Métis students embrace their culture and make lifelong connections during four-day retreat  

See pages 3 - 5

Métis artist helps design TO2015 medals

Strawberry Ceremony seeks justice for Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women

Métis youth honoured for her achievements
Youth enjoy a bonfire at the 2015 Métis Nation of Ontario Infinite Reach March Break Camp.
March break campers learning traditional dances.
March Break Camp participants got to experience nature, and tap into their Métis pride through workshops and snowshoe hikes

(Cont’d from page 3)

A favourite camp activity for many of the participants was the snow shoe hike. “Just being outside in the woods with the nature surrounding us, it’s just amazing,” said Sudbury student Melanie-Rose Frappier. “This is my third year here at the Infinite Reach March Break Camp, and every time I get to learn new things.”

Participant Alexandre Fox McCoy had never had the opportunity to go snowshoeing before. “We really got to enjoy the nature setting [and] really get in touch with [our] nature side,” he said.

MNO Victims Services Coordinator Manika Depooter and MNO Violence Against Aboriginal Women Coordinator Sahra McLean led two Healing and Wellness sessions. They focussed on Métis healing blankets and the Faceless Dolls project—an art project originally developed by the Native Women’s Association of Canada that has been customized for the MNO to commemorate the lives of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls. These workshops embraced one of the main themes of the camp—honouring Métis women and one’s self as a Métis person. Cobourg student Hannah Bazinet enjoyed the healing blankets workshop, which she said has helped her come to terms with some of the stuff she’s been dealing with as a teenager.

This year also included workshops on Youth Suicide Prevention led by MNO Consultant and Toronto and York Region Métis Council President Tera Beaulieu. Tera is currently completing her PhD in Counselling and Psychology at the OISE-University of Toronto. Her research examines the supports and challenges of Métis traditional knowledge in addressing the life transition needs (mental health, education and employment) of urban Métis homeless peoples.

One of her goals is to help youth build and maintain self-esteem and pride in who they are as Métis people and realize the strength they can draw from their communities. Tera said that “one of the most beautiful things about participating [in the camp] is really the sense of community and belonging that emerges organically when you bring Métis people together in a circle or in a room.”

Bringing Métis youth together at events like this camp is key, according to Tera, as it allows them to listen and learn from one another and build a sense of connection and community. “From a health and wellness perspective we know that those are critical pieces to achieving health and wellbeing,” said Tera. “It helps in breaking down that sense that I am alone, or I am isolated in my experiences of being bullied or experiencing abuse or not really being sure where I should go in the next step of my journey with respect to education. Having everyone sit together, they get to learn from one another and feel validated in their different experiences.”

Students also participated in workshops that provided them with an overview of the future job market, and information on various post-secondary opportunities and potential funding. March Break Camp participants also took part in a resume writing workshop led by MNO Interim Supervisor of Labour Market Projects Rae-Anna Gardner. PCMNO Senator Verna Porter-Brunelle and Métis Knowledge Holder Joe Faquette were also in attendance. Every morning they led the group in prayer and shared Métis culture and heritage with the students. MNO Manager of Education and Special Projects Scott Carpenter says that bringing Métis youth and elders together at events is essential.

“We have our elders who are sharing their stories, and from our youth come different types of questions that we have not asked in the past, so it challenges us to think beyond what we’ve known and encourages us to keep learning,” he explains. “The MNO is looking to our youth for the future. We’re proud of who they are and what they’re going to be able to bring to the Nation as we move forward.”

(Cont’d on page 5)
MARCH BREAK CAMP 2015

According to Joe Paquette, the camp gives youth “an idea on how the ancestors related to the land. They come away from the camp not only with good positive exposure but also with that sense of belonging, that continuance of lineage, that ancestral connection to that land that sustains us all.”

Each day concluded with the students gathered around a campfire to unwind. On the final night, the campers joined together for a wolf howl in hopes of hearing nearby wolf packs answer their calls. At the end of the week it was clear that many great friendships and connections had been made, not just with each other, but with the Infinite Reach Facilitators, MNO staff and community members.

As the camp came to a close, Senator Porter-Brunelle observed that many of the participants were getting teary-eyed but told them: “This is not the end—you can go back to your communities and share what you learned. Be proud of what you learned.”

- MNO Senator Verna Porter-Brunelle

Campers made life-long connections with students and facilitators from throughout the province.
Métis Nation delegates participate in National Roundtable on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

by | MNO Staff

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Chair Francine Picotte and NNO Manager of Victim Services Jennifer Lord were among the leaders that met on February 27, 2015 in Ottawa at the Marriott Hotel to discuss needed action to prevent and address violence against Indigenous women and girls. The event was organized by several indigenous groups, including the Native Women’s Association of Canada and the Assembly of First Nations.

The Métis Nation delegation was composed of Métis National Council (MNC) President Clément Chartier, MNC Vice-President and Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) President David Chartrand, Women of the Métis Nation (WNM) President Melanie Omnesho, Métis Elder Angie Cerar, Métis Nation of Ontario Chair France Picotte, MNO staff Jennifer Lord, Provincial Chair for Métis Women BC Clara Morin-Dal Col, MNA Women representative Muriel Stanley Venne, and MNC Communications Officer Ke Ning.

The Roundtable opened with prayers by Algonquin Elder Peter Decontie, Métis Elder Angie Cerar, and Inuit Elder Sally Webster, followed by presentations from four representatives who were selected from the People’s Gathering—a public event held on February 26 where participants discussed solutions and made recommendations to end violence against Indigenous women and girls. The presentations provided general context and reflection on the themes for discussion and recommendations for action. The Roundtable discussion focused on three themes: prevention and awareness, community safety plans and protocols, and policing measures and justice responses.

Delegates of the National Roundtable committed to continue working together to coordinate actions to prevent and end violence against Indigenous women and girls, including the commitment to hold a second National Roundtable in 2016. They also adopted the Framework for Action to Prevent and Address Violence Against Indigenous Women and Girls, and accepted the offer by Premier Selinger that a national conference on policing and justice be held prior to the 2016 session.

President Lipinski attends the Métis Economic Development Symposium

by | MNO Staff

On March 18, 2015, Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) President Gary Lipinski attended the Métis Economic Development Symposium III (MEDS) in Winnipeg alongside the Honourable David Gravelle, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, and MNO Director of Intergovernmental Affairs Joanne Mayer.

Each symposium brings together Métis organizations, governments and industry leaders to build new relationships that will enable Métis to fully share in economic development opportunities across Canada.

“The Métis Nation of Ontario is pleased that the Métis Economic Development Symposium provided the opportunity to highlight the progress we have made working together with the Government of Ontario,” said President Lipinski.

“The achievements we have realized through the MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement, the Métis Voyageur Development Fund, green energy contracts and other initiatives are making a difference for Métis in Ontario as well as strengthening the whole Ontario economy.”

The MNO and the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs have built a strong relationship while working together to make concrete progress on meaningful employment and business development for Métis people across the province. By working in partnership with one another, they are ensuring that Métis people have the opportunity to succeed and fully participate in the workforce and the economy.

“This symposium is a great opportunity to learn new ideas and initiatives, and share the work we’ve done with the Métis Nation of Ontario,” said the Honourable David Zimmer. “We are committed to working together to ensure that Métis people have every opportunity to succeed and play an ever more significant role in the economy.”

At the symposium, the Honourable Bernard Valcourt, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, and the President of the Métis National Council, Clément Chartier, signed an Economic Development Accord.

Northern leaders meet to discuss Northern Ontario Growth Plan

by | MNO Staff

On February 12, 2015, a group of municipal, provincial and First Nations leaders gathered at Sault Ste. Marie’s Delta Hotel to discuss the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario, 2011. The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) was represented by PCMNO Secretary/Treasurer Tim Pile.

The long-range, 25-year Growth Plan was announced by the province on March 4, 2011 and is designed to diversify the region’s traditional resource-based industries, stimulate new investment and entrepreneurship, and nurture new and emerging sectors with high growth potential. The Growth Plan’s policies are built upon six themes, which contribute to the region’s long-term sustainability and prosperity: economy, people, communities, Aboriginal peoples, infrastructure and environment.

The MNO’s participation in this event is another indication of the MNO’s growing role in Ontario and the esteem the MNO is held in by all levels of government.
MNO builds relationships with Ontario’s leading mineral developers

by | MNO Staff

The Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada (PDAC) is a national association representing the mineral exploration and development industry. The association’s convention is the world’s largest annual gathering of the mineral industry, focusing on exploration, discovery and development of new mines and innovative developments. The 2015 PDAC Convention was held March 1-4 at the Metro-Toronto Convention Centre.

The Métis Nation of Ontario’s (MNO) presence at the PDAC conference built upon the MNO’s mandate to foster new relationships with mining companies operating within the Métis Nation’s traditional harvesting territories. Mineral proponents impacting the lands and waterways traditionally used by Métis communities have the Duty to Consult and Accommodate with the MNO.

“Mineral exploration and development is an important part of Ontario’s economy and MNO’s increased involvement with mineral proponents promises new opportunities for Métis people to benefit from potential education and training programs, as well as employment for Métis citizens and businesses,” said President Lipinski.

The MNO was well-represented at the conference by MNO Kenora Metropolitan Councillor Marcel Lafrance, PCMNO Regional Councillors Marcel Lafrance, Juliette Denis, Theresa Stenlund, and Ernie Gatien.

MNO and Ministry of Transportation take part in information exchange meetings

by | MNO Staff

On March 13, representatives from the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) from Regions One, Two, Three and Four, and the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) met at the DaVinci Center in Thunder Bay for an information exchange meeting. On March 21 another information exchange meeting took place in Toronto with MNO representatives from Regions Six, Seven, Eight and Nine. For both information exchange meetings, MTO representatives presented information on understanding MTO’s class environmental assessment, and other topics relevant to the Regions in attendance.

MNO Associate Director of Education & Way of Life Dr. Brian Tucker presented information on the MNO Traditional Knowledge Study Process and Director of Intergovernmental Relations Joanne Meyer presented information on the consultation process with MNO communities and the MNO’s new corporation—Infinity Investments LP.

Amanda Rheame to perform at Toronto Pan Am Games

by | MNO Staff

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Citizen Amanda Rheame is the newest Métis artist to be added to the lineup of entertainers performing at the Toronto 2015 Pan Am / Parapan Am Games (TO2015) Aboriginal Pavilion. Rheame is set to perform at the Garrison Commons (adjacent to Fort York) on July 26, 2015. Earlier this month, it was announced that Métis fiddler Sierra Noble will also be performing at TO2015.

“I am excited to be included in this great event,” said Rheame. “It is great that Métis performers like myself are being included. I see this as a great opportunity to let people from all over the Americas learn more about our story.”

Creating meaningful Aboriginal participation is a focus of TO2015. The Aboriginal Pavilion cultures of the Americas at three locations across the city of Toronto: the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto, Garrison Commons (adjacent to Fort York), and Planet IndigenUs at Harbourfront Centre.

The Toronto Pan Am Games take place from July 10 to 26 and the Parapan Am Games from August 7 to 15 and will involve municipalities stretching from Oshawa to Welland. During the games, close to 7,000 athletes from across Latin America, South America, the Caribbean and North America will put their years of intense training, perseverance and sacrifice to the test in world-class competition in 36 Pan Am sports and 15 Parapan Am sports.

MNO Citizen Amanda Rheame will play at the 2015 TORONTO Pan Am Games.

Representatives from the Métis Nation of Ontario Regions One, Two, Three and Four, and the Ministry of Transportation attend an information exchange meeting in Thunder Bay on March 13.

Representatives from the Métis Nation of Ontario Regions Six, Seven, Eight and Nine, and the Ministry of Transportation attend an information exchange meeting on March 21.
Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Community Relations team was busy throughout February and March, with team members Glen Lipinski and Beth Hornberger delivering four Governance and Finance Training courses.

The MNO developed the Governance and Finance course to help community councils perform their important work, which is of immense benefit to MNO citizens. Hard-working council members spend hundreds of hours building and strengthening their Métis communities every year; the Governance and Finance training helps them become more successful in fulfilling important leadership roles.

During the weekend of February 21-22, the course was delivered to the MNO Sudbury Métis Council. From February 28 to March 1 the MNO Temiskaming Métis Council participated. From March 14 to 15 the course was offered to the MNO Oshawa and Durham Region Métis Council, and from March 28 to 29 members of the MNO Grand River Métis Council received the training.

The Governance and Finance course is a two-day seminar, usually held on weekends at a hotel or meeting hall in each council’s community. The program explains the role of community councils as the MNO’s local governments, whose structure and purpose is coordinated through each council’s charter agreement with the MNO.

The course covers everything from how to run effective meetings and engage citizens in council activities to budgeting and the various financial practices, regulations and legislation that community councils follow. In the past courses have taken place in Atikokan, Credit River, Georgian Bay, Milton, Niagara, North Bay, Ottawa, Peterborough, Toronto, and Windsor.

**Governance and Finance Training strengthens community leadership**

by MNO Staff

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O n April 7, 2015, Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) President Gary Lipinski applauded a recently released report on the renewal of Canada’s comprehensive claims policy, which recommends that Canada create a “reconciliation process” to address Métis rights and outstanding claims. A copy of the report is available at: www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca

The report, prepared by Vancouver-based lawyer Doug Eyford, provides an overview of recommendations with respect to Canada’s existing policy for negotiations on Aboriginal rights and land claims across Canada. In November 2014, President Lipinski met with Mr. Eyford to outline the MNO’s concerns with Canada’s current refusal to deal with Métis rights, interests and claims. The MNO also provided written submissions to Mr. Eyford.

By and large, over the last three decades, this federal policy has excluded Métis, despite repeated efforts by the Métis community across Canada. In November 2014, President Lipinski applauded Mr. Eyford’s recommendations, “…Mr. Eyford wisely recognizes this cannot continue. We are optimistic that Minister Valcourt will listen to the advice of his Independent Special Representative and begin to work with the MNO on these important issues. Further, with the Supreme Court of Canada set to hear the appeal in Daniels v. Canada in October this year, the federal government will no longer be able to deny its constitutional responsibility to advance these issues.”

At the meeting, President Lipinski provided an overview of the MNO’s governance structure, the Powley case, the existence of Métis rights throughout the province as well as the histories of the outstanding Ontario Métis community claims that exist. President Lipinski’s presentation emphasized that the MNO’s ongoing exclusion of Métis from both the Specific and Comprehensive claims processes was inconsistent with decisions from the Supreme Court of Canada, the rule of law and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The MNO is optimistic that Mr. Pelletier’s report will raise the need for Canada to finally create a policy that allows for outstanding Métis claims to be addressed.

MNO supports recommendations from Canada’s Special Representative on Comprehensive Claims Policy

by MNO Staff

As the home of the historic Powley case, we welcome Mr. Eyford’s recommendations.” - MNO President Gary Lipinski

Supreme Court of Canada cases recognizing Métis rights and claims such as the Powley case (2003) and the Manitoba Métis Federation case (2013). In arriving at his Métis-specific recommendations, Mr. Eyford wrote:

“…As the home of the historic Powley case, we welcome Mr. Eyford’s recommendations,” says MNO President Gary Lipinski. “It is well past the time to deal with outstanding claims against the Crown for ‘broken promises and unfilled obligations.’ … Canada must do more in its relationship with the Métis to ensure their section 35 rights are appropriately recognized and can be meaningfully exercised.

Specifically, Mr. Eyford made the following two Métis-specific recommendations:

1. Canada should develop a reconciliation process to support the exercise of Métis section 35(1) rights and to reconcile their interests.

2. Canada should establish a framework for negotiations with the Manitoba Métis Federation to respond to the Supreme Court of Canada’s decision in Manitoba Métis Federation vs. Canada, 2013 SCC 14.

“The current refusal to deal with Métis rights in relation to land and resources as well as address outstanding Métis claims outside of the courts. Currently the Métis have no other place to go, and Mr. Eyford rightfully recognizes this cannot continue.”

“We are optimistic that Minister Valcourt will listen to the advice of his Independent Special Representative and begin to work with the MNO on these important issues. Further, with the Supreme Court of Canada set to hear the appeal in Daniels v. Canada in October this year, the federal government will no longer be able to deny its constitutional responsibility to advance these issues.”

MNO President Lipinski Meets with Canada’s Special Representative on Specific Claims

by MNO Staff

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Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) & Métis Awards Committee (MAC)

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) is seeking Métis community members who are interested in volunteering their time as members of Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) or Métis Awards Committee (MAC). These roles offer an opportunity to make a valuable contribution to the Métis community across Ontario. RAC and MAC members assist in the review of employment and training services in keeping with program Principles, Policies and Procedures.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- RAC members review and recommend training proposals through an anonymous review process with the assistance of the Regional Employment and Training Coordinator (RETC).

- MAC members are required to review bursary applications once or twice a year.

- All RAC and MAC business is to be completed by fax, e-mail and/or teleconference wherever possible. MNO will provide the tools necessary to assist us with making informed decisions.

- RAC/MAC works are strictly voluntary.

If you are interested in this position or would like to know more please contact:

Jade Bourbonnière jade@icientation.org 1-800-263-4889

MNO President Lipinski with Special Representative Pelletier.

MNO Staff
Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizen and visual artist Christi Belcourt played a key role in the development of the medals that will be awarded at the upcoming Toronto 2015 Pan Am/Parapan Am Games (TO2015). The medals were unveiled at the Royal Ontario Museum in a ceremony on March 3, 2015.

The artwork on the medals tells the rich story of the “People’s Games” through a beautifully layered design that expresses the values of inclusion and diversity, and highlights Aboriginal traditions of working together and cherishing the beauty of the natural world.

The medal combines artistry and storytelling with the Royal Canadian Mint’s innovative production process. Braille is used to identify Toronto 2015— a reflection of TO2015’s commitment to accessibility, and the first time it has ever been applied on both Pan Am and Parapan Am Games medals.

Christi Belcourt’s work demonstrates a deep respect for the traditions and knowledge of her people. The majority of her art explores and celebrates the beauty of the natural world and traditional Indigenous world-views on spirituality and natural medicines. Christi is a past recipient of awards from the Canada Council for the Arts, the Ontario Arts Council, the Chalmers Family Fund and the Métis Nation of Ontario. In 2013, her stained glass piece, Congratulating, was installed in the Centre Block of the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa. Currently she is organizing the community based project Walking With Our Sisters to honour murdered or missing Indigenous women and girls.

The TO2015 competition medals were on temporary exhibition at the Royal Ontario Museum from Saturday, March 14 through Sunday, March 29. During the Games, they will be available for public viewing at the Royal Canadian Mint pavilion at CIBC Pan Am Park. The Pan Am Games will run from July 10–26 followed by the Parapan Am Games August 7–15.

The Toronto 2015 Pan Am/Parapan Am Games gold medal.

Métis digital stories for healing, connection and community

Submitted by: Jennifer Lafontaine
MNO Citizen

Over four Saturdays in November 2014, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Toronto and York Region Métis Council (TYRMC) partnered with Community Story Collective artists Jennifer LaFontaine (an MNO citizen) and Emmy Pantin on the Métis Digital Storytelling Project.

“I think the benefit of digital storytelling is three-fold. It brings Métis people together, it shows us how similar we are in our lives, and it will help preserve what being Métis means to us in 2014 for future generations,” explained Jennifer.

At the workshop, six community members learned how to create short five-minute videos that were life story based. Community members ranged in ages from 20 to 60, which provided the opportunity for multi-generational sharing and learning.

Each session opened with cultural teachings from our Knowledge Keepers, who shared medicine, smudged, sang, told stories and gave teachings on politics, identity, mental health, spirituality and community. One community member said that “the Knowledge Keepers were so inspirational, they gave me ideas for my own story and reassured me that I belonged in this space.”

The digital storytelling component of the workshop began with a storytelling circle. Participants shared stories of addiction, homelessness, losing our sense of place, reunification with family, denial of culture, two-spirited identity, residential schools, historical research and finding community.

Within the circle there was a constant affirmation of identity, with many participants feeling that they are always measuring “how Métis” they are, or what right they have to claim this cultural identity. One community member noted that they “learned that many urban Métis people struggle with and are insecure in their identity as a result of colonization.”

After the storytelling circle each participant crafted a script, recorded their voices telling their story and then created storyboards to plan the visual and audio elements. Participants also received a video-editing lesson. With support from the artists, every participant successfully completed their video.

On Saturday November 15, 2014, the MNO TYRMC hosted a Louis Riel Day potluck filled with jigging, fiddling and a special screening of the digital stories. Over 60 people attended the event, including all of the storytellers along with many family and friends. Every storyteller also had the opportunity to speak to the audience about their experiences and the digital storytelling project. The entire community was very accepting and encouraging and honoured every storyteller.

A community member wrote to the council after the event saying, “thanks for a wonderful afternoon. It was indeed a celebration of many things—good food, meeting new friends, music, dancing, sharing…[we] enjoyed it all. The digital stories were particularly moving. The sharing of our stories helps us understand one another and appreciate the long roads some have travelled.”

Digital storytelling organizers noted that little reminders such as this are the reason for going on these shared journeys for healing, connection and community.

The digital stories were screened at the MNO TYRMC Annual General Meeting on Saturday, April 11 at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. They will also be added to the MNO TYRMC website in the upcoming weeks. This project was made possible through the generous support of the Ontario Arts Council.

The organizers would like to thank the following Knowledge Keepers for providing guidance and support for this project: MNO Veterans’ Council President Joseph Paquette; Constance Simmonds; Dr. Lynx Lavallee and MNO Veterans’ Council Senator Dr. Alis Kennedy; O.Ont., C.D., O.M.C. They would also like to thank the following MNO TYRMC members who volunteered their time to help make this project such a success: President Tera Beaulieu, Secretary/Treasurer Marilyn Hew, Interim Chair Todd Ross, Women’s Representative Brenda Stewart, Councillor Derek Johnstone, and Youth Representative Christine Skura.

Jennifer LaFontaine (left), MNO citizen and Métis Digital Storytelling Project organizer, sits with Toronto York Métis Councillor victoria Barber during the workshop.
Strawberry Ceremony seeks justice for Canada’s Missing and Murdered Indigenous women

MNO Toronto and York Region Métis Council participates in Toronto demonstration

submitted by

Kelly Campagnola
MNO TYRMC Women’s Representative
Tera Beaulieu
MNO TYRMC President

On February 14, 2015, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Toronto and York Region Métis Council joined 500 other demonstrators, including the MNO Infinite Beach Métis Student Solidarity Network at the University of Toronto, in seeking justice for Canada’s missing and murdered Indigenous women.

The Toronto Strawberry Ceremony was organized by native youth sexual health network No More Silence, and sex workers’ rights organization M/Magpie’s Toronto, and was endorsed by nearly 100 other organizations in the city of Toronto. The Strawberry Ceremony has been held for the past 10 years on February 14 to raise awareness and honour Indigenous women who have been murdered or who have gone missing. The Toronto-gathering is held in solidarity with a vigil that was originally organized by a group of women approximately 25 years ago in Vancouver’s Downtown East Side. Similar gatherings are now held across Canada on February 14 bringing together thousands of Indigenous peoples and Canadians.

There is a growing awareness that Indigenous women in Canada continue to go missing or be murdered at a disproportionate rate, with minimal or no action being taken by the Canadian government. Events like the Strawberry Ceremony bring awareness to the systemic nature of gendered violence, poverty, racism and colonialism in Canada.

The gathering occurred outside of the Toronto Police Headquarters and was followed by a march organized by the Native Women’s Residence of Toronto. The Strawberry Ceremony was led by Elder Wanda Whitebird and included prayers for the women and their families, drumming, jingle dress dancing, and the sharing of strawberries, water and tobacco for all in attendance.

One of the primary purposes of the gathering is to provide community support and healing for the families in attendance whose loved ones are missing or have been murdered. Gathered individuals heard family members speak about the devastating loss of their beloved mothers, sisters, cousins, aunts and daughters, along with their calls for action to bring an end to this dark period in our history.

The Prime Minister and his government have also been called upon to initiate a national inquiry into murdered and missing Aboriginal women—a move that the Assembly of First Nations, Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne and federal opposition leaders Justin Trudeau and Thomas Mulcair have voiced their support for.

The Prime Minister’s response to the demand for a national inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women is that the issue “should not be viewed as a sociological phenomenon”, but rather as crime, and should be dealt with as such. However, many activist organizations take the approach that crime is an inherently sociological phenomenon, shaped by historical and social processes.

The Conservative government has also cut funding to the Sisters in Spirit initiative by the Native Women’s Association of Canada in 2010—the landmark research project that brought the crisis of missing and murdered Aboriginal women to the public’s awareness.

The MNO TYRMC proudly endorsed and attended the Strawberry Ceremony along with other Aboriginal agencies, groups, and peoples in the city. The Council took time to make various signs that were held at the Strawberry Ceremony to raise awareness and honour the women who are no longer with us and remain missing. The dire numbers released by the RCMP demonstrate that there are powerful historical and systemic forces at play, which cannot be ignored. The MNO TYRMC is committed to drawing attention to Aboriginal women’s issues and we will proudly and solemnly lend our voice to speaking out against the ongoing tragedies and join in the emerging healing efforts dedicated to missing and murdered Aboriginal women in Canada.
MNO High Land Waters Métis Council Meeting

by | Julie Druker
Adapted from an original story that appeared at frontenacnews.ca

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) High Land Waters Métis Council (HLWMC) held a nomination and information meeting on January 31, 2015 at the Northbrook Lions Community Hall. The meeting was attended by 30 people. The meeting’s dual purpose was to attract new members and to nominate representatives for positions on the council.

The MNO HLWMC, which was established seven years ago, is one of the MNO’s 29 Métis community councils. Its members represent the area that stretches east to Perth, west to Peterborough, south to Huron County and north to Bancroft. MNO HLWMC members strive to bring Métis awareness to their communities and to let members know what services are available to them.

Present at the meeting were MNO staff Amanda Cox, Tracey Dale, and Hank Rowlinson. Rowlinson gave an overview of current issues facing the MNO at the provincial and national levels and stressed the importance of community involvement.

Deidre Thompson, MNO HLWMC Acting President, said that she hopes to see membership numbers increase as a direct result of the recent meeting in Northbrook. She said that for a long time Métis people struggled with an identity that considered them “too white to be Aboriginal and too Aboriginal to be white. We are trying to let people know that we exist and that we have rights as Aboriginal people.” President Thompson said that the long-term goal of the MNO HLWMC is to spread awareness that the Métis are a distinct Aboriginal group.

The formal nominations for the MNO HLWMC for 2015 wrapped up Saturday’s meeting in Northbrook. Scott Lloyd and Catherine Thompson were nominated for President, Marlon Lloyd and Benjamin Saulnier were nominated for Chair, Secretary Treasurer Candace Lloyd and Youth Representative Gwendalyn Lloyd were acclaimed. The Councillors nominated and elected by acclamation were Terry Conners, Tom Thompson Sr. and Gertrude Conners. The position for Women’s Representative is still open.

The MNO HLWMC elections took place at the Northbrook Lions Community Hall on March 8. Results will be published in the next issue of the voyageur section. For more information, please visit: www.metisnation.org/community-councils.

MNO council hosts community potluck

by | MNO Staff

On January 31, 2015, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Grand River Métis Council (GRMC) held a community potluck to introduce the newly-elected council members. Special guests included PCMNO Vice-Chair Sharon McBride, PCMNO Region Nine Councillor and Captain of the Hunt Peter Rivers, MNO Clear Water Métis Council (CWMC) President Jerry Clarke, and MNO Credit River Métis Council (CRMC) President Richard Cuddy, and CWMC and CRMC citizens.

President Clarke gave a presentation on the upcoming Métis Rendezvous, which will take place September 12, 2015 in Tillsonburg. The Métis Rendezvous is a joint effort between the MNO GRMC and the MNO CRMC.

MNO citizens and guests enjoyed good food, laughter and music during the afternoon. Entertainment was provided by Rajan Anderson on fiddle and Kim Anderson on keyboard. MNO GRMC Chair Barbara Ricard Lair taught everyone some jigging steps.

Métis culture in the classroom

submitted by | Jennifer Parkinson
MNO Grand River Métis Council President

Teachers from the Upper Grand District School Board participated in Aboriginal Art workshops organized by the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO). Teachers were taught Métis Dot Art by Marie-Louise Lariviere, MNO Infinite Beach Facilitator at Wilfrid Laurier University, as well as loom beading and how to make dream catchers by MNO Grand River Métis Council (GRMC) Chair Barbara Ricard Lair. At the end of the workshop, the teachers brought these skills back to their classrooms.

Stephanie Jordan, a teacher from John McCrae Public School, particularly enjoyed learning Métis Dot Art and taught her students this craft. The students’ beautiful artwork will be submitted to the museum for the Aboriginal Art Festival, which runs from April 30, 2015 to May 2, 2015.

Stephanie also invited Jennifer Parkinson, MNO GRMC President, into her classroom to teach students about Métis culture and history. The students learned to jigg, play the spoons, and had the opportunity to feel different types of furs, hides and traps.

Upper Grand District School Board teachers practice traditional Métis dot painting. Workshop participants also got the chance to try loom beading and how to make dream catchers.

Métis children participate in jigging at the MNO Grand River Métis Council community potluck.
MNO council shares Métis history and culture with Niagara students

submitted by | Amanda Pont-Shanks
MNO Niagara Region Métis Council Councillor

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Niagara Region Métis Council (NRMC) has been busy educating students in the Niagara region about Métis history, culture and way of life. Council member Amanda Pont-Shanks shared her culture with her kindergarten class at Central Public School in Grimsby. She talked about her sash, its uses, what it means to her and what each colour represents.

She also talked about the Métis flag and the voyageurs. Her students loved hearing about Métis travels and even made their own canoe in the block centre.

MNO NRMC President Derrick Pont presented to the primary grades at Jacob Beam Public School in Beamsville. He talked to the students about the life of a Métis fur trapper and shared his traditional knowledge of Métis history and way of life. He gave a very interactive presentation where students were allowed to touch and feel furs, try on regalia, and ask questions about the Métis in Ontario.

Among the attendees included President Derrick Pont’s grandson, Holden Shanks (grade two), who was thrilled to have his grandpa share his heritage with his class. When Holden was asked, “what is your favorite thing about being Métis?” He responded, “being in parades with grandpa”.

The MNO Niagara Region Métis Council presents to many schools across Niagara. Council members also sit on various education advisory committees such as Brock University and Niagara College.

▲ Amanda Pont-Shanks with her kindergarten class at Central Public School in Grimsby, Ontario.

A day with Christi Belcourt and Isaac Murdoch

submitted by | Jennifer Parkinson
MNO Grand River Métis Council President

On March 5 the Upper Grand District School Board (UGDSB) Aboriginal Liaison, Colinda Clyne, organized a day of learning for the teachers of the UGDSB. The guest speakers were Christi Belcourt, a well-known Métis visual artist and Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizen, along with Anishinaabe Knowledge Keeper Isaac Murdoch.

The session began with MNO Grand River Métis Council (GRMC) President Jennifer Parkinson and Clyne welcoming the speakers. GRMC Chair Barbra Ricard Lair presented a pair of moccasin vamps to Christi Belcourt for her Walking With Our Sisters initiative. Christi and Isaac filled the morning with presentations, while the afternoon was filled with activities that included open discussions with the presenters, and small group discussions on how to integrate First Nation, Métis and Inuit culture into classrooms. It was a very informative and enriching day for everyone who attended.

▲ (L-R) Barbra Ricard Lair, MNO GRMC Chair; Isaac Murdoch, Anishinaabe Knowledge Keeper; Colinda Clyne, UGDCB Aboriginal Liaison; Christi Belcourt, MNO citizen and visual artist; Jennifer Parkinson, MNO GRMC President.

A special donation to La Maison Rosewood Shelter

submitted by | Verna Porter-Brunelle
PCMNO Senator

This past November and December, PCMNO Senator Verna Porter-Brunelle spent many hours making comfort blankets at Georgian College in Midland. On December 11, 2014, Senator Porter-Brunelle and Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Honourary Senator Audrey Vallée presented the comfort blankets to La Maison Rosewood Shelter—an emergency women’s shelter in Midland. A total of six blankets and four small children’s blankets were presented to Annick Brown, Supervisor at La Maison Rosewood Shelter.

▲ PCMNO Senator Verna Porter-Brunelle (left) and MNO Honourary Senator Audrey Vallée show their comfort blankets.
Obituaries

MNO citizen Normand ‘Norm’ Guerin

In loving memory of Métis Nation of Ontario citizen Normand Guerin, it is with great sadness that the family announces his passing at the Toronto General Hospital on Thursday October 2nd, 2014 at the age of 76 years.

Beloved husband of Aline Guerin (Cappadocia) (nee Gagnon). Loving father of Joanne Dupuis (Claude). Step father of Douglas (Sue), Gary (Chris) and Ron (Cathy). Cherished grandfather to Kevin (Michelle) and Eric (Cassie). Dear brother of Gilles (Pauline), Donald, Denis (Helene), Noelline (Reginald), Luke and Christina (Josh). Step grandfather of Tyler (Brooke), Dylan, Daniel, Amy, Mike and Laurie. Step great grandfather of Kaia. Predeceased by his parents Henri and Lillian (nee Langlois) Guerin.

Norm will be remembered for his sense of humour as well as his love and passion for living. He enjoyed travelling, spending time with his family and friends and living life to the fullest. A celebration of life was held in Noelville on November 8, 2014.

This obituary was originally published in the Métis Voyageur #83 but failed to reference Mr. Guerin’s daughter, Joanne Dupuis. We apologize for this error. Below is the corrected article:

In loving memory of Métis Nation of Ontario citizen Normand Gelinas; it is with heavy hearts that the family announces his passing at the South Centennial Manor on Wednesday, March 18, 2015 at the age of 60 years. Loving husband of 40 years of Maria (nee Loranger), and cherished father of the late Roger Gelinas (1974), Steve (Jessica Kuzmich) Gelinas of Iroquois Falls, and Michel Gelinas also of Iroquois Falls. He also leaves his step grandchildren: Rylan and Mackenzie. Normand is also survived by his siblings: Don (Esther) Gelinas of Iroquois Falls, Conrad Gelinas of Iroquois Falls, Robert (Lynn racey) Gelinas of North Bay, and Lucille (Doug) Corbett of North Bay as well as his sisters-in-law: Lynda Gelinas of Iroquois Falls and Christine Gelinas of Iroquois Falls. He was predeceased by his parents Roland and Isabella (nee Langlois) Gelinas, his step father Armand Gagnon, his siblings Linda (the late Leon) Gelinas, Jackie (the late Bob) Lafortune, Gaston Gelinas and Simon Gelinas as well as his sister-in-law Marilyn Gelinas.

In keeping with Norm’s wishes, cremation has taken place. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Alzheimer’s Society of Timmins (cheques only please) and would be appreciated by the family.

To leave a message of condolence, make a donation or light a memorial candle, please visit www.abitibifuneralservicesltd.com.

Métis Women’s Circle participates in Healing Blanket Workshop

by MNO Staff

On February 28, 2015, the Georgian Bay Métis Women’s Circle participated in a Healing Blanket Workshop facilitated by Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) staff members Tracy Bald and Lisa Talbot. Healing blankets are created by using the ‘tie blanket making’ technique. The exercise started by writing words of strength and healing on the inside of the blanket. The side that has words on it is then turned to the inside and the blanket tied together. The healing blanket symbolizes the healing process by wrapping strength, support and comfort around a victim.

Patricia Taylor with the Georgian Bay Métis Council stated: “The Georgian Bay Métis Women’s Circle would like to thank Bruce Power for the funding that made the Healing Blanket Workshop possible. A special thank you to Tracy Bald and Lisa Talbot for the care, knowledge and consideration taken for this wonderful workshop.”

Patricia Taylor with her blanket.

Workshop participants showing off their healing blankets.
Métis adventurer walks across Georgian Bay

submitted by Rachelle Brunelle-McColl
MNO Employment Developer
Adapted from an original article by Colin Field that appeared at mountainlifemag.ca

Scott Parent, son of Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) staff member and citizen Jo-Anne Parent who works in the MNO office in Midland, embarked on a unique adventure this past month.

For the last few years, stand-up-paddleboard adventurer and Fathom Paddle Guiding owner Scott Parent’s dream has been focused on crossing Georgian Bay on a stand-up-paddleboard during the winter. Often considered the sixth Great Lake, Georgian Bay is a huge expanse of water. The weather didn’t co-operate in the winter of 2014, but in 2015, with record low temperatures, the ice was set. Together with Zane Davies of Explorer’s Tread, they set off on March 11, 2015 to do something that had never been done before.

While Parent is no stranger to the Bay (he paddled across it in 2011) or to paddling in the icy winter waters, this excursion tested all of his and Zane’s skills. With ice-climbing tools, modified paddleboards, dry suits, ski poles and more, their motley collection of gear from a variety of different sports all proved invaluable.

Leaving from Cape Croker, they first needed to traverse a one kilometre stretch of open water — a section they’d spent the previous week perfecting their systems on, destroying a paddleboard in the process. They spent the first night camped on the ice, drifting nearly two kilometres as they slept. At daybreak they awoke beside a river of water that hadn’t existed the previous night.

From Cape Croker it was a 55 kilometre paddle and hike before reaching the lighthouse on Double Top Island in the Western Islands, and another 27 kilometres to get off the Bay.

With temperatures above zero during the three days they were on the ice, they finally arrived at 12 Mile Bay on March 13, 2015.

MNO Senator invested into Order of Ontario

by | MNO Staff

On February 3, 2015, the Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, invested 26 extraordinary Ontarians into the Order of Ontario during a ceremony at Queen’s Park. Included on this list was Dr. Alis Kennedy, C.D., O.M.C., Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Veterans’ Council Senator. Senator Kennedy was recognized for being an inspiring Métis leader and passionate advocate for veterans, Francophones and Aboriginal peoples.

“I am proud to formally welcome these 26 remarkable people into the Order of Ontario. Their diverse and significant contributions have had an impact on the lives of millions of Ontarians, improving our quality of life, making our communities stronger and positioning this province as an international centre of excellence in many endeavours,” said Her Honour.

Dr. Kennedy has spent her life shattering barriers and challenging the status quo, reminding us too, that tolerance, acceptance and generosity are values that we must never take for granted. With an impressive résumé, she is dedicated to the advancement of Aboriginal people, advocating for those particularly in difficulty with the law and violence against women. She served 13 years in the Canadian Armed Forces.

Dr. Kennedy has shared her skills for over 40 years on three continents volunteering with a multitude of organizations. An inspiring speaker, leader and advocate for veterans and a role model for Aboriginal youth, Dr. Kennedy demonstrates that anything is possible with resolve and determination.

The Order of Ontario is the province’s highest official honour. It recognizes any current or former long-time resident of Ontario who has demonstrated a high level of individual excellence and achievement in any field benefiting the people of Ontario or anywhere in the world.

Dr. Alis Kennedy (right), C.D., O.M.C., MNO Veterans’ Council Senator, and the Speaker of the House, the Honourable Dave Levac (left), attended the Queen’s Park ceremony where Dr. Kennedy was invested into the Order of Ontario.
Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizen Cherie Dimaline has been named Toronto Public Library's first Writer in Residence – Aboriginal Experience, with a focus on exploring and celebrating the Aboriginal experience in Canada. She has accepted a four month residency at North York Central Library from March to June 2015.

Cherie Dimaline is an author and editor from the Georgian Bay Métis community, who was named the 2014 Emerging Artist of the Year, Ontario Premier’s Awards for Excellence in the Arts. Her first book, a collection of short stories, Red Rooms, was published in 2007 and won the Anskohk Fiction Book of the Year Award. Her novel, The Girl Who Grew a Galaxy, published in 2013, was shortlisted for the 2014 Burt Award. She is also the editor of both FNH Magazine and Mudrak Magazine.

“Cherie’s appointment reflects a strong and growing commitment to storytelling in the Aboriginal voice, supporting the Library's role in nurturing and building on the rich legacy of oral histories and traditions associated with Toronto's past,” said City Librarian Vickery Bowles.

Cherie shared her plans for the residency at March 2015 public event at the North York Central Library auditorium. Attending guests included the Honourable David Zimmer, MPP for Willowdale and Minister of Aboriginal Affairs; Giles Benaway; Lee Maracle; guest; and Deborah Richardson, Deputy Minister for the Ontario Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs.

Stephanie Pangowish and Josh Smoke, traditional drummers and singers, performed at the event, with readings from novelist Lee Maracle and poet Giles Benaway.

During her four month residency, Cherie will meet individually with aspiring writers to review submitted manuscripts and lead a series of panel discussions and workshops. The workshops will explore topics such as the importance of Indigenous storytelling and the challenges and resources for multicultural Toronto writers and poets. Writers will also have an opportunity to learn more about grants and public reading.

Cherie's residency will usher in a month of Aboriginal programming at the library in June 2015 that will celebrate Aboriginal culture in film, music, art, dance and literature at branches across the city. It will also serve as a public forum for issues of national interest, including a panel on Canada’s missing and murdered Aboriginal women hosted by the CBC's Michael Enright.

The theme for June’s programming, developed by Cherie, is Giganewondamin Dibaajimowinan: We Keep the Stories.

MNO citizen named Writer in Residence

by |MNO Staff
With files from torontopubliclibrary.ca

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Cherie Dimaline and guests attend a public event in the North York Central Library auditorium. (L-R) The Honourable David Zimmer, MPP for Willowdale and Minister of Aboriginal Affairs; Cherie Dimaline; Giles Benaway; Lee Maracle; guest; and Deborah Richardson, Deputy Minister for the Ontario Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs.

MNO Citizen Cherie Dimaline.
One Métis youth, many achievements

Mélanie-Rose Frappier is a self-identifying Métis who is very involved with the community. She is proud of her francophone and Métis heritage, and has always enjoyed learning about the traditions of her Métis culture. She was given the opportunity to learn more about Métis history as a participant of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Infini Reach March Break Camp, which she has been a participant of for the past three years.

Mélanie-Rose was asked by her school, École Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur, to be the sole student representative for the Aboriginal Advisory Education Committee, which she accepted. This position allowed her to play an integral part in creating the first Aboriginal Studies course to be offered in the French Catholic School Board.

Mélanie-Rose is in grade 12, and is involved in a range of youth, community, and cultural activities that have led to a long list of honours, including most recently the Lieutenant Governor’s Ontario Heritage Award for Youth Achievement this past February.

She was presented with the award at a ceremony at Queen’s Park in Toronto on February 27th. The Lieutenant Governor’s Ontario Heritage Awards are presented annually to individuals, groups, and communities that have made outstanding contributions to conserving Ontario’s heritage.

Even prior to being selected for the Heritage Trust Award, Mélanie-Rose had an impressive portfolio. Last year, she received the prestigious Canada’s Top 20 Under 20 Award, which recognizes the exceptional leadership, innovation and achievements of 20 young people under the age of 20 from across the country. She is a recipient of the National Aboriginal Youth Achievement Award, and the Gathering Our Voices Aboriginal Youth Award, both of which recognized her outstanding leadership qualities and her dedication to improving her community. Last fall she participated in the Aboriginal Youth Panel at Toronto WE Day where she shared her pride in her Métis heritage.

Mélanie-Rose’s community involvement includes countless volunteer hours and youth leadership roles in a number of organizations, and in 2013 she was chosen to be Youth Ambassador of Canada to the United States Embassy.

Mélanie-Rose was also chosen as a Top 30 Global Teen Leader with Three Dot Dash for her work in creating It’s Cool to Be Healthy—a non-profit organization that educates students on the benefits of exercise and proper nutrition.

Now she can add another one to her list — YWCA Woman of Distinction for her work as a volunteer, a leader, and an agent for change in her community.

“I’m so honoured to be recognized as a powerful woman in my community, [and] that I’ve had an impact on other girls my age.”

- Mélanie-Rose Frappier

The Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario (left) with Mélanie-Rose Frappier (centre); and Maria Topalovich, Board Member, Ontario Heritage Trust (right) following the presentation of the Lieutenant Governor’s Ontario Heritage Awards.

Photo by Tessa Buchan, courtesy of the Ontario Heritage Trust

Mélanie-Rose was recognized as a YWCA Woman of Distinction for her work as a volunteer, a leader, and an agent for change in her community.
Employee Announcements

WELCOME TO OUR NEW TEAM MEMBERS AND CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR STAFF IN NEW POSITIONS

Welcome Dale Legge

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) is pleased to welcome Dale Legge to the Ottawa MNO office in the position of Human Resources Coordinator. Dale is a recent graduate of Algonquin College in the Human Resources Certificate program. His studies were funded in part through the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy program. Dale will also receive his Business Administration Diploma majoring in Human Resources through the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy program. His studies were funded in part through the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy program.

We are very pleased to welcome Dale to the MNO team!
— Submitted by Beverley Newton, Manager of Human Resources

Welcome Roxanne Brisson

Roxanne Brisson recently obtained a Bachelor of Arts in Communication with a minor in Psychology from Carleton University. Roxanne has communication experience within multinational and private corporations.

As an MNO citizen, Dale is looking forward to helping the MNO continue to grow, provide support for all areas of the organization and to learn more about his Métis heritage and culture.

We are very pleased to welcome Roxanne to the MNO team!
— Submitted by Mike Fedyk, Manager of Communications

ACROSS THE HOMELAND

British Columbia

MNBC launches Keeping My Culture Alive Contest

The Métis Nation of British Columbia (MNBC) has launched a series of Métis Youth Cultural Employment Connections (MYCEC) events all over British Columbia. These events will provide training opportunities for Métis youth in their communities through leadership development and the preservation of strong Métis identities.

To promote MYCEC events and showcase youth attendees, the MNBC has created a contest called #KeepingMyCultureAlive. Métis youth who attend MYCEC events across BC have the opportunity to enter the contest and win an iPad Mini 2 or other exciting prizes.

To enter the contest, Métis youth must attend a MYCEC event in their area and actively engage in the training and cultural elements of the event. Entrants simply need to express on MNBC’s Facebook page what the most meaningful aspects of the event were to them and provide a brief description why this event is a great way to engage Métis youth and promote Métis culture.

Alberta

Edmonton Métis Dancers celebrate 30 years

The Edmonton Métis Dancers was formed in 1985 by Georgina Donald to preserve Métis dance and music, and to teach them to the younger generations to ensure that they will continue to survive as a way for the Métis people to express pride in their culture.

On June 16, 2015, to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the Edmonton Métis Dancers, the dancers of Batoche will be held at the Royal Alberta Museum. The event will tell the story of the creation of Métis dance and music in Western Canada and will feature the Edmonton Caladonian Dancers, LaGirondale Francophone Dancers, and some of the Edmonton area’s finest First Nation dancers.

Edmonton Métis Dancers have won many championships including nine group competitions at Back to Batoche Days in Saskatchewan, and current Edmonton Métis Dance member Brent Potskin is a seven time Canadian Red River Jig Champion. The Edmonton Métis Dancers currently include three generations of the Donald family: grandfather, father, sons, daughters and grandchildren, a true family tradition.

Saskatchewan

Gabriel Dumont Institute has expansion plans

The Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) in Saskatoon wants to bring more beauty and culture to 22nd Street, where its Saskatoon campus is located. According to its Executive Director Geordie McCaffery, the GDI has been growing and now occupies four buildings along 22nd Street.

“We do have a lot of buildings,” said McCaffery. “We’ve taken the strategic approach of acquiring smaller properties, owning and paying them off over time.”

“We do have a lot of buildings,” said McCaffery. “We’ve taken the strategic approach of acquiring smaller properties, owning and paying them off over time.”

“We buy a building, own it, and then fix it up, renovate it, and make it look really nice,” said McCaffery. “(We) improve that student experience and make our campus a source of pride for the Métis community and then move on to expand.”

“We’re trying to improve the face of 22nd street and so a centre of excellence is just that next logical step in making this a nice place and a place people can be proud of.”

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