Historic legislation recognizes Métis Nation of Ontario

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The time is here

On December 9, 2015, the members of the 41st Legislative Assembly made history and fulfilled the aspirations of Métis throughout this province by passing the Métis Nation of Ontario Secretariat Act. For our citizens and communities, this legislation represents a significant step forward in our ongoing journey toward reconciliation between the Crown and the Métis Nation.

For generations, we have struggled to be recognized and respected as one of this country’s Indigenous peoples and partners in Confederation. As the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples aptly concluded, we have been Canada’s “forgotten people,” even though we played a fundamental role in this country’s expansion and development. While we hoped our inclusion in section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982 would correct this pattern of neglect, governments throughout Canada—including Ontario—remained willfully blind to our unique history, rights and needs.

In the 1990s, Ontario became ground zero in the Métis Nation’s “hunt for justice” in this country. As a part of the denial of our existence as an Indigenous people, the Ontario government charged two of our citizens, Steve and Rodney Powley, for hunting a moose without a license outside Sault Ste. Marie. In 2003, after a decade of court battles, the Supreme Court of Canada unanimously affirmed that there were Métis communities in this province with constitutionally-protected rights. The Powley case was and remains a watershed for Ontario Métis and the Métis Nation as a whole.

Throughout these struggles, our citizens and communities through the Métis Nation of Ontario have developed their own forms of self-government at the local, regional and provincial levels. In 1994, as a part of our organizational efforts, we incorporated the Métis Nation of Ontario Secretariat as a not-for-profit corporation under Ontario law to act as our nation’s legal and administrative arm. We incorporated the Secretariat under Ontario law because we needed a legal entity to receive and administer funding, do business, and protect our citizens and leaders from legal liabilities like other governments.

That said, this provincial legislation has always been an awkward fit for us. It is designed for local clubs and associations, not provincial-wide Métis government. As is our Métis way, we made do with what we had, but always aspired to something more. When I was first elected as President in 2008, we began to write a new chapter with the Ontario government and every political party stand united for this legislation. This legislation was introduced by the Ontario government on December 2, and passed unanimously on December 9.

It was quite something to sit in the same legislature that once put a $5,000 bounty on Louis Riel’s head, and now see the government and every political party stand united for this historic recognition of Ontario Métis. With the inclusion of the MNO Secretariat Act, we are well on our way toward full recognition of our Métis self-government, this new legislation advances the yardstick significantly.

Most importantly, the days of anyone denying the existence of the Métis people and our communities in Ontario are over.

While we continue to work toward full recognition of our Métis self-government, this new legislation advances the yardstick significantly.

Gary Lipinski is President of the Métis Nation of Ontario
**MNO Secretariat Act**

**Historic Legislation recognizes Métis Nation of Ontario**

*Métis Nation of Ontario Secretariat Act passed by Ontario Legislature with unanimous consent*

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**MNO Act Timeline**

1993 Creation of a Secretariat as representative of the Métis Nation in Ontario

1994 Incorporation of the Secretariat as a Not-For-Profit Corporation

1999 President Lipinski elected for his mandate

2001 Legislation passed by Ontario Legislature with unanimous consent

2002 Resolution calling for the recognition of the Secretariat and Community Councils

2008 The Secretariat convenes at the historic Appin House in Saugeen and with representatives of the MNO and the community of Saugeen First Nation for the first time

2009 MNO Assembly passes unanimous resolution calling for MNO specific legislation


2011 MNO Engagement Framework released and ongoing consultations in early 2012 to engage all Métis citizens on the historic legislation

2015 Premier Wynne commits to renewed and continued commitment to implement legislation recognizing MNO and its Community Councils

2016 Implementation of MNO Act

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**I am pleased that so many of our citizens, leaders and Community Councils came forward to offer their support in order to see this MNO goal become a reality. This legislation demonstrates the strength and effectiveness of the Métis people within this province.**

– MNO Chair France Picotte

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*O* n December 9, 2015 (ON) MNO citizens and communities throughout Ontario celebrated the passage of the *Métis Nation of Ontario Secretariat Act, 2015* (the “MNO Act”) by the Ontario legislature with the unanimous consent of the Ontario government and all opposition parties.

“This is truly a historic day for Ontario Métis. Less than two decades ago, we struggled to have the existence of the Métis people and our communities acknowledged by the government of the day, which led to our turning to the courts for recognition and justice. Now, in partnership with the Ontario government, we are witness to this type of recognition through legislation unanimously passed by a legislature that once put a $5,000 bounty on Louis Riel’s head,” said MNO President Gary Lipinski.

President Lipinski added, “While we still have much to do to advance reconciliation between the Crown and the Métis Nation, this legislation represents a significant step forward that Métis and all Ontarians can be proud of. On behalf of the MNO, I want to thank Premier Wynne as well as Ministers Zimmer and Ora- zieni and Government House Leader Naqvi in making this long held aspiration become a reality for Ontario Métis. I also want to acknowledge the support of the leaders of the Progressive Conservatives (Patrick Brown) and the NDP (Andrea Horwath) and their house leaders in making this happen.”

The MNO Act is a special purpose piece of legislation that deals with the MNO Secretariat the MNO’s corporate and administrative arm which has been incorporated under Ontario law since 1994. The MNO Act does not deal with or interfere with the MNO’s internal governance and institutions that are grounded on its inherent rights of self-government and self-determination, but it recognizes and accommodates the MNO Secretariat’s unique status as the corporate arm of the MNO.

In particular, the legislation exempts the MNO Secretariat from various sections of the Ontario Not-For-Profit Corporations Act (“ONCA”), which has already been passed by the Ontario legislature and will be given legal effect as a future date. ONCA would have created operational challenges for the MNO (e.g., the MNO feels its leadership through province-wide ballot box elections every four years whereas ONCA requires election be held at annual meetings). While similar provincial legislation in relation to the Métis Nation’s governance structures have been passed in Saskatchewan and Alberta (The Métis Act, SS 2001, c. M-14-01; The Métis Settlements Act, RSA 2000, c. M-19), this legislation represents a historic milestone for Ontario Métis—home of the landmark Supreme Court of Canada decision in *R. v. Powley* because:

- The MNO Act is the first piece of legislation passed by the Ontario legislature since 1987 that has dealt with Métis-specific issues or included the word “Métis” in it.
- The legislation recognizes the MNO’s unique representative role on behalf of its citizens and MNO communities throughout the province flowing from its centralized Registry.
- The legislation acknowledges that a distinct Aboriginal people called the Métis Nation emerged in west central North America, which includes Ontario Métis communities.

The legislation comes after repeated calls from MNO citizens, leaders, Community Councils and Annual General Assemblies for the MNO to work with the Ontario government to develop legislation to recognize the MNO Secretariat’s unique status and role. Most recently, the 2015 MNO Annual General Assembly, the highest governing authority within the MNO, passed a unanimous resolution that directed the MNO to “secure unanimous support within the legislature for this historic legislation.”

MNO Chair France Picotte added, “I am pleased that so many of our citizens, leaders and Community Councils came forward to offer their support in order to see this MNO goal become a reality. This legislation demonstrates the strengths and effectiveness of the Métis people within this province. It is so much that we are well on our way to achieving this objective through this legislation.”

MNO President Lipinski concluded, “Now that this historic legislation has been passed, we will be beginning province-wide community consultations in early 2016 to engage all of our citizens on this historic legislation and discuss how we will work together to implement this new and exciting opportunity to advance Métis rights and self-government in Ontario.”
Understanding the Métis Nation of Ontario Secretariat Act, 2015

On December 9, 2015, the Ontario legislature passed the Métis Nation of Ontario Secretariat Act, 2015, S.O. 2015, Ch. 39 (the “Act”). A copy of this historic legislation is available at the MNO’s website (www.metisnation.org) or on eLaws Ontario (www.ontario.ca/laws).

This legislation came after years of successive calls by Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizens, elected leadership and Community Councils – through the MNO Annual General Assembly (MNO AGA) – to secure legislation which recognizes the MNO’s unique governance structures at the local, regional and provincial levels. The legislation also responds to upcoming changes to provincial legislation that would have created significant operational challenges for the MNO Secretariat. The Secretariat – the MNO’s legal and administrative arm – has been incorporated as a not-for-profit corporation under Ontario law since 1994.

The information in the following pages is provided by the MNO to explain the Act in greater detail to MNO citizens. The first section sets out the background and historic context leading to the MNO’s creation in 1993, the incorporation of the Secretariat in 1994, and, ultimately, the passage of the MNO Act in 2015. The second section sets out what the Act does and why it was needed, including, an overview of the important provisions of the Act and descriptions of the various sections of the Act using plain language explanations. The third section sets out what happens next in relation to implementing the Act and provides information on how citizens can get additional information.

As set out in the Statement of Prime Purpose, the MNO’s goal is “to gain the recognition and respect of the Métis as a Nation and a people” and “to establish democratic institutions based on our inherent right of self-government.” As such, the starting point for the MNO’s mandate is its centralized Registry of MNO citizens. Based on the mandate it receives from its citizens, the MNO has established democratic and nation-building governance structures at the local, regional and provincial levels. These structures and institutions are authorized to represent MNO citizens and communities throughout Ontario as a part of the MNO’s overall governance structure.

Specifically, MNO citizens are represented at the local level through Community Councils, at the regional level through Regional Councillors that sit on the Provisional Council and at the provincial level through the MNO Secretariat. The Secretariat is responsible for managing the governance activities of the MNO and ensuring that the MNO’s mandate is being fulfilled.

As a regional councillor, I am very much looking forward to the opportunities that Bill 153 will give to communities in my area who are looking for a chance to expand their horizons and engage in new ventures.

PAULINE RICHARDSON
Region 7 Councillor on the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (PCMNO)
Incorporation of the Secretariat

In order to incorporate the Secretariat and implement Métis self-government in the “democratic institutions” that advance Youth Council, Veterans’ Council, the Women’s Secretariat, and Post-Secondary Representatives. All of these structures are mandated through ballot box elections held at regular intervals. In addition, all MNO citizens have the right to participate in the MNO Annual General Assembly. The assembly receives annual updates on the MNO’s progress and provides direction to the MNO’s leadership in between PCMNO’s province-wide elections held every four years.

The above listed MNO governance structures, along with other structures like the Youth Council, Veterans’ Council, the Women’s Secretariat of the MNO, work together to represent and serve Ontario Métis. They are the “democratic institutions” that advance and implement Métis self-government in Ontario.

Incorporation of the Secretariat

While the Métis Nation – as an Indigenous people – has the inherent right to self-government and self-determination, Métis governments like the MNO continue to struggle to have Canada fully recognize their mandates and jurisdictions. As this Métis self-government recognition process unfolds, the MNO needed a corporate entity to act as its legal and administrative arm for two key reasons:

1. Other governments would not provide funding for the delivery of programs and services of other initiatives for collective Métis or elected Métis leadership directly. From a policy perspective, governments will only provide this type of funding to incorporated entities where there is a clear understanding of the entity’s corporate and accountability structures. Since there was no Métis equivalent to the Indian Act, the only option for the MNO to be incorporated was to incorporate the Secretariat under provincial legislation. The alternative would have been for the MNO not to be able to access any government funding on behalf of Ontario Métis.

2. A corporate entity such as the Secretariat provides a liability shield that protects MNO citizens and elected leadership from being personally liable for the administrative and business operations of the MNO (outside of certain liabilities such as employee source deductions or fraudulent activities where the corporate shield can be pierced). Even though the Métis Nation has the inherent right of self-government, it would be unfair to ask individuals to be personally liable for potential lawsuits, damages, cost claims or debts the MNO incurred in pursuit of recognition of Métis rights and self-government.

Based on these realities, the MNO incorporated the Secretariat as a not-for-profit corporation under Ontario law on February 25, 1994. Notably, other Métis governments use similar corporate structures to advance their self-government. For example, the Manitoba Métis Community has incorporated the Manitoba Métis Federation Inc. (MMF) under provincial legislation. The Métis Nation of Alberta is incorporated as an association under Alberta’s Societies Act.

Contrary to the suggestions by some, the use of corporate structures does not diminish Métis self-government or put Métis under the thumb of government. For example, both the MNO and the MMF have advanced Métis rights litigation all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada as corporate entities. Further, the Supreme Court of Canada has held the following:

“... But an Aboriginal group can authorize an individual or an organization to represent it for the purpose of asserting its s. 35 rights ...” (Drake v. McIvor Contracting Ltd., 2013 SCC 26, para. 30)

Other Indigenous peoples have similarly used corporate structures as the legal vehicle to advance their self-government. The Indigenous people or nation can never be incorporated, but rather the group’s members create a corporation to collectively represent them and to negotiate with other governments.

The above incorporation, the MMF, and the MNO secretariat act are examples of other Indigenous groups who have used or are using this strategy across Canada. While these not-for-profit corporations have always been an awkward fit for Indigenous governments. These corporate entities were not designed for this purpose, however, they have proven to be effective transitional vehicles to advance Indigenous rights and claims until full self-government recognition can be secured.

Successive Calls for MNO-Specific Legislation

While the full recognition of Métis self-government remains the ultimate destination for the MNO, getting to a negotiations table will take time. The MMF Land Claim took 30 years to litigate, and, in spite of the MMF’s 2013 victory at the Supreme Court of Canada, the MMF still has not secured a formal negotiations table. In the First Nations world, modern day treaties take decades to prepare, to be accepted for negotiations, to negotiate and to conclude. As we advance Métis self-government in Ontario, citizens have repeatedly called for increased recognition and respect for the MNO’s representative role. Put simply, since the MNO and its Secretariat are unique, they should not be lumped in with mere clubs or associations under Ontario legislation. At successive MNO AGAs, unanimous resolutions directed Métis leaders to secure MNO-specific legislation. Notably, both Saskatchewan and Manitoba have passed MNO-specific legislation.

Bill 153 gives more power and options to our Métis communities in the province. It is another example of the positive work the MNO is doing to advance our shared goals.

What impressed me about Bill 153 is that it recognizes the distinctness of Métis government and provides structures that we can work within. For many years now MNO citizens have been asking for this legislation.

Figure 1. Other Indigenous corporate structures

The chart above shows examples of other Indigenous groups that have similarly used corporate structures as the legal vehicle to advance their self-government.

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Based on this direction from the MNO citizens, both the 2008 and 2014 MNO-Ontario Framework Agreements included the following objective: “discuss options for the legal recognition of the MNO and its Chartered Community Councils.” Previous Liberal minority governments were unwilling to move forward on this legislation; however, in December 2015, Premier Wynne committed to this initiative at her annual meeting with MNO President Lipinski.

Throughout 2015, the MNO worked collaboratively with the Ontario government for the development of the Act. While the legislative drafting process had to follow the rules and strict confidentiality requirements set for the provincial legislature, regular updates were provided to PCMNO and presentations were provided to the 2015 MNO AGA as well as the annual Community Council Presidents meeting. Ultimately, this unanimous resolution was passed.

WHEREAS past MNO AGAs have called for the MNO’s leadership to work with the Ontario Government to secure legislation that recognizes and respects the MNO’s unique governance structure;

AND WHEREAS the MNO’s leadership and legal counsel have presented the MNO AGA on the progress that has been made on this issue as well as the proposals being considered,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

(1) That the 2015 MNO AGA fully endorses the MNO’s moving forward on securing provincial legislation that recognizes and respects the MNO’s unique governance structure; and,

(2) That, when it is strategic, all of the MNO’s unique governance structures and policies will reflect provincial corporate law, Ontario not-for-profit corporations.”

The purpose of the Act is to exempt the MNO from certain provisions of provincial corporate law that are inconsistent with how Ontario Métis have chosen to govern themselves, and to create special provisions for the MNO to reflect its unique status and objectives. This means that instead of the MNO having to change its structures and policies to reflect provincial corporate law, Ontario has changed its laws to respect the MNO’s structures and policies.

Overview of the MNO Act

Purpose and provisions of the Act

The purpose of the Act is to exempt the MNO from certain provisions of provincial corporate law that are inconsistent with how Ontario Métis have chosen to govern themselves, and to create special provisions for the MNO to reflect its unique status and objectives. This means that instead of the MNO having to change its structures and policies to reflect provincial corporate law, Ontario has changed its laws to respect the MNO’s structures and policies.

Preamble

The Preamble to the Act makes a number of important statements about the nature and structure of the MNO, and why the MNO requires special recognition. It says that:

The MNO was created to represent and advocate on behalf of its citizens and communities with respect to their “collective rights, interests and aspirations,” as well as to provide social, economic and cultural supports to Métis individuals, families and communities through a province-wide service delivery system.

The MNO’s citizens are the members of the MNO Secretariat, and have “defined rights and responsibilities set out in the Secretariat’s constituting documents and bylaws.”

The citizens of the MNO identify as “descendants of the Métis people that emerged in west central North America with their own language, culture, traditions and way of life. These Métis people collectively refer to themselves as the Métis Nation, which includes Métis communities within Ontario.”

Through the Secretariat, the MNO has established various “democratically elected governance structures at the local, regional and provincial levels to represent its citizens.”

The Government of Ontario “recognizes that the Secretariat’s status as a governance structure that represents its citizens at the local, regional and provincial levels as distinct from other Ontario not-for-profit corporations.”

Definitions

Section 1 of the Act replaces various terms used in provincial legislation with terms that the MNO has developed and uses. For example, instead of referring to “members” of a corporation, the Act uses the term “citizen.” Similarly, it uses the term “Councilor” to refer to the elected members of PCMNO, rather than “director.” It also explains how
The MNO is strongly committed to ensuring that Métis youth are meaningfully engaged in the MNO’s governance structures at the local, regional and provincial levels.

Youth Representatives

The MNO is committed to ensuring that Métis youth are meaningfully engaged in the MNO’s governance structures at the local, regional and provincial levels. This is reflected in the fact that MNO citizens who are at least 16 years old can vote in elections and at MNO AGAs in accordance with Métis traditions and self-government. It is also reflected in the fact that the PCMN includes both Youth and Post-Secondary Representatives. At the same time, the MNO also needs to ensure that young people are not exposed to legal liabilities that may affect their futures. In order to balance these needs, the MNO respects and accepts the votes of young people between the ages of 16 and 18, but does not expose them to potential liabilities. For that reason, the MNO has always stated that voting councillors must be individuals who are bondable, at least 18 years of age, and have the power under law to enter into contracts.

Post-Secondary Representative, they will not possess the powers, duties or liabilities of a Councillor. This respects the MNO’s longstanding policies and practices.

Youth Representatives

Bill 153 is a milestone for Métis in this province as we see for the first time in legislation the recognition of our governance structure as unique and distinct. It is a real advancement for Métis in Ontario.

It is great that all three parties supported our Métis Nation of Ontario Secretariat Act. It shows how much change has taken place in the years since the MNO was founded. Bill 153 opens up the door for even more positive change.

JOEL HENLEY
President of the MNO Kenora Métis Council

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As President of the Métis Nation of Ontario Youth Council ... I am very pleased to see the Ontario government recognizing the vital Métis youth play in the MNO. The MNO Act ensures that we can continue to make our voices heard and be active participants in the MNO's governance structures.

KIM POWLEY
President, MNO Historic Sainte Marie Métis Council

MNO Secretariat Act

Regulations Provisions

The Act addresses all of the ways in which current provincial law is inconsistent with the MNO's governance structure and processes. But, in the future, the Ontario government could decide to change its laws again in ways that have unintended consequences for the MNO. Making changes through regulations is a simpler procedure than making amendments to the Act itself. Section 16(1) of the Act provides the Minister of Government and Corporate Services to make sure that the regulation is agreed to by the MNO. If a Community Council runs into difficulty, the Secretariat can also use written declarations to assist a Community Council or suspend or wind down a Community Council pursuant to terms and dispute resolution processes set out in their negotiated bylaws.

Amendments

When the Secretariat was incorporated in 1994, it was incorporated under the Ontario Corporations Act. Right now, the Corporations Act applies to both for-profit and not-for-profit corporations. The Ontario government has already passed new legislation—the Not-for-Profit Corporations Act, that is expected to come into force soon. When the Not-for-Profit Corporations Act comes into force, that will be the legislation that applies to the Secretariat, subject to the exceptions and modifications set out in the Act.

Sections 17 to 29 of the Act simply set out the changes that will be made when the Not-for-Profit Corporations Act comes into force, in order to replace all of the references to the Not-for-Profit Corporations Act with references to the corresponding provisions of the Not-for-Profit Corporations Act.

What happens next?

The Act came into force on January 1, 2016—but nothing changed on that day. The MNO is holding community information sessions in early 2016 to review the Act with MNO citizens and Community Councils. Through these meetings, the MNO hopes to better inform citizens on the success and benefit that the Act represents to MNO Métis as well as begin to identify those Community Councils that may have interest in incorporating under the Act for future discussions. Information about these meetings is available at www.metisnation.org.

Clearly, in order to meaningfully implement various parts of the Act, the MNO requires additional capacity for both the Secretariat and Community Councils to negotiate new arrangements. As a part of upcoming bilateral and tripartite meetings with Ontario and Canada, the MNO will be raising the need for additional financial resources to complete this work in future fiscal years. Based on what is heard as a part of the community information sessions, the MNO will develop a “way forward” plan for the Act and submit that to Ontario as well as Canada for consideration.

Additional Information on the MNO Act

 MITCH CASE
Youth Representative, Provincial Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (PCMNO)

In addition, the following MNO staff are available to answer questions or provide additional information as well:

Margaret Froh
MNO Associate Chief Operating Officer
Telephone: 1-800-263-4889
Email: margaret@metisnation.org

Joanne Meyer
MNO Director of Intergovernmental Affairs
Telephone: 1-416-977-9881
Email: joannem@metisnation.org

For MNO citizens that would like more information about the Act or that have additional questions, please contact your local, regional or provincial Métis leadership. In addition, the following MNO staff are available to answer questions or provide additional information as well:

Margaret Froh
MNO Associate Chief Operating Officer
Telephone: 1-800-263-4889
Email: margaret@metisnation.org

Joanne Meyer
MNO Director of Intergovernmental Affairs
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Email: joannem@metisnation.org

In addition to this document, the MNO has prepared a clause-by-clause overview of the Act, which provides more detailed information. This document is available on the MNO’s website at www.metisnation.org.
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Métis Nation of Ontario
With the support of Canada
President Lipinski meets with Indigenous Affairs Minister

On December 14, 2015, Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) President Gary Lipinski met with the Honourable Dr. Carolyn Bennett, the recently appointed Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs in the new government of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

“It is very encouraging that Minister Bennett met with us so quickly after assuming office. She is a Minister firmly committed to advancing relationships, which is central to the process of reconciliation,” commented President Lipinski. This is the first time since 2008 that the Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs (formerly Indian and Northern Affairs) has met with the MNO President for bilateral discussions.

President Lipinski requested the meeting in order to discuss the commitments made by the Trudeau Government in the recently published mandate letters to Cabinet and to establish a formal relationship with the Minister on a number of Ontario-specific Métis priorities.

Key among those priorities are the establishment of a federal claims process that sets out a framework to address Métis rights protected by s. 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982, recognizing Métis self-government, and resolving outstanding Métis claims against the Crown. “A Métis specific claims process is a critical concern for the Métis in Ontario given the outstanding commitments made to Ontario Métis by previous Canadian governments,” commented President Lipinski.

The health and well-being of Métis families and communities, in particular children and youth, was discussed including the federal government’s commitment to undertaking a collaborative review, in partnership with Métis communities, of existing federal programs and services available to the Métis Nation, to identify gaps and areas where strategic investments are needed in order to improve Métis quality of life. The MNO has made important advancements in quality of life for Ontario Métis through its work with the Government of Ontario under the MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement and through other collaborative agreements with institutional partners, which the MNO seeks to build on in its engagement with the new federal government.

Another area discussed with the Minister is the need for a whole-of-government approach on a range of issues impacting Métis people, including the need for long-term investments in the Aboriginal Skills Employment and Training Strategy (ASETS), including the continuation of nation-to-nation and distinctions-based approaches that respect the unique realities of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people in the delivery of these programs and services to their communities, and the enhancement of existing scholarships and bursaries available to Métis students at various colleges and universities across Canada, in partnership with the Métis Nation.

The MNO welcomes the federal government’s commitment to work with Métis communities and existing Métis financial institutions to develop a Métis Economic Development Strategy that identifies strategic federal investments that can be made to enhance Métis entrepreneurship, as well as Métis participation in business development and economic growth. “The Métis Voyageur Development Fund (MVDF) has been extremely successful in supporting Métis entrepreneurs in Ontario, thanks to the commitments made by Ontario. Métis businesses accessing MVDF financial support have generated over 80 new jobs in Ontario. MVDF has been very successful with returns on investments and the lowest rate of arrears on loans made among Aboriginal financial institutions. We are looking to this new federal government to come to the table to help support our people in realizing their dreams as entrepreneurs”, added President Lipinski.

After the meeting, President Lipinski commented, “We are grateful to Minister Bennett for today’s meeting. It was a very positive first step in developing a relationship between the MNO and this new federal government, and we are confident that we can build the same kind of positive relationship with the federal government that we currently enjoy with the Ontario government. It is only through working together that we can hope to achieve reconciliation and working for the betterment of MNO citizens in Ontario.”

Federal Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Dr. Carolyn Bennett (centre) meeting with President Lipinski (right) and Associate COO Froh (centre) on December 14.
MNO-Ontario meeting advances Métis issues

by MNO Staff

On December 16 at Queen’s Park in Toronto, an MNO delegation led by President Gary Lipinski and including MNO Chair France Picotte, MNO Associate Chief Operating Officer Margaret Froh, and Joanne Meyer, Director of Intergovernmental Relations, met with Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne, Aboriginal Affairs Minister David Zimmer, and Deputy Aboriginal Affairs Minister Deb Richardson as well as Assistant Deputy Ministers Alison Pila, Hillary Thatcher and David Diduck.

These annual MNO-Ontario meetings traditionally take place prior to Christmas and provide both governments the opportunity to review past successes, ongoing cooperation and discuss upcoming areas of common interest.

“The positive tone of this meeting, like those of the past, underscores the benefits of working together,” commented President Lipinski.

Key discussion points included the MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement, the latest version of which was signed in 2014 for a five-year term. The annual meeting provided an excellent opportunity to evaluate the progress on its objectives. “The Framework Agreement,” stated President Lipinski, “continues to be the foundation of our strong relationship with Ontario. It outlines clearly where our two governments will collaborate for the benefit of Métis people, families and communities.”

“Working together, the MNO and Ontario have made significant advancements this year under the Framework Agreement, including the recent passage of the Métis Nation of Ontario Secretariat Act, the first ever Métis-specific legislation in Ontario that recognizes the MNO’s unique governance structure. Major advancements for Métis and other Indigenous peoples in Canada were discussed with the Premier, including the launch of the National Inquiry into Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls, and the Final Report issued by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. "As these meetings take place at the highest level," explained President Lipinski, “they provide the direction necessary to ensure continued progress on a whole range of issues important to Métis in this province. We are very pleased that Ontario continues to recognize the role of the MNO as representing Métis interests in this province.”

MNO citizen takes part in Youth Panel at CAMA annual conference

submitted by Joanne Meyer
MNO Director of Intergovernmental Relations

On November 23, Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizen Maria Vandenbrand spoke on the Youth Panel during the Canadian Aboriginal Minerals Association’s (CAMA) 23rd Annual Conference in Vancouver, British Columbia.

Vandenbrand went to college for heavy equipment technician training and graduated with a diploma in heavy equipment technician training.

“Funny because I swore I would never go into mining after seeing all my family’s old mining stories from their time underground ‘50-some odd years ago,” Vandenbrand said.

“But here I am! And I’m loving it more than I could have ever thought.”

Royal Canadian Legion Branch 82 acknowledged by the MNO Veterans’ Council

submitted by Joe Paquette
MNO Veterans’ Council President

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Veterans’ Council presented a certificate of appreciation to the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 82 in Port Credit for their continuous support of Métis veterans.

For the past five years during Remembrance Day ceremonies, the Métis flag has been included in the colour guard. According to the Legion’s website, the flags included in the colour party are the Canadian Flag, the Red Ensign, the Royal Union Flag (also known as the Union Jack), the appropriate provincial or territorial flag, the United Nations flag, the NATO flag, the Legion banner and flags that represent the Legion and the principles on which the Legion is founded.

Including the Métis flag in Branch 82’s colour party is a great honour for Métis veterans.

This year, Royal Canadian Legion Branch 82 also donated the first Métis veterans’ wreath to be placed at the Port Credit cenotaph. In addition, Métis veterans are proudly and publicly acknowledged as the Métis veterans’ wreath is laid at the cenotaph.

“Royal Canadian Legion Branch 82 has and continues to welcome our Métis veterans as part of the Canadian fabric and their contributions to Canada,” said MNO Veterans’ Council President Joseph Paquette.

The certificate of appreciation was presented to Branch 82’s President Bob Borre for their continued support.

Left to Right - Minister of Aboriginal Affairs David Zimmer, MNO Chair France Picotte, Premier Kathleen Wynne, MNO President Gary Lipinski and MNO Associate Chief Operating Officer Margaret Froh.

MNO citizen Maria Vandenbrand at the Canadian Aboriginal Minerals Association’s 23rd Annual Conference.

Bob Borre (left), President of Royal Canadian Legion Branch 82, with Joseph Paquette (right), President of the MNO Veterans’ Council.
MNO will continue to work together with Ministry of Education

New Memorandum of Understanding signed

Our government is committed to ensuring that all students learn about the history and perspectives of First Nations, Métis and Inuit people in Ontario. Today, we celebrate a wonderful chapter for the Métis Nation of Ontario and for the people of this province.

- Minister of Education Liz Sandals

In 2014, the MNO and Ontario signed the second MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement that placed increased emphasis on programming for youth in order to ensure that Métis youth have the opportunity to be all they can be. The new MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement is a wonderful chapter for the Métis Nation of Ontario and for the people of this province.

This signing enhances the Ontario Government's collaborative relationship with the MNO by further promoting the distinct identity and culture of Métis citizens and the importance of these for education, learning and success.

- MNO Chair France Picotte

Our government is committed to ensuring that all students learn about the history and perspectives of First Nations, Métis and Inuit people in Ontario. Today, we celebrate a wonderful chapter for the Métis Nation of Ontario and for the people of this province.

The signing of this MOU strengthens the MNO’s long-standing partnerships in education and further demonstrates the value of working together. It is still more evidence of the commitment by the Government of Ontario to live up to the promise it made with the signing of the MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement in November 2008 and 2014.,” added President Lipinski.

The implementation of the MOU will be guided by a mutually agreeable work plan which identifies opportunities and partnerships to address the unique educational needs of Métis people in Ontario, reduces the gaps in Métis student achievement and student success, and increases the confidence of Métis parents in the education system. That work plan will include regular meetings between the Minister of Education and MNO President Gary Lipinski.
It is refreshing to have a federal government that recognizes that we must take action to address the violence that has been done to Métis, First Nations and Inuit women and children in this country.

- MNO President Gary Lipinski

94 TRC Calls to Action. While some of those Calls to Action are specific to our First Nations brothers and sisters, the majority of the Calls to Action apply to all Aboriginal Peoples in Canada — First Nations, Inuit and Métis. The MNO commends TRC Chair Justice Murray Sinclair, IPCC, Chief Wilton Littlechild, IPCC, and Dr. Marie Wilson for their commitment and the extraordinary service they have provided to all Canadians through this important work.

Volume Three of the TRC Final Report speaks to the limits of the mandate provided to the TRC, derived from the 2000 Indian Residential Schools (IRS) Settlement Agreement, and notes that the Métis experience of residential schooling has been overlooked for too long, describing this as an “ongoing shame” that needs to be addressed and rectified.

“The lack of relationship and recognition of the Métis by Canada that has existed historically is something that still permeates today, as you see reflected in an ongoing lack of federal policy regarding the Métis which has a huge negative impact on our citizens and communities. This is indeed an ongoing shame that needs to be addressed and rectified,” added President Lipinski.

“The MNO is hopeful given the commitments made by the Liberal Party in the recent election which are now reflected in the mandate letters provided to Prime Minister Trudeau’s Cabinet. The lack of relationship with the federal government and the lack of recognition of the Métis Nation is changing. The Métis Nation of Ontario looks forward to working with the Trudeau Government, and the Ontario Government under the leadership of Premier Kathleen Wynne, to build that relationship and to move forward, together, on our path of reconciliation,”

MNO Staff

Veterans’ Council acknowledges sponsors

submitted by

Joe Paquette
MNO Veterans’ Council President

During the 2015 Annual General Assembly (AGA) in Midland, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Veterans’ Council launched the release of a new book, Fighting For Canada Before There Was A Canada; Ontario Métis Veterans Pass The Torch. The project that led to the books release began in the spring of 2013 and submissions by MNO veterans, veteran supporters and Métis youth were published in the book. MNO Veterans’ Council President Joseph Paquette presented certificates of appreciation to the sponsors whose contributions helped bring the book project into fruition.

The sponsors — Nuclear Waste Management Organization, Ontario Power Generation, Hydro One Network Inc. and Techno-Metal Post — were additionally presented with copies of the book.

Members of the Nuclear Waste Management Organization holding the certificate of appreciation and the Métis veterans’ book. From left: Ross Holden, Senior Engagement Advisor, Aboriginal Relations; Lisa Frizzell, Director of Corporate Affairs; Bob Watts, Associate Vice-President, Aboriginal Relations; MNO Veterans’ Council President Joe Paquette; and Joe Gaboury, Director, Aboriginal Relations.

Scott Barry (right), Manager Nuclear Issues and Waste at Ontario Power Generation, and MNO Veterans’ Council President Joseph Paquette (left).

President and CEO of Techno Metal Post Roger Lauzon (third from left) and MNO Veterans’ Council President Joseph Paquette (right).

Richard Pringle (right), Manager Community Investment at Hydro One, and MNO Veterans’ Council President Joseph Paquette (left).

Detail of a stained-glass window designed by Métis artist Christi Belcourt depicting the Residential School system. This window can be found in the Centre Block of Parliament in Ottawa.

Cover of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s report on the Métis experience.

Detail of a stained-glass window designed by Métis artist Christi Belcourt depicting the Residential School system. This window can be found in the Centre Block of Parliament in Ottawa.
On September 25, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Veterans’ Council, in collaboration with the Belleville Police Service, presented the Louis Riel Medal and Certificate to four MNO veterans.

The presentation ceremony took place at a fitting location: the National Air Force Museum of Canada, located at Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Trenton. MNO Veterans’ Council Chair Guy Mandeville, CD, organized the venue for the ceremony.

Paquette presented each veteran with the Louis Riel Medal and the accompanying certificate was presented by Belleville Chief of Police Cory MacKay.

MNO citizen Clark Beamish, CD, was the first among those gathered to receive the Louis Riel Medal. Belleville Deputy Chief Ron Gignac, CD, was the second recipient of the Louis Riel Medal. Gignac’s wife Betty and their daughter Nicholette also attended the ceremony.

The third and fourth recipients of the Louis Riel Medal were Yvonne I.L. Gebhardt and her son Donald Gebhardt, CD. After Yvonne received her medal, Paquette stepped aside and Yvonne presented her son with his Louis Riel Medal. Doris’ wife Linda and her two daughters, Hannah and Laxi, were present at the ceremony.

Working together

Following the presentation of the Louis Riel Medals, the MNO Veterans’ Council acknowledged the Belleville Police Service for their support of MNO veterans. Paquette presented Chief MacKay with a Certificate of Appreciation from the MNO Veterans’ Council.

The Belleville Police Service and the MNO Veterans’ Council have established a good long-term connection, working together within their community. “We must contribute towards healthy communities throughout our province,” Paquette said.

A chance to see history

The National Air Force Museum of Canada has a national reputation for having the largest number of aircraft on display.

The presentation platform was placed in front of the famous, fully restored Handley Page Halifax aircraft. “It was quite the honour to display the Métis flag in the Trenton museum,” says Paquette. Mandeville and Paquette had the opportunity to visit the museum later in the day.

Veterans’ Council brings Métis presence to NCVA meetings

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Veterans’ Council attended the annual meeting of the National Council of Veteran Associations (NCVA) in November 2015, where veteran organizations are given a chance to put together a legislative program to be brought to the federal government’s attention. The MNO Veterans’ Council has been a member of good standing with the NCVA for six years. MNO Veterans’ Council representatives attend the annual meeting every year in Toronto to ensure that Métis veterans have a voice at the federal level. The representatives’ visibility and input are vital towards keeping a Métis presence at the meeting.

The NCVA advocates for over 60 different veteran organizations.
Métis veterans profiled in Manitoulin genealogy book

Submitted by
Debra Huron
MNO Citizen

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizens Debra Huron and Katie Skelton were proud to learn that Métis veterans within their families were included in a book published in 2015 by the Manitoulin Genealogy Club. The book, titled Remember Me: Manitoulin Military, Vol 1, shares the stories of the late Métis veterans Napoleon Jerome "Joe" Pilon and his older brother Walter "Shot" Pilon. Their stories were included among the 175 individuals profiled in the book.

Joe Pilon, Debra Huron’s father, was born on Meldrum Bay on Manitoulin Island. He enlisted in the Royal Canadian Navy for his tour of duty. Joe served as a telegraph and radio operator during the Korean War. Shot Pilon, Katie Skelton’s grandfather, was born in Killarney and was a Second World War veteran. He joined the Royal Canadian Navy with his brother Joe. During his tour of duty, Shot sailed to Russia and was aboard ship along the coast of Normandy during the D-Day invasion. It took two years for the Manitoulin Genealogy Club to put together all the material for the book. They used reports from local newspapers, letters of correspondence, pictures and military files to research the 300-page book. Remember Me: Manitoulin Military, Vol 1 aims to honour military men and women from Killarney and Manitoulin Island and to record their family history for future generations.

The Manitoulin Genealogy Club is collecting stories for volume 2 and any MNO citizens wishing to include Métis veterans for the next book are encouraged to contact the club with their information. Copies of the book can also be ordered by e-mail or telephone.

To contact the Manitoulin Genealogy Club, e-mail them at manitoulingenealogy@gmail.com or call them at 705-368-3416.

The MNO and Barrick Gold Corporation sign a Memorandum of Understanding for the Williams Gold Mine

Submitted by
MNO Staff

On October 30, 2015, in Marathon, the Métis Nation of Ontario ("MNO") and Barrick Gold Corporation ("Barrick") announced that they formally signed a Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") to guide their working relationship with regards to the operations of the Williams Mine Project (the "Project") in Hemlo, Ontario.

"This agreement is very important to the Métis people," explained MNO Region 2 Chair Cameron Burgess. "It acknowledges the exercise of Métis rights and the Métis way of life in the context of a currently operating mine in the Marathon area. We are pleased to continue working with Barrick. Agreements like this one are another benefit that we see coming from the MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement, which was first signed in 2008 and renewed in 2014," he added.

Andrew Baumen, General Manager of Williams Operating Corporation, added: "We have been consulting with the Métis Nation on the operating and future closure of the Williams Gold Mine since 2011. This formalized Memorandum of Understanding is a positive representation of our commitment to continuing to work with the Métis Nation."

The MOU sets out the way in which the local Métis community, as represented by the MNO’s Lakehead/Nippigon/Michipicoten Traditional Territory Consultation Committee, intends to consult with the Project and details how the parties will work together to address any potential impacts the Project may have on Métis rights, interests and way of life. The MOU demonstrates Barrick’s commitment to continue to collaborate and consult with the surrounding community to build long-lasting positive relationships.

MNO Superior North Shore Métis Council President Trent Desaulniers commented: "Our community is very proud of the relationship that we have built with Barrick. We see this relationship as an opportunity to foster ongoing collaborations while working together to protect our traditional values and way of life. We look forward to continuing to strengthen our relationship with Barrick as their project progresses."

MNO Veterans’ Council swears in new Sergeant-at-arms

Submitted by
Joe Paquette
MNO Veterans’ Council President

During the 2015 Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Annual General Assembly (AGA), the MNO Veterans’ Council held their annual general meeting where Rob Baskey was sworn in to his new position as the MNO Veterans Council Sergeant-at-arms. Baskey, a sergeant with the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP), began his career in law enforcement in 1990 with the North Bay Police Service. In 1995, he transferred to Mattawa, followed by working with the Provincial Violent Crime Linkage System (VCLAS) Centre and the Ontario OPP Detachment, where he is currently the communications strategist for Community Mobilization and Engagement efforts.

In 2012, Baskey was seconded by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) to be deployed in the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) to train, mentor and advise the South Sudanese National Police Service and the Government of South Sudan.

The MNO Veterans’ Council is pleased to have Baskey’s experience added to their ranks. Welcome aboard, Rob!


About Barrick Gold Corporation

Barrick aims to be the world’s leading mining company focused on gold. Based in Toronto, with operations in 10 countries, our vision is the generation of wealth through responsible mining — wealth for our owners, our people and the countries and communities with which we partner. The company has been ranked as a world leader in social and environmental responsibility for eight consecutive years by the Dow Jones Sustainability Index. Shares are traded on the Toronto and New York stock exchanges under the symbol ABX.
WSMNO announces two new Representatives

submitted by Sharon McBride
PCMNO Vice-Chair & WSMNO Spokesperson

The two vacancies on the Women's Secretariat of the Métis Nation of Ontario (WSMNO) have been filled. The new WSMNO Representatives are Suzanne Jackson from Region 9 and Sandra Gauthier-Poelman from Region 1. Suzanne Jackson joined the MNO Clear Waters Métis Council in 2009 and has been Chair since 2013. She first became aware of her Métis lineage after she identified a shared ancestor with Louis Riel. Born and raised in Alberta, she was unknowingly steeped in a culture which was never identified by name. Her grandmother’s experi-
ences in the Duck Lake Residential School solidified a great concern within Suzanne that the past be remembered. Women and children’s needs have always been a primary focus in her career primarily as a labour and delivery Doula with training in healing methods such as the Bowon technique. She and her hus-
band share seven children and ten grandchildren.

A teacher at heart, Suzanne often takes part in outreach activities in- cluding school and women’s group visits to communities to share Métis history and traditions. Im-
mersion in the Aboriginal arts has taken her from beadwork, drum-
making, mossie hair tunneling and porcupine quill jewelry to where she is now learning the process of turning leather into useful items. Moccasin-making came first, fol-

owed by all learning about turning hides. Her next objective to obtain-


If you or someone you know is feeling the impacts of problem gambling, please call our Provincial Coordinator at 705-671-9855 ext. 223

She can connect you to online resources as well as local MNO Healing and Wellness Coordinators who can provide peer support.
ON January 12, Ontario Minister of Aboriginal Affairs David Zimmer met with the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Thunder Bay Métis Council citizens in Thunder Bay. During his visit, Minister Zimmer toured the MNO Thunder Bay Métis Council's office and learned about the many MNO housing, health and community projects being undertaken in that region.

While on a tour of the MNO office in Thunder Bay, the minister received gifts from MNO staff. Community Wellness Coordinator Joan Panizza presented the minister with a shoulder satchel with a Métis sash design. Regional Employment and Training Coordinator Paula Bouchard presented Minister Zimmer with a carved wooden eagle feather locally crafted from a piece of cedar.

submitted by Joanne Meyer
MNO Director of Intergovernmental Relations

ON Tuesday, December 22, 2015, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Georgian Bay Métis Council handed out awards for their third annual Helen Bradley Memorial Bursary. Senator Helen Bradley passed away in 2010. She was a founding member of the MNO Georgian Bay Métis Council and deeply respected within the MNO. She was a recipient of the 2008 Ontario Medal of Good Citizenship, an honour recognizing individuals who have made outstanding contributions to their communities.

The council picked three recipients for the bursary by evaluating essays the students submitted on “What it means to be Métis.” The students also had to provide proof that they had attended an MNO Georgian Bay Métis Council event in the spring or summer of 2015.

The winners of the 2015 Helen Bradley Memorial Bursary were:
• First place: Caitlin Diver
• Second place: Dominic Searles
• Third place: Jordyn Playne

The MNO Georgian Bay Métis Council would like to congratulate these students and wish them well in their future endeavours. The council would also like to thank Bruce Power for providing the funds for this wonderful bursary.

submitted by Danielle Callander
MNO Citizen

ON November 10, Provisional Council of the Métis Nation (PCMNO) Senator Verna Porter-Brunelle and MNO Employment Developer Rachelle Brunelle-McColl hosted an MNO display and information booth at the Georgian College campus in Midland. Métis historical items were on display to promote Louis Riel Day on November 16 in addition to information regarding the many programs offered by the MNO for students.

Porter-Brunelle and Brunelle-McColl focused especially on the Métis Student Bursary program, a bursary dedicated to post-secondary Métis students. Georgian College is one of the 41 different post-secondary institutions that offer the bursary.

submitted by Jade Bourbonnière
MNO Education & Training Operations Coordinator

commUNITY

Minister of Aboriginal Affairs visits
MNO Thunder Bay Métis Council

submitted by
Joanne Meyer
MNO Director of Intergovernmental Relations

MNO citizens bring Métis culture to Georgian College

Third annual Helen Bradley Memorial Bursaries awarded

submitted by
Danielle Callander
MNO Citizen

MNO Senator Helen Bradley (left) with MNO Thunder Bay Métis Council President Bryanna Scott (centre) and MNO Infinite Reach Facilitator Paul Robitaille.
MNO Council President meets Countess of Wessex

by MNO Staff

On November 12, Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Toronto and York Region Métis Council (TYRMC) President Tera Beaulieu attended a working lunch with the Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario, and Her Royal Highness, the Countess of Wessex, along with other representatives from Aboriginal agencies and initiatives across Canada.

Several presentations were delivered that highlighted the unique needs faced by Aboriginal people living in urban centres, including issues related to child welfare, health, and education and employment. Several key themes emerged from the conversations that occurred among the guests in attendance, chief among them the significance of truth and reconciliation among Aboriginal people and Canadians, and the importance of self-governance for Aboriginal peoples, particularly when discussing the needs of communities and actions that should be taken.

At the conclusion of the discussions, the Countess of Wessex expressed thanks to those in attendance and convening conversations that should be taken.

MNO High Land Waters Métis Council Governance and Finance Training

Saluted by Glen Lipinski
MNO Community Relations Coordinator

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) High Land Waters Métis Council participated in the two-day Governance and Finance Training session in Kingston from November 21 to 22.

The training was facilitated by Glen Lipinski, MNO Community Relations Coordinator, and Hank Rowlston, MNO Manager of Community Relations.

The two-day training focused on Governance and began with a Métis 101. Additional topics covered included visioning, challenges, opportunities and planning for Councils. Lipinski also concentrated on Finance and the New Relationship Fund. They delivered sessions focusing on policies, procedures, aspects of budgeting and general reporting.

In attendance from the MNO High Land Waters Métis Council region were Candace Lloyd, Gwendalyn Lloyd-Gomez, Trudy Conner and her husband Jim, Rob Lloyd, Marlon Lloyd and Scott Lloyd.

While MNO Governance and Finance Training sessions are offered to specific community councils, there are occasions when there are openings to allow additional MNO representatives or citizens to participate and bring the knowledge to their regions. At this training, Pearl Gabona, the MNO Women’s Secretariat Representative for Region 5 and 8, and MNO citizen Ralph Wolf Thistle both travelled to Kingston at their own expense to attend the training session.

Renkont Michif

soumis par

France Picotte
Vice-présidente de la Nation Métisse de l’Ontario

Le 28 pi 29 novembre, 2015, le l’akawimi michif yéti ensemb Témisins pi parté dno lawe pi devlépt ót reors ki von éde le zot a aprend no bal lauw. Se bini rianpawt d’kontinué a parté l’michif. Pi denkouragé lé zot pi surusi lé jeun di fai de

La NMO célèbre le lancement de la ressource version française-michif « En cercle, ensemble »

soumis par

France Picotte
Vice-présidente de la Nation Métisse de l’Ontario

Le gens sont venus en grand nombre lors du lancement officiel de la ressource multimédia « En cercle, ensemble » du Centre Ontarien de Prévention d’Agressions (COPA).

Plus d’une quarantaine de gens sont réunis le samedi 28 novembre au Holiday Inn de Timmins. Les gens étaient invités à un souper et à une présentation de la ressource produite en collaboration avec la Nation Métisse de l’Ontario, une ressource ayant une perspective métisse, qui est culturellement pertinente, qui satisfait les besoins et qui est appropriée pour les Métis.

De plus cette ressource supporte la diversité des familles de l’Ontario. Depuis 2013 la collaboration entre COPA et la Nation Métisse se poursuit afin de créer cette ressource qui vise à favoriser l’établissement de milieux scolaires où règnent la sécurité, la force et la liberté!

Le groupe Michif a fait la traduction pour la narration en Michif et les voix de la narration en Michif furent enregistrées à Timmins par Richard Alain et Nicole Charron. Chaque famille a reçu une boîte à outils multimédias « En cercle, ensemble ».
Proud Métis shares his granddaughter’s success story

submitted by
Ken Simard
MNO Georgian Bay Métis Council Chair

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizen Ken Simard feels very proud of his granddaughter Heidi Reinikka. Reinikka is currently situated in British Columbia, working for the government as a practices forester. In an old newspaper clip Simard has kept, Reinikka’s aspirations were quite different than where she currently finds herself.

The newspaper clip, taken from the Thunder Bay Chronicle Journal, shows 13-year-old Reinikka holding up a poster warning against the dangers of street gangs. The article shares that Reinikka won $100 for her poster in a contest.

At the time, Reinikka’s aspirations leaned towards architecture or medicine. Now she has a successful career as a Forest Technologist for BC Timber Sales, a semi-autonomous program within the British Columbia Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resources Operations.

Congratulations, Heidi!

submitted by
Ken Simard
MNO Region 2 Captain of the Hunt

Métis youth attend annual camping trip to Beausoleil Island

submitted by
Larry Ferris
MNO Georgian Bay Métis Council Chair

Members of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Georgian Bay Métis Council were joined by many Métis youth during their 2015 annual trip to Beausoleil Island at Georgian Bay Islands National Park. The youth went to the park as part of an Aboriginal camping group and made up over half of the campers; there were 23 Métis youth and two councillors.

There were lots of new faces and some old friends within the group and the weather was outstanding and made for an enjoyable experience.

Parks Canada organized presentations on the history of Beausoleil Island, including replicas of artifacts used 5,000 years ago in addition to Métis artifacts.

The young campers also learned first-hand about endangered, threatened and rare animal species within the Georgian Bay area, including the Massasauga rattlesnake, an animal known to live along the eastern side of Georgian Bay and on the Bruce Peninsula. Some campers even had the chance to handle Pineapple, an Eastern Foxsnake also included on the threatened species list in the Georgian Bay area.

Other activities the youth enjoyed were canoeing, kayaking, hiking and a new activity they were able to experience was archery. With the excellent weather, some brave campers climbed up a high tower in order to leap about 20 feet down into the water.

The youth went home with new knowledge on conservation, teamwork and leadership skills.

submitted by
Larry Ferris
MNO Georgian Bay Métis Council Chair

Citizens take part in heritage trees project

submitted by
Larry Ferris
MNO Georgian Bay Métis Council Chair

Recently, Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizens, including youth with the MNO Georgian Bay Métis Council, worked with the North Simcoe Anglers and Hunters Conservation Club to reintroduce several heritage species trees to their area. The trees included three large butternut, one elm and one Ohio buckeye chestnut, each of which was two to three metres tall.

The trees were planted at the Georgian Bay Islands National Park. While the park usually doesn’t involve itself in volunteer efforts, the planting of the trees was well received and encouraged by Brian Charles, the park’s Aboriginal Liaison Officer. Charles recognized that the cultural and historical importance of the trees would be important within the Aboriginal communities.

Park staff will be maintaining the trees in order to ensure they will be a good seed source for future plantings as well as educational value for visitors interested in the cultural history of the area.
Region 4 MNO citizens spread some holiday cheer

submitted by
Yvonne Jensen
NNO North Channel Métis Council President

On December 13, Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizens from Region 4 held a meeting in Iron Bridge to view a presentation from MNO staff at the Sault Ste. Marie office.

MNO Employment Coordinator Fran Scheepmaker gave a presentation on employment and training and how Métis in Ontario can apply for bursaries for educational purposes. The presentation lasted an hour and council members asked many good questions about MNO education and training programs. During the presentation, those who attended were tempted with delicious Christmas snacks to celebrate the Holidays.

Citizens were grateful that the MNO staff took time to join them at their meeting and inform them of changes taking place to MNO education and training programs.

Present at the meeting were MNO North Channel Métis Council President Yvonne Jensen, Chair Mike Laderoute, Region 4 Council President Art Bennett, Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (PCMNO) Region 4 Councillor Ernie Gatien, Councillor Reg Bennett, Councillor Jason Ryder, Councillor Gary Foster, Secretary-Treasurer Jennifer Jensen and Youth Representative Taylor McNally.

The MNO North Channel Métis Council hopes everyone had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!”

Métis youth bring home gold and silver from NWO Cadet Biathlon

submitted by
Marlene Davidson
NNO Citizen

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizens Marlene Davidson’s two grandchildren, Emily and Keira Cameron, recently competed in the Northwestern Ontario (NWO) Cadet Biathlon with the Atikokan Cadet Unit’s team.

The two Métis youth are first-year cadets and participated in the Stage 1 competition during the weekend of January 10. There were over 100 cadets participating in the competition, including Sea and Army cadets from 16 units across Northwestern Ontario traveled from Marathon to Kenora in order to take part in the Cadet Biathlon.

The biathlon was very similar to the same event held during the Olympics except that cadets did not carry rifles on their backs. Instead, the rifles remained on the firing range and were placed in the shooting lane by the coaches as the cadets skied up to the shooting ramp.

Emily and Keira made their family very proud by winning gold and silver medals in the Junior category. They will advance to the next level of competition on Sault Ste. Marie at the end of January for the Northern Ontario Stage 2 Competition

MNO Council Youth Representative stays active in her community

submitted by
Yvonne Jensen
NNO North Channel Métis Council President

Taylor McNally has been very busy within her community. As the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) North Channel Métis Council Youth Representative, she has been hosting events at local schools in Blind River.

On December 10, McNally held a Métis 101 event, teaching the students about Métis heritage and helping them make healing blankets using the four sacred medicines of Aboriginal people.

On December 17, McNally organized a mittens, scarves and hats campaign for local schools, raising donations and presenting them to the schools in the area for any children who forget, lose or don’t have mittens, hats or scarves. Thanks to McNally’s efforts, local children will be able to stay warm for winter recess.

The following message was posted on École St. Joseph’s Facebook page: “Taylor McNally, ancienne élève de l’École St. Joseph, a eu la brillante idée de ramasser des mitaines, tuques et foulards afin de les remettre aux écoles de la communauté. Ainsi les enfants, qui auraient oublié leurs mitaines, tuques ou foulard, auront la possibilité d’être bien au chaud durant les vacances. Merci Taylor et bravo pour ton implication!”

Good job, Taylor!”

Workshop helps preserve Métis skills

submitted by
Jackie Courville
MNO Citizen

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Northern Lights Métis Council hosted an Aboriginal Mitts Workshop on December 10, 2015, at their office in Cochrane.

MNO citizen Jackie Courville facilitated the workshop with the assistance of MNO-Timmins staff member Richard Aubin. This was Courville’s first time hosting a crafting workshop at the MNO Northern Lights Métis Council office.

“She did very well,” Aubin shared in an e-mail. “What I love the most is seeing someone learning a skill our ancestors practiced and passing it on to others.”

While this workshop focused on creating a pair of warm mitts, Courville hopes to host other workshops to teach moccasins, mukluks and Métis beadwork.

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Emily and Keira made their family very proud by winning gold and silver medals in the Junior category. They will advance to the next level of competition on Sault Ste. Marie at the end of January for the Northern Ontario Stage 2 Competition.

First year cadets Emily Cameron and Keira Cameron won silver and gold medals at the NWO Biathlon.

MNO North Channel Métis Council Youth Representative Taylor McNally (right) helps students with a healing blanket.

MNO Council Youth Representative stays active in her community

submitted by
Yvonne Jensen
MNO North Channel Métis Council President

Taylor McNally has been very busy within her community. As the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) North Channel Métis Council Youth Representative, she has been hosting events at local schools in Blind River.

On November 16, McNally attended École secondaire catholique Jussieu-Nord to assist in their celebration of Rock Your Mocs Day, a worldwide event where Aboriginal people wear their moccasins at work, at school or anywhere. Students and school staff were encouraged to wear their moccasins to school to show their pride and solidarity with Aboriginal peoples.

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Good job, Taylor!”

From the left: Councillor Reg Bennett, PCMNO Region 4 Councillor Ernie Gatien, MNO Employment Coordinator Fran Scheepmaker, President Yvonne Jensen, MNO Employment Coordinator Patti Moreau, Region 4 Captain of the Hunt Art Bennett and Chair Mike Laderoute.

Sue Beauleine works on a mitt during a workshop.
MNO Grand River Métis Council marks Louis Riel Day in three cities

submitted by
Paul Smith
MNO Grand River Métis Councilor

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Grand River Métis Council (GRMC) commemorated Louis Riel Day 2015 in ceremonies within three cities: Guelph, Kitchener and Cambridge, on November 14, 16 and 20. The events were featured in local newspapers and on local CBC Radio.

On November 14, the MNO GRMC joined Guelph’s Mayor Cam Guthrie and city councillors James Gordon and Léanne Piper for the Sixth Annual Louis Riel Day event. Local Métis musicians Kim and Rajan Anderson played Métis fiddle music for the crowd. On November 16 in Cambridge, Mayor Doug Craig and numerous city councillors joined the MNO GRMC to share stories about Louis Riel and raise the Métis flag over Cambridge City Hall for the first time. The MNO GRMC were invited back for 2016.

Finally, on November 20 in Kitchener, about 90 Grade 7 and 8 students joined the celebration at Kitchener City Hall. Other guests and participants included Councilor Sarah Marsh, many local Métis citizens and university students. The students from the Waterloo Catholic District School Board learned about Louis Riel and Métis history and culture, which ties into the intermediate school curriculum. Local CBC personality Craig Norris joined the festivities as well.

On November 16, Trudeau met with Clement Charmer, President of the Métis National Council, Perry Bellegarde, National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations; Dawn Harvard, President of the Native Women’s Association of Canada; Natan Obed, President of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami; and Dwight Dorey, National Chief of the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples. Their meeting focused on the best ways to implement the 94 recommendations found in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s final report.

Senator Gordon had been asked to read the closing prayer for the meeting. Afterward, Trudeau approached her and thanked her for the prayer and posed for a picture. “I thought how proud his father would be,” Senator Gordon shared in an interview. “I felt that finally, good things will happen for Indigenous people. I remember the past and now I look forward to the future.”

In their picture, Trudeau and Senator Gordon both wore beaded garments. The beading on Senator Gordon’s jacket was done by PCMNO Youth Representative Mitch Cederwall.

Senator Gordon meets Prime Minister Trudeau

Senator Gordon submitted by
Reta Gordon
PCMNO Executive Senator

During a meeting with the leaders of five national Aboriginal organizations, Provincial Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (PCMNO) Executive Senator Reta Gordon met Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and caught the moment on camera.

On December 16, Trudeau met with Clement Charmer, President of the Métis National Council, Perry Bellegarde, National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations; Dawn Harvard, President of the Native Women’s Association of Canada; Natan Obed, President of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami; and Dwight Dorey, National Chief of the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples. Their meeting focused on the best ways to implement the 94 recommendations found in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s final report.

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MNO Kenora Métis Council Training

submitted by
Glen Lipinski
MNO Community Relations Coordinator

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Kenora Métis Council participated in the two-day Governance and Finance Training session in Kenora from January 16 to 17.

The training was facilitated by Glen Lipinski and Beth Howesberger, MNO Community Relations Coordinators. The two-day training focused on governance and began with Métis 101. Additional topics covered included visioning, challenges, opportunities and planning for councils. Lipinski also concentrated on Finance and the New Relationship Fund. They delivered sessions focusing on policies, procedures, aspects of budgeting and general reporting.

In attendance from the MNO Kenora Métis Council were Karen Cederwall, Jordan Benoit, Martin Camire, Liz Boucha, Nina Henley, Joel Henley and Sandy Trickle.

MNO council unveils new logo

submitted by
Jerry Clarke
MNO Clear Waters Métis Council President

The MNO Clear Waters Métis Council was pleased to have Tobias Clarke unveil the new brand mark at their annual Christmas Feast in Hamilton on Saturday December 5.

With the council’s name change from the MNO Hamilton-Wentworth Métis Council to the MNO Clear Waters Métis Council, it was evident that a new logo was needed. Therefore, the council decided to entertain a distinct new look.

Tobias was instrumental in the design of the council logo and worked in cooperation with all of the council for its completion. The inspiration of the council’s ancestors was the instrumental force that brought forth vivid color, heritage and culture in the new council’s visual identity.

The logo was well received by many of the MNO citizens that attended the feast and received praise by many others on the MNO Clear Waters Métis Council’s Facebook page.

Chi-Miigwech, merci, thank you.
MNO citizens attend drum-making workshop in Toronto

submitted by Jocelyn Couture
MNO Citizen

On December 6, 2015, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Toronto and York Métis Council (TYRMC) held their annual business meeting and offered MNO citizens and friends a drum-making workshop following the meeting.

The drum-making workshop featured First Nations instructor Steve Teekens. Situated at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, the workshop focused on making the drums as well as the importance of drums and drumming in Aboriginal culture.

For the workshop, participants used the following materials and tools:

- Rawhide (they used white-tail deer), soaked overnight
- Rawhide laces, soaked overnight
- A circular wooden frame
- A leather hole punch
- A “can-do” attitude

Participants quickly learned that making a drum was not for the faint of heart. Teekens explained how each individual wooden frame is handmade by assembling blocks of identically shaped white pine to form the sturdy circular frame and carefully sanded down by hand to ensure the soaked rawhide can be stretched across without tearing. Next, the pre-cut and pre-punched rawhide piece is stretched over the frame.

Luckily for participants, the frames and rawhide had already been prepared by Teekens beforehand.

Next came the tricky part of securing the ferrari-like rawhide laces through the pre-made holes to secure the drum cover to the frame. Attention to detail is crucial at this point as it’s easy to get the laces mixed up. The last step was to create the drum’s handle on the back. Teekens made certain that any mistakes were corrected and everyone was able to bring home their very own beautiful and functional hand drum, complete with a drumstick, to ensure maximum merry-making.

Just in time to bring a musical addition home for the holidays! A drum before having its rawhide laces threaded through.

MNO citizen launches Métis clothing line

submitted by Liliane Ethier
MNO Temiskaming Métis Council President

On November 26-27, 2015, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizen Liliane Ethier, owner of Natural Thredz Designs, launched her new clothing line during the Second Annual Temiskaming Village Noel held on November 25-27.

The event was funded through MNO training initiatives and has been successfully managing her new venture since November 2013. Throughout the event, Natural Thredz Designs featured unique and authentic Métis clothing. Ethier’s business produces handmade clothing, including Métis leather garments, historical costumes, one-of-a-kind designs and apparel.

Ethier received funding through MNO training initiatives and has been successfully managing her new venture since November 2013. Throughout the event, Natural Thredz Designs featured unique and authentic Métis clothing. Ethier’s business produces handmade clothing, including Métis leather garments, historical costumes, one-of-a-kind designs and apparel.

MNO communities meet with KGHM to learn about the Victoria Mine

submitted by MNO Staff

On October 22, 2015, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) hosted a community information session for MNO citizens about the KGHM Victoria Mine Project in Sudbury, Ontario. The community information session provided the opportunity for the Region 5 communities to learn more about the KGHM – Victoria Mine project and to ask questions about the project.

During the evening, Mark Frayne, Project Support, Risk Manager and Project Services with KGHM, and Robert Nowak, Deputy Project Manager from KGHM, delivered a presentation and answered questions about the Victoria Mine project.

After dinner, the MNO Lands, Resources and Consultation (LRC) staff facilitated a dialogue with the Region 5 communities, allowing citizens to ask additional questions about the project as well as a chance to share their comments and concerns about the Victoria Mine project and how it may affect their Métis rights and way of life.

Currently in advanced exploration, the Victoria Mine is located approximately 40 kilometers west of Sudbury in Denison Township. The project is estimated to contain 10.3 million tonnes of minable ore with an expected mine life of 10 years. If the project obtains all regulatory approvals and is determined to be feasible, KGHM anticipates that the Victoria Mine will commence production sometime in 2022 and will employ approximately 200 people.

The event was funded through a Memorandum of Understanding executed between the MNO and KGHM on April 29, 2015.

For any questions about the KGHM – Victoria Mine project, please contact the responsible MNO Consultation Coordinator via email at: StevenS@metisnation.org
ACHIEVEMENTS

Métis author publishes new collection of short stories

by MNO Staff

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizen Cherie Dimaline recently released her latest collection of stories through Kegedonce Press. Dimaline is an author and editor born within the Georgian Bay Métis community.

Her new novel, A Gentle Habit, contains six stories focusing on a diverse group of characters, addiction, and attempting normalcy in an unnatural world.

Dimaline’s first book, Red Rooms, won Fiction Book of the Year from the Anskohk Aboriginal Book Awards. Her novel The Girl Who Grew a Galaxy was shortlisted for the 2014 Burt Award.

She has edited numerous publications, including Spirit, FNH and Muskrat magazines. Her fiction has been anthologized internationally and she was named the first Writer in Residence – Aboriginal Literature for the Toronto Public Library.

Dimaline can be purchased on the Kegedonce Press website, on AllLitUp.ca or by ordering it through local bookstores.

MNO citizen Darby Starratt in the House of Commons.

submitted by
Bryanna Scott
MNO Thunder Bay Métis Council President

Darby Starratt, Secretary for the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Thunder Bay Métis Council, recently accepted a position in Ottawa working for newly elected Thunder Bay-Rainy River Member of Parliament (MP) Don Rusnak.

Starratt was born and raised in Hudson and left northwestern Ontario to pursue her studies at Carleton University, where she obtained an Honours Bachelor of Arts degree. After graduating, she enrolled at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, where she graduated with a Bachelor of Education degree.

As a teacher, Starratt worked for a number of years within Aboriginal communities, teaching at various First Nations schools in northwestern Ontario. When she accepted a position as Aboriginal Student Navigator at Confederation College, she became actively involved with the MNO Thunder Bay Métis Council.

During the recent federal election, Starratt volunteered on Don Rusnak’s campaign. Afterward, Rusnak offered her the position of his Executive Assistant in Ottawa. The MNO Thunder Bay Métis Council is very proud and wishes her all the best in her new position!

MNO citizen Paul Montsion

submitted by
Linda Montsion
MNO Citizen

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizen Leah Gravelle won first place in the 12 and under category in the Café Music Festival held in Azilda on September 18 to 20.

In March 2015, Leah, whose stage name is Leah Belle, and many other performers auditioned to compete in the festival. She and nine other finalists were selected and went on to the final round at the September festival. The young Métis singer won $500 thanks to her talent.

Leah has already won several prestigious awards, including first place in the 2014 N’Swakamok Aboriginal Idol competition, and taken part in festivals, such as the 2015 annual Concert for a Cure, a cancer awareness event sponsored by the Six Nations Community Youth Organization.

She will be releasing an album in 2016, sponsored by award-winning Aboriginal artist Jace Martin.

MNO citizen living her dream on Parliament Hill

submitted by
Bryanna Scott
MNO Thunder Bay Métis Council President

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizen Garry Montsion and his wife Linda wish to share their pride and announce the graduation of their son, MNO citizen Paul Montsion.

Paul graduated from Carleton University with a Bachelor of Arts degree.

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizen Cherie Dimaline.

Young MNO citizen rising towards stardom

submitted by
Richard Gravelle
MNO Citizen

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizen Leah Gravelle was born and raised in Hudson and left northwestern Ontario to pursue her studies at Carleton University, where she obtained an Honours Bachelor of Arts degree. After graduating, she enrolled at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, where she graduated with a Bachelor of Education degree.

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MNO citizen Paul Montsion

submitted by
Linda Montsion
MNO Citizen

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizen Cherie Dimaline.

MNO citizen receiving Honours Law degree

submitted by
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MNO Citizen

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Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizen Cherie Dimaline.

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizen Garry Montsion and his wife Linda wish to share their pride and announce the graduation of their son, MNO citizen Paul Montsion.

Paul graduated from Carleton University with a Bachelor of Arts degree.

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizen Cherie Dimaline.
Octave Belisle, former Senator for the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) North Channel Métis Council, passed away on January 5 at the Thessalon Hospital. He was 85.

Loving father of Darlene Clavet (Keenan), Daniel Belisle (Marylou), Christian Belisle (Patty) and Lori Witty (Cliff), he will be fondly remembered by several grandchildren and great-grandchildren. He is survived by his siblings Shirley Grisdale (late Phillip), Betty Buchanan (late Buck), William (Eileen), Donelda Errington (late Vinny) and Marie and brother-in-law of Eddy Kukkola (Mert); and numerous nieces and nephews.

He is predeceased by his father Octave and mother Edith, his son Timothy Belisle (Karen), his mother-in-law Hanna Kukkola and his brother Wilfred (Eunice).

Donations to the Alzheimer’s Society or the Canadian Cancer Society would be gratefully accepted.

– Submitted by Yvonne Jensen, MNO North Channel Métis Council President

Jessie Annabell Couture (née Garvie) passed away peacefully at the Grey Bruce Regional Health Services in Owen Sound on Tuesday, January 12. She was 98.

Jessie was the beloved wife of the late Rudy Couture. Loving mother of Leora (Keith) Wilson and Rudy (Jean) Couture and the late Bob Couture and Marilyn Couture. Cherished grandmother to 16 grandchildren, 28 great-grandchildren and 12 great-great-grandchildren. Predeceased by her parents, Arthur and Jennie Garvie (née Wrigley), her sister Muriel Gray and her brothers Harry, William and Robert.

She will be fondly remembered by her daughter-in-law Sharon Couture, her nieces and nephews as well as many other relatives and dear friends.

As an expression of sympathy, donations to the Residential Hospice Grey Bruce or the charity of your choice would be appreciated by the family.

– Submitted by Pauline Richardson, PCMNO Regional Councillor

MNO citizen retires after 30-year career in law enforcement

After 30 years with the London Police Service, Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizen Paul Gilpin is easing into a well-earned retirement. Gilpin started with the London Police Force back in 1986 after graduating with a degree from the University of Guelph. He retires with the rank of Staff Sergeant.

Over the course of his career, Gilpin has worked in many different areas of the law enforcement, ranging from Patrol Operations, Recruiting and Training, the Criminal Investigation Division as a detective with the Sexual Assault and Child Abuse Section and Community Services. He also worked as a Patrol Sergeant followed by Patrol Staff Sergeant and finally completing his tenure as Staff Sergeant in charge of the Court and Offenders section at the London Middlesex Court House.

A proud Métis, Gilpin often taught the younger officers about the rich culture and history of the Métis.

Gilpin enjoyed his career and feels fortunate that he worked in so many areas of law enforcement. His two daughters, Erynne and Emilee, are very excited to have their dad at home, safe and sound and working in the garden.

He looks forward to spending more time with his wife Michelle and riding on his motorcycle.

Congratulations, Paul!
Building the MNO Team
The MNO is excited to welcome four new staff members and congratulations a fifth staff member who has taken on a new role.

MNO Healing and Wellness

Wendy Stewart
Manager of Health and Addictions, Ottawa

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) is pleased to welcome Wendy Stewart to the Ottawa office. Wendy is joining the MNO in the position of Manager of Health and Addictions with the MNO Healing and Wellness Branch. Wendy has her Masters in Social Work and has been working in the field of mental health and addictions for over 17 years in various capacities: community and hospital clinician, hospital and correctional administration, advocacy and teaching.

She has extensive experience in program design and has been part of several quality mental health and addiction initiatives during her career to date, including developing tele-psychiatry clinics.

She is delighted to be here and is looking forward to working with and learning from staff, citizens and partners of the MNO.

Submitted by Wenda Watteyne, Director of Healing and Wellness

Cody Carmody
Policy Analyst/Project Coordinator, Ottawa

Born and raised in Fort Frances, Ontario, Cody Carmody is an MNO citizen who moved to Ottawa to study at the University of Ottawa, where he received an Honours Bachelor of Social Science Degree with Majors in Political Science and Psychology.

He has experience working in government affairs, public relations, and the natural nutritional supplement industry, and is eager to apply his knowledge and experience towards improving the well-being of current and future generations.

Submitted by Wenda Watteyne, Director of Healing and Wellness

MNO Lands, Resources & Consultations

Russell Ott
Intake Clerk and Office Receptionist, Toronto

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) is pleased to welcome Russell Ott to the Toronto office. Russell is joining the MNO in the position Consultation Intake Clerk and Toronto office Receptionist. Russell has an Honours Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Geography from the University of Toronto and an Honours Bachelor of Arts in Visual Arts (Studio and Art History) from Brock University. From 2010 to 2014, Russell was a Committee Member with the Heritage Guelph Advisory Committee of the City of Guelph and previously served as Co-Chair of the Grassroots Guelph Executive Committee from 2012 to 2014.

From 2011 to 2012, Russell was a Curling Club Committee member with the Guelph Country Club and worked as an Administrative Assistant and in Sign Production for Loblaw in 2009. He also has experience working as a line cook, a shop labourer, a resource centre instructor, housekeeper and houseman, customer service roles and as a teaching assistant.

Submitted by Wenda Watteyne, Director of Healing and Wellness

MNO Registry

Callie Weaver
Administrative Assistant, Ottawa

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) is pleased to welcome Callie Weaver to the Ottawa office. Callie is joining the MNO in the position of Administrative Assistant with the MNO Registry.

Callie is a highly motivated individual, dedicated to bridging cultural, social, and economic divides to strengthen communities. Her passion for social equality led her to obtain an Honours Bachelor of Arts degree in Global Studies from Wilfrid Laurier University.

Her area of interest focused on Conflict and Identity Politics.

Callie has work and volunteer experience with community outreach programs, political campaigning, and civil rights and social action organizations. She is thrilled to be a part of the MNO team and is looking forward to assisting applicants and citizens within the Métis Nation.

Submitted by Wenda Watteyne, Director of Healing and Wellness

MNO Education and Training

Devon Martin
Region 8 Employment Developer, Toronto

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) is pleased to announce that Devon Martin, who held the position of Consultation Intake Clerk in the Lands, Resources and Consultation (LRC) Branch, has moved to the Education and Training Branch where he now holds the position of Employment Developer for Region 8. Devon continues to work out of the MNO office in Toronto.

Working with various directors and citizens, Devon’s organizational skills, attention to detail and accuracy have proven to be assets. Within his new position, Devon will be working closely with clients and employers throughout Region 8 to find and secure employment, and develop and strengthen relationships in the Greater Toronto and surrounding areas.

Submitted by Jennifer St. Germain, Director of Education and Training

Letter to the editor:

This letter represents the opinions of the writer only and does not necessarily reflect the views of the Métis Nation of Ontario.

There has been a lot of talk these past months about the Syrian refugees and the plan to take 25,000 here in Canada. It is amazing how many people are disagreeing with our Prime Minister Trudeau!

These people had to flee their country and leave all their possessions behind not only to save their lives but for their children. Any parent would do anything to save and protect their children.

We as Métis understand this more than most. There was a time when nobody wanted us.

Canada is truly the greatest country in the world and we as Canadians are known for being big hearted, kind, and a friendly nation. Let us now open our arms, homes and hearts for these less fortunate people. The creator did make us all equal so let us make this happen and pray for these people to find some peace and happiness.

– Senator Larry Duval
MNO Moon River Metis Council

Welcome to the team Cody, Wendy, Callie, Devon and Russell!

Recently moved or moving soon?

To stay in touch with its citizens, the Métis Nation of Ontario depends on its Registry mailing list. This list is used to send citizens important notices as well as each issue of the Métis Voyageur.

If we don’t have your current address then this important information will not reach you.

If you are moving or have moved, please don’t forget to change your address with the Registry so that you will continue to receive MNO notices and the Métis Voyageur.

To get your address updated please either call 1-855-798-1006 ext. 2 or send an e-mail to: registry@metisnation.org
ACROSS THE HOMELAND

We call those lands the Métis Homelands. The Homelands stretch from the lakes and rivers of Ontario, cross the wide prairies, traverse the mountains into British Columbia and into the northern reaches of the Northwest Territories. They include the hills and valleys of the north-central American States. — from the Métis Nation of Ontario Statement of Prime Purpose

British Columbia
On December 22, Simon Fraser University announced that Monique Auger, a Métis woman from Vancouver Island, was one of the two recipients of the 2015 Graduate Aboriginal Entrance Scholarship. Divided into two categories, the scholarship provides funds towards Aboriginal graduate students who are pursuing a master's degree and a PhD.

“There is a problem with mental health in the Métis community,” Auger said. “The epidemiological data show that Métis people suffer from mental health disparities such as depression and anxiety disorders. But there’s not a lot of contextual information as to why this is the case. That’s a gap I would like to address.”

Currently a consultant with Reciprocal Consulting, Auger holds a BA in First Nations Studies from the University of Northern B.C., a score of 26-20.

Alberta
Métis entrepreneur Ron Sturgess Sr. and his partner Jordan Hoppie recently launched Adventure Boreal, a tourism enterprise inspired by the northern lights near Fort McMurray.

The company is situated in the heart of oil sands country but instead of focusing on what’s below the surface, tourists are encouraged to turn their gaze skyward.

“We have some specular views of the northern lights,” Sturgess stated in an interview with CBC News.

“People just think it’s devastated by the oil sands and when I take you out 15 minutes east up the river, you lose cellphone coverage and you wouldn’t know you’re anywhere near the oil sands developments and you’re out in the bush.”

Guests are given more than just a view. They can look forward to traditional Aboriginal meals and invigorating experiences such as snowshoeing, ice fishing and trapping around Willow Lake.

Saskatchewan
Saskatoon author Wilfred Burton found inspiration from the stories of Métis elders when he wrote Road Allowance Kitten, a children’s book about a dark time in Métis history.

After the North West Rebellion of 1885, the Métis people were forced from their homes to live on Crown land, leading to them being called the Road Allowance People.

While speaking with Métis elders, Burton often found that many of their stories included a kitten.

“Maybe that’s how children can access the story is through an animal, because children like animals,” Burton shared in an interview with CBC News.

Road Allowance Kitten is based on a true story and gives readers a glimpse of the past through the eyes of the children involved in the story.

Manitoba
On November 25, the Grey Cup, the official trophy of the Canadian Football League, was brought to Winnipeg for the championship game between the Edmonton Eskimos and the Ottawa Redblacks. The trophy travelled from Upper Fort Garry all the way to the legislative building in a traditional Red River Cart.

The Red River Cart had an entourage of both Métis and First Nations escorts as it travelled through Winnipeg towards its destination.

“The procession represents the historic journey between two important places and two important periods of the province,” the Manitoba Métis Federation shared in a news release. Historic Métis leader Louis Riel’s provisional government sat in Upper Fort Garry while the Legislature houses the current government.

The Eskimos defeated the Redblacks with a score of 26-20.

The financier of Choice for Métis Entrepreneurs in Ontario

Financing up to $1,000,000 for resources and related sector businesses
Rates & security customized to promote Métis business success
Contributions for business plans and ongoing support

mvdf.ca 1-855-798-0133
NOTE: all mail ballots must be returned to the chief electoral officer and postmarked no later than May 2nd 2016.
ATTENTION ALL CITIZENS OF THE MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO

ELECTION NOTICE 2016

Hours of Polling: 9:00 AM - 8:00 PM CST (Region One)
9:00 AM - 8:00 PM EST (Regions Two-Nine)

Advance Poll: April 23, 2016
3:00 PM - 7:00 PM (in each relevant time zone)

Polling Stations: Locations to be posted by April 1, 2016

Nominations Close: April 1, 2016 5:00PM ET

DATE OF ELECTION: MAY 2, 2016

POSITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS FOR NOMINATIONS
All candidates must submit a written acceptance of the Nomination and a statement that the candidate has read the MNO Electoral Code and MNO Bylaws and is eligible to be nominated as a candidate in the MNO election (see Article 6 of the Electoral Code).

POSITIONS FOR ELECTION TO THE PROVISIONAL COUNCIL OF THE MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO (PCMNO)

EXECUTIVE POSITIONS (PCMNO)
- President
- Chair
- Vice Chair
- Secretary-Treasurer
- Sergeant-at-Arms

Candidates require a minimum of seven signatures of electors in seven of the nine regions
- $200.00 non-refundable deposit (Certified cheque or money order only. Make payable to The Métis Nation of Ontario)

OTHER PCMNO POSITIONS:
- 9 Regional Councillors

Candidates require a minimum of 21 signatures of electors from within their respective region
- $200.00 non-refundable deposit (Certified cheque or money order only. Make payable to The Métis Nation of Ontario)

MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO YOUTH COUNCIL (MNOYC):
- Regional Youth Representative *

* Must include a statement that the candidate on the date of election will be between the ages of 16 and 25 years of age.

Candidates must be between the ages of 16 and 25 years on date of election
- Candidates must provide four signatures of electors who are over the age of 16 but under 30 years of age as of the date of the election. Signatures must be from electors who reside in the region from which the candidate is nominated.

MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO VETERANS’ COUNCIL (MNOVC):
- President
- Chair
- Senator for Veterans
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Women’s Representative
- Sergeant-at-Arms

Candidates require a minimum of four signatures of electors who are veterans
- A signed Veteran’s Affirmation (statement that the candidate is a veteran)

Post-Secondary Representative (PCMNO)**

** Must include a statement that the candidate intends to be a student at a post-secondary institution in Ontario for at least 2/3 of the term of office.

Candidates require a minimum of four signatures of electors from each of the nine regions
- Any registered voter can nominate Post-Secondary Representative

MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO REPUBLICAN (MNO)
- Youth Representative (PCMNO) *

* Must include a statement that the candidate on the date of election will be between the ages of 16 and 25 years of age.

Candidates require a minimum of four signatures of electors who are over the age of 16 but under 30 years of age as of the date of the election, from seven of the nine regions.

NOMINATIONS:
Will be accepted by the Chief Electoral Officer up to end of the nominations closing date of April 1, 2016, either in person, by mail, email or facsimile. Deposits, where required, must be received by end of closing date. If nomination forms are submitted by facsimile or email, the original forms must be received by mail or in person before the posting of candidates April 11, 2016.

NOMINATION FORMS:
Made available through the MNO website: www.metisnation.org/governance/2016-election or by email from the Chief Electoral Officer.

REMINDER:
All MNO electors should ensure that the MNO Registry has their current addresses.

POSTING OF CANDIDATES:
April 11, 2016.

Upon completing a review of all filed nominations to ensure they meet the necessary requirements, the MNO Chief Electoral Officer will issue an official candidates’ listing. The listing will also be posted on the website.

PRELIMINARY ELECTORS’ LISTS:
February 15, 2016 - made available at all MNO Council Offices.

Upon provision of evidence satisfactory to the Chief Electoral Officer of legitimate errors and omissions, names can be added or removed from the list at any time on or before March 9, 2016.

FINAL ELECTORS’ LISTS:
March 10, 2016 - posted in Council Offices.

MNO ELECTORAL CODE:
The procedures and rules governing these elections are contained in the Métis Nation of Ontario Electoral Code: Part A, and will be available through MNO Community Councils and on the MNO website.

For further information or for a copy of the MNO Electoral Code please contact:
Paul DeVillers
Chief Electoral Officer
John Graham
Deputy Chief Electoral Officer
Métis Nation of Ontario
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