giller Prize-winning Métis author, Joseph Boyden.

It was standing room only in the Law Society’s Convocation Hall for Boyden’s reading. The excerpt was preceded by a reception, which included greetings from MNO President, Gary Lipinski; Law Society Treasurer, Laurie Pawlitza; and, Ontario Superior Court Justice, Todd Ducharme. Boyden then read from Louis Riel and Gabriel Dumont. Published in 2010, as part of Penguin Books’ “Extraordinary Canadians” series, Boyden’s treatment of Riel and Dumont provided a fresh and sometimes controversial insight into these two seminal figures and how they shaped Canada.

The legal panel discussion took place in the Barristers’ Lounge and also attracted a standing room only crowd. Entitled “Canada and Riel’s People: Promises Made, Promises Kept?” the panel featured Jean Teillet, who is descended from Louis Riel’s brother and who defended Métis rights in the historic R. v. Powley Supreme Court of Canada case, Jason Madden, who is Chief Legal Counsel for the MNO and has been involved in numerous Métis rights cases across the Homeland; and Jim Aldridge, who is going before the Supreme Court of Canada on December 13 for Manitoba Métis Federation Inc., et al. v. Attorney General of Canada, et al. (Manitoba)

All three speakers provided excellent historical background on the Métis in Canada as issues of Métis rights are tightly woven into the fabric of Canadian history. Current legal cases involving the Métis inevitably require lawyers to establish that long-held Métis rights have been denied and need to be restored. Madden cut a wide swath through history discussing the implications to Métis rights of scrip; The Dominion Lands Act; The Constitution Act, 1982; Powley; and, reconciliation processes with First Nations, as well as R. v. Hirsekorn, an Alberta Harvesting Case that he is currently litigating on behalf of the Métis Nation of Alberta. Referring to a wealth of historical documentation, Teillet demonstrated how Ontario Métis had actively pursued their rights with various colonial governments and officials and explained the relevance of this history to current Métis rights cases. Her presentation clearly demonstrated the need to learn more about Métis history in Ontario.

Aldridge provided an exhaustive review of the upcoming Manitoba Métis Federation case, which has been ongoing since 1981. He explained how the Provisional Métis Government had successfully negotiated Manitoba’s entry into Confederation and won various concessions from the federal government. He went on to explain how the majority of 1.4 million acres of land that was to go to the Métis was never properly awarded, which is the basis of the MMF case to the Supreme Court.

LOUIS RIEL DAY • ACROSS THE PROVINCE

MÉTIS RIGHTS | LAW SOCIETY OF UPPER CANADA

Promises Made, Promises Kept?

Métis writer Joseph Boyden speaking at the MNO/Law Society of Upper Canada Louis Riel Day event.

Canada on December 13 for Manitoba Métis Federation Inc., et al. v. Attorney General of Canada, et al. (Manitoba)
years to do it; it ended up doing it Teillet. “The government took 15 about what Louis Riel was fighting Manitoba Act. “The case is directly that Riel had negotiated into The million acres of land in Manitoba Métis Federation and concerns 1.4 continued from page 28 by a lottery, and then ended up only issuing pieces of paper. Less than one per cent of the land ended up in the hands of the Métis. So, lest we think that the land issues and all the issues that progress has been made in Ontario MNO acknowledged that some titles are still being fought, the ruled, they’re not.”

Riel fought and died for are set- itself where a large number of could be seen at the ceremony Some evidence of this progress towards achieving Riel’s goals. President Lipinski said, “to the MNO is continuing his work. Although Riel’s work remains unfinished there is no doubt that the MNO is continuing his work. ‘It may fall to future generations,’ said President Lipinski, ‘to the youth that are here today, to carry on, because that work will take time; but as long as we are making progress in the right direction, and we are, then I think we should cel- ebrate that.’”

The ceremony left no doubt that Riel’s execution, 126 years before, had not stopped the Métis cause, and in fact, at Métis youth Conlin Sawchuk stated: “The Heart of Louis Riel is alive and beating with us today.”
The heart of Louis Riel is alive and beating today

It is up to us, not necessarily up to the Métis Nation of Ontario. We are the umbrella; we might be able to help you, might be able to help facilitate you, but it is your responsibility to transfer that culture, that knowledge, to be proud of who you are.

As happens every year, on November 16, 2011, Metis people all across Ontario gathered for Louis Riel Day events. The provincial Louis Riel Day ceremony was held at Queen’s Park in Toronto at the Northwest Rebellion Monument. While aspects of the day definitely are celebratory, there is always a sombre undercurrent. “November 16 marks one of the darkest moments in Canadian history,” explained Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) President, Gary Lipinski, at the provincial ceremony. “It marks a day when Canada went completely off the rails.” November 16 is the day in 1885 when the Canadian Government executed Riel for leading the Northwest Resistance in defense of the Métis. Sorrowsful remembrance is always part of Louis Riel Day, as MNO Vice-chair Sharon McBride explained when she described her first trip to Batoche, site of the last stand of the Métis during the Resistance. “When I was walking among the ruins, and I thought about what happened there,” she explained, “it made me think about the families who lived there, fought there, and survived there. It was so overwhelming for me; you really feel it in your heart.”

While a sense of loss did underscore Riel Day, it was Riel’s cause that was front-and-centre for those in attendance. “Riel was only seeking that the rightful place of the Métis within Canada be recognized and respected,” stated President Lipinski, “and that the Métis way of life be protected within Confederation.” Corin Sawchuk, who represented Métis youth at the ceremony and who shares a common ancestor with Riel, eloquently described what the Métis leader had set out to accomplish. “He attempted to create a truly equal society where the rights of minorities were recognized—a truly democratic state,” stated Sawchuk. “I think it is important to celebrate today the contribution of Louis Riel to our country and the Métis by sharing our culture, our stories, our language, our entrepreneurial spirit and our profound understanding and respect for the environment. If Canada can embrace its history and tap into the knowledge of our ancestors, this would be to the benefit of all our fellow citizens as well as future generations.”

President Lipinski explained that even though Riel did not achieve his goals in his lifetime, the work towards his goals has never stopped. “In 1885, Riel offered Canada an opportunity to bargain in good faith that was harshly rejected,” stated President Lipinski, “but today the MNO continues to make that offer. While we have seen some progress in the last several years there is still much to be done before Riel’s vision becomes a reality.” The Métis quest and progress thus far in realizing the vision of Louis Riel was on the minds of many people attending the ceremony. One of the most direct examples of the ongoing work of achieving Riel’s goals was touched upon by Métis lawyer, Jean Teillet, a descendent of Riel’s brother. She described the case coming to the Supreme Court of Canada on December 13th. It is

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